Venerating Saints and Constructing Cults in an Age of Reform

Male and Female Monastic Communities and their Saints in late Tenth- and early Eleventh-Century England

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COVID-19 Impact Statement

The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant practical and emotional challenges to finishing and submitting this thesis. In March 2020, as the UK's first national lockdown was announced, I was finishing the first draft of my final chapter. The first months of lockdown, in which Oxford's university libraries were closed and access to online databases was still in the process of negotiation, had a significant impact on my work. I was unable to consult essential sources and consequently required an extension to my submission deadline. Over the course of Trinity and Michaelmas 2020, I undertook the process of writing up the final draft of my thesis, a process constrained by limited access to the library and the availability of online resources.

In the case of certain source texts like charter S 914 of Christ Church, Canterbury, I was able to consult the source's digitised manuscript copy but not its critical edition. In other cases, for example the *Regularis Concordia*, old and out-of-copyright editions of texts could be consulted on open access platforms like Archive.org and Google Scholar with more recent critical editions remaining unavailable to me until I could return in person to the Bodleian. I am grateful to my examiners for their understanding with regards to certain unusual references to editions or manuscript copies of primary sources. With greater access to the library following my viva, I was able to update and emend these references.

The limited physical access to the library and the vagaries of online databases also presented a significant challenge to the process of reference-checking and footnote formatting. Over the course of Michaelmas 2020, I made every effort to return as frequently as possible to the Bodleian, however, successive national lockdowns in November 2020 and January 2021 made it extremely challenging to consistently visit the library in person. I am very grateful to the librarians who worked during this period, without their help in securing desk bookings, scanning material, and co-ordinating scans of material stored off-site I would not have been able to finish the final draft of the thesis in time for submission in February 2021.

Short Abstract

Why was there a proliferation of saint-making in late tenth- and early eleventh-century England? New saints, ancient saints, universal saints, and obscure saints were venerated with striking vigour. Litanies, calendars, prayerbooks, and Latin and vernacular hagiographical collections attest to a remarkable and devoted interest in the saints of Christian history in this period. The answer to this striking development lies with those responsible for the care of the saints: monasteries and nunneries. While not the unique owners of saints' relics, both male and female monastic congregations nonetheless presented themselves as uniquely qualified custodians. They achieved this representation by capitalising on an ideology of reform monasticism which began to develop in the second half of the tenth century. Traditionally labelled the 'Benedictine Reform,' this period in English history has been studied primarily from the perspective of three episcopal leaders who promoted the reform of monastic life. This thesis foregrounds congregations, rather than the bishops, and reveals that 'reform' operated dynamically and outside the control of these reformers. The ideology crafted by the reformers elevated monastic men and women to an exceptional status. Sensitive to the potential of this ideology, new male and female congregations integrated the rhetoric of reform into their cults. They created new cults and revived ancient ones with the rhetoric of reform and monastic exceptionalism. Over the course of the late tenth and early eleventh century, monastic virtue and the language of sanctity became blended as male and female congregations embedded themselves in a scheme of Christian history and an increasingly diverse religious landscape.

Long Abstract

Why was there a proliferation of saint-making in late tenth- and early eleventh-century England? The answer to this question lies with the monastic communities responsible for the care of the saints. While not the unique owners of saints' relics, monastic congregations nonetheless presented themselves as uniquely qualified custodians. They achieved this representation by capitalising on an ideology of reform monasticism which began to develop in the second half of the tenth century. This ideology elevated monastic men and women to an exceptional status. Monks and nuns formed an elect group and, according to the ideology of reform monasticism, their purity and sacrificial mode of life transformed them into members of the divine host. Embodying a style of living sanctity, these men and women served the saints in an exclusive manner.

The wave of saint-making in the late tenth century accompanied a swell of new congregations seeking to firmly establish themselves in an increasingly diverse religious landscape. This wave of new foundation or, in some cases, re-foundation occurred with royal and episcopal support, prompting generations of scholars to view King Edgar's reign (r. 959-975) as the beginning of a 'Benedictine Reform.' The traditional view that the Benedictine Reform entailed a sweeping reform of monastic life in Edgar's kingdom has been complicated and dismantled and the time is ripe for a reassessment of the cult of saints in this period. The episcopal leaders of the Benedictine Reform have been credited with using the saints as tools to promote their ideologies, whether using the Virgin Mary to advance the ideal of monastic purity or ancient English saints to represent the revival of a golden age for the English Church. While the great bishops of Edgar's reign undoubtedly exercised significant influence

over the houses they founded, the bulk of the evidence for the cult of saints in this period was produced by monastic houses not their bishops. The evidence demands that the significance of cults to 'reformed' houses be reassessed according to *their* interests. This thesis foregrounds monastic congregations and the material they produced for the veneration of saints. This approach reveals that 'reform' operated dynamically amongst a diverse group of congregations who capitalised on their prominent connections, saints, and the new ideology of reform monasticism.

The investigation begins by examining how an English ideology of reform monasticism was constructed in the late tenth century. The principles of this ideology ultimately relied upon a profound belief in the transformative power of monastic practice. Chapter I examines the relationship between this belief and the veneration of the saints. It begins with two related questions: how were saints venerated by monastic congregations in this period? What relationship between saint and community resulted? These questions are explored over the course of three thematic sections which investigate the prescriptive literature for monastic *praxis* and liturgical material for the veneration of the saints. The first section analyses the prescriptions for the veneration of saints included in the extant English customaries from the period. The second and third sections explore the individual and communal experiences that this literature sought to shape. Simply put, if one followed the veneration prescribed, what relationship to the saints resulted? The chapter ends by considering how this understanding of veneration shapes our model of the monastic landscape in the late tenth and early eleventh century. Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates that the specific saints promoted by individual houses formed a part of a much larger whole, monastic congregations venerated a divine host of saints not simply those saints whose relics they kept. Rather than minimising the significance of particular cults, this perspective

underscores the importance of the individual saints promoted by monastic communities. With so many saints to choose from, why did a congregation like Ramsey or Shaftesbury choose St. Oswald or Edward Martyr?

Chapter 2 examines the intertwined rhetoric of reform monasticism and sanctity constructed by the influential reformers Bishop Æthelwold and Ælfric of Eynsham, asking: what role did the saints play in the reformers' efforts to promote reform monasticism? Across historical writing, prescriptive literature, and hagiography, Æthelwold and Ælfric constructed an exceptional status for monasticism. In the *Regularis Concordia*, *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, and the New Minster Foundation Charter, Æthelwold argued that monks acted as the key to the kingdom's salvation. According to Æthelwold, the monastic life transformed individuals into an elect group who could join the host of the saints, fill the seats in heaven left empty by the rebel angels, and most effectively intercede for the English people. This argument highlighted the sacrificial character of the monastic life. Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, further developed the bishop's ideology in his hagiographical collection, the *Lives of Saints*. Drawing upon both Æthelwold's arguments and the framework for sanctity articulated in Paul the Deacon's ninth-century Homiliary, Ælfric cast monks as the 'new' martyrs of his era. In his schema, periods of persecution and martyrdom cycled through Christian history, from the Maccabees in the Old Testament through to the monks of early medieval England. The influence of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary upon Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* has been explored; however, its impact on his collection of *passiones* has not. The Common of Saints in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary provided a set of general sermons that could be adapted to suit any saint's feast day. As Chapter 2 demonstrates, the sermons for martyrs in the Common of Saints supplied Ælfric with a framework for interpreting martyrdom as an *exemplum* for chaste, ascetic living. Adapting the principles of these sermons

in his re-telling of martyrs' persecutions, Ælfric argued that the arena of true martyrdom was an interior one and presented the interior struggles of the monastic life as a martyr's persecution. The ideology of reform monasticism constructed by these two reformers effectively sanctified monastic *praxis* – transforming monks and nuns not just into especially holy individuals, but into living saints.

The blended language of monastic virtue and sanctity in the ideology of reform monasticism presented new congregations with a powerful framework to assert their spiritual significance and communal autonomy. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 explore the ways in which a diverse group of new tenth-century congregations created cults that capitalised upon the ideology of reform monasticism. The houses selected for analysis in these chapters were all founded or re-founded in the tenth century or early eleventh century and each promoted a new or revived cult in the later tenth century. Grouped thematically over the course of three chapters, the group of houses includes in Chapter 3, the male houses of Winchester, the Old and New Minsters, Ramsey, and the two Canterbury houses, Christ Church and St. Augustine's;[1] in Chapter 4, the fenland houses of Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St. Edmunds; in Chapter 5, the nunneries at Shaftesbury, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking. Out of necessity, this group represents only a selection of the monastic houses and cults in the tenth century, due in part to the constraints of space and in part to source survival. Nonetheless, the striking success of these houses and their cults, many of which continued to thrive up to the Dissolution, and their outsize importance in the surviving material from the tenth and eleventh centuries deserves explanation. These houses made a substantial

[1] Neither of the Canterbury houses was founded in the tenth century, the reason for their inclusion in this chapter is two-fold: first, as the primary see in the English Church, Canterbury cannot be ignored, especially as its Archbishop in the period under investigation has been controversially remembered as an important reformer; second, the Canterbury houses contributed new and revived cults to the religious landscape of late tenth- and early-eleventh century England, notably, in the case of Christ Church, around the time that the community became monastic.

contribution to the cult of saints in early medieval England, either by creating new saints or reviving the cult of ancient ones.

Chapter 3 begins the investigation with the cults of the three reformers themselves, asking: to what end were the 'reformers' of the tenth century venerated as saints? How and why did the reformers' foundations deploy the ideology of reform monasticism? To modern scholarship, SS. Æthelwold, Oswald, and Dunstan may represent the most important new saints of the tenth century, due primarily to the informative hagiographies composed in the generation after their deaths. However, as several scholars have argued, the cults of these men, Æthelwold and Dunstan in particular, do not appear to have achieved the widespread popularity that their hagiographers might have wished. This chapter situates the cults of these men at the Old and New Minsters in Winchester, at Ramsey, and at the Canterbury houses, respectively. By the late tenth and early eleventh century, the recently established monastic congregations at these houses faced critical junctures: the deaths of their leaders, rival claims to their in-house cults, and the political instability wrought by Scandinavian invasions. Against this backdrop, Wulfstan of Winchester and Byrhtferth of Ramsey composed their hagiographies of Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald and the Canterbury houses received the *vita* of Dunstan composed by the elusive 'B.' Wulfstan and Byrhtferth's hagiographies carefully constructed the bishops' sanctity according to the ideologies of monastic exceptionalism that they espoused. Significantly, the reformers' cults operated alongside several others in Winchester, Ramsey, and Canterbury. The Winchester houses promoted cults that demonstrated their exceptional monastic character and communal purity. Ramsey pursued this self-representation primarily through the cults of martyrs, both English and Continental. In the early eleventh century, when the Canterbury houses also faced a critical period following the murder of Archbishop Ælfheah and the depredation of their

endowments, Christ Church and St. Augustine's deployed key elements of the ideology of reform monasticism to construct communal histories and defend their spiritual significance. This chapter reveals the power that the memory of reform wielded and demonstrates how individual houses could utilise the ideology of reform monasticism to construct communal histories as well as support new and ancient cults.

Chapter 4 examines the significance of early English saints to new congregations established in ancient sites. The revival of ancient houses associated with early saints, for example Ely and S. Æthelthryth, has been interpreted as an effort to signal a return to a golden age in the English Church. While Æthelwold may have had this effect in mind as he founded Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney, it remains important to ask what significance, if any, it held for the new congregations established in these places. From their perspective, what role did the veneration of ancient saints like Æthelthryth and Cyneburh play? What significance did the ideology of reform monasticism have for these houses? This chapter examines the cults at Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St. Edmunds. The first three were ostensibly founded or re-founded under Æthelwold's aegis and, collectively, made significant contributions to the cult of saints in the region. The monks of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney incorporated Æthelwold and Ælfric's historical framework for monasticism into their saint cults, thereby establishing continuity between the ancient and new congregations. This continuity relied upon an artful reinterpretation of the houses' ancient saints and the creation of a new set of cults. With the ancient and new saints cast with the rhetoric of reform monasticism, these houses positioned themselves as exceptional, and uniquely qualified, custodians of the saints. Roughly sixty years after Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney were populated with monks, King Cnut supported a new congregation of Benedictine monks at the burial site of a ninth-century martyr, Bury St. Edmunds. Located in the same region, the new

congregation at Bury also faced the challenge of establishing a distinctive identity in a place steeped in history. However, in contrast to Æthelthryth's cult at Ely which had receded into near obscurity, the new monks at Bury were faced with a popular saint, the martyred king Edmund, whose cult operated both within and without 'official' bounds. At Bury, the congregation successfully imposed its exclusive ownership over Edmund's cult by deploying the ideology of reform monasticism. As the cults at these houses demonstrate, the principles of reform provided new congregations with a powerful framework to articulate and defend their communal integrity.

Chapter 5 investigates the substantial number of new cults created in the tenth century by the royal nunneries of Southern England. The liturgical evidence for saints in this period reveals that the new saints of Shaftesbury, Wilton, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking were avidly venerated by many male 'reformed' houses. This evidence challenges the assumption that the nunneries were peripheral members, if members at all, of the Benedictine Reform and prompts the question: did the ideology of reform monasticism confer agency to female houses and, if so, what did they achieve with it? With the exception of Barking, the nunneries analysed in this chapter were all founded in the early tenth century and as new congregations also faced the pressure of establishing distinctive communal identities while navigating the upheavals wrought by succession crises and disrupted patronage networks. Like their male counterparts, these houses for women used cults to meet these challenges. The evidence for these cults survives primarily in post-Conquest hagiography and tenth- and eleventh-century liturgical material. This material reveals that this group of nunneries was attuned to the ideology of reform monasticism and proficient at capitalising upon its potential. The communal histories integrated into the nunneries' cults of founders, members, and leaders reveal that these houses for women sought to position themselves amongst their male

counterparts in a scheme of monastic history and exceptionalism. In contrast to their male counterparts, the nunneries promoted the cults of recently deceased, exceptional *monastic* saints. They deployed the rhetoric of sanctity established by the ideology of reform monasticism and presented their saints as sacrifices to holy monastic observance. Each house made powerful claims to the transformative monastic virtues of chastity and obedience and the veneration of their saints in places like Winchester, Peterborough, and Canterbury suggests that their male counterparts recognised their importance as monastic congregations.

The 'reformers' of monastic life in the tenth century established a powerful ideology of monastic superiority, the success of this ideology was not tied to the prominent bishops who constructed it but rather to the strategic endeavours of a diverse group of houses. The male and female monastic communities who capitalised upon its rhetoric and the spiritual authority it conferred succeeded so completely at creating a memory of reform that centuries of scholarship viewed monastic life in the period monolithically. This view has been dismantled, the 'Benedictine Reform' has necessarily been de-centred and its impact complicated. This thesis, however, proposes one caveat: rather than measuring the success of the reform by the adoption of one customary, the true measure of its success ought to be measured by the enduring framework for monastic exceptionalism that it provided to the new congregations of the tenth and eleventh centuries. According to the ideology of reform monasticism, these new congregations re-formed themselves into true images of God and lived, incredibly, as saints.

For Dana Richardson and
David Braund (1951 - 2003)

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List of Abbreviations

Abingdon RSB	Abingdon copy of the *Regula Benedicti*, ed. J. Chamberlin, *The Rule of St. Benedict: the Abingdon copy* (Toronto, 1982)
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England*
BL	British Library
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
CC	*Corpus Christianorum*
CH I	Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies*, ed. P. Clemoes, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: the first series tex*t (Oxford, 1997)
CH II	Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies*, ed. M. Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: the second series text* (London, 1979)
DV	Aldhelm, *De Virginitate*, trans. M. Herren and M. Lapidge, *Aldhelm: the prose work*s (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 59-135
EEM	*Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, ed. and trans. D. Whitelock, *Councils and Synods, with other documents relating to the English Church I AD 871-1204*, ed. Brett and Brooke (Oxford, 1981), no. 33, pp. 142-54
EME	*Early Medieval Europe*
HE	Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969)
Lib. Eli.	Liber Eliensis, ed. E. O. Blake (London, 1962)
LME	Ælfric, *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*, ed. and trans. C. Jones, *Ælfric's Letter to the Monks of Eynsham* (Cambridge, 1998)
LS	Ælfric, *Lives of Saints*, ed. and trans. W. Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of saints: being a set of sermons on saints' days formerly observed by the English Church* (2 vols, London, 1881-1900)
NMFC	New Minster Foundation Charter, ed. and trans. A. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester*, pt. 3 of *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester* (Oxford, 2002), Doc. IV, pp. 65-97
Old English *RSB*	Old English Regula Sancti Benedicti, ed. A. Schröer, *Die angelsächsischen Prosabearbeitungen der Benedictinerregel., Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa* (2 vols, Kassel, 1885)
PL	*Patrologia Latina*
RB	*Revue Bénédictine*

RC	*Regularis Concordia*, ed. K. Hallinger, *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum*, vol.7 pt.3, *Consuetudinum saeculi X/XI/XII monumenta non-Cluniacensia* (Siegburg, 1984)
RSB	*Regula S. Benedicti*
SC	*Sources chrétiennes*
WW, *VÆth*	Wulfstan of Winchester, *Vita Æthelwoldi*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Life of St Æthelwold* (Oxford, 1991)
BR, *VO*	Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita Oswaldi*, ed. and trans. M. Lapidge, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine* (Oxford, 2009)

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Introduction

In his reply to a set of questions sent by Augustine of Canterbury, the seventh-century English missionary, Gregory the Great advised that:

> because you, brother, learned in the rules of the monastery, ought not to live separately from your clerics in the English Church, [...], you ought to institute that way of life which was followed by our fathers in the beginning of the early Church, in which none of them said that anything they possessed was their own, but that they had all things in common.[1]

As England's first monk-bishop, Augustine set a precedent for episcopal office that was to have profound implications for the early medieval English Church. In addition to creating a new tradition of episcopal monasticism, Augustine brought the established traditions of Roman Christianity to the early English kingdoms. One of the most captivating of these traditions for the new converts was the veneration of Roman martyrs.[2] In the century after Augustine's arrival in Kent in 597, English Christians venerated almost exclusively the saints of Rome and Early Christianity. The saints who were created in this period were overwhelmingly the abbots, abbesses, and bishops who had established communities in ecclesiastic and monastic centres.[3] Significantly, their earliest and most important saints, like

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All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

[1] Gregory the Great, 'Gregorio Episcopo Augustino,' in *Gregorii I pape Registrum Epistolarum*, MGH Epp. 1-2, vol. II, Liber XI no.56, p. 333: 'Sed quia tua fraternitas monasterii regulis erudite seorsum vivere non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quae auctore Deo nuper adhuc ad fidem perducta est, hance debet conversationem instituere quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris, in quibus nullus eorum ex his quae possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed errant eis communia.'

[2] Alan Thacker, 'In search of saints: the English church and the cult of Roman apostles and martyrs in the seventh and eighth centuries,' in J. M. H. Smith (ed), *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough* (Oxford, 2000).

[3] Alan Thacker, 'Loca Sanctorum: The significance of place in the study of the saints,' in R. Sharpe and A. Thacker (eds), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002); Catherine Cubitt, 'Memory and Narrative in the Cult of Early Anglo-Saxon Saints,' in Y. Hen and M. Innes (eds), *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000); eadem, 'Universal and Local Saints in Anglo-Saxon England,' in R.

Augustine, their apostle, were men and women who had instituted 'that way of life which was followed by our fathers in the beginning of the early Church.'

From the origins of monasticism in England, the cults of the saints and monastic *praxis* were intertwined. Minsters not only served as the primary custodians of relics and cults, but also as the primary creators of new saints: the overwhelming majority of early English saints, male or female, comprised founders, leaders, and patrons of monastic communities.[4] Monastic congregations were so apt to venerate former members of the community that, as one scholar has argued, 'every community could well have had its own saint.'[5] These new saints were styled with the trappings of 'official' cults: hagiographies, shrines, holy relics, and special commemoration in the liturgy.[6] These hallmarks of organised cults have survived to varying degrees in the historical record; however, archeological remains, in particular, indicate that minster-based cults operated alongside popular ones.[7] Nonetheless, as minsters increasingly became the central foci of entire regions, acting as the bases for regional economic activity as well as political and ecclesiastical administration, the cults they promoted also became embedded into the physical and institutional structures of the early English kingdoms. Many of these cults exerted so strong a memory that certain saints were transformed into the undying lords of their minsters' endowments.[8] Following the disruptions

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Sharpe and A. Thacker (eds), *Local Saints and Local Churches*; David Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 101-4.

[4] John Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster? Local cults in Anglo-Saxon England,' in R. Sharpe and A. Thacker (eds), *Local Saints and Local Churches*, pp. 455-94; idem, 'A Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Saints,' in ibid., pp. 495-565.

[5] Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster,' p.456.

[6] Thacker, 'The Making of a Local Saint,' in R. Sharpe and A. Thacker (eds) *Local Saints and Local Churches*; Cubitt, 'Universal and local saints,' pp. 439-43.

[7] John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), p. 141-9; idem, 'A Saint for Every Minster,' pp. 467-71; Cubitt, 'Sites and Sanctity: revisiting the cults of murdered and martyred Anglo-Saxon royal saints,' *EME* 9.1 (2000): pp. 53-83; eadem, 'Universal and local saints,' pp. 424-32; Thacker, 'Loca Sanctorum,' p. 39.

[8] David Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, pp. 196-214.

of Scandinavian invasions and settlement in the ninth century, the new congregations of the tenth turned to these early saints to claim territory, authority, and institutional history.

This is not to say that there was no interest in creating new saints following the ninth century. On the contrary, by the end of the tenth century a host of new English abbesses, nuns, queens, kings, and bishops had joined the ranks of the saints, raising the central question of this thesis: why was there a proliferation of saint-making and interest in early cults in this period? Like their earlier counterparts, most of the new saints of the tenth century were also intimately tied to a monastic environment, having been founders, leaders, prominent members or patrons of male and female houses. Two striking exceptions, St. Edmund and Edward the Martyr, marked significant contributions to the host of saints: these murdered kings, venerated as martyrs by the turn of eleventh century, were the first English royal martyrs to be added to the litany of saints since the ninth century.[9] While not monks or noted monastic patrons, the cults of these two martyrs nonetheless were managed by monastic congregations, Edmund's at Bury and Edward's at Shaftesbury.[10] To understand the

[9] Nicole Marafioti has compellingly argued that Edmund's status as a martyr was purposefully constructed in the aftermath of Edward's murder, the East Anglian saint providing a framework with which to interpret the regicide, *The King's Body: Burial and Succession in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto, 2014), pp. 161-91. David Rollason has made the case that S. Wigstan of Repton (d. 849 AD) was the last royal martyr before Edward's death in 978, 'The cults of murdered royal saints in Anglo-Saxon England,' *ASE*, 11 (1982). Most recently, Sarah Foot has drawn a distinction between royal and clerical martyrs in early medieval English cults, arguing that the English only created their first clerical martyr (S. Ælfheah) after Edward's death and veneration as a martyr challenged long-held assumptions about the high threshold for martyrdom, Foot, 'Why were there no martyrs in the early English Church?' H. M. Chadwick Memorial Lecture 31 (Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic; Cambridge, 2020), pp. 34-40 and 47.

[10] Embedded as they were in political, economic, and social networks from their origins, minsters had a long tradition of serving as cult centres for royal saints, Thacker, 'Kings, Saints, and Monasteries in Pre-Viking Mercia,' *Midland History*, 10:1 (1985); Susan Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England. A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge, 1988); Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London, 2003), pp. 118-22. However, as Catherine Cubitt has argued, the murder of kings and princes could prompt a grassroots devotion amongst the laity. As the royal cult grew in popularity, it might attract the attention of a monastic house which would then take ownership of the cult, 'Sites and Sanctity,' pp. 60-5; cf. 'Universal and local saints,' pp. 424-32. Both Edmund's cult at Bury and Edward's at Shaftesbury will be analysed in this thesis, see Chapters 4 and 5.

proliferation of saint-making and interest in early cults in the later tenth century, we must understand the monastic context in which it occurred.

The Benedictine Reform dominates the history of monasticism in England in the tenth century and has been credited as the main impetus behind the century's new cults. However, as this reform movement has been challenged, nuanced, and de-centred in recent years, the time is ripe for a reassessment of the relationship between reform and the cult of the saints in this period. The cults of the saints have long been understood as an important mechanism by which medieval monastic congregations articulated communal identities and histories. Taking an approach that foregrounds the monastic environment in which cults operated, this thesis proposes that the study of the saints provides an invaluable window onto what 'reform' meant to individual congregations. Over the course of five chapters, this thesis investigates the tenth-century proliferation of saint-making and its relationship to monastic reform by asking: how were saints venerated by monastic congregations? What role did the saints play in the attempts to reform monastic life in this period?

Monasticism and the cult of saints in tenth-century England: the historiography

The Benedictine Reform sits at the intersection of the wave of monastic foundation and proliferation of saint cults in the tenth century. In order to investigate the monastic environments of cults in this period, we must first address the historiographical problem of how to interpret 'Benedictine Reform.' Two generations of churchmen in the second half of the tenth century presented the period as a revolutionary one for monastic life, and the model they bequeathed has endured until recently. Despite the fact that 'reformed' houses probably only comprised ten per cent of all active minsters, 'reform' continues to shape the history of

monasticism in tenth- and eleventh-century England.[11] As a conceptual framework, 'reform' endures in no small part because significant developments in monastic practice *did* occur in this period and we need a way to describe them. From the tenth century onwards, the Benedictine cursus became increasingly popular in England,[12] and many prominent houses historicised tenth-century changes to their congregations and practices. 'Benedictine Reform' remains an imperfect label, especially in its traditional sense, but neither is it useless. To contextualise the term and its significance for this thesis, we will begin with a brief survey of the historical record of monastic reform in tenth-century England. This will be followed by an assessment of the various conceptual models that have been proposed and the interpretation that this thesis will take. Finally, we will address how the study of monastic reform has shaped that of the cult of saints in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

A Benedictine Reform?

Despite roots in the reigns of earlier kings, the Benedictine Reform has been traditionally placed in the reign of King Edgar (r. 959 – 975). Edgar became king of Wessex in 959 following the short and turbulent reign of his brother Eadwig. Upon accession to the throne, Edgar re-established good relations with prominent men of the realm who had been estranged in his brother's reign. Notably Edgar supported Dunstan's return to England and installation as

[11] John Blair has estimated that by the 970s, at the height of the Benedictine Reform, reformed houses formed as a little as ten per cent of the total number of active minsters in England, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, p. 351.
[12] Jesse Billett, 'Discerning 'Reform' in Monastic Liturgy (c. 750-1050),' in I. Cochelin and A. Beach (eds), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West* (Cambridge, 2020), p. 428; idem, *The Divine Office in Anglo-Saxon England, 597-c. 1000* (London, 2014), pp. 149-96. Billett has revealed that up until at least the mid-950s secular clergy and 'reformed' monks probably used identical forms of the Office, arguing that 'the real innovation of the monastic reformers was the adoption of the Benedictine cursus in their own Office liturgy, inspired by their reading of Frankish monastic literature of the ninth century,' 'The Divine Office and the Secular Clergy in the Later Anglo-Saxon England,' in C. Leyser, D. Rollason and H. Williams (eds), *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century* (Turnhout, 2010), p. 447-51, quote at p. 462.

Archbishop of Canterbury. A few years into Edgar's reign, Æthelwold of Abingdon, the king's former mentor,[13] and another young, ambitious, and reform-minded monk were promoted to bishoprics by the king: Oswald to the see of Worcester and Æthelwold to that of Winchester, in 961 and 963 respectively. As bishop of Winchester, Æthelwold began a 'reform' of his see: in 964, he ejected the clerics of the Old Minster, reputedly a lax and negligent group, and replaced them with a congregation of monks.[14] In the early years of their episcopates, both Oswald and Æthelwold founded monasteries and began a process of re-forming established ones into strictly monastic congregations.[15] Sometime between 970 and his coronation in 973, King Edgar convened an Easter meeting at Winchester. At this meeting, Æthelwold promoted his vision for an ideal, standardised monastic practice in the customary known as the *Regularis Concordia*, an interpretation of the Benedictine Rule that drew from Continental customs and English tradition.[16] Notably, this customary also reimagined royal authority: the king and

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[13] Writing c. 997x1002, Byrhtferth of Ramsey recorded that Edgar 'had been instructed in the knowledge of the True King by Æthelwold, the holy bishop of the town of Winchester,' *VO*, III.11, pp. 77-9. Æthelwold's hagiographer, Wulfstan of Winchester, also recorded the close relationship between the bishop and king in the *VÆth* (§25), completed in 996.

[14] *VÆth*, §16. This was followed by the expulsion of clerics from the New Minster and the institution of the *Regula Benedicti* at the Nunnaminster, *VÆth*, §20 and 22, respectively. Notably, both Wulfstan and Byrhtferth recorded Edgar's support for monastic reform. Wulfstan noted that Edgar granted Æthelwold permission to expel the clerics from the Winchester houses (*VÆth* §16 and 20) and displayed his support by sending a special agent, Wulfstan of Dalham, 'who used royal authority to order the canons to choose one of two courses: either to give place to the monks without delay or to take the habit of the monastic order,' *VÆth* §18, p. 33. In the *VO* (III.10; IV.3), Byrhtferth described Edgar's enthusiastic support for monastic reform, notably remarking that the king had tasked Dunstan, Æthelwold, and Oswald with establishing monks and nuns in 'all monastic sites,' IV.3.

[15] Both Wulfstan and Byrhtferth credited Æthelwold and Oswald, respectively, with founding and reforming many monasteries. According to Wulfstan, Æthelwold was responsible for populating the Winchester houses with monks and nuns, re-founding Ely and Peterborough (*VÆth* §23, 24) and establishing a congregation at Thorney (§24). Wulfstan hyperbolically claimed that thanks 'to Æthelwold's unremitting aid, monasteries were established everywhere in England, some for monks, some for nuns' (§27); the 'A' text of *ASC* recorded that in year 964 Æthelwold expelled clerics from Chertsey and Milton Abbas and replaced them with monks, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: a collaborative edition*, vol. 3, MS A, ed. Bately (Cambridge, 1986), p. 76. Byrhtferth celebrated Ramsey as Oswald's greatest foundation (*VO* III.16-20), alluding briefly to the bishop's houses at Worcester and Winchcombe (IV.4). As it will be discussed below, these representations of the bishops' activities are misleading. They appear to have actively supported many new houses, but the completely monastic cathedrals described by their hagiographers were more fiction than fact.

[16] Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, recorded that Æthelwold was the author of the *RC*. In the preface to his *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*, composed c. 1005, Ælfric wrote that he was drawing from 'the customary that Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, together with his fellow bishops and abbots in the time of most blessed Edgar, king of the English, compiled from various sources and established for monks to observe,' *LME* §1, p. 111. In

queen had a particular responsibility for the health of the monastic communities of the realm.[17] A strong and disciplined monastic branch of the English Church, Æthelwold argued, reflected a powerful king and morally upright kingdom.[18] In 975, only a few years after the Winchester meeting, Edgar died. The relative peace and prosperity of his sixteen years of rule were followed by factionalism and regicide.[19] His son from his first wife, Edward, acceded to the throne following his death and in the following decade both Æthelwold and Dunstan died, the first in 984 and the latter in 988. Both bishops were significant members of two factions vying for power in the wake of Edgar's death. Æthelwold maintained a close relationship with Queen Ælfthryth, Edgar's third wife, who sought to advance her son, Æthelred.[20] Dunstan, in contrast, was a member of the group that supported Edward's

addition to Ælfric's claim, several other (albeit indirect) pieces of evidence confirm Æthelwold's authorship, for a summary see Lucia Kornexl, 'The *Regularis Concordia* and its Old English Gloss,' *ASE*, 24 (1995), pp. 97-101 and Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 125-7.

[17] *Regularis Concordia*, in K. Hallinger (ed), *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum*, vol.7 pt.3, *Consuetudinum saeculi X/XI/XII monumenta non-Cluniacensia* (Siegburg, 1984), §3, p. 70: Regali utique functus officio, ueluti pastorum pastor sollicitus a rabidis perfidorum rictibus, uti hiantibus luporum faucibus, oues, quas Domini lariente gratia studiosus collegerat, muniendo eripuit; coniugique suae Aelfthrithe sanctimonialium mandras, ut impauidi more custodis defenderet cautissime precepit, ut uidelicet mas maribus, femina feminis sine ullo suspicionis scrupulo subueniret.

[18] Æthelwold further developed this argument in his Old English historical account of Edgar's reign, *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries* (hereafter *EEM*), for an edition see Dorothy Whitelock ed. and trans., *Councils and Synods, with other documents relating to the English Church I AD 871-1204*, ed. Brett and Brooke (Oxford, 1981), no. 33, pp. 142-54. Æthelwold was also responsible for the translation into Old English of the *Regula Benedicti*, Mechthild Gretsch, 'Æthelwold's translation of the *Regula Sancti Benedicti* and its Latin exemplar,' *ASE*, 3 (1974). He may even have supported the translation of the *Rule of Chrodegang*, a ninth-century Carolingian customary intended for clerical congregations, Brigitte Langefeld ed. and trans., *The Old English Version of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang* (Frankfurt am Main, 2003).

[19] Byrhtferth vividly contrasted the peace of Edgar's reign, 'the times of contentment,' with the political turmoil which followed the king's death 'which neither the bishops nor the leading men in ecclesiastical and secular affairs were able to assuage,' *VO* IV.18, p. 137. Byrhtferth painted a picture of a realm on the brink of civil war, divided between those who supported Edward's claim and those who supported that of his younger half-brother, Æthelred, *VO* IV.18-9.

[20] As Barbara Yorke has demonstrated, Æthelwold maintained close ties to Edgar's queen Ælfthryth, mother of Æthelred, both during and after Edgar's reign, 'Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century,' in B. Yorke (ed), *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence* (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 81-2. Notably, as early as 966, just two years after Edgar and Ælfthryth's marriage, Æthelwold visibly supported the queen's progeny as the sole legitimate heirs to the throne: in the New Minster Foundation Charter (S 745), which was presented a major court occasion, Ælfthryth's first son, Edmund, was described as 'clito legitimus prefati regi filius' and given precedence over Edward, 'eodem rege clito procreatus' while Ælfthryth herself was described as 'legitimus prefati regis coniunx,' Yorke, 'Æthelwold and Politics,' pp. 82-3.

claim.[21] Edward's murder in 978 settled the question of rulership but initiated a profound political and cultural reckoning with royal authority.[22] Æthelred's reign began under the cloud of his half-brother's death and, despite a brief period of stability, ended with ignominious exile and the loss of the kingdom to a foreign ruler in 1016. Bookended by these events, the stable period of his reign saw the rise to prominence of political and ecclesiastical men sympathetic to reform, c. 993 - 1006.[23] The religious regeneration of the kingdom through reform was framed as a necessary response to the moral crises of regicide and viking invasion.[24] Indeed, at least one see was 'reformed' within this framework, in 998 Bishop Wulfsige installed monks at Sherbone.[25] During Æthelred's reign, the pupils of Æthelwold and Oswald, Ælfric of Eynsham, Wulfstan Cantor, and Byrhtferth of Ramsey most notably, promoted various visions of an ideally reformed monastic discipline, through hagiography,[26] prescriptive literature,[27] and liturgical material.[28] In sum, Edgar and Æthelred's reigns mark

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[21] Dunstan appears to have been an important proponent of Edward's cause, playing a major role in procuring Edward's coronation, Pauline Stafford, 'The Reign of Æthelred II, A Study in the Limitations on Royal Policy and Action,' in D. Hill (ed), *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 21-6; Keynes, *Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready' (978-1016): a study in their use as historical evidence* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 163-76; Levi Roach, *Æthelred the Unready* (Yale, 2016), pp. 56-7 and pp. 68-73.

[22] Marafioti, *The King's Body*, pp. 165-74.

[23] Cubitt 'Virginity and Misogyny in Tenth and Eleventh Century England,' *Gender & History*, 12.1 (2000), p. 22; Keynes, *Diplomas of King Æthelred*, pp. 189-93.

[24] Cubitt, 'Virginity and Misogyny,' pp. 22-3.

[25] Simon Keynes, 'Wulfsige, Monk of Glastonbury, Abbot of Westminster (c 900-3), and Bishop of Sherborne (c. 993-1002),' in K. Barker, D. Hinton and A. Hunt (eds), *St Wulfsige and Sherborne: Essays to Celebrate the Millennium of the Benedictine Abbey 998-1998* (Oxford, 2005), p. 69.

[26] Byrhtferth of Ramsey composed in Latin the *Vita Oswaldi*, the *Vita Ecgwini*, and the *Passio Æthelred et Æthelberti*. Wulfstan Cantor of Winchester was also responsible for Latin hagiographies, the *Vita Æthelwoldi* and a metrical version of the miracles of S. Swithun, the *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, and a Latin poem that celebrated the feast of All Saints, the *Breviloquium de omnibus sanctis*. Ælfric of Eynsham produced an Old English version of Æthelwold's *vita*, and a vernacular collection of saints' lives, the *Lives of Saints*.

[27] Byrhtferth produced a bilingual computus manual, the *Enchiridion*, a Latin *Computus* as well as a set of explanatory glosses for Bede's *De natura rerum* and *De temporum ratione.* In addition to several pastoral letters and an Old English version of the *Admonitio ad filium spiritualem*, Ælfric produced the *LME*, a customary for the congregation at Eynsham which adapted Æthelwold's *RC*. Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, written in Old English, provided a collection of homilies for an entire liturgical year.

[28] Wulfstan appears to have produced a substantial body of liturgical material for many Winchester saints, S. Æthelwold most notably. He has been credited with creating the sequences and tropes for English saints in the two musical manuscripts known as the 'Winchester Tropers' and is considered the author of a set of prayers, hymns, collects, and *Introit* tropes for S. Æthelwold's feast days, see Lapidge and Winterbottom's introduction to the *Life of St Æthelwold*, pp. xxiii-xxxix.

two distinct intellectual generations of reform, the first characterised by the charismatic personalities of king and prominent bishops, Æthelwold, Oswald, and Dunstan, and the second distinguished by the bishops' prolific students and the increasing political instability of the kingdom.

The developments in these years, both political and monastic, have prompted several models, all gathered under the umbrella term 'Benedictine Reform.' It should be underscored that while Bishop Æthelwold, Ælfric of Eynsham, and later twelfth-century historians historicised the wave of new monastic foundation as a distinctive movement they did not label it 'Benedictine Reform.' In twentieth-century scholarship, this descriptive label, and its iterations as 'monastic revival' or 'monastic reformation,' occurred influentially in the work of Sir Frank Stenton and Dom David Knowles.[29] The authoritative account of the 'Benedictine Reform' that they put forward held that beginning at Glastonbury in the 940s Dunstan acted as the driving force behind a large-scale reform of the English Church which had been struggling to regain its former integrity since the viking attacks of the ninth century. In partnership with his pupil, Æthelwold, and Oda's erudite and ambitious nephew, Oswald, Dunstan presided over a dynamic movement which saw a wave of new monastic foundation, the reform of dissolute clerical congregations in English cathedrals, and the bishops' own political ascendancy during and after Edgar's reign. The new houses founded or re-founded by these bishops adopted the Benedictine practice prescribed by the *Regularis Concordia*; however, the vitality of the reform was tied to the charismatic personalities of its leaders and with their deaths the fervour of reform waned, the integrity of monastic life steadily declining until the stimulating influence of Norman churchmen following the Conquest.

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[29] Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1943), pp. 441-51, esp. p. 451: 'There can, in fact, be no doubt that the Benedictine reformation of the tenth century brought fresh vitality to the whole English Church'; David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 31-56.

This traditional view began to be challenged in the 1970s, most significantly in the collection of essays in *Tenth Century Studies*.[30] The essays in this collection did not entirely dismantle the essential points of the traditional narrative of the Benedictine Reform; nonetheless, they began indispensable work on three crucial avenues of inquiry. First, Thomas Symons' investigation of the history and derivation of the *Regularis Concordia* highlighted the composite nature of the customary, raising the question of the reformers' intellectual relationship to different styles of Continental monasticism.[31] Second, Donald Bullough's essay charted the development of a nostalgia for and idealisation of Carolingian unity, of which ecclesiastical reform was a key marker, and argued that the close cultural and social links between the Carolingian kingdoms and Wessex provided an important mechanism for the transfer of reform ideas to England.[32] Bullough's essay revealed the importance of situating the English reform within a much larger social and political European context. Finally, Sawyer's analysis of the charters in Worcester's archive led him to argue that a gradual monasticisation of the see occurred from 964 onwards, an argument that undermined the view that the monastic cathedrals of the tenth century were exclusively populated by monks following a dramatic and complete ejection of clerics.[33]

Three seminal essay collections, published successively in the late 1980s and early 1990s, reassessed the careers of the great 'reformers,' Bishop Æthelwold, Archbishop Oswald, and Archbishop Dunstan, and cumulatively provided a new, more nuanced model for

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[30] David Parsons (ed), *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia* (London, 1975).
[31] Thomas Symons, '*Regularis Concordia*: History and Derivation,' in D. Parsons (ed), *Tenth-Century Studies*, pp. 37-59.
[32] Donald Bullough, 'The Continental Background of the Reform,' in D. Parsons (ed), *Tenth-Century Studies*, pp. 20-36.
[33] Peter Sawyer, 'Charters of the Reform Movement: the Worcester Archive,' in D. Parsons (ed), *Tenth-Century Studies*, pp. 84-93.

'Benedictine Reform.'[34] Fruitfully pursuing the lines of inquiry begun by Symons, Bullough, and Sawyer, these collections revealed that each reformer developed a distinctive attitude towards monasticism and promoted it idiosyncratically, with the effect that it no longer remained possible to speak of a homogenous, coordinated 'Benedictine Reform.' The collection devoted to Bishop Æthelwold revealed that as a 'reformer' the bishop of Winchester had a dual reverence for early English tradition and the Benedictinism promoted by Benedict of Aniane at the Council of Aachen.[35] Unlike Dunstan and Oswald, Æthelwold's monastic education occurred exclusively in English territory, at the monastery of Glastonbury,[36] and, in contrast to Dunstan, Æthelwold weathered the political crises of the 950s to his immediate advantage.[37] Æthelwold's close relationship to both Eadwig and Edgar distinguished him from his former teacher and his mutually beneficial relationship with Edgar's queen, Ælfthryth, may have been based upon kinship ties that operated in opposition to the network of kin in which Dunstan operated.[38] As the only one of the three 'reformers' to have left to posterity a significant written corpus that explicitly aimed to support a large-scale reform, and as the essays in this collection revealed, Æthelwold, not Dunstan, acted as the primary driving force behind reform in Edgar's reign.

The reassessment of Dunstan's career emphasised the Archbishop's energetic activity in the politics of the late tenth century and stressed his importance as a scholar and teacher;[39]

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[34] Barbara Yorke (ed), *Bishop Æthelwold: His career and influence* (Woodbridge, 1988); Nigel Ramsay, Margaret Sparks, and Tim Tatton-Brown (eds), *St. Dunstan: His life, times and cult* (Woodbridge, 1992); Nicholas Brooks and Catherine Cubitt (eds), *St. Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence* (London, 1996).
[35] Patrick Wormald, 'Æthelwold and his Continental Counterparts: Contact, Comparison, Contrast,' in B. Yorke (ed), *Bishop Æthelwold*, pp. 13-42.
[36] Michael Lapidge, 'Æthelwold as Scholar and Teacher,' in B. Yorke (ed), *Bishop Æthelwold*, pp. 89-117.
[37] Alan Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' in B. Yorke (ed), *Bishop Æthelwold*, pp. 43-64.
[38] Barbara Yorke, 'Æthelwold and Politics,' pp. 65-88.
[39] Nicholas Brooks, 'The Career of St Dunstan,' in N. Ramsay, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan*, pp. 1-24; Mildred Budny, "St Dunstan's Classbook' and its Frontispiece: Dunstan's Portrait and Autograph,' in N. Ramsay, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan*, pp. 103-42.

however, the Dunstan that emerged from these essays was not the reformer-par-excellence of previous scholarship. Indeed, as Alan Thacker and David Rollason's essays demonstrated, Dunstan's involvement in secular affairs created a complicated legacy. On the one hand, Thacker showed that Dunstan's cult only achieved national popularity in the reign of Cnut and credited the archbishop's worldliness as the main reason for Christ Church's reluctance to promote his cult.[40] In contrast, David Rollason argued that this worldliness conformed to a style of episcopal sanctity particularly valued in Eastern Francia.[41] Significantly, monastic reform did not occupy a central place in Dunstan's memorialisation. The anonymous B, a former Glastonbury monk residing in Liège, crafted a hagiography for the archbishop that utilised B's personal knowledge of Dunstan before his appointment to Canterbury.[42] B's silence on Dunstan's role in the reform of monastic life in England remains a challenge to interpret: does it indicate, as Nicola Robertson later argued, that the archbishop was not a major force in the Benedictine Reform?[43] Or, is B's silence simply a consequence of the author's personal circumstances? B's *vita* appears to have been composed as part of the author's effort to gain employment under Dunstan's successor, an effort that was ultimately unsuccessful. This may reflect, as Thacker argued, Christ Church's relative indifference to the archbishop's cult, a conservatism that was practised by Dunstan himself during his archiepiscopacy.[44] Building on the work of Nicholas Brooks, who demonstrated that Christ Church gradually became a monastic congregation under Dunstan's successors, Thacker

[40] Alan Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury: Relics and Reform under Dunstan and his Successors,' in N. Ramsay, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan*, pp. 221-45.
[41] David Rollason, 'The Concept of Sanctity in the Early Lives of St Dunstan,' in N. Ramsay, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan*, pp. 261-72.
[42] Michael Lapidge, 'B and the *Vita Dunstani*,' in N. Ramsay, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan*, pp. 247-60.
[43] Nicola Robertson, 'Dunstan and Monastic Reform: Tenth-Century Fact or Twelfth-Century Fiction?' *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 28 (2006).
[44] Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury,' pp. 236-40.

surmised that in 'the later tenth century, Canterbury, it seems, was ruled by a man who lacked the will and perhaps the political finesse to do for his community what Æthelwold had done for the Old Minster.'[45] While Dunstan appears to have viewed the monastic life as an especially holy one, it does not appear that he sought to reform his see according to its principles.

Oswald's role as a reformer was similarly questioned in the reassessment of his career, *St. Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence*. Notably, Julia Barrow demonstrated that even though Oswald gradually introduced monks to his see at Worcester, the cathedral community remained mixed by design during his episcopate.[46] As Barrow revealed, Oswald altered the cathedral enclosure at Worcester in order to accommodate both a monastic and clerical congregation: he constructed a church dedicated to St. Mary for the particular use of the monks while the clerical community continued to make use of the church dedicated to St. Peter. The congregation was not fully monastic until the episcopate of Wulfstan (1062-1095), leading Barrow to argue that 'we might be justified in attributing to him and not Oswald, the realisation of the tenth-century monastic reform of Worcester.'[47] Nonetheless, Oswald's reverence for Benedictine monasticism, inspired by his education at Fleury, the resting place of St. Benedict's relics, left a lasting impression on the Worcester community and his monastic foundation at Ramsey. John Nightingale argued that Ramsey's dedication to St. Benedict and Oswald's conspicuous promotion of men trained at Fleury reveals that the bishop sought to create a new Fleury in England.[48] While Oswald evinced a fervour for the monastic life similar in pitch to Bishop Æthelwold's, it does not appear that he promoted Æthelwold's style of

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[45] Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury,' pp. 244; Nicholas Brooks, *The early history of the Church of Canterbury: Christ Church from 597 to 1066* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 255-60.
[46] Julia Barrow, 'The Community of Worcester, 961-c.1100,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 84-99.
[47] Barrow, 'The Community of Worcester,' p. 99.
[48] John Nightingale, 'Oswald, Fleury and continental reform,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 23-45.

Benedictinism at his foundations – further undermining the narrative of a coordinated, large-scale reform.[49] The picture of 'Benedictine Reform' that results from these reassessments is a completely altered one: the 'reform movement' occurred only at a select group of houses, founded or re-founded by Æthelwold and Oswald; furthermore, these bishops' monastic cathedrals may not have been as strictly monastic as the reformers' rhetoric would have us believe.

These essay collections invigorated a new scrutiny of the intellectual products of reform.[50] The polemics of Æthelwold in particular received new attention,[51] but, significantly, scholars began to reassess the work of the bishops' prolific pupils. In the work of Ælfric of Eynsham, Byrhtferth of Ramsey, and Wulfstan Cantor of Winchester scholars have identified a second generation of 'reform' around the turn of the eleventh century, a generation as intellectually diverse as that which preceded it. These men, the students of Æthelwold and Oswald, were the beneficiaries of the dynamic intellectual milieus created by the bishops. They inherited a rhetoric of monastic superiority and a rigorous interest in defining the parameters of monastic life. Ælfric, Byrhtferth, and Wulfstan each undertook ambitious literary projects, in which hagiography featured prominently, that variously engaged with the ideas of the first generation of reform.[52] Notably, these distinctive projects returned again and

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[49] Richard Gameson, 'Book production and decoration at Worcester in the tenth and eleventh centuries,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 194-243; Alicia Corrêa, 'The liturgical manuscripts of Oswald's houses,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 285-324.

[50] Most notably, Mechthild Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*; eadem, 'Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 57: a witness to the early stages of the Benedictine reform in England?' *ASE*, 32 (2003); Joyce Hill, *Bede and the Benedictine Reform*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1998); Lucia Kornexl, 'The *RC* and its Old English Gloss.'

[51] Antonia Gransden, 'Traditionalism and Continuity during the last century of Anglo-Saxon Monasticism,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 40.2 (1989); David Johnson, 'The Fall of Lucifer in Genesis A and two Anglo-Latin Royal Charters,' *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 97.4 (1998); Alexander Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester*, pt. 3 of *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 65-97; Julia Barrow, 'The Ideology of the tenth-century 'Benedictine Reform',' in P. Skinner (ed), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009).

[52] See above n. 24-6.

again to two central themes from the first generation: the distinction between the monastic and clerical orders and the politics of language.

In the first generation of reform, Æthelwold strategically deployed anti-clerical rhetoric to justify the need for a sweeping reform of the English Church.[53] The negligence of clerics, he argued, imperilled the English kingdom's spiritual health and their laxity polluted sacred places, monastic houses most notably.[54] Scholars have demonstrated that this rhetoric bears little relationship to reality. A rule for canons was produced by Æthelwold's circle and many of the 'monastic cathedrals' of the later tenth century remained intentionally mixed congregations. Nonetheless, this rhetoric remains important to consider because it reveals an active interest in creating distinct monastic and clerical identities. The three second-generation reformers were finely attuned to this rhetoric and their work belies a strong desire to categorise and define 'monastic' and 'cleric.' Byrhtferth deployed the stock features of anti-clerical rhetoric (negligence and decay) in his *Vita Oswaldi*; however, his *Enchiridion* offers the most revealing window onto his attitude towards to the two orders. The *Enchiridion*, a computus manual, strategically deployed clerical negligence as a foil for monastic superiority. To provide instruction on a challenging subject which was essential to monastic life, as Rebecca Stephenson has shown, Byrhtferth directed the *Enchiridion* at fictional 'ignorant clerics' who functioned as an elaborate excuse for the use of Old English.[55] Byrhtferth's use of

[53] Barrow, 'Ideology,' p. 150-3; Gransden, 'Traditionalism and Continuity,' p. 169.
[54] Compare, for example, Æthelwold's claims in the *EEM* and the New Minster Foundation Charter (S 745): 'He cleansed holy places from all men's foulnesses […]. Assuredly he drove out canons who abounded beyond measure in the aforesaid sins, and he established monks in the foremost places of all his dominion for the glorious services of the Saviour Christ,' *EEM*, p. 150; 'I have driven away the wanton clerks, and I, […], have faithfully appointed thither true worshippers of God, observing the monkish degree [of humility], who might intercede for our sins, and for those of our people lying at rest there, by zealous service, [so that], fortified by their intercessions, the condition of our kingdom might thrive,' New Minster Foundation Charter (S 745), Doc. IV in Rumble, *Property and Piety*, Ch. VIII, p. 82.
[55] Rebecca Stephenson, *The Politics of Language: Byrhtferth, Ælfric and the multilingual identity of the Benedictine Reform* (Toronto, 2015), p. 102.

the vernacular and hermeneutic Latin in the text allowed him to reinforce boundaries between monastic and secular identities 'by creating a discourse accessible only to a monastic elite.'[56] In this text, Byrhtferth revealed a perhaps conflicted view about the vernacular, but nonetheless an unequivocal one of the superiority of monastic men to their clerical counterparts. Wulfstan's interest in defining and categorising the orders of the Church was articulated more subtly in his *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*. His detailed description of the new church at the Old Minster emphasised the clear and exclusive boundaries for sacred spaces. The strict hierarchy of space also delineated a fixed hierarchy of religious orders in which the monastic superseded the clerical. In Wulfstan's *Narratio*, only monks could enter the holiest places within the church, the altar and shrines of the saints.[57] In the writing of both Byrhtferth and Wulfstan, monks were unequivocally purer, holier, and more spiritually authoritative than their clerical counterparts.

In contrast to Byrhtferth and Wulfstan, Ælfric of Eynsham demonstrated a more ambiguous attitude towards the importance of monks over and against clerics.[58] Trained at Winchester during Æthelwold's episcopacy, Ælfric would have been steeped in the anti-clerical rhetoric of Æthelwold's intellectual circle; however, his pastoral letters and homilies reveal that he remained far more concerned with the supreme goods of sexual continence and virginity writ large than he was with promoting a strict hierarchical distinction between monastic and clerical orders.[59] For example, Ælfric famously divided human society into three

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[56] Ibid., pp. 101-2.
[57] For a discussion of Wulfstan's hierarchy of space in the *Narratio* see Christopher Jones, 'Ælfric and the Limits of 'Benedictine Reform',' in H. Magennis and M. Swan (eds), *A Companion to Ælfric* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 99-100.
[58] Of these three second-generation reformers, Ælfric of Eynsham has received the most sustained critical attention, due primarily to the substantial corpus of material that he produced, and which remains extant. Just as Æthelwold's writing has provided a template for 'reform,' Ælfric's sermons, pastoral letters, prescriptive literature, and hagiographies have been interpreted until recently as representative. The recent collection of essays in Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan (eds), *A Companion to Ælfric* (Leiden, 2009) has highlighted his distinctiveness as an author and reformer, providing a useful introduction to the study of his works.
[59] Jones, 'Ælfric and the Limits of 'Benedictine Reform',' pp. 87-90; cf. Cubitt, 'Virginity and Misogyny,' pp. 18-9.

orders: *oratores*, *bellatores*, and *laboratores*.[60] This division grouped both the monastic and clerical orders under one category, 'those who pray.' Given the importance of distinguishing these two in the first generation of reform, it is remarkable that Ælfric grouped them in this way without further discussion. As Christopher Jones has remarked, this may reflect the fact that in practice the two orders were more enmeshed than traditional 'reform' literature would have us believe.[61] Ælfric's prescriptive literature evinces a profound concern with motivating clerics *and* monks to celibacy although he celebrated the specific holiness of monastic virginity in his hagiographical writing.[62] Unlike Byrhtferth and Wulfstan, Ælfric did not use licentious clerics as the foil for monastic purity. He certainly condemned clerics who did not remain celibate but did not use this as justification for monastic superiority. Virginity and sexual continence transformed monks but were not unique to them – Ælfric urged all Christians to practise a chaste way of life and, in this respect, distinguished himself from his contemporaries. This is not to say, however, that Ælfric did not participate in an effort to promote monastic life.[63] As it will be demonstrated, his writing reveals a profound belief in the holiness and transformative power of monastic practice.

Language, Old English and Latin, played a significant role in the formation of a specifically monastic identity during both generations of reform. The rich intellectual tradition that Ælfric, Byrhtferth, and Wulfstan inherited employed both the vernacular and

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[60] Ælfric, *LS* 25, Maccabees, ll. 812-62.
[61] Jones, 'Ælfric and the limits of 'Benedictine Reform',' pp. 85-9; Francesca Tinti, 'Benedictine Reform and Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England,' *EME*, 23 (2015).
[62] Catherine Cubitt has compellingly demonstrated that Ælfric's elevation of virginity was gendered: Ælfric celebrated the triumph of *male* monastic virginity, 'Virginity and Misogyny,' pp. 9 and 15-8.
[63] Ælfric's distinctiveness should not undermine the influence he wielded in prominent circles, both lay and ecclesiastical. His pastoral letters reveal that he was consistently consulted by bishops, Bishop Wulfsige and Archbishops Sigeric and Wulfstan, and he owed his promotion as abbot at Cerne Abbas to the support of Ealdorman Æthelmær, Cubitt, 'Ælfric's Lay Patrons,' in H. Magennis and M. Swan (eds), *A Companion to Ælfric*, pp. 177-9; Pauline Stafford, 'Church and Society in the Age of Ælfric,' in P. Szarmach and B. Huppé (eds), *The Old English Homily and its backgrounds* (Albany, 1978), pp. 22.

an elevated, ornate hermeneutic Latin. A revived interest in hermeneutic Latin began in the court of King Æthelstan, Edgar's paternal uncle, and ultimately shaped the educational programmes at Glastonbury and then Winchester.[64] Æthelwold's Winchester school evinced a particular concern with parsing, defining, and promoting 'official' Latin ecclesiastical and exegetical terminology.[65] Latin, however, was not the exclusive language of this generation of reform; Æthelwold crafted Old English historical writing, translated the *Regula Benedicti* and may even have supported the translation of the *Rule of Chrodegang*.[66] At Ramsey and Winchcombe, Oswald appears to have fostered scriptoria capable of producing high-quality, ornate liturgical books as well as an intellectual culture that avidly consumed and produced challenging Latin texts.[67] The scriptorium at Worcester remains difficult to assess, but it is nonetheless clear that the community inherited a number of high-quality books from previous centuries, which included texts in Old English and Latin.[68]

Trained in these centres, Ælfric, Byrhtferth and Wulfstan developed distinctive vernacular and Latin styles that articulated a specific monastic identity. Rebecca Stephenson has argued that these men strategically deployed both Latin and the vernacular to demonstrate the superiority of monastic life and learning.[69] Their texts often contain intricate grammatical constructions and code-switches that could only have been fully appreciated by an audience equally as steeped in the politics of language, that is a highly learned monastic audience. In his *Enchiridion*, ostensibly directed at a clerical audience, Byrhtferth, Stephenson

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[64] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 332-83.
[65] Ibid., pp. 93-113; Gretsch, 'Ælfric, Language and Winchester,' in H. Magennis and M. Swan (eds), *A Companion to Ælfric*, pp. 123-5; Sarah Foot, *Veiled Women: The Disappearance of Nuns from Anglo-Saxon England*, vol. 1 (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 85-110 and 127-34.
[66] See above n. 18.
[67] Gameson, 'Book production at Worcester,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 204 see also Appendix 11.1, pp. 236-242.
[68] Ibid, p. 230.
[69] Rebecca Stephenson, *The Politics of Language: Byrhtferth, Ælfric and the multilingual identity of the Benedictine Reform* (Toronto, 2015).

argues, affected a form of vernacular writing so Latinised and replete with esoteric vocabulary that the text could not have been fully understood by a non-monastic audience.[70] Stephenson has further demonstrated that Ælfric, whose prolific vernacular writing has led scholars to present him as an accessible, secular-minded author, also developed a vernacular style that articulated a monastic identity specifically appreciable by a monastic audience.[71] Ælfric's monastic audience has often been presumed to be a poorly educated one,[72] however, as Stephenson reveals, this view imposes an arbitrary binary (Latin=learned/monastic; Old English=accessible/lay) that ignores the multilingual environment of most English monasteries, including the most intellectually rigorous. Latin and Old English functioned as integral and essential languages of a distinctively English reform monasticism in the later tenth century.

The reassessments of the careers of Æthelwold, Oswald, and Dunstan and the active interest in the work of their pupils collectively present a picture of 'Benedictine reform' so characterised by diversity that it begs the question: is it still useful to talk about 'reform' in England in this period? Julia Barrow has raised this question in several essays, proposing that scholars ought to use the language of the reformers themselves and frame the developments of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries as processes of cleansing or monasticising.[73] The question of whether 'reform' remains useful to describe English monasticism in the tenth

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[70] Stephenson, *Politics of Language*, pp. 120-31.
[71] Ibid., pp. 180-4.
[72] Taking for example Jonathan Wilcox's examination of the many possible audiences for Ælfric's *LS*, Wilcox remarked 'Monastic reading ought to be in Latin, although it is easy to imagine that the learned language might not be comprehensible to all members of the community and that vernacular reading might be a concession to practical circumstances' and 'it can be established that the *Lives of Saints* probably saw use [...] as edifying public reading, to be recited over meals, to a monastic audience not fully literate in Latin, especially that in a female monastic house,' 'Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* and the Face of Cotton Caligula A.xiv,' in A.N. Doane and K. Wolfe (eds), *Beatus Vir* (Arizona, 2006), pp. 245 and 259.
[73] Barrow, 'Ideology,' p. 154; eadem, 'Ideas and applications of reform,' in T. Noble, J. M. H. Smith and R. Baranowski (eds), *Early Medieval Christianities, c. 600 -1100* (Cambridge, 2008); eadem, 'Developing definitions of reform in the Church in the ninth and tenth centuries,' in R. Balzaretti, J. Barrow and P. Skinner (eds), *Italy and Early Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2018).

century has been prompted largely as a result of the developing consensus regarding the reforms of the Carolingian era. Scholars of this period have challenged the traditional model of a 'Carolingian renaissance' arguing that more appropriate terminology for the ecclesiastical developments in this period include 'emendatio' and 'correctio.'[74] Broadly, scholars agree that there were two phases of this process, the first occurring in the reign of Charlemagne in the late eighth century and the second in the reign of Louis the Pious in the early decades of the ninth. The process of *correctio* was an inclusive one that sought to embed religious communities in royal structures of governance and power, the promotion of ideal principles empowered communities to engage in a continuous process of self-correction. In the reign of Louis the Pious, this process was promoted as a collective endeavour, with *correctio* requiring that all branches of the Church function as an integrated whole. Significantly, the reassessments of the Carolingian reforms have highlighted the fluidity of monastic and clerical practice and have emphasised the diversity of the religious landscape.

The historiographical question of whether 'reform' remains a useful term has received sustained critical attention most recently in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*. The essays regarding the central middle ages in this volume challenge the model of reform monasticism that has traditionally characterised the period. These essays argue that the influence of Fleury, Gorze, and Cluny on Northern European monasticism should not be understood as monolithic reform movements that functioned as inevitable developments in the history of monasticism. Since the late eleventh century, reform has been presented as a necessary consequence of monastic decline and, as the essays in this volume argue, this model for monastic history in the central middle ages still needs dismantling. The

[74] For an introduction to this historiographical shift, see Rutger Kramer, 'Monasticism, Reform and Authority in the Carolingian Era,' in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, (Cambridge, 2020).

reassessment of monastic history that occurs in this volume builds upon recent work whose focus has been decentring the importance of the *Regula Benedicti* as a measure of the integrity of monastic life in a period or region. Significantly, it is now generally accepted that a community's possession of a *regula* does not automatically indicate complete adherence to its precepts.[75] The focus upon the use and circulation of customaries has revealed that the *Regula Benedicti* only achieved pre-eminence as part of the ninth-century project of *correctio* by Louis the Pious and Benedict of Aniane and that, despite their efforts, it was not universally adopted in the Carolingian empire. As the essays in the Cambridge volume emphasise, the ecclesiastical leaders who promoted the correction of monastic practice understood that local traditions, pressures, and secular ties could produce substantially different circumstances and that the *correctio* of one place would unfold differently to another. Consequently, we should view the elevation of the *Regula Benedicti* as the promotion of a set of ideal principles that could be adapted to fit local needs. Against this backdrop, a minority of scholars have argued that the term 'reform' should be dispensed with entirely as it unhelpfully conveys a sense of homogeneity and, crucially, was not consistently, if at all, deployed by 'reformers' themselves.[76]

Where does this leave this investigation into the cult of saints at monastic houses in the late tenth-century England? 'Reform' remains a useful framework to approach the monastic

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[75] The work of Albrecht Diem has been particularly influential in this shift, see especially Diem, 'Inventing the Holy Rule: Some Observations on the History of Monastic Normative Observance in the Early Medieval West,' in H. Dey and E. Fentress (eds), *Western Monasticism ante litteram: The Space of Monastic Observance in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2011); idem, 'The Gender of the Religious: Wo/men and the invention of monasticism,' in J. Bennett and R. Mazzo Karras (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2013); idem, *Das monastische Experiment: die Rolle der Keuschheit bei der Entstehung des westlichen Klosterwesens* (Münster, 2005).

[76] For example, Steven Vanderputten has argued that the term 'reform' should be dispensed with entirely in studies of monasticism in the central middle ages. The recent effort to redefine and interpret 'reform' as a highly diverse, contextualised process highly reliant on the agency of individuals and institutions needs to go one step further, Vanderputten argues: 'as regards methodology and implications, prior to the twelfth century the reform of each individual institution represents a unique case,' 'Monastic Reform from the tenth to the early twelfth century,' in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, pp. 599-617 at p. 615

environment in which cults operated. Its utility, however, rests in a more theological understanding: reform, as a Pauline concept, meaning the effort to bring the individual closer to God.[77] The language of *reformatio* in the Pauline epistles urged Christians to re-form themselves in body and mind so that they might discern the will of God, [78] take for example Paul's injunction in Romans:

> I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be reformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

The efforts of Æthelwold, Ælfric, Oswald, Byrhtferth and the other reformers constituted 'reform' to the extent that each sought to bring the men and women of their flock closer to Christ. It is striking that they considered monasticism as the means to achieve this. It is in this sense that I will employ 'reform monasticism' in this thesis. Encapsulating as it does a rich theological tradition, 'reform monasticism' will be employed as a descriptor for the efforts to elevate monasticism in the late tenth century. At times, following the conventions of current scholarship, I will use the term 'Benedictine Reform' to refer to the historical period from Edgar's reign to the close of Æthelred's.

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[77] This understanding of 'reform' was one of several deployed by medieval authors, Barrow, 'Developing definitions of reform,' pp. 502-4.

[78] The language of renewal and *reformatio* was used in Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23: 'Renovamini autem spiritu mentis vestrae'; Col. 3:10: 'et induentes novum eum, qui renovatour in agnitionem secundum imaginem eius qui creavit illum'; Tit. 3:5: 'non ex operibus iustitiae, quae fecimus nos, sed secundum suam misericordiam salvos nos fecit per lavacrum regenerationis et renovationis Spiritus Sancti'; 2 Cor. 4:16: 'Propter quod non deficimus: sed licet is, qui forist est, noster homo corrumptaur, tamen is, qui intus est, renovatur de die in diem.' My thinking on the meaning of reform in early medieval Christian theology has been shaped by Gerhart Ladner's *The idea of reform: its impact on Christian thought and action in the age of the Fathers* (Cambridge, Ma., 1959), in particular his analysis of the Pauline doctrine of reform and its influence on S. Augustine, pp. 49-62 and 153-282. Ladner traced the history of the Christian 'reform idea' from Classical antecedents to its expression in Eastern and Western Patristic texts, he argued that at its core the concept of *reformatio* linked reform and man's image-likeness to God. The Pauline epistles provided the essential biblical expression of this connection: 'in the Epistles of St. Paul the concept of reform-renovation is seen as a continuation of rebirth in baptism and at the same time as a repetition as it were of the creation of man,' p. 59.

The saints in tenth- and eleventh-century England

This brings us to a particular historiographical question addressed by this thesis: what was the relationship between 'reform' and the cult of saints in tenth-century England? Scholars have approached this question from various angles, the diverse and substantial body of work reflecting the multifaceted functions which the cult of saints served in early medieval English society.[79] As monasteries and minsters were deeply embedded in social, political, and economic networks, it comes as no surprise that the cults they fostered were both influenced by and influencers of the dynamic environment in which monastic communities operated. Alongside the new and revived cults promoted by monastic houses, a rich hagiographical tradition, in both Latin and the vernacular, began to develop.[80] Interestingly, this growing body of work did not take in-house cults as its exclusive, or even central, focus. The proliferation of cults and hagiographical literature in this period reveals a widespread, vigorous interest in the host of Christian saints. The interest in a broad range of saints indicates a sustained engagement with the meaning of sanctity. Many 'reformed' houses and

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[79] Since Peter Brown's seminal article, 'The Holy Man in Late Antiquity' (1971), invigorated the study of the cult of saints in the early middle ages the field has grown exponentially. The study of early English cults was no exception, with David Rollason's *Saints and Relics* sparking interest in the political aspects of saints' cults in the early English kingdoms, see above n. 3-10. As the broader field took a literary turn, building upon and reassessing the important work of Delehaye and the Bollandists whose careful recovery and compilation of Christian hagiography in the ongoing *Acta Sanctorum* had provided Brown and others with essential material for the study of saints, the hagiography that was produced or circulated in early medieval England received new scrutiny. Scholars began to investigate the Latin sources for the substantial corpus of vernacular hagiography, notably this resulted in a dedicated entry in the *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*'s first volume: E. Gordon Whatley, 'Acta Sanctorum,' in F. Biggs and D. Oosterhouse (eds), *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, *Abbo of Fleury, Abbo of St Germain-des-Prés, and Acta Sanctorum* (Kalamazoo, 2001). The bibliography for the Old English hagiography is substantial and wide-ranging, most significant for this project have been the following essay collections: Paul Szarmach (ed), *Holy men and holy women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and their Contexts* (Albany, 1996); Hugh Magennis and Stuart McWilliams (eds), *Saints and Scholars: New Perspectives on Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture in Honour of Hugh Magennis* (Cambridge, 2012); Paul Szarmach (ed), *Writing Women Saints in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto, 2013); Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara and Claudia Di Sciacca (eds), *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England: Adopting and Adapting saints' lives into Old English prose (c. 950-1150)* (Barcelona, 2014).

[80] Gordon Whatley, 'Late Old English Hagiography, c. 950 – 1150,' in G. Philippart (ed), *Hagiographies*, vol. 2 (Turnhout, 1996); Michael Lapidge and Rosalind Love, 'The Latin Hagiography of England and Wales (600-1550),' in G. Philippart (ed), *Hagiographies*, vol.3 (Turnhout, 2001).

reformers made significant contributions to this debate in the form of cults or hagiography, revealing that reform monasticism and the cult of saints were deeply entwined. Broadly, three main trends are identifiable across the investigations into the role of the cult of saints during and after the Benedictine Reform. First, saints served as powerful political tools, allowing bishops, royal factions, or even kings to pass commentary upon contemporary events.[81] Second, the promotion of certain types of saint functioned as an ideological instrument for reform.[82] Finally, the promotion of one cult in particular, that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, served not only to disseminate the ideals of reform but also to coalesce authority, both spiritual and earthly, around the central leaders of reform.[83]

A bishop, king, or noble's support for a particular cult was never a neutral act. Piety was politicised and religious patronage was an integral part of the exercise of authority. In the dynamic, and often fraught, second half of the tenth century, which experienced political stability, economic prosperity as well as regicide and foreign invasion, certain cults provided influential men and women with the opportunity to further their political aims. The cult of King Edward provides a case in point. As Nicole Marafioti has shown, the cultural reckoning provoked by the king's death found its first outlet in the cult of another murdered king, S. Edmund of East Anglia.[84] Edmund's cult provided a language and framework with which to interpret the shocking regicide of 978. Alongside Edmund's cult, those of other murdered royal princes gained new life in the aftermath of Edward's murder: S. Kenelm at Winchcombe and the seventh-century Kentish princes, SS. Æthelred and Æthelberht.[85] Significantly, the

[81] Thacker, 'Saint-making and relic collecting by Oswald and his communities,' in N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald*, pp. 252-6.
[82] Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' pp. 61-3; idem, 'Cults at Canterbury,' pp. 231-5.
[83] Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 61-88, 133-8, 270-1; eadem, 'Centralism and uniformity versus localism and diversity: the Virgin and native saints in the English monastic reform,' *Peritia*, 8 (1994).
[84] Marafioti, *The King's Body*, pp. 161-91.
[85] Thacker, 'Saint-making and relic collecting,' pp. 252-3; cf. Cubitt, 'Sites and sanctity,' pp. 72-9.

renewed interest in these cults occurred in centres supported by leading men of the realm, Archbishop Oswald most notably.[86] The condemnation and intellectual framework provided by the invigorated cults of murdered princes in the last decades of the tenth century had a hugely significant effect: King Edward's remains were translated to the nunnery of Shaftesbury where the king began to be venerated as a martyr.

While King Edward's cult provides an illuminating example of a politicised one, it is certainly not singular. The veneration of royal saints served as an established mechanism by which monastic houses could maintain close ties with wealthy patrons; although this mechanism had its drawbacks, as Barbara Yorke has argued with regard to cults at nunneries, venerating a royal saint could jeopardise a house's source of patronage if a rival royal faction came to power.[87] Conversely, support for a house's important cults could strengthen or legitimise a new ruler's authority. For example, King Æthelred's public penance and support for his half-brother's cult closed the tumultuous transition period between the two kings.[88] Recently, Sarah Foot has shown that King Cnut and King William's promotion of the cults of SS. Edmund and Cuthbert were not only designed to establish continuity between themselves and their predecessors, but also served to promote national unity.[89] The efflorescence of vernacular hagiography which began around the turn of the eleventh century, and which reveals a marked interest in saints who faced violent oppression, reveals that beyond the

[86] Notably, the twelfth-century *Chronicon Rameseiensis* recorded that Ealdorman Æthelwine initiated the translation of Æthelred and Æthelberht from Wakering in 991, the chronicle is printed in W. D. Macray (ed), *Chronicon Abbatiae Rameseiensis a saec. X usque ad an. circiter 1200* (London, 1886), see esp. p. 55.
[87] Yorke, *Nunneries*, pp. 55-7; Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, pp. 234-52.
[88] Marafioti, *The King's Body*, p. 173.
[89] Sarah Foot, 'Kings, Saints and Conquests,' in L. Ashe and E. J. Ward (eds), *Conquests in Eleventh-Century England: 1016, 1066* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp. 143-58.

highest echelons of society, people were turning to the saints to articulate and navigate widespread challenges caused by political instability.[90]

The saints also served as ideological instruments in this dynamic period. Bishop Æthelwold, as Alan Thacker has argued, appears to have been keenly sensitive to this potential. At Abingdon, Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney, he has been credited with promoting the cults of ancient English saints. Thacker has interpreted this promotion as an effort to disseminate a crucial element of Æthelwold's reform ideology: the return to a past a golden age of the English Church.[91] The cults of saints like Æthelthryth, Cyneburh, or Thancred provided the new congregations with a link to that golden age, but also established continuity between ancient and new communities. In addition to using ancient English saints as tools with which to disseminate his ideology, Æthelwold also strategically utilised the 'universal' saints, Benedict and the Virgin Mary. Robert Deshman has revealed how the innovative iconography of S. Benedict produced in Æthelwold's scriptorium at Winchester articulated an astonishing new vision of royal authority.[92] Styled with regal motifs, the figure of S. Benedict powerfully blended royalty and monasticism and, in conjunction with the crowned Christ, provided 'the ideal heavenly Christological and monastic models of the terrestrial monarch.[93] As Deshman and others have noted, the rhetoric of royal authority articulated both visually and literally in Æthelwold's benedictional and *Regularis Concordia* presented a distinctive vision of English rulership, one steeped in the ideals of monasticism.[94]

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[90] Hill, 'The Context of Ælfric's Saints' Lives,' in L. Lazzari, P. Lendinara and C. Di Sciacca, *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 1-28; Cubitt has examined the influence of the political instability in Æthelred's reign on Latin hagiography in 'Reading Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Latin Hagiography in the Context of the Reign of King Æthelred II 'the Unready,' in ibid., pp. 345-64.
[91] Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' pp. 61-3.
[92] Robert Deshman, '*Benedictus Monarcha et Monachus*: Early Medieval Ruler Theology and the Anglo-Saxon Reform,' *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 22 (1988).
[93] Deshman, 'Monarcha et Monachus,' p. 240.
[94] Deshman, 'Monarcha et Monachus,' pp. 208-11; Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin*, pp. 159-65.

The elevation of monasticism as a model for rulership was further supported by the elevation of the Virgin Mary as the patron saint of reform. The reformers placed great emphasis on Mary's position as the Queen of Heaven.[95] This new approach to the Virgin served a political function: it created a language for a distinct sacral queenship which transformed the king's wife into an appropriate royal consort.[96] As an ideological instrument for reform, the Virgin's cult promulgated the supreme good of chastity. Æthelwold's see of Winchester became its centre, producing liturgical material that celebrated Mary's virginity and unique intercessory powers.[97] Mary Clayton argued that the Virgin's cult acted as a centrifugal force, drawing authority towards Winchester and the king. However, following the publication of her study *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (1990), which occurred almost concurrently with that of David Rollason's *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (1989) and Susan Ridyard's *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England* (1988), Clayton revised her argument regarding the centralising power of the Virgin's cult. Rollason and Ridyard's work, she argued, had revealed a splintered landscape dominated by locally important cults, the increased localism by the turn of the eleventh century suggested that the Virgin's cult had not achieved the widespread prominence that the reformers had sought.[98] Clayton suggested that the fervor for Mary's cult waned with the deaths of her most vocal proponents, Æthelwold and Oswald, such that the Virgin's cult was ultimately best understood as a local cult of Winchester.[99] Clayton's reinterpretation of the significance of the

[95] The Benedictional of Æthelwold provides a notable example: as Clayton demonstrated, the representation of a crowned Mary in the scenes of her dormition and later coronation seems to be an innovative composition, based on literary descriptions, purposefully designed to emphasise her exalted position as *regina*, Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin*, pp. 160-5.
[96] Stafford, 'Queens, Nunneries and Reforming Churchmen: Gender, Religious Status and Reform in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century England,' *Past & Present*, 163 (1999), pp. 20-22.
[97] Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, pp. 61-88.
[98] Clayton, 'Centralism and Uniformity,' pp. 98-103.
[99] Ibid., pp. 104-5.

Virgin's cult in the late tenth century highlights the problems of analysis presented by a distinction between 'universal' and 'local' saints and an assumption that local cults do not signal participation in larger programmes.

The distinction between 'universal' and 'local' saints remains a problematic one. As Catherine Cubitt has discussed, there is no easy separation of the two: 'even so widely venerated a saint as Peter acted as the local patron of Rome. The transfer of relics from one church to another transplanted the cult of a saint local to one place to another.'[100] As this thesis will demonstrate, monastic congregations venerated a host of saints and any analysis of the significance of certain saints over others must take into account the whole of which they formed a part. This holistic approach not only allows us to appreciate the significance of particular saints to certain houses, it also provides a more inclusive way of understanding the role that the saints played at both large and small scales. Monastic houses could choose to venerate specific saints, who then might be considered 'local,' but they also chose to venerate the saints of many other places and could thereby participate in far-reaching networks. The saints allowed communities to concurrently express intensely 'local' identities and to participate in large-scale programmes. Consequently, this thesis will explore the relationship between reform monasticism and the cult of saints through the concepts of sanctity articulated by individual houses and the reformers, not limiting itself to the study of separate universal and local cults. As it will be demonstrated, a distinctive rhetoric of sanctity was developed over the course of two generations of reform and many houses integrated this rhetoric into the cults they promoted and the communal identities they constructed.

[100] Cubitt, 'Universal and Local Saints,' p. 423.

Approaching the question: method and organisation

The saints in the liturgy: a methodology

This investigation seeks to answer the question: why was there a proliferation of saint-making and interest in early cults in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries? The answer lies with the primary custodians of cults in this period: monastic houses. The focus on monastic congregations prompts two subsequent questions: how were saints venerated by these congregations? What role did the saints play in the attempts to reform monastic life in this period? The extant evidence for the cult of saints in monastic houses, however, poses some difficulty: with a handful of notable exceptions, few hagiographies for the new or revived cults survive from this period. Rather, the bulk of the evidence for cults lies in liturgical sources, litanies of the saints and calendars most notably. The nature of this evidence necessitates a different approach to the study of saints, one which decentres the hagiography. Since Peter Brown's seminal article in 1971, hagiography has been fixed as the most important evidence for the veneration of saints in the early Middle Ages. In the various critical responses to Brown's arguments concerning the role of saints in late Antique and early medieval society, scholars have developed increasingly sophisticated methods of reading hagiographies, revealing their exemplary functions, social and political commentaries, and their significance to monastic life and communal identities. However, Patrick Geary has sounded a compelling warning against keeping hagiography on its pedestal in the study of the cult of saints.[101] As 'occasional literature,' hagiography has significant insights to reveal; however, as Geary argues, the

[101] Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1994), p. 25: 'Hagiography was always occasional literature. The production of *vitae*, *translationes*, and the like was always precipitated by some specific need external to the life of the saint or the simple continuation of his or her cult, a need external to the intertextuality of the work itself but which would render the text comprehensible [...]. The text stands at a threefold intersection of genre, total textual production, and historical circumstance. Without any of these three it is not fully comprehensible.'

circumstances of its production are critical to understanding the text. In addition to the historical circumstances, whether political, economic, or cultural, I would add that the liturgical circumstances of a saint's veneration are also essential to interpreting a hagiography's significance. A saint's *vita* formed one element of a large body of necessary material for veneration, considering this material as a whole allows a much more illuminating window on religious experience.

The surviving tenth- and eleventh-century English litanies and calendars reveal a rich practice of veneration. This thesis will foreground the contexts in which both were used, an examination of these contexts provides insight into the relationship between congregations and saints that was constructed over the course of sustained, often daily, practices. This approach is indebted to the work of Helen Gittos and Martin Bradford Bedingfield which highlights the significance of liturgical ritual to early medieval communities' spirituality.[102] Gittos has shown the complex relationship to sacred space within churches that certain rituals created, revealing how ritual and architecture were sensitively combined to produce profound spiritual experiences.[103] Bradford-Bedingfield's examination of the dramatic experience of liturgical ritual has highlighted the remarkable connection that ritual could create between celebrant, participants, audience, and Christian doctrine.[104] Foregrounding the liturgical veneration of the saints ultimately foregrounds the interests of the congregations that were committed to this veneration. While the great bishops of Edgar's reign undoubtedly exercised significant influence over the houses they founded or revived, the bulk of the evidence for the cult of saints in this period was produced by monastic houses not their bishops. The evidence

[102] Christopher Jones' 'The book of the liturgy in Anglo-Saxon England,' *Speculum* 73.3 (1998) has also been influential.
[103] Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, architecture, and sacred places in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 2013).
[104] Martin Bradford Bedingfield, *The dramatic liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2002).

demands that the significance of cults to 'reformed' houses be reassessed according to *their* interests.

With the extant litanies and calendars as a starting point, I will examine *how* the saints were venerated in monastic congregations. How were litanies used? What does a feast day in a calendar indicate? Situating these sources in monastic practice reveals that they were integral parts of a large body of material necessary for the ritual veneration of the saints. To venerate the saints, monastic congregations performed special masses, chanted particular prayers both communally and individually, read hagiographies and martyrologies, listened to specific homilies and sermons, and celebrated special rituals. Cumulatively, these practices forged an intimate connection between the saints and their custodians. This thesis will use the broad range of material associated with the veneration of the saints to investigate this connection. Taking this holistic approach to the study of the cult of saints helps to address the challenge presented by the haphazard source survival. Traces of cults can be found in a wide range of material and when these traces are brought together a more complete picture of veneration forms.

Significantly, this approach prompts inclusiveness in another way: the concurrent analysis of both male and female communities. The extant litanies and calendars commemorated the saints of a large group of monasteries *and* nunneries and, perhaps even more importantly, several of the liturgical books which contain these litanies and calendars also contain evidence of use by both male and female readers.[105] The group of nunneries implicated by this evidence corresponds to the 'royal' nunneries of Southern England, a group

[105] For example, Ælfwine's Prayerbook, produced sometime before 1035 at the New Minster, contains prayers which have been altered with feminine forms by a twelfth-century scribe. The most recent editor of Ælfwine's Prayerbook, Beate Günzel, has argued that several of the early eleventh-century prayers included in the book were copied from an exemplar which itself contained feminine forms, Günzel, *Ælfwine's Prayerbook: London, British Library, Cotton Titus D xxvi + xxvii*, Henry Bradshaw Society 108 (London, 1993), p. 4.

traditionally considered to have been on the periphery, if involved at all, in the Benedictine Reform.[106] Building on the work of Pauline Stafford in particular, I will demonstrate that the veneration of saints provides an illuminating window onto these nunneries' active participation in the elite intellectual environment of reform monasticism.

Foregrounding the liturgical veneration of saints also provides a revealing window on congregations' engagement with the ideological programmes put forward by the reformers. The saints functioned as important tools with which to disseminate the ideals of reform and, importantly, as the tools with which monastic houses could capitalise upon those ideals. As will be demonstrated, Æthelwold and his pupil Ælfric of Eynsham constructed an ideology of reform monasticism which elevated monastic men and women to an exceptional status, akin to a living sainthood. Through various media, notably including hagiography, prescriptive literature, and historical writing, these reformers disseminated an ideal of monastic practice that ultimately transformed English monks and nuns into the elect of God. From the perspective of individual houses, this ideology presented an opportunity to assert their significance and autonomy. Through their veneration of certain types of saint individual houses could demonstrate their adherence to an elevated monastic life. By looking for the principles of reform monasticism rather than customaries (either the *Regularis Concordia* or the *Regula Benedicti*), a new, more inclusive, model for the 'Benedictine Reform' presents itself. One in which an important group of monasteries *and* nunneries adopted and promoted the ideals of reform monasticism.

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[106] This group includes Shaftesbury, Nunnaminster, Romsey, Wilton and Barking. Barking is a distinctive member of the group: it was the only nunnery which claimed a continuous history from its foundation in the seventh century and was not a royal foundation, although it enjoyed royal and aristocratic patronage. With the exception of Romsey and Nunnaminster, it is unclear whether these nunneries were Benedictine either before or after the Benedictine Reform, Yorke, *Nunneries*, pp. 85-92; see also the entries for Barking, Romsey, Shaftesbury, Wilton and Nunnaminster in Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 27-33, 149-55, 165-77, 221-31, and 243-52, respectively.

Organisation

Broadly, this thesis is divided between an investigation of norms and an examination of these norms in specific local contexts. The first two chapters investigate the norms of veneration as outlined in prescriptive literature and examine the ways in which reformers used the saints to shape a debate about monastic superiority. The final three chapters situate these norms and the blended language of sanctity and reform monasticism in local contexts through a series of case studies.

Chapter 1 sets out the significance of the liturgical evidence for the cult of saints in the late tenth century. By situating the extant material for the veneration of saints in its practical context, it is possible to sketch the general parameters of the rituals which connected monastic congregations to their saints. The chapter begins with two related questions: how were saints venerated by monastic congregations in the late tenth century? What relationship between saint and community did this veneration construct? The answers to these questions are explored over the course of three thematic sections. The first section investigates the prescriptions for the veneration of saints included in the extant English customaries from the period, including the *Regularis Concordia*, the Old English *Regula Benedicti*, and Ælfric's *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*. These three customaries were composed by the prominent reformers, Bishop Æthelwold and his pupil Ælfric, and serve as important articulations of these men's ideology of reform monasticism. However, in this chapter, their prescriptions for the celebration of the Divine Office are treated as normative. This is in part out of necessity, few customaries from the period survive, and in part because these texts probably did represent the norms for the Divine Office. Even as the *Regula Benedicti* has begun to be decentred and the distinctiveness of individual houses advanced, a cautionary note has been sounded by

scholars of the liturgy.[107] Adoption of the *Regula Benedicti* may no longer provide a useful measure of monastic life throughout the former Carolingian empire and the early medieval English kingdoms, however, many houses in these regions undertook similar liturgical programs in their celebration of the Divine Office. As Jesse Billet has argued, the Divine Office was celebrated in remarkably similar ways across the Latin West and, thus, the prescriptions for venerating the saints in the Divine Office in the 'reform' customaries examined in the first section of Chapter 1 are treated as normative representations. The second and third sections explore the individual and communal experiences that this literature sought to shape. Simply put, if one followed the veneration prescribed, what relationship to the saints resulted? The chapter ends with a consideration of the impact that this understanding of veneration has for our model of the monastic landscape – asking the question, are the saints another measure of confraternity? Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates that the specific saints promoted by individual houses formed a part of a much larger whole, monastic congregations venerated a divine host of saints not simply those saints whose relics they kept. Rather than minimising the significance of particular cults, this perspective underscores the importance of the individual saints promoted by monastic communities. With so many saints to choose from, why did a congregation like Ramsey or Shaftesbury choose St. Oswald or Edward the Martyr?

Chapter 2 examines the intertwined rhetoric of reform monasticism and sanctity constructed by the influential reformers Bishop Æthelwold and his pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, asking: what role did the saints play in the reformers' efforts to promote reform monasticism? Beginning with Bishop Æthelwold's texts, the *Regularis Concordia*, *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, and the New Minster Foundation Charter, this chapter investigates how an

[107] See in particular Jesse Billett, 'Discerning 'Reform',' and idem, *The Divine Office in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 149-96.

exceptional status for monasticism was constructed. In the prescriptive literature directed at monastic men and women Æthelwold emphasised the sacrificial character of the monastic life. Chastity and virginity were conceptualised as a form of martyrdom, the extreme renunciation that a chaste monk or nun adopted serving as a witness to the faith akin to that of the early Christian martyrs. Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, further developed the bishop's ideology in his hagiographical collection, the *Lives of Saints*. Drawing upon both Æthelwold's arguments and the framework for sanctity articulated in Paul the Deacon's ninth-century Homiliary, Ælfric cast monks as the 'new' martyrs of his era. The influence of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary upon Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* has been explored; however, its impact on his collection of *passiones* has not. Sermons for the important days of the liturgical year were essential texts for any monastic congregation and thus provide a useful resource to investigate the theological framework presented to congregations. Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, in various versions, appears to have been the most popular collection of Latin sermons in England in the late tenth and eleventh centuries.[108] The Common of Saints in the Homiliary provided a set of general sermons that could be adapted to suit any saint's feast day, the sermons for martyrs in the Common of Saints, as Chapter 2 reveals, provided Ælfric with a framework for interpreting martyrdom as an *exemplum* for chaste, ascetic living. The ideology of reform monasticism constructed by Æthelwold and Ælfric effectively sanctified monastic *praxis* – transforming monks and nuns not just into especially holy individuals, but into living saints.

The investigation then proceeds to a series of case studies, over the course of three chapters, which explore individual houses' responses to this rhetoric in their veneration of the

[108] Thomas Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints in Early English Homiliaries and Legendaries,' in A. Kleist (ed), *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation* (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 233-4.

saints. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 explore the various ways that a diverse group of new tenth-century congregations created and promoted cults that capitalised upon the ideology of reform monasticism. The houses selected for analysis in these chapters were founded or re-founded in the tenth century or early eleventh century and each promoted a new or revived cult in the later tenth century. Grouped thematically over the course of three chapters, the group of houses includes in Chapter 3, the male houses of Winchester, the Old and New Minsters, Ramsey, and the two Canterbury houses, Christ Church and St. Augustine's;[109] in Chapter 4, the fenland houses of Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St. Edmunds; in Chapter 5, the nunneries at Shaftesbury, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking. Out of necessity, this group represents only a selection of the monastic houses and saint-cults in the tenth century, due in part to the constraints of space and in part to source survival. Nonetheless, the striking success of these houses and their cults, many of which continued to thrive up to the Dissolution, and their outsize importance in the surviving material from the tenth and eleventh centuries deserves explanation. These houses made a substantial contribution to the cult of saints in early medieval England, either by creating new saints or reviving the cult of ancient ones.

Chapter 3 begins the investigation with the cults of the three reformers themselves, asking: to what end were the 'reformers' of the tenth century venerated as saints? How and why did the reformers' foundations deploy the ideology of reform monasticism? To modern scholars, SS. Æthelwold, Oswald, and Dunstan may represent the most important 'new' saints of the tenth century, due primarily to the informative hagiographies composed in the generation after their deaths. However, as several scholars have argued, the cults of these

[109] Neither of the Canterbury houses was founded in the tenth century, the reason for their inclusion in this chapter is two-fold: first, as the primary see in the English Church, Canterbury cannot be ignored, especially as its Archbishop in the period under investigation has been controversially remembered as an important reformer; second, the Canterbury houses contributed new and revived cults to the religious landscape of late tenth- and early-eleventh century England, notably, in the case of Christ Church, around the time that the community became monastic.

men, Æthelwold and Dunstan in particular, do not appear to have achieved the widespread popularity that their hagiographers might have wished. This chapter situates the cults of these men at the Old and New Minsters, Ramsey, and Canterbury houses, respectively. Through an analysis of the liturgical material associated with each house, this chapter reveals that the bishops' cults formed a part of much larger programmes of veneration at each house. The cults of saints like Grimbald and Iudoc at the New Minster and Mildrith at St. Augustine's reveal that these houses, which had been intimately associated with 'reform,' actively sought by various means to represent themselves in continuity either with the attitudes of their bishop or with the principles of reform monasticism. This chapter explores the power that the memory of reform wielded and demonstrates how individual houses could utilise the ideology of reform monasticism to both construct communal histories and support new and ancient cults.

Chapter 4 examines the significance of early English saints to new congregations established in ancient sites. The revival of ancient foundations associated with early cults like Ely and Peterborough has been interpreted as an effort to signal a return to a golden age in the English Church. While Æthelwold may have had this effect in mind, it remains important to ask what significance, if any, it held for the new congregations established in these places. From their perspective, what role did the veneration of ancient saints like Æthelthryth and Cyneburh play? What significance did the ideology of reform monasticism have for these houses? This chapter examines the cults at Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St. Edmunds. The first three were ostensibly founded or re-founded through Æthelwold's aegis and, collectively, made significant contributions to the cult of saints in the region. Roughly sixty years after they were populated with monks, King Cnut supported a new congregation of Benedictine monks at the burial site of a ninth-century martyr, Bury St. Edmunds. Located in

the same region, the new congregation at Bury also faced the challenge of establishing a distinctive identity in a place steeped in history. However, in contrast to Æthelthryth's cult at Ely which had receded into near obscurity, the new monks at Bury were faced with a popular saint, the martyred king Edmund, whose cult operated both within and without 'official' bounds. The bulk of the evidence analysed in this chapter survives in post-Conquest sources and this reveals not only that the ideology of monastic exceptionalism operated beyond the lifetime of the reformers, but also that 'reform' continued to carry an exceptional valency in the English Church across the Conquest.

Chapter 5 investigates the substantial number of new cults created in the tenth century by the royal nunneries of Southern England. The liturgical evidence for saints in this period reveals that the new saints of Shaftesbury, Wilton, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking were avidly venerated by many male 'reformed' houses. This evidence challenges the assumption that the nunneries were peripheral members, if members at all, of the Benedictine Reform and prompts the question: did the ideology of reform monasticism confer agency to female houses and, if so, what did they achieve with it? With the exception of Barking, the nunneries analysed in this chapter were all founded in the early tenth century and as new congregations also faced the pressure of establishing distinctive communal identities while navigating the upheavals brought by succession crises and disrupted patronage networks. Like their male counterparts, these houses for women used cults to meet these challenges. The evidence for these cults survives in post-Conquest hagiography and tenth- and eleventh-century liturgical material, it reveals that this group of nunneries was attuned to the ideology of reform monasticism and proficient at capitalising upon its potential. The communal histories that the nunneries integrated into their cults of founders, members, and leaders reveal that these

houses for women sought to position themselves amongst their male counterparts in a larger scheme of monastic history and exceptionalism.

Why was there a proliferation of saint-making and a renewed interest in ancient cults in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries? The answer to this question lies with the monastic communities responsible for the care of the saints. While not the unique owners of saints' relics, monastic congregations nonetheless presented themselves as uniquely qualified custodians. By the end of the tenth century, an ideology of reform monasticism was in circulation and, crucially, this ideology elevated monastic men and women to an exceptional status. Monks and nuns formed an elect group, their purity and sacrificial mode of life transformed them into members of the divine host. Embodying a style of living sanctity, these men and women served the saints in an exclusive manner. The wave of saint-making and interest in ancient cults in the late tenth century accompanied a swell of new congregations seeking to firmly establish themselves in an increasingly diverse religious landscape. They created new cults as the exceptionally holy men and women of the tenth century died and they revived ancient ones as new communities embedded themselves in a scheme of Christian history and monastic exceptionalism. Over the course of the late tenth and early eleventh century, monastic virtue was profoundly integrated into the language of sanctity. Talking about the saints involved talking about monasticism and vice versa, as Ælfric of Eynsham wrote:

> Those are men and women who live in chastity, and offer themselves entirely to God as a sacrifice, both in soul and in body; they shall have the better dwelling within God's walls and the eternal name in his house with him.[110]

[110] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' ed. and trans. Whitelock, *Councils and Synods*, no. 46, §93-5, pp. 280-1.

Chapter 1
Constructing Divine Communities on Earth: The Saints in Monastic Practice

Introduction

Early in the twelfth century, Orderic Vitalis copied a brief note entitled *De horis peculiaribus* into his compilation of materials relating to S. Æthelwold of Winchester.[1] This note, probably first composed by the bishop's hagiographer Wulfstan of Winchester, recorded that Æthelwold had created supplementary offices, unique to himself and intended for individual observance:

> and with the most modest insistence he urged those subject to him that, with this private observance, they should vigilantly resist the fiery temptations of Satan and, through God's grace, could overcome them by active resistance [...]. The first chant of psalmody is devoted to the praise of the blessed mother of God ever-virgin Mary; the second is to the glory of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul [...]; the third is a petition for the assistance of All Saints, so that, protected by their merciful intercession, we may be found worthy to conquer the manifold trickery of the shape-shifting Antichrist and his associates, and to receive the palm of heavenly reward through Christ's bounty.[2]

Unfortunately, Orderic did not include the offices to the saints as they were 'available in writing in a number of places;'[3] nonetheless, this remains significant not simply as evidence

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[1] Alençon, Bibl. Mun. MS 14, fo. 36r; ptd. *PL* 137, col. 107-8. For discussion of this manuscript witness to the *VÆth* see Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Life of St. Æthelwold*, clxxx-clxxxi. Lapidge argues that the liturgical material appended to Orderic's copy of the *VÆth* in the Alençon manuscript was originally composed by Wulfstan of Winchester, possibly between 971 and 996, see pp. xxiii and lxviii.

[2] *PL* 137, col. 107-8: 'humillima diligentia quosque subiectos ammonens ut hoc secreto famulatu ignites sathane temptamentis uigilanter resisterent [...]. Est enim prima psalmodie cantilena ad laudem beate Dei genitrices semperque uirginis Mariae procurata; secunda autem ad honorem beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli [...]; tercia uero ad suffragia Omnium Sanctorum postulanda, ut eorum pia intercession protecti multiformem uersipellis Antichristi et membrorum eius fallaciam expugnare et Christo remunerante celectium premiorum palmam mereamur accipere.' (translation from Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Life of St. Æthelwold*, p. lxviii n. 115).

[3] Alençon, Bibl. Mun. 14, fo. 36r; ptd. *PL* 127, col. 108: 'hore plerisque in locis habentur adscripte.'

for their existence, but more importantly as evidence for their significance. The offices for the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and All Saints functioned as mechanisms by which monastic men and women actively resisted temptation and achieved the palm of heavenly reward. Venerating the saints was an active – not passive – ritual action. As the *De horis peculiaribus* demonstrates, ritual veneration of the saints was not restricted to festal observance in monastic houses: it formed an essential part of both the Divine Office and individual acts of prayer. Woven into psalmody through litanies and intimately linked to the Eucharist through the deposition of their relics in altars, the saints inhabited monastic space on both a physical and conceptual level. Their omnipresence in monastic *praxis* provided fertile ground for the construction of identity and authority.

This chapter will assess the significance of the ritual veneration of saints to monastic communities during and after the Benedictine Reform of the mid- to late-tenth century. Through an examination of the prescriptive sources for monastic veneration in this period, this chapter will uncover the manner in which *praxis* constructed a *communio sanctorum* within individual houses and across male and female communities. This will be approached first by questioning the role of the saints in the Divine Office, followed by an interrogation of the theological function that this veneration served, and, finally, by asking what *communio sanctorum* resulted as a consequence. The monks and nuns who prayed according to the prescriptions examined in this chapter achieved a special status, as Orderic Vitalis recorded, their private and group observance preserved their faith 'perpetually whole and inviolate' – and this transformed them into members of a divine community.[4]

[4] Ibid., col. 107: 'fides [...] iugiter et inuiolata permaneat.'

I. Venerating the saints in the Divine Office

The saints were conceived as powerful protectors of the communities in which their relics lay and invoking their aid through prayer, pilgrimage, or even in the private possession of their holy remains, formed an integral part of the religious life of countless individuals, both lay and clerical.[5] To monastic communities the veneration and invocation of the saints transformed daily life: through the Office a divine community joined an earthly one. In litanies, chants, prayers, and readings, monks and nuns engaged a host of saints on a daily basis. In this ritual veneration, saints were omnipresent in monastic life and space and consequently performed a crucial role in the construction of communal identity. Before exploring this role, we must first establish the form of the daily ritual encounters with the saints that occurred in male and female monastic houses in the mid- to late-tenth century.

Few customaries survive from the period in question, indeed the often-fragmentary manuscripts from the mid-tenth and eleventh centuries represent the majority of extant witnesses to the *regulae* of pre-Conquest English houses.[6] The customaries considered in this

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[5] Julia M. H. Smith, 'Rulers and Relics c .750- c. 950: Treasure on Earth, Treasure in Heaven,' *Past and Present*, 206 (2010), pp. 74–6. There is a huge bibliography for the use and function of relics in the early middle ages, the following have been particularly useful in orienting my understanding for the use of relics in early medieval England. For a summary of the early history of relic cults see Jean Leclercq, 'Reliques et reliquaires' in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie Chrétienne et de liturgie*, vol. 14 pt. 2 (Paris, 1948), col. 2295-2359. See also Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its rise and function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981), in particular Chapter 5 'Praesentia' and Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead*, pp. 177-93. For a discussion of the political uses of relics in Anglo-Saxon England see Rollason, *Saints and Relics* and for a comparison of the politically strategic use of relics by Baldwin II of Flanders, Edward the Elder of Wessex and Æthelflæd of Mercia in the late ninth and early tenth century see Brigitte Meijns, 'The Policy on Relic Translations of Baldwin II of Flanders (879-918), Edward of Wessex (899-924), and Æthelflæd of Mercia (d. 924): A Key to Anglo-Flemish Relations?' in C. Leyser, D. Rollason and H. Williams (eds), *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century* (Turnhout, 2010). For an overview of the history of the *elevatio* and *translatio* of relics in early medieval England and the importance of relics to the construction of local sacred sites see Thacker, 'The Making of a Local Saint' and 'Loca Sanctorum.'

[6] In his *The Divine Office in Anglo-Saxon England*, Jesse Billett has reassessed the development of the Divine Office in early medieval England, in particular he has argued that although the *Regula Benedicti* was known and studied before the Benedictine Reform of the tenth century, it was only following that reform that the Benedictine Office was adopted in monastic houses, albeit with variations from house to house. The period before the reform was characterised by an eclecticism with regards to monastic practice, a reflection of the multi-faceted function of

chapter were products of the tenth-century Benedictine Reform. The *Regularis Concordia* and Old English *Regula Benedicti* were produced by one leader of that movement, Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester, whereas the *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham* (hereafter *Eynsham Letter*) was crafted a generation later by one of Æthelwold's students, Ælfric. The particular 'reform' character of these customaries will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 2, for the present analysis they will be considered, out of necessity, as normative texts for monastic practice.

Daily invocations of the saints

Extant liturgical books and customaries, which include the *Regularis Concordia*, the Old English *Regula Benedicti*, and Ælfric's *Eynsham Letter*, reveal that the saints were consistently invoked on a daily basis by monks and nuns both as a group and as individuals. The invocations that occurred as part of the communal celebration of several Hours took the form of chanted litanies of the saints. Litanies, in essence prayers of supplication or intercession which included names of saints listed according to a well-defined hierarchy of sanctity (e.g. apostle, confessor, martyr, virgin etc.), have a long history in the liturgy of the Western Church and had been integrated into monastic observance since the sixth century.[7] A copy of

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monastic communities in early English societies, see Foot, *The Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England, c. 600 - 900* (Cambridge, 2006) and Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*.

[7] In Christian liturgy, litanies form a special category of the numerous and varied prayers which range from those spoken as part of personal devotions to those sung as part of the Mass to those which form an essential part of Easter processions. In essence, litanies are prayers of supplication directed to Christ and the saints which ask for intercession and protection on behalf of the individual prayer and the wider Christian community. Various forms of litanies were given by patristic authors, notably John Chrysostom, Augustine, and Cassian. In the fifth century in Gaul, a form of the litany was developed which combined verses from several psalms and beginning in the sixth century Church councils began to make prescriptions for the appropriate performance of litanic prayers, for example the Council of Agde in 506 prescribed that litanies be sung at the end of Lauds and Vespers. Some of the earliest examples of litanies being performed occur in the *passiones* of early Christian martyrs, for example, in the *Apologeticus* Tertullian described how at the point of death the martyrs recited a prayer on behalf

the *Regula Benedicti* produced at Abingdon c. 1000, now Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 57, prescribed the chanting of litanies for the *nocturnis horis* in winter and summer:

> And the three lections are followed by the appropriate responsories and then the remaining six psalms with the 'Alleluia' are to be sung. After the reading of the Apostle there follows the supplication of the litany, recited from the heart and prostrate, that is 'Kyrie eleison,' and in this way the nighttime vigils are ended.[8]

The Abingdon copy of the *Regula Benedicti* also stipulated the singing of litanies at the conclusion of the *matutinorum sollemnitates*:

> Afterwards Lauds follows, in which the reading from one Apostle is to be recited from memory and which is completed by the responsory, hymn, versicle, canticle from the Gospel, and litany.[9]

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of all men with their head straight and uncovered, hands extended. For an introduction to the history of litanies see Fernand Cabrol, 'Litanies,' in F. Cabrol and H. Leclerq (eds), *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie ChrÉtienne et de Liturgie*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1930), col. 1540-46. In the sixth century, the *Kyrie eleison* form of litany, which involved a direct appeal for Christ's intercession and protection, was integrated into the *RSB* and allusions to litanies are also made in the Rule of St. Columba and in the Antiphonary of Bangor, see Cabrol, col. 1545-6. In the *RSB*, the *Kyrie eleison* was defined as a *supplicatio litaniae*, making it clear that the rule was prescribing a prayer rather than a ritual procession (an alternative form of 'litany'). The *Kyrie eleison* litany was to conclude the observance of Vigils and Matins (ch. IX and XI) and formed part of Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline (ch. XVII). For an introduction to the history of the *Kyrie eleison* prayer its development into a litany see Cabrol, 'Kyrie Eleison,' in F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq (eds), *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, vol. 8, pt. 1 (Paris, 1928), col. 909-10. Litanies that included petitions to the saints do not appear in Latin liturgical manuscripts until the eighth century, although they have a long history in the Eastern Church, and Michael Lapidge has hypothesised that Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury played a pivotal role in transmitting and disseminating the litany of the saints in the Western Church, see Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon litanies of the saints* (London, 1991), pp. 13-25. The eighth century *Council of Clofesho* and *Vita S. Gregorii* reveal that from this period at least names of the saints formed a part of the litanies performed in the English Church. The *Vita S. Gregorii*, composed at Whitby probably between 704 and 714, recounted that Gregory's name was included in the litany alongside those of other apostles and martyrs: 'Unde letaniis, [...], sanctum Gregorium nobis in amminiculum vocamus, cum sanctis scilicet apostolis et martyribus,' *Vita S. Gregorii*, ed. B. Colgrave, *The earliest life of Gregory the Great* (Lawrence, KS: 1968), p. 138. The *Council of Clofesho* (747 AD) stipulated that Gregory's name be included in the litany, immediately following that of S. Augustine: 'Itaque ut uterque dies ab ecclesiasticis et monasterialibus feriatus habeatur, nomenque eiudem beati patris et doctoris nostril Augustini, in Laetaniae decantatione, post Sancti Gregorii vocationem semper dicatur,' *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* III (Oxford, 1878), §17, p. 368.

[8] *Abingdon RSB*, ed. J. Chamberlin, *The Rule of St. Benedict: the Abingdon copy* (Toronto, 1982), ch. VIIII p. 33–34: 'Post has uero tres lectiones responsoriis suis sequantur reliqui sex psalmi cum 'Alleluia' canendi. Post hos lectio Apostoli sequitur ex corde recitanda et uersus et supplicatio letaniae, id est 'Kyrie eleison,' et sic finiantur uigiliae nocturnae.' Ch. X advised that in the summer months the number of psalms and readings ought to be reduced; however, the finishing litanies were still required.

[9] *Abingdon RSB*, ch. XII p. 35: 'Post haec sequantur laudes, deinde lectio una Apostoli memoriter recitanda, responsorium, ambrosianum, uersus, Canticum de Aeuangelio, letaniae, et conpletum est.'

At the conclusion of Prime and Terce the 'Kyrie eleison' was to be recited after the reading.[10] At Vespers, after the psalms had been recited and the reading performed, there followed the recitation of the appropriate responsories, versicles, canticles, and litanies.[11] Compline required the singing of three psalms without antiphons and the recitation of the 'Kyrie eleison' before the celebration of the mass:

> And Compline is concluded with three psalms, psalms which are said without antiphons. After the hymn, reading for that hour, and 'Kyrie eleison,' the benedictions and mass are celebrated.[12]

Following the *Regula Benedicti*, [13] the Old English *Rule of St. Benedict* also prescribed that the chanting of the litany, beginning *Kyrie eleison*, should conclude Vigils in winter and summer and Lauds on both feast and ferial days, while Chapter XVII of the rule prescribed that the litany should end the psalmody of each hour.[14] The *Eynsham Letter* departed from these prescriptions slightly, it advised that litanies be chanted at Prime, excluding feast days and Sundays, and in general it stipulated that they were to be sung before mass on ferial days.[15]

Litanies of the saints occur in almost all genres of early medieval English liturgical books, revealing that they were integral to the liturgical observance of the English Church as a

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[10] *Abingdon RSB*, ch. XVII p. 37.
[11] Ibid: 'Post quos psalmos lectio recitanda est; inde responsorium, ambrosianus, uersus, Canticum de Aeuangelo, letaniae, et oratio dominica cum precibus et missa est.'
[12] Ibid.: 'Conpletorium autem trium psalmorum dictione terminetur, qui psalmi directanei sine antiphona dicendi sunt. Post hos hymnus eiusdem horae lectio una et uersus, 'Kyrri eleison,' benedictiones et missae fiunt.'
[13] Mechthild Gretsch has demonstrated that Æthelwold was the author of the Old English *Rule of St Benedict*, see Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 226–60; Gretsch, 'Æthelwold's Translation of the *RSB*.' Gretsch argued that Æthelwold translated the *RSB* at the outset of his career, c. 940s-950s, and used a *textus receptus* recension of the *RSB* for his translation. The Latin copy of the *RSB* produced at Abingdon c. 1000 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 57) amalgamated older and newer traditions of the *RSB* and, according to Gretsch, its production in an intellectual environment fostered by Æthelwold reveals that the bishop 'did not reject outright the older English traditions, in spite of his clear orientation towards continental models,' *Intellectual Foundations*, p. 253.
[14] Old English *RSB* in A. Schröer (ed), *Die angelsächsischen Prosabearbeitungen der Benedictinerregel* (Kassel, 1885), ch. IX-X p. 33–34; ch. XII-XIII p. 36–38; ch. XVII p. 40–41.
[15] Ælfric*, LME*, §2 and §56.

whole. The most frequently encountered form of the litany of the saints involved a number of petitions in the following sequence:[16]

a) *Kyrie eleison* repeated three times, at the second repetition *Kyrie* often replaced by *Christe.*

b) Invocations to the Trinity accompanied by *Miserere nobis.*

c) Invocations to the Virgin, the archangels, the patriarchs, the apostles, the martyrs, the confessors, and the virgins. The petition *Ora pro nobis* accompanied each invocation.

d) Series of supplications (beginning *Propitius esto parce nobis Domine*) which asked for deliverance from various evils and which are accompanied by *Libera nos Domine.*

e) Series of supplications for the Church and its regents and for various estates of men, all accompanied by *Te rogamus audi nos* and ending with *Fili Dei te rogamus audi nos.*

f) Invocations to the *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi* accompanied successively by *parce nobis Domine*, *exaudi nos Domine* and *miserere nobis*.

g) Repetition of *Christe audi nos*, usually three times, followed by the opening petition of *Kyrie eleison*, *Christe eleison*, *Kyrie eleison*.

The extant litanies from the eighth through to the eleventh century vary considerably in length, particularly with regards to the number of saints included.[17] Given that litanies were meant to be sung frequently in monastic observance, it is probable that a selection of saints

[16] Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon litanies*, p. 1. The following list is drawn from Lapidge's assessment of the basic format of Anglo-Saxon litanies of the saints.
[17] For example, the litany in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce MS 296 (a psalter produced probably at Crowland in the second quarter of the eleventh century) included 104 saints. In contrast, the litany in the psalter London, BL, Cotton MS Tiberius C. vi (produced in the mid-eleventh century, possibly at the Old Minster, Winchester) included only 14 saints.

from the long litanies would have been chosen for regular use by monastic communities, this selection reflecting the specific interests of individual houses.

The monks and nuns observing the *Regularis Concordia* would have further engaged as a group with the saints at the conclusion of the daily meeting of Chapter when the martyrology was read.[18] The martyrologies to which these monks and nuns had recourse would have included Bede's *Martyrology*, Usuard's *Martyrology*, or even the *Old English Martyrology*.[19] These historical martyrologies varied in the number of saints included and in the amount of detail provided for each, in the case of Usuard's *Martyrology* it is clear that houses were eager to adapt and add entries that reflected the community's spiritual interests.[20] Significantly, in this communal context, monks and nuns were given the

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[18] *RC*, §26, p. 86-7: 'Hoc expleto facto signo a priore conuenientes ad capitulum ipso praecedente uersa facie ad orientem salutent crucem et ceteris undique fratribus se uultum inclinator humilient. Cuius humiliationis ratio et in moni conuentu custodienda est. Tunc residentibus cunctis legatur martyrlogium.'

[19] Almost from the time of its composition in the eighth century, Bede's *Martyrology* achieved an authoritative status, Felice Lifshitz has suggested that there may have been an orchestrated campaign to disseminate copies of the martyrology 'since by the second decade of the ninth century at the latest the daily reading of the stories of the martyrs (and not just their names) was required by canon law,' see Lifshitz, 'Bede, Martyrology,' in T. Head (ed), *Medieval Hagiography* (London, 2001), p. 174. The Old English Martyrology, compiled in the ninth century from various sources including Bede's *Martyrology*, survives in a tenth or eleventh-century manuscript London, BL, Cotton MS Julius A.x, fos. 44-175, and two Exeter manuscripts from the eleventh century, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41, s. xi^{1}, Exeter and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 196, s. xi^{2}, Exeter. Usuard's martyrology, which used Bede's *Martyrology* as its base text, survives in three English manuscripts, two of which were copied in the late eleventh century at Durham and St. Augustine's (Gneuss nos. 248 and 405, respectively). The martyrology was also copied c. 1000, possibly at Abingdon, into Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 57 (fo. 41r-94v) amongst a collection of texts associated with the ninth-century monastic reform of Louis the Pious and Benedict of Aniane: the *RSB* (fo. 2r-32v), Pseudo-Fulgentius' admonition not to deviate from the *RSB* (fo. 32v), the *Memoriale qualiter* (fo. 33r-37v), *De festivitatibus anni* (37v), *Collectio capitularis* (37v-40v), Smaragdus' *Diadema monachorum* (95r-163v).

[20] Sarah Hamilton's investigation of the use of Usuard's *Martyrology* at Exeter, St. Augustine's, Canterbury and Durham in the late eleventh century reveals the distinctive interests of each house: the regular canons at Exeter, for example, appear to have had a universalising approach to saints' cults whereas the monks of St. Augustine's, Canterbury and Durham incorporated new material that focused on cults related to their prominent in-house saints (i.e. St. Augustine and his companions and Cuthbert and other northern cults, respectively), see 'Understanding the Church's past: Usuard's Martyrology in tenth- and eleventh-century England,' *Medieval Worlds*, 10 (2019), pp. 56-7 and eadem, 'Liturgy as history: the origins of the Exeter martyrology,' *Traditio*, 74 (2019), pp. 194-7. In contrast to this dynamism, the Old English Martyrology's transmission history reflects a static text, as Hamilton demonstrates, while the late eleventh-century canons of Exeter adapted their copy of Usuard and added obits, they left their copies of the Old English Martyrology untouched, see 'Usuard's Martyrology,' p. 55-6. Hamilton suggests that the comparatively static nature of the Old English Martyrology's text is a consequence of its use in private, devotional reading (in contrast to the daily, public recitation of Usuard's *Martyrology* that prompted revision and updating to reflect a community's spirituality), see 'Usuard's Martyrology,' p. 55. A private and devotional context for the Old English Martyrology's reading has been proposed by Christine Rauer, the

opportunity to reflect on the particular sanctity of individual saints normally invoked as a group. We might imagine that this added an important degree of particularity to an otherwise homogenous heavenly body, giving features to the community of saints chanted in the litanies. This community was made even more particular by the knowledge that the monastic house had a particular association with at least one of its members, either through the community's dedication or possession of relics. The *Regularis Concordia* prescribed that after Lauds had been celebrated and two psalms sung for the King, Queen, and benefactors the brothers should 'sing the antiphons of the Cross, and then the antiphons of St Mary and of the saint whose veneration is honoured in that church or, if there be none such, of the one to whom the place is dedicated.'[21]

In addition to these communal observances, the saints could be invoked as part of individual devotion. As the *De horis peculiaribus* indicates, Bishop Æthelwold provided his monks with supplementary offices to SS. Peter and Paul, the Virgin, and All Saints. Extant prayerbooks also contain prayers that would have enabled individuals to seek intercession from the saints. For example, the early eleventh-century prayer book London, BL, Cotton MS Galba A.xiv contains prayers for SS. Æthelwold, Machutus, Ælfgifu, and Edward Martyr amongst others.[22] The manuscript appears to have been produced at a male community, possibly Winchester although it is not easily localisable, and, significantly, many of its prayers

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most recent editor of the text. Rauer has characterised the text as encyclopedic in its scope and suggested that it may also have acted as a reference work for preaching or historical/hagiographical writing, 'Usage of the Old English Martyrology,' in R. Bremmer and C. Dekker (eds), *Foundations of Learning: The Transfer of Encyclopaedic Knowledge in the Early Middle Ages* (Paris, 2007), pp. 125-46. The various uses of these two historical martyrologies underscores the central place which the saints, and martyrs in particular, occupied in monastic spirituality, both at a communal and individual level.

[21] *RC*, §21, p. 84: 'Post hoc sequantur diei Laudes. [...] Quibus finitis cantent antifonam de cruce, inde antiphonam de sancta Maria et de sancto cuius ueneratio in praesenti colitur aecclesia aut, si minus fuerit, de ipsius loci consecratione.'

[22] Bernard James Muir, *A Pre-Conquest English prayer-book: BL MSS Cotton Galba A.xiv and Nero A.ii (ff. 3-13)* (London, 1988): S. Æthelwold (no. 77), S. Machutus (Malo) (nos. 78 and 91), S. Milburg (nos. 100 and 101), S. Edward Martyr (no. 98), and S. Ælfgifu (no. 102).

have been altered to incorporate feminine pronouns, indicating that it was used by a female community at one point.[23] This prayerbook and others like it, for example the private prayer-book of the Winchester priest Ælfwine,[24] reveal that monks and nuns were encouraged to seek intercession and association with the *communio sanctorum* as part of their individual and communal experience. The saints were present at every level in daily monastic practice and this consistent ritual encounter with the divine community was doubly transformative: the saints became embodied agents in monastic space while the earthly community was brought into *conversatio* with an heavenly one.

Major feasts

In addition to the daily ritual encounters, the special rites for major feasts of the liturgical year further integrated the saints into the communal life of the monastic houses following the prescriptions of the *Regularis Concordia, Regula Benedicti*, or *Eynsham Letter*. The chanting of litanies and carrying of relics characterised Easter and Rogation Day processions for many houses. For example, in the *Vita Oswaldi*, Byrhtferth of Ramsey situated one of Oswald's miracles during the annual Rogation Day procession at Ramsey. He recorded that it was the custom for 'the entirety of the congregation [...] to walk barefoot to the church of St Mary, mother of Christ and perpetual Virgin' carrying 'our precious relics.'[25] The physical presence of the saints, through their relics, at these significant events for monastic houses served to further strengthen the union between divine and earthly communities.

[23] Lapidge suggests that the book may have been produced at Winchester and then used by the nuns of Shaftesbury in the later eleventh century, *Anglo-Saxon Litanies*, p. 70.
[24] London, BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvi + xxvii, edited in Günzel, *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*.
[25] Byrhtferth, *VO*, IV. 16.

The dedication of an entire community or simply the dedication of its church to a saint formed the initial step towards creating this union. This ceremony, the rite for which survives in eleven pontificals from the tenth and eleventh centuries, often involved the deposition of relics into the church's main altar.[26] These relics were not necessarily those of the saint to whom the community was dedicated, for example Ramsey was dedicated to S. Benedict, yet the community did not claim possession of the saint's remains. Indeed, in 816 the Council of Chelsea had decreed that:

> When a church is built, let it be consecrated by the bishop of its diocese…let the Eucharist which is consecrated by the bishop through his ministry be placed [by him] with other relics in a reliquary and let it be deposited in that same church. And if he is unable to find any other relics, nevertheless this is able to be done chiefly because it is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. [27]

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[26] Eleven dedication rites survive that were not copied directly from a Continental manuscript, see Table 4 in Helen Gittos, *Liturgy* for a summary of their contents. There was significant variation in dedication rites across Europe in the central middle ages and the rites in the English pontificals are no exception, nonetheless Helen Gittos has shown that 'there was a distinctively Anglo-Saxon rite that was remodelled repeatedly during the later-tenth and eleventh centuries,' *Liturgy*, pp. 220 - 40 at p. 230. The characteristic features of English dedication rites include: three processions around the church at the beginning of the rite during which a litany was chanted, the use of chrism in the holy water, sprinkling the exterior of the church with holy water over the course of three processions (rather than the single procession prescribed in many Continental rites), and marking consecration crosses on the exterior of the church, ibid., p. 230. The deposition of relics as part of this rite appears to have become common, though not essential from the sixth century onwards. In the ninth century, new rites for church dedication were drawn up in the Carolingian empire which broadly fall into two types: those in which the deposition of relics in the altar formed a central feature and those in which the deposition formed only a small part of a much more elaborate ceremony. Both of these types of rites were available to English liturgists in the late tenth century, the *ordines* in the pontificals produced in this period reveal that relic deposition was considered a desirable feature, but not an essential one, and, significantly, that the term 'relic' was an expansive one that could include the relic of saint, the host, or other sacred objects like gospel books or processional crosses. See Gittos, *Liturgy*, pp. 221-8 for a discussion of the influence of the Carolingina rites on English ones, and, Christopher Jones, 'Old English Words for Relics of the Saints,' *Florilegium* 26 (2009) and esp. pp. 96-100 for the flexible, expansive use of the Old English 'reliquias.'

[27] Cannon 2, Council of Chelsea, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* III, p. 580: 'Ubi æcclesias ædificentur, a propriæ diocesi Episcopo sanctificatur…Postea Eucharistia, quæ ab Episcopo per eodem ministerium consecrator, cum aliis reliquiis conditur in capsela, ac servetur in eadem basilica. Et si alii reliquias intimare non potest, tamen hoc maxime proficere potest, quic Corpus et Sanguis est Domini nostri Jesu Christi.' See Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils, c. 650-850* (London, 1995), pp. 191-204 for a discussion of the Council of Chelsea, convened against the backdrop of the tensions between Archbishop Wulfred and King Coenwulf of Mercia. This particular prescription, that the Eucharist could be used in place of a saint's relics, has been variously interpreted. Helen Gittos and Catherine Cubitt have argued that it can be read as a reaction to the controversy of the Second Council of Nicaea which prompted a rebuttal at the council in Aachen in 794, Gittos, *Liturgy*, p. 219 and Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, p. 64. Patrick Geary has interpreted it as a response to a shortage of relics in the ninth century, Geary, *Living with the Dead*, pp. 165-6. Significantly, the provision that the Eucharist could be used in place of saint's relics was repeated in the Dunstan Pontifical. This pontifical was notably flexible in its prescriptions for the use of relics as part of a church dedication, Gittos argues that this flexibility may

The deposition of relics that occurred as part of the dedication forged an intimate connection between the community and the sanctity of their shared space. Two pontificals of the tenth century, known as the Anderson Pontifical (London, BL, Add. MS 57337) and Claudius Pontifical I (London, BL, Cotton MS Claudius A.iii, fo. 39-86), reveal how this rite created the bond between divine and earthly communities. Claudius Pontifical I stipulated that the relics ought to be kept in a special place during the night preceding the ceremony with a member of the community keeping vigil over them (fo. 62r). At the end of the ceremony, the *ordo* prescribed that the bishop should process with the relics to the altar where:

> Having extended the covering between them [i.e. the celebrants] and the people, the bishop [takes] the concealed relics in his hands [and places] them in the tomb of the altar making the sign of the cross across the four corners saying this: 'In nomine patris et filii spiritus sancti pax tibi et cum spiritu tuo.' And then he places the three portions of the body of the Lord within the tomb of the altar as well as three portions of incense and then the relics are revealed in the altar with the signing of the antiphons: 'Exultabunt sancti in Gloria laetabuntur incubilibus suis' et 'Laudate dominum decet.' After the singing of the blessed antiphons, while the holy signs are made on the altar, he says: 'Sub altare domini sedes accepistis intercedite pro nobis per quem meruistis' et 'Beati inmaculati.' And then a holy document is placed under [the altar] while the sacred oil is poured from above, and afterwards the sign of the cross is made over the four corners of the altar and it ends with him saying this prayer: 'Deus qui ex omni coaptione sanctorum aetas num tibi condis habitaculum da aedifcationis tuae incrementa caelestia ut quorum hic reliquias pio amore complectimur eorum semper meritis adiuuemur per.' [28]

'reflect mid tenth-century Anglo-Saxon custom, and/or knowledge of the canons of the 816 Council of Chelsea, or a view particular to Archbishop Dunstan,' *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places*, p. 225.

[28] London, BL, Cotton MS Claudius A.iii, fo 63r-v: 'extenso velo int[er] eos et populu[m] recondant pontifex propria manu ipsas reliquias in c[on]fessione altaris per angulos quattuor in cruce ita dicendo: In nomine patris et filii spiritus sancti pax tibi et cum spiritu tuo. deinde ponat tres portiones corporis d[omi]ni intus in confessione altaris et tres de incense et recludant[ur] reliquie in confessione canentes antiphones: Exultabunt sancti in Gloria laetabuntur incubilibus suis' et 'Laudate dominum decet. s[an]c[t]e antiphona du[m] ponunt[ur] pignora sacra in confessione altaris: Sub altare domini sedes accepistis intercedite pro nobis per quem meruistis' et 'Beati inmaculati.' subponantur etia[m] tabula sacra super qua[m] infundatur oleu[m] sacratu[m] et postea per quattuor angulos altaris ex ipsis crux figuretur finito hoc dicat hanc oration: Deus qui ex omni coaptione sanctorum aetas num tibi condis habitaculum da aedifcationis tuae incrementa caelestia ut quorum hic reliquias pio amore complectimur eorum semper meritis adiuuemur per.' Hermann-Mascard notes that the term *confessio* was first used in the fifth century to designate a monumental structure built on top of a saint's tomb distinct from

The Anderson Pontifical also required that the bishop process with the relics before depositing them in the church's altar:

> And with these things having been done, the bishop takes up the relics and with his attendants he carries them to the new altar, singing these antiphons: 'Exultabunt sancti in gloria letabuntur incubilibus suis' and 'Cantate deus' and 'In celesti regno sanctorum habitation et in eternum requies eorum' and 'Beati inmaculati' and 'Sub altare domini sedes accepistis intercedite pro nobis quem meruistis' and 'Beati in[maculati].'[29]
> This is done after the bishop [brings] the concealed relics of the saints into the church.[30]

The directions for the deposition of relics in these two pontificals appear to have blended two *ordines*, classified as the Roman *ordo* XLII and Gallican *ordo* XLI, that modeled the rites for the deposition of relics on funerary and initiation rites.[31] These elements of the dedicatory rite served to emphasise the sanctification of space that occurred as a result of the relics' presence. Significantly, the sanctity of space needed to be continually maintained by the community. Following the dedication rite in the Sherborne Pontifical, an Old English version of Caesarius of Arles' sixth-century sermon *Natalem temple huius diem* explained that the congregation's

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the altar to the saint. By the time of *ordo* XLII it had come to designate the tomb of the saint, *Les reliques des saints*, 151 n. 50.

[29] London, BL, Add. MS 57337, fo 17v: ipsa expleta suscipiat pontifex ipsas reliq[ui]as aministris et portet eas ad altare novu[m]. cu[m] his antiphon[es]: 'Exultabunt sancti in gloria letabuntur incubilibus suis' [et] 'Cantate deus' [et] 'In celesti regno sanctorum habitation et in eternum requies eorum' [et] 'Beati inmaculati' [et] 'Sub altare domini sedes accepistis intercedite pro nobis quem meruistis' [et] 'Beati in[maculati].'

[30] Written in the margin of London, BL, Add. MS 57337, fo 17v: hic ab ep[iscop]o Reliquie s[an]c[t]or[um] infra eccl[esi]am recondantur.

[31] Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, *Les reliques des saints: formation coutumière d'un droit* (Paris:, 1975), pp. 150–54. The distinction between a Gallican rite (elaborate service in which relic deposition forms small part) and a Roman one (deposition of relics primary part of rite) has been made by scholars. Michel Andrieu was the most influential proponent of this distinction, which has been followed by scholars since. Recently, it has been suggested that this distinction is a misleading one and that the two *ordines*, XLI and XLII, are more helpfully understood as complementary rites, with *ordo* XLII ('Roman') acting as a distinct rite for the deposition of relics which could have been usefully employed at the dedication of a church or in the consecration of a new altar. Gittos has proposed that these *ordines* reflect the need for new rites as the deposition of relics became increasingly desirable from the sixth century onwards. By the ninth century, 'more elaborate ceremonies for consecrating churches were devised, and these rites took place before the deposition of relics into the altar. In some cases, the rites associated with depositing relics were written into the church dedication ceremonies; in others, the two rituals were simply copied side by side in a manuscript,' *Liturgy*, p. 216.

devotion and purity performed an essential and continuous service from the initial dedication onwards.[32] Consequently, for monastic communities, performing the Divine Office in the church where the relics of the saints lay represented more than a simple demonstration of communal devotion; it made them active participants in transforming an earthly physical space into one able to receive a divine presence.

In their instructions for several major feast days, the *Regularis Concordia* and *Eynsham Letter* reveal that monastic communities could develop particular relationships with the saints to whom they were dedicated, and to this we might also add the saints whose relics lay in their altars. On the feast of the Purification, the *Regularis Concordia* prescribed that a brother should recite an antiphon and collect in honour of the saint to whom the church was dedicated whereas on the feast of All Saints the monks were required to go to Matins 'singing an antiphon to honour the saint to whom the porticus, which they are walking under, was dedicated.'[33] The *Regularis Concordia* instructed that the antiphons for the saint to whom the church was dedicated be recited as part of the Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday processions before the appropriate canticle.[34] The *Eynsham Letter* simply instructed that litanies of the saints should be chanted as part of these processions and the celebration of Pentecost.[35]

The liturgical year for monks and nuns was structured in such a way as to replicate, enact even, a Christian history of salvation. As the customaries and pontificals reveal, the

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[32] The Old English version of Caesarius' homily also occurs in two other near-contemporary English pontificals, Rouen, Bibliothèque municipal, 368 (A.27) and 369 (Y.27), and its Latin version occurs in two English homiliaries, Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.III.29, fo. 299 and Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 24, fo. 303. In the Sherborne Pontifical, the Old English sermon is followed by a homily, both are printed in Rudolf Brotanek, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur altenglischen Literatur und Kirchengeschichte* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1913), 1–15 and 15–27. For a discussion of the Rouen pontificals see Niels Krogh Rasmussen, *Les pontificaux du haut moyen age: gènese du livre de l'évêque* (Leuven, 1998), 258–317.

[33] On the feast of the Purification of Mary, *RC*, §54 p. 101: 'Et intrantes aecclesiam agant orationem cum antiphona et collecta ad uenerationem ipsius sancti cui ecclesia ipsa ad quam itur dedicate est.' For the feast of All Saints, *RC*, §21 p. 84: 'Post quas eundum est ad Matutinales Laudes de Omnibus Sanctis, decantando antiphonam ad uenerationem sancti, cui porticus ad quam itur dedicata est.'

[34] *RC*, §57 p. 103-4 (Ash Wednesday) and §60, p. 106 (Palm Sunday).

[35] Ælfric, *LME*, §2, §29, and §34.

saints were present throughout the liturgical re-enactment of Christian history from its very origins and intimately bound a monastic community to its most sacred spaces.

Saint's feast day observance

Extant liturgical calendars from the tenth and early eleventh centuries reveal that in addition to the major feast days celebrating the life of Christ, the celebration of saints' feast days formed a substantial part of a monastic community's liturgical life. The calendars also indicate that the number of feasts celebrated often varied from community to community, there was a substantial group of saints universally venerated to which monastic houses might add their own in-house saint or any other saints to whom the community felt particularly attached. The *Eynsham Letter* provides insight into the practice required on a saint's feast day, Ælfric prescribed that during the Night Office:

> on all feasts of the saints, throughout the entire year, we read lives or passions of the saints themselves, or sermons appropriate to the given solemnity, and [we sing] proper responsories, if these are to be had; if not, we sing other appropriate ones and adopt for the third position [readings] from a homily on the gospel, as we do always and everywhere.[36]

Whether ordered precisely as Ælfric outlined in his letter to the monks of Eynsham, special readings appear to have been standard for the celebration of a saint's feast day. For example, many feasts in the tenth-century calendar in Paris, BNF, lat. 7299, fos. 3-12 are graded with the letters D, G, I, M, N, or T to indicate the number of lections to be read, or, possibly, the

[36] Ælfric, *LME*, §73.

gradation of the feast's importance.[37] The monastic community at Bury St Edmunds in the late eleventh century marked up their copy of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary with lection numbers, revealing that the practice of special readings on a saint's feast day remained a significant element of the veneration of saints in monastic houses well beyond the Benedictine reform of the tenth century.[38]

The large number of saints in the extant liturgical calendars suggests that a substantial amount of material would have been required to supply these special readings. Large collections of either hagiographies or sermons would therefore have been useful, essential even, for monastic houses. This necessity perhaps underlies Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, an influential hagiographical collection containing twenty-nine vernacular *lives* which was compiled in the 990s. Even though the *Lives of Saints* did not provide material for an exhaustive number of feasts, Ælfric claimed that he had only included translations of Latin *vitae* for those saints whose feasts 'monks venerate in their offices.'[39] In compiling this collection, Ælfric had recourse to another large compendium of *vitae*: as Patrick Zettel has shown, a version of the Cotton-Corpus Legendary supplied Ælfric with source texts for many, if not all, of the Continental saints in the *Lives of Saints*.[40] Large collections such as these would

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[37] Rebecca Rushforth, *An Atlas of Saints in Anglo-Saxon Calendars* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 19. See also Gneuss no. 888. The liturgical calendar in this manuscript was compiled at Ramsey in the late tenth century, both the calendar and computus materials were then taken to Fleury where further computistical material was added.

[38] Bury's copy of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary: Cambridge, Pembroke College MSS 23 and 24. This copy was written in Northern France and acquired by Bury before the end of the eleventh century. The lection number markings occur in the margins alongside the text, divided into two columns.

[39] Ælfric, *LS*, 'Praefatio,' p. 4: '[...] et placuit nobis in isto codicello ordinare passiones etiam vel vitas sanctorum illorum quos non vulgus sed coenobite officiis venerantur.'

[40] Patrick Zettel, 'Ælfric's Hagiographic Sources and the Latin Legendary Preserved in BL MS Cotton Nero E I + CCCC MS 9 and other manuscripts' (DPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 1980), esp. at p. 41, 79-82, and 97-8. A Continental exemplar provided the main sources for the Legendary which accrued even more saints as it was compiled. Amongst the localisable saints in the Legendary, there is a pronounced emphasis on saints from northern France or Flanders and Jackson and Lapidge have concluded that the exemplar for the Cotton-Corpus Legendary must have come from a compilation produced in this region in the late ninth or early tenth century, Peter Jackson and Michael Lapidge, 'The Contents of the Cotton-Corpus Legendary,' in P. Szarmach (ed), *Holy Men and Holy Women*, pp. 133-4. For a summary of the accretions to the Legendary in the twelfth century, see 'The Contents of the Cotton-Corpus Legendary,' pp. 131-2.

have served the needs of monastic houses seeking to venerate the saints according to the *Eynsham Letter*'s prescription. In addition to hagiographical collections, these houses would also have required collections of sermons or homilies. Indeed, a collection of sermons might even have been more useful to a monastic community: a general set of sermons could be adapted for use on any saint's feast day whereas a hagiography uniquely provided for a single saint. The sermons for saints available in England in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries were primarily those contained in the collection compiled by Paul the Deacon at the end of the eighth century.[41] Paul the Deacon's Homiliary provided sermons and homilies for all the major feast days of the *temporale* as well as a limited set for *sanctorale* feasts. Significantly, the Homiliary also contained a section called the Common of Saints, this section included a set of general sermons organised according to the order of saint (i.e. confessors, martyr, virgin etc.) that could be adapted for use on a particular saint's feast day.[42]

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[41] Thomas Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints;' Hall, 'The Development of the Common of Saints in the Early English Versions of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary,' in T. Hall and D. Scragg (eds), *Anglo-Saxon Books and their Readers* (Kalamazoo, 2017), pp. 31-65. Réginald Grégoire produced the now-standard edition of the contents of the original Homiliary by Paul the Deacon in his *Homéliaires liturgiques médiévaux* (Spoleto, 1980), pp. 427-78. Grégoire's list of the Homiliary's contents has recently been reassessed by Zachary Guiliano. In a study of the eighty manuscript witnesses from the ninth and tenth centuries, many of which were not consulted by Grégoire, Guiliano proposed a revised contents list of the original Homiliary, Zachary Guiliano, 'The Composition, Dissemination, and Use of the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon in Carolingian Europe from the Late Eighth to Mid-Tenth Century' (PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2016). Significantly, Guiliano's revisions did not alter Grégoire's order of material for the Homiliary's Common of Saints. Consequently, Grégoire's contents list for this section of the Homiliary is used in this thesis, references to Grégoire's list will include the part and number given in *Homéliaires liturgiques médiévaux*, pp. 472-8. Two seminal studies which have influenced the scholarship on Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, with particular regard to its use in preaching, are Rosamund McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789-895* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 80-4 and 97-102 and Milton Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto, 1977). Paul the Deacon's Homiliary was not the only Carolingian homiliary known in Anglo-Saxon England, Mary Clayton has argued that the Old English homilies in the Blickling Homilies and the Vercelli Book were influenced by other Carolingian homiletic collections, most notably those compiled by St Père de Chartres and Hrabanus Maurus, Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching in Anglo-Saxon England,' *Peritia*, 4 (1983), pp. 207-42.

[42] In some later eleventh-century Paul the Deacon manuscripts, these general sermons have been adapted specifically for certain Anglo-Saxon saints. For example, in the late eleventh-century homiliary, Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A. III. 29, the general sermon for a virgin in Paul the Deacon's collection, a sermon by Augustine on the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins (Grégoire no. II.121), has been adapted for the feast of S. Æthelthryth. Several other sermons for Anglo-Saxon saints are adapted versions of general sermons from Paul the Deacon's collection in this manuscript, Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints,' pp. 239-41.

These large collections of hagiographies and sermons for saints highlight the importance of a host of saints to a single monastic house. In the study of the cult of saints, great emphasis has been placed on the importance of local saints to the communities in which their relics rested. Certainly, a local saint functioned as a powerful actor in communal life, however, in the case of monastic congregations, local or in-house saints must be contextualised as significant parts of a much larger whole. As embodied agents in monastic life, these saints may also be viewed as access points for monks and nuns into the *communio sanctorum*. The Divine Office joined earthly and heavenly communities and a house's saint might be understood as that community's bridge into the divine group. A miracle account from Lantfred's *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni* offers a (slightly comical) example. Before the translation of Swithun's remains into the church, a hunchback was miraculously cured at his gravesite; however, the monks of the Old Minster were uncertain to whom to attribute this miracle:

> since on this same day the ordination of St. Martin and the translation of his most sacred body was celebrated by the monks of the Old Minster, the monks living there were in some perplexity about which saint it was through whose merit the sick man had deserved to receive his cure.[43]

The monks' confusion underscores Swithun's sanctity; it was he rather than the famous St. Martin who cured the sick man, yet it also highlights the fact that the monks of Old Minster expected the divine community that they venerated to act as embodied agents in their house. The discovery of Swithun's relics provided the Old Minster monks with their own particular

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[43] Lantfred, *Translatio et miracula de S. Swithuni*, ed. and trans. Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester: Part 2, The Cult of St. Swithun* (Oxford, 2002), p. 273. Lantfred's *Translatio et miracula* was commissioned by the monks of Old Minster c. 972-974x5 and, according to Lapidge, 'is clearly written with this local and restricted audience in mind,' Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, 67. The *Translatio* recorded the posthumous miracles of S. Swithun, both before and after he was translated into the Old Minster church by Bishop Æthelwold on 20 October, 980. Two Winchester manuscripts containing this text survive from the tenth/eleventh century: Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, U. 107 (1385), fo. 29r-80v and London, BL, Royal MS 15.C.VII, fo. 2r-49v.

member of that community, he was their part of a divine whole. This understanding of the saint's significance to the Old Minster is reflected in another text concerning Swithun's translation: Wulfstan of Winchester's *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*.[44] In the prefatory *epistola* to his verse rendering of Lantfred's *Translatio*, Wulfstan described the two dedication ceremonies for the Old Minster that occurred in the late tenth century, the first during the episcopate of Bishop Æthelwold on October 20th, 980 and the second around the year 993x994.[45] After describing in hyperbolic terms the joyfulness and lavishness of the ceremonies, Wulfstan directly addressed the saints to whom the Old Minster was dedicated, Peter and Paul. He asked them to act as special patrons of the place and to be the particular intercessors for worshippers in the Old Minster church.[46] Wulfstan had been careful to note the saints who rested at the Old Minster (SS. Birinus, Swithun, Beornstan, Ælfheah, and Æthelwold) and the cumulative effect of this recitation and plea to the two apostolic saints places emphasis on the divine *community* of local and universal saints accessible at the Old Minster.

Situating an in-house saint in a larger whole need not diminish the particular significance of the saint to his or her community, rather it lends even greater significance to the saint. It is thus not surprising that special celebrations were held for local saints' feast days. For example, writing c. 1000, Byrhtferth of Ramsey recorded in the *Vita S. Ecgwini* that the monks of Evesham customarily celebrated the saint's feast day with 'suitable praises' and, after Mass, 'thankfully refresh[ed] themselves with food and [...] a pleasant draught.'[47] The

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[44] Wulfstan of Winchester, *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, ed. and trans. Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Winchester*, pp. 379-93.
[45] For a discussion of the political circumstances and implications of the dedication ceremony as evidence for reconciliation and compromise see D. J. Sheerin, 'The Dedication of the Old Minster, Winchester, in 980,' *RB*, 88 (1978).
[46] Wulfstan*, Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, p. 393.
[47] Byrhtferth, *Vita Ecgwini*, IV.9.

New Minster monks possessed the relics of the Breton saint Malo or Machutus, the house kept a copy of the saint's *vita* and produced a special homily for the saint.[48] These indications of the community's particular attachment to Malo suggest that the New Minster monks also developed special traditions for the saint's feast day. These two examples remind us that the 'localness' of a saint was a flexible concept, but more significantly they demonstrate that the *communio sanctorum* was a diverse body. Whether celebrating a 'local' saint's feast day or that of a 'universal' saint, monks and nuns venerated a distinct part of a divine whole.

II. The theological function of the saints in monastic practice

The integration of the saints into the Divine Office and the liturgy of the major feasts of the year unified divine and earthly communities in monastic spaces. Veneration of the saints was productive, not passive, and thus the theological function of the saints in monastic practice deserves further examination. As agents in monastic life and space, the saints provided monks and nuns with both a tangible and figurative link to the biblical events continually unfolding and renewing as the liturgical year progressed. Litanies were woven into psalmody, relics occupied the same sacred space as the Eucharist, and the bodily and spiritual purity of monastic men and women made individuals as well as communities fit company for the saints – venerating, contemplating, and imitating the saints transformed monastic men and women

[48] In the late tenth century, the monks compiled a *libellus* that included a copy of the early *vita* of the saint written in the ninth century by the deacon Bili and their own original homily on Malo. This *libellus* survives as London, BL, Royal MS 13.A.X. The sources for the homily include Alcuin's sermon on S. Vedast, the Gospel of John, Caesarius' *Sermone 223*, and the Pseudo-Augustinian *Serm. 209* as well as verses and responsories drawn from the *Comm. Unius Martyris*, François Dolbeau, 'Les sources d'un sermon en l'honneur de Saint Malo,' *Analecta Bollandiana*, 101 (1983), pp. 417–19, esp. 418; David Yearns and Robert Brown, 'A Sermon on the Birthday of St. Machutus,' *Analecta Bollandiana*, 99 (1981), pp. 160–64. Notably, the earliest extant manuscript witness to the *Comm. Unius Martyris* from which the sermon drew verses and responsories belonged to Charles the Bald, BNF, lat. 17436, s. ix^{2}. See no. 7010 in R.-J. Hesbert (ed), *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, vol. 4 (Rome, 1970).

into 'holy servants and holy handmaidens.'[49] Taking each of these aspects of monastic practice in turn, this section will explore the powerful theological function performed by the saints in monastic communities.

Litanies and psalmody

The psalms provided a fundamental structure for monastic life, sung as they were in every hour of the day. The integration of litanies into the order of Prime, Terce, Compline, Vespers, Lauds, and Matins incorporated the saints into the structuring principle of monastic life at a profound level: litanies acted in conjunction with the psalms to purify and order the community. The significance of the joint action of the two must be underscored as it reveals an important theological function of the saints in monastic practice: through singing the psalms a monastic community could achieve unity with the divine community of angels, while singing litanies achieved a union with a distinct part of the heavenly host, the saints. The cumulative effect totally integrated the earthly community into the unfolding of Christian salvation past, present, and future.

The psalms have structured monastic practice since its very origins and the rich tradition of commenting upon and glossing the psalms in psalters produced or used in the British Isles from the eighth century onwards reveals their permanently central place in monastic practice.[50] The most significant commentaries for the reformed monastic

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[49] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' §34: 'halige þena $_7$ halige þinena.'
[50] There is a substantial bibliography that treats the importance of the psalms to monastic practice, for an introduction see Cabrol, 'Psalmodie Antiphonale,' *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1924) vol. 1 pt. 2, col. 2297-2319; 'Psalmdoie Responsoriale,' in H. Marrou (ed), *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, vol. 14 pt. 2, col. 1945-1948; 'Psautier,' ibid., col. 1950-1967. For an introduction to the importance of the psalms to education and learning in the early English kingdoms see George Brown, 'The psalms as the foundation of Anglo-Saxon Learning' in N. Van Deusen (ed), *The Place of the psalms in the intellectual culture of the Middle Ages* (Albany, 1999), pp. 1-24. The use and development of psalters in early medieval England has been recently

communities of the tenth and eleventh centuries appear to have been Augustine's *Ennarationes in Psalmos* and Cassiodorus' *Expositio Psalmorum*.[51] Cassiodorus' commentary, directed particularly at monastic communities, explained that the psalms unified biblical history and Christian salvation: as the words of David they prophesied Christ and as vessels of truth they revealed the Trinity.[52] Significantly, Cassiodorus' commentary framed the psalms as prophecies that joined past, present, and future:

> By saying which, we evidently recognise that through the Holy Spirit the psalms were prophecies. Truly, it must be known that every prophecy that is said or done in any way concerns past, present, and future time. [53]

Framing the psalms in this way situated the monastic communities that sang these prophecies in a continually unfolding history of Christian salvation. The effect of occupying this place was felt at both the communal and individual level. This can be seen in the preface to the psalms in a psalter from Christ Church, Canterbury, produced in the first quarter of the eleventh century:

> The song of the psalms adorns the souls and invites angels into hearing. [...] The constant praise of the Lord, the singing of psalms and the song of the elect at the house of the Lord, is like honey. It drives off sin from all and binds with the chain of charity and penetrates all, suffuses all, fulfills all, teaches all,

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reassessed by M.J. Toswell in *The Anglo-Saxon Psalter* (Brepols, 2014), for an analysis of the monastic use of psalters see Billett, *The Divine Office.* The influence on and place of the psalms in English vernacular literature has recently been comprehensively explored in the collection Tamara Atkin and Francis Leneghan (eds), *The Psalms and Medieval English Literature: From the Conversion to the Reformation* (Cambridge, 2017).

[51] Augustine's *Ennarationes in Psalmos* survives in fourteen manuscripts used or produced in the British Isles from the mid-eighth century through to the turn of the twelfth (Gnuess nos. 170, 171, 188.8e, 212.5f, 231, 232, 281.3e, 457.4, 619, 620, 692e, 792f, 937.5f, 944.5e). Cassiodorus' *Expositio Psalmorum* survives in six manuscripts, also ranging from the eighth to the late eleventh century (Gneuss nos. 77e, 154f, 212.4.2f, 237, 381e, 822f). The commentaries of Jerome and Ambrose have survived in much fewer manuscripts, three (Gneuss nos. 136, 455, 9433.6f) and two (Gnuess nos. 175.1f, 653.2e) respectively.

[52] Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, CC 97, Praef. l. 69-75: 'Cantus, qui aures oblectat et animas instruit, fit vox una psallentium, et cum angelis dei, quos audire non possumus, laudum uerba miscemus, per illum scilicet qui uenit ex semine Dauid, dominum Christum, sicut in apocalypse dicit: ego sum radix et origo Dauid. A quo et religionem salutarem suscepimus et sanctae trinitatis mysteria reuelata cognoscimus. Unde merito eis patris et filii et spiritus sancti una gloria sociatur, ut perfecta eorum praeconia comprobentur.'

[53] Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, CC 97, Praef. Cap. 1 l. 24-25: 'Quo dicto recognoscimus euidenter per spiritum sanctum psalmos fuisse prophetatos. Sciendum est sane quod omnis prophetia aut de praeterito aut de praesenti aut de future tempore loquatur aut agat aliquid.'

> sanctifies all, extols all. [...] It gives peace between the body and soul and sets a spiritual fire in the heart [...].[54]

This preface is a version of the 'Laus Psalterii' falsely attributed to S. Augustine of Hippo. A version of the 'Laus Psalterii' appears in the form of two prayers in another earlier English psalter, the tenth-century London, BL, Harley 2904.[55] The way in which this preface positions the psalter's significance is in line with Cassiodorus' commentary, itself consciously indebted to Augustine's *Ennarationes in Psalmos*.[56] In the mid-eleventh century the Christ Church community added the *Expositio Psalmorum* to a ninth-century psalter from Rheims. The house's active interest in this exposition of the psalms was not unique: by the early eleventh century, several other reformed Benedictine houses also possessed copies, including Ramsey and St. Augustine's, Canterbury.[57] Given the importance of the psalms to monastic practice, the presence of litanies in early medieval English psalters deserves further examination.

The divine community invoked in litanies was distinct from the community of angels made present through the singing of the psalms. Litanies included holy men and women who had lived after Christ and, in the case of some litanies, even men and women who had inhabited the very spaces where their names were being chanted. Thus, the *communio sanctorum* was distinct from the *communio angelorum* by the fact that its members occupied a

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[54] London, BL, Arundel MS 155, fo. 11r: 'Canticum Psalmorum [...] animas decorat inuitat angelos in adiutorium [...] Laus dei similis enim melli assidue canticum psalmorii canticum electrum est apud dominum. Omne peccatum ex pellit uinculum caritatis enectit omnia penetrat omnia suffert omnia implet omnia docet omnia sanctificat omnia magnificat. [...] Dat pacem inter corpus et animam facit ignem spiritalem in corde succendere.'

[55] In London, BL, Harley MS 2904, fo. 1v, the Laus Psalterii is not given this title, rather the text begins with the rubric: 'Dicta S[anc]ti Augustine Quod.'

[56] In the preface to the *Expositio*, Cassiodorus stated his indebtedness to Augustine's *Ennarationes* and that he sought to refine its teachings, amongst others, into a more accessible commentary for monks, CC 97, Praef. L. 10 – 32.

[57] Ramsey possessed an early manuscript copy of the *Expositio Psalmorum*: Cambridge, St John's College, MS Aa.5.1, s. viii[1] (Gneuss no. 154). Excerpts from the *Expositio Psalmorum* prefaced one of the psalters kept by the community at St. Augustine's, a psalter in active use demonstrated by the additions made to it in the eleventh century: London, BL, Cotton Vespasian A.i, s.viii[2/4] (Gneuss no. 381). The community at Durham also possessed an early manuscript copy of the breviate version of the *Expositio*: Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B.II.30, s. viii[2/4] (Gneuss no. 237).

different position within the history of Christian salvation – this community fulfilled in many ways the past, present, and future prophesied by the psalms. As it has been seen, this group provided a tangible link between monastic men and women and a divine host, and again it needs to be stressed that litanies were not neutral lists of names. The presence of litanies in the majority of the surviving psalters from the eighth through to late eleventh century reflects the fundamental importance of litanies as discrete prayers that operated in conjunction with the psalms. Two psalters, in particular, provide a window onto the interweaving of the divine groups: London, BL, Add. MS 37517 and London, BL, Harley MS 2904.

The Bosworth Psalter, London, BL, Add. MS 37517, is the earliest extant English example of a psalter decorated with divisions appropriate to the Benedictine *cursus*.[58] Clearly produced for a monastic community observing the Benedictine Office, the psalter's precise provenance has remained difficult to determine, though the general consensus considers Canterbury as the most probable place of origin. The debate, begun by Edmund Bishop's discovery and publication of the psalter in 1908, has centred upon the provenance of the psalter's calendar, added to the manuscript c. 1000, and its implications for the manuscript's production at either Christ Church or St Augustine's in the late tenth century.[59] In 1973, P.M. Korhammer presented a compelling case for the psalter's production at either Christ Church or Westminster, resting his argument upon the resemblance between the psalter's script and that of two eleventh-century charters in addition to the calendar's epithet for St. Augustine, one never used in calendars for St Augustine's, Canterbury.[60] David Dumville adopted the Christ Church position and used this provenance to support his reassessment of the closely

[58] Billett, *The Divine Office*, pp. 192-3.
[59] In *The Bosworth Psalter* (London, 1908), Bishop suggested Christ Church, Canterbury as the psalter's place of production. This view was challenged by Francis Wormald in 1934 who proposed St Augustine's in his *English Kalendars before AD 1100*.
[60] P. M. Korhammer, 'The origin of the Bosworth Psalter,' *ASE* 2 (1973), pp. 182-7 and 178.

related calendar in the Leofric Missal.[61] Nicholas Orchard, however, has argued that the psalter's monastic character and its calendar's distinctive appellations for SS. Peter and Paul make St. Augustine's the most probable place of origin.[62] These houses' cults of saints and relationship to the reform monasticism of the tenth century will be explored in Chapter 3, for the present discussion it is significant that whether produced at Christ Church or St Augustine's the Bosworth Psalter reflects monastic use and an active interest in interweaving the psalms with invocations to the saints.

The calendar on fo. 2r-3r was not the only addition made to the Bosworth Psalter around the turn of the eleventh century. These other additions included a litany and series of prayers on fo. 135v-138v, inserted after the monastic canticles. The brief litany on fo. 136r lists only a series of apostles and early Christian martyrs after the standard invocations to Christ and the Virgin Mary. Not distinguished on the page by a rubricated title and wedged between prayers, the litany was literally woven into its surrounding text. Notably, in another prayer, on fo. 137r, a litany of the saints was also integrated into the text, this litany, introduced as a list of apostles and martyrs, contains invocations to female virgin martyrs as well as male martyrs. The additions of these blended prayers and litanies reveals the importance of the saints in developing effective or powerful prayers of supplication. The fact that these were added to a monastic psalter demonstrates an active association between the psalms and invocations to the saints in the Benedictine *cursus*, one we might interpret as evidence that these were understood as complementary supplications to the divine.

The Ramsey Psalter, London, BL, Harley MS 2904, reveals even more clearly the complementary nature of litanies and psalms. Opening and closing prayers clearly distinguish

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[61] David Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical history of late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 48-65.
[62] Nicholas Orchard, 'The Bosworth Psalter and the St Augustine's Missal,' in Richard Eales and Richard Sharpe (eds), *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest* (London, 1995), pp. 87-94.

the beginning and end of the psalter. The prefatory material begins on fos. 1v-2v with two prayers attributed to S. Augustine, these are a version of the 'Laus Psalterii' that precedes the psalms in Arundel 155, and a third prayer on fos. 2v-3r headed with the rubric 'Oratio Ante Psalterium.' The psalter concludes with a series of prayers on fos. 213r-214v that are introduced by the rubric 'Oratio Ante Psalterium.' Significantly, a litany on fos. 211r-213r precedes these closing prayers. The introductory and concluding prayers make clear that the enclosed material was considered an integral whole – the litany of the saints and the psalms were distinct parts of a single divine entity. As it was written in the 'Oratio Post Psalterium':

> Holy God, whose mercy and kindness ought to be heard, accept these psalms through the intercession of the blessed and glorious ever virgin, Mary, and of the blessed archangel Michael and also our blessed S. Benedict and all your saints and free me from all bad things through their intercession and make me worthy to be heard and able to win your clemency on account of each and every one of them. [63]

[63] London, BL, Harley MS 2904, fo. 213r-v: 'Deus pie et exaudibilis clemens et benignus suscipe hos psalmos per intercessionem beatae et gloriosae semper uirginis mariae sanctique michahelis archangeli nec non et sancti Benedicti et omnium sanctorum tuorum et libera me ab omnibus malis per eorum intercessionem et fac me dignum ex audiri pro omnibus pro quibus tuam clementiam exoro.'

Relics and the Eucharist

The saints inhabited monastic spaces both literally and figuratively, significantly the relics enshrined in the main altar of the church placed the saints at the heart of the community's most sacred space. The *ordines* for the deposition of relics and the 816 Council of Chelsea reveal that relics of the saints served an essential function in sacralising space. Both the consecration of the host and the physical presence of the saints in the altar continuously produced and secured sacred space. That the Eucharist itself functioned as an enshrined relic where no other relic was to be found underscores the importance of a continuous physical presence in the holiest of places within the community. The production of sacred space through ritual and material object further demonstrates the fundamental and transformative role of the saints in monastic communities. The proximity of the relics in the altar to the consecrated host replicated the proximity of the saints in heaven to Christ. And as the monks and nuns' liturgical observances brought earthly and divine communities into harmony, the relics of the saints in the altar manifested this unity in a powerfully physical way.

The *Regularis Concordia* intensified the relationship between relics and consecrated host: in a unique prescription, it required its observers to receive the Eucharist on a daily basis:

> After the *Pax*, the brothers, except the ones who are aware of being guilty of sin or of weakness of the flesh, shall eagerly and daily receive the Eucharist, as they zealously pursue the regular life. [64]

[64] *RC*, §29, p. 89: 'Post pacem fratres cotidie, nisi qui crimine se aliquo uel carnis fragilitate reos cognouerint, regulari studio prorsus intenti eucharistiam accipere.' In his analysis of its derivation, Symons noted that this prescription was original to the *RC*, having no parallel in the customs of Fleury or Gorze. Symons argued that it was 'an injunction found in no other customary,' and suggested that in addition to the allusion to Ambrose's *De sacramentis* in the prescription 'it is likely that the Council had also in mind the Letter to Egbert in which Bede deplores neglect of daily Communion in Northumbria,' 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation' in D. Parsons (ed), *Tenth-century Studies*, p. 44-5.

In justification of this requirement, the *Regularis Concordia* appealed to the authority of S. Augustine – or, more correctly, pseudo-Augustine.[65] The sermon that supplied the *Regularis Concordia* with its rationale for daily reception of the Eucharist was also attributed to S. Augustine in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary where it was included in the Common of Saints as a sermon for the celebration of a church's dedication feast.[66] This sermon emphasised the salvific and purifying functions of receiving the Eucharist and firmly situated these functions in the context of earthly and celestial communities:

> And so, dearest brothers, each one [of you] ought to examine his conscience: and as much as he shall know that he is wounded by sin, first [let him offer as many] prayers, and desire to cleanse his conscience through fasting and offerings; and [only] then may he presume to receive the Eucharist. And if knowing his own guilt, he approaches the divine altar, he will quickly receive the kindness of divine mercy: because just as *he who exalts himself shall be humbled*; and so by contrast *he who humbles himself shall be exalted* (Matt. 23, 12). For he who, just as I said, knowing his own guilt, humbly wishes to remove [it] by the altar of the church through the emendation of his life, will not need to fear being thoroughly excommunicated from that eternal and celestial banquet.[67]

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[65] *RC*, §29, p. 89: 'non rennuant adtendentes illud, quod ait beatus Augustinus in libro *De uerbis domini*, quod uidelicet in oration dominica non annotinum sed cotidianum deposcimus panem et, ut ipse inibi testator tam facile christianum posse carere ne umquam uitae pabulum, corpus uidelicet ac sanguinem Christi accipiat, quam non crebrius quam semel in anno degustet.' Symons identified the *De uerbis domini* as in fact a sermon attributed to S. Augustine, *In Dedicatione Ecclesiae uel altaris Consecratione*, *PL* 39, col. 2166-8, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation,' p 44-5. This sermon was included in a collection of patristic sermons compiled by Caesarius of Arles in the sixth century, the collection included many Augustinian sermons and as whole was attributed to S. Augustine throughout the middle ages, H.G. Hamman, 'La transmission des sermons de saint Augustin: les authentiques et les apocryphes,' *Augustinianum*, 25 (1985), pp. 319-27.

[66] Ps. Augustine, 'Sermone CCXXIX, In dedicatione ecclesia uel altaris consecratione' *PL* 39, col. 2166-2168. In Grégoire's summary of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, the sermon was included in the Common of Saints under the heading 'Sermo in dedicatione basilicae beati Augustini episcopi,' Grégoire no. II.127.

[67] Ps. Augustine, Sermo 229, *PL* 39, col. 2166-7: 'Et ideo, fratres charissimi, unusquisque consideret conscientiam suam: et quando se aliquo crimine vulneratum esse cognoverit, prius orationibus, jejuniis vel eleemosynis studeat mundare conscientiam suam; et sic Eucharistiam praesumat accipere. Si enim agnoscens reatum suum, ipse se a divino altari subduxerit, cito ad indulgentiam divinae misericordiae perveniet: quia sicut *qui se exaltat humiliabitur;* ita e contrario *qui se humiliat exaltabitur* (Matth. XXIII, 12). Qui enim, sicut dixi, agnoscens reatum suum, ipse se humiliter ab altari ecclesiae pro emendatione vitae removere voluerit, ab aeterno illo et coelesti convivio excommunicari penitus non timebit.'

The sermon's focus upon remaining within the community of the Christian church through the proper reception of the consecrated host lends greater force to the *Regularis Concordia*'s prescription: receiving the Eucharist on a daily basis not only secured monks and nuns' place within a universal Christian community, it also distinguished them as an especially holy group. Indeed, the Gospel of John underscored the distinction that this daily practice conferred: 'Then Jesus said to them: [...] He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me, and I in him.'[68] The daily purification and experience of the salvific power of the Eucharist brought monks and nuns as close as was possible in their earthly lives to joining the saints at the eternal and celestial banquet.

Several sermons in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary and *passiones* in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* explored this relationship by using the Eucharist to construct an intimate connection between saint and Christ. As might be expected in these texts, to behold the saint was ultimately to behold Christ; however, the sermons and *passiones* presented Christ through the medium of the Eucharist – by beholding the saint one beheld Christ as the consecrated host. The Homiliary's sermon for the celebration of a martyr's feast day, drawn from Gregory the Great's *Homilia 37* and the *passiones* of SS. Dionysius and Sebastian in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* vividly articulated this theological function of the saints.[69] These texts would have provided

[68] John 6: 51-57: 'Dixit ergo eis Jesus [...] qui manducate meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in illo.'

[69] The Common of Saints provided three sermons in total for the veneration of a martyr's vigil (Grégoire no. II.110) and feast day (Grégoire nos. II.111 and II.112), these were drawn from Jerome's *Commentarii in Evangelium Matthei* (for the vigil and feast day, Grégoire nos. II.110 and II.111) and Gregory the Great's *Homilia in Evangelia* (for feast day, Grégoire no. II.112). The Gregorian sermon for the celebration of a martyr's feast corresponds to *Homilia 37* from the *Homilia in Evangelia*, the edition used here: Gregory the Great, *Homélies sur l'Évangile*, 2 vols, eds. and fr. trans. Étaix, Blanc and Judic, *Sources Chrétiennes* 485 (I, Paris, 2005) and 522 (II, Paris, 2008). The Common of Saints in extant English manuscripts generally contain all three sermons and, significantly, even the exceptions to this rule contain Gregory's *Homilia 37*: in Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.III.29 Gregory's sermon is the only one included for the celebration of a martyr's feast day whereas in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 179 and Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 34 only two sermons for a martyr's feast day (one from Jerome and the other from Gregory) have been included in the Common of Saints.

for the reading required by the *Eynsham Letter* on a saint's feast day and thus offer a window onto the conceptual framework for sanctity available to tenth-century monks and nuns.

Gregory's *Homilia 37* offers an exposition of the gospel reading from Luke 14:25-33 in which Jesus proclaimed that if any wished to follow him, they must hate their mother and father. Gregory argued that this injunction presented the conditions of discipleship to Christ, ultimately stressing that ascetism and compassion acted as routes to fulfilling these conditions:

> And so, we are ordered to hate our parents and our soul. It is certain that on account of love he ought to hate his parents, he who hates them hates himself. Thus, we hate correctly our soul when we do not acquiesce to its bodily desires, when we subdue its appetites, and when we struggle against its delights.[70]

Gregory acknowledged that it was not often possible to completely fulfill the conditions of discipleship, indeed this complete state could only be achieved through the Eucharist. He explained that:

> The host, offered with tears and benevolence of mind on the sacred altar, has the singular ability to bring about our absolution [...]. For as often as we offer the host of his Passion, we renew his Passion for our own absolution.[71]

Gregory further demonstrated the essential salvific function of the Eucharist through a series of miracles which culminated in the *exemplum* of Bishop Cassius of Narni. The consecrated host was the central focus of the example offered by the holy bishop: Cassius celebrated the Eucharist on a daily basis and his life accorded in every way with this blessed sacrifice.[72]

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[70] Gregory, *Homilia 37*, *SC* 522, p. 428: 'Odisse itaque praecipimur proximos, odisse et animam nostrum. Constat ergo quia amando debet odisse proximum, qui sic eum odit sicut semetipsum. Tunc etenim bene nostrum animam odimus, cum eius carnalibus desideriis non acquiescimus, cum eius appetitum frangimus, eius uoluptatibus reluctantur.'

[71] Gregory, *Homilia 37*, *SC* 522, p. 430: 'Singulariter namque ad absolutionem nostram oblata cum lacrimis et benignitate mentis sacri altaris hostia suffragatur [...]. Nam quotiens ei hostiam suae passionis offerimus, totiens nobis ad absolutionem nostram passionem illius reparamus.'

[72] Gregory, *Homilia 37*, *SC* 522, p. 441: 'cui cum sacrificio ualde etiam concordabat uitam.'

Gregory argued that Bishop Cassius performed an *imitatio Christi*, however, he was not the true martyr or sacrifice in this *exemplum* – the true sacrifice was the Eucharist itself. The *Homilia in Evangelia* marked this homily for the celebration of S. Sebastian's feast day; however, Sebastian's martyrdom is entirely absent from the sermon. Bishop Cassius' *exemplum*, offered in place of the martyr's, effectively demonstrated that the celebration of the mass served as the most important sacrifice in which Christians could actively and continuously participate. As a sermon for the celebration of a martyr's feast day, the interweaving of *imitatio Christi*, martyrdom, and the Eucharist transformed the veneration of a martyr into the veneration of Christ's martyrdom.

This transformation amounted to the central focus of the *passiones* of two saints, the martyr S. Dionysius and the confessor S. Basil, in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*.[73] In many ways, Dionysius' *passio* provided a survey of early Christian history: not only was the saint involved in the missions of the first evangelists, his martyrdom encapsulated those of the most famous early Christian martyrs.[74] Significantly, the narrative climax of the *passio* occurred not at the moment of Dionysius' beheading, but with the saint's celebration of the Eucharist the evening before his martyrdom. The series of comparisons between Dionysius' martyrdom and those of other early Christian martyrs created a narrative momentum that builds from one martyrdom to another until it reached the most significant one of all, that of Christ's. After suffering the various tortures of other martyrs, Dionysius was thrown into a dungeon where he performed mass for the prisoners and:

> With them there he broke apart that holy Eucharist and then there came a heavenly light over all the multitude such as they had never seen. There came

[73] Ælfric, *LS* 29 and 5, respectively.
[74] Ælfric wrote that Dionysius was stretched on an iron grille and burned 'swa man laurentium dyde,' sent into the arena to contend with wild beasts, put into a burning oven, and finally crucified on the cross where he 'hælend bodode eallum æt-standendum swa swa andreas dyde' (preached the Saviour to all the bystanders just as Andrew did), *LS* 29, ll. 243-255.

> also the Saviour with the heavenly light and many angels with him there where men were looking on and He took that Eucharist which was there consecrated and spoke to the bishop with a joyful face.[75]

The physical presence of Christ at the moment of Eucharistic consecration in the narrative intensified the holy bread's transformation into the blood and body of Christ. The succinct account of Dionysius' beheading that follows this passage underscores the importance of Christ's sacrifice over that of the saint's. With Gregory's sermon in mind, Dionysius' suffering replicated Christ's but more significantly the narrative climax left the reader contemplating Christ, himself.

The salvific power of the Eucharist features as the central theme of the *passio* of S. Basil in the *Lives of Saints*. The saint's devotion to the consecrated host recurs as a motif throughout the *passio*, occurring at points of tension and challenge to Christian doctrine. Notably, a Eucharistic miracle sanctioned Basil's decision to establish monastic houses following his own rule. The newly consecrated bishop had prayed for instruction on 'him offrian mihte/ða lyflican on sægednisse mid soðfæstre þenunge' (how he might offer to him, the living sacrifice with true service).[76] In response to this plea, Christ appeared to instruct the bishop that fulfilling this true service required prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist – instruction which inspired Basil to write the service of the mass and a monastic rule.[77] Notably, this miracle produced a physical relic: the host which Christ had himself consecrated on the altar. Basil divided this relic into three portions, he consumed the first, the second he preserved for the purpose of being buried with it, and the third he placed in a reliquary, shaped like a dove

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[75] Æflric, *LS* 29, ll. 261-5: 'þa mid þam þe he to-bræc þæt halige husel þa com þær heofonlic leoht ofer eall þa meniu swlic swa hi ær ne gesawon. Þær com eac se hælend mid þam heofonlican leohte and fela engla mid him þær men onlocodon and nam þæt husel þe ðær gehalgod wæs and cwæð to þam bisceope mid blyðre ansyne […].'
[76] Ælfric, *LS* 3, ll. 107-8.
[77] Ælfric, *LS* 3, ll. 144-5.

and suspended above the altar.[78] In this *passio*, the Eucharist and Basil's sanctity were intimately tied and, as the saint was celebrated as the father of monasticism, monastic practice was transformed into the purest expression of Eucharistic devotion.

The consecrated host was central to the idealisation of monastic practice in these sermons and hagiographies. The Eucharist's ability to purify and exalt both individuals and communities distinguished monks and nuns as a particularly holy group, particularly as they were uniquely required to receive it daily. The saints served in an essential role in this process, with their relics placed in the altar they not only replicated the heavenly community on earth but also served as *exempla* of Christ's own sacrifice – a sacrifice in which their relics participated at the consecration of every Eucharist.

Transformation in monastic practice

Performing the Divine Office unified heavenly and earthly communities in monastic spaces, the communal and individual purity of monastic men and women played an important role in achieving this union. Ritual alone was insufficient to maintain membership of the *communio sanctorum*, participation in this community required both an individual and collective commitment to bodily and spiritual purity. Correct observance of monastic practice beyond the Divine Office transformed monks and nuns into companions of the saints. The transformative power of monastic praxis will be explored through the framework of virtue represented in Ælfric's *Admonitio ad filium spiritualem*, the distinctive status of virginity

[78] Ælfric, *LS* 3, ll. 121-133.

presented in sermons from Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, and, finally, the *exempla* offered by the virgin martyrs in Æflric's *Lives of Saints*.

In his translation of the *Admonitio ad filium spiritualem*, Ælfric directed its precepts, which he attributed to S. Basil, to his fellow English monks and nuns.[79] The precepts conceptualise monasticism as a service rendered to the divine akin to the military service offered by soldiers.[80] The *Admonitio* explores the meaning of this service at the level of the individual monk, its focus centres upon the cultivation of virtue and the transformation that occurs as a result of this commitment. For the present discussion the *Admonitio* will be treated as a representative demonstration of how monastic practice was conceptualised in the later tenth century.

Both Basil's sanctity and ecclesiastical authority were well established in England by the time that Ælfric translated the *Admonitio*.[81] King Æthelstan had donated the saint's tooth and crozier to Exeter in the early tenth century, a gift which may have been accompanied by a *vita* of the saint.[82] On the Continent, the *Regula Basili* was still in use at the time of the Carolingian monastic reforms and the *Admonitio* was itself incorporated into the *Expositio in regulam S. Benedicti* composed by the Carolingian exegete, Smaragdus of Saint Mihiel.[83] It

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[79] Ælfric, *Admonitio ad filium spiritualem*, ed. Norman, *The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St Basil, or Be Godes six dagas weorcum. And the Saxon remains of St Basil's Admonitio ad Filium Spiritualem* (London, 1849), p. 32, Prologus: 'Basilius [...] awrat ða lare ðe we nu willað on Englisceum gereorde secgean ðam he his recceað heo gebyrað to munecum and eac to mynecenum ðe regollice libbað for hyra drihtnes lufe under gastlicum ealdrum.'
[80] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 32 -4: 'Basil cwæð ða on his boclican lare [...] Ic wylle ðe secgan and soðlice læran ðæt gastlice gewinn hu ðu Gode campie and mid hwileum gemeter ðu miht him ðeowian.'
[81] Joyce Hill argues that Ælfric translated the Admonitio while a monk at Cerne Abbas, c. 1000, Hill, 'Ælfric: His Life and Works,' in *A Companion to Ælfric*, pp. 59-60.
[82] Gabriella Corona has connected the fragment Exeter Cathedral FMS/3, written in an English hand of the early tenth century and containing excerpts from the Latin *Vita S. Basilii*, to Æthelstan's gift recorded in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. MS D.2.16, 'Saint Basil in Anglo-Saxon Exeter,' *Notes and Queries*, (2002), pp. 316-20. The Latin vita represented in the fragments formed the base text for Ælfric's own version of Basil's life in the *LS*.
[83] For the Rule of Basil in the Carolingian reforms see McKitterick, *The Frankish Church*, p. 121. James Francis LePree has explored the influence of the *Admonitio* on Smaragdus' *Expositio in regulam S. Benedicti* in his PhD thesis, 'Sources of Spirituality and the Carolingian Exegetical Tradition' (PhD Thesis, City University of New York, 2008), pp. 149-50.

remains impossible to determine whether the *Regula Basili* was in use in England, however, the saint's significance as an authority for monastic practice was transmitted both directly and indirectly from Continental sources: the Latin *vita* of the saint presented him as a father of monasticism and the *Admonitio*'s instructions were transmitted both through Smaragdus' *Expositio in regulam S. Benedicti* (an important influence on Æthelwold's own translation of the *Regula S. Benedicti*) and in manuscript copy.[84] The surviving copy of Ælfric's translation of the *Admonitio* was copied in Worcester in the early eleventh century, suggesting that it began to circulate amongst monastic communities soon after Ælfric composed it.[85]

The *Admonitio* framed monastic practice as a particular service rendered to Christ. It presented this service as a form of spiritual warfare that operated on both an inner and outer plane: on the one hand, monks and nuns were 'servants of Christ waging war with devils, by day and night,' while on the other, they served 'God with observant purity.'[86] Each of the *Admonitio*'s exhortations explored the relationship between these two planes, with the inner one depicted as the most significant arena. The chapter regarding chastity vividly demonstrates this principle at work. The chapter opens with a warning against delighting in 'the countenances of beautiful women' and the consequent desire inspired by this gazing, it exhorts the monk to 'turn away your love from the love of women, lest love for it debar you from Christ.'[87] The 'houses of maidens' formed the arena in which the monk's struggle for chastity occurred, a fraught arena from the monk's very entrance into it:

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[84] For an analysis of the influence of Smaragdus' *Expositio* on Æthewold see Mechthild Gretsch, 'Æthelwold's translation of the *RSB*,' 144-6. The manuscript copy of the *Admonitio* from which Ælfric made his translation no longer survives, however, its existence can be presumed.

[85] Ælfric's *Admonitio* survives in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton MS 76 (S.C. 4125), Gneuss no. 632. A copy of Gregory's *Dialogi* was copied into the same manuscript in the same hand, Scragg, *A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English 960 -1100*, nos. 892 and 892a.

[86] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 32, Prologus: 'munecum and eac [..] mynecenum ðe regollice libbað for hyra drihtnes lufe under gastlicum ealdrum Gode ðeowiende gehealdenre clænysse swa swa Cristes ðegenas campiende wið deoflu dæges and nihtes.'

[87] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 48-9: 'Awend ðine lufe fram wifmanna lufe ðe læs ðe hire lufu ðe beluce fram Criste.'

> Do not pretend, my child, that you can go with innocence and security to the houses of maidens, and converse with them, and not have your mind evilly contaminated through their idle conversations.[88]

The corruption of the monk's mind formed the ultimate danger of this arena, preserving physical chastity was meaningless unless it was accompanied by a chastity of mind. The conjunction of bodily and mental purity produced a holy state of virginity in the monk, in a departure from the Latin source Ælfric explained that:

> In either condition is the holy state of virginity, in young men and in maidens, in monks and in female monks, in those who from childhood were so fortunate that they have ever in chastity ministered to Christ Himself, in order that they might have in the end the hundredfold reward, that Christ Himself promised in His holy gospel.[89]

In the Latin version of the *Admonitio*, this chapter focused upon the danger of physical temptation and the punishment for its consummation – or the desire for its consummation.[90] Ælfric's translation placed greater emphasis on the maintenance of a chaste soul and body and his departure from his source exposed a distinction between 'virginity' and 'chastity' not found in pseudo-Basil's text. Chastity, 'clænysse,' a state of bodily and mental purity, formed an essential part of the service offered by monks and nuns; however, virginity, 'mægðhad,' was a sacred – 'halga' – state. Ælfric had deployed the term 'mægðhad' in his *Catholic Homilies* and

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[88] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 48-9: 'Ne hiwa ðu min bearn swilce ðu mid bilewitnysse mæge ðe gan orsorh to mædena husum and wið hi motian ðæt ðin mod ne beo yfele besmiten ðurh ða ydelan spellunga.'
[89] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 48-51: 'In ægðrum had byð se halga mægðhad on cnihtum and on mædenum on munecum and on mynecenum ðam ðe fram cildhade swa gesælie wurdon ðæt hig æfre on clænysse Criste sylfum ðeowodon ðæt hi habban on ende ða hundfealdan mede ðe Crist sylf behet on his halgan godspelle.'
[90] For example, the Latin *Admonitio* expanded upon the injunction not to gaze upon the faces of beautiful women with the series of commands: 'Ne improbo oculo tuo intuearis speciem mulieris, ne intret mors per fenestras tuas. Ne aperias aures tuas ad perficienda verba eorum, nec concupisces nequitiam in anima tua. Mulieris carnem non velis tangere, ne per tactum ejus inflammetur cor tuum, et spiritu tuo labaris in periditionem'; 'Do not gaze upon the faces of women with your wicked eyes, lest death enter through your eye-windows. Do not open your ears to the perfidy of their words, lest you conceive a strong desire for wickedness in your soul. Do not wish to touch the flesh of women, lest through this touch your heart becomes inflamed, and you slip your soul into perdition,' *PL* 103, col. 689. Ælfric did not include these exhortations, in his translation of the *Admonitio* the injunction not to gaze on the faces of beautiful women was immediately followed by a comparison (also in the Latin) between the flammability of chaff and the quickness of desire, *Admonitio*, p. 50.

Lives of Saints, across the texts in these collections the word only occurs in descriptions of Christ, Mary, the apostles, and virgin saints.[91] In the *Admonitio*, the use of this term in conjunction with an emphasis on the particular 'vowed' status of monks and nuns reveals the transformative power of monastic chastity: through their 'observant purity' monastic men moulded themselves into a holy state, making them fit company for the *communio sanctorum* that joined them in the Divine Office.

The distinctive holy status of virginity, one which reflected a bodily and spiritual purity and available particularly to monks and nuns, gained further expression in the sermons for virgin saints in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. In contrast to the overt misogyny of Ælfric's *Admonitio*, which exclusively gendered monastic virginity as male,[92] the sermons in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, drawn from the works of S. Augustine and Gregory, presented the virgins as a distinct order of sanctity with a specific ascetic *exemplum* for both men and women.[93] The two sermons that interpreted the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins in Mt. 25: 1-13 argued that self-restraint and the suppression of desire constituted the correct preparation for entry into the kingdom of heaven. Assigned to the feast day of a virgin saint, these sermons framed virginity as the commitment to both a physical and spiritual condition. Significantly, the sermon that addressed the Gospel parable in Mt. 13:44-52 drew an explicit connection between the parable and the *exemplum* offered by a virgin martyr saint, in this case Agnes.[94] The martyred saint, according to Gregory, offered a perfect example of how one should prefer the heavenly life over the earthly life; however, Gregory did not advise his

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[91] The Dictionary of Old English Corpus includes 123 instances of the word 'mægðhad,' Ælfrician texts (ranging from the *Catholic Homilies*, *Lives of Saints*, to his pastoral letters) correspond to 89 of these instances, see 'mægðhad' in *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*, compiled by Antonette diPaolo Healey with John Price Wilkin and Xin Xiang. (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project 2009).
[92] Ælfric repeated this view elsewhere in his writings, Cubitt, 'Virginity and Misogyny,' pp. 15-9.
[93] Augustine, *De diverses quaestionibus* 83, q. 59, *CC* 44A, pp. 110-118 [Grégoire no. II. 121]; Gregory, *Homilia 12*, in *SC* 485, pp. 278-95 [Grégoire no. II. 122]; Gregory, *Homilia 11*, *SC* 485, pp. 262-73 [Grégoire no. II. 123].
[94] Gregory, *Homilia 11*, *SC* 485, pp. 262-73.

listeners to replicate her martyrdom exactly in their own lives. He urged his listeners to be in awe of the martyr's virtue and to follow her example, not by seeking death but by seeking to kill their illicit desires – this was the 'martyrdom' to which they should aspire. He argued that the saint would not have been able to die for the Lord in her body, had her soul not already been dead to the desires of the world.[95] Contemporary martyrdom, according to Gregory, had to be achieved by suppressing the desires of the flesh. In the Gregorian sermons collected in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, the early martyrs were promoted as *exempla* for asceticism, and female martyrs, in particular, demonstrated a central tenet of this asceticism: the suppression of carnal desire.

Significantly, the transformative nature of the state of virginity remained open to both men and women. The sermon for Agnes' feast day (Jan. 21) in the winter portion of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary explained how to understand the distinctive *exempla* offered by virgin saints:

> For the examples of the saints are handed down through writing, such that there are [examples] according to the character of each sex, and, with these [examples] having been placed forward, they represent the manner of living for all eras, and in this way virgins [are shown the way forward] by a virgin, and so they are eager to defeat [any] spouses for a future spouse on account of the love of Christ, refusing the sweetness of the world through the opposition of their soul, and not refusing his austerity, they reach the eternal delights and everlasting joy.[96]

One might read this passage as an articulation of a neat gender binary: female saints are appropriate examples for women, male saints for men. However, this reading does not

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[95] Gregory, *Homilia 11*, *SC* 485, p. 264: 'Neque enim sancta haec, cuius hodie natalitia celebramus, mori pro Domino potuisset in corpore, si prius a terrenis desideriis mortua non fuisset in mente.'
[96] Ps. Ambrose, Sermo XLVIII, 'In festo sanctae Agnetis virginis et martyris,' *PL* 17, col. 701-2 [Grégoire no. I. 62]: 'Ideo enim sanctorum per litteras traduuntur exempla, ut unusquisque pro qualitate sexus, et pro aetate annorum modum sui propositi teneat, et sicut per virginem virgines, ita et per conjugem conjuges vincere saeculum pro Christi amore studeant, ac repugnatione animi mundi dulcia recusants, et ejus non recusantes austere, ad delectations perpetuas et ad gaudia aeterna pertingant.'

adequately explain why such a gender-specific message was included in a collection directed, from its very origins, at mixed audiences.[97] As one of the few female saints within an extremely limited *sanctorale*, Agnes' example must have been considered vitally relevant to the Homiliary's overarching project. This prompts a new reading: Agnes' virginity, as that of other female saints, revealed the transformative power of sexual renunciation. The saint's commitment to her virginity formed as extreme a sacrifice as that of the male martyrs, a sacrifice to which monastic men *and* women were urged to commit themselves:

> [Join] the happy crowd of virgins, in whose footsteps you must follow with the zeal of your own *confessio*; for they shall hold with you the crown [of virginity] in heaven, because, along with you, they will have overcome the iniquity of the world. [...] and so we believe in these eternal ones who ought to be imitated with joy and not denied.[98]

Imitation, like veneration, was not passive: it produced a new order of being for those who practised it. As another sermon in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary explained:

> For if for any reason we value just or faithful ones, we ought to take up justice and faith into ourselves, for we are able to be what those [ones] are, if we do what it is that they do.[99]

The sermons in the Common of Saints in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary provided a framework for interpreting the *exempla* of the saints, male and female, venerated by monks and nuns. These general sermons emphasised replicable qualities of the saints: the renunciation of

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[97] Guiliano argues that Paul the Deacon envisioned a wide and mixed audience for his Homiliary (see Chapter 3) and has traced manuscript copies of the Homiliary to over thirty-three elite religious communities across the Frankish Empire – revealing that 'Many of the major ecclesiastical centres of the Frankish Empire possessed copies of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary or Paul the Deacon-derived collections by the tenth century,' see Chapter 4 in 'The Composition, Dissemination, and Use of the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon,' esp. p. 166.

[98] Ps. Ambrose, Sermo 48, *PL* 17, col. 705: 'Felix caterva virginum, quibus stadium est tuae confessionis sequi vestigia; habebunt enim tecum coronam in coelo, quae tecum superaverint inimicum in mundo. [...] ita his imitantibus aeterna credimus gaudia non neganda.'

[99] John Chrysostom, Homilia 28, *PLS* 4 col. 738 [Grégoire no. II. 120]: 'Nam si propterea iustos fidelesque diligimus, quod in ipsis iustitiam fidemque suscipimus, possumus nos quoque esse quod sunt, si faciamus ipsi quod faciunt.'

wealth, commitment to virginity, practice of an ascetic life, and steadfast faith. With this framework in mind, the *passiones* in the *Lives of Saints* achieved a direct relevance to their monastic audience: the martyrs, virgins, and confessors in this collection each offer an *exemplum* for monastic practice – and, as the sermons argued, fulfilling these examples had the power to transform the monk or nun into a type of living saint.

Cumulatively, the *exempla* offered by the saints in the *Lives of Saints* revealed that committing to the monastic life was an exceptionally effective way for a Christian to replicate the actions of the saints. For example, the virgin martyrs Lucy and Cecilia renounced their wealth as part of their commitment to virginity, Agnes and Agatha preserved their chastity even in the face of death, the martyrs Alban and George rejected their noble status in favour of adopting an ascetic life, the Forty Soldiers, S. Maurice and the Theban Legion preferred spiritual warfare over physical warfare, while the spouses Chrysanthus and Daria and Julian and Basilissa committed themselves to a chaste marriage because they preferred to be true spouses to Christ.[100] The monastic life offered the fulfillment of these divine models.

Taking one *passio* as a case study, Ælfric's translation of S. Eugenia's life and martyrdom offered its monastic audience a model of the sanctity that one could achieve by

[100] Following her pledge of virginity, Lucy sold all her moveable and landed wealth, distributing her earnings to the poor, to strangers, to widows and exiles, and to the 'wisum godes þeowum,' Ælfric, *LS* 9, ll. 53-6. Following the death of her husband and brother-in-law, Cecilia distributed their wealth which brought her to the attention of the prefect, Almachius, *LS* 34, ll. 285-87. Both Agnes and Agatha, according to their passiones, suffered extreme torture, the virgins' triumph over their physical pain was attributed to both their inner and bodily purity, Ælfric, *LS* 8, ll. 183-94 and 7, l. 160. In *LS* 19, ll. 54-6, Alban renounced his family ties by taking on the garb of a priest and refused to return to his noble status, George's renunciation followed a similar pattern (albeit without the saint adopting a priest's clothing), *LS* 14, ll. 27-32. The Forty Soldiers' spiritual battle occurred during their torture, in this contest their strength in arms was transformed as their steadfast faith, *LS* 11, ll. 199-209. In *LS* 28, Maurice and his Theban Legion preferred to cast aside their weapons in the face of persecution, ll. 70-3. In the *passio* of Chrysanthus and Daria, the male martyr's commitment to his virginity unfolds in a similar fashion to the female virgin martyrs': Polemius, Chrysanthus' father, in the narrative role of the unwelcome suitor, attempts to induce his son to succumb to earthly desire and wealth. Chrysanthus refuses his father's advances at every turn, preferring to remain chaste. Eventually forced into an unwanted marriage, the saint convinces his spouse, Daria, to live chastely with him, *LS* 25, ll. 122-4. In *LS* 4, Christ appeared to Julian and urged him to find a wife with whom he might live chastely, ll. 9-21.

sustained commitment to monastic practice.[101] Although Eugenia's *passio* ends with the virgin saint's martyrdom, the majority of the narrative was devoted to an account of the saint's life in a monastery – monastic space forms the arena for Eugenia's trials and triumph. The central test and trial to which the saint submits effectively enacts the 'dangerous' scenario warned against in the *Admonitio*: Eugenia not only entered into conversation with a beautiful woman, she also entered the woman's house to do so.

The monastic space in which the test of a vowed individual occurred was a male one, Eugenia, according to the *passio*, disguised herself as a man in order to join the community. Once elected abbot, and with her gender remaining a secret, the saint gained a reputation as a powerful healer. The fame of her healing abilities drew a sick woman, Melantia, to the monastery. After being healed by the saint, Melantia became infatuated and 'afterwards came often, with a false mind/ to the beauteous maiden, for she thought she was a youth.'[102] Seeking to entice Eugenia to become her husband, Melantia offered the saint gifts and flattery; however, when these failed to move the virgin saint, Melantia feigned an illness and implored Eugenia to treat her in her home.[103] There, Melantia 'began to speak to her her dark thoughts' and begged the saint to become 'lord of my goods and of me.'[104] The *Admonitio* warned its monastic readers that:

> It is certainly true that if the monk or the learned priest will go to the houses of women, and hold conversations with them, and if their pleasant speeches are always pleasing to the maidens, they will forthwith pervert their worth, and of their own accord they will forsake that which they have vowed unto God.[105]

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[101] Ælfric, *LS* 2.
[102] Ælfric, *LS* 2, ll. 145-6: 'com siððan gelome mid leasum mode/ to þam wlytegan mædene wende þæt heo cniht wære.'
[103] Ibid., ll. 152-6.
[104] Ibid., l. 153 and 159: 'ongan hyre sæcgan hyre sweartan geþoftas'; 'þæt þu hlaford beo þæra æhta and min.'
[105] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 48-9: 'Hit is gewissilice soð gif se munuc wyle gan oððe se gelærada preost to wifmanna husum and wið hy motian and gif ðæm mædenum likiað hyra luftyman spræce a sona hy awendað hyra wurðfullnysse and his sylfwilles forleosað ðæt ðæt hi Gode beheton.'

This warning forcefully represented not only the danger to the monk or priest's vowed chastity, but also the danger to their vowed renunciation of worldly goods and status. Eugenia's refusal to be tempted not only by Melantia's body but also by her wealth and status revealed a specifically monastic *confessio*. Eugenia demonstrated her sanctity in an arena which tested her commitment to a monastic life. In an echo of Gregory's sermon for a virgin martyr in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, Eugenia triumphed in this test because she had made herself dead to desire. The saint rebuked Melantia in language infused with the precepts of the *Admonitio*:

> [...] the desires of this present world are extremely deceitful, though they are pleasant, and the lusts of the body often seduce and bring them to sorrow who love them most. [...] and Eugenia said [to Melantia] that she verily was a kindler of lust, a child of wrath, a companion of darkness, and filled with blackness, a daughter of death, and the devil's vessel.[106]

Significantly, Eugenia's trial and Melantia's condemnation occur without the revelation of the saint's gender. In this *passio* we see the intersection of a politics of gender and sanctity. We must assume the universality of Eugenia's model: included in a collection directed at a mixed audience, her status as a virgin saint provided a model to both men and women who had vowed themselves to chastity. This particular order of sanctity was conceptualised in terms of a female body, yet it was an order that presented an example replicable by both men and women. Eugenia's sanctity offered a specific example of monastic chastity, as a woman disguised as a man the saint's example navigated a construct of virginity that required a

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[106] Ælfric, *LS* 2, ll. 164-175: '[...] ða gewylnunga þissere andweardan worulde/ Synt swiðe swicole. Þeah þe hi geswæse beon/ And þæs lichoman lustas gelome be-pæceð/ and to sarnissum gelædað þa þe hi swiðost lufiað/ [...] Eugenia cwæð to ðære sceande þæt heo soðlice wære/ galnysse ontendnyss and gramena mæge/ þeostra gefæra and mid sweartnysse afylled/ Deaðes dohto and deofles fætels.' Compare this with the passage in the *Admonitio*: 'No such men as these [i.e. monks/priests who enter the houses of women] can make a dwelling for God desirous of purity, in an uncorrupted heart, but they shall be destroyed in their unbelief as putrifying rottenness, by their evil habits'; 'Ne magon na swilce men makian wununge ðam clængeornan Gode on clænre heortan ac hy beoð tolysede ungeleaffullice swa swa forrotod ðreax on hyra unðeawum,' p. 48-9.

female body, but which could only be tested in terms of male desire for a female body. This gender dynamism also occurred in the *Admonitio* which sought to explain a monk's love for God in terms of a husband's love for his wife:

> If the man of this world strives in what way he may please his wife, much rather shall the monk in every respect give delight to Christ, and please Him always, and love Him, and keep His commandments.[107]

With the *Admonitio* in mind, the *passiones* of the chaste spouses in the *Lives of Saints* function as further explorations of how to conceptualise a union with Christ – they provided models for the monk or nun's chaste marriage to the divine. Cumulatively, Eugenia's *passio* and the others included in the *Lives of Saints* revealed the transformative power of fulfilling their *exempla*: acting like saints entailed acting according to the precepts of monastic life, thereby elevating the monk or nun to a holy status and holy company.

[107] Ælfric, *Admonitio*, p. 40-1: 'Gif se woruldmann kepð hu he his wife gelikie micele swyðor sceal se munuc on eallum gemetum Criste gelikian and him gecweman a and hine lufian and his bebodu healdan.'

III. Constructing an earthly *communio sanctorum*

The role of the saints in monastic practice opens a new window onto the ways in which local cults created connections between houses. Venerating each other's saints required a significant commitment from monastic communities. The liturgical sources required for this veneration shed light onto a network of houses joined through the veneration of each other's saints. Significantly, in the late tenth century, this network was marked by diversity: nunneries and monasteries, some Benedictine and others not, were united in a group that spanned the English kingdom. In following chapters, this network of houses will be analysed through its constituent parts, the present discussion will analyse the methods by which the veneration of local saints constructed both a distinctive group identity and a larger network of English houses.

The term 'local' saint remains an imperfect one – there is no straightforward binary between 'local' and 'universal' saints. Supplying 'native' for 'local' is equally imperfect as many monastic houses venerated with special devotion saints who had no living connection with either the house or the region. The cults of SS. Grimbald and Iudoc at the New Minster provide an example: neither saint was native to England, Grimbald was remembered as a learned priest recruited from the Continent by King Alfred and Iudoc a seventh-century Breton prince, yet the monks of New Minster promoted these saints as their own. In absence of a more precise term, 'local' when used in reference to a cult or saint will refer to cases in which a monastic house possessed the relics of a saint and promoted this saint as one who was particularly attached to the community. The saints discussed in the sections above largely correspond to a group considered 'universal,' this term encompassing the saints whose cults transcended regional or ecclesiastical affiliation, notably including but not limited to the

saints of the early Christian West (the apostles, martyrs, and confessors of the early Church). These semantic divisions provide a way to appreciate distinctive elements in the veneration of the saints; however, as it will be shown, the analysis of any one cult at a monastic house needs to be situated against the larger whole of which it formed a part.

Individual houses and the veneration of community leaders

The veneration of the founders or early leaders of a community formed a standard feature of monastic houses in the early medieval West, England was no exception.[108] Within the context of the above discussion, this practice served a significant function: it constructed a distinctive group identity within a much larger divine whole. On the one hand, the sanctification of a member of the community literally placed the community amongst the heavenly host. On the other hand, it provided a way for the community to distinguish itself amongst this host and to conceptualise a particular communal identity. These two achievements had important consequences for communal life on both a personal and physical level. The prominent reformers in the tenth century sought inspiration in the traditions of the early English Church, in particular they presented the Northumbrian Church of Bede's era as a golden age. Their nostalgia constructed a vision of the past that bore little resemblance to its reality, yet this vision ought not to be dismissed: it provides a lens by which we might interpret the reformers' aims. The veneration of Bedan-age saints figured as one important method of disseminating the ideals of reform.[109] The success of the 'revived' cults of early saints will be

[108] See in particular Cubitt, 'Monastic memory and identity in Anglo-Saxon England,' in W. Frazer and A. Tyrell (eds), *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain* (London, 2000).
[109] Antonia Gransden has argued that through the cult of Bedan-age saints the tenth-century reformers constructed a powerful narrative of continuity between their own age and that of a 'golden age' of Christianity in England, 'Traditionalism and Continuity.' In a series of articles reassessing the importance of the reformers'

assessed in later chapters, this section will examine the influence of the traditions which some of these cults carried with them and the models for veneration that they provided for tenth-century communities developing their own in-house cults.

Venerating a leader of the community provided an opportunity to create powerful bonds between past, present, and future members – and ultimately supported the integrity of the house's spiritual family. In the late tenth century the monks of Glastonbury possessed the relics of many Bedan-age saints, notably this collection included the relics of a famous community leader, Abbot Ceolfrith of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow. In addition to Bede's beloved abbot, it appears that Glastonbury also kept a collection of materials related to Monkwearmouth-Jarrow's early leaders.[110] Bede's homily for Benedict Biscop, the founder of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, was included in the collection, this homily contained a vivid explanation of Benedict's enduring significance to the community:

> we are indeed his sons (*nos sumus eius filii*), we whom our godly provider led into this monastic house, we are his sons, we whom he caused to be gathered together spiritually in a single family sworn to holiness, sprung as we are in the flesh from various parents; we are his sons, if we keep to the virtuous road he took by imitating him, if through growing weary we do not depart from the proper path he taught us.[111]

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saint-making activities, Alan Thacker has stressed the material aggrandisement which Æthelwold and Oswald's relic-collecting achieved, arguing that through these activities, inspired by the *adventus* and *translatio* events which had occurred at Fleury and Ghent, the bishops asserted significant spiritual and territorial authority. In the case of Æthelwold, territorial authority seems to have been an important motivation: using David Rollason's model of saints acting as 'undying lords' of particular areas, Thacker has demonstrated how possession of 'ancient' or 'Bedan age' relics allowed Æthelwold to claim landed wealth for his new foundations and re-foundations, Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' pp. 61-3. Archbishop Oswald, on the other hand, according to Thacker, used relic cults of Bedan age saints and royal martyrs as vehicles of propaganda which could variously condemn royal murder and political opponents as well as promote the cause of reform and inviolability of reformed communities, Thacker, 'Saint-Making and Relic Collecting,' pp. 248-53.

[110] London, BL, Harley MS 3020, s. x^{ex} contains a substantial collection of saints' lives, it begins with a group of material related to the early abbots of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow: Bede's Homily I.13 on Benedict Biscop (fos. 1r-6r) and *Historia Abbatum* (fos. 7r-21r) as well as the anonymous *Vita Ceolfridi* (fos. 21r-34r). Michael Lapidge has argued that this collection was produced at Glastonbury c. 1000, 'Beda Venerabilis,' in L. Castaldi and P. Chiesa, *La trasmissione dei testi latini del Medioevo*; *Medieval Latin Texts and their Transmission: Te. Tra. 3* (Florence, 2008), 44–137.

[111] Bede, Homily I.13 in *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow: Bede's Homily i. 13 on Benedict Biscop, Bede's History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow, the Anonymous Life of Ceolfrith, Bede's Letter to Ecgbert, Bishop of York*, eds. and trans. Grocock and Wood (Oxford, 2013), p. 15.

In addition to this homily, Bede composed a historical account of the first abbots of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, the *Historia Abbatum*, shortly after the community suffered the loss of Abbot Ceolfrith.[112] As a response to this critical moment in the community's history, Bede's undertaking can be seen as community-minded project – one which gave the monks the tools to construct a group identity that would survive any one individual leader. As these texts emphasised the importance of constructing a communal identity through imitation and adherence to monastic virtue, they transcended the eighth-century Monkwearmouth community. They provided the tenth-century Glastonbury monks who possessed the relics of Abbot Ceolfrith a framework with which to construct both an individual identity and a connection to an illustrious past community.

At the turn of the eleventh century, it appears that the monks of Winchester also kept an account of early Northumbrian abbots, the *De Abbatibus*.[113] This ninth-century verse text was perhaps also composed as part of a community-minded project, it commemorates not only the significant abbots of an unknown Northumbrian minster but also several important community members. The narrative progression in the *De Abbatibus* from one abbot or monk to another constructed a genealogy for the Northumbrian community, a genealogy which united past and present members:

> Let there always be without end thanks to the Lord above, that by his help to us such abbots (as we have had) have had it granted to them to shine forth, pious, just, and benign. They scattered the fine seed of a celestial gift in the hearts of the brothers, and crops sprang up through the monastery right gladly in the sweetness of the dew of heaven. Now the place smiles, monks flourish in the

[112] Abbot Ceolfrith died in 716 while journeying to Rome with the famous pandect bible, the *Codex Amiatinus*. Christopher Grocock and Ian Wood, the most recent editors of Bede's *Historia Abbatum*, argue that Bede composed his account of the early abbots of Wearmouth-Jarrow, which included Ceolfrith's abbacy and death, in the autumn or winter of 716, 'Introduction,' *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, p. xxi.

[113] Winchester, Cathedral Library, MS 1 (with London, BL, Cotton MS Tiberius D.iv, vol. II, fos. 158-66), s.x/xi or xi^{in}, prov. Winchester (Gneuss no. 759). It is not possible to determine whether this manuscript was copied at the Old or New Minsters, Scragg suggests that the hand belongs to the mid-eleventh century, *A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English 960 -1100* (Cambridge, 2012), no. 1039.

> monastery in the joy of Christ, the order is happy within the bounds, and one law governs them together, the good will in their happy breasts.[114]

While it does not appear that either the monks of the New or Old Minsters possessed the relics of the abbots commemorated in the *De Abbatibus*, the possession of the poem itself nonetheless suggests that it provided a model for the tenth-century monks who were in the process of developing several in-house cults of former leaders, SS. Swithun and Æthelwold at the New Minster most notably.

In addition to the traditions regarding communal identity articulated in these commemorative texts, influential patristic texts also supported the view that both individual action and the robust bonds between individuals actively contributed to the integrity of communal life. This concept had lain at the heart of monastic life from its very origins, in the *Conlationes* Cassian not only argued that an ideal friendship ought to exist between virtuous brothers but also that brotherly concord was essential to effective monastic prayer:

> And thus our Lord does not wish to have such sadness when viewing us from above, such that if a brother will have any grievance against us, then [the Lord] will not receive our offering, that is he will not allow any prayers to be offered by us, until we lift quickly and to his satisfaction the just or unjust [grievance] conceived [against us] thereby lifting the sadness from his soul.[115]

Venerating an abbot or abbess, or a prominent monk or nun, as a saint provided the community with a focal point for their particular spiritual family. As monastic houses replicated secular familial structures, bonds of kinship between members of the house were constructed by conceptualising leaders as parents with sanctified parents acting as the

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[114] Æthelwulf, *De abbatibus*, ed. Campbell (Oxford, 1967), p. 48.
[115] Cassian, *Conlationes*, Sources Chrétiennes, 54, vol.II, Conf. XVI §XVI p. 235: 'In tantum igitur non uult nos dominus noster alterius despectui habere tristitiam, ut si aliquid aduersum nos frater habuerit , nec munera nostra suscipiat, id est nec orationes sibi a nobis permittat offerri, donec de animo eius tristitiam iuste iniusteue conceptam celeri satisfactione tollamus.' Cassian's *Conlationes* circulated in England from the early eighth century through to the post-Conquest era, Gneuss nos. 834.5, 173, 627, and 700.

founding ancestors of the family. Thus, their veneration contributed significantly to the integrity of the past, present, and future family group.

This significant contribution operated at both a conceptual level and a tangible one: the fact that these holy abbots and abbesses had once inhabited the same space underscored the particular significance of the house's physical presence and further distinguished and elevated monastic space from a secular one. In the late eleventh century, Goscelin expressed this notion in his *Vita Edithae* when he described how the oral history of the saint had functioned amongst successive generations at Wilton:

> Her pure character [i.e. Edith's] indeed, and her life, spreading sweetness far and wide through the land of the churches, but especially towards her own people, diffuse so immediate a fragrance of virtues as if she herself were still here today; and often in visions among the sisters she is seen as if still alive and embodied. Her own special places and her occupations are also well known: 'Here she was accustomed to read, here to pray; she achieved such and such things in the Lord.'[116]

Local saints, like Edith, Benedict Biscop, or the abbots of Æthelwulf's minster, served an essential function to monastic communities – they united fellow monks and nuns and provided them with a distinctive heritage for their particular spiritual family.

[116] Goscelin, *Vita S. Edithae*, in 'The Vita of Edith,' trans. Wright and Loncar, *Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin's Legend of Edith and Liber Confortatius*, ed. Hollis and Barnes (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 23-24.

Networks constructed through veneration

In addition to the members of individual houses, the veneration of both local and universal saints united monastic communities diverse in gender, place, and regular life. The inclusion of local saints, in particular, in liturgical calendars reveals significant bonds between congregations – offering a window onto inter-house relationships that operated beyond the confines of formal confraternal ties. By including the local saint of another house into its calendar, a monastic community committed itself to a significant ritual obligation and acknowledgement. As it has been seen, celebrating a saint's feast day involved a series of dedicated readings and special liturgical practices. Thus, a community that committed itself to the veneration of another house's local saint acknowledged in a significant manner that saint's sanctity. The importance of this acknowledgement must be underscored: at a time when formal papal canonisation did not operate on a large scale if at all, a saint was made through a community's decision to venerate him or her. Therefore, the extant liturgical calendars should be taken as representations of a network of monastic houses actively engaging with each other through the veneration of each other's saints.

Three localizable and roughly contemporaneous calendars provide an example of the active networks constructed through veneration. The calendars in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 579, and London, BL, Add. MS 37517 all contain a substantial number of local saints from a diverse group of English houses, both male and female (see Table 1 and Fig. A). The calendars in these three manuscripts reveal a network of prominent houses joined through the veneration of each other's local saints.[117] The

[117] The exchange between nunneries and their male counterparts is further revealed in the shared liturgical material from the period. Ælfwine's Prayerbook, produced sometime before 1035 at the New Minster, contains prayers which have been altered with feminine forms by a twelfth-century scribe; however, Beate Günzel, the

conspicuousness of nunneries in this network highlights the notion that sanctity and monasticism are not easily divisible along lines of gender: as vowed individuals operating in monastic spaces, nuns and monks sought to achieve the same goal, a holy life and divine union. The network reflects the importance of female monks and female saints in the religious landscape of the later tenth century. Overwhelmingly, the local saints of the female houses represented in this network were comparatively recent saints, saints who had died not in the remote past but in the more immediate past of the early decades of the tenth century. The women venerated at Shaftesbury, Nunnaminster, and Romsey had contributed to the communities through various means before their deaths: S. Ælfgifu, wife of Edmund I, endowed Shaftesbury with significant estates, S. Eadburh joined the Nunnaminster community as a nun, and S. Mærwynn presided over Romsey as abbess. The presence of these local saints in the calendars of prominent male houses testifies to the royal nunneries' importance in the religious landscape of the late tenth century. The commitment and acknowledgement implied by the veneration of the nunneries' local saints at male houses indicates that the nunneries' saints, at the very least, were considered legitimate and

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most recent editor of London, BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvi+xxvii, has argued that several of the early eleventh-century prayers were copied from an exemplar which itself contained feminine forms, Günzel, *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, p. 4. The sharing of liturgical materials is further demonstrated in the early eleventh-century prayerbook London, BL, Cotton MS Galba A.XIV. The variety and number of scribes demonstrates that the book was added to over the course of the first half of the eleventh century. Many prayers in the book contain inflexions that indicate use by both men and women, for example masculine forms are sometimes glossed with feminine endings and vice versa. The most recent editor of the book, Bernard Muir, noted that some prayers include masculine and feminine forms side by side 'perhaps indicating that they are hybrid forms produced inadvertently as the texts were produced,' *A Pre-Conquest English Prayer Book*, p. xiv. The book's place of production and use remain difficult to establish, but Muir suggested that the Winchester houses formed the most probable environment for the book's use, ibid., pp. xiv-xv. Citing the prayers to SS. Æthelwold (no. 77), Machutus (Malo) (nos. 78 and 91), Milburg (nos. 100 and 101), Edward Martyr (no. 98), and Ælfgifu (no. 102), Michael Lapidge has suggested that the book was used 'by a dependency of Winchester, perhaps Shaftesbury,' *Anglo-Saxon Litanies*, p. 70. However, as the networks constructed through veneration (in addition to the conspicuous wealth and prominence of the royal nunneries, in particular) reveal notions of dependency do not accurately describe the relationships between male and female houses in this period. The elite groups of houses represented in the networks of veneration indicate that male and female houses were active participants in a common project. The role of gender in the understanding of sanctity and monasticism was dynamic, not reductive – requiring an inclusive model.

important members of the earthly and divine *communiones sanctorum* constructed through veneration.

The veneration of the saints achieved significant rewards for the monks and nuns of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries: it unified earthly and divine communities within individual houses and constructed bonds amongst monastic congregations. The saints, both local and universal, served as models and active members of these congregations, which in turn transformed themselves into fit company for their divine companions.

Figure A. English monastic houses joined through veneration of each other's saints, according to liturgical calendars in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, Leofric Missal B, and the Bosworth Psalter

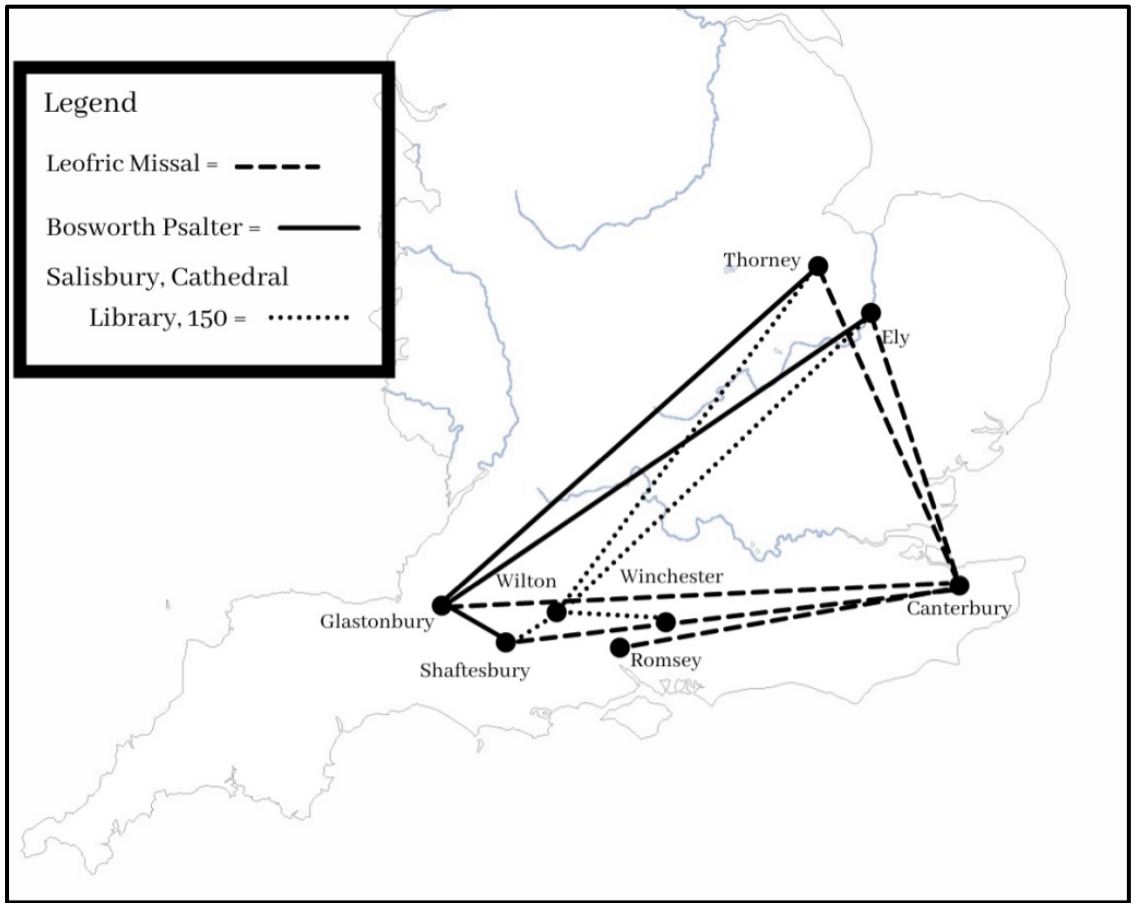


Table 1. Local saints in three late tenth-century English calendars

Calendar	Date and provenance	Select local saints and their associated houses
Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, fo. 3r-8v	c. 969x987, Wilton	▪ Winchester (Old and New Minsters, Nunnaminster): SS. Birinus, Swithun, Grimbald, Eadburh ▪ Ely: SS. Æthelthryth and Seaxburh ▪ Shaftesbury: S. Edward Martyr ▪ Thorney: S. Botwulf
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 579, fo. 39r-44v [Leofric Missal]	Calendar in 'Leofric Missal B' added c. 969x979 at Canterbury (previously attributed to Glastonbury)	▪ Glastonbury: SS. Ceolfrith and Aidan ▪ Ely: S. Æthelthryth ▪ Thorney: S. Benedict Biscop ▪ Shaftesbury: S. Edward Martyr
London, British Library, Add. MS 37517, fo. 2r-3r [The Bosworth Psalter]	Calendar added between 988 and 1000, possibly at Christ Church, Canterbury or Glastonbury	▪ Thorney: SS. Botwulf, Benedict Biscop ▪ Ely: SS. Æthelthryth, Seaxburh, Wihtburh ▪ Winchester (Old and New Minsters, Nunnaminster): SS. Swithun, Grimbald, Eadburh ▪ Glastonbury: SS. Ceolfrith and Aidan ▪ Romsey: S. Mærwynn ▪ Shaftesbury: SS. Ælfgifu and Edward Martyr ▪ Canterbury: SS. Hadrian, Dusntan, Augustine, Theodore, Honorarius

Conclusion

The saints provided fertile ground for the construction of monastic identity, on both an individual and communal scale. Woven into the ritual structures of daily life, a *communio sanctorum* formed a real presence in monastic congregations. Monastic practice united earthly and divine groups, ultimately distinguishing monks and nuns as specifically holy individuals. In an increasingly diverse religious landscape, the distinctive and significant holy status of monastic men and women needs to be underscored. The Benedictine Reform consciously looked back onto an earlier 'golden age' in the English Church, the nostalgia for this age produced a new vision of an ideal Church – a Church structured according to monastic principle. The framework for monastic practice and the importance of the saints in achieving a special status for monasticism reveal that this vision was not a misinterpreted imitation: it sought to distinguish and purify the English Church by means of a pure and distinctive life. The role of the saints in monastic practice was far-reaching, in the following chapter we will examine the ways in which the reformers of the tenth century purposefully idealised monasticism – here it must be emphasised that they were able to do so because of the profound integration of divine and earthly *communiones sanctorum*.

Chapter 2
An Ideology of Reform Monasticism and the Cult of Saints

Introduction

Compiled around the year 1031 at the New Minster, the *Secgan be þam Godes sanctum þe on Engla lande ærost reston* resting place list claimed to provide an authoritative record of all the saints whose relics lay in early medieval England. The full list, in the form in which it survives, represents in reality two separate projects: its first half, known as the Secgan A, was probably composed sometime before the ninth century whereas its second half, the Secgan B, provided a record of the saints in England from c. 950 to the time of the full list's composition.[1] The two halves of this list present a striking shift in the cult of the saints in early medieval England. Each of the twenty-seven saints in the Secgan A rested at a distinct house, hinting at a religious landscape in which there was one saint for every minster.[2] The Secgan B, however, suggests a very different landscape, one in which a handful of monasteries kept the relics of all the saints in England.[3] While the Secgan B cannot be taken as an exhaustive or complete record of the saints venerated in early medieval England, it remains nonetheless revealing. The select group of houses represented in the Secgan B list is remarkable for more than its collection of relics, overwhelmingly, it is composed of the prominent 'reformed' houses of the

[1] David Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England,' *ASE*, 7 (1978), p. 68.
[2] S. Oswald, the seventh-century Northumbrian king, is the exception: his head and right arm rested, according to the Secgan A, at Bamburgh while the remainder of his body rested at Gloucester, Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting-places,' p. 87.
[3] For example, the list recorded that nine saints rested at Thorney, eight at the Old Minster, three, respectively, at Ramsey, Peterborough, and Romsey, Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting-places,' pp. 89-93.

tenth century. The Secgan B sits at the intersection of reform monasticism and the cult of saints, prompting the question: what role did the cult of saints play in the reform of monastic life?

The proliferation of new saints and renewed interest in ancient saints in the later tenth century points to an intimate relationship between an idea of reform and the cult of saints. Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald have been credited with promoting cults programmatically, with the intention of disseminating either the renewal of a golden age for the English Church or adherence to a pure form of Benedictine monasticism.[4] One saint in particular seems to have fulfilled the role of patron saint of reform monasticism. The Virgin Mary, celebrated for her exceptional purity and unique intercessory powers, encapsulated an ideal of holy monastic living, a virgin parent with whom many an abbot or abbess could identify.[5] Both Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald demonstrated an exceptional personal devotion to the Virgin. During Æthelwold's episcopacy, Winchester became a center of Marian devotion, producing new Offices for the Virgin in addition to new material for her principal feasts.[6] Oswald built and dedicated a church to Mary at his see in Worcester, to which his remains were translated in 1002.[7] The devotion to Mary focused primarily upon the salvific power of her virginity.[8] As the vigil for the feast of the Nativity in the New Minster Missal extolled:

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[4] See above, Introduction, p. 26.
[5] As Clayton noted, the wave of new monastic foundation during the Benedictine Reform was accompanied by an 'almost universal practice of dedicating, or even rededicating, monasteries to her,' a practice which 'must have been deeply influential in causing those who worshipped in them to regard the Virgin as their personal *protectrix*,' *Cult of the Virgin*, p. 270.
[6] Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin*, pp. 65-88.
[7] Byrhtferth, *VO*, IV.4; Lapidge, 'Introduction,' *The Lives of St. Oswald and St. Ecgwine*, pp. lxvii-lxviii.
[8] Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin*, pp. 65-88, esp. 84-5.

> And so, may she open the door of eternal light for us. She, the incorrupt virgin and the door of life, brought forth the author of salvation. She whom the angels praise.[9]

The cult of Mary in the tenth century was also marked by an interest in her position as Queen of Heaven, the power of the saint's virginity became blended with her royal status to produce a uniquely powerful intercessor. The reformers' devotion to the Virgin Mary reveals an active interest in defining the nature and conditions of sanctity, one which deserves further investigation as it complicates the role that the cult of saints played in monastic reform. Devotion to certain cults, like the Virgin's, could signal a community's adherence to reform; however, if the reformers were in the process of redefining what it meant to be a saint, it follows that we should look for certain principles of sanctity in addition to certain cults as we investigate the relationship between the reform of monastic life and the cult of saints.

This investigation begins with the writings of Bishop Æthelwold, the only one of the three tenth-century 'reformers' to have left a substantial record of his vision of 'reform monasticism.' In prescriptive literature, historical writing, and a charter proem, Æthelwold constructed an ideology of reform monasticism that elevated 'monk' to an exceptional status and an exceptional company, the divine host of the saints in heaven. As Æthelwold sought to redefine the importance of monasticism, he created a blended language of monasticism and sanctity. His pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, further developed the language of monastic sanctity in the *Lives of Saints*, arguably the most influential 'reform' text for monastic communities. Sanctity and monastic practice became intertwined, so much so that the litanies of the saints began to commemorate 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae.' In the ideology of two

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[9] 'New Minster Missal,' ed. Turner, *The missal of the New Minster, Winchester*, (London, 1962), p. 157: 'Ipsa quoque nobis lucis aeternae ianuam aperiat, quae ianua uitae facta, salutis auctorem uirgo edidit incorrupta. Quem laudant angeli.'

generations of reformers, the saints were both examples and companions to an exceptional order of religious men and women.[10]

I. Constructing and exceptional status

Across several texts, *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, the *Regularis Concordia*, and the New Minster Foundation Charter, Bishop Æthelwold constructed an ideology of monastic superiority that created a special status for monasticism. This elevated monks above other orders and transformed them into companions of Christ's angelic host. The exceptional nature of monastic life, in Æthelwold's ideology, rested upon two principles: monasticism's apostolic heritage and its sacrificial condition. The former situated monasticism in an unfolding scheme of Christian salvation while also demonstrating its proximity to Christ's own life. Living as the apostles had, monks (and nuns) served as the true and pure disciples of Christ in the age of grace. The sacrifice required by this mode of living underscored the radical and exceptional choice that individual monastic men and women made. Monastic enclosure was transformed into an arena in which individuals could offer themselves as

[10] In her analysis of the spiritual-sexual hierarchy constructed by the tenth-century reformers, Catherine Cubitt has compellingly argued that Ælfric, more so than any other reformer, elevated male monastic virginity above that of female monastic virginity, 'Virginity and Misogyny,' pp. 9-10. Ælfric explored the distinctive perfection of male virginity in his *passiones* of chaste spouses and in his adaption of the *Admonitio* (for discussion of the *Admonitio* see above, Chapter 1, p. 72-6). As Cubitt demonstrated in 'Virginity and Misogyny', Ælfric's misogyny, and that of the other reformers, complicates our understanding of the position of women in the tenth-century reform: on the one hand, the *RC* clearly envisioned a monastic landscape populated by both men and women, on the other hand, reformers like Ælfric espoused a sustained misogyny and none founded houses for women. In this chapter, I have chosen to treat the elevation of monasticism in Ælfric and Æthelwold's writings as applicable to both men and women for two reasons: first, monasteries and nunneries did not operate completely independently of each other and it is my view that while the reformers may have cared to underscore the importance of monks over that of nuns, they nonetheless understood both as belonging under the umbrella of 'monasticism'; second, as Pauline Stafford has shown and as I will explore in Chapter 5, many nunneries were adept at operating within the misogynistic, patriarchal framework for monasticism established by the reformers. They were able to use the rhetoric of reform and sanctity to their own advantage, manoeuvring which belies a more complicated and dynamic socio-religious landscape than Ælfric's overt misogyny would have us believe.

sacrifices and serve as witnesses to the faith. The monk and nun's commitment to virginity functioned as an active and continuous choice, a rebellion against nature that earned them a living sanctity. From the turn of the eleventh century, the litanies of the saints composed in England began to reflect the legacy of this exceptional status: a new order of sanctity, described with the line 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae,' began to be added to the lists of confessors, martyrs, and virgins.

An apostolic heritage

Both the proem to the *Regularis Concordia* and *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries* constructed a history of Christian of salvation in which the development of monasticism played a central role. According to *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, the monastic life was first established by the apostles who 'all had one heart and one soul, and no one of them had private possession, nor even said that he had any, but all things were common unto them.'[11] By casting monasticism as an apostolic life, Æthelwold elevated the spiritual authority of monks (and nuns) over and above that of their clerical counterparts. In *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries* this history for monasticism was placed into the mouth of Pope Gregory who, in Æthelwold's retelling, mandated that S. Augustine of Canterbury establish monasteries throughout the English kingdoms. This rehearsal of English ecclesiastical history drew from Gregory's *Libellus responsionum*, which was integrated into Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* I. 27. To describe the challenges faced by the Christian missionaries, whom he framed in apostolic terms,[12] Bede included a series of questions and answers reputedly put to

[11] *EEM*, pp. 144-5.
[12] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), I. 25-6.

Pope Gregory by Augustine of Canterbury. Æthelwold's *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries* adapted Gregory's answer to Augustine's first question in this *Libellus*, namely 'How should bishops live with their clergy?' According to Æthelwold, Gregory replied:

> He eagerly admonished and instructed his deputy messenger [Augustine] that he should eagerly found monasteries to the praise and honour of Christ, and should teach and establish for the servants of God the same mode of life which the apostles maintained with their society in the beginning of our Christianity: they all had one heart and one soul, and no one of them had private possession, nor even said that he had any, but all things were common unto them.[13]

However, in the *Libellus responsionum* the emphasis was entirely different: Gregory suggested that it was appropriate for Augustine, who was 'learned in the rules of the monastery,' to establish *himself* as a bishop who lived according to the apostolic way of life, with everything held in common:

> But because you, brother, learned in the rules of the monastery, ought not to live separately from your clerics in the English Church, which, through God the founder, has recently been lead to the faith, you ought to institute that way of life which was followed by our fathers in the beginning of the early Church, in which none of them said that anything they possessed was their own, but that they had all things in common.[14]

In *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, Æthelwold did not manipulate the origins of monasticism in England, and indeed Christendom, without precedent. In his *Diadema monachorum*, the Carolingian exegete Smaragdus of St. Mihiel had argued that Paul, in his epistles to the Thessalonians, Galatians, and Philippians, had set down a rule for Christian life

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[13] *EEM*, pp. 144-5: 'He georne þone his gespelian þurh ærendracan manode 7 lærde þæt he georne mynstra timbryde Criste to lofe 7 weorþunge, 7 þæm Godes þeowum þone ylecan þeaw tæhte 7 gesette þe þa apostolas mid heora geferrædene on þam aginne ures Cristendomes heoldon: him eallum wæs an heorte 7 an saul, ne heora nan syndrige æhta næfde, ne þæt furþum ne gecwæþ þæt he ænige hæfde, ac ealle þing heom gemæne wæron.'

[14] Gregory the Great, 'Gregorio Episcopo Augustino,' MGH Epp. 1-2, vol. II, Liber XI no.56, p. 333: 'Sed quia tua fraternitas monasterii regulis erudite seorsum vivere non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quae auctore Deo nuper adhuc ad fidem perducta est, hance debet conversationem instituere quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris, in quibus nullus eorum ex his quae possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed errant eis communia.'

which required living communally in a disciplined manner.[15] This apostolic heritage for monasticism transformed Peter and Paul into both spiritual fathers of the Church and spiritual fathers of monasticism. Smaragdus underscored the exceptional history of monasticism by presenting monks as the blessed sons of God, with particular intercessory powers.[16] This history infused monasticism with a spiritual authority that elevated it above the secular order of the Church – it also provided a powerful support to Æthelwold's argument that monasticism served as a standard for the entire English Church. The proem to the *Regularis Concordia* presented the Synodal Council of Winchester of 973 and the *Regularis Concordia* itself as a return to both Gregory's injunction and an original order:

> And with the whole effort of their minds upon obeying his [i.e., Edgar's] commandments immediately, they considered the documents of our blessed Pope Gregory which were sent to the blessed Augustine. [In these documents Gregory] advised that he [i.e., Augustine] ought to institute the distinguished customs of not only the Roman but also the Gallican churches for use in the rude in English Church which needed to be adorned. Contemplating [these documents], they sent men to Fleury of the blessed Benedict and also to the distinguished monastery, which is celebrated by the name of Ghent, collecting from them the best and most worthy monastic customs.[17]

In *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, Æthelwold further elaborated the theme that Edgar's reign marked a return to an earlier golden age by creating a narrative of decline and renewal. He claimed that before Edgar's accession 'there were only a few monks in a few

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[15] The *Diadema monachorum* was copied along with the *Regula Benedicti*, Usuard's Martyrology, and several texts from the 816 and 817 Councils at Aachen in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 57 (s. x/xi), known as the 'Abingdon copy' of the *Regula Benedicti*, see above Chapter 1, n. 123. The *Diadema* survives in three other manuscripts: Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. 4. 43 (Christ Church, Canterbury, s. x^{ex}); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 451 (Nunnaminster, Winchester, s. xi/xii); Cambridge, Clare College, MS Kk. 4. 4 (s. xi/xii). In addition to the *Diadema*, Smaragdus' commentary on the *Regula Benedicti* was also known to the tenth-century reformers, Gretsch, '*Æthelwold's translation of the RSB*,' pp. 144-6. For Smaragdus' argument regarding a Pauline rule see *Diadema monachorum*, *PL* 102, col. 669-70.

[16] Smaragdus, *Diadema monachorum*, col. 675-6.

[17] *RC*, Proem, § 5, p. 71-2: 'Nam ilico eius imperiis toto mentis conamine alacriter obtemperantes sanctique patroni nostri Gregorii documenta, quibus beatum Augustinum monere studuit, ut non solum Romanae uerum etiam Galliarum honestos aecclesiarum usus in rudi Anglorum ecclesia decorando constitueret, recolentes, accitis Florensis beati Benedicti necnon praecipui coenobii quo celebri Gent nuncupator uocabulo, monachis queque ex dignis eorum moribus honesta colligentes [...].'

places in so large a kingdom who lived by the right rule' and that, once king, Edgar endowed Abingdon 'so greatly that it was not inferior to or meaner than many of those which his ancestors had advanced over a long period.'[18] The 'cleansing' of holy places functioned as a significant feature of this narrative of renewal-return. This cleansing, according to Æthelwold, entailed the expulsion of clerics and their replacement by monks. It was presented not only as a return to an original order, but more significantly it functioned as a consequence of monks' superior purity.[19] The proem to the *Regularis Concordia* articulated the same narrative of decline and renewal and, in both texts, Æthelwold presented the monastic life as a truly ideal one.[20]

The idealisation of monasticism received its fullest treatment in the text of the New Minster Foundation Charter (S 745). Composed in the early years of Æthelwold's episcopate and almost a decade before the *Regularis Concordia*, the lavishly decorated and elaborately written charter not only commemorated King Edgar's generous endowment of the New Minster, it also sketched a cosmological schema in which monks functioned as the elect replacements for the seats in heaven left empty by the fallen angels. The history of Christian salvation narrated in this charter began with the fall of the rebel angels and the creation of

[18] *EEM*, p. 148-9.
[19] *EEM*, p. 150: 'Assuredly he [Edgar] drove out canons who abounded beyond measure in the aforesaid sins, and he established monks in the foremost places of all his dominion for the glorious service of the Saviour Christ.'
[20] *RC*, Proem, §2, pp. 69-70: 'Comperto etiam quod sacra coenobia diuresis sui regiminis locis diruta ac pene domini nostril Jhesu Christi seruitio destitute neglegenter tabescerent, domini conpunctus gratia cum magna animi alacritate festinando ubicumque locorum decentissime restaurauit eiectisque neglegentium clericorum spurcitiis non solum monachus uerum etiam sanctimonialis patribus matribusque constitutes ad dei famulatum ubique per tantam sui regni amplitudinem deuotissime constituit bonisque omnibus locupletans gratulabundus ditauit'; 'And having learnt that the blessed monasteries in diverse places in his kingdom were wasting away and hardly able to serve our Lord Jesus Christ having been either destroyed or heedlessly abandoned, he was goaded to plea for the Lord's grace with all his soul and rushing with great alacrity he splendidly restored every place and ejected the negligent clerics with their filth. He established not only monks but also nuns who devoutly followed abbots and abbesses in the service of god throughout the breadth of his kingdom and offering them congratulations and embellishments he enriched them with all good things.'

man as a consequence,[21] this forms the first instance of a recurring motif of decline and restoration throughout the charter. Æthelwold situated Edgar's expulsion of clerics from the New Minster as the latest redemptive event in a series that began with Adam and Eve's fall from paradise, the decline of Noah's descendants after the Flood, and the restoration of man through Christ.[22] The expulsion of clerics from the New Minster mirrored the expulsion of angels from heaven and man from paradise, and, writing in the voice of King Edgar, Æthelwold elaborated on the reasons for this act: not only had the clerics become depraved, they were acting rebelliously by neglecting the proper performance of their services to God.[23] Their replacement by monks not only righted a degraded order, but also improved the health of the kingdom:

> I have driven away the wanton clerks, and I, [...], have faithfully appointed thither true worshippers of God, observing the monkish degree [of humility], who might intercede for our sins, and for those of our people lying at rest there, by zealous service, [so that], fortified by their intercessions, the condition of our kingdom might thrive.[24]

Monks, both at the New Minster and throughout the kingdom, were presented as the true representatives of the king and their regulated life transformed them into spiritual warriors

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[21] NMFC (S 745), p. 73-95. The first 'chapter' of the document narrated God's creation of man, p. 75: 'When indeed the abode of Heaven had been emptied, and the filth of swollen pride had been put out of doors, the Supreme Judge of All Goodness did not allow the bright dwellings of Heaven to remain still without an inhabitant; [...] He at length shaped Man out of clay. [...] Subjecting all created things on the surface of the whole universe to Man, He subjected Man and his progeny to Himself, until his descendants to come should make good the number of angels driven out, full of pride, from the dwellings of Heaven'; 'Euacata namque polorum sede et eliminate tumidi fastus spurcitia summus totius bonitatis arbiter lucidas celorum sedes non sine cultore passus torpere formatis ex informi materia diuersarum rerum speciebus hominem tandem ex limo conditum uite spiraculo ad sui formauit similitudinem. Cui uniuersa totius cosmi superficie condita subiciens seipsum suosque posteros sibi subiecit quatenus eius exsecutura posteritas angelorum suppleret numerum celorum sedibus supervia turgente destrusum.'

[22] NMFC, chs. II – VII, pp. 76 – 81.

[23] Ibid., ch. VII, p. 81: 'I, the vicar of Christ, have expelled the crowds of depraved canons from the various monasteries of our kingdom, [...] they who were contaminated with diverse blemishes of vices were not performing the things which God wished in his commandments, and were rebelliously doing all things which God did not wish.'

[24] Ibid., ch. VIII, p. 82: 'clericos lasciuientes repuli ac ueros Dei cultores monachico gradu fungentes qui pro nostris nostrorumque inibi quiescentium excessibus sedulo intercederent seruitio quo eorum intercessionibus nostril regiminis tatus uigeret.'

who effectively defended king and kingdom from 'the rabid persecution of invisible enemies.'[25] In the binary opposition created between licentious clerics and pure monks, Æthelwold lent a redemptive quality to monastic practice: through their intercessory prayer and regular observance, mankind might do justice to Christ's sacrifice. This unequivocally elevated monks over and above their clerical counterparts and powerfully implied that they were the true inheritors of the empty angelic seats in heaven.

Holy sacrifice

Around the year 1006, Æthelwold's famous pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, promoted this ideology of monastic superiority in his pastoral letter to Wulfstan. Ælfric wrote that the 'men and women who live in chastity' practised an ancient Christian tradition. According to Ælfric they lived in the same fashion as the earliest Christians in Jerusalem, in community and without possessions.[26] In addition to this form of communal living, monks and nuns' dedication to chastity earned them a favoured place in the heavenly realms:

> Those are men and women who live in chastity, and offer themselves entirely to God as a sacrifice, both in soul and in body; and they shall have the better dwelling within God's walls and the eternal name in his house with him.[27]

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[25] NMFC, ch. VIII p. 83 and ch. XV, pp. 88-9: 'Abbas autem armis succinctus spiritalibus monarchorum cuneo hinc inde uallatus carismatum celestium rore perfusus aerias demonum expugnans uersutias regem omnemque sui regiminis clerum Christo cuius uirtute dimicant iuuante a rabida hostium persecution inuisibilium sollerter spiritus gladio defendens fideo scuto subtili protegens tutamine robusto prelians triumph miles eripiat inperterritus.'

[26] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' §42, p. 271: 'Her wæs asteald þurh þisne haligan heap þæra muneca lif þe libbað æfter regule under hyra abode; ealle hyra þingc him doð gemæne, swa swa him diht se abbod'; 'Here was established by this holy band [i.e., the apostles] the life of the monks who live according to rule under their abbot; they place all their things in common, according as the abbot directs them.'

[27] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' §94-95, p. 280-1: 'Þæt synd wæpmen ⁊ wifmen þe wuniað on clænnysse, ⁊ hi sylfe offriað eall Gode on sægdnysse, ge on sawle ge on lichaman; hi sceolon habban þa selran wununge binnan Godes weallum ⁊ þone ecean naman on his huse mid him.'

Significantly, Ælfric portrayed the commitment to chaste living as a sacrifice. This sacrifice functioned as witness to the faith, a martyrdom, that particularly distinguished monks and nuns from all other Christians. The violence of virginity and chaste living transformed monks and nuns into an especially holy order of living Christian, and, as it has been demonstrated, their disciplined life had the power to make them into living saints – or so Æthelwold and Ælfric argued.

The interweaving of virginity, martyrdom, and monasticism had a long tradition in early medieval English sources. Bede's eighth-century *Martyrology* had placed the virginal abbess S. Æthelthryth amongst the martyrs and by the time of the *Regularis Concordia* monks and nuns were enjoined to read a martyrology at Chapter.[28] Significantly for the reformers, Aldhelm's late seventh-century *De virginitate* provided a thorough meditation on the significance of virginity and martyrdom to the monastic life. Æthelwold seems to have had a particular fascination with Aldhelm's Latin prose, enthusiastically promoting not only the study of Aldhelm's work but also supporting sustained efforts to gloss many of these works in Latin and Old English.[29] Æthelwold's study of Aldhelm's works probably began at Glastonbury in the 940s and 950s, at which time he studied alongside Dunstan. Dunstan's role in promoting the study of Aldhelm through glossing projects remains more difficult to determine, nonetheless there is a tantalizing possibility that Dunstan annotated the verse rendering of Aldhelm's treatise on virginity, known as the *Carmen de virginitate*.[30]

[28] Bede, 'Martyrology,' in J. Dubois and G. Renaud (eds), *Édition Pratique des Martyrologes de Bède, de L'Anonyme Lyonnais et de Florus* (Paris, 1976), p. 113.
[29] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 332-83 esp. 376-83.
[30] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, p. 351.

Originally composed for the seventh-century nuns of Barking, Aldhelm's *De virginitate* provided a full and nuanced exploration of the relationship between virginity, sanctity, and monastic *praxis*. In this treatise, Aldhelm presented virginity as the highest of virtues, 'next kin to angelic beatitude,' and one particularly mandated by Christ.[31] Virginity, for Aldhelm, was as much a spiritual state as a physical one and, consequently, an active rather than passive condition: in order to attain and maintain this virtue, the Christian had to contend in an arena fraught with vice and temptation – 'wherefore let no-one trust that the sole attribute of purity without the assistance of other virtues will suffice in attaining fully to perfection, and as if, were it alone preserved, he might be relaxed and confident without (taking on) the conflict of the remaining vices.'[32] In order to demonstrate and exemplify how one ought to labour in this contest, Aldhelm provided a series of saintly *exempla*, which he grouped according to their order of sanctity: Old and New Testament figures, apostles and evangelists, confessors, martyrs, and virgins. The preface framed the virginity and *passiones* of these saints as demonstrations that chastity and the contemplative life formed the most perfect routes to sanctity. Aldhelm cast the chastity required of monastic men and women as a violent martyrdom, 'the future eminence of the angelic life is now in a certain sense seized by violence beforehand by the male and female followers of intact virginity.'[33] Virginity was violent because it required the chaste one to spurn the laws of nature:

> For it is assuredly clear – because the violence is of the strictest and the way of life most difficult – that the man, whom maternal fecundity brought forth into the world from the natural womb of nativity, if he spurns the laws of nature, is bound to exist as an inseparable fellow of angelic chastity, and, before the dominion of horrendous is driven into black hell by the supreme glory of the

[31] Aldhelm, *De virginitate* in *Aldhelm: the prose works*, trans. Lapidge and Herren (Cambridge, 1979), §VII, p. 63: 'if the glory of holy virginity is believed to be next kin to angelic beatitude, [...], it ought to be extolled with the acclaim which it is due, since among the other ranks of the virtues it is singled out to wield the sceptre of the highest sovereignty and the sway of government; [...] so the divine majesty [...] set the special attribute of virginity before all the ranks of virtues in general.'
[32] Aldhelm, *DV*, §XV, p. 71.
[33] Aldhelm, *DV*, §XVIII, p. 74.

> resurrection and 'this corruptible (body) puts on incorruptibility' [1 Cor. 15:53], earthly celibates are compelled in a wonderful manner to become heavenly citizens.[34]

Framed in this way, the examples offered by the saints in the treatise were poised to galvanise the monastic woman or man to embrace and transform herself or himself through virginity. Martial imagery was used throughout the preface to describe monastic virginity, notably the nuns of Barking were advised to imagine themselves as wrestlers in the arena of martyrdom – evoking the image of Perpetua's own heroic struggle.[35] More generally, aspirants to virginity were described as martyrs facing death: 'goaded on by the spear of divine love and inflamed by the blazing torch of heavenly ardour, that every day they eagerly long to depart from the prison of the body.'[36] In the examples of the saints which followed, the crown of virginity was just as often the crown of martyrdom. This treatise, directed at a monastic audience, transformed the monastic enclosure into an arena in which the individual monk or nun fought to attain a state of virginity. If successful, the 'earthly celibate' achieved a living sanctity as a fellow citizen in the kingdom of heaven.

Aldhelm's equation of monastic virginity to angelic beatitude may have provided an essential foundation for Bishop Æthelwold's own argument that monks could fill the empty seats of the fallen angels; however, his treatise was not the only one to frame chastity and virginity as transformative virtues. Smaragdus' *Diadema* also cast the virtue of chastity in terms of martyrdom:

> For if Christ is chastity, truth, and justice, then that which lies in ambush [i.e. desire] is the persecutor, and so he who wishes to guard against [the one who lies in ambush] and the other vices and preserve himself, will be a martyr.[37]

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[34] Aldhelm, *DV*, §XVIII, p. 74.
[35] Aldhelm, *DV*, §II, p. 60.
[36] Aldhelm, *DV*, §XIV, p. 70.
[37] Smaragdus, *Diadema monachorum*, col. 688: 'Si enim castitas, et veritas, et justitia Christus est, sicut ille qui insidiatur persecutor est, ita et ille quic haec in defensare et in se custodire voluerit, martyr erit.'

Both Aldhelm and Smaragdus conceded that chastity was a virtue that ought to be sought after by both the secular and regular orders; however, they also made clear that the regular order more consistently attained and maintained this virtue. Indeed, Smaragdus argued that God had announced his virtues particularly to monks.[38] Both authors portrayed a special relationship between the divine and monastic men and women, with the effect that monasticism formed the most perfect and appropriate witness to the faith. In this framework, the monastic life formed an *imitatio martyri*, and the sacrificial virginity that it required transformed the monk and nun into a living saint.

Given the significance of virginity to monastic integrity, it is not surprising that in its fourth chapter, concerning the instruments of good works for monks, the Old English *Regula Benedicti* reordered the long Latin list of instruments such that it began and ended with an emphasis on virginity: the tools pertaining to chastity were listed first and the list ended with a discussion of the importance of avoiding lust.[39] Indeed, in this light Ælfric's claim that the men and women living in chastity would have a better dwelling in heaven appears more than the simple repetition of Æthelwold's ideology, it reflects a deeply entrenched belief in the transformative power of monastic practice. Ælfric developed his argument for the spiritual significance of monastic virginity across several texts: his translation of the *Admonitio*, his *Lives of Saints*, and several homilies.[40] His Marian homilies for the Feast of the Assumption and the Nativity of the Virgin are particularly revealing. In his homily for the Feast of the Assumption, Ælfric not only styled Mary as queen of heaven ('heofonlican cwene') but also as the perfect martyr.[41] Other martyrs, Ælfric wrote, had suffered bodily harm, but Mary had suffered the

[38] Smaragdus, *Diadema monachorum*, col. 664-5.
[39] Old English *RSB*, pp. 58-77.
[40] See discussion of chastity in Ælfric's translation of the *Admonitio* in Chapter 1, p. 75-7. The *LS* will be considered in greater detail below.
[41] Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies* I.30, ed. P. Clemoes, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies I: the first series text* (Oxford, 1997).

most as she watched Christ removed from the cross. Her overwhelming and unique love for Christ made her interior suffering more painful than any physical torture, and, in this way, she performed the most perfect martyrdom.[42] By presenting Mary as an example for interior suffering, this homily elevated a spiritual martyrdom, which Ælfric labelled 'digela martirdom' or 'secret martyrdom' in another homily,[43] above a physical one. In his homily on the Nativity of the Virgin, [44] Ælfric argued that chaste monastic living functioned as an interior martyrdom:

> They make the best offering that anyone can, such that they become a holocaust, and that is a great offering, that they remain clean and daily contend with the invisible and treacherous fiend and with sinful desires, just as Christ taught. They are martyrs through the monastic life, martyred not outwardly but interiorly.[45]

In a homily for the Virgin, this statement, drawn from Jerome, placed monastic men and women in an exceptional scheme of salvation and spiritual perfection. By not only presenting chaste monks as sacrifices but the monastic life itself as an extended interior martyrdom, Ælfric revealed that monastic men and women imitated the greatest martyr of all, the Virgin

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[42] Ælfric, *CH* I. 30, pp. 433-4, ll. 140-5: 'Nu is heo mare þonne martyr for þan ðe heo þrowade þone martyrdom on hire sawle þe oþre martyras þrowodon on heora lichaman; Heo lufode crist ofer ealle oþre men. $_{7}$ for þy was eac hire sarnys be him toforan oþra manna. $_{7}$ heo dyde his deað hire agenne deað for þan ðe his þrowung swa swa swurd þurhferde hire sawle'; 'Now she is the best martyr because she suffered martyrdom in her soul whereas other martyrs suffered in their bodies; she loved Christ more than all others and thus her pain exceeded that of all the others near to him and at his death she died her own death because his suffering was like a sword through her soul.'

[43] Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies* II.37, ed. M. Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: the second series text* (London, 1979), p. 315, ll. 150-4 and 163. In this homily for the feast of a martyr, Ælfric drew from a Gregorian homily that distinguished spiritual suffering 'digela martirdom' from physical persecution 'openne martyrdom,' presenting the former as a martyrdom to be imitated by contemporary Christians.

[44] Ælfric composed this homily on the Nativity of the Virgin around the time of his pastoral letters to Wulfstan, c. 1005-6. The homily is constituted of two sections: a short meditation on the Virgin Mary followed by a lengthy discussion of virginity. For an analysis of the homily's sources and its relationship to Ælfric's other Marian pieces, see Clayton, 'Ælfric and the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,' *Anglia*, 104.3 (1986). The edition of the homily used here is 'III. Ælfric: Nativitas Sanctae Mariae Virginis,' ed. Bruno Assmann and reprint. Peter Clemoes, *Angelsächsische homilien und heiligenleben* (Darmstadt, 1964), pp. 24-47 (hereafter Assmann III).

[45] Assmann III, p. 35-6, ll. 289-95: 'Þæt synd ða mæstan lac, þe man mæg geoffrian, þæt he holocaustum beo, þæt is eall godes lac, swa swa þa clænen doð, þe dæghwamlice campiað wið ða ungesewenlican and ða swicolan fynd and wið unlustas, gelærede þurh Crist. Hi beoð Cristes martyras þurh ða munuclican drohtnunge, na æne gemartirode, ac oft digollice.'

Mary. Indeed, in another homily he argued that on Judgement Day faithful monks would sit alongside the apostles and act as judges.[46]

The platform that both Æthelwold and Ælfric gave to the idea that 'monk' constituted an exceptionally holy status had a profoundly significant consequence: from the turn of the eleventh century a new order of sanctity, 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae,' began to be entered into the litanies of the saints. The earliest extant example, the litany added around the year 1000 to Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 411, included this invocation between its lists of confessors and virgins.[47] The majority of litanies from the eleventh century also contain this invocation and, significantly, in each case the line 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae' was added without any further enumeration of monk or hermit saints. This suggests the elevation of an entire order rather than particular individuals, monks and hermits as a whole occupied a distinct place within the divine hierarchy of saints. Ælfric's homily for the feast of All Saints reflected this ordering of the divine host, including the position of the 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae.' This homily, largely drawn from the popular Latin sermon 'Legimus in ecclesiasticis historicis,' explained the various grades of saint.[48] Like the litanies which placed monks and hermits before the list of virgins, Ælfric preceded his discussion of virgin saints with a recitation of the holiness of the various types of monk, a

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[46] Ælfric, *CH* I, 27, p. 406: 'ðær beoð feower werod æt þam dome. twa gecorenra manna. ⁊ twa wiðercorenra; ðæt forme werod bið þæra apostola. ⁊ heor efenlæcendra. þa ðe ealle woruldþing for godes naman forleton: hi beoð ða demeras. ⁊ him ne bið nan dom gedemed.' Following this statement, Ælfric specified that monks constituted the imitators of the apostles and would thus additionally receive a hundredfold reward, *CH* I, 27, p. 407, esp. ll. 196-209. Milton Gatch has argued that this vision of Judgement Day, in which monks would join the ranks of the judges at Christ's right hand, was 'new to the English vernacular tradition,' *Preaching and Theology*, p. 83.
[47] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 411, fo. 140r-v. This psalter, copied in the early tenth century, appears to have been in use at a Benedictine monastery around the turn of the eleventh century. The litany which included 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae' also marked SS. Vincent and Benedict for special veneration through the use of square capitals. Michael Lapidge has argued that this points to its use at Abingdon, Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Litanies*, p. 66 and idem, 'Æthelwold and the *Vita S. Eustachii*,' in M. Bernhard and S. Krämer (eds), *Scire Litteras: Forschungen zum mittelalterlichen Geistesleben* (Munich, 1988), p. 260; however, others have argued for its production and use at Canterbury, see Francis Wormald, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Art: Some Questions and Suggestions,' in J. Alexander, T. Brown, and J. Gibbs (eds), *Collected Studies*, vol. I (London, 1984), p. 106.
[48] Malcolm Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 298-9.

notable rearrangement and expansion of his Latin source which only extolled the holiness of hermits.[49]

Notably, a litany which commemorated 'omnes sancti monachi et eremitae' formed part of the *ordo* for monastic ordination, which contains both masculine and feminine endings throughout, in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 44, produced in England in the second quarter of the eleventh century. The *ordo* prescribed that the abbot or abbess begin the formal acceptance of the novice with the recitation of the litany.[50] This invocation and acknowledgement of the divine members of the community followed the novice's promise given 'coram deo et sanctis eius' and served to emphasise that the novice sought to enter a unified earthly-heavenly community. Following the recitation of the litany, the abbot or abbess recited a series of prayers that underscored the postulant's act of renunciation. The *ordo* in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 44 expanded upon this theme with an additional prayer which linked the novice's adoption of monastic discipline to the apostles' way of life:

> Lord, this garment [which we wear] on our exterior is just as your cross and [by wearing it] we assimilate to an interior crucifixion through which we might be made worthy, [according] to the truth of your message spoken to Peter and the other apostles who relinquished all things and followed you in the promise and regeneration of being seated and acting as judges alongside you in the seat of your majesty.[51]

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[49] Ælfric, *CH* I.36 ll. 104-17, pp. 489-90; Anon., Homily on All Saints, beginning 'Legimus in ecclesiasticis historicis,' ed. J. E. Cross in '*Legimus in ecclesiasticis historicis*: A Sermon for All Saints and its use in Old English Prose,' *Traditio*, 33 (1977), p. 119, ll. 182-9. It should be noted that one manuscript of the sermon (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria Lat. 218, now K.II.24, fos. 1-5, s. xi) preserves a similar order to Ælfric's; however, the extant manuscript does not itself appear to have circulated in England. For discussion see Cross, '*Legimus*,' p. 125.

[50] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 44, p. 310.

[51] Cambridge, CCC MS 44, p. 315: 'Hoc domine indumentum sicut in exterioribus nostris beatae crucis tuae est assimilatio ita quis et in interioribus etiam unde crucifixo ut per hoc etiam digni efficiamur uera euangelii tui ad petrum et ad apostolos dicta promissione omnes omnia relinquentes et te sequentes in regeneratione in sede maiestatis tuae tecum sessuros et iudicaturos.'

Not only did these prayers invoke the presence of the saints, they also demanded that the novice align himself or herself with the saints at the point of entry to the monastic life. As the litanies of the saints indicated with their new order of sanctity and as the *ordo* in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 44 underscored, joining a monastic congregation as a monk or nun entailed a complete transformation of the individual. These liturgical sources reveal a profound legacy of the ideologies of reform monasticism promoted by Æthelwold and his pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham.

II. Disseminating the ideal of monastic sanctity

Beyond the prescriptive texts for monastic practice, the ideology of 'reform monasticism' was disseminated through hagiography. Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald were both venerated as saints in the years after their deaths and by the end of the tenth century substantial Latin hagiographies attested to the sanctity of each. As will be seen in the following chapter, the houses which produced these hagiographies strategically deployed the bishops' ideologies of monastic exceptionalism and thus presented themselves as exemplary communities. The *Vita Æthelwoldi* and *Vita Oswaldi* have had a tremendous influence on the history of the Benedictine Reform; while they certainly provide invaluable insight, it should be noted that they were not the only nor necessarily the most successful vehicles for the ideology of reform monasticism.[52] The turn of the eleventh century marked the beginning of a period in which a substantial corpus of vernacular hagiography began to be composed and

[52] Both Wulfstan of Winchester and Byrhtferth of Ramsey's Latin style required a high degree of Latin literacy to appreciate – the hermeneutic style cannot have been the most accessible language in which to widely disseminate a message.

circulated in the English kingdom.[53] One of the most prolific contributors to this corpus was himself a pupil of Bishop Æthelwold and, as already noted, was keen to promote the bishop's ideology of monastic exceptionalism. Ælfric of Eynsham's collection of Old English *passiones*, known as the *Lives of Saints*, was suffused with this ideology and its enduring success throughout the eleventh century arguably makes it the most influential text of the Benedictine Reform.

A monastic audience

Given the central importance of virginity, sacrifice, and spiritual warfare to the ideology of reform monasticism constructed by Bishop Æthelwold, it should come as no surprise that Ælfric of Eynsham promoted martyr saints as the most appropriate *exempla* for monastic men and women. In the preface to the *Lives of Saints*, Ælfric argued that the *passiones* of the martyrs excited a languishing faith and that his collection offered its audiences accounts which would stimulate faith and devotion to a good Christian life.[54] Throughout this collection the motifs of virginity, the renunciation of wealth and status, the importance of steadfast faith and patience recurred – cumulatively and individually the *passiones* in the *Lives of Saints* presented

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[53] The relationship between vernacular saints' lives and Latin sources has been the focus of a substantial and important body of scholarship, the most significant study being Whatley's *Acta Sanctorum* in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*. The detailed studies of Ælfric's use of his Latin source material in certain saints' lives from the *LS* have focused mainly upon Ælfric-as-author or have generally characterised a vague audience for the lives in the *Lives of Saints*. For an introductory bibliography to Old English hagiography see Claire Watson's review article, 'Old English Hagiography: Recent and Future Research' *Literature Compass* 1 (2004) ME 100, pp. 1-14, and for an introductory bibliography to Latin hagiography in the early medieval British Isles see Michael Lapidge and Rosalind Love, 'The Latin Hagiography of England and Wales (600–1550).' For an introduction to Ælfric's life and works see *A Companion to Ælfric*.

[54] Ælfric, *LS*, 'Praefatio,' p. 4: 'Illa a vero que scripturus sum suspicor non offendere audientes, sed magis fide torpentes recreare hortationibus, quia martyrum passiones nimium fidem erigant languentem'; 'And truly I think that those things I am about to write will not offend [their] listeners, but rather will revive by their exhortations those who are lethargic in faith, because the *passiones* of the martyrs greatly excite a languishing faith.'

monasticism as both a form of martyrdom and the ideal Christian life. The intertwining of martyrdom and monastic themes in these vernacular hagiographies transformed martyrs into specific *exempla* for monks and nuns. This section will examine this transformation, first by situating it in its monastic environment, second by analysing its theoretical framework, and, finally, by tracing its popularity in monastic houses from the end of the tenth and through the eleventh centuries.

The Lives of Saints *and Paul the Deacon's Homiliary: material for veneration*

As discussed in Chapter 1, the celebration of a saint's feast day entailed special readings, including but not limited to Nocturns.[55] Sermons, hagiographies, relevant Gospel lections all provided the necessary material for these special readings. Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* would have supplied a house with a substantial number of hagiographies and its usefulness to monastic audiences needs to be underscored.[56] Ælfric's own recourse to monastic libraries and texts has been well-documented in the search for his source-material for both the *Lives of Saints* and the two series of *Catholic Homilies*; however, the role that the *Lives of Saints* had to play in the veneration of saints in the monasteries which kept copies of it has received little attention beyond the work of Joyce Hill, who has traced the dissemination of the *Lives of Saints* texts in later Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.[57] This is perhaps due, on the one hand, to the assumption that

[55] See above Chapter 1, pp. 55-6.
[56] The audience and readership of the *LS* has been the subject of debate, the general consensus being that the *LS* was an accessible text, in style and language, that could have reached many different types of reading and listening communities. See esp. Wilcox, 'The Audience of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* and the Face of Cotton Caligula A. XIV, fols. 93-130.' Wilcox suggests numerous reading communities for the *LS*, both private and public in lay, secular, and regular contexts. Rebecca Stephenson has presented a compellingly case for a highly literate monastic audience for the *LS*, see above, Introduction, pp. 18-9.
[57] Joyce Hill, 'The Dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*;' in *Holy Men and Holy Women*; Hill, 'The Context of Ælfric's Saints' *Lives*.'

monastic communities would have preferred to read in Latin rather than the vernacular, and, on the other, to the fact that the *lives* in the *Lives of Saints* are more or less epitomes of Latin sources. However, as the Old English translation of the Benedictine Rule, the interlinear vernacular translation of the *Regularis Concordia*, and Ælfric's own *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham* and *Colloquy* reveal, Old English was a language of instruction in many early English monasteries[58] and thus we should see the *Lives of Saints* as an appropriate and valuable collection for a monastic house.

In addition to a hagiographical collection like the *Lives of Saints*, it would also have been good practice for a monastery to possess a collection of sermons for feast days, especially the feasts for which the house had no hagiography. As it has been noted, Paul the Deacon's Homiliary would have filled this need.[59] Significantly, Ælfric made use of a copy of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary as he created his two series of *Catholic Homilies* in the years before he embarked on his composition of the *Lives of Saints*.[60] Thus the influence of the Homiliary's framework for martyrs' *exempla* on Ælfric's own version of early Christian martyrs' *passiones*

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[58] Milton Gatch has noted that some monasteries may have had two schools, one in Latin and one in Old English, *Preaching and Theology*, p. 41. This system may have been introduced by Abbo of Fleury to Ramsey in the late tenth century, Cyril Hart argued that it was presupposed in Byrhtferth's *Manual*, Cyril Hart, 'Byrhtferth and his Manual,' *Medium Ævum*, 41 (1972), pp. 96-7.

[59] See above, Chapter 1, pp. 56-7.

[60] Peter Clemoes' study of the chronology of Ælfric's work remains an essential point of reference, Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works,' in P. Clemoes (ed), *The Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1959). Clemoes established that Ælfric began the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* in 989, embarked on the Second Series in 992 and completed the *LS* sometime between 992 – 1002 (all completed before his transfer from Cerne Abbas to Eynsham). Cyril Smetana was the first to demonstrate Ælfric's use of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary in his *Catholic Homilies*, Smetana, 'Ælfric and the Early Medieval Homiliary,' *Traditio* 15 (1959). Joyce Hill has further developed the study of Ælfric's use of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, she has demonstrated that Ælfric appears to have used a version of the Homiliary that was augmented with several sermons from Gregory the Great's Homilies on the Gospels, 'Ælfric's Manuscript of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary: A Provisional Analysis,' in *The Old English Homily* (2007), pp. 77-80. Significantly, Hill also showed that Ælfric's version of the Homiliary was unlikely to have had the prefatory material of the original Paul the Deacon Homiliary and thus Ælfric did not necessarily know that the Homiliary was Paul's composition, ibid., pp. 80-1; however, it is nonetheless clear that Ælfric considered the Homiliary an authoritative collection on par with the collections of Smaragdus and Haymo, ibid. In a detailed study of the surviving Latin sermons for saints in early medieval England, Thomas Hall has revealed that versions of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary continued to circulate after Ælfric, into the eleventh century and provided a rich resource for the veneration of saints, Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints.'

deserves further investigation. The Homiliary's Common of Saints, a collection of general sermons that could be adapted to a saint's feast day, in particular, framed martyrs as examples of asceticism, virginity, and self-denial and, cumulatively, its sermons for these types of saint emphasised that a Christian could be a contemporary martyr by adopting these practices. Read in a monastic environment, both the *Lives of Saints* and Paul the Deacon's Homiliary affirmed the essential principles of monastic life while revealing that martyrs offered an example of how to be a good monk or nun.

The framework: martyrs as monastic exempla

The sermons for martyrs and virgins in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary collectively argued that these saints offered relevant *exempla* for Christians living in times of peace. These sermons urged Christians to an *imitatio martyri* in which they adopted a life of continence and asceticism, actively suppressed desire, and envisioned an interior arena in which the soul struggled to offer a witness to the individual's faith. This framework for understanding the martyrs' *exempla* exerted a powerful influence on Ælfric's rendering of the *passiones* of early Christian martyrs in his *Lives of Saints*.[61] Throughout the *Lives of Saints*, Ælfric inserted

[61] The group of saints included in the *LS* has posed some problems, Ælfric signalled that these saints were particularly venerated by monastic communities, however, many of these saints were not marked for special veneration in Anglo-Saxon calendars and nor do the feast days assigned to several correspond to those in the calendars. For example, S. Eugenia's feast day in the *LS* is marked for 25 December; however, in the Anglo-Saxon calendars her feast appears variously on 16 March, 16 May, and 23 December. SS. Julian and Basilissa's feast day is marked for 9 January in the *LS* but only two calendars from the late eleventh-century commemorate the saints on 9 January. Several other calendars commemorate the saints, sometimes together and sometimes separately, on 13 Feb., 27 Feb., and 20 May. Michael Lapidge has argued that across the *CH* and the *LS* Ælfric seems to have constructed a relatively balanced *sanctorale* which left space for important *temporale* feasts, Lapidge, 'Ælfric's *Sanctorale*,' in P. Szarmach (ed), *Holy Men and Holy Women*. Hill has rejected the idea that Ælfric's principle of selection can be reduced to choosing the more popular saints for the *CH* and relegating lesser-known ones to the *LS*, Hill, 'Context of Ælfric's Saints' Lives,' p. 22. Ælfric's Latin source for the saints' *lives* in the *LS* and *CH*, a version of the Cotton-Corpus legendary, may have had a significant role to play in his selection. Patrick Zettel has argued that the contents of the Legendary often determined which saints' *vitae* Ælfric included, for example, there are saints who appear prominently in Anglo-Saxon calendars but, despite their popularity, are excluded

framing devices that explained the correct interpretation to be taken from the *passio* and overwhelmingly these devices transformed martyrs into specifically monastic *exempla* in terms that echoed the framework laid out by Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. This transformation will be demonstrated through a thematic comparison of the sermons for groups of martyrs in the Common of Saints and the *passiones* for military companies and warriors in the *Lives of Saints*.[62] First, the theme that martyrdom constituted a physical and spiritual sacrifice in both a public and private arena will be examined. This will be followed by an analysis of the argument that martyrdom amounted to a universal Christian experience with specific historical manifestations.

from the *CH* and *LS*, Zettel, 'Ælfric's Hagiographic Sources,' p. 41, 79-82 and 97-8. The Cotton-Corpus Legendary may have also provided Ælfric with feast dates for the saints he selected; however, it is also worth noting that across both the *CH* and the *LS* the feast days for the saints consistently correspond to the dates assigned to these saints in Usuard's Martyrology. It is beyond the scope of this project to investigate Ælfric's possible use of Usuard's Martyrology, here I wish to note that this possible use of Usuard highlights the influence of Carolingian 'reform' texts on Ælfric's projects.

[62] The *passiones* in the *LS* can be grouped according to a similar order of sanctity as that in the Common of Saints, i.e. there are *passiones* for distinct groups of saints (apostles, confessors, martyrs, virgins). The *passiones* for S. Maurice and the Theban Legion, the Forty Soldiers, the Maccabees, and Abdon and Sennes focus upon the martyrdom (and sanctity) of a group rather than an individual and thus are considered here to closely align with the sermons for groups of martyrs in the Common of Saints. The Common of Saints provided up to eight sermons for the veneration of a group of martyrs on their feast day. These sermons were drawn from Augustine, Gregory the Great, Bede, Leo, John Chrysostom, and Maximus of Turin. In comparison with the 'original' PD homiliaries, the pre-1100 Anglo-Saxon copies of the PD homiliary contain fewer homilies by Maximus and Leo. Hill has argued that Ælfric's failure to use the available Leo and Maximus homilies was not driven by lack of access, but by design: 'Neither Leo's homilies, which are brief and doctrinal, nor those of Maximus, which make much use of the natural world in order to draw out spiritual analogies and moral lessons, are in harmony with Ælfric's patristically validated, lection-based exegetical approach,' Hill, 'Ælfric's Manuscript of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary,' pp. 79-80. The Leo and Maximus homilies from the Common of Saints will be analysed here because they could have formed part of a PD homiliary read alongside Ælfric's *LS*.

a) Martyrdom in public and private arenas

Collectively, the sermons for a group of martyrs in the Common of Saints in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary presented the Christian's life as a form of martyrdom in which the struggle between the individual's body and soul functioned as a life-long persecution. The public arena of the martyr's sacrifice functioned as an example for the private arena of struggle and sacrifice that every Christian faced. The authors of these sermons, most notably Augustine, John Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great, emphasised that the private arena remained as fraught as the public one. Augustine's sermon, an exposition of Psalm 125, verses 5 and 6 framed bodily existence as a martyr's persecution.[63] He argued that while in the body the Christian was absent from the Lord, the individual's longing for the eternal homeland forming a constant torture confronted most perceptibly and importantly in the act of prayer. Augustine recommended that the most appropriate way of confronting one's longing was the singing of psalms. At the outset of the sermon, he stated that the martyrs' recompense had been predicted in the Psalms and, thus, as the individual confronted his or her absence from the divine through singing the psalms, he or she also offered a witness to the faith, a martyrdom.[64] Read in a monastic environment, this sermon effectively transformed the *cursus* of the Divine Office into an arena in which both individuals and the community as a whole could perform a martyrdom.

John Chrysostom's sermon described the private arena of martyrdom with martial imagery: the soul struggled on a spiritual battlefield to conquer vice.[65] He advised the Christian to imitate the martyrs by arming his or her soul with heavenly weapons, in doing so

[63] Augustine, *Sermo 31*, *PL* 38, col. 192-6.
[64] Augustine, *Sermo 31*, col. 193.
[65] Chrysostom, *Homilia 28*, col. 738-40.

the individual could join a divine army.[66] Notably, Chrysostom distinguished between the martyr-saints who served as *exempla* for this interior struggle and the apostles, Peter and Paul, who acted as intercessors on behalf of Christians. In this schema, he urged Christians to imitate martyrs and to pray to the apostles for intercession.[67] Gregory's *Homilia XXV* also distinguished between a public and private martyrdom, although rather than casting the private arena as a battlefield he urged the Christian to cultivate the virtues of patience, humility, and meekness. For Gregory, cultivating patience, in particular, and living according to Gospel precepts served as the route to the martyr's palm in times of peace.[68] Significantly, Gregory illustrated this point in this sermon for S. Mennas' feast day not through the *passio* of the martyr but through the example of Abbot Stephen of Rieti. The abbot, according to Gregory, offered the perfect imitation of the martyr: he considered the one who caused him trouble as a friend, he was thankful for abuses, he welcomed poverty, and saw all his adversaries as aides.[69] Cumulatively, these sermons moved the martyr's arena from a public space into a private one and presented *imitatio martyri* through the prism of prayer and virtuous living.

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[66] Chrysostom, *Homilia 28*, col. 738: 'Exere vires, fortiter dimica, atrociter in praelio isto concerta. Considera pactum, conditionem attende, militiam nosce. Pactum quod spopondisti, conditionem qua accessisti, militam cui nomen dedisti. Hoc enim pacto quos miraris, cuncti pugnarunt, hac conditione universi vicerunt, hac militia omnes triumpharunt. Denique considera praesente deo te cum hoste pugnare, favet ille ut vincas, favet ut obtineas. Cum pugnas adest, cum diminicas praesens est'; 'Stretch forth your strength, contend bravely, violently fight in that battle. Consider this agreement closely, apply yourself to the contract, study the campaign. The agreement which you pledged yourself to, the contract to which you approached, the army in whose name you gave yourself. For by this agreement you admire those ones, who fought all together, were all victors in that contract, and who all triumphed in that army. Finally, consider closely how you will presently fight for God with that host, he shall support you so that you shall win, and so that you shall remain firm. When you fight, he is near, when you struggle, he is present.'

[67] Chrysostom, *Homilia 28*, PLS 4 col. 740.

[68] Gregory, *Homilia 35*, *SC* 522, p. 380: 'Mori quippe a persequente martyrium in aperto opera est; ferre uero contumelias, odientem diligere, martyrium est in occulta cogitatione'; 'To die in the open by the persecuting one is the work of the martyr; to bear insults, to love the one who hates you, is the work of the martyr in hidden thought.'

[69] Gregory, *Homilia 35*, *SC* 522, p. 384.

In his *passiones* of S. Maurice and the Theban Legion, the Forty Soldiers, and the Maccabees, Ælfric also distinguished between the martyrs' physical and spiritual persecution, emphatically and repeatedly demonstrating the martyrs' preference for the spiritual weapons of prayer. For example, in the *passio* of the Forty Soldiers, Ælfric not only emphasised that the soldiers' struggle was more spiritual than physical he also presented prayer and the singing of psalms as the martyrs' helpmates in this struggle. In a debate with a Roman judge, Agricola, the martyrs, a company of forty Cappadocian Christians, ended each of their responses with a quote from a psalm.[70] After this debate, the soldiers were subjected to increasingly horrific tortures which culminated in being placed in a frozen mere with a bucket of warm water placed within reach. Literally frozen in place, the soldiers faced their torture with a lengthy prayer. Crucially, this prayer secured divine aid, a heavenly light shone upon them and warmed the mere to a 'pleasant bath.'[71] This heavenly light also delivered to each martyr his crown – before their physical deaths – underscoring that it was their good service and commitment to God that made them martyrs.[72] Ælfric further emphasised that this was the lesson to be taken from their *passio* in its final lines:

> God gives to us men manifold fruits, which we are to enjoy as far as may be safe for us that the body may have shelter and food, that we may not be ensnared by the pleasant lusts which come from superfluity to all those who spend their worldly life unwarily. Let us turn our will to God, and in all things honour our Creator.[73]

[70] These responses occur at *LS* 11, ll. 41-2 (l. 43 calls this a 'sealm,' but it is only written in Old English without the Latin), l. 86 (Ps 53:3), l. 107 (Ps 26:2), and l. 117 (Ps 122:1).
[71] Ælfric, *LS* 11, l. 199: 'wynsumum bade.'
[72] Ælfric, *LS* 11, ll. 203-9.
[73] Ælfric, *LS* 11, ll. 356-63: 'God forgifð us mannum menigfealde wæstmas Þæra we sculon brucan swa us gebeorhlic sy Þæt se lichama hæbbe hlywðe and fodan Þæt we ne beon beswicene þurh ða swæsan lustas Þe of ofer-flowednysse eallum þam becumað/ Þe buton wær-scipe heora woruld adreogað. Uton we awendan ure willan to gode and on eallum þingum urne scyppend wurðian.'

In this framing device, Ælfric presented the Forty Soldiers' martyrdom as an example of how to turn one's will towards God through prayer and the singing of psalms. In his *passio* of S. Maurice and the Theban Legion, Ælfric's completed the narrative with a similar interpretation of the martyrs' *exempla*. In the final lines of this *passio*, he elaborated on a concept of 'good service': toiling to overcome evil habits formed the service that would merit one the eternal kingdom.[74] In these two *passiones*, Ælfric adopted the schema articulated by the Homiliary's sermons, namely that the Christian ought to imitate the martyrs with prayer and continent living.

In the *passio* of the Maccabees, Ælfric further explored the relationship between spiritual and physical warfare. This lengthy *passio* narrative began with the persecution and martyrdom of Eleazar (1 Macc. 1:1-67) and the seven brothers (2 Macc. 6: 18-31 and 7:1-42); however, the *passio* of these men was almost eclipsed by the even lengthier retelling of Judas Maccabeus' exploits.[75] These exploits were drawn from various sections of 1 and 2 Maccabees and collectively cast Judas' physical warfare in terms of spiritual warfare. Judas' victories were consistently shown to have occurred as a result of God's support, rather than Judas' own military prowess. For example, when Judas fought against Timotheus he prayed to God:

> They went then from the city, emboldened by God, and they fought together firmly with weapons. Lo! Then wonderfully came five angles from heaven, riding on horses with golden apparel, and two of the angels on both sides of Judas were fighting, and also defended him.[76]

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[74] Ælfric, *LS* 28, ll. 121-4.
[75] Ælfric's translation of Eleazar and the seven brother's martyrdom condensed and re-arranged the Maccabees narrative such that accounts of persecution were immediately followed by martyrdom. The scenes were also altered such that the narrative contained some the standard elements of a *passio*: for example, Alexander was turned into a wicked king who chose cruel successors, mirroring the presentation of evil emperors and their even-more-cruel judges/prefects who carry out their decrees. In 1 Macc. 1:1-18, Alexander was presented as a powerful conqueror whose servants made themselves into kings after his death and against his express wishes.
[76] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 488-93: 'Eodon þa of ðære byrig ge-bylde þurh god and hi fengon togadere fæstlice mid wæpnum. Hwæt ða færlice common fif englas of heofonum ridende on horsum mid gyldenum gerædum and twægen þære engla on twa healfe iudan feohtende wæron and hine eac bewerodon.'

Cast as God's army, the depiction of Judas' army resonated with Chrysostom's sermon from Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, most notably with Chrysostom's injunction:

> Finally, consider closely how you will presently fight for God with that host, he shall support you so that you shall win, and so that you shall remain firm. [...] The weapons from heaven will be furnished for you, the military weapons will be crushed by them [i.e. divine weapons]. [...] The angels strike together for you, they invite fear. For fortitude is granted to you, and the [enemy's] military force is weakened.[77]

According to Ælfric, Judas, like the martyrs Eleazar and the seven brothers, functioned as an example for Christians, 'he is as holy, in the Old Testament,/ as God's elect ones, in the Gospel-preaching.'[78] However, Ælfric carefully explained that Judas had rendered good service to the Lord in a form appropriate to the time in which he lived and therefore his example had to be understood figuratively: like Judas the Christian should fight, but in Ælfric's age the Christian's enemies were invisible ('ungesewenlican') and had to be fought with ghostly weapons ('gastlicum wæpnum').[79] The Christian, Ælfric argued, could serve as a warrior for God on an inner battlefield in which the soul contended with vice:

> Then shall we be God's champions in the spiritual battle, if we despise the devil, through true belief, and the chief vices, through self-control, and if we perform God's will with our works.[80]

The Maccabees *passio* narrative ended with an explanation of the three orders in society, labourers, beadsmen, and soldiers. In this section, Ælfric, in no uncertain terms, argued that the spiritual struggle was the more dangerous and more important one. Its consequences were far

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[77] Chrysostom, *Homilia 28*, col. 738-9: 'Denique, considera praesente deo te cum hoste pugnare, favet ille ut vincas, favet ut obtineas. [...] Tibi arma divinitus ministrantur, illi malitiae tela franguntur. [...] Tibi angelis applaudunt, illi formidinem adhibent. Tibi enim fortitude tribuitur, illius militia infirmatur.'
[78] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 681-2: 'he is eall swa halig on ðære ealdan gecyðnysse/ swa swa goes gecorenan on ðære godspel-bodunge.'
[79] Ælfric, *LS* 25, l. 691 and 693, respectively.
[80] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 697-700: 'Þonne beoð we goes cempan on ðam gastlican gefeohte/ Gif we ðone deofol forseoþ þurh gehealtsumnysse/ And gif we godes willan mid weorcum gefremmað.'

more profound than those of physical warfare, and its soldiers – monks – were therefore engaged in the most important battle for humanity:

> Greater therefore is now the struggle of the monks against the invisible devils that lay snares around us, than may be that of the worldly men that struggle against fleshly foes, and visibly fight against the visible [enemies].[81]

Ælfric elevated this spiritual warfare so much above physical warfare that he argued it was better to bear the persecution of impious tormentors than to defile one's hands with fighting. Indeed, undertaking physical warfare would anger the Lord because it meant that the spiritual warrior had forsaken his duty for a lesser one:

> Now the monk that submits to Benedict's rule, and leaves all worldly things, why will he again return to worldly weapons, and cast aside his struggle against the invisible enemies, to vex his Creator? The servant of God may not fight along with worldly men if he is to have success in the spiritual combat.[82]

Where the sermons in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary had presented the heroic struggles of the martyrs as examples for an individual's spiritual struggle, Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* transformed the martyrs into *exempla* for the warriors of a raging spiritual battle. These warriors, monastic men and women, imitated the martyrs' sacrifice on both an individual and communal level and, thus, served as the 'new' martyrs of Ælfric's age.

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[81] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 823-6: 'Is nu for-þy mare þære muneca gewinn/ Wið þa ungesewenlican deofla þe syrwiað embe us/ Þonne sy þæra woruld-manna þe winnað wiþ ða flæsclican/ And wið þa gesewenlican feohtað.'
[82] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 851-6: 'Nu se munuc þe bihð to benedictes regole/ And forlæt ealle woruld-ðinge hwi wile he eft gecyrran/ To woruldlicum wæpnum and awurpan his gewinn/ Wið þa ungesewenlican fynd his scyppende to teonana/ Se goes þeowa ne mæg mid woruld-mannum feohtan/ Gif he on þam gastlican gefeohte forð-gang habban sceall.'

b) Martyrdom: universal experience and historically manifested

Collectively, the sermons for martyrs in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary historicised the understanding and experience of martyrdom. These sermons framed the early Christian martyrs' persecution as *exempla* for individual struggle, effectively arguing that martyrdom was a universal Christian experience. However, the sermons also identified historic manifestations of martyrdom by distinguishing between an earlier era of physical persecution and a 'contemporary' one of spiritual conflict. The historicization of a 'universal' experience of martyrdom recurs throughout Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, most notably in his *passio* of the Maccabees. This recurring motif provided a powerful support for the exceptional status of monastic men and women: in an era in which martyrdom occurred in an inner arena, monks and nuns acted as the true imitators of the early Christian martyrs and thus served the same function as these saints in the unfolding of Christian history.

The sermons for martyrs, in particular those for groups of martyrs, in the Common of Saints in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary repeatedly emphasised that imitating the martyrs did not require a literal reproduction of their deaths. In his *Homilia 32*, Gregory argued that the Christian could sacrifice himself or herself in the inner arena of martyrdom just as the persecuted martyrs had done in the physical arena. Gregory demonstrated this by presenting an inner death, for example 'becoming dead to desire,' as a return to a prelapsarian condition:

> But, fallen through sin, we are other than what we were made through nature; what we have done is one thing, what we have become is another. Let us leave behind our condition which we have brought about through sinning and let us remain in the condition which we were made through grace.[83]

[83] Gregory, *Homilia 32*, *SC* 522, p. 274: 'Sed aliud sumus per peccatum lapsi, aliud per naturam conditi; aliud quod fecimus, aliud quod facti sumus. Relinquamus nosmetipsos quales peccando nos fecimus, et maneamus nos metipsi quales per gratiam facti sumus.'

Significantly, the 'return' which Gregory outlined drew upon a rich tradition of theological discourse regarding *reformatio*.[84] In this passage, Gregory distinguished an original natural human condition that was formed at Creation from both a postlapsarian condition of sin and reformed condition of man achieved through Christ. His injunction to reject the postlapsarian condition does not entail a return to Eden, rather it urges a *reformatio in melius*. The renunciation and rejection of one's earthly condition entailed, according to Gregory, a re-formation into a new natural condition that was possible because of Christ's manifestation in the world. Gregory stressed that the sacrifice of the early Christian martyrs provided a direct and physical example of renunciation and rejection while also emphasising that they had offered a sacrifice according to their specific historical circumstances. He argued:

> As long as persecution from enemies is absent, the heart must be very vigilantly protected. For in times of peace, because it is permitted to live, it is also pleasing to strive [for earthly things].[85]

The dangers of a peaceful era, in Gregory's schema, threatened the individual's soul as much as, if not more so, than the enemies of the age of persecution – the historical circumstances changed, but the reward did not. Maximus of Turin's sermon similarly distinguished amongst historical manifestations of martyrdom. Like Gregory, he argued that there had been an earlier age of physical persecution and that the specific suffering endured by martyrs in that age was not required by contemporary Christians. Instead, he advised that Christians should act as martyrs by adhering to Christ's mandate:

> For 'martyr' in Latin means witness; and as often as we follow Christ's mandate with good actions, so often do we present testimony/witness to Christ. And whence the cross of the Lord which was constructed in the time of the passion

[84] Ladner, *The idea of reform*, pp. 153-318; see above, Introduction, pp. 21-2.
[85] Gregory, *Homilia 32*, *SC* 522, p. 280: 'Cum persecutio ab aduersariis deest, ualde uigilantius cor custodiendum est. Nam pacis tempore quia licet uiuere, libet etiam ambire.'

> by the joining of staves is not [exactly for us], rather it is chosen by those who seek virtue with total discipline for the run of their whole lives.[86]

Maximus' sermon presented martyrdom as a universal Christian experience, but, crucially, the martyr's crown only remained available to individuals who actively sought to live according to the Gospel.[87] The sermons drawn from Bede's *Commentary on Luke* and Pope Leo's *Sermo 95* further underscored that acting as a contemporary martyr required living according to Christ's precepts. The sermon drawn from Bede's commentary emphasised that the ancient prophets 'died not in the fear persecution but by the announcement of truth.'[88] According to the sermon, contemporary Christians ought to strive for an announcement truth by living according to the eight Beatitudes, with the four blessings from Lk. 6:20-22 of particular importance.[89] The Christians who adhered to these precepts, i.e. adopting a life of poverty, hunger, and separation, earned a privileged place in the Kingdom of Heaven.[90] Leo's *Sermo 95* provided an exposition of the Beatitudes and, used as a sermon for the veneration of

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[86] Maxime, *Homilia 82*, *PL* 57 col. 429-30: 'Martyr enim Latine testis dicitur; ac quotiescunque bonis actibus mandatum Christi facimus, toties Christo testimonium perhibemus. Unde et crux Domini non illa tantum dicitur quae passionis tempore ligni affixione construitur, sed et illa quae totius vitae curriculo cunctarum disciplinarum virtutibus cooptatur.'

[87] Maxime, *Homilia 82*, col. 430: 'Therefore, the whole Christian life of a man, if he lives according to the Gospel, is the cross and martyrdom. And this is what is discovered with difficulty by us, that each one of our acts ought to be guided according to the Gospel; and for that reason, as often as we are wallowing in desires, we put to one side the cross of the Saviour'; 'Tota igitur vita Christiani hominis, si secundum Evangelium vivat, crux est atque martyrium. Sed hoc est, quod in nobis difficile reperitur, ut omnes actus nostril secundum Evangelium dirigantur; atque ideo, quotiescunque voluptatibus volutamur, crucem Salvatoris amittimus.'

[88] Bede, *In Lucam*, *CC* 120, p. 140: 'ideo prophetae antique timore persecutionis a ueritatis praedicatione defecerunt.'

[89] Lk 6:20-22: 'Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you that hunger now: for you shall be filled. Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

[90] Bede, *In Lucam*, p. 140: 'Therefore, they who wish to ascend to the height of perfect virtue, but have not done so yet, in the interim ought to cherish thoroughly the blessedness of general perfection in so far as little by little they might progress from good things to better ones until, taking a position in the plain, they are pleasing to the Lord for having heeded what [he prescribed] sitting on the mount and [then] they can sublimely ascend'; 'Igitur qui necdum consumatae uirtutis arcem conscendere ualent generalis interim perfectionis sunt beatitudine perfouendi quatenus a bonis paulatim ad Meliora progressi dum consistenti in planitie domino libenter auscultant ad hunc quandoque in monte sedentem sublimiter ascendant.'

martyrs, it effectively presented these Gospel precepts as the martyrs' *exempla*. Significantly, this sermon was infused with the language of *imitatio*, for example, the first disciples 'made many to be like themselves by imitating this faith, at the time when among those first-born of the Church there was 'one heart and one soul of all the faithful',' and as man acts mercifully and justly 'the Creator will appear in his own creature, and 'the image of God,' expressed through the paths of imitation, may shine in the mirror of the human heart.'[91] Cumulatively, these sermons revealed that the early Christian martyrs, through their suffering and witness, had achieved a particular kind of re-formation. These martyrs had reformed themselves into an image of God in the age of grace. They provided an example and a historical manifestation of a universal Christian experience.

As a whole, Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* explored the integral role that martyrdom had to play in the history of Christian salvation. The collection of *passiones* brought together records of martyrs from an extensive historical range, revealing that martyrdom functioned as a central and universal feature of Christian history. The Maccabees narrative revealed martyrdom's role in the Old Testament and prefigured its importance in the New, while the *passio* narratives of the apostles and early Christian martyrs revealed its role in the early days of the Christian Church and prefigured its importance in the salvation of future Christians. Just as the sermons in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary had distinguished distinct periods of physical and spiritual persecution, in the Maccabees *passio* Ælfric argued:

> The ancient people of God had to fight then with weapons and their contest had the signification of holy men who drive away vices and devils from them in the New Testament, that Christ Himself appointed.[92]

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[91] Leo, *Sermo 95*, in *Sermons*, trans. Freeland and Conway (Washington, D.C., 1996), p. 396 and pp. 398-9.
[92] Ælfric, *LS 25*, ll. 701-4: 'Þæt ealde godes folc sceolde feohtan þa mid wæpnum/ And heora gewinn hæfde haligra manna getacnunge/ Þe to-dræfað þa leahtras and deofla heom fram/ On ðære niwan gecyðnysse þe crist sylfe astealde.'

In the same *passio*, Ælfric strenuously urged Christians to take up spiritual rather than physical weapons as these were more appropriate to the evils they faced. Even though he acknowledged the physical threat and persecution wrought by 'the cruel seamen,' Ælfric maintained that spiritual warfare remained more important and argued that beadsmen, those who prayed, formed the most important order of society.[93] This emphasis is a striking one given that at the time of the *Lives of Saints*' composition, the English kingdom faced increased aggression from Scandinavian forces and significant political instability in Æthelred's reign – it would not have been difficult to frame it as a new age of persecution. Thus, it remains all the more significant that Ælfric adopted the Homiliary's position on imitating the martyrs in a spiritual rather than physical arena. Indeed, in the explanatory section of the Theban Legion Ælfric urged his audience to act like martyrs by renouncing the world.[94] The *passiones*' collective emphasis on the special importance of monastic men and women effectively presented monasticism as the latest historical manifestation of martyrdom in Christian history. The *Lives of Saints* undoubtedly reached many audiences, however, for its monastic ones it provided a powerful record of monasticism's history and its special status in the age of grace.

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[93] After outlining the four types of war (*justum*, *injustum*, *civile*, and *plusquam civile*), Ælfric conceded that '*Justum bellum* is just war against the cruel seamen, or against other peoples that wish to destroy our land' ; '*Iustum bellum* is rihtlic gefeoht wið ða reðan flot-menn oþe wið oðre þeoda þe eard willað fordon,' *LS* 25, ll. 708-9. In a subsequent section, Ælfric described the three orders of society (labourers, beadsmen, and soldiers) and warned that monks, the beadsmen, ought not to be turned from their essential role in society: 'Then the worldly soldiers ought not to the worldly battle compel the servants of God, away from the spiritual struggle; because it will profit them more that the invisible enemies/ may be overcome than the visible ones'; 'Nu ne sceolon þa woruld-cempan to þam woruld-licum gefeohte þa godes þeowan neadian fram þam gastlican gewinne forðan þe him fremað swiðor þæt þa ungesewenlican fynd/ beon ofer-swyðde þonne ða gesewenlican,' *LS* 25, l. 827-30.
[94] Ælfric, *LS* 28, ll. 160-8.

An enduring framework: the Lives of Saints *and Paul the Deacon's Homiliary in monastic houses in the eleventh century*

Copies of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, often in combination with his *Catholic Homilies*, and Paul the Deacon's Homiliary dominate the surviving corpus of Latin and Old English homiliaries. Given their popularity, a logical conclusion presents itself: these two intertwined texts provided generations of monastic men and women with a language of and framework for sanctity. The significance of this must be underscored as monastic exceptionalism formed the bedrock of this language and framework. Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* was infused with the ideals and rhetoric of reform monasticism, monks had a special status in earthly and divine hierarchies in his collection, and the collection's popularity should not desensitise us to the remarkable template for sanctity that it provided. As it will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, monastic houses from the end of the tenth century and through to the eleventh were sensitive to the agency that monastic sanctity conferred and actively sought to represent themselves and their saints according to its principles. Through an analysis of the *Lives of Saints*' dissemination, and that of Paul the Deacon Homiliaries, this section demonstrates that 'monastic sanctity' operated as a distinct and coherent concept during this period.

As Joyce Hill has demonstrated, the *Lives of Saints* has a complex dissemination history in the eleventh century, complicated in no small measure by the lack of an autograph copy.[95] Nonetheless, several important conclusions can be drawn. First, the *Lives of Saints* was treated as a thematically cohesive collection. As it circulated, large collections of distinct *vitae* and *passiones* could easily have been broken up into smaller groups or pillaged for individual items

[95] Hill, 'Dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*,' pp. 235-6. Hill has charted the dissemination of the *LS* and has identified a group of manuscripts (which she labels 'Group A') from the early eleventh through to the twelfth century which contain items from the *LS* and that are or appear to have been wholly or predominantly hagiographic, for the manuscripts in each group see pp. 243-7.

– and, as Hill has shown, the *Lives of Saints* was no exception. However, a group of hagiographic collections, copied in the eleventh century, indicates that Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* was appreciated as a cohesive and thematic whole. This group, identified by Joyce Hill, contains collections of predominantly hagiographic material that preserve, to varying degrees, substantial portions of the *Lives of Saints*.[96] The most authoritative collection in the group, London, BL, Cotton MS Julius E.VII, represents not only the earliest extant copy of the *Lives of Saints* but also the most complete version.[97] In addition to some non-hagiographical material, four non-Ælfrician *vitae* were added to the manuscript and, significantly, these *vitae* developed the same themes as the Ælfrician items.[98] Two of the non-Ælfrician *passiones* concern martyrs, Eustace and the Seven Sleepers, and, if we take the Seven Sleepers as an example, the *passio* of this group of martyrs emphasised the renunciation of wealth, the virtue of patience, and the importance of communal living. The non-Ælfrician *vitae* of the two female saints, Mary of Egypt and Euphrosyne, similarly develop monastic themes. The action in Euphrosyne's *vita* occurs entirely in monastic space and takes the suppression of desire and renunciation of family as its central themes.[99] Mary of Egypt's *vita* was introduced with an overtly monastic framing device. The narrative begins with the monk Zosimus who

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[96] See list in Hill, 'The Dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*,' p. 243.

[97] Ælfric completed the *LS* sometime between 992 and 1002, the earliest extant copy, London, BL, Cotton MS Julius E VII, has been dated by Ker to the beginning of the eleventh century, see *Catalogue of manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), item 162; see also Gneuss no. 339. As noted above, Cotton Julius E VII does not represent Ælfric's original version of the *LS* nor is it the manuscript from which all other copies derive. A thirteenth-century inscription on fol. 3 reveals that the manuscript belonged to Bury St. Edmunds, however, it is not possible to determine precisely when the manuscript arrived at Bury. The Cotton Julius E VII manuscript served as Skeat's base text for his edition of the *LS*, for further discussion see Hill, 'Dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*,' pp. 236-42.

[98] The additional *vitae* in London, BL, Cotton MS Julius E.VII concern SS. Mary of Egypt, the Seven Sleepers, Eustace, and Euphrosyne. Hugh Magennis has shown that these *vitae* were each composed by different authors, 'Contrasting Features in the Non-Ælfrician Lives in the Old English Lives of Saints,' *Anglia* 104 (1986).

[99] Euphrosyne enters a monastery disguised as a man, but her beauty presents a distraction to the other monks and, consequently, she is secluded within the monastery – highlighting the importance of gender segregation and the appropriateness of increased female claustration. Euphrosyne's father, distraught at the disappearance of his daughter, frequently visits her all the while believing her to be just another monk until she reveals her identity on her deathbed.

undertakes a journey, similar to Cassian in his *Conlationes*, to seek out the wisdom of desert fathers, Zosimus encounters Mary in the desert and the saint narrates her life and wisdom to the monk who then returns to his monastery. These additions reveal an appreciation for the thematic cohesiveness of the *Lives of Saints*. Notably this appreciation was not restricted to BL, Cotton MS Julius E.VII, the hagiographic collections from the early to mid-eleventh century, BL, Cotton MS Otho B.X + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawl. MS Q.e.20 and BL, Cotton MS Vitellius D. XVIII, both preserve versions of the *Lives of Saints* that are dominated by narratives of martyrdom.[100]

The appreciation of the *Lives of Saints* as a thematically coherent whole is all the more significant given that many saints included in it were not as popular as the collection itself. For example, the monastic communities at both St. Augustine's, Canterbury and Bury St. Edmunds kept copies of the *Lives of Saints* in the eleventh century despite the fact that the collection contained saints not included the houses' calendars and litanies.[101] This suggests that houses sought the *Lives of Saints* as much for its arguments regarding the nature and history of monastic sanctity as they did for its utility as a compendium of material. Significantly, both St. Augustine's and Bury also kept copies of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary

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[100] See Table 2 in Hill, 'The Dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*.' In this table, Hill notes that Cotton Otho B.x + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawl. MS Q.e.20 (no. 177) preserves the *vitae* and *passiones* of Eugenia, Basil, Julian and Basilissa, Sebastian, Maur, Agnes, George, Æthelthryth, Swithun, Seven Sleepers, Mary of Egypt, Edmund, and Euphrosyne. Cotton Vitellius D.xviii (no. 222 in Hill's table) contains the *vitae* and *passiones* of Basil, Sebastian, Agnes, Agatha, Lucy, George, Mark, Alban, Æthelthryth, Appollinaris, Abdon and Sennes, Maccabees, Oswold, Theban Legion, Dionysius, Eustace, Edmund, Cecilia, Thomas.

[101] There are at least three litanies of the eleventh century that can be localised to St. Augustine's, Canterbury: Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff.1.23 (xi^{med}); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 44 (xi$^{2/4}$); Rouen, Bibliothèque municipal, MS 231 (A.44) (xi^{ex}). Respectively, these litanies contain 108, 54, and 82 saints. A surviving litany from Bury St. Edmunds, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. MS 12 (xi$^{2/4}$) contains a total of 82 saints. The calendar in this manuscript, which Rushforth dates to xi$^{3/4}$, contains roughly 207 saints. The Bury calendar, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. MS 12, f. 7r-12v, did not mark the feasts of SS. Eugenia, Basil, Julian and Basilissa, and Chrysanthus and Daria. The litanies from Bury and St. Augustine's (see note 147, above) all commemorated SS. Agnes, Agatha, Lucy, George, Æthelthryth, Maurice and companions, Denis, Martin, and Cecilia. Each litany commemorated one or two other *LS* saints beyond this core group, none of the litanies in question commemorated all of the saints from the *LS*.

in the eleventh century, further signalling that these collections' framework for interpreting sanctity continued to operate long after the tenth-century 'Benedictine Reform.' As Table 2 shows, St. Augustine's and Bury were not the only monastic congregations to keep copies of both Ælfric's hagiographic and homiletic work and Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. In various ways the versions of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary kept at Durham and Norwich, both cathedral communities with monastic congregations, indicate an active interest in the Homiliary's conceptual framework for sanctity. In the Homiliary possessed by Durham, six sermons from the Common of Saints have been adapted for English saints associated with Æthelwold, revealing, as Thomas Hall has argued, an important connection between late eleventh-century Durham and reform-era Winchester.[102] The Common of Saints in Norwich's copy has been marked up with lection numbers, indicating active use.[103] Cumulatively, this evidence reveals that the cohesive conceptual framework provided by both Paul the Deacon's Homiliary and Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* provided monastic communities throughout the eleventh century with a language of monastic sanctity. Ubiquity should not be confused with neutrality. Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, particularly in combination with Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, articulated a powerful argument: the monastic life was an exceptional one and, as he argued elsewhere, its practitioners 'shall have the better dwelling within God's walls and the eternal name in his house with him.'[104]

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[102] The sermons are adapted for the feasts of Augustine of Canterbury, Æthelthryth, Swithun (deposition and translation), and Birinus, see Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints,' pp. 239-41 for further discussion of Durham, Durham Cathedral Library, MS A.III.29. See also Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints,' p. 241: 'the appearance of these four sermons for the feasts Swithun and Birinus in Durham A.III.29 shows that the *sanctorale* of this manuscript embodies a set of hagiographic concerns that can be traced back to reform-era Winchester under Æthelwold. It is not unreasonable to suppose, in fact, that these four sermons may have been initially developed for readings in the Night Office at Winchester in the 970s or 980s when Ælfric was a young novice there.'

[103] There are 10 sermons in the Common of Saints in Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.4.13, fo. 124v -149r, which have been variously divided with lection numbers.

[104] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' §94-95, pp. 280-1: 'Þæt synd wæpmen ⁊ wifmen þe wuniað on clænnysse, ⁊ hi sylfe offriað eall Gode on sægdnysse, ge on sawle ge on lichaman; hi sceolon habban þa selran wununge binnan Godes weallum ⁊ þone ecean naman on his huse mid him.'

Table 2. Manuscripts of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary and Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* used or produced in early medieval England

Gneuss no.	Manuscript	Date and Provenance	Language(s)	Genre	Paul the Deacon (PD) or Ælfric
209	Canterbury, Cathedral Library, Add. MS 127/1	s. xi^{1}, Canterbury?	Latin	Homiliary	PD
424	London, BL, Harley MS 652	s. xi^{ex}, St Augustine's, Canterbury	Latin	Homiliary	PD
89	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 312	s. xii^{med}, St Augustine's, Canterbury	Latin	Homiliary	PD
153	Cambridge, St John's College, MS 164	s. x, St Augustine's, Canterbury	Latin	Libellus	n/a
569	Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MSS 340+342	s. xi^{in}- xi^{med} (c. 1000?)	OE	Homiliary	Ælfric
50	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 162	s. xi^{in}, St Augustine's, Canterbury? Rochester?	Latin and OE	Homiliary	Ælfric
406	London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius D.XVII, fos. 4-92	s. xi^{med}, Canterbury?	OE	Homiliary	Ælfric
763-763.2	Worcester, Cathedral Library, MSS F. 92, 93, and 94	s. xii^{in}	Latin	Homiliary	PD
64	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 198	s. xi^{1} or xi^{2}, Worcester?	OE	Homiliary	Ælfric
310	London, BL, Cotton MS Caligula A.XIV, fos. 93-130	s. xi^{med}, Worcester?	OE	Legendary	Ælfric
162	London, BL, Cotton MS Julius E.VII	s. xi^{in}	OE	Legendary/Homiliary	Ælfric

129-30	Cambridge, Pembroke College, MSS 23 and 24	s. xi^{ex}, Northern France, at Bury before end of 11th c	Latin	Homiliary	PD
753	Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 179	s. xi$^{4/4}$	Latin	Homiliary	PD
273	Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 158	s. xi^{2}, Lincoln	Latin	Homiliary	PD
222	Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.III.29	s. xi^{ex}, Durham	Latin	Homiliary	PD
16 + 24	CUL MSS Ii.2.19 and Kk.4.13	s. xi^{ex}, Norwich	Latin	Homiliary	PD
262	Gloucester, Cathedral Library, MS 35	s. xi^{1} – xi^{2}	OE	[Binding fragments]	Ælfric
n/a	Cambridge, University Library, MS Ii.1.33	s. xii^{2}	OE	Homilies and vitae	Ælfric
n/a	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 367, pt. II, fos 3-6, 11-29	s. xii	OE	[fragment]	Ælfric
476	London, BL, Royal MS 8 C.VII, fos 1 and 2	s. xi^{in}	OE	[fragment]	Ælfric
n/a	Cambridge, Queen's College, Horne MS 75 [and Bloomington Lily Library, Poole 10]	s. xi^{in}	OE	[fragment]	Ælfric
355	Londo, BL, Cotton MS Otho B.X, fos 1-28, 31-50, 52-54, 56-7, 59-60, 65 and 67 + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawl. MS Q.e.20	s. xi^{1}	OE	Homiliary	Ælfric

Beyond enclosure

It remains important to note that monastic congregations were not the sole consumers of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* nor Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. These collections had a wide circulation which highlights an influential legacy of tenth-century reform ideology and the importance of saints to its dissemination. Two examples illustrate the point: the compilation of the Cotton-Corpus Legendary and the Old English homiliary, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MSS 340 + 342.

Within one generation, the *scriptorium* at Worcester compiled the substantial hagiographic collection known as the Cotton-Corpus Legendary and produced a three-volume version of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary.[105] Judging by the two extant calendars from the mid-eleventh century, the mixed cathedral community at Worcester venerated a considerable number of saints over the course of a liturgical year and thus large collections like the Legendary and Homiliary would have been invaluable compendiums.[106] As Worcester had been the episcopal see of S. Oswald, who was also responsible for establishing a monastic congregation at Worcester, it is perhaps not surprising that the community would turn to collections tied to the memory of reform. As Patrick Zettel has demonstrated, Ælfric selected hagiographies for his *Lives of Saints* from a similar exemplar, if not the same one, as the

[105] The Legendary was compiled in the third quarter of the eleventh century (Gneuss nos. 344 and 36). Thomas Hall has argued that the Paul the Deacon Homiliary, Worcester, Cathedral Library, MSS F. 92, 93, 94 was compiled at Worcester at the beginning of the twelfth century, 'Latin Sermons for Saints,' p. 244.

[106] There are two surviving calendars from Worcester: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 9 (c. 1062?, xi^{med}); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 391 (c. 1064). Respectively, these two calendars included roughly 230 and 237 saints. The litany in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 391 contains 119 saints, the original litany on pp. 221-5 has been partially erased and rewritten, according to Lapidge, sometime in the first half of the twelfth century. At least one other litany can be localised to Worcester: London, BL, Cotton MS Claudius A.III, fos. 31-86 (c. 1000, known as 'Claudius Pontifical I'). This litany forms part of the dedication of a church and is very short, it contains only 12 saints

Legendary's compilers.[107] While the compilation of the Legendary preceded that of the Homiliary, it is evident that a version of the Homiliary exerted influence on the Legendary's compilers: five of the eight sermons included in the Legendary were ones that circulated in contemporary English Paul the Deacon manuscripts.[108] Notably, the overwhelming majority of saints commemorated in the Legendary were martyrs.[109] This emphasis in the Legendary, noteworthy even when one allows for the influence of its exemplar, coupled with the production of a Paul the Deacon Homiliary shortly afterwards suggests an active interest at Worcester in venerating saints, particularly martyrs, according to a 'reform' framework of monastic exceptionalism.

The dissemination of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* in as-yet-unidentified centres, particularly in combination with homilies from his *Catholic Homilies*, suggests that his language of monastic sanctity reached an even wider audience. Collections like Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MSS 340 + 342, compiled at Canterbury, drew from both the *Catholic Homilies* and the *Lives of Saints* to create a homiliary that, like Paul the Deacon's, provided ordered sermons for a complete liturgical year. These homiliaries owed a debt to Paul the Deacon's Homiliary not just in content but in form as well. For example, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MSS 340 + 342 contained a series of general sermons for saints at the end of the homiliary, reminiscent of the way in which the Common of Saints appeared at the end of the summer cycle in Paul the Deacon Homiliaries. The popularity of homiliaries like Bodley MSS 340 + 342 reveal that

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[107] See Chapter 1, p. 56 n. 150; Patrick Zettel, 'Saints' Lives in Old English: Latin Manuscripts and Vernacular Accounts: Ælfric,' *Peritia*, 1 (1982).

[108] Hall, 'Latin Sermons for Saints,' pp. 247-50. Hall notes that the feasts and saints which the sermons in the Cotton-Corpus Legendary celebrate were all fixtures of the late Anglo-Saxon calendar, 'and it is particularly telling that all five of these feasts and saints and ones for which we find new and supplementary sermons added to English Paul the Deacon manuscripts at very nearly the same time, so that the homiliary can be shown to follow a pattern of development that is closely paralleled in the 'Cotton-Corpus Legendary',' p. 250.

[109] Using Jackson and Lapidge's summation of the contents of the Cotton-Corpus Legendary, the Legendary contained roughly 82 martyrs, 23 virgins, 38 apostles/evangelists and confessors/bishops, and 8 other saints.

Ælfric's ideology of monastic sanctity and exceptionalism provided a language to understand the saints and their role in Christian history to diverse audiences, within and without enclosure.[110]

Conclusion

Over the course of two generations and various texts, Bishop Æthelwold and his pupil Ælfric of Eynsham constructed an ideology of reform. The central tenet of this ideology, that monasticism was a superior mode of religious life, infused monastic *praxis* with a sanctity that transformed individual monks and nuns into holy warriors with a special and particular place in the divine hierarchy. Æthelwold constructed this special status by creating a history of monasticism in which the apostles functioned as its founders and the perfection of its practice returned men to a lost proximity to god. Ælfric added a further historical element to this monastic exceptionalism, presenting monasticism as the latest manifestation in a series of historical periods of martyrdom. This ideology transformed monks and nuns into living martyrs, intimately intertwining monastic virtue and exemplary sanctity. Significantly, they disseminated their understanding of reform and arguments for monastic superiority through various media: historical writing, ostentatious charters, monastic customaries and prescriptive literature, pastoral letters, and hagiography. However, it appears that one collection in particular had the most widespread influence, Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, particularly in

[110] Clayton has demonstrated that there was a range of Latin homiliaries available to the copyists of vernacular homiletic collections, nonetheless the prominence of PD homiliaries, according to Clayton, remains striking. Particularly notable is the prominence of Gregory's sermons in the homiliaries in circulation in Anglo-Saxon England, Clayton, 'Homiliaries and Preaching,' p. 217 and pp. 218-220.

combination with Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, provided a language of and framework for sanctity for generations of diverse audiences. Whether their intention or not, this ideology conferred a powerful agency to the monastic houses founded or re-founded in the tenth century – as it will be seen, these houses, male and female, strategically capitalised upon Æthelwold and Ælfric's ideology of monastic sanctity.

Chapter 3
Monastic Cults, Sanctity, and the Reformers
Winchester, Ramsey, and Canterbury

Introduction

In the last decades of the tenth century, the three prominent 'reformers' of the English Church died: Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester in 984, Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury in 988, and Archbishop Oswald of York in 992. By the turn of the century each had been sanctified and their cults promoted by hagiographies produced within living memory of their deaths.[1] These hagiographies have shaped centuries of scholarship as each provides substantial biographical detail and, perhaps more significantly, because they present a relatively cohesive narrative of a monastic reform movement.[2] The narrative that they proposed has been challenged and nuanced: no longer is it accepted that clerics were ejected from every cathedral and that all monastic houses adopted the *Regularis Concordia*. While their version has deservedly been dismantled as an accurate representation of events, its significance nonetheless deserves further investigation. Byrhtferth and Wulfstan's hagiographies present a cohesive narrative because both authors purposefully adopted the rhetoric and ideologies espoused by their former bishops. They did so at critical moments for their communities: after Æthelwold's death, the young King Æthelred increasingly allowed

[1] Wulfstan of Winchester completed the *VÆth* around the time of the bishop's translation in 996, Byrhtferth of Ramsey composed the *VO* in the decade between 992 and 1002, and the anonymous cleric 'B' wrote the earliest *Vita Dunstani* sometime between 995 and 1004.
[2] B's *Vita Dunstani* is the exception: this hagiography gives only vague details of Dunstan's career after his election to the archiepiscopacy of Canterbury and little to no information regarding any reforming activities during his abbacy at Glastonbury. Recent scholars have challenged the view that Dunstan played a central role in the tenth-century monastic reforms, see above, Introduction, pp. 11-13.

the abuse of church privileges and around the time that both Byrhtferth and Wulfstan were composing their hagiographies the English kingdom was facing persistent and increasingly successful incursions by Viking armies. In this period of political instability, both authors created powerful hagiographical accounts that not only promoted the sanctity of bishops who had been cornerstones of the political landscape, but also the exceptional holiness of their foundations. The following case studies of the male Winchester houses, Oswald's foundation at Ramsey, and the two Canterbury houses, Christ Church and St. Augustine's, will explore the ways in which these communities created distinctive identities by adopting the rhetoric of reform and manipulating the memory of their former leaders.

I. Winchester

The memory of Bishop Æthelwold and his vision of monastic life loomed large in the developing identities at the male houses in the city of Winchester, the Old and New Minsters, in the generation after the bishop's death. In the later tenth century, the thriving city housed the shrines of many saints, some of whom, S. Swithun most notably, had inspired substantial building works that transformed the city's urban landscape.[3] Bishop Æthelwold instigated the transformation of the Old and New Minsters, both in terms of their physical aspect and personnel. The bishop's activities at these houses have provided the archetype of 'reform' for historians since the twelfth century.[4] Recent historians have questioned whether the ejection

[3] For an analysis of the transformation of Winchester over the course of the tenth century, see Martin Biddle, *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 449-56 and idem, 'Felix Urbs Winthonia: Winchester in the age of monastic reform,' in *Tenth-Century Studies* (Phillimore, 1975). For a discussion of the significance of the physical transformation of the Old Minster under Bishop Æthelwold and its two dedication ceremonies, see Daniel Sheerin, 'The Dedication of the Old Minster, Winchester in 980.'

[4] For example, in the twelfth century Orderic Vitalis copied Wulfstan's *VÆth* into a miscellany of *vitae* and texts relating to Saint-Évroul, Alençon, Bibl. Mun. 14. Orderic altered Wulfstan text at several points and interpolated

of clerics from the Old and New Minsters truly provided a model for other localities and even whether a full-scale purge occurred at all.[5] The veracity of Wulfstan of Winchester's account of monastic reform in the *Vita Æthelwoldi* certainly needs to be challenged as an accurate representation of events; however, the history of reform that it constructed served a particular purpose for the monks of the Old Minster. In the hagiographies composed by Wulfstan in the last decades of the tenth century, after Bishop Æthelwold's death, it is possible to observe a concerted effort to construct a specific history and identity that revealed the Old Minster to be the ideal monastic community. In counterpoint, in this same period the monks of New Minster developed cults of monastic men that distinguished the community from its counterpart even as they placed the New Minster within Bishop Æthelwold's vision of monasticism. This section will explore the manner in which these two houses integrated the bishop's polemic of monastic superiority into the cults of their prominent saints, asking at all times what this achieved for each community.

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lines from Wulfstan's *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*, for a discussion see Lapidge and Winterbottom, 'Introduction,' *The Life of S. Æthelwold*, p. clvii-clviii. William of Malmesbury, the earliest source to designate Wulfstan as the author of the *VÆth*, used the *vita* as a source for his *Gesta Regum*, *Gesta Pontificum*, and his version of the *Vita S. Dunstani*, Lapidge and Winterbottom, 'Introduction,' *The Life of S. Æthelwold,* pp. clviii-clix.

[5] Most recently, Christopher Jones has demonstrated how the construction of a monolithic Benedictine-monastic past in the texts of the Benedictine Reform has profoundly shaped modern historiography. Jones argues that the rhetoric of strict Benedictinism does not accurately reflect the permeable and mixed ecclesiastical spaces that were the reality of the tenth century and proposes that in these inclusive and mixed environments the distinguishing features of the tenth-century movement were a 'devotion to both regular life and pastoral ministry, and [the] cultivation of a rich vernacular culture,' 'Minsters and Monasticism in Anglo-Saxon England,' in *Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, pp. 502-18, quote at p. 517.

The Old Minster and the cults of SS. Swithun and Æthelwold

By the end of the tenth century, Winchester had transformed into one of the largest and most prosperous cities in the English kingdom.[6] The transformation had its roots in the reign of King Alfred but reached its peak during the episcopacy of Bishop Æthelwold. Decades-long building works turned the Old Minster into an impressive structure adorned by a five-storey tower, large areas within the city walls were cleared so that the three Winchester houses could have a peaceful and properly enclosed space, and as the *scriptorium* of the New Minster attracted skilled artisans suburbs outside the city walls began to grow.[7] It is against the backdrop of a growing city, increasingly wealthy and increasingly cramped, that the cult of Bishop Æthelwold in the late tenth century must be set.

Roughly a decade after the bishop's death (d. 984), Wulfstan of Winchester, a prominent member of the Old Minster community, began to promote the bishop's sanctity. Wulfstan produced a large collection of essential texts for the veneration of the bishop: a *vita*, hymns, a set of collects, *Introit* tropes for the mass on the saint's feast day, and poems celebrating Æthelwold.[8] Significantly, across these texts Wulfstan deployed Æthelwold's rhetoric of monastic superiority and the bishop's constructed history of monasticism in England. Through the language of the bishop's ideology, Wulfstan crafted a communal history for the monks of the Old Minster, presenting Æthelwold and the tenth-century congregation as the ideal expressions of a process that had begun with the apostles.

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[6] Biddle, *Winchester*, pp. 461-9.
[7] Biddle, *Winchester*, pp. 459-60.
[8] Lapidge and Winterbottom, 'Introduction,' *Life of St. Æthelwold*, pp. xv-xxxix.

Written in 996, the year that Bishop Æthelwold's remains were translated into the choir of the Old Minster's church,[9] Wulfstan's *Vita Æthelwoldi* provided the monks of Old Minster with a definitive record of their former leader's sanctity. This hagiography situated both saint and community within Æthelwold's own scheme of Christian history, thereby firmly securing the Old Minster's successive generations of monks as especially holy men. The rhetoric of sanctity that Wulfstan applied to the bishop was steeped in the concepts of spiritual warfare and purity, concepts which had underpinned the idealisation of monasticism during the saint's episcopacy. At every layer of language and style, the *Vita Æthelwoldi* grounded the Old Minster's distinctive identity as a perfect monastic community in the persona of Æthelwold – as the spiritual sons of the saint, the monks were the particular elect amongst the 'army' of monastic men and women recruited by the bishop.

Much as Æthelwold had done in *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, Wulfstan demonstrated the contemporary superiority of monastic men by imbuing them with an apostolic heritage. The preface to the *Vita Æthelwoldi*, following hagiographic convention, situated the saint in a history of Christian salvation; in Wulfstan's rehearsal of this history Æthelwold formed one of the company of apostles. Æthelwold, according to Wulfstan, belonged to this group as he was 'the founder of many monasteries and teacher of the Church's doctrines.'[10] Wulfstan reinforced this essential aspect of Æthelwold's sanctity over the course of several chapters which described the bishop's monastic foundations and how the spread of monasticism in England during the saint's episcopacy mirrored the spread of Christianity under the first apostles.[11] Compare, for example, Wulfstan's description of the

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[9] The bishop's remains were translated under the direction of his successor, Bishop Ælfheah, on 10 September 996, Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §43.
[10] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, Preface: 'Ex quorum collegio beatus pater et electus Dei pontifex Ætheluuoldus, uelut lucifer inter astra coruscans, suis temporibus appruit, multorumque coenobiorum fundator et ecclesiasticorum dogmatum institutor inter omnes Anglorum pontifices solus singulariter effulsit.'
[11] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §11-27.

apostles' ministry following Christ's crucifixion to his description of Æthelwold's own ministry:

> Thereafter he [i.e. Christ] spread throughout the world the light of many apostolic teachers; bathed in the brilliance of the faith proclaimed in the gospels, they were to banish the blind darkness of ignorance from men's hearts, set alight the minds of believers with the fire of heavenly love, and, driving away the hunger and poverty that had so long afflicted the mass of the peoples, fill them full with the banquet of eternal life.
> *Vita Æthelwoldi*, Preface

> But from that time till today they have never ceased to be fulfilled [i.e. Æthelwold's visions]: everyone ablaze with the love of God is hurrying to leave this world and lead a monastic life, and the common people are anxious one and all to depart from evil, do good and bow their necks in humility to Christ, king of kings, so that both monks and laity together, following the footsteps of the holy father Æthelwold, may deserve to attain the lasting joys of the heavenly kingdom.
> *Vita Æthelwoldi*, §38

The saint's apostolic sanctity was most explicitly revealed by his miraculous ability to bind a guilty monk with invisible fetters, Wulfstan finished his account of this miracle by comparing Æthelwold to Peter:

> He brought the proper faith and conduct to the shepherd's care of his holy rule, and surely for that reason was the successor of the blessed Peter, chief of the apostles, in binding and loosing.[12]

As Æthelwold's successors, the monks of Old Minster could claim a communal purity imbued with a sense of apostolic authority. The scenes of clerical expulsion and general anti-cleric rhetoric in the *Vita Æthelwoldi* further reinforced a continuity with Christ's elect and a communal history intimately tied to Æthelwold's persona and ideas. Wulfstan recorded that immediately after Æthelwold's consecration as bishop of Winchester the saint expelled the corrupt clerics from the Old Minster – a scene which echoed Æthelwold's own description of

[12] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §33.

Edgar's actions upon his accession.[13] Significantly, the expelled clerics in the *Vita Æthelwoldi* were described with language that recalled the descriptions of the fallen angels and rebellious New Minster canons in the New Minster Foundation Charter:

> If moreover it should happen on any occasion, at the Devil's instigation, that, glorying in the arrogance of presumption, the cast-down canons should wish to plot to cast down the flock of monks which I [i.e. Edgar] have respectfully established with a shepherd in God's property, let it be done with them, and with everyone who might give them aid, blinded by some kind of bribe, as happened with the proud angels and with the first man seduced by the Devil's trick, namely that, having been expelled from the bounds of Paradise and from the sublime seats of the kingdom of Heaven they shall be thrust down into the fires of the Abyss with these [other] disdainful ones who have spurned the Lord's service, and be tormented with perpetual misery.[14]
> *New Minster Foundation Charter*

> Now at that time there were in the Old Minster, where the bishop's throne is situated, cathedral canons involved in wicked and scandalous behaviour, victims of pride, insolence, and riotous living, to such a degree that some of them did not think fit to celebrate mass in due order. They married wives illicitly, divorced them, and took others; they were constantly given to gourmandizing and drunkenness. The holy man Æthelwold would not tolerate it. With permission from King Edgar, he lost no time in expelling from the monastery such detestable blasphemers against God.[15]
> *Vita Æthelwoldi*

[13] Just as Edgar had expelled canons 'who abounded beyond measure in the aforesaid sins' from the holy places in his kingdom (*EEM*, pp. 149-50), so Æthelwold immediately drove out the Old Minster canons 'involved in wicked and scandalous behaviour, victims of pride, insolence, and riotous living,' *VÆth,* §16.

[14] NMFC, CH. IX, p. 83: 'Si autem qualibet ocasione diabolo instigante contigeret ut fastu superbientes arrogantie deiecti canonici monachorum gregem quem ego uenerans cum pastore in Dei constitui possessione deiecere insidiando uoluerint agatur de eis et de omnibus qui quolibet munere cecati iuuamen eis impenderint quod actum est de angelis superbientibus et de protoplasto diaboli fraude seductor ut paradisi uidelicet limitibus sublimibus que regni celorum sedilibus eiecti cum his qui Domini famulatum aspernentes contemserunt barathri incendiis detrusi iugi crucientur miseria.'

[15] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §16: 'Erant autem tunc Veteri Monasterio, ubi cathedra pontificalis habetur, canonici nefandis scelerum moribus implicati, elation et insolentia atque luxuria praeuenti, adeo ut nonnulli illorum dedignaretur missas suo ordine celebrare, repudiantes uxores quas inlicite duxerant et alias accipientes, gulae et ebrietati iugiter dediti. Quod minime ferens sanctus Ætheluuoldus, data licentia a rege Eadgaro, expulit citissime detestandos blasphematores Dei de monasterio, et adducens monachos de Abbandonia locauit illic, quibus ipse abbas et episcopus extiti.'

This resonance gained greater force in §19 of the *Vita Æthelwoldi* in which the expelled canons plotted against Æthelwold and attempted to poison him. The canons, according to Wulfstan, had been motivated by envy and intended 'upon his death, to drive away the servants of God and regroup to form a new assembly, free to indulge their former shameful practices.'[16] The anti-clerical rhetoric deployed by Wulfstan in these scenes, imbued with the resonance of Æthelwold's own words, served to highlight the purity and superiority of the monks who replaced the canons. Across the descriptions of the other monasteries that Æthelwold founded, Wulfstan created a narrative of decline and renewal that further elevated monastic communities. Into this image of widespread monasticisation, a privileged position was carved for the monks of the Old Minster: as the first place to receive the cleanse of monastic life and the site of the bishop's throne, it formed the ideal model for all other monastic foundations.[17] Indeed, with the framework for expulsion laid out in the New Minster Foundation Charter in mind, Æthelwold's immediate actions against the canons in the Old Minster placed the saint in a tradition that stretched back to the expulsion of the rebellious angels from heaven. The return of monks to the Old Minster evoked a redemptive return to a prelapsarian Paradise.

The New Minster Foundation Charter provided a further framework through which to construct Bishop Æthelwold's sanctity and the Old Minster's privileged status: the language of spiritual warfare. In the record of the prophetic vision of Æthelwold's mother, Wulfstan interpreted the symbolism of the vision using martial imagery that echoed the New Minster

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[16] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §19.

[17] Following his description of the clerics' expulsion and the establishment of monks at the Old Minster, Wulfstan claimed that 'Up to then there had been no monks in England at that time, except those dwelling at Glastonbury and Abingdon,' *VÆth*, §18. A similar claim had been in *EEM*, following Æthelwold's description of Edgar's endowment of Abingdon, the bishop recorded: 'Before that there were only a few monks in a few places in so large a kingdom who lived by the right rule. This was in no more places than one, which is called Glastonbury,' *EEM*, pp. 148-9. Alan Thacker has demonstrated that the image of a neglected and impoverished community at Abingdon was a constructed one, at the time of Æthelwold's election as abbot the community was in far better shape than the *VÆth* and *EEM* claimed, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' pp. 43-51.

Foundation Charter's descriptions of a spiritual army of monastic men.[18] This language was deployed again in the record of another prophetic dream to describe Æthelwold as 'a soldier under his [i.e. Archbishop Dunstan's] command.'[19] This language and imagery cast Æthelwold in the model of sanctity which he had himself constructed, revealing not only a keen awareness of the bishop's particular attitude towards monasticism and sanctity but also a concerted effort to represent the Old Minster as the perfect expression of those attitudes. The miracles enacted by Æthelwold during his lifetime overwhelmingly occur at the Old Minster itself or involve a member of the community.[20] Throughout the *Vita Æthelwoldi*, Æthelwold devotes particular care and attention to the discipline and harmony of the Old Minster community, a narrative mechanism which simultaneously presented the saint as the ideal abbot and reinforced the holiness of the community as a corporate body.

The *Vita Æthelwoldi* reveals that the communal identity of the Old Minster monastic community was grounded in the memory of Bishop Æthelwold. The cult of the bishop distinguished this group of monastic men not only from their neighbours at the New Minster and Nunnaminster, houses that could also claim a particular relationship to the bishop, but also from the worshippers of the other prominent cult that the community housed, that of S. Swithun. Around the time that he was composing the *Vita Æthelwoldi*, Wulfstan was also at work upon another substantial hagiographical composition: a metrical version of Lantfred's

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[18] In *VÆth* §3, Wulfstan interpreted the prophetic vision in the following manner: 'In the banner on high we can see that the holy man, then in his mother's womb, was one day to be standard-bearer in the army of God: as he indeed was, for we saw him putting up a versatile struggle in defence of Holy Mother Church against her ancient enemy, the devil; thanks to his warfare – or rather God's victory through him – we saw the machinations of the wicked brought to nought.' Compare to ch. XV of the NMFC (S745): 'Moreover, let the abbot, girded with spiritual arms, defended on all sides by a troop of monks, drenched with the dew of celestial gifts, conquering the phantom-like tricks of devils, skilfully defending with a sword of the spirit, protecting with the subtle shield of faith as a defence, fighting in hardy triumph as an undaunted soldier, snatch the king and all the clergy of his kingdom from the rabid persecution of invisible enemies, with the help of Christ, through whose power they contend.'

[19] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §38.

[20] Ibid., §32-7.

Translatio et miracula de S. Swithuni.[21] In the lengthy dedicatory *epistola* to Wulfstan's *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, Wulfstan described in effusive terms the building works undertaken by Æthelwold, praising the dedicatee of the *Narratio*, Bishop Ælfheah, as a worthy completer of Æthelwold's vision.[22] The description of the bishop-saints interred at the Old Minster moves roughly chronologically: beginning with Birinus it builds crescendo-like to Æthelwold's episcopacy. Wulfstan lauded Æthelwold's sanctity in such lavish terms that the bishop's significance appears to eclipse that of Swithun's, this praise effectively presented Æthelwold as the true patron-saint of the Old Minster.[23] As the framing-piece for a *life* of S. Swithun directed at the current spiritual father of the Old Minster, the emphasis of the dedicatory *epistola* of the *Narratio* suggests that the late tenth-century congregation of monks situated a distinct communal identity in their most recent bishop rather than their most popular saint.[24]

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[21] Lapidge and Winterbottom have argued that Wulfstan composed the *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni* in the years 992x994, during the archiepiscopate of Sigeric, and that its final form was completed shortly after the translation of Æthelwold in 996 when two chapters of the *VÆth* were incorporated into it, 'Introduction,' *Life of St. Æthelwold*, p. xxii.

[22] Wulfstan, *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, p. 381: 'Your Excellency [i.e. Ælfheah] straightaway succeeded him in the episcopacy and with attentive application brought to completion the work thus begun. What is more, you have taken care to add hidden crypts which Daedalina wit had constructed in such a way that, should any unfamiliar visitor enter them he would not know whence he came nor how to retrace his steps.'

[23] Wulfstan includes what is essentially a summary of the saint's reforming actions and miracles, *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuni*, pp. 394-7.

[24] In the *Translatio et miracula de S. Swithuni* composed c. 971, Lantfred claimed that 'we know very little concerning the marvellous signs, portents and miracles which this saint [Swithun] performed by means of his prayers during his lifetime' and wrote that his work would be concerned primarily with 'those things which without any doubt took place posthumously at the man of God's tomb,' p. 253. Swithun's obscurity in the tenth century has been called into question by modern scholars. In her analysis of both Goscelin of St. Bertin's *vita* of Swithun and Wulfstan's *Narratio metrica*, Barbara Yorke has argued that Swithun's cult was well developed by the tenth-century reforms and that this motivated Æthelwold's intervention and promotion of the cult, 'The Bishops of Winchester, the Kings of Wessex, and the Development of Winchester in the ninth and early tenth centuries,' in D. Pelteret (ed), *Anglo-Saxon History: Basic Readings* (London, 2000), p. 110. Daniel Sheerin has interpreted Æthelwold's promotion of Swithun's cult as evidence for a degree of negotiation occurring at the Old Minster between an old clerical order and a new monastic one, 'The Dedication of the Old Minster,' p. 270.

The cults of monastic men at the New Minster

As their famous foundation charter reveals, the monastic congregation at the New Minster enjoyed an intimate relationship with royalty in the tenth century.[25] This relationship reached back beyond Edgar to his great-grandfather, Edward the Elder, who had founded the house at the turn of the century (c. 901).[26] This foundation has been interpreted as a symbolic statement of royal authority, Barbara Yorke has argued that the clear rejection of the Old Minster, itself a symbol of West Saxon power, symbolised a new order: 'The Old Minster was the foundation of the kings of Wessex: the New Minster that of the kings of England.'[27] This symbolism was fixed as the New Minster became the burial site of successive kings, including Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Eadwig.[28] In decoration and language, the lavish New Minster Foundation Charter asserted the community's privileged status as a royal foundation, and, with its text composed by Bishop Æthelwold, it provided the monks with a communal history intertwined with a powerful legacy of royal and ecclesiastical authority.

However, neither bishops nor kings were venerated at the New Minster, the monks instead preferred the cult of monastic men. In the 980s, a few years before Wulfstan began composing the *Vita Æthelwoldi* and *Narratio metrica*, the New Minster monks were in the process of creating new material for two saints whose relics the community had possessed

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[25] The NMFC recorded that King Edgar re-established monks at the New Minster in the fulfilment of his desire to do good works, see ch. VIII: 'Wherefore, goaded on by love of the holy ghost, he [i.e. Edgar] established and abbot and monks in the New Minster,' p. 82. The charter also recorded Edgar's injunction that the New Minster remain under the protection of successive kings, ch. XIV, p. 88.

[26] Four charters of Edward the Elder record grants of land given to the newly established community at New Minster (S 1443, S 365, S 366, S 370). S 370, an eleventh-century forgery, purports to be a formal foundation charter for the year 903 AD. Charter S 1443, dated 901 Ad and considered authentic, recorded the purchase of a church, a stone dormitory, and a piece of land from Bishop Denewulf and the community of Old minster in order that Edward might found a monastery for the salvation of his soul and that of his father, King Alfred. For a discussion of these charters see Rumble, *Property and Piety*, Doc. III (S 370) and Doc. II (S 1443).

[27] Yorke, 'The Bishops of Winchester,' p. 116.

[28] Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 65.

since the early decades of the tenth century: the Breton S. Iudoc and Welsh S. Malo/Machutus. In addition to these two monastic saints, the monks also venerated Grimbald, the Continental monk and scholar recruited by King Alfred in the ninth century. These cults articulated a distinct identity for the New Minster, although this is not to say that they indicated a rejection of Æthelwold's ideology of monasticism. In the material composed for these saints, the New Minster visibly adopted the worship of monastic superiority and demonstrated its commitment to the transformative nature of monastic practice.

In the 980s, the monks of New Minster composed a metrical *vita* of S. Iudoc, the seventh-century prince whose relics had been brought to the New Minster shortly after its foundation by Breton monks fleeing Viking attacks.[29] Prompted perhaps by a rival claim to the saint's relics, the metrical *Vita S. Iudoci* transformed the *vita prima* of the saint, composed c. 913x931, into a poem of roughly 452 lines.[30] Significantly, this transformation situated the saint in a scheme of Christian history that linked martyrdom and monasticism, revealing that in a conscious effort to promote S. Iudoc the monks of New Minster adopted an Æthelwoldian rhetoric of monastic sanctity.

In an original addition to the *vita prima*, the poet of the metrical *Vita S. Iudoci* included an historical account of Christ's life and death and the early spread of Christianity:

> Accordingly, many were found worthy to receive the joys of the heavenly realm, but many also obtained the crown of martyrdom, they who rejoice to live in Christ by shedding their own blood; and others, having comprehensively rejected the sins of the flesh, dedicated themselves to serve the eternal Lord of virtues rather than [serving] the world in an evil and wicked manner. Among these is one whose name was Iudoc, a holy man of the Lord.[31]

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[29] Lapidge, 'A metrical Vita S. Iudoci from Tenth-Century Winchester,' *Journal of Medieval Latin*, 10 (2000), pp. 255-9.

[30] Lapidge, 'A metrical Vita S. Iudoci,' pp. 265-7. In 977, the monks of Saint-Josse, Iudoc's original resting-place, claimed to have rediscovered the relics of the founder.

[31] *Vita S. Iudoci*, in 'A metrical Vita S. Iudoci,' ed. and trans. Lapidge, ll. 56-61: 'Quapropter multi meruerunt guadia regni,/ martirii quidam sed et obtinuere coronam,/ sanguine qui fuso letantur uiuere Christo,/ et quidam uitiis carnalibus undique spretis/ uirtutum Domino quam nequiter et male mundo.' The section in Lapidge's edition labelled 'C. 1' (ll. 47- 83) does not appear in the *vita prima* of the saint, an edition of which can be found in Hubert

This historical framework for the saint placed monasticism as an equivalent expression to martyrdom. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the prescriptive texts used by Æthelwold and promoted at his houses cast the monastic life in the terms of a martyr's persecution. For example, the Carolingian treatise on monastic virtue, Smaragdus' *Diadema monachorum*, argued that the monk's commitment to chastity corresponded to the martyr's persecution:

> For if Christ is chastity, truth, and justice, then that which lies in ambush [i.e. desire] is the persecutor, and so he who wishes to guard against [the one who lies ambush] and the other vices and preserve himself, will be a martyr.[32]

The historical framework for Iudoc's *vita* forms the most substantial interpolation into the narrative of the *vita prima*, the only other addition occurs at lines 361-6 and records that Iudoc's relics lie at Winchester. This indicates that this specific interpretation of Christian history served an essential function to the presentation of Iudoc's sanctity – a sanctity which provided a model for monastic virtue.[33]

Le Bourdellès, 'Vie de St Josse,' *Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaries de France* (1995), pp. 915-28 (text) and 928-34 (translation). It is noteworthy that the earliest surviving manuscript copy of the *vita prima* was probably written in England, or at the very least by English scribes working on the Continent: Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, 1384 (U. 26), fo. 1-4, s. $x^{4/4}$, England or Jumièges (English scribes), prov. Jumièges s. xi^{2} (Gneuss no. 925.5).

[32] Smaragdus, *Diadema monachorum*, col. 688: 'Si enim castitas, et veritas, et Justitia Christus est, sicut ille qui insidiatur persecutor est, ita et ille quic hæc et in aliis defensare et in se custodire voluerit, martyr erit.'

[33] The poet of the New Minster interpolation praised Iudoc as 'a continual worshipper and perpetual lover of godliness; he was also tirelessly devoted to prayer through night-time vigils; mindful of the Lord by day and night he chanted the Lord's praise'; 'continuus cultor iugis et deitatis amator;/ excubiis pernox infessus necne precator,/ nocte dieque memor Domini laudum quoque cantor,' *Vita S. Iudoci*, ll. 66-8. The poet also declared that 'Yet it is appropriate for me to select at least a few details – even though prose texts may better reveal the mighty accomplishments of earlier fathers – by hymning your deeds in hexameter verse, O Iudoc, so that the record of your model life may stand out more clearly'; 'Me tamen ecce iuuat saltem discerpere pauca/ (magna licet patrum diuulget prosa priorum),/ exametro psallendo mdod tua gesta, Iudoce,/ lucidius sancta pateat quo mention norme,' *Vita S. Iudoci*, ll. 80-3.

In the late tenth century, the monks of New Minster also produced an original sermon for the celebration of another saint whose relics they kept, S. Malo/Machutus.[34] This sermon presented the monastic life as an arena for a heroic struggle, ultimately stressing the transformative power of monastic praxis. For example, the sermon urged the monks to plead for Machutus' intercession in their 'daily struggle':

> Thus, let us call upon saint Machutus to aid us, in order that he does not desist from helping us in our daily struggle with his pious prayers in heaven [...]. Wherefore, dearest ones, whosoever bravely resists diabolic suggestions in his order and according to his own abilities, he shall merit to receive the crown of eternal triumph with our pious parent Machutus.[35]

The sermon made clear that this struggle operated on both an individual and communal level; it urged its listeners to contend in a battle between flesh and spirit and argued that the community's temporal persecutors would ultimately be punished for their actions.[36]

These themes resonate with the language of Æthelwold's ideology of monastic superiority and this sermon reveals an active interest in and deployment of the rhetoric of that ideology. The author of the sermon drew material from a range of sources, his main source

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[34] The sermon survives in London, BL, Royal MS 13 A.x, fo. 98r-103v and is written in a script notably practised in houses associated with Æthelwold, for a discussion see David Dumville, *English Caroline Script and Monastic History: Studies in Benedictinism AD 950-1030* (Woodbridge, 1993), p. 145. For an edition see Brown and Yearkes, 'A Sermon on the Birthday of St Machutus,' pp. 161-4. Hereafter references to this edition will be indicated by page numbers and the title *Homelia in natale sancti Machutis*.

[35] *Homelia in natale sancti Machutis*, p. 161: 'Igitur vocamus sanctum Machu in auxilium nobis, ut ille de caelesti patria piis orationbus nostrum cotidie agonem adiuvare non desistat, [...]. Quapropter, dilectissimi, unusquisque in suo ordine secundum uirium facultatem fortiter diabolicis resistat suggestionibus, ut aeterni triumphi coronam cum pio parente nostro Machu dignus accipere mereatur.'

[36] For example, the sermon declared that 'Truly we, most beloved brothers, must walk in the soul and not bring about the desire of the flesh. For dear ones, the flesh pits itself against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And thus, they oppose each other by turns, and even if you do not wish it, it is so'; 'Nos uero, amantissimi fratres, spiritu ambulemus et desideria carnis non perficiamus. Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem adversus carnem,' *Homelia in natale sancti Machutis*, p. 162. The punishment for the community's persecutors: 'Let us daily think upon how we shall come in faith before the tribunal of the eternal judge on the day of judgement, when the Lord shall begin to examine his people and by this examination to decide who among them will be worthy and to send the guilty and negligent ones into Gehenna, and to condemn our persecutors to the penalty of flames to burn in perpetuity'; 'Cogitemus cotidie, qua fiducia ueniamus ante tribunal aeterni iudicis in die iudicii, cum coeperit Dominus populum suum recensere et de suo examine singulorum merita cognoscere, mittere in gehenam nocentes et neglegentes, et persecutors nostros flammae poenalis perpetuo ardore dampnare,' *Homelia in natale sancti Machutis*, p. 163.

appears to have been Alcuin's *Life* of S. Vedast which he supplemented with his own composition and passages from at least two popular sermons.[37] These latter sources raise the possibility that the author of Machutus' sermon was working from a version of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary which, if the case, would indicate that the monks of the New Minster had adopted not only the rhetoric of monastic superiority but had also integrated the programme of Carolingian texts that supported it into their *praxis.* François Dolbeau identified several possibilities for the two sermons in question: Caesarius of Arles' Sermo 223 which has identical passages in Ps. Augustine, *Sermo* 225 and Ps. Augustine, *Sermo* 209 which itself has identical passages in Ps. Bede, *Homilia* III 70. The second of these two, the Ps. Bede/Ps. Augustine sermon, was included in a ninth-century version of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary from Tours, Paris, BNF, lat. 2322.[38] Notably, the passage from this sermon that the Machutus author incorporated into his text extolled the wonder of the heavenly community of saints and angels:

> There, there is no discord, rather every one of the saints are joined in one concord, one peace and happiness surrounds them all, where the saints shine like the sun in perpetual felicity. There, there is no night, no shadows, no encounter with clouds, no fire nor cold, no old age, there is no misery there. And what is even better, [there you have] full enjoyment of the company of angels and archangels, assembled around the throne and [heavenly] domain of the most high and powerful Prince, and amongst all the other superbly virtuous comrades in arms.[39]

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[37] Brown and Yearkes' edition of the sermon highlights the material drawn from Alcuin whereas it was François Dolbeau who identified the additional sources, Dolbeau, 'Les sources d'un sermon en l'honneur de Saint Malo,' p. 418. The author of Machutus' sermon did not cite the patristic authors from which he drew and, consequently, identification of the short passages which he integrated into his text has thrown up a few possibilities. Dolbeau identified the following ones: Caesarius of Arles' Sermo 223 (passages identical to Ps. Augustine 225) and Ps. Augustine Sermo 209 (passages identical to Ps. Bede Homilia III 70). Dolbeau also argued that the sermon ended with a hymn which had been mistakenly printed as prose, pp. 418-9.

[38] Grégoire, *Homéliaires liturgiques médiévaux*, p. 67.

[39] *Homelia in natale sancti Machutis*, p. 164: 'Numquam ibi erit ulla discordia, sed omnium erit sanctorum una Concordia, una pax ac Letitia continent cuncta, ubi sancti fulgebunt sicut sol in perpetuas felicitates. Nulla ibi nox est, nullae Tenebrae, nullus nubium concursus, ardor frigoris nullus, nulla senectus, nulla miseria ibi est. Et quod melius est, consociare angelorum et archangelorum coetibus, thronis ac dominationibus, principatibus et potestatibus, omniumque supernarum uirtutum contuberniis perfrui.'

For a community that regularly read the history of the fallen angels and man's consequent creation in their foundation charter, the society of angels presented in this sermon resounded with the transformative power of the monastic life and the privileged place of New Minster monks within the history of Christian salvation. The New Minster author of this sermon deployed images and rhetoric that not only articulated the superiority and transformative power of the monastic life, but also the specific and privileged power of being a *New Minster* monk.

The hagiographical material for the third monastic saint venerated at the New Minster, S. Grimbald, survives in manuscripts from a significantly later date; however, there are indications that in the traditions developed by the New Minster for this saint, the monks sought to frame Grimbald in compatible terms with the communal identity constructed in the late tenth century. Two manuscripts of c. 1300 preserve the breviary of Hyde Abbey, the New Minster's later medieval designation, which contain twelve lections for the feast of S. Grimbald.[40] These lections rehearse a hagiography of the saint distinct from a twelfth-century *Vita S. Grimbaldi* and possibly represent a *vita prima*.[41] Without an earlier source with which to compare, it is impossible to determine the precise alterations that the author of the lections made to the tenth-century *vita*; nonetheless, it remains notable that the lections emphasise Grimbald's monastic virtue by casting him as a 'christo militantium' in both physical and spiritual struggles.[42] Furthermore, in Grierson's reconstruction of the *vita prima*, a clerical

[40] Breviary of Hyde Abbey ed. Tolhurst, *The Breviary of Hyde Abbey, Winchester: MSS Rawlinson litrug.e.1, and Gough liturgy. 8, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (London, 1932), fo. 288r-291r.
[41] This was proposed by Philip Grierson in 'Grimbald of St. Bertin's,' *English Historical Review* 55.220 (1940), in which Grierson reconstructed the material of the *vita prima* through comparison with medieval breviaries of St. Bertin's, pp. 530-2. Janet Bately has supported Grierson's assessment that the lections in the Breviary of Hyde Abbey represent a late tenth-century *vita* of the saint, 'Grimbald of St. Bertin's,' *Medium Ævum* 35.1 (1966).
[42] For example, in *Lectio XI* Grimbald was praised as 'Magnates anglie pluriams auri argenti terrarumque donaria promptissima deuocioe obtulerunt quibus aleretur chorus ministrorum sub sancto Grimbaldo christo militantium,' Breviary of Hyde Abbey, fo. 290v. The saint's monastic suffering was lauded in *Lectio XII*: 'In qua infirmitate tantus apparuit in uigiliis in oratio in carnis affliction et in intolerabili mortalibus uirtute paciencie ut sanis fortior uideretur in infirmitate dicente cum apostolo,' Breviary of Hyde Abbey, fo. 290v-291r.

expulsion scene was included: Grimbald was described as an exceedingly mild leader who tolerated the evil habits of certain *domestici* and that it was not until the episcopacy of Bishop Æthelwold that they were ejected.[43] The omission of this scene as well as any reference to Æthelwold or the presence of clerics at the New Minster in the later medieval lections may indicate that the New Minster had developed traditions regarding the saint that distinguished both Grimbald as an exemplary monastic saint, and the New Minster community as pure and whole *monastic* congregation.

The veneration of these monastic men at the New Minster placed the community within the scheme of history promoted by Bishop Æthelwold even as it distinguished the house from its counterpart at the Old Minster. The monks of the Old Minster grounded their communal identity in the memory of Bishop Æthelwold himself whereas the monks of the New Minster cultivated a distinctive monastic identity grounded in the bishop's rhetoric and ideology.

[43] This scene occurs in the Breviary of St. Bertin's which recorded on fo. 142r: 'Tam benigna uero errant in eo paternae charitatis viscera, ut domesticorum quorundam mores tolerare maluerit, quam eos ejicere, commendance Domino tempus dispensationis, qua corrigeret ecclesiam suam. Quod per beati praesulis Adelwoldi instantiam factum esse constat.' This scene does not occur in the Hyde Breviary, but neither does it occur in the *Vita secunda*, prompting Grierson to determine that 'the balance of probability is in favour of the lections in the Breviary of St. Bertin's being derived from the *Vita prima* rather than from the twelfth-century biography,' p. 532. Grierson further estimated that the omission of this passage in the Hyde Breviary occurred because there 'it was felt that tolerance of secular clergy was a blot on Grimbald's reputation,' 'Grimbald of St. Bertin's,' p. 537 n. 1.

II. Ramsey

Founded by Bishop Oswald in 974, the monastery of Ramsey was unique amongst its counterparts in tenth-century England: it alone was dedicated to S. Benedict. In his *Vita Oswaldi*, Byrhtferth of Ramsey made clear the reason for this particular dedication: Ramsey, according to Byrhtferth, formed a new Fleury, itself the seat of the definitive *auctoritas* of S. Benedict.[44] The distinctive Benedictine identity constructed and espoused by the community was indebted to this Continental centre; however, the *auctoritas* of its monastic identity rested upon its cultivation of specifically English monastic traditions. Ramsey not only possessed the relics of many early English saints, it was also the centre of a substantial output of English *vitae* and an avid consumer of such material. The texts produced for the veneration of saints at Ramsey reveal that the monks enthusiastically adopted the notion that monasticism served as the 'new' martyrdom – a martyrdom made all the more perfect by the community's close relationship to the most authoritatively Benedictine centre, Fleury. This section will analyse the construction of a distinctive communal identity in this body of material in a roughly chronological order: beginning in the 980s with Abbo's gift of the *Passio S. Edmundi* to Ramsey, followed by the composition of the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey which preceded that of Byhrtferth's *Vita Oswaldi* in the final years of the tenth century, and finishing with an analysis of the *Vita Oswaldi* itself.

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[44] Byrhtferth praised the monastic life at Fleury in lavish terms, writing that Oda had sent Oswald 'to the monastery of the glorious confessor and abbot St. Benedict, [...], for he knew without question that the most perfect servants of God were dwelling there, whom the diadem of religion and the glorious teaching of St. Benedict adorn more than others,' *VO*, II. 4. John Nightingale has argued that Oswald and the other prominent English reformers looked to Fleury, the custodian of S. Benedict's relics, as the authority on Benedictine monasticism. Without an early customary from the period before Odo of Cluny's reforms in the later tenth century it remains difficult to determine the exact character of Fleury's Benedictinism; however, later customaries and the community's intimate relationship with royalty, Carolingian in particular, suggest that Benedict of Aniane's interpretation of the *Regula Benedicti* may have been in use. For further discussion of Bishop Oswald's relationship to Fleury see Nightingale, 'Oswald, Fleury, and Continental reform,' pp. 23-45.

In the 980s, only a decade or so after the house had been founded, Abbo of Fleury composed a *Passio S. Edmundi* for the monks of Ramsey in thanks for their hospitality.[45] In this *passio*, the ninth-century East Anglian king was framed as a martyr whose sacrifice provided a particularly relevant model of sanctity for a monastic audience. Abbo articulated Edmund's monastic *exemplum* both in the overarching structure of the *passio* narrative and in the explicit framework that he provided for interpreting Edmund's example.

Abbo began the *Passio S. Edmundi* with an emphasis on the monastic sanctity of Ramsey's region, East Anglia, and on the lesson to be drawn from the saint's status as a martyr: Edmund, he wrote, was an example of steadfast faith and the triumph over human frailty.[46] Deploying the standard elements of the *passio* genre, Abbo included scenes that recalled trials before pagan judges, the tests of faith presented by devoted family members pleading for the martyr to renounce his faith, and the sacrificial torture of the martyr.[47] Placing this local saint into the generic conventions of the *passiones* of early Christian martyrs reveals a deliberate effort to situate the English saint in a clearly defined order of sanctity – an order of sanctity that, as we have seen, now had a particular resonance to the monastic life.

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[45] In 985, Abbo failed to be elected abbot of Fleury, royal intervention had supported the election of Abbot Oylbold over that of the famous scholar. In the ensuing fall-out, Abbo travelled to Ramsey and remained there for two years, Marco Mostert, 'Le séjour d'Abbon de Fleury à Ramsey,' in *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 144 (1986), pp. 201-4. In the preface to the *Passio S. Edmundi*, Abbo dedicated the work to Archbishop Dunstan and wrote that once he revealed the story of Edmund to the monks of Ramsey, they were eager to possess in writing the passio of Edmund, *Passio S. Edmundi*, ed. Winterbottom, *Three Lives of English Saints* (Toronto, 1972), Preface, p. 67. In this preface, as Susan Ridyard has stressed, it is noteworthy that Abbo credited his knowledge of the martyr to Dunstan rather than to any local traditions or contemporary hagiography, Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, 224.

[46] Abbo, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §4: 'gradiensque via regia nec declinabat ad dexteram, extollendo se de meritis, nec ad sinistram, succumbendo uitiis humane fragilitatis.'

[47] For example, Edmund's exchange with Hinguar, through the messenger, recalled the exchanges between judges/consuls/Roman governors and early Christian martyrs during trial scenes, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §7 and 9. The bishop's counsel to Edmund to flee recalled the urging of the martyr's family members to renounce his or her faith, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §8. Edmund's statement of steadfast faith recalls the martyr's witness to his or her faith in Christ, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §8-9. Finally, Edmund's torture and martyrdom were described with the imagery of the martyrdom of Sebastian, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §10.

Abbo also provided an explicit framework with which to interpret Edmund's *exemplum* as a martyr: as a martyr, Abbo wrote, Edmund provided an ideal example of patience, ascetism, and virginity. For example, in one scene in which Edmund was tied to a stake and likened to Christ on the Cross, Abbo argued that the saint's tortured and wounded body demonstrated the example of patience:

> And on account of his love for the Lord, he, bristling with heavy arrows and with his entire body torn to pieces through severe torture, patiently and from the depths of his heart persisted in the confession of his faith.[48]

In addition to Edmund's virtuous patience, his ascetism was also a significant element of the final scenes of his martyrdom: when the Danes took the king's body off the stake, they discovered a hair shirt under his clothes.[49] In these final scenes of the saint's martyrdom, Abbo emphasised that Edmund was a martyr because of his blessed life, not because of the form of his death.[50] Indeed, he added that Edmund's *passio* offered an example of virtuous living, similar rewards, he argued, were given to those who committed themselves to virginity. Keeping one's flesh incorrupt in life was the method by which one could imitate a martyr in a time without persecution:

> Consider what he became, he who, amongst such earthly wealth and luxury, strove to overcome the trite insolence of his own flesh, and what his incorruptible body reveals. The uncorrupted members show that to be pleasing to Him the servants bustling in human services [must] perpetually remain clean, and, if they are not able to keep the maidenly flower of chastity, they must at least attempt the continual killing of desire.[51]

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[48] Abbo, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §11: 'Iste propter amorem nominis Domini toto corpore gravibus sagittis horridus et medullitus asperitate tormentorum dilaniatus in confessione patienter perstitit.'
[49] Ibid., §11: 'Cuius corpus ita truncum et aculeis hirsutum relinquentes.'
[50] Ibid., §17.
[51] Ibid.: 'Considerandum igitur quis iste fuerit, qui in regni culmine, inter tot diuitias et luxus saeculi, semet ipsum calcata carnis petulantia uincere studuit, quod eius ostendit caro incorruptibilis. Cui humano obsequio famulantes satagant illi ea placere munditia quam ei perpetuo placuisse manifestant membra incorrupta, et, si non possunt uirgineo flore pudicitiae, saltem expertae uoluptatis iugi mortificatione.'

This framework for interpreting Edmund's *exemplum* as a martyr aligned with that set out in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. The sermons for the celebration of an individual martyr's feast day in the Homiliary's Common of Saints argued that 'contemporary' martyrdom was achieved through the renunciation of earthly wealth and family. Collectively, these sermons were concerned with the ways in which Christians could be martyrs in times of peace: they urged the pursuit of monastic virtues, if not the monastic life itself, as the most effective means by which to achieve this blessed state. As it has been seen, the sermons from Paul the Deacon's Homiliary were used by monastic communities in England from at least the tenth century onwards as part of the required reading for the celebration of a saint's feast day. Within this context, Edmund's *passio* conformed to a martyrdom narrative in a conventional sense, the saint was persecuted and died as a witness to his faith, but it was also framed in such a way that it could provide a contemporary example of martyrdom to a monastic audience familiar with and interested in the monastic *exempla* offered by Christian martyrs.

A particular interest in martyrs at Ramsey is further indicated by a metrical calendar produced by the community in the tenth century. The Metrical Calendar of Ramsey, a poem of 228 lines that recorded the names of a series of saints and the date of their feasts in Roman reckoning, survives uniquely in a twelfth-century computistical miscellany, Oxford, St John's College, MS 17, compiled at the fenland monastery of Thorney.[52] Both the stylistic elements of the poem and the fact that Byrhtferth of Ramsey incorporated lines verbatim into several of his own works suggest that the calendar was produced at Ramsey in the late tenth century.[53] This calendric poem is significant in two respects: first, it reveals an effort to situate Ramsey in

[52] Lapidge, 'A tenth-century metrical calendar from Ramsey,' *RB* (1984). Lapidge provides an edition of the metrical calendar at pp. 363-6.
[53] Lapidge, 'A tenth-century metrical calendar from Ramsey,' pp. 348-52.

a scheme of Christian history, and, second, it demonstrates an active interest in the role of martyrs in this historical schema.

In its form the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey recalls that of historical and enumerative martyrologies. Like the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey, historical and enumerative martyrologies listed saints, included biographical details, and arranged them according to the order of their feasts in the liturgical year.[54] As Sarah Hamilton has shown these types of liturgical texts can reveal a concerted effort to situate a community in schemes of Christian history at both a universal and local level.[55] This interpretative framework can be applied to the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey. The compiler of the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey created a unique record of sanctity. He combined elements of two earlier metrical calendars and completed the poem with seventy original contributions.[56] Overwhelmingly, these contributions included the feast days of martyrs and English saints which reveals both an interest in the unfolding of Christian history and also a desire to convey a prominent English role in it. Notably, many of the martyrs included in the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey received *passiones* in Ælfric of Eynsham's *Lives of Saints*.[57] The emphasis upon martyr saints in the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey provides another window onto Ramsey's developing identity as an exemplary monastic community: according to the calendar, martyrs played an essential role in the unfolding of Christian history and as the 'new' martyrs, the monks of Ramsey formed the next generation of saints.

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[54] The brief reckoning for each saint's feast day in the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey aligns more closely with the brevity of enumerative martyrologies which typically only include a succinct mention of the saint's place of burial or execution.
[55] See Hamilton, 'Understanding the Church's past.'
[56] A version of the eighth-century Metrical Calendar of York and the early tenth-century Metrical Calendar of Hampson served as the compiler's immediate sources for the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey. The compiler drew some forty-seven lines from the former and eight from the latter, Lapidge, 'A tenth-century metrical calendar from Ramsey,' pp. 332-48 and 354-5.
[57] The saints included by compiler of the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey who also received *passiones* in Ælfric's *LS* were: SS. Maurus, Marcellinus, Agnes, George, Alban, Abdon and Sennes, Stephen, Cecilia, Edmund.

In addition to the liturgical veneration of early Christian martyrs, Ramsey also promoted the cults of several royal English martyrs.[58] Around the time that the monks received Abbo's *Passio Edmundi*, they also acquired the relics of two Kentish princes, reputed to be martyrs as well. The twelfth-century *Chronicon Rameseiensis* recorded that Ealdorman Æthelwine initiated the translation of Æthelred and Æthelberht from Wakering in 991.[59] At the time of this translation, Ramsey was housing the monks of Winchcombe, another one of Oswald's foundations, who had been forced out after King Edgar's death.[60] These monks had served as the custodians of another royal martyr, S. Kenelm. The translation of the Kentish princes, Æthelred and Æthelberht, was perhaps motivated by the desire to transform Ramsey into the centre of a similarly prominent royal martyr-cult. The restricted liturgical commemoration of the princes in litanies and calendars indicates that their cult did not rival Kenelm's in importance, although Byrhtferth did compose a *passio* for the martyred princes.[61] In addition to these princes, Ramsey promoted the sanctity of the recently murdered contender to the throne, Edward Martyr, and supported the cult of the Winchcombe monks' martyr, S. Kenelm.[62] This devoted interest in martyr cults at Ramsey functioned perhaps as a

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[58] The interest in martyrs at Ramsey occurred in the wake of King Edward's murder and Sarah Foot has argued that against this backdrop Ramsey's promotion of royal martyrs marks a shift in English attitudes towards martyrdom. Namely, that 'from this point the English Church began to envisage the genre of the martyr's *passio* as appropriate for contemporary as well as long distant figures,' 'Why were there no martyrs?' pp. 36-40, quote at p. 40.

[59] *Chron. Rameseiensis*, p. 55.

[60] These events were described in the *Chron. Ramsensis*, p. 73 and for further discussion see Lapidge, 'Introduction,' *The Lives of S. Oswald and S. Ecgwine*, pp. xx-xxi.

[61] SS. Æthelberht and Ætheldred appear together in only one litany from the first half of the eleventh century, surviving in a pontifical possibly produced at Ramsey: London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius A.vii, fo. 1-112. Byrhtferth composed a *Passio SS. Æthelberhti et Æthelredi* c. 1000, this *passio* is in effect a revision of an earlier one composed for the community at Wakering, the princes' original resting place and survives only as part of Simeon of Durham's twelfth-century *Historia regum*. David Rollason has argued that the *passio* represents one element of a hagiographical cycle centred upon the Kentish princess, Mildrith, for further discussion and analysis of its role in the Mildrith Legend see Rollason, *The Mildrith Legend: A study in early medieval hagiography in England* (Leicester, 1982), pp. 16-7.

[62] In the *VO*, Byrhtferth recorded the circumstances of Edward's murder and lauded him as a martyr, claiming that the king's exhumed and undecayed body was proof of his sanctity, *VO*, IV.18-21, esp. §19. Ramsey support for Kenelm's cult is visible in a sacramentary possibly produced at the house in the late tenth century which then travelled to Fleury in the early eleventh. There is debate whether this sacramentary, Orléans, Bibliothèque

critique of recent political events, as Alan Thacker and David Rollason have argued, but equally it distinguished the house in the terms of monastic exceptionalism.[63]

Ramsey's identity as a model monastic community was fixed in Byrhtferth of Ramsey's *Vita Oswaldi*. Just as Wulfstan of Winchester had provided the Old Minster monks with a communal identity grounded in the memory of their recent leader, so Byrhtferth not only supplied Ramsey with an exemplary figurehead but also a record of the community's past and future exemplary status. Composed in the decade between the bishop's death in 992 and his translation at Worcester in 1002, the *Vita Oswaldi* presented Ramsey as the true *locus* of the bishop's sanctity. Byrhtferth divided the hagiography of the bishop into five parts over the course of which Oswald's sanctity was intimately tied to his personal monastic virtue and that of the communities which he founded, Ramsey most notably. In broad strokes, the narrative begins in Part I with a description of Oswald's apostolic lineage then moves onto the ways in which Oswald transformed himself into an ideal monk in Part II. In Parts III and IV, Oswald's increasing prominence in the English Church is represented through the army of monks he assembled and the monastic confederacy he established. Effectively circumventing the fact that the bishop died at Worcester not Ramsey, Byrhtferth devoted Part V to a description of the commemoration of the bishop at Ramsey and the death of the community's most important secular patron, Ealdorman Æthelwine. Throughout the *vita*, Byrhtferth deployed the reform-era rhetoric of monastic sanctity: martial imagery described the bishop, narratives

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municipal, MS 127, was produced at Winchcombe or Ramsey, the fact that it travelled to Fleury shortly after its production (around the time that the Winchcombe monks were housed at Ramsey) suggests that if not produced at Ramsey, it travelled to Fleury from that house. The sacramentary contains a litany on pp. 332-6 in which several saints are marked for special veneration: SS. Benedict and Scolastica (the patron saints of Fleury), S. Maurice and the Theban Legion (whose relics lay at Agaune), and S. Kenelm, Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Litanies*, pp. 219-24. The presence of Kenelm amongst the martyrs in this litany suggests that the monks of Ramsey and Winchcombe sought to situate themselves in both an earthly and divine company of Continental saints and houses.

[63] Thacker, 'Saint-Making and Relic Collecting,' pp. 248-9; Rollason, 'The cults of murdered royal saints,' pp. 18-19.

of martyrdom underpinned the representations of monastic life, anti-clerical rhetoric distinguished the purity of Oswald's houses, and royal authority bolstered the elevated spiritual authority of Oswald and his monks.[64] The distinctive element of the communal identity articulated in this hagiography lay in Ramsey's ties to Fleury: Oswald, according to Byrhtferth, was the ideal Fleury monk and thus his foundation at Ramsey formed the new centre of ideal monastic practice.[65]

In Part III of the *Vita Oswaldi*, Byrhtferth provided the monks of Ramsey with a foundation story that unequivocally reinforced their exceptional status. This section of the hagiography opens with Oswald's return to England and subsequent elevation to the episcopacy of Worcester. Byrhtferth presented Oswald's return as the fulfilment of the saint's commitment to the monastic life and cast his elevation to the episcopal see in the terms of an abbatial election.[66] Accordingly, the bishop, cast as a monastic apostle, spread 'the monastic

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[64] For example, in describing Oswald's habits as a newly ordained monk at Fleury, Byrhtferth wrote that the saint 'possessed the exercise of humility and other obligations of the holy Rule as his unconquerable weapons, prevailing with wondrous strength,' *VO*, II. 7. Following Oswald consecration as Bishop of Worcester, Byrhtferth used the trope of clerical vice in his record of how the saint converted many priests and clerics to the monastic life: 'It was, I say, a delightful sight to see them hasten daily to the church in calmness of spirit, those who formerly wallowed in sin, enslaved to foul debauchery, vices, and wickedness, [...]. Now they are accustomed to gaze in contemplation with chaste heart on heaven and on the secrets of heaven's Creator,' *VO*, III. 8. In the record of the Synod of Winchester, Byrhtferth recorded that King Edgar was particularly motivated to support Oswald's monastic foundations because Oswald had been the first to instruct the king concerning the 'most worthy soldier St. Benedict,' *VO*, III. 11.

[65] References to Fleury recur throughout the *VO*, its *auctoritas* underpinned the bishop's sanctity as it was through Fleury that Oswald became an ideal monk. Byrhtferth placed the praise of Oswald's exemplary monastic practice in the mouth of the Fleury abbot Wulfald: 'Concerning his [i.e. Oswald's] complete adherence to the monastic rule which Benedict, the saintly leader and revered glory of monks everywhere, produced superbly and established for his well-intentioned disciples to observe – as to how willingly, how devoutly and how honourably Oswald observed it, let the reverend Wulfald say it, let 'the throng of monks say it,' who are all faithful witnesses: that he was a true servant of God,' *VO*, II. 8.

[66] Oswald's return to England occurred at behest of Archbishop Oda, but only after the abbot and monks of Fleury 'had taken counsel concerning Oswald's departure' and assented to it, *VO*, III. 3. Oswald's return and subsequent promotion to the see of Worcester were described with the rhetoric of prophetic fulfillment: Oscytel, Archbishop of York, gazed upon Oswald 'just as Joseph looking upon his brother Benjamin,' *VO*, III. 4, whereas Dunstan 'directed his clear gaze on to Oswald's face [...] like Christ, who gazed with kindly vision upon the disciple [Peter] who was denying him: thus, did the great bishop gaze upon the humble Oswald,' *VO*, III. 5. Byrhtferth completed the record of Oswald's election with the statement: 'And he who had previously commended himself to Christ the heavenly King was commended to the earthly king by the magnates of this land,' III. 5.

remedy' throughout England.[67] As part of his praise for Oswald's monastic virtue, Byrhtferth extolled the exemplariness of Fleury, the house that had educated Oswald was rightly named 'flower' because 'the jewels and flowers of Paradise flourish there with rosy hue and snow-white brilliance.'[68] In Byrhtferth's telling, Fleury not only formed an earthly Paradise, it also served as an arena of martyrdom. He described Germanus, one of Oswald's followers, as one of the many martyrs produced by Fleury's teaching:

> To this man as well the monks of Fleury revealed the monastic remedy; they tested him at length in the penitentiary, showing him things which were severe and arduous. He, however, undergoing martyrdom [as it were] and the furnace of the Three Youths, and taking on the suffering of the Passion through his endurance, was accustomed to chant the hymn of those aforementioned soldiers with shrewd perception. Departing from the place of his trial, he adopted aspects of good conduct from individual monks.[69]

Germanus, whom Byrhtferth compared to the evangelist John, formed part of a growing group of twelve followers.[70] Through this group Oswald spread the monastic discipline of Fleury. In this way, Byrhtferth effectively compared Oswald both to an apostle and Christ, himself. Significantly, this *imitatio Christi* achieved its narrative climax with the Synod of Winchester and foundation of Ramsey. According to Byrhtferth, Oswald sensed his approaching death and sought out the king in order to determine his successor and this coincided with the Synod of Winchester.[71] Following the Synod, Edgar gave Oswald the choice of three places to establish an exceptional monastery.[72] According to Byrhtferth, Oswald selected the future site of Ramsey not only because 'it was suitable for housing monks' but also because it enjoyed the protection of a family notable for their commitment to

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[67] Byrhtferth, *VO*, III. 6-8.
[68] Byrhtferth, *VO*, III. 6: 'Rite 'Floriacus' dictus est ille sacer locus, quia in eo (ut libet loqui) florent roseo colore et niueo splendore gemme floresque Paradysi.'
[69] Byrhtferth, *VO*, III. 7.
[70] Ibid., III. 8.
[71] Ibid., III. 10-12.
[72] Ibid., III. 12.

supporting monastic life.[73] Byrhtferth described the construction of Ramsey in lavish and extensive terms, presenting it as a biblical fulfilment:

> The beloved patriarch Jacob went down to Egypt with seventy souls; but our patriarch, enjoying even greater distinction, went down to the island [Ramsey] replete with every sort of beauty. [...] The 'Promised Land' was promised to Jacob's people; the glory of the heavenly kingdom was promised to Oswald's, if they kept the decrees of St Benedict in their monastery.[74]

The third part of Oswald's hagiography ended with the foundation and praise of his most exceptional house, Ramsey. Over the course of this section, Byrhtferth carefully crafted a foundation narrative for Ramsey that at once paid homage to Fleury's status even as he hinted that Ramsey now surpassed it in excellence – he finished his description of Ramsey's foundation with the words of Abbo of Fleury: 'O noble throng of Ramsey, secluded by spreading waters,/ You strive to be purer than gold for God's sake.'[75]

Byrhtferth's *Vita Oswaldi* provided the monks of Ramsey with a foundation story intimately tied to their blessed founder and his style of monasticism. The community's sense of its own importance in the development of monasticism and unfolding of Christian history is revealed in this text, the Metrical Calendar of Ramsey, and Ramsey's martyr-cults. Ramsey, so Byrhtferth argued, was a new Fleury, and dedicated as it was to S. Benedict it formed a new arena of monastic exceptionalism.

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[73] See *VO*, III. 14 in which Byrhtferth praised Ealdorman Æthelwine's lineage: the ealdorman, Byrhtferth recorded, 'was born of royal stock, and had a distinguished lineage on his mother's side. In praising her, Archbishop Dunstan said that she and her kindred were blessed.' Byrhtferth also noted that Æthelwine's father, Ealdorman Æthelstan, had taken the monastic habit at Glastonbury and that Æthelwine's brothers were buried at Ramsey.

[74] Byrhtferth, *VO*, III. 17.

[75] Byrhtferth, *VO*, III. 18. In addition to the *VO*, Abbo's poem in praise of Ramsey's location was transmitted in several Fleury manuscripts containing his other works and was incorporated into Andrew of Fleury's early eleventh-century *vita* of Abbot Gauzelin of Fleury, Lapidge, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, p. 91 n. 176.

III. Canterbury

In the traditional narrative of the Benedictine Reform, Dunstan's abbacy at Glastonbury during the 940s set the entire reform in motion. The *Regularis Concordia*, *Vita Æthelwoldi*, and *Vita Oswaldi* all praised the Archbishop of Canterbury as a guiding light in the reform of monastic life.[76] However, Dunstan's role as instigator and leader was most substantially developed by twelfth-century historians and, as Nicola Robertson has demonstrated, the 'traditional narrative' owes its views on Dunstan to this twelfth-century interpretation of the tenth century.[77] Indeed, it appears that the monasticisation of Christ Church, Canterbury developed over the course of decades following Dunstan's episcopacy and only reached relative completion in the 1020s.[78] Whereas the Winchester houses and Ramsey constructed new communal identities and histories within a decade of their leaders' respective deaths, the Canterbury houses in the late tenth century did not follow suit. It was not until these houses faced similar challenges to their communal and institutional integrity in the early decades of the eleventh century that they adopted the strategies and rhetoric developed by the houses at Winchester and Ramsey. In these decades, Christ Church and St. Augustine's turned to the

[76] For example, the Proem to the *RC* recorded that 'in order to confirm the deliberations of the aforesaid Synodal Council, Dunstan, the noble archbishop of our country, moved by the spirit of prophecy, providently and wisely added these further instructions: that no monk, nor indeed any man whatever his rank, should dare to enter and frequent the places set apart for nuns,' p. 4. In the *VÆth*, Wulfstan recorded that Æthelwold was educated in monastic *praxis* at Glastonbury during the abbacy of Dunstan (§9) and included Dunstan's prophetic dream of the tree covered in monastic cowls that signified the extensive army of monks and nuns which Æthelwold would assemble (§38). Byrhtferth attributed a more active role to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the *VO*, he wrote that the king's decrees at the Synod of Winchester 'enjoined upon the eloquent pastor [Dunstan] of Christ Church (which is in the city of Canterbury) that he and Æthelwold, the glory of Winchester, as well as Oswald bishop of Worcester, should know that all monastic sites should be established with monks and likewise nuns; they straightway implemented this injunction with astonishing and unwavering speed, because they were ardent 'in their own good works' and venerable in their deeds,' IV. 4.
[77] Robertson, 'Dunstan and Monastic Reform,' pp. 165-7.
[78] Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, p. 256.

narrative of monastic superiority and the memory of Archbishop Dunstan to construct distinctive communal identities.

Narratives of continuity and change at Christ Church

In the early eleventh century, the growing Benedictine community at Christ Church, Canterbury used the redolent symbolism of a clerical expulsion narrative, in addition to a specific form of Benedictine *praxis* and the veneration of two English saints, to demonstrate the community's continuity with the tenth-century reform and to promote its identity as an exemplary Benedictine community.

Recorded in a foundation charter, the clerical expulsion narrative produced by the monk Eadui Basan fixed in time Christ Church's identity as an exemplary reformed Benedictine community. Forged in the 1020s and inserted into a gospel-book gifted to the community by King Æthelstan, Basan's charter asserted the community's authority and legitimacy with the same tools with which the Old Minster, at least, had asserted its own.[79] The charter, purporting to be from 1006, recorded that corrupt clerics had been expelled from Christ Church and replaced with Benedictine monks, echoing Wulfstan of Winchester's record of the expulsion of clerics from the Old Minster and utilising the reconstructed history of monasticism promoted by Æthelwold and Ælfric, the latter in a pastoral letter from c. 1006 to Archbishop Wulfstan of York. In Basan's charter, King Æthelred confirmed the privileges and estates of Christ Church – after declaring that the inspiration for this confirmation was

[79] This charter (S 914) is preserved amongst a miscellany of documents relating to Christ Church, London, BL, Cotton MS Claudius A.iii, fo. 2-7, which was copied in the early eleventh century (Gneuss no. 362). These documents, including S 914, were detached from a tenth-century gospel-book, London, BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A.ii, in the seventeenth century (Gneuss no. 362). The edition of the charter cited is that in *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury Part 2* (Oxford, 2013), Nicholas Brooks and Susan Kelly (eds), no. 140, pp. 1019-25.

the expulsion of corrupt clerics from the community. According to this expulsion narrative, the clerics of Christ Church were openly displaying their vices, most notably licentious behaviour.[80] The corrupt clerics were expelled and replaced by monks who followed the *Rule* brought by St. Augustine through the command of Pope Gregory. In this narrative, the clerics of Christ Church were accused and expelled in a similar fashion to the clerics of the Old Minster in Wulfstan's *Vita S. Æthelwoldi*:

> In the name of the Lord and Almighty God. I, Æthelred, king of the English with God's grace [...] declare to English Christians how Archbishop Ælfric, venerable in episcopal wisdom and diligence, has often instructed me in God's commands: [...] I see that this nation, through men's evilness and unrighteousness, has been all too widely destroyed, laid waste and ravaged by armies. And with my senses I see and truly understand that this nation has been destroyed and has become unwholesome through the negligence of priests throughout this country. I dearly lament that the service of God has diminished and withdrawn. I said to my counsellors that advise me in divine and earthly matters that God makes them understand my mind's concerns. Through God's assistance they declared that it was better that I cast out the priests of Christ Church for their open laxity and settle Christ Church with monastic men who would properly serve me and my people therein and please God.[81]

The Basan charter presented priests' licentiousness as the most pressing problem facing the Church and the community, declaring that 'other vices' were openly displayed by the clerics of Christ Church. The solution to this problem, Benedictine monasticism, not only

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[80] The charter declared that the entire nation was being corrupted through the licentiousness of priests throughout the kingdom: 'soþlice understande þæt þes ðeodscype ðurh preosta gymeleste pide on ðisum earde ðurh ungehealdsumnysse apyrd is,' Brooks and Kelly (eds), *Charters of Christ Church*, no. 140, p. 1023. The expulsion of the openly corrupt clerics at Christ Church is presented as the solution to this rampant problem.

[81] My translation of Brooks and Kelly (eds), *Charters of Christ Church*, no. 140, pp. 1022-3: 'On Drihtnes naman ælmihtiges Godes . Ic Æðelred mid Godes gyfe Angelðeode cyning [...] cyðe Engliscum cristenum mannum . hu se arwyrða arcebisceop . Ælfric . of his bisceoplican wisdome . ⁊ gymenne . me on Godes bebodum oft abysgud hæfð ; [...] ic ðisne ðeodscype undergyte ðurh manna yfelnysse . ⁊ unrihtþisnysse eall to pide fordonne . ⁊ forhergudne ; Eac betþux minum andgyte ic geseo . ⁊ soþlice understande þæt þes ðeodscype ðurh preosta gymeleste pide on ðisum earde ðurh ungehealdsumnysse apyrd is . ⁊ ic Godes ðeoþdom aledne ⁊ acoledne ðearle behreopsige . Sæde ic minum pitun ðe me for Gode . ⁊ for porulde rædað þæs him God andgyt sylð mines modes hohfulnysse . Cþædon hi ða þæt hit ðurh Godes fultum betere pære . þæt ic ða preostas of Cristes cyrcean for hiora openan leahtran . ⁊ gyltan geutode . ⁊ Cristes cyrcean mid munechades mannum gesette þe for me . ⁊ minne leodscype ðærinne poldon rihtlice gebiddan and God gladian.'

emphasised the subsequent community's chastity, but also its adherence to an ancient and illustrious tradition. The monks who replaced the clerics at Christ Church followed the rule set by St. Augustine, a rule ultimately derived from the instruction of Pope Gregory himself:

> And so, I placed monks in Christ Church following the rule that Augustine had brought there, when he, by the command of S Gregory and with the assistance and advice of the great King Æthelbert, set the holy monks in Christ Church whom he had brought with him to that country and who thence, through their holy living, became bishops.[82]

This recalls the narrative found in Æthelwold's *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries* in which Æthelwold had justified the monastic reform of cathedral communities by subtly modifying a passage from Gregory's *Liber responsionum*: Gregory, Æthelwold claimed, had mandated that Augustine establish monasteries throughout the kingdom which should follow an apostolic rule.[83] Ælfric further developed the argument that a chaste life had been mandated to and adopted by the apostles in his first Old English letter to Wulfstan of York, written c. 1006.[84] Basan's charter used these narratives of monastic history to intertwine an expulsion narrative with a foundation story for the Christ Church community – ultimately placing that community securely within the tradition of reformed monasticism in England.

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[82] My translation of Brooks and Kelly (eds), *Charters of Christ Church*, no. 140, p. 1023: 'Ic ða spa dyde on Cristes cyrcean munecas gesette of ðære bysne ðe sanctus Augustinus hider tobrohte . þæt pæs þæt he on Cristes cyrcean be sanctus GREGORIUS hæse . ⁊ ðæs mæran cinges geðeahte ⁊ fultume . ÆÐELBYRHTES . ða haligan munecas ðærinne gesette ðe he hider on eard mid him brohte . ⁊ ða munecas syððan ðurh hira haligan drohtnunga to biscopan gepurdan.'

[83] See above, Chapter 2, pp. 99-100.

[84] Ælfric began this letter with a rehearsal of Christian history which he divided into three ages: the time of the patriarchs (before God's law), the time of Moses (under God's law), and the time under the grace of Christ. In the third age, Ælfric argued, Christ 'came into this world in true humanity, because he wished to redeem the sinful and to bring the lost to the way of life; and established Christianity and taught chastity, the chastity which he loves in his pure servants, who must ever serve him in chastity, namely in monks and in nuns and in mass-priests,' 'First Old English Pastoral Letter to Wulfstan,' pp. 263-4. Ælfric further elaborated on the importance of chastity, declaring that it not only characterised but sanctified the lives of the twelve apostles, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter to Wulfstan,' pp. 264-5. Notably, this letter is preserved in a twelfth-century Christ Church collection of Ælfrician homilies, London, BL, Cotton MS Vespasian D.xiv, fo. 4-169, letter at fo. 75r-v.

This narrative of clerical expulsion appears to be a deliberate construction: over the course of several decades, beginning perhaps in the archiepiscopate of Dunstan, the Christ Church community had gradually shifted from a clerical body to a monastic one.[85] This process appears to have been largely peaceful, Brooks has characterised it as one by which 'continuity, not radical change seems to have been the order of the day.'[86] Significantly, the house's library indicates that from the late tenth century through to the mid eleventh the increasingly monastic community sought to conform to the principles of reform. The *scriptorium* at Christ Church produced no less than six copies of Aldhelm's *De Virginitate*, in both its prose and poetic versions, in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.[87] In addition to this demonstrable interest in the *De Virginitate*, the *scriptorium* also produced a copy of Smaragdus' *Diadema monachorum* in the late tenth century, Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff.4.43. Brooks has suggested that the growing body of texts for monastic practice in Christ Church's library may have had its origins in the archiepiscopacy of Sigeric, abbot of St. Augustine's before his accession to Christ Church in 990.[88] By the mid eleventh century Christ Church's *scriptorium* had produced two copies of the *Regularis Concordia*, London, British Library, Cotton MSS Faustina B.iii, fo. 159-98 + Tiberius A.iii, fo. 174-7 and London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius A.iii, fo. 2-173, in addition to a collection of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.15.34. Cumulatively, this growing reform-oriented library strongly suggests that the monks of Christ Church sought to model their regular practice after the ideals set forth during the two generations of reform in the previous century.

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[85] Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, p. 256.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Brooks identified this group of Aldhelm manuscripts in *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 268-9. This group includes London, BL, Royal MS 6.A.v (s. x^{ex}); Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 38 (s. x^{ex}); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 326 (s. x/xi); London, BL, Royal MS 5.E.xi (s. x/xi); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 577 (s. x/xi); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 97 (s. x/xi).
[88] Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, p. 278.

Given the *scriptorium*'s growing importance as a centre of book production for other houses,[89] one wonders whether it is possible to observe in Christ Church's early eleventh century monastic library and *scriptorium* the beginnings of a third generation of reform.

In addition to its active interest in prescriptive 'reform' texts, the community's adherence to the Benedictinism of the tenth century took another visible form in the dual promotion of a monastic and a martyr saint: SS. Dunstan and Ælfheah.[90] Around the turn of the millennium, Archbishop Ælfric received a *vita* of Dunstan composed on the Continent, possibly at Liège, by an Englishman known only by his first initial B.[91] B's *life* appears to have been based upon personal memories of Dunstan and abruptly cuts its narrative of the saint's career before Dunstan's attained the archiepiscopate. Even though it was not produced by a member of Christ Church it provided the community with a memory of the saint that emphasised his heroic ascetism and lauded him with martyrological epithets, *athleta Dei* and *agonista Dei*.[92] Significantly, Christ Church's interest in Dunstan's cult coincided with the death of their archbishop, Ælfheah, in 1012. Despite the fact that B's *Vita Dunstani* was directed to Archbishop Ælfric, the earliest extant manuscripts of the *vita* appear to have been copied at

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[89] Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, pp. 273-5.

[90] Alan Thacker has demonstrated that Dunstan's cult was only taken up with any enthusiasm by the Christ Church community following the sack of Canterbury in 1011. From this period onwards, the increasingly monastic community at Christ Church, Thacker has argued, sought to distinguish itself from St. Augustine's through the promotion of its own holy men. The coupling of Dunstan's cult with Ælfheah's 'suggests that its [Dunstan's cult] wider diffusion owed more to the contemporary community's perception of its current interests than to any immediate spontaneous reaction to the figure of the saint himself,' Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury,' p. 241.

[91] Two crucial facts provide the *terminus ante quem* (1002) and *terminus post quem* (997) for the completion of the *Vita Dunstani*: Byrhtferth of Ramsey made use of the *Vita Dunstani* in his *VO* which was completed before S. Oswald's translation in 1002 and B made use of Wulfstan of Winchester's *VÆ* which was in circulation by 997, 'Introduction,' in M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (eds), *The Early Lives of St Dunstan* (Oxford, 2012), pp. lxiv. It remains unclear when the unique extant manuscript of the *vita*, Arras, Bibliothèque municipal 1029 (812), s. x/xi, arrived at Canterbury.

[92] For example, as B recounted how Dunstan once fought the Devil, who appeared in the guise of a bear and savage dog, he described the saint as both an athlete and combatant for God: 'Nam quadam nocte, dum adleta Dei infra septa claustrorum psalmodies uigiliisque constans immoraretur, [...]. Sed cum agonista Dei monstrum hoc inimicale spiritali magis quam corporali intuit perspexisset [...],' *Vita Dunstani*, §16, p. 54. David Rollason has argued that the emphasis on ascetism in B's life was in keeping with a style of episcopal sanctity developed and promoted by German hagiographers, 'The Concept of Sanctity in the Early Lives of St. Dunstan,' p. 268.

St. Augustine's not Christ Church.[93] As Alan Thacker has shown, this may reflect the somewhat strained relationship between St. Dunstan and Christ Church in the years leading up to the archbishop's death, caused in part by his particular fondness for St. Augustine's.[94] The martyrdom of Ælfheah and the existential crisis that it represented for Christ Church prompted a new interest in the house's saints. Ælfheah had commissioned the monk Adelard of Ghent to produce a series of lections for the feast of St. Dunstan; following the archbishop's death the cults of both men began to be intertwined at Christ Church.[95] The community produced a new calendar of saints between 1011 and 1023 which excised the feasts of the early archbishops of Canterbury but kept the feasts of Dunstan and Ælfheah. The glossed prayers which conclude the manuscript containing this calendar only invoke SS. Dunstan and Ælfheah. The prayers and calendar in London, BL, Arundel MS 155 indicate not only that Christ Church was attempting to promote its own saints at the expense of St. Augustine's but also that Dunstan and Ælfheah's cults were developing in tandem at the house.[96]

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[93] B's *Vita Dunstani* survives in three manuscripts, two of which were copied in England around the turn of the millennium: Arras, Bibliothèque municipal (Médiathèque), MS 1029 (812), c. 1000; Sankt Gallen, Kantonalsbibliothek, Vadianische Sammlung, MS 337, c. 1000; London, BL, Cotton MS Cleopatra B.xiii, fo. 59-90, Exeter, s.xi^{2}. The Arras and Sankt Gallen manuscripts are written in Style II Anglo-Caroline script with features that tie them to the scriptorium of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, 'Introduction,' *The Early Lives of St. Dunstan*, p. lxxix-lxxxii. It should be noted, however, that at least two out of three earliest extant calendars to commemorate Dunstan's feast day on 19 May are localizable to Christ Church: Paris, BNF, Lat. MS 10062, s. xi^{in} and London, BL, Arundel MS 155, 1012x1023. The Bosworth Psalter, London, BL, Add. MS 37517 also includes Dunstan's feast day.

[94] Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury,' pp. 238-9. It is also notable that the Sankt Gallen copy of the *Vita Dunstani* was prepared at St. Augustine's and sent by its abbot to Abbo of Fleury for versification. This indicates that St. Augustine's was perhaps seeking to emulate the great hagiographical projects in development at Ramsey and Winchester.

[95] Only late eleventh- and twelfth-century copies of Adelard's *Lectiones in depositione S. Dunstani*, however, the copy in London, BL, Cotton MS Nero C.vii, fo. 60-79, s. xii^{2} contains a prefatory letter in which Adelard explains that he undertook the project at the special request of Archbishop Ælfheah. For an edition of the letter, see *The early lives of St. Dunstan*, pp. 112-3.

[96] Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury,' p. 241 and Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, p. 265. Ælfheah's remains were initially interred at St. Paul's in London. In 1023, with King Cnut's assistance, Archbishop Æthelnoth succeeded in translating Ælfheah's relics to Christ Church. A calendar produced at Christ Church in the early eleventh century, Paris, BNF, Lat. 10062, fo. 162r-3v, commemorated this event with three feasts: the archbishop's translation on 8 June, his reception into the church on 11 June, and his reburial on 14 June.

Promoting a saint remembered as an active reformer and one who had achieved martyrdom in a time of persecution had the combined effect of demonstrating Christ Church's primacy over and against other sees while also asserting its complete (and perhaps unique) success at achieving the ideals set out by the reformers. Through the cults of SS. Dunstan and Ælfheah, Christ Church could visibly and incontrovertibly demonstrate that the community was a true expression of an ideal English Church. Monastic praxis, the veneration of English saints, and the construction of a tradition of reform collectively articulated a communal identity for Christ Church that distinguished it as a particularly spiritually significant community during the reign of King Cnut, a king renowned for his generosity towards the Church.

St. Augustine's and the translation of S. Mildrith c. 1030

The early decades of the eleventh century also served as a period of significant reconstruction for the community of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. The community had suffered important losses during the wave of Danish attacks at the outset of the century and following these losses Abbot Ælfstan (1023x1027 – 1045), in particular, energetically sought to rebuild and increase the monastery's endowment.[97] In this period of reconstruction, around the year 1030, Abbot Ælfstan's 'greatest coup' was the acquisition of the relics of an ancient, though perhaps obscure, monastic leader: S. Mildrith of Minster-in-Thanet. This acquisition was significant not only because it presented an opportunity for St. Augustine's to reconstitute the lands of Minster-in-Thanet,[98] but also because it allowed the community to promote a specific and powerful monastic identity.

Promoting Abbess Mildrith's sanctity demonstrated St. Augustine's long-standing adherence to both the Benedictine Rule and the virtue of chastity in a period in which both Canterbury houses were rebuilding their wealth and status. In counterpoint to Christ Church's self-promotion as an ideal reformed monastic house, St. Augustine's appears to have been Benedictine by the close of the tenth century and could assert itself as an ancient and

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[97] Susan Kelly (ed), *Charters of St. Augustine's Abbey Canterbury and Minster-in-Thanet* (Oxford, 1995), p. xix. The charters of St. Augustine's archive reveal that Abbot Ælfstan had been making acquisitions in the area around Minster-in-Thanet before 1030 and he appears to have acquired some part of the Minster estates in exchange for land at Folkestone. Minster-in-Thanet is generally thought to have been destroyed during the ninth-century Viking assaults in the region; however, there is some evidence that there was a congregation associated with the cult of Mildrith in the mid-tenth and early eleventh century living in Canterbury, Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 125-132.

[98] Later traditions at St. Augustine's pressed the monastery's claims to the Minster-in-Thanet lands primarily through their possession of Mildrith's relics rather than their possession of the Minster-in-Thanet archive. These traditions are visible in the (in)famous foundation forgeries produced at St. Augustine's, beginning c. 1060-70, which were intended to celebrate the abbey's early history and exalted status, Kelly, *Charters of St. Augustine's Abbey,* xix. Kelly argues that the forged writ S 990, which recorded Cnut's grant of Mildrith's relics and all the customs pertaining to her church, probably came into existence in the course of the twelfth century, but may have been based upon an earlier record, *Charters of St. Augustine's Abbey*, p. cxii.

prestigious site of monastic sanctity.[99] By promoting S. Mildrith, St. Augustine's distinguished itself as both an ancient site of monastic sanctity and one with its own independent ties to the reform of the previous century.

As a virgin abbess from the 'golden age' of the early English Church, Mildrith was a saint who fit neatly into the framework of monastic sanctity developed during the two generations of the Benedictine reform. Later traditions concerning Mildrith's sanctity at St. Augustine's reveal that the community particularly valued both her status as virgin and her ties to the royal saints venerated at the East Anglian reformed monasteries. St. Augustine's produced a Latin translation of the Kentish Royal Legend, *þa halgan*, sometime between 1035 and 1091 (London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius A II).[100] This legend emphasises Mildrith's familial ties to both Kentish and East Anglian royalty and appears to have been the only authoritative written source for her sanctity in the early eleventh century: neither Mildrith's sanctity nor her community at Minster-in-Thanet are mentioned in Bede's *HE* or the Old English Martyrology. In these circumstances, Mildrith appears an ideal candidate for St. Augustine's to press its claim to the concept of monastic sanctity developed during the course of the tenth century reform. Mildrith's familial connections to East Anglian royalty, in particular, connected the community at St. Augustine's to Ely, Ramsey, and Peterborough, all prominent reformed monasteries. Her status as both virgin and abbess placed her in the same category as her illustrious relations, S. Æthelthryth most notably, and would have resonated with the

[99] The community possessed a copy of the *RSB* in addition to a copy of the *Capitulare monasticum* from the Council of Aachen at the close of the tenth century: London, BL, Harley MS 5431, s. x/xi.
[100] The *Liber Vitae of New Minster and Hyde Abbey*, London, BL, Stowe MS 944, represents the earliest surviving witness to the Kentish Royal Legend, in this manuscript, copied c. 1031, the legend begins with the phrase 'Her Cyðymbe þa halgan þe on Angel cynne restað' and covers fo. 33r-34v. For a discussion of the relationship of the Kentish Royal Legend to the cycle of texts related to S. Mildrith see Rollason, *The Mildrith Legend*, pp. 20-1. Rollason has also argued that St. Augustine's produced a *vita* of the saint sometime between 1035x1059 and that a version of this *vita* survives as part of a thirteenth century manuscript written at Ramsey (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 285), *Mildrith Legend*, pp. 20-25.

emphasis on virginity as a form of monastic martyrdom promoted in the Benedictine reform.[101] Thus, the saint's virginity and status as abbess made her a suitable candidate for a community seeking to assert its own adherence to the Benedictinism of the tenth-century reform. Her royal lineage allowed the community to promote ties to prominent communities of that reform and, significantly, made her a suitable candidate to secure royal patronage.[102]

In a period of reconstruction, the two Canterbury houses sought to reassert their significance as centres of spiritual authority by representing continuity with the traditions of the tenth-century Benedictine reform. They both integrated narratives of clerical expulsion and monastic reform into their institutional histories. At Christ Church, Canterbury narratives of clerical expulsion and monastic superiority were integrated into an institutional history that asserted the community's primacy in the English Church. St. Augustine's, in contrast, pressed its claims to a Benedictine identity through the medium of tenth-century reform traditions. Rather than through a clerical expulsion narrative, St. Augustine's promoted its identity as an ancient and chaste Benedictine community through its possession

[101] The cults at Ely may have been a particular source of inspiration for Abbot Ælfstan: just as Abbot Byrhtnoth had created S. Wihtburh's kinship with the Ely women and invented a new daughter for abbess Seaxburh, Eormenhild, so too might Abbot Ælfstan have chosen to craft a virgin monastic saint from the 'golden age' of the early medieval English Church. The Kentish Royal Legend includes other potential candidates from Minster-in-Thanet: Abbesses Æbbe and Eadburh, most notably. Abbess Æbbe was the foundress of Minster-in-Thanet, having received lands for the community as recompense for the murder of her brothers, princes Æthleberht and Æthelred (Mildrith was Æbbe's daughter). These abbesses also appear in eighth-century charters as active advocates for their community and offered, in several ways, more compelling candidates than Mildrith for saintly patronesses, see charters S 91 and S 17. Mildrith, then, was a conscious choice. I believe that it was her relative unimportance in comparison to the other abbesses of Minster that made her the ideal candidate for Abbot Ælfstan in the 1030s. In some ways, she was a blank slate with the appropriate credentials: she was a Bedan-age royal monastic saint with no significant narratives, or surviving community, to dispute or engage with.
[102] As early as the mid eleventh century, Queen Emma was remembered as a special and devoted patron of the community, revealed in the record of the queen's gifts to the house and in the fact that St. Augustine's possessed a copy of Emma's *Encomium*, London, BL, Add. MS 33241. For further discussion of King Cnut and Queen Emma's patronage of the Church and St. Augustine's in particular see T.A. Heslop, 'The production of 'de luxe' manuscripts and the patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma,' *ASE*, 19 (1990), p. 157.

of the relics of ancient leaders of the English church and, in the 1030s in particular, through its possession of S. Mildrith's relics.

Conclusion

The veneration of saints and promotion of cults at Winchester, Ramsey, and Canterbury provide a window on the inner workings of monastic communities facing critical junctures: the death of their leaders, rival claims to their in-house cults, and political instability. Through the memory of their bishops in particular these houses cultivated reputations of monastic excellence and asserted claims to incontestable spiritual authority. Æthelwold and Oswald's visions of monastic *praxis* and superiority supplied their foundations with the tools to create distinctive communal identities and as saints these bishops continued to serve the interests of their monastic houses. For example, in the decades following the production of Wulfstan's *Vita Æthelwoldi*, the bishop's cult remained restricted to Winchester even as both houses continued to play influential roles in the English Church – a reflection of Wulfstan's success: the exceptional status of Æthelwold's houses outshone the saint himself. In following chapters, the legacy of these rhetorical strategies will be explored as English monastic houses in the eleventh century continued to turn to the concepts of monastic sanctity and superiority to navigate crises and an increasingly diverse religious landscape.

Chapter 4
Monastic Sanctity and Communal Identity at Male 'Reformed' Houses

Introduction

The hagiographies of Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald presented the saints as active founders of monastic houses, in particular they were credited with rescuing many ancient houses from decay. The revival of ancient and neglected foundations has been interpreted as a distinguishing feature of the Benedictine reform; the restoration of ancient houses fulfilled the bishops', and Æthelwold's in particular, desire to restore monasticism to its former glory under the Northumbrian Church of Bede's era. However, this top-down view of reform and the cults of ancient saints deserves further consideration. The region in which many of these revived houses were located, the East Midlands and former kingdom of East Anglia, had transformed significantly since the original foundation of minsters like Ely and Peterborough in the seventh and eighth centuries. The new monastic congregations established by Æthelwold and Oswald faced significant challenges in their ancient sites and thus present an opportunity to examine the function and limits of 'revival.'

In the *Vita Æthelwoldi*, Wulfstan of Winchester took particular care to highlight Æthelwold's revival of Ely and Peterborough and his foundation at Thorney as examples of the bishop's desire 'to bring monks together in the service of Almighty God not only within Wessex but also in remote parts of Britain.'[1] The case of Ely, in particular, provided proof of

[1] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §23-4.

Æthelwold's tireless efforts to restore the glory of monasticism in the English kingdom. According to Wulfstan, the bishop rescued Ely, 'a place held to deserve all reverence, for it is made glorious by the relics and miracles of St Æthelthryth, queen and perpetual virgin, and her sisters,' from abandonment, not only filling it with a large group of monks but also lavishly enriching the house.[2] Significantly, Ely functioned both as an example of an ancient house fallen into decay and an example of an ancient cult being neglected; its refoundation served as an essential example of the restoration of the entire Church to its previous glory.[3] The revival and foundation of Peterborough and Thorney, respectively, further supported Wulfstan's case for Æthelwold's successful restoration of the Church to its former golden age during the Northumbrian Church. Wulfstan recorded that these houses were located in the 'district of the Gyrwe on the banks of the River Nene.' Bede had described the region with the term 'Gyrwe' at several points in the *Historia ecclesiastica* and Wulfstan's own use of the term cast Æthelwold's activities in the language of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*.[4] Both Peterborough and Thorney, like Ely, were the custodians of many ancient relics and preserved traditions that linked these relics to Bishop Æthewold, although it should be noted that Wulfstan did not record Æthelwold's gift of relics to these two houses. Integrated into Wulfstan's overarching project, i.e. the demonstration of Æthelwold's sanctity, these records of rescue, revival, and foundation prompt several questions. First, did revival or foundation occur as Wulfstan described? Second, did these houses interpret themselves as the proof of Æthelwold's

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[2] Ibid., §23.

[3] Bishop Æthelwold appears to have had a marked interest in S. Æthelthryth, she was prominently featured in the *Benedictional of St Æthelwold* the deluxe manuscript produced for Æthelwold's use. In miniatures and prayers to the saint, Æthelthryth was celebrated as a symbol of monastic chastity, see Virginia Blanton, *Signs of Devotion: The Cult of St. Æthelthryth in Medieval England, 695-1615* (University Park, Pa., 2007), p. 75.

[4] *VÆth*, §24. Compare Wulfstan's description of Peterborough, 'It was in the district of the Gyrwe on the banks of the River Nene, once called in English *Medeshamstede* but now ordinarily known as *Burh* (Peterborough),' to Bede's description, 'in his place [he, i.e. Archbishop Theodore] ordained Sexwulf for bishop [of the Marchmen], who was the builder and abbot of the monastery that is called Medeshamstead in the country of the Gyrwas,' *HE*, IV.6.

sanctity? And, finally, what significance did the ancient cults at these houses have for the new communities of monks?

Untangling the traditions developed over the course of the late tenth and eleventh centuries at Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney reveals a sustained interest in the history and rhetoric of monastic exceptionalism constructed by Bishop Æthelwold. Despite Wulfstan's representation of their 'remote' location, these three houses operated in a dynamic region replete with new and ancient religious foundations. The viking incursions and settlement under the Danelaw in the ninth and early tenth centuries caused significant disruption in Eastern England at all levels of society. However, archaeological evidence indicates that wholesale massacre and destruction was not as far reaching as the twelfth-century apocalyptic narratives developed at Ely and Peterborough would have us believe. Indications of continuity to religious devotion, if not religious life, challenge the view of absolute devastation and prompt a picture of a region in transformation.[5] Ultimately, the plethora of small minsters that populated Eastern England were subject to increasing proprietary interests in the tenth and eleventh centuries, whether royal, noble, or episcopal, that spelled their end as autonomous houses – a trend which had its origins before the Danelaw.[6] Amidst these long- and short-term transformations, the reformed houses of the region stand apart. Unlike their

[5] The tales of total destruction through a single viking attack developed by monastic houses have been exposed as twelfth-century inventions, see esp. S. Foot, 'Violence against Christians? The Vikings and the Church in Ninth-Century England,' *Medieval History*, I (1991); Guy Halsall, 'Playing by Whose Rules? A Further Look at Viking Atrocity in the Ninth Century,' *Medieval History* II.2 (1992); Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. I, pp. 71-5. Nonetheless, the extent of the destruction and transformation in Eastern England remains a source of debate, for an overview of the scholarship see Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough Abbey* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 28-32. Kelly notes that the new emphasis upon investigations of individual churches, with a focus on the continuous devotion to saints, has highlighted the regional differences in the Danelaw and, in some areas, provided evidence for an important degree of continuity. For a discussion of the potential and limits of this style of investigation, and its use of archaeological evidence, see Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 292-323. Blair emphasised that the evidence for saint cults in the Danelaw region 'reinforce the sense of populous, polyfocal monastic culture, spanning the viking interlude,' p. 319, and that the impoverishment suffered by many houses did not extend to long-term abandonment, esp. p. 320.

[6] Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, p. 323.

smaller counterparts in the late tenth and eleventh centuries, they were not annexed or subsumed into lay or episcopal ownership. Their exceptional success at remaining relatively autonomous houses underscores the powerful agency conferred upon them and which they capitalised upon. The stakes were high for Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney as they faced local, regional, and political pressures. The traditions that they developed helped each house to negotiate, at times with conspicuous success, a rapidly changing social and political landscape. Thus it is not surprising that at least one neighbouring house, Bury St Edmunds, promoted an ancient cult and constructed a communal identity in similar terms that transformed it into an important rival. The case of Bury St Edmunds, a house founded in the 1020s and site of a royal martyr cult, reveals that monastic sanctity and its rhetoric of monastic exceptionalism were not the exclusive purview of houses associated with the 'reformers' of the tenth century.

I. Ely

According to Wulfstan of Winchester, Bishop Æthelwold was responsible for repopulating Ely with monks. The ancient house, Wulfstan recorded, had decayed from its former glory and by the time of Edgar's reign 'pertained to the royal fisc.'[7] The precise circumstances in which Ely passed into royal possession and the house's actual state at the time of Æthelwold's purchase are difficult, if not impossible, to reconstruct; nonetheless, it appears that the 970s marked a significant change for the house and Ely preserved a communal history that emphasised its attachment to Æthelwold and its participation in the monastic revival that he sought to orchestrate. The traditions and communal history constructed in the last decades of

[7] Wulfstan, *VÆth*, §23.

the tenth century and over the course of the eleventh century presented Bishop Æthelwold and S. Æthelthryth as Ely's co-founders, protectors, and intercessors. In addition to these intertwined cults, during Byrhtnoth's abbacy (c. 970 - 996) Ely developed the cult of an entire family group of ancient saints, an effort that promoted the exceptional monastic sanctity of Ely's new community of monks. Much like the Old and New Minsters, Ely sought to capitalise on both Æthelwold's personal sanctity and his theology of monastic exceptionalism as the community faced existential threats.

The foundation history crafted by the new community in the later tenth century adopted the essential elements of Æthelwold's history of monasticism in England: a period of decline characterised by clerical negligence, the expulsion of corrupt clerics, and the restoration of regular life through chaste monks. While they are not without difficulties, three texts produced in the tenth century reveal the construction of this communal history. Taken together, the house's refoundation charter (S 779), the *Liber miraculorum beatae virginis Ætheldrythae,* and the *Libellus Æthelwoldi* developed a coherent narrative of Ely's re-foundation. Ely, an ancient and holy site, had decayed and was shamefully occupied by negligent and ignorant canons. These canons were expelled by Æthelwold and replaced with monks, under whom the house flourished in wealth and saint cults. Each text contributed an essential element to this foundation history and will be taken in turn.

The house's refoundation charter (S 779) established Ely's decayed state, how the re-establishment of monks fit into Edgar's larger project of monastic revival, and Æthelwold's responsibility for Ely's new monastic congregation.[8] Crucially, the charter repeated a history

[8] The charter purports to record King Edgar's confirmation of Ely's privileges in the year 970. Its possible authenticity has sparked significant debate, the narrative elements prompting many to consider it spurious and a later fabrication. However, the current balance of opinion is in favour of its essential authenticity, see esp. Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon,' p. 54, Wormald, 'Æthelwold and his Continental Counterparts,' pp. 40-1, Yorke, 'Æthelwold and Politics,' p. 68.

of monastic revival in England that echoed the history presented in the New Minster Foundation Charter and *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, both composed by Æthelwold. Ely's refoundation charter rehearsed Edgar's ascension, the peace it entailed, and Edgar's desire to revive religious life in his kingdom.[9] The author of the charter also elaborated upon the particular holiness of Ely and its decayed state:

> And the place [i.e. Ely] was hallowed of old, from ancient days, to the honour of the holy Peter, chief of the apostles, and it was embellished by the miracles of God himself, which were frequent at the tomb of the holy maiden Æthelthryth, who there lies whole until now, in an all-white coffin wrought of marble. Of her we read, how she was here in life, and how she served God by a good life-course, and at her ending; and how she was taken up sound from her tomb, as Bede, the doctor of the English nation, wrote in his lore-books. Now was the holy place evilly left with less service than it pleased us, now in our time, and had also passed into the hand of the king [...].[10]

The charter also underscored Æthelwold's particular responsibility for the house, recording that after he purchased Ely from Edgar 'he straightaways, with my [i.e., Edgar's] counsel and aid, planted that monastery with monks, according to rule.'[11] In this way, the charter interwove Ely's status as an ancient holy place, affirmed by Bede's authority, and its status as a 'reformed' house populated by disciplined and pure monks. By invoking Bede's history of Æthelthryth and emphasising Æthelwold's responsibility for the house's revival, the charter

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[9] S 779, edition in B. Thorpe (ed), *Diplomatarium anglicum aevi saxonici* (London, 1865), pp. 237-43 at p. 240: 'I will now, through God's guidance, the forsaken monasteries in my dominion, everywhere plant with monks and mynchens, and God's praises renew, which was before neglected'; 'ac ic will nu þurh Godes wissunge þa forlætenan mynstru on minum an wealde gehwær mid munecum gesttan ⁊ eac mid mynecenum ⁊ Godes lof geedniwian ðe ær wæs forlæten.'

[10] Thorpe (ed), *Diplomatarium*, p. 241: 'Seo stow wæs gehalgod iu fram ealdum dagum þam halgan Petre to wyrðmynte ðæra apostola ydolst ⁊ heo wæs geglengd þurh Godes syles wundra þe gelome wurdon æt Æðeldryðe byrgene þæs halgan mædenes þe ðær gehal lið of marmstane geworht. Be hire we rædað hu heo her on life wæs ⁊ hu heo Gode ðeowode on godre drohtnunge ⁊ be hire geendunge ⁊ hu heo up adon wæs ansund of hyre byrgene swa swa Beda awrat Engla ðeode lareow on his lar bocum. Nu wæs se halga stede yfele forlæten mid læssan þeowdome ðonne us gelicode nu on urum timan ⁊ eac wæs gehwyrfed ðam cyninge to handa.'

[11] Thorpe (ed), *Diplomatarium*, p. 242: 'he þærrihte mid minum ræde ⁊ fultume mid munecum gesette þe mynster æfter regole.'

constructed a history for the house that collapsed time: the house was both ancient and new, founded by both Æthelthryth and Æthelwold.

The house's decayed state before its refoundation was further elaborated in the *Liber miraculorum*, an account of the miracles that occurred at Ely from roughly 870 to 970.[12] Significantly, the 'standard' accounts of miraculous healing and breaking of bonds that function as hagiographic convention were framed with a miracle account that highlighted clerical ignorance, Æthelthryth's legitimacy as a powerful virgin saint, and Ely's reduced state. This opening miracle account rehearsed the history of monastic decline in England, attributing the decay to 'the lust of the world,' and situated Ely in this history:

> If there remained any [monasteries] untouched in the ancient cities, they were occupied for a very long time by canons of both sexes, [canons] in name not in dignity, and so it came to pass that the monastery of Ely, which is situated in the island in which the blessed virgin Æthelthryth lies with her sister Seaxburh and her venerable niece Eormenhild, passed away under their dominion.[13]

In the time of the canons, the *Liber* recorded, a certain archpriest doubted that Æthelthryth's body remained incorrupt. The archpriest was warned against opening the saint's tomb, a narrative device that allowed a different character to relate the 'standard' miracles performed by Æthelthryth but proceeded to attempt his scheme even after being told of the saint's power. Crucially, the archpriest's doubt was cast as a test not only of the saint's incorrupt state but as a test of Bede's authority. According to the *Liber*, the archpriest declared:

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[12] The *Liber Miraculorum* was incorporated into the *Liber Eliensis* in the twelfth century and, unfortunately, does not survive independently of it. Nonetheless, the *Liber* still retains elements of a discrete text, including a named narrator, the canon Ælfhelm, which led Blake to argue that it represents an earlier, possibly tenth century, record of S. Æthelthryth's miracles. In her edition of the substantial hagiographical dossier of the Ely saints produced by Goscelin of St. Bertin, Rosalind Love has supported this view, although with important caveats, Love, *The Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely* (Oxford, 2004), pp. lx-lxxi. The text of the *Liber Miraculorum* cited here corresponds to Book I. §43-9 in Blake's edition of the *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake (London, 1962), hereafter *Lib. Eli*.

[13] *Lib. Eli*. I. §43, p. 58: 'si qua in antiquis urbibus remanserant integra, ab utriusque sexus canonicis nomine, non dignitate, errant occupata diutissime, contigit quoque ut monasterium Elge, quod situm est insula, in quo sancta virgo Æðeldreða requiescit cum germana nomine Sexburga ac venerabili nepte Ærmenilda, sub eorum transiret dominio.'

> I wish to know beyond all doubt, if the venerable virgin Æthelthryth still now remains with incorrupt flesh, just as the blessed letters of the venerable Bede tell in the *Hystoria gentis angligene*, or whether anything at all remains from her in the monument, in which her small body was once placed, because it does not seem to me to be possible, but I believe that it is more possible that nothing is in the sarcophagus.[14]

While the *Liber*'s narrator unequivocally condemned the archpriest's doubt, the test was nonetheless carried out. The archpriest inserted a candle into the saint's coffin through a small crack, the saint's garments were miraculously untouched – a fact revealed when the archpriest managed to pull out some cloth through the same crack in the marble.[15] The archpriest was duly punished for his violation of the virgin's tomb, but only after declaring himself to be free from doubt: 'Now that I have removed the scruple of ambiguity I know without doubt that the sacred virgin lies here in this tomb, remaining with incorrupt flesh.'[16] The punishment meted out to the doubtful archpriest highlighted both Æthelthryth's inviolate state and the perfidy of the canons who occupied her monastery. It also served as a powerful advertisement of the ancient saint's legitimacy, both Æthelthryth's sanctity and Bede's authority were proved incontestable. The *Liber*'s record of clerical negligence and Æthelthryth's continuous activity as a saint would have provided the new tenth-century monks of Ely with a comprehensive justification for their existence: the cult of this monastic virgin required chaste and disciplined custodians.

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[14] *Lib. Eli*. I. §43, p. 58: 'Volo indubitanter scire, si venerabilis virgo Æðeldreða etiam nunc integra manet carne, sicut referent sacra scripta venerabilis Bede in Hystoria Gentis Angligene, aut si aliquid omnino ex eo manet in monument, in quo olim tumulata est corpusculo, quoniam mihi non videtur esse versimile, sed potius credo quod nichil est in sarcofago.'
[15] *Lib. Eli*. I. §49, pp. 60-1.
[16] *Lib. Eli*. I. §49, p. 60: 'Nunc remoto ambiguitatis scrupulo indubitanter scio, quia adhuc in hoc tumulo requiescit sacra virgo, sic integra permanens carne.'

The *Libellus Æthelwoldi* contributed another essential element to the foundation history constructed in the later tenth century. Based on a now-lost tenth-century vernacular register, the Latin *Libellus* provided a record of Bishop Æthelwold and Abbot Byrhtnoth's efforts to endow the new community of monks at Ely with profitable estates.[17] Throughout the *Libellus*, Æthelwold appears as an active defender and patron of Ely's landed assets, so much so that his efforts often eclipse those of Ely's abbot, Byrhtnoth.[18] The twelfth-century compiler elaborated on this theme by including a rehearsal of the abbey's refoundation under Æthelwold and by commemorating Æthelwold as a founding saint in seven short poems. The compiler's emphasis not only on Æthelwold's role in the endowment of the new community of monks but also on the bishop's personal sanctity reveals that by the early twelfth century the house had transformed Æthelwold from founder into patron saint. In the poems celebrating Æthelwold's sanctity, the compiler begged the saint to protect Ely and intercede on behalf of its monks. For example, he addressed Æthelwold as 'Institor diues' (§2) and prayed to the saint:

> You are among eternal riches and celestial treasures,
> Enjoying the peace of Christ, whom you zealously served:
> From where you will be a sure [and] compassionate protector to us.[19]

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[17] The *Libellus* offers a vivid portrait of the market in land, the procedures of various types of local assemblies, and the impact of Ely's accumulation of land on the local population. Its base text, an Old English register, was translated at Ely in the twelfth century at the instigation of Bishop Hervey (1108-31). It survives in two manuscripts, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 0.2.41, pp. 1-64 and London, BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A.xix, fos. 2-27, and was incorporated into the *Lib. Eli.* with some alterations and additions, in Blake's edition of the twelfth-century *Lib. Eli.* it can be found at pp. 395-9 (prologue and chs. 1-3 and verses) and pp. 75-117. An edition of the *Libellus Æthelwoldi* is in preparation by Simon Keynes, forthcoming.

[18] Frequently, in the records of Byrhtnoth's acquisitions or efforts on behalf of the congregation the abbot was only referred to by his station (i.e. 'the abbot' rather than 'Abbot Byrhtnoth'), for example, *Lib. Eli.* II.12, p. 91; II.16, p. 92; II.17, p. 93; II.21, p. 96; II. 22-3, pp. 96-7. In contrast, the author of the *Libellus Æthelwoldi* not only named Bishop Æthelwold in each transaction, but also frequently included epithets that emphasised the bishop's virtue or sanctity, i.e., 'blessed' and 'holy.' Overwhelmingly the bishop was celebrated in more obvious terms for his efforts than Ely's abbot, Byrhtnoth.

[19] Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester's Life of St. Æthelwold*, *Appendix B*, p. 86: 'Interes eternis opibus gazisque supernis,/ Pace fruens Christi, qume prudens excoluisti:/ Quo nobis certus patronus adesto misertus!'

In both its twelfth-century additions and its core tenth-century text, the *Libellus* reveals that Ely not only integrated Æthelwold into its communal history, it also celebrated the saint on par with the house's original founder. Cumulatively, the narratives developed in the *Libellus*, the *Liber miraculorum*, and the refoundation charter provided the new congregation at Ely with a history grounded in two founders, SS. Æthelthryth and Æthelwold.

In addition to the intertwined cults of SS. Æthelthryth and Æthelwold, in the last decades of the tenth century Ely developed a cult of a large family group of Bedan-age saints. The cults of SS. Æthelthryth, Seaxburh, Eormenhild, and Wihtburh at Ely indicate that the house was also keen to assert itself not just as a reformed, Æthelwoldian foundation, but as an ancient site of sanctity. SS. Seaxburh, Wihtburh, and Eormenhild were promoted as the sisters and niece, respectively, of Æthelthryth and in litanies and calendars from the second half of the tenth century onwards Æthelthryth, with only two exceptions, was commemorated in conjunction with one or more of her female kin.[20] The familial ties among these women, however, appear to be a tenth-century invention. In the *Historia ecclesiastica*, Bede recorded that Æthelthryth was succeeded as abbess by her sister Seaxburh, the former Mercian queen and mother to the nun Eorcengota, while her two other sisters, Æthelburh and Sæthryth, entered the Continental nunnery of Faremoutiers-en-Brie.[21] Wihtburh and Eormenhild do not appear at all in the *Historia ecclesiastica*. Liturgical evidence from the late tenth and early eleventh centuries provides the earliest evidence for Eormenhild's existence and sanctity and

[20] The calendars in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 718 (Glastonbury? Canterbury?, 979x987) and London, BL, Cotton MS Titus D.xxvii (New Minster, 1023x1031) only include S. Æthelthryth's feast day. However, most of the surviving calendars from the tenth and eleventh centuries include the feast days of both S. Æthelthryth (23 June) and S. Seaxburh (6 July), the missal of Robert of Jumièges, Rouen, Bibliothèque municipal, 274 (Y. 6), 1014x1023 (Peterborough? Canterbury?), also included masses for both saints and in the Bosworth Psalter, London, BL, Add. MS 37517 (x/xi, Christ Church) marked the two saints' feast days with an "S" indicating that there was a corresponding mass (now lost) and also included the feast days of Eormenhild and Wihtburh. The litany in the Ramsey Psalter, London, BL, Harley MS 2904 (x^{ex}) SS. Æthelthryth, Seaxburh, and Withburh occur as a group at the end of the list of virgin saints.
[21] Bede, *HE*, III.8.

Goscelin of St Bertin's post-Conquest hagiographical dossier of the Ely saints provides the fullest record of their kinship ties to Æthelthryth and Seaxburh.

The invention of Eormenhild's sanctity and Wihtburh's sisterhood, and the presence of their relics at Ely, provided the new congregation at Ely with a substantial and powerful group of monastic saints. The desire to cement Ely's reputation as the custodian of a holy royal line of monastic women may have motivated the invention and translation of Eormenhild and Wihtburh. It may have also been prompted by necessity: SS. Æthelburh and Eorcengota, Æthelthryth's Bede-attested kin, were being venerated as saints at Faremoutier-en-Brie and as the abbot of a newly refounded and fledgling community, Byhrtnoth was perhaps not prepared to wade into the difficulties of a rivalry with an ancient Continental community.[22] Nonetheless, as Goscelin's hagiographical dossier reveals, the cults of the monastic women at Ely proved hugely successful. Goscelin's representation of these women stressed their monastic virtue (in addition to their family ties) in terms that indicate a sustained interest in monastic sanctity at Ely over the course of the eleventh century.

Goscelin's hagiographical dossier constructed an elaborate and intertwined history of these women. Significantly, monastic devotion functioned as a recurring theme throughout these texts. Even in the case of S. Seaxburh, whom Bede had explicitly described as a queen and mother, Goscelin sought to emphasise the saint's chastity, for example he described

[22] There is scant evidence for any activity at Faremoutiers-en-Brie in the ninth and tenth centuries: a fire destroyed the nunnery and most of its early records in the twelfth century. The only source for the community in the ninth and tenth centuries is the Chronicle of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens which recorded that at the end of the tenth century Count Rainard le Vieux had systematically deprived Faremoutiers and its neighbouring monasteries of much of their income, *Chronique de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens dite Clarius = Chronicon Sancti Petri Vivi Senonensis*, ed. and trans. Bautier, Gilles, and Bautier (Paris, 1979), pp. 104-5. A thirteenth-century breviary, Bibliothèque Mazarine MS 349, contains feasts for 'Sce Ercongote vriginis' and 'Sce Adalberge' in its calendar and also includes these two Anglo-Saxon women in the 'Faremoutiers' group of saints in its litany. The eighteenth-century antiquarian Michel Du Plessis recorded their feasts in the calendar for the Diocese of Meaux, c. 1731, and noted that the twelfth-century chapel dedicated to Aubièrge/Æthelburh was still in use at the time of writing, *Histoire de l'église de Meaux, avec des notes ou dissertations, et les pièces justicatives* (Paris, 1731), p. 71.

Seaxburh as 'not so much a married woman as female monk.'[23] In the lections he produced for Eormenhild's feast, Goscelin described Eormenhild's relationship with her husband in terms that recalled the exemplary function of sanctity: her husband, King Wulfhere of Mercia, venerated her virtue and modelled his life after example.[24] As commissioned pieces, we can assume with relative confidence that Goscelin composed these materials according to Ely traditions or, at least, in such a way that would please the eleventh century monks. Consequently, this dossier provides a window onto the enduring importance of monastic saints to the house.

II. Peterborough

In the *Vita Æthelwoldi*, Wulfstan of Winchester presented the refoundation of Ely, Peterborough and Thorney as the fulfilment of Bishop Æthelwold's project to restore monasticism in the English kingdom. Despite sharing the same (re)founder, the relationship between Peterborough and Thorney, in particular, appears to have been fraught and marked by competing claims to saints and the superiority of their congregations. Both Peterborough and Thorney claimed the relics of the seventh-century bishop, S. Botulph, and by the early decades of the twelfth century Peterborough was in the process of constructing an elaborate argument for the house's primacy in the East Midlands.[25] The intertwined history of

[23] 'Lectiones in festiuitate S. Sexburge,' in *Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely*, pp. 2-9, at §4, p. 4-5: 'Rara in turba, frequens in ecclesia ut uideretur post regni negotia non tam marita quam monacha.'
[24] 'Lectiones in natale Sancte Eormenhilde,' in *Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely*, pp. 12-23, at §4, pp. 14-7. Take for example the phrase: 'Hanc mirabatur, hanc uenerabatur, eiusque inter secularis flumina celo fixam intentionem emulabatur'; 'He marvelled at her, he venerated her, and emulated the ways she fixed her attention steadily on heaven amid the fast-flowing rivers of the world.'
[25] In her edition and study of the pre-Conquest documentary archive of Peterborough, Susan Kelly identified a group of charters produced collectively in the early decades of the twelfth century. This group, Kelly argued, constituted an effort to promote Peterborough as the *mater ecclesia* of the East Midlands. In order to support this claim of primacy in the region, Peterborough forged charters that demonstrated the house's antiquity, even

Peterborough and Thorney from the time of their refoundation to the early decades of the twelfth century has been preserved most substantively in post-Conquest sources. The traditions represented in these sources retain important connections to earlier ones and, collectively, they reveal two houses asserting the same claim, monastic exceptionalism, with the same building blocks, the cults of ancient English saints, but with distinct strategies.

Following its refoundation, Peterborough benefitted from a succession of ambitious and active abbots, although one abbot in particular appears to have provided the community with a firm foundation as both a cult centre and a centre of learning.[26] Following the turbulent years of Swein's conquest and Æthelred's struggles to retain the English kingdom, during which the community at Peterborough may have been dispersed, Abbot Ælfsige (c. 1006 – c. 1041) was faced with the task of re-establishing a house that was only a generation old.[27] According to the twelfth-century monk of Peterborough, Hugh Candidus, Ælfsige spent three years in exile on the Continent in the company of Queen Emma. During this time, the abbot purchased the relics of the martyr Florentin for £500 in silver.[28] At Peterborough, S.

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claiming that its foundation predated that of Ely. This group of forgeries includes a tract known as the *Relatio Hedde abbatis*, a charter of King Wulfhere (Kelly no. 1), a privilege of Pope Agatho with a confirmation by King Æthelred (Kelly no. 2), and a diploma of King Edgar, with confirmations by successive kings down to William I (Kelly no. 16). For discussion of this dossier see Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, 'Introduction,' esp. pp. 11-4 and pp. 60-7.

[26] The first two abbots of Peterborough, Eadwulf and Coenwulf, were both promoted to important bishoprics: Eadwulf to Worcester in 992 and the York in 995 and Coenwulf to Winchester in 1005, Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, pp. 51-2.

[27] Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, pp. 53-4. The house had also faced challenges during the succession crisis that followed King Edgar's death, the gifts and patronage that it had received from that king appear to have sparked local antagonisms, so much so that Peterborough has been cited as evidence for an anti-monastic reaction following Edgar's death. The house had been dispossessed by at least one local landowner, requiring Bishop Æthelwold's intervention, for further particulars see Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, pp. 47-51. Abbot Ælfsige's abbacy spanned the years of Swein's invasions, his reign and that of his sons. There are indications that following the events of 1013, when all the people of the Five Boroughs and all the Danish settlers of north of Watling Street submitted to the Danish king, the community at Peterborough was dispersed. A late medieval tradition that Swein attacked Peterborough in 1013 was preserved in the *Historia Croylandensis*, this account of destruction and dispersal is unverifiable but does present a scenario that would explain Abbot Ælfsige's escape to the Norman court in the company of Queen Emma (recorded in the E version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle), Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, pp. 52-3.

[28] Hugh Candidus, *Peterborough Chronicle* in *The Peterborough Chronicle of Hugh Candidus*, trans. Mellows and Mellows (Peterborough, 1941), p. 49.

Florentin's relics joined those of a group of ancient English saints, also brought to the house through Ælfsige's efforts sometime before 1031.[29] Two liturgical manuscripts from the early decades of the eleventh century suggest that Peterborough began to promote the cult of three early English female saints, Cyneburh, Cyneswith, and Tibba.[30] An interpolation made into the E version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the early twelfth century attributed the translation of all three women to Ælfsige, although it implausibly claimed that this occurred in the year 963.[31] The promotion of three royal female saints may have been an effort to transform Peterborough into a rival cult centre to Ely. Whether intended as rival cults or not, the cult of the three female saints at Peterborough provided the house with an important link to its pre-refoundation history.

Indeed, it appears that this link was particularly valued by Peterborough: as the house sought to assert itself as the *mater ecclesia* in the twelfth century,[32] it used the authority of these saints as evidence for the house's antiquity and the possession of their relics as evidence for the congregation's continuity with its ancient origins. The elaborate dossier of forgery produced between 1116 and 1122 constructed a history for the abbey that emphasised

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[29] The Secgan B resting-place list, compiled c. 1031, recorded that four saints rested at Peterborough: Botwulf, Florentin, Cyneswith, and Cyneburh (London, BL, Stowe MS 944, fo. 38r). The missal of Robert of Jumièges, tentatively dated to sometime between 1014 and 1023 at either Peterborough or Canterbury, recorded the feast of Florentin. These records suggest that the saints were translated to Peterborough at the very least before the Secgan B resting place list was entered into London, BL, Stowe MS 944, if not around the time of the missal's production. The two female saints, Cyneburh and Cyneswith, were reputedly seventh-century royal women. According to Bede's *HE* III.21, King Penda of Mercia had a daughter by the name of Cyneburh who married Alchfrith, son of Oswiu of Northumbria. In later traditions, notably the Kentish Royal Legend, Cyneburh and Cyneswith were considered sisters of Wulfhere of Mercia and the other royal female saint whose relics rested at Peterborough, Tibba, was remembered as a their 'close relative.'

[30] The Crowland Psalter, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce MS 296, s. xi$^{2/4}$, included the trio of saints in its litany and recorded the feast of their translation on March 6th. The missal of Robert of Jumièges, Rouen, Bibliothèque municipal, 274 (Y.6), commemorated the three female saints in its litany, but included only Tibba's feast (Dec. 29th) in its calendar.

[31] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS E, vol. 7, ed. Irvine (Cambridge, 2004), s.a. 963, p. 58: 'Þa cæs man oðer abbot of þe silue minstre þe wæs gehaten Ælfsi; se Ælfsi wæs þa abbot syððon fiftig winter. He nam up Sancta Kyneburh 7 Sancta Kynesuið 7 þe lægen in Castra and Sancta Tibba þe læi in Rihala 7 brohte heom to Burch and offrede heom eall Sancte Peter on an dæi 7 heold þa hwile he þær wæs.'

[32] See above, n. 456.

continuity rather than disruption over the course of several documents. This is a striking distinction from the historical construction occurring at Ely and Thorney in the same period, both houses crafted communal histories that presented refoundation as an essential event. The opening document of Peterborough's dossier, the *Relatio Hedde abbatis*, adapted Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* to describe the house's foundation in the seventh century. Bede had ascribed the house's foundation to Bishop Sexwulf and, separately, recorded the marital ties between King Penda's children, Cyneburh and Peada, and the Northumbrian royal house.[33] The *Relatio Hedde abbatis* blended these accounts and presented Cyneburh and Alchfrid as ultimately responsible for the foundation of Peterborough, or *Medeshamstede* as it was then known. The *Relatio* recorded that Cyneburh, and Alchfrid, were responsible for Peada's conversion to Christianity and because of their crucial role in the king's conversion Sexwulf was able to found Peterborough.[34] Presented in this way, Cyneburh functioned almost as a founding saint and thus the twelfth-century community's possession of her relics testified to its continuity with the first congregation established at Peterborough.

The house's refoundation was integrated into this constructed communal history in such a way that continuity rather than disruption remained the overt theme. In the charter ascribed to Edgar, 'confirmed' by successive kings including William the Conqueror, the author emphasised that the king sought to support Bishop Æthelwold's endeavour to restore

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[33] Bede recorded the foundation of Peterborough, or *Medeshamsted*e, in *HE* IV.7 and Cyneburh's marriage to Alchfrith in III.21. In the latter, Bede recorded that Cyneburg was the wife of King Oswiu of Northumbria's son, Alchfrid, and that her brother, Peada, married Oswiu's daughter, Alchfled.

[34] *Relatio Hedde abbatis*, in Appendix I, *Charters of Peterborough*, pp. 359-60, at p. 359: 'Rex Alhfridus regis Peade sororem habebat reginam Kyneburgam, et Peada mutual cognatione sororem Alhfridi acceperat Ælfledam. Alhfridus filius erat regis Northanhumbroroum Osuui, fratris sceptrigeri martyris Osuualdi, Peada filius Pender egis Merciorum. Hic, suadente fideli cognato et pia sorore, baptizatus est a Finano pontifice, plus iam gaudens de eterna salute quam de petita uirgine, assumptisque secum quattuor euangelizatoribus religiosis cum coniuge, fidem Christi et sup paterno regno, patre licet pagano satis consentiente, inuexit. His accessit comes et cooperator illustris Saxulfus, uir prepotens et seculo et religione, reque et ecclesie acceptissimus. Qui cupiens nouellam plantationem christianitatis sua uice in gentes dilatare, Dei clementia et Christian regis beniuolentia molitus est monasterium nobile quod Medeshamstede dicitur in regione Gyruiorum.'

the ancient monasteries of England. However, rather than repeat a history of monastic decline and the necessity for the reform of religious life, the charter exclusively attributed Peterborough's decay to viking assault.[35] This at once glorified the house's refoundation while also minimising the disruption that it represented, leaving the sense that the house would have continued to function autonomously if not for the vikings and that Edgar and Æthelwold were simply putting a few things to rights. Indeed, the interpolation into the year 963 in Peterborough's version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle may reflect this sense of the house's history. The entry for this year condensed the 'history' of Edgar and Æthelwold's reform of monastic life, Peterborough's refoundation, and Ælfsige's translation of SS. Cyneburg, Cyneswith, and Tibba into a single year, 963 AD. This chronological condensation had the effect of presenting the house's refoundation as a notable event, but ultimately one of a series that formed Peterborough's continuous history. Additionally, the emphasis on viking assault rather than clerical occupation also underscored the house's historic purity, unlike its counterparts at Ely and Winchester, the community at Peterborough did not require a cleanse at the time of its refoundation. In contrast to the other houses reformed by Æthelwold, Peterborough appears not have constructed a communal history that used the Bishop's memory to support the new community's authority or autonomy. Rather, it used its ancient saints to assert the new congregation's continuity with an ancient and holy foundation.

[35] Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, no. 16: 'Recolens enim illud a pristinis regibus Wlfere necnon Æthelredo aliisque successoribus magnifice ditatum et regalibus priuilegiis fortissimo stabilitum, sed ab externo paganorum exercitu destitutum, hic Dei sapiens architectus magno zelo domus Dei studuit reparare, et acquisitis ac redemptis undique rerum possessionibus cum rostra regali donation prout potuit amplificare.'

III. Thorney

In contrast to Peterborough, Thorney appears to have developed cults and constructed a communal history in which Bishop Æthelwold featured prominently. The *Secgan B* resting-place list recorded an impressive number of saints resting at Thorney: SS Botulph, Athwulf, Huna, Thancred, Torhtred, Hereferth, Cissa, Benedict Biscop, and Tova.[36] There are no pre-Conquest sources that indicate how or when these relics were acquired by Thorney, Wulfstan of Winchester recorded the house's foundation in his *Vita Æthelwoldi* but made no comment about its relic collection.[37] The later traditions developed at Thorney concerning its saints reveal a marked interest in the eremitic qualities of Thancred, Torhtred, and Tova and in Æthelwold's personal involvement in the house's relic collection.

Thorney's first post-Conquest abbot, Folcard (c. 1069 – 1085), composed a Latin *vita* for S. Botulph and a sermon on the lives of SS. Thancred, Torhtred, and Tova both of which are characterised by eremitic themes and devotion to Thorney's founder, Bishop Æthelwold.[38] In the preface to S. Botulph's *vita*, Folcard emphasised the solitude and isolation of Thorney by presenting the community as a quiet place of spiritual nourishment separate from the cares of

[36] The English saints which were closely associated with Æthelwold's activities in Thorney tradition were Botulph, Athwulf, Benedict Biscop, and the three hermits Thancred, Torhtred, and Tova. There is no early evidence for Athwulf nor for the three hermits; however, Cecily Clark has suggested that the names 'Thancred,' 'Torhtred,' and 'Tova' are compatible with an authentic pre-Viking tradition, 'the two men's names at least would hardly have been invented in the late tenth century or after unless the forger had had an antiquarian's knowledge of early personal names,' 'Notes on a Life of Three Thorney Saints Thancred, Torhtred and Tova,' *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 69 (1980), p. 49.

[37] *VÆth*, § 24: 'He purchased yet a third place on the banks of the same river, normally called Thorney in English from the thorn-bushes growing freely all round it and made it entirely suitable for the monks to whom he handed it on the same terms. He placed over it as ruler and abbot Godemann, dedicated the completed monastery to the virgin Mary, mother of God, and was glad to make it rich in all sorts of property.'

[38] For a discussion of Folcard's career and hagiographical writing see Love, 'Foclard of Saint-Bertin and the Anglo-Saxon Saints at Thorney,' in M. Brett and D. A. Woodman (eds), *The Long Twelfth-Century View of the Anglo-Saxon Past* (Farnham, 2015) and Love, 'The Anglo-Saxon Saints of Thorney Abbey and Their Hagiographer,' in L. Lazzari, P. Lendinara and C. Di Sciacca, *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England*.

the world to which he had retreated.[39] This representation of Thorney was in line with the house's physical location: the place name 'Thorney,' from 'Thornige,' means the island of thorns and archaeological excavations of the region have revealed that the monastery was indeed constructed on a small parcel of solid ground surrounded by marsh.[40] This appears to have remained the case into the twelfth century when several chroniclers remarked upon Thorney's isolation. William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis, and Hugh Candidus of Peterborough all noted Thorney's remoteness, Hugh wrote that the monastery was only accessible by boat for most of the year and Orderic Vitalis, perhaps unsurprisingly, recorded that Thorney was 'utterly removed from daily intercourse with secular persons.'[41] For Abbot Folcard, the house's isolation supported a particularly holy monastic space, particularly

[39] Folcard, *Vita Botulphus Abbas in Anglia*, Praefatio, p. 373: 'peccatis meis agentibus, sub specie pastoralis curae in coenobium Thornense incidi, ibique venustate illustrissimae habitationes captus, ipsa eadem loci delectation inhaesi. Res diversae occurrebant quae nolentem iniquitatis animum ad affectum sui inclinabant; [...] Deinde solitude illa, sanctae religionis amica, nulli incuriae pervia, silvisque amoenissimis et continuis paludibus atque interfluentibus aquis irrigua [...]'; 'with my sins driving me forward, I came under the guise of pastoral care to the monastery of Thorney, and there I was taken into beautified and most illustrious lodgings, I clung to that delightful place. Diverse things occurred there which inclined my unwilling spirit from iniquity to compassion for itself [...]. And in that solitude, in the friendship of blessed religion, penetrable by no carelessness, amongst the woods and delightfully continuous marshes irrigated by flowing waters [...].' The edition of Folcard's *Vita Botulphus Abbas in Anglia* in the *Acta Sanctorum* (BHL 1428) lacks Folcard's preface which was preserved in two manuscripts, London, BL, Harley MS 3097, fos. 61b-64b, s. xi and BL, Cotton MS Tiberius D III, fos. 223b-225b, s. xiii. Hardy printed the preface in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials Relating to the History of Great Britain and Ireland, to the end of the reign of Henry VII*, 3 vols in 4, (London, 1862-71), I, p. 373-4. An edition of Folcard's *vita* is in preparation by Rosalind Love, the edition of the *vita* cited here is that in the *Acta Sanctorum* while that of the preface is in Hardy.

[40] For a summary discussion of the archaeology of medieval Thorney, see 'Introduction' in C. Clark and L. Rollason (eds), *The Thorney Liber Vitae: London, British Library, Additional MS 40,000, Fols 1-12r: Edition, Facsimile and Study* (Woodbridge, 2015). Helen Gittos has noted that the church at Thorney, dedicated to the Trinity, contained four altars: a main altar, an altar dedicated to the Virgin in the eastern presbytery, an altar dedicated to S. Peter in the western part of the church, for use by both clergy and laity, and an altar dedicated to S. Benedict in the north porticus, *Liturgy*, p. 185.

[41] In his *Peterborough Chronicle*, Hugh Candidus recorded that Æthelwold rebuilt Thorney on an ancient site called Ancarige, 'that is, an island of men shut in, or set apart. For there is no way of coming there except in a boat on one side; so shut off is it by the fen,' p. 22. Orderic described Thorney in the following manner: 'Thorney is the English name for 'island of thorns,' because a thicket of different kinds of trees is completely surrounded by numerous broad streams. In this island stands a monastery in honour of Mary, the holy Mother of God, which is renowned for its faithful performance of the divine offices and utterly removed from daily intercourse with secular person. [...] Only the monks and their servants live in the dark recesses of Thorney and serve God faithfully in security,' *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, vol. 6 (6 vols, Oxford, 1980), Bk. XI, §33, p. 151.

beloved by Bishop Æthelwold. Folcard claimed that the bishop had hoped to return to Thorney's solitude:

> the illuminated prelate of God Æthelwold zealously enriched [the place] with many pious relics of the saints; because, as they said, and if it is possible to believe it, he had chosen [Thorney] as the propitious place to end the course of his life in spiritual conduct.'[42]

In addition to attributing the translation of many saints, including Botulph, to Æthelwold, Folcard recorded that the bishop was responsible for the construction of an oratory that could function as 'a hermit's cell for himself.'[43]

Folcard further developed this significance of eremitic spirituality to Thorney's congregation in his sermon for Thancred, Torhtred and Tova. In this sermon he argued that these hermits served as examples to the monastic congregation, who ought to imitate their holy lives:

> Who can estimate or repeat their labours in such solitude: the vigils with fasting, the patience of soul and body, the troublesome spirits, the noble tears and pious longing in constant sighing for God?[44]

Folcard cast their eremitical lives as both a retreat and continuous test of their faith, he stressed that they faced constant challenges but nonetheless presented a consistent witness to their love of god. He transformed the saints into contemporaries of S. Edmund and claimed

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[42] Folcard, *Vita Botulphus abbas in Anglia,* Preface, pp. 373-4: 'Deo Praesulis Adeluuoldi illustrate, et tot Sanctorum pignoribus pio ipsius studio ditata; in qua, ut aiunt, et satsi credi potest, cursum praesentis vitae finire delegerit in conversatione theorica.'

[43] Folcard, 'De translatione sanctorum qui in Thornensi monasterio requiescunt,' in Appendix F in *The Liber Vitae of New Minster and Hyde Abbey*, ed. Birch, *Liber Vitae: register and martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey* (London, 1982), p. 290: 'Construxit etiam non longe ab eodem monasterio in eo scilicet loco ubi beata uirgo Christi Toua inclusa fuerat lapideam ecclesiolam in modum piramidis, delicatissimis cameratam cancellulis et dupplici area tribus dedicatam altaribus permodicis, undique usque ad ipsos eius muros uallatam arboribus diuersi generis, sedem scilicet heremiticam sibi si permississet gratia supremi rectoris, qui magis tantam lucernam retinebat in candelabro pontificali del illuminationem totius orbis Anglici.'

[44] Folcard, 'De sanctis Thancredo et Torhtredo,' in Appendix F in *Liber Vitae of New Minster and Hyde Abbey*, pp. 284-5: 'Quis aestimare quis referre ualeat eorum in tanta solitudine labores uigilias inedia animi patientiam corporis incommoda animae Deum assidue suspirantis decoras lacrimas et pia desideria?

that Thancred, like the East Anglian king, had been martyred.[45] While Thancred was a martyr, Folcard commemorated Torhtred as a confessor and Tova as virgin, thus providing Thorney with a group of saints who represented every order of sanctity open to mankind – including that of 'monachos et eremitae.' Significantly, Folcard also presented Æthelwold as Thorney's first abbot and attributed his knowledge of the three hermits to traditions that originated with the bishop himself.[46]

This form of spirituality remained central to Thorney's communal identity. In the forged foundation charter for the house (S 792), produced perhaps in the twelfth century as the house sought to position itself against the encroachments of Peterborough, the author presented the three hermits as the original occupants of Thorney.[47] Their holy occupation on the site was disrupted by viking invasion, according to the charter's author, and was followed by dark period for the house: clerical occupation.[48] The refoundation of the house, which the charter purported to document, thus functioned as a return to an original eremitical, albeit regular, congregation. Framed in this way, the new congregation was elevated not simply in opposition to secular clerics but also through its possession and emulation of Thorney's eremitic saints.

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[45] Ibid., p. 285: 'Nec temporalis sane gladiator eorum defuit coronis quia eadem pestis pyratica quae legitur Angliam depopulasse tempore beati Eadmundi regis et martiris diuersa passim loca inquietans ad eandem etiam heremum peruenit ibique in cella sua repertum beatum Christi antistitem Thancredum martirem fecit longiorisque luctae pugnam tandem glorioso fine decorauit.'

[46] Ibid.: 'Quae sicut beatus Christi praesul et eiusdem loci primus constructor et abbas sanctissimus Aetheluuoldus in suis testatur scriptis non solum erat tantorum sanctorum soror carnali propinquitate sed etiam uirtutum sedula imitatione' and 'Frater uero eius Torhtredus aeque antistes domini ut predictus Dei pontifex Atheluuoldus eadem scriptis suis edocet.'

[47] S 792, edited in Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough*, Appendix 4, p. 370: 'Nam in ipso prefato loco, anachoretice uite aptissimo, duo quondam precipue sanctitatis germani antistites, Thancredus uidelicet et Torhtredus, celestis uite beatitudinem, alter martyrio, alter confessionis gloria, obtinentes, cum gloriosa aegregii triumphi palma migrauerunt ad Christum. Toua uero eorum soror, non solum carnalis propinquitatis federe compaginata set etiam imitacione uirtutum et caritatis repagulo connexa, in ultima huius insule parte anachoreticam uitam ducens.'

[48] S 792, *Charters of Peterborough Abbey*, Appendix 4, p. 370: 'Hic namque tante et tam secrete quietis ac uenustatis locus, peccatis promerentibus prius a paganis uastatus et diu postea miserabiliter a secularibus possessus, sine Dei seruicio et spiritualium conuersacione extiterat.'

The importance of both eremitic spirituality and the memory of Bishop Æthelwold was firmly embedded in the congregation by the time that Folcard's successor sought to dissociate the house from its famous founder. During the abbacy of Gunter of Le Mans (1085 – 1112), a new record of the house's history was begun in the *Thorney Liber Vitae*. The compilers of the *Thorney Liber Vitae* selectively chose to include material which emphasised the monastery's connection to King Cnut rather than its connection to Æthelwold.[49] Lynda Rollason suggested that this was done in order to distance Thorney from the sphere of Peterborough and Ely, both of which were developing campaigns that asserted their dominance in the region.[50] However, despite this effort to transform Thorney's history and dissociate it from Æthelwold's memory, the congregation continued to venerate the bishop. In the twelfth-century Thorney Annals, a scribe recorded that in the year 1111 'two brothers from Winchester, namely Master Ordmer and Anthony, brought to Thorney the relics of the blessed Æthelwold, the founder of this house, namely the bones from his back, on Monday, 23 October, twenty-six years after Lord Abbot Gunter received the care of the same house.'[51]

This evidence, scant as it is, reveals that by 1031 at least Thorney had an impressive collection of early Anglo-Saxon saints' relics, a collection that seems to have been intended for the spiritual nourishment of the Thorney monks rather than for the promotion of pilgrimage or patronage. Æthelwold's involvement in the development of this collection is difficult to determine; however, by the late eleventh century Thorney had developed a tradition of

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[49] *Thorney Liber Vitae*, p. 18.
[50] Ibid., p. 5 and pp. 18-9.
[51] The manuscript transmission of the Thorney Annals has been complicated by various folios having been separated and rebound throughout the annals' history in addition to various continuations added by Thorney scribes down to the year 1412. Hart has determined that the retrospective entries for the years 963 to 1049 were made by one twelfth-century scribe who continued to insert annals down to 1118, suggesting that the 1111 entry was near-contemporaneous with the event it described. For an edition and translation see C. R. Hart, *The Thorney Annals, 963-1412 AD: An Edition and Translation* (Lewiston, N.Y., 1997).

Æthelwold's involvement that remained central to the community's identity – so much so, that even as they sought to distinguish themselves from their fenland brethren, the Thorney monks still coveted the relics of their founder, the very bishop who had also endowed and established their rivals.

IV. Bury St Edmunds

Over the course of the eleventh century, both before and after the Conquest, Bury St. Edmunds promoted its continuity with the Benedictine Reform, thereby crafting a corporate identity grounded in the monastic traditions developed in the late tenth century. At two points in the eleventh century, the 1020s and the 1090s, the community promoted its ties to the tenth-century reform; however, the ways in which the Bury community represented its continuity in these crucial periods varied considerably. For the newly founded community in the 1020s, representing continuity with a tradition of monastic reform allowed the community to articulate a specifically Benedictine identity in a region populated by prominent reformed houses. Following the Conquest, the community re-imagined its Benedictine identity in such a way that it could assert its autonomy based upon its corporate purity, both in the chastity and homogeneity of its members (i.e., not a mixed congregation of clerics and monks). Crucially, grounding the community's identity and history in a specifically English tradition of monasticism proved effective both before and after the Conquest – revealing the significant currency which this tradition had in a changing religious landscape.

In the 1020s, a Benedictine community was installed at Bury St. Edmunds with the support of King Cnut.[52] Until then, Edmund's cult had been a fairly local one: the king appears to have been venerated as a saint in East Anglia shortly after his death in 870 but it was not until a century later that a hagiography was produced, and even then the Latin *passio* appears to have had a restricted popularity. Ælfric had epitomised Abbo's *passio* of the royal martyr in his *Lives of Saints* and it is most likely through this collection that Edmund's sanctity was most widely known at the time of Bury's foundation in the second decade of the eleventh century. It is important to remember the relative local-ness, if not obscurity, of Edmund's cult in the early eleventh century – it makes the saint's subsequent popularity all the more remarkable and, significantly, reveals the early community deliberately positioning itself in continuity with the reform monasticism of the late tenth century.

In the late tenth century, Edmund's status as a saint became intimately tied to the concept of monastic sanctity developed during the Benedictine Reform, so much so that in the early eleventh century the saint could be considered as much a saint of 'Benedictine' monastic sanctity as a 'national' saint of the English kingdom. The interweaving of Edmund's sanctity with Benedictine monasticism began in the 980s when Abbo of Fleury composed the *Passio S. Edmundi* for the monks of Ramsey in thanks for their hospitality.[53] Shortly thereafter Ælfric produced an Old English version of the martyr's *passio* as part of his hagiographical collection, the *Lives of Saints.* Notably, in this period, the late tenth century, Edmund's sanctity was

[52] Tom Licence, 'The Origins of the Monastic communities of St Benedict at Holme and Bury St Edmunds,' *RB*, 116 (2006).
[53] A martyr's *passio* was a particularly appropriate gift to a reformed monastic community in this period, even more so to a community with an active interest in promoting the sanctity of other Anglo-Saxon royal martyrs. In the late tenth century, Ramsey had acquired the relics of two martyred Kentish princes, Æthelberht and Æthelred. Byrhtferth of Ramsey produced a *passio* of the two princes around the year 1000, see above Chapter 3, p. 159. Significantly, Abbo explicitly credited his *passio* of the saint to Archbishop Dunstan rather than to any local traditions or hagiographical material, Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, p. 224.

promoted not by a community which claimed his relics but by a prominent reformed monastic community and a prominent monastic reformer.

The deliberate effort to provide the Benedictine monks of Ramsey with a local martyr demonstrates that in the 980s Edmund's cult was effectively situated within a Benedictine monastic context. Edmund's significance as a monastic martyr in this period, the late tenth century, is also demonstrated by the inclusion of his *passio* in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*. In this collection, the *passiones* of individual male martyrs presented the martyr's example as one of spiritual fatherhood, ministry, and commitment to community. Ælfric's epitomisation of Abbo's *passio* retained these themes and Edmund's sanctity contributed to the collection's overarching emphasis on the superiority of the monastic life and its sanctity. For example, Edmund's reply to Hinguar's messenger stressed the saint's commitment to his community. Previously cast as a spiritual father to his people, Edmund's refusal to flee placed him in line with the other male martyrs in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*; most notably, both Sebastian and Apollinaris were framed as spiritual fathers who encouraged and supported their followers in times of persecution.[54] In addition, Edmund's decision to meet his persecutors weaponless not only demonstrated his commitment to imitating Christ, it also conformed to Ælfric's advice in his account of the Maccabees. Ælfric ended this lengthy passio narrative with an explanation of the role of the three orders of society. At the top of the social and moral hierarchy, he placed beadsmen, 'those who prayed,' and argued that their spiritual struggle was far more important and dangerous than any physical warfare. Spiritual warfare was so much more significant, he argued, that it was better to bear the persecution of impious aggressors than to defile one's hands with fighting. The Benedictine monk, in particular, was warned against

[54] Ælfric, *LS* 5, ll. 14, 8, 54-68 and Æflric, *LS* 22, ll. 214-5 and 226.

taking up arms against men as this was forsaking a much more important duty.[55] In this context, Edmund's steadfast refusal to engage in combat with Hinguar made Edmund not only a committed spiritual warrior, but a *Benedictine* one.

Ælfric again emphasised the particularly monastic *exemplum* offered by the saint in his explanation of the significance of the saint's incorrupt remains. Æflric, departing from Abbo's narrative, stated that Edmund's incorrupt body was a demonstration of his virginity:

> His body, which lies undecayed, tells us that he lived without fornication here in this world and travelled to Christ with a pure life.[56]

Ælfric explored the importance of virginity to male sanctity in the *passiones* of the chaste spouses Chrysanthus and Daria and Julian and Basilissa. In these *passiones*, virginity was a significant composite element of male sanctity: it represented a complete renunciation of bodily desire and commitment to a holy and pure life. These *passiones* promoted this renunciation and commitment for both men and women, although virginity placed each in distinct categories of sanctity. Edmund's virginity, like that of Chrysanthus and Julian, was a significant element of his status as martyr, one which placed him amongst the ranks of specifically monastic martyrs. Ælfric even suggested that the saint was most appropriately venerated by 'clænum godes þeowum.'[57] In his pastoral letter to Wulfstan, Ælfric had used a similar phrase to refer to monks and nuns: 'Þæt synd wæpmen 7 wifmen þe wuniað on clænnysse.'[58] Given the overarching emphasis on the superiority of the monastic life in the *Lives of Saints*, it appears that Ælfric promoted the idea that, as a martyr, Edmund was best venerated by monks.

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[55] Ælfric, *LS* 25, ll. 851-6.
[56] Ælfric, *LS* 32, ll. 186-7: 'His lychama us cyð þe lið unformolsod þæt he butan forligre her on worulde leofode and mid clænum life to Criste siþode.'
[57] Ibid., l. 257: 'pure servants of God.'
[58] Ælfric, 'First Old English Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan,' §94, p. 280-1: 'those are men and women who live in chastity.'

Edmund, then, was a saint particularly suited to a newly founded monastic community. By venerating Edmund, the Bury community emphasised their connection to a particular Benedictine tradition of sanctity, one which securely placed the new community in the tradition of its prominent East Anglian neighbours. It is clear that the Bury community valued and promoted this connection through its veneration of Edmund and, more generally, its veneration of saints: as it has been noted, in the eleventh century Bury kept copies of both Paul the Deacon's Homiliary and Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* in addition to Abbo's *Passio S. Edmundi*.[59] Bury's successful promotion of Edmund's sanctity, and thereby the community's own exceptional monastic identity, is also visible in the surviving calendars from the period. Notably, Edmund was not included in several calendars associated with other prominent monastic centres in the late tenth century: his feast day does not appear in the Wilton calendar in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, the calendar in the Bosworth Psalter, the calendar in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 579 (associated with both Glastonbury and Canterbury), or the Christ Church, Canterbury calendar in in Paris, BNF, lat. MS 10062. The saint's absence from these calendars is commensurate with the restricted popularity of Abbo's *Passio*. While the monks of Ramsey seem to have been interested in Edmund's sanctity it does not appear that their interest was more generally shared. However, beginning with the calendar in the Arundel Psalter, produced sometime between 1012 and 1023, Edmund's sanctity visibly grew in popularity over the course of the eleventh century. The martyr's inclusion in the Arundel Psalter, in particular, underscores his significance as a saint associated with reform monasticism. This calendar was the product of a community consciously modelling itself in conformity with the ideals of the Benedictine Reform,

[59] The earliest surviving copy of the *Passio* is London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 362 fo. 1-2, s. xi^{med}, Bury St Edmunds. This manuscript contains the *Passio* divided into eight lections for reading, a mass and two hymns for the celebration of Edmund's feast day.

Edmund's inclusion in it testifies to Christ Church's acknowledgement of his status as martyr and monastic saint.

The significance of Edmund's status as a martyr to Bury's identity as a chaste Benedictine community appears to have waned after the Conquest. In the struggle between Bury and Bishop Herfast, of which Herman's *De sanctis miraculis Edmundi* was a product, the community did not promote its autonomy and identity as a Benedictine monastic house based solely upon its possession of a monastic-martyr's remains. Herman's account of Edmund's miracles was commissioned by Abbot Baldwin at a time of crisis for the community: following Bishop Herfast's appointment to the East Anglian see in 1070, the bishop sought to relocate his see to Bury, a move which would have at the very least restricted the monks to a smaller site within Bury if not causing their outright eviction. Divisible into two parts, the first concerned with Bury's history up to the Conquest and the second extending the community's history into William II's reign, the language of martyr narratives underlies Herman's account of Bury's pre-Conquest history. Corrupt judges, persecution, and the triumph of the martyr are central features of the community's history and the miracles worked by the saint. However, Herman's demonstration of Edmund's sanctity was ultimately in service of the demonstration of Bury's own inviolability and purity as a monastic house. In the *De sanctis miraculis*, the tenth-century *topoi* of clerical expulsion and communal decay was used to assert Bury's claims to a tradition of purity and monastic integrity. Edmund's specific order of sanctity was certainly an important contribution to these assertions, but unlike the newly founded community in the 1020s the post-Conquest community framed the saint more as a divine protector of an inviolate communal body than as a monastic martyr.

Herman's *De sanctis miraculis Edmundi* (hereafter *Miraculis Edmundi*) promoted Bury's autonomy as a monastic community by emphasising a tradition of pure reformed

monasticism. In Herman's record of S. Edmund's miracles, Bury's status as a chaste and inviolate Benedictine community was forcibly protected by the saint against outsiders, most notably the Danes.[60] In the troubled years of Swein's incursions in the region, Herman presented the saint valiantly defending Beodricesworth and its surrounding town in scenes which echo Abbo's presentation of the saint's contest of words with Hinguar and Hubba.[61] Significantly, Herman created a new narrative for the community's origins, one which emphasised monastic communal purity. According to Herman, Edmund was finally widely acknowledged as a saint in the reign of King Æthelred, at which time a group of distinguished clerics assembled at Beodricesworth to serve the saint's cult.[62] However, by the reign of Cnut these clerics were no longer appropriate attendants to the saint:

> As the cult of the martyr St Edmund flourished under his tetrarchy, the clerical order which served the saint was, in the same location, changed into a monastic order, the one lot being replaced with a community eager to pursue the true path, by fruitful exchange, that the reverend king and martyr might be honoured by a larger, and indeed a worthier, body of attendants.[63]

The re-formation of a clerical congregation into a monastic one placed late eleventh-century Bury within a tradition of reformed monasticism that emphasised monastic autonomy and superiority. As it has been demonstrated, narratives of clerical expulsion served critical functions in constructing a reformed monastic identity and Herman's description of Bury's re-

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[60] Several chapters are devoted to the 'persecution' inflicted upon the community by Swein, the imposition of a heavy tribute on the community narratively functions as persecution levelled against the martyr through the medium of his community, *Miraculis Edmundi*, ed. and trans. Tom Licence, *Herman the Archdeacon and Goscelin of St Bertin: Miracles of St Edmund* (Oxford, 2019), §4-10. Significantly, Herman described Edmund's triumph over this persecution by comparing the saint to the martyr Mercurius. This is a notable comparison: Mercurius was a hero of Ælfric's *vita* of St. Basil, *LS* 3. In Ælfric's *vita*, Mercurius was sent to deliver St Basil's people from the emperor Julian the Apostate. Thus, in Herman's account, Edmund was modelled upon a martyr known for his valiant protection of St Basil's community of Christians.

[61] *Miraculis Edmundi*, § 4-5 and 7.

[62] Ibid., §2.

[63] Ibid., §20: 'Quo tetrarchizante sanctique martyris EADMUNDI ueneratione pululante, clericalis ordo famulatus sancto in ordinem monachicum mutator in eodem loco, indagine ueritatis talia commutando felicio commertio, ut rex et martyr uenerandus frequentiori famulatu necnon digniori ueneraretur.'

foundation in Cnut's reign recalls the framework for clerical expulsion codified in Wulfstan of Winchester's *Vita Æthelwoldi*. Herman may also have been influenced by Lantfred's record of the miracles of S. Swithun at the Old Minster. Following his record of the clerics' expulsion and the establishment of a monastic community in both Cnut and Edward's reigns, Herman included a scene reminiscent of a miracle in Lantfred's *Translatio et miracula de S. Swithuni*. Lantfred recorded that S. Swithun appeared in a vision to a widow and urged her to chastise the monks of the Old Minster who were neglecting the proper veneration owed to the saint.[64] Herman recorded a similar miracle in the *Miraculis Edmundi*: in the reign of king Edward, when Leofstan was abbot of Bury, S. Edmund appeared in a series of three visions to a formerly mute woman and commanded her to admonish the monks in charge of the shrine.[65] The monks, according to the saint, had neglected the shrine to the point where it was covered in cobwebs and rot.[66] Not only was the shrine in a lamentable state, the monks had further offended the saint and God by neglecting to uphold the appropriate veneration that was the martyr's due.[67] This narrative of neglect and decay sits uneasily in Herman's history of the community. This particular scene occurs during King Edward's reign, a period which Herman had previously claimed was one of prosperity and peace for the community due to the king's particular favour.[68] It is at odds with the demonstrable support which the community

[64] Lantfred, *Translatio et miracula*, §10, pp. 292-7.
[65] *Miraculis Edmundi*, §22.
[66] Ibid.: 'He lies under a blanket of spider's webs, sick with the ugly affliction of the spiders and dry rot'; 'Tele aranearum sunt sibi tegmina, ipse aranee lignique charies indecens nausea.'
[67] Ibid.: 'To God's still greater displeasure, he is revered, with less than his full due of honour, by men forgetful of the mercy that God generously displayed to His people on many occasions through the saint's agency'; 'Et quod Deo constat displicentius, omni uenerationis honore ueneratur minus, ab hominibus oblita Dei misericoridia per eum totiens magnifice suis exhibita.'
[68] Herman recorded that Edward approached Bury on foot following his accession to the crown and enriched the house with 'imperial revenues; imperialibus reditibus' in addition to eight hundreds of surrounding land and the royal estate of Mildenhall, *Miraculis Edmundi*, §20. Herman also recorded that the confessor entered into a bond of confraternity with the monks of Bury, §23.

received,[69] yet its inclusion may indicate that there was nonetheless a period of difficulty for the community in the early years of the Confessor's reign. However, I argue that it is best interpreted as an effective rhetorical strategy to assert the community's late eleventh-century purity. As it has been demonstrated, this narrative of decay had been successfully deployed by other Benedictine communities over the course of the eleventh century. Its use by the Bury community was not restricted to Herman: it appears in a bilingual diploma prepared at Bury in the late eleventh century.[70] This diploma, prepared following Baldwin's success against Herfast, recorded a brief foundation story for Bury which included a narrative of clerical decay and expulsion:

> And truly the abbot revealed in what manner King Cnut, with the universal counsel of his archbishops, bishops and prominent priests, ejected the disorderly ones from the aforementioned church, who were living therein, and replaced them with monks.[71]

Like the forged Eadui Basan charter for Christ Church discussed above, this diploma's narrative was copied into a gospel book kept by the community, BL, Harley MS 76, fos. 140r-141r.

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[69] The fifteen surviving authentic writs from the Confessor's reign in favour of Bury reveal a conspicuous show of support for the house, in terms of the number of writs Bury remained second only to the Confessor's foundation at Westminster, Florence Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, 2nd ed. (Stamford, 1989), pp. 138-66. The authentic writs for Bury include S 1068, S 1069, S 1071, S 1072, S 1073, S 1074, S 1075, S 1077, S 1078, S 1079, S 1080, S 1082, S 1083, S 1084, S 1085. In these writs, Edward confirmed Bury's right to sake and soke over their men both within the borough and without (S 1071), defended Bury's exemption from the payment of *heregeld* (S 1075) and rights over the properties bequeathed to the community (S 1072, S 1073, S 1074, S 1077, S 1080). He also produced a writ to announce Baldwin's appointment as abbot (S 1083) and another to declare that he granted the house a moneyer (S 1085).

[70] For discussion of this diploma see David Bates (ed), *Regesta Regem Anglo-Normanorum, The Acta of William I (1066-1087)* (Oxford, 1998), no. 39. Bates argues that the diploma was prepared at Bury with the intention of securing William I's ratification; however, it does not appear that it was presented to the king – it is incomplete in some parts and does not bear the appropriate ratification marks. A related writ, much shorter in length, was ratified by the Conqueror and confirmed Baldwin's successful outcome against Bishop Herfast, see Bates no. 40, p. 210.

[71] Bates, *Regesta Regem Anglo-Normanorum*, no. 39, p. 206: 'Abbas vero e contra quomodo Canutus rex a predicta ecclesia cum communi consilio archiepiscoporum, Episcoporum et optimatum suorum presbiteros qui inibi inordinate vivebant eiecerit et monachos posuerit.'

These narratives of clerical expulsion and negligence of appropriate veneration emphasised the subsequent monastic community's superiority and legitimacy as caretakers of Edmund's shrine. In the scene recording the neglect of the saint's shrine, the monks opened the shrine and beheld the saint's incorrupt remains. The corporal integrity of the saint's remains marked the reformed community as a similarly pure and inviolate body. These ways of asserting Bury's identity as a pure and reformed monastic community differed from those adopted by the newly founded community in the 1020s. It is significant that Herman turned to the *topoi* of the tenth-century Benedictine Reform to assert Bury's identity and position within a tradition of Benedictine monasticism. The continuing currency which these *topoi* had post-Conquest is underscored by the fact that they could successfully distinguish and support Bury's exceptional monastic identity against Bishop Losinga in a period in which other prominent monastic congregations had been reformed to the standards of Lantfred's *Constitutiones*.

Conclusion

The cases of Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St Edmunds reveal that the 'revival' of ancient houses or ancient cults required that new congregations establish continuity with a specific and constructed past. The monks of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney developed communal histories in the tenth and eleventh centuries that aligned the new communities with their ancient founders; significantly, to represent themselves in continuity with these original congregations they adopted the narrative of monastic history constructed by the tenth-century reformers. Decay, clerical negligence and expulsion, restoration of communal purity through the introduction of regular monks formed the essential elements of each house's history. Into this narrative of monastic history, they added a new strand: destruction through viking attack. While the rhetoric that the houses used to describe the devastation wrought by Danish armies may have been exaggerated, it is clear that at the time of their (re)foundation the houses were significantly diminished from their original foundation. The introduction of new monastic congregations into Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney significantly transformed these houses and it should come as no surprise that these new communities needed a history to firmly embed themselves in their ancient sites.

At Ely and Thorney, the memory of Bishop Æthelwold loomed large in the communal histories they constructed. The monks of Ely transformed the bishop into a co-founder and partner to S. Æthelthryth whereas at Thorney the bishop was remembered as the house's first abbot and the congregation as his particular favourite. For both of these houses (re)foundation was construed as a significant event that provided the essential link between the original congregation and the new one. And for both houses, the memory of Æthelwold functioned as the bridge and support for this link. In contrast, the monks of Peterborough

sought to establish continuity with their ancient roots without the memory of Æthelwold acting as a bridge. By the time of the Conquest, Peterborough had grown into a powerful and well-connected intellectual centre, its eleventh-century ties to powerful families and ecclesiastics perhaps distinguished the house more effectively than its historic tie to Bishop Æthelwold and King Edgar. The house's refoundation in the tenth century did not feature significantly in its campaign to assert its primacy over other monastic houses in the East Midlands in the early decades of the twelfth century. The emphasis on a long and continuous history certainly better supported Peterborough's claim to be the *mater ecclesia* of the region than an emphasis on refoundation by a bishop who had refounded Peterborough's rivals at about the same time. However, this emphasis may also represent a tradition rooted in the pre-Conquest period: with Thorney claiming Æthelwold as first abbot, Ely claiming the bishop as co-founder, Ramsey and Bury St Edmunds positioned as exemplary reformed houses, Peterborough would have needed a novel approach to its communal history to distinguish itself from its neighbouring rivals.

Ultimately, a memory of reform linked Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, and Bury St Edmunds and the fact that these houses persisted beyond the Conquest indicates that by the close of the eleventh century at least, this characteristic preserved them from the demise suffered by many of their 'unreformed' counterparts. The impressive collection of cults that they housed had a key role to play: through their saints, these houses affirmed their indisputable antiquity, autonomy, and communal integrity.

Chapter 5
Virgins, Martyrs, and Monastic Women: Nunneries and the Rhetoric of Reform

Introduction

By the tenth century, the royal nunneries of Southern England had been firmly embedded in structures of political and social power for centuries.[1] These nunneries, the most prominent of which included Shaftesbury, Wilton, Nunnaminster, Romsey, and Barking, successfully navigated the disruptions of several succession crises and invasions that characterised the tenth and eleventh centuries; by the time of Domesday, several rivalled their male counterparts in wealth and prestige.[2] The increasingly diverse modes of religious life available to women in this period underscore the importance of these houses. At a time when women of means could establish themselves as relatively independent vowesses and the foundation of small local churches provided an outlet for individual piety, it is striking that these nunneries continued to grow in wealth and prominence.[3] Nunneries, then, provide an interesting place

[1] For a thorough examination of the relationship between the nunneries of Southern England and the royal houses of pre-Conquest England see Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries*, for the period in question see esp. 'Chapter 3: The Later Nunneries of the West Saxon Royal House,' at pp. 85-92. See also Foot, *Veiled Women* vols. I and II; Julia Crick, 'The wealth, patronage and connections of women's houses in late Anglo-Saxon England,' *RB* 109 (1999); M. A. Meyer, 'Patronage of the West Saxon royal nunneries in late Anglo-Saxon England,' *RB* 91 (1981).
[2] For example, at the time of Domesday Romsey maintained holdings worth roughly £97 which placed it far behind Shaftesbury and Wilton, estimated at £285 and £296 respectively. Yet even as the fourth richest nunnery, Romsey still ranked amongst the top twenty wealthiest houses in England. For the calculation of the nunneries' holdings see Table I in Crick, 'Wealth, patronage and connections,' pp. 162-3. For comparison to other religious houses at Domesday, see Knowles' estimation in *The Monastic Order in England*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1976), p. 702.
[3] The continued interest in patronising monastic houses for women has prompted different conclusions about religious life in the tenth and eleventh centuries. For example, Meyer argued that the Benedictine Reform weakened aristocratic control even as it strengthened royal power, making the royal nunneries of Wessex the only outlet for the piety of aristocratic benefactors and vowesses, 'Patronage of the West Saxon royal nunneries.' In counterpoint, Crick has emphasised the exclusivity of royally patronised communities, arguing that they were an 'outlet' for a very specific socio-economic group, 'The Wealth, patronage and connections,' p. 181. However, Pauline Stafford has shown that royal patronage and claims to authority were not always considered in a positive

to test the operation of monastic sanctity; by their very nature nunneries reflected the fluid and hybrid nature of secular and religious power. Did monastic sanctity confer agency to these communities and, if so, what did they achieve through that?

The nunneries investigated in this chapter each developed one or more important saint cults and, in the case of two houses, also underwent a 'reform' of their daily practice. The nunneries of Shaftesbury, Wilton, Nunnaminster, and Romsey were relatively new foundations, all had been founded around the turn of the tenth century, and it is striking how rapidly they were able to develop successful cults of their founders or prominent members. The practice of venerating founders and prominent members had a long tradition. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, for example, reveals that it was a standard practice for the early houses of the English kingdoms in the seventh and eighth centuries.[4] The newly founded nunneries adopted the same practice, but in terms that capitalised upon tenth-century attitudes towards monasticism and sanctity. Shaftesbury, Wilton, Nunnaminster, Romsey, and Barking integrated a narrative of tenth-century institutional change into the cults of their founders and monastic women, much like their male counterparts did. However, in contrast to the narratives developed at male houses, those constructed by the nunneries did not focus upon a history of decline, expulsion, and revival. Such a narrative would have been inappropriate for the newly-founded nunneries. However, it could have been deployed by Barking, the only female house to maintain a continuous history from the time of its foundation in the seventh century through to the Dissolution. Instead, the nunneries each integrated institutional histories into the cults of their saints that emphasised royal connections, either through the

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light by female communities, particularly as the *RC* changed the relationship between nunneries and queens, 'Queens, Nunneries, and Reforming Churchmen.' Barbara Yorke has also demonstrated how male royal interests could threaten royal nunneries' inmates, *Nunneries*, pp. 52-8, 61-3, 72-9, and 152-9.

[4] See above, Introduction, pp. 1-2.

record of King Edgar's patronage or the royalty of their saints, and the house's exceptional communal purity. Traditionally considered on the peripheries of the 'Benedictine Reform,' if considered participants at all, the evidence for the cult of saints reveals that the prominent nunneries of southern England were active members of a spiritual family that extended across the kingdom. Into this family, they contributed several new and powerful saints – a feat only matched by the houses which kept the relics of the three 'reformers,' Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishops Oswald and Dunstan.

I. Shaftesbury

Founded in the ninth century by King Alfred and one of the richest houses for women at the time of Domesday, the nunnery at Shaftesbury held a prominent position amongst the monastic houses of Southern England in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The extent to which the house was Benedictine remains unclear, however, as the site of two important royal cults Shaftesbury was firmly embedded in the networks of secular and ecclesiastical power that shaped the later tenth century.[5] Through cults of S. Ælfgifu and particularly that of Edward Martyr, Shaftesbury distinguished and integrated itself in a network of prominent houses. The evidence is fragmentary but highly suggestive: Shaftesbury, like its male counterparts, deployed the new rhetoric of sanctity to its own advantage.

[5] It has been estimated that at the time of Domesday three-quarters of Shaftesbury's endowment had been obtained by grants from members of the royal house, Meyer, 'Patronage of the West Saxon royal nunneries,' pp. 341-3; Crick, 'Wealth, patronage and connections,' pp. 164-5; Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 168-73. Royal patronage appears to have been particularly valued by the nunnery, Crick noted that Shaftesbury's cartulary almost exclusively recorded royal donors despite the fact that the nunnery probably received donations from noble patrons, 'Wealth, patronage and connections,' pp. 166-8. Despite Shaftesbury's prominence and royal connections in the tenth century, there is no conclusive evidence that the house conformed to the *RC*. See Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, p. 173; Symons, 'Regularis Concordia,' pp. 40-1.

Only two decades before the clerics were expelled from the Old Minster in Winchester, Ælfgifu, the first wife of King Edmund and mother of King Edgar, died. Following her death in 944 AD, she was interred at Shaftesbury. A few decades after her death, the *Chronicle of Æthelweard* recorded that after her death 'she was held to be a saint. And at her tomb, with the help of God, down to the present day, very many miracles take place in the monastery known by the common people as Shaftesbury.'[6] By the time that Lantfred was composing the *Translatio et Miracula de S. Swithuni* c. 974-984, the former queen's cult rivalled that of the great bishop of Winchester: Ælfgifu was one of three rival saints named by Lantfred. He reported that at her tomb many people received 'medication through the omnipotence of God – partly as a result of her own and partly as a result of her son's merits.'[7] In the *Translatio et Miracula de S. Swithuni*, the popularity of Ælfgifu's cult is indicated not only by its inclusion in the account in the first instance but equally by the terms in which Lantfred included it. Like S. Augustine at Canterbury and S. Iudoc at the New Minster, Ælfgifu was presented as an unsuccessful miracle-worker: Lantfred recorded the case of a young man cured of his blindness by S. Swithun who had previously and unsuccessfully sought the same cure at Ælfgifu's tomb.[8] These records functioned both as an acknowledgement of a rival cult's popularity and as propaganda for S. Swithun who could achieve what his fellow saints

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[6] Æthelweard, *Chronicon Æthelweardi*, ed. A. Campbell, *The Chronicle of Æthelweard* (London, 1962), p. 5: 'In eodem vero anno obit et regina Elfgyuu, Eadmundi regis coniunx, postque sanctificatur. In cuius mausoleo, (cooperante deo) usque ad præsens innumerosa equidem miracula fiunt in coenobio, quod vulgo Sceftesbyrig nuncupatur.' Written for Abbess Matilda of Essen, the *Chronicon Æthelweardi* is a Latin translation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* down to the year 975 written by Ealdorman Æthelweard (d. 998). It survives uniquely in an English manuscript which may have been used by William of Malmesbury, the only medieval author to use the *Chronicon* as a source. For an introductory discussion of Æthelweard and the *Chronicon*, Patrick Wormald, 'Æthelweard [Ethelwerd] (d. 998?), chronicler and magnate,' in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (online). In his *Gesta Pontificum*, William of Malmesbury recorded that Ælfgifu, queen and saint, was 'a woman ever devoted to good works, pious and sweet-natured, so that she even used unobtrusively to ransom men publicly condemned by an adverse judicial verdict,' *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* vol. 1, ed. and trans. Winterbottom (Oxford, 2007), Bk II, §86.2.

[7] Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, §36.

[8] Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, §36. See Lantfred, *Translatio et Miracula*, §13 and §3 for Swithun's triumph over SS. Augustine and Iudoc.

could not. The absence of Ælfgifu's name in eleventh-century Old Minster litanies may reflect an on-going rivalry between Ælfgifu's cult and Swithun's.[9]

Lantfred's remark that Ælfgifu's sanctity was a function of both her own merit and that of her son's, the late King Edgar, may reflect an important aspect of the queen's cult – her link to the king intimately connected with and remembered as responsible for the reform of monastic life in England. Unfortunately, no hagiography of the queen survives, and it is impossible definitively to claim that Shaftesbury actively promoted the saint's connection to King Edgar. However, when we place her cult at Shaftesbury in conjunction with that of her grandson's, Edgar's murdered son Edward, it appears that the house sought to rival its male reformed counterparts in the same terms that they were using to assert their own authority.

Edward's remains were buried at Shaftesbury in 979, almost a year after the king's murder, however it was not until the end of the tenth century that the king was officially venerated as a saint. About 1001 AD, Edward's remains were translated into a shrine in Shaftesbury's church, the occasion prompting a gift from the saint's brother, King Æthelred, and the production of a *passio*.[10] Edward's ignominious burial – the king's corpse was hidden

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[9] Three litanies from the early to mid-eleventh century have been localised to the Old Minster, Winchester, in all three neither S. Ælfgifu nor S. Edward Martyr appear: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 146, pp. 64 and 66-7, s. xi^{in}; London, BL, Cotton MS Tiberius C.vi, fos. 23r-v, s. xi^{med}; Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F. 173, fos. 8r-9v, s. xi^{med}. This absence is even more striking given the fact that both Shaftesbury saints were included in contemporaneous New Minster litanies and calendars: London, BL, Cotton MS Titus D.xxvii+xviii, fos. 3r-8v (calendar) and 51v-56v (litany), 1023x1031; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 422, pp. 29-40 (calendar) and 378-82 (litany), c. 1061; London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius E.xviii, fos. 2r-7v (calendar), c. 1062; London, BL, Arundel MS 60, fos. 2r-7v (calendar) and 130r-132v (litany), c. 1073.

[10] S 899 recorded that Æthelred gifted the cenobium of Bradford-on-Avon and its appurtenant lands to Shaftesbury in AD 1001. The charter's draftsman was careful to emphasise Edward Martyr's sanctity, 'quem proprio cruore perfusum per multiplicia uirtutum signa ipse Dominus nostris mirifcare dignatus est temporibus,' and further references to the former king's saintly relics cumulatively suggest that this grant accompanied Edward's second translation. For further discussion see Levi Roach, *Æthelred*, p. 172. For an edition and discussion of S 899 and its prominent place in the Shaftesbury archive, see Kelly, *Charters of Shaftesbury Abbey* (Oxford: OUP, 1996), no. 29, pp. 114-22. The *Passio Sancti Eadwardi Sanctis et Martyris* has been edited by Christine Fell in *Edward, King and Martyr* (Leeds, 1971). The *Passio Eadwardi* recorded that the translation of the murdered king's remains was attended by prominent clerics and laymen: 'Tunc a uenerabilium uirorum minibus susceptum et feretro impositum, cum magno cleri et plebis tripudio ad Scephtoniam deducitur, quia idem coenobium in honore sanctae Dei genitrices Mariae dedicatum admodum celebre habebatur,' p. 9, l. 16-9.

and inaccessible for almost a year after his death – appears to have caused a widespread reckoning with the destabilising fact of an anointed king's murder. Nicole Marafioti has compellingly argued that the king's transformation from murdered royal to martyr was not an automatic response to regicide, but rather a reflection of his subjects' need to 'rationalize a particularly scandalous royal murder and explain it in the context of a broader Christian cosmology.'[11] Indeed, as Marafioti argues, Abbo's *passio* of the ninth-century East Anglian king, Edmund, has important parallels with the circumstances of Edward's death: written in the mid-980s it may reflect an effort to make sense of the recent regicide by providing a framework to interpret the loss and discovery of a missing royal corpse.[12] While Abbo's *passio* reflected a contemporary horror at a king's dismembered and missing body,[13] Shaftesbury's own narrative of Edward's death, as preserved in the late eleventh-century *Passio S. Edwardi*, stressed that Edward's murderers wished to conceal the corpse so that his memory would cease to exist.[14] The emphasis on obliterating the king's memory highlighted the perfidy of Edward's assassination, transforming his death from serious crime to a saintly martyrdom.[15]

It is significant that Edward was transformed into a martyr in the decades following his interment at Shaftesbury. Æthelred's expatiatory motives for promoting his brother's cult

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[11] Marafioti, *The King's Body*, p. 190.
[12] Ibid., pp. 183-8.
[13] In Abbo's *Passio S. Edmundi*, Hinguar ordered that Edmund's head be hidden in order that the king could not be buried according to Christian rite, *Passio S. Edmundi*, §11, pp. 79-80. In his version of Edmund's martyrdom, Ælfric stressed that the saint's missing head seriously disturbed his subjects who could not conceive of burying the king's truncated body without it, *LS* 32, l. 133-7.
[14] *Passio Edwardi*, p. 7: 'in locis abditis et palustribus ubi minus putaretur humo tego, ne ab aliquo amplius inueniri potuisset. Quibus iussa sine mora complentibus, edictum quo nil inclementius proposuit, ne quis de interitu eius gemeret aut omnino loqueretur, se nimirum memoriam eius de terra omnino delere existimans.'
[15] As Marafioti has revealed, the initial concealment of Edward's corpse gave rise to competing interpretations and ideological traditions regarding the king's death. Concealing the corpse, thereby removing it from public memory, may have been an attempt to repudiate Edward's status as king, as Marafioti argues 'If the cultivation of memory was recognized as a defining aspect of royal identity, posthumous oblivion would have represented the antithesis of royal dignity,' *The King's Body*, p. 177. However, as the king increasingly came to be identified as a martyr 'the killers could in no way be regarded as righteous men cleansing the realm of an illegitimate or tyrannical pretender [...] Edward's posthumous evolution into a saint made his killers into enemies of Christianity,' *The King's Body*, p. 184.

have been explored, but Shaftesbury's own motivations deserve further consideration.[16] While the earliest extant version of the *Passio S. Edwardi* was composed following the Conquest, its author appears to have made use of an earlier *passio* produced by Shaftesbury and therefore we must ask why the nunnery sought to transform a royal tomb into the shrine of a martyr. Edward's translation into this shrine about 1001 coincides with the production of the hagiographies of Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald and occurred only a few years after Æthelwold's translation in the Old Minster on 10 September 996. As has been demonstrated in Chapter 3, the hagiographers of these bishops constructed communal identities and asserted their houses' authority through their respective connections to both the bishop-saints and their ideologies of monastic superiority. Portraying Edward as a martyr in both translation and hagiography would have elevated Shaftesbury in terms commensurate with the monastic sanctity espoused by the monks of Winchester and Ramsey.

In the *Passio S. Edwardi*, Edward's status as a martyr was portrayed primarily as a function of his death. The *Passio* lauded the king with the expected virtues of humility, piety, and love of peace; however, as he had only reigned for three years – during which time he appears to have been unpopular with his contemporaries, according to Byrhtferth of Ramsey[17]

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[16] See in particular Marafioti, 'Chapter 5. Body and memory: this missing corpse of King Edward the Martyr,' in *The King's Body*, esp. pp. 174-82 for a detailed analysis of the competing legacies and political consequences of the king's murder in Æthelred's reign. See also Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, pp. 165-8 in which Ridyard interprets Æthelred's promotion of his half-siblings' sanctity (Edith and Edward Martyr) 'as part of an important, if ultimately abortive, movement to enhance the prestige of the king in order more effectively to meet the challenges of the Danes,' p. 166. Ridyard also frames Shaftesbury's development of Edward's cult as strategic and, ultimately, based in mercurial concerns: 'there is a very strong possibility that the Shaftesbury nuns came to regard the body of King Edward as an important focus around which might be worked out their relationship with his successor: his role, paralleling that of his saintly sister at Wilton, was that of *mediator ad regem*,' ibid., p. 170. If this was the case, the nuns were only capable of capitalising on this aspect of Edward's cult for a short time: even though Cnut promoted the martyr's cult, he made no grants to Shaftesbury in recognition of their guardianship of the saint's relics. For a discussion of the diminishment of Shaftesbury's endowment in the eleventh century see Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 175-6.

[17] In the *VO*, Byrhtferth of Ramsey recorded that following King Edgar's death some ealdormen wished to elect Æthelred to the throne because he seemed gentler than his brother, Edward, who 'struck not only fear but even terror into everyone; he hounded them not only with tongue-lashings, but even with cruel beatings – and most of all those who were members of his household,' IV.18.

– he could not be sanctified solely according to his earthly endeavours and thus the circumstances of his death had to prove his sanctity. With this in mind, the demonization of Queen Ælfthryth, portrayed as the main instigator of his murder, serves an important purpose: she functioned as the unjust judge or consul who cruelly put the early Christian martyr to death. Compare, for example, the rhetoric of Ælfthryth's evil intentions towards Edward to the fury of the 'impious' judge in the Old English *passio* of Alban:

> When he was approaching to that place, it was announced to the most impious queen by her minister that King Edward had arrived. And she, full of hostile thoughts and trickery, rejoicing and overtaken by desire that the proper time [had arrived] for her depravity to be satisfied, she proceeded forward, rejoicing with her ready accomplices in iniquity at his arrival, and received him courteously and amicably, and invited him into the castle.[18]
> *Passio Edwardi*

> He [Alban] was thereupon bound, and brought straightaway to the impious judge, where he was offering to his gods the devilish sacrifices, with all his associates. Then the judge became fiendishly angry, as soon as he beheld the steadfast martyr. [...] Lo! Then the judge became fiendishly irate, and commanded men to scourge the holy martyr.[19]
> *Lives of Saints* 19

By making her extremely evil, the hagiographer intensified the horror of Edward's death, more closely aligning it with the persecution suffered by other martyrs.[20] On the one hand, this may reflect Shaftesbury's attempt to divorce itself from the queen's authority as prescribed by the *Regularis Concordia*.[21] However, it may equally reflect the community's effort

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[18] *Passio Edwardi*, p. 4-5: 'Cui dum approximaret, nuntiatum est impiissimae reginae a ministris suis illus regem Eadwardum aduenire. Illa autem plena iniqua cogitatione et dolo, ad explenda nequitiae suae desideria adipisci se tempus idoneum gaudens, obuia mox cum satellitibus iniquitatis tanquam de aduentu eius congratulans procedit, blande eum et amicabilitier Salutat, ad hospitium inuitat.'
[19] Ælfric, *LS* 19, l. 37-41 and l. 73-3.
[20] The *Passio* compared the betrayal of Edward to Judas' treachery (p. 5). Following the king's martyrdom, the author of the *Passio* wrote that Ælfthryth suffered an attack of madness, echoing the fate suffered by many an impious judges in martyrs' *passiones*, during which she ordered the martyr's corpse to be desecrated, an order often given by the judges in *passiones* who sought to prevent the martyr's proper burial and veneration: 'Praedicta uero Ælftrid de equo illud cecidisse audiens, nequitiae suae nondum rabie exsaturata rapi corpus eius qunotcius iubet et in domicilium quoddam quod iuxta erat proici, ne palam fieret quod fecerat. Cuius imperio ministry parentes nefandissimi ilico accurrunt, praedictum sacrum corpus more beluino per pedes abstrahunt, et in domicilium contemptibiliter ut iusserat proiectum uilibus stramentis cooperiunt,' *Passio Edwardi*, p. 6.
[21] Stafford, 'Queens, Nunneries, and Reforming Churchmen,' pp. 22-32.

to distinguish themselves as appropriate custodians of a martyr cult. By developing Edward's status as a martyr, Shaftesbury highlighted its authority and legitimacy as a monastic house in terms explicitly and forcefully recognised by the prominent male monastic communities.

The *Passio* also developed Edward's exemplary status by foregrounding his connection to his father, King Edgar, who specifically chose Edward as his successor.[22] This emphasis would have complemented King Æthelred's own self-promotion around the year 1000, at this time Æthelred began to promote the sanctity of his half-siblings, Edith of Wilton and Edward, in addition to supporting the cults of Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald.[23] It appears that Æthelred was consciously trying to portray his reign in the model of his father's, and thus Edward's status as a martyr with a connection to King Edgar would have underscored Shaftesbury's exceptional *monastic* status in terms that placed it amongst, and as an important rival to, the great houses of Winchester, Ramsey, and Canterbury.

[22] *Passio Edwardi*, p. 2: 'Videns uero pater eius [i.e. Edgar] tantam in filio carissimo [i.e. Edward] animi florere ingenuitatem, gauisus super prudential eius et industria, hunc post se in solio iure hereditario inthronizandum paterno more instituit ac praeordinauit.'
[23] Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, pp. 165-6; Roach, *Æthelred*, pp. 167-74.

II. Wilton

In the mid-to-late tenth century, Wilton, like Shaftesbury, was embedded in networks of secular and ecclesiastical power; the cults developed by the community in this period helped construct a communal identity that supported the house in times of crisis and peace. The cults of S. Denis and S. Edith reveal that Wilton actively engaged with the rhetoric of monastic exceptionalism and sanctity espoused by Bishop Æthelwold and promoted by the 'reformed' male houses of the later tenth century. A late eleventh-century *Vita* and *Translatio* of Edith, composed by Goscelin of St. Bertin, forms the most substantial evidence for both of these cults, however, the liturgical material associated with the house, while fragmentary, indicates that the traditions reported by the Flemish hagiographer c. 1080 extended back to the late tenth century.[24] The endurance of these traditions over the course of this period, in addition to Wilton's steadily increasing wealth, reveals that the cult of a royal saint and a martyr cast in the rhetoric of monastic sanctity successfully supplied the house with the tools to adapt to a tumultuous political landscape and diversifying religious one.

Sometime between the expulsion of the clerics from the Old Minster and the murder of Edward Martyr, Wilton received a grant of land from King Edgar and, separately, acquired a richly decorated psalter.[25] The former serves as a testament to the close relationship between

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[24] The *vita* and *translatio* were edited by André Wilmart in 'La légende de Ste Édith en prose et en vers par le moine Goscelin,' *Analecta Bollandiana* 56 (1938): pp. 5-101 and 265-307. Recently, both have been translated by Michael Wright and Kathleen Loncar in *Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin's Legend of Edith and Liber Confortatius* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 23-67 and pp. 69-93. As Wright and Loncar do not provide a new edition of the Latin, Wilmart's edition of the Latin texts will be used throughout this section with my own translations.

[25] S 767, generally considered authentic, recorded a grant of land near Wilton made by Edgar in AD 968. The provenance of the psalter in question, Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, has been much debated – Shaftesbury, Wilton, and Sherborne have all been proposed – but it is now fairly generally accepted that the psalter was in use at Wilton in the tenth century. The argument in favour of Wilton was put forward by Daphne Stroud who argued that the addition of feminine endings, the emphasis on S. Denis in the calendar, and the appearance of the unusual feast of the Holy Nails provide a compelling case in favour of Wilton as the psalter's original place of use, 'The Provenance of the Salisbury Psalter,' *The Library* 1.3 (September 1979).

Wilton and the West Saxon royal house, the latter testifies to a devotional culture in-keeping with the latest developments of the period. The Salisbury Psalter, Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150, reveals a conspicuous devotion to martyr saints and contains an Old English gloss derived from a tradition closely associated with Bishop Æthelwold. The Easter tables in the psalter provide a fairly secure date of composition for the manuscript, sometime between 969 and 987,[26] while the calendar on fos. 3[a]-8[b] contains additions written in hands that extend from the eleventh to twelfth centuries. Significantly, this indicates that the psalter was in continuous use from the time of its composition until the early twelfth century at least. The tenth-century entries in the calendar reveal a marked devotion both to martyrs and virgins: roughly sixty-three festal days are given the label 'martiris' while twenty-nine are marked as 'virginis.'[27] Interestingly, not all saints known to be martyrs or virgins are marked as such, for example S. Maurice and his legion of soldiers are not marked as martyrs, which increases the number of festal days devoted to both orders of sanctity to an even greater proportion. Several martyr and virgin saints appear multiple times, this is due in part to multiple saints bearing the same name (e.g., S. Tecla) but in certain cases, like those of SS. Eugenia, Eulalia, and Denis, it is not so readily explained. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to trace each instance of multiplication, however, considering that several of these 'multiplied' saints, like Eugenia and Eulalia, had a long tradition of veneration in early medieval England their repetition in the psalter's calendar demonstrates a devoted interest in their cult within the larger conspicuous interest in virgin martyrs. The liturgical programme demonstrated by this calendar, indicates that the nuns of Wilton, like their male counterparts at Winchester and

[26] The tables for the calculation of Easter occur at the beginning of the manuscript and include cycles for the years 969-987 and 988-1006, fos. 1-11.
[27] There is a notable group of Continental martyr and virgin saints, suggesting a Continental exemplar for the calendar in the psalter, Stroud, 'Provenance of the Salisbury Psalter,' p. 230-2.

Ramsey, devoted themselves to the veneration of an order of sanctity that affirmed and elevated the house's holy monastic status.[28]

In addition to a sustained commitment to the veneration of martyrs and virgins, the psalter's Old English gloss places its users, the nuns of Wilton, at the forefront of the developments in monastic practice occurring in the mid-to-late tenth century. The Old English gloss that accompanies the Latin psalms in the Salisbury Psalter bears a close relationship to that in the mid-tenth-century Royal Psalter, British Library, Royal MS 2.B.V, which was produced in southern England, perhaps at Winchester, Abingdon, or Glastonbury.[29] The Royal Psalter integrated an Old English gloss with a Latin gloss, drawn primarily from the works of Cassiodorus, that provided a commentary on the psalms.[30] The Old English used in the gloss has several important lexical links to Æthelwold's vernacular translation of the *Regula Benedicti*. Mechthild Gretsch has demonstrated that the glossator of the Royal Psalter was impacted by the terminology being developed and deployed by Æthelwold and his school at Winchester, raising the distinct possibility that the Old English gloss of the Royal Psalter was a product of that school.[31] The Salisbury Psalter's dependency on the gloss of the Royal Psalter reveals that the nuns of Wilton were studying an interpretation of the psalms at the forefront of Æthelwold's efforts to elevate and sanctify monastic practice.

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[28] It is also noteworthy that a substantial number of the saints included in Ælfric's *LS* occur in the Salisbury psalter. Ælfric claimed that the *LS* contained *passiones* of saints particularly venerated by monastic men and women. andWilton's *sanctorale*, according to the calendar of the Salisbury psalter, would have made it an excellent example of Ælfric's claim.

[29] Kenneth and Cecilia Sisam (eds), *The Salisbury Psalter* (London, 1959), pp. 39-47. For a summary of the debated provenance of the psalter see Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 264-7. As it will be discussed below, whatever the provenance of the psalter, it appears to have been in use at the Nunnaminster by the late eleventh century at least. Nunnaminster's possession of the psalter is indicated by a prayer and Office of the Virgin that was added sometime between 1066 and 1098.

[30] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 28-33.

[31] Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 104 and 112-3.

In addition to the devotional practice represented by the Salisbury Psalter, the cults of S. Denis and S. Edith placed Wilton amongst the prominent 'reformed' male houses of the mid-to-late tenth century. According to Edith's eleventh-century *vita*, the royal saint was conspicuously devoted to the martyred bishop and constructed a church dedicated to the saint.[32] Edith reportedly died in this church and whether true or not this tradition indicates an effort to closely associate the nun and her favourite martyr.[33] Edith's own sanctity began to be promoted beyond the Wilton community by her half-brother, King Æthelred, around the same time that her other brother, Edward, was gaining the reputation of a martyr.[34] Edith's remains were translated into the Church of S. Denis at Wilton sometime between 997 and 1000, shortly before the remains of her saintly brother were translated at Shaftesbury.[35] The translation into a church dedicated to a martyr and her kinship with a contemporary martyr forged a powerful relationship between Edith's status as a virgin saint and a martyr's sanctity. This relationship appears to have been appreciated by at least one other house: Ramsey. The tenth-century *Metrical Calendar of Ramsey*, a calendar that displays a conspicuous interest in martyrs, commemorates Edith's fest day on 16 September.[36] By the end of the tenth century, the cults located at Wilton and the house's own veneration of a select group of saints reveal a congregation deploying a programme of monastic sanctity that firmly placed it amongst the 'new' monasticism of the period.

The eleventh-century evidence for Edith's cult reveals that Wilton continued successfully to capitalise on its status as an elevated and exceptional monastic house. King

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[32] Goscelin, *Vita Edithae*, §8, pp. 53-5 and §20, p.87.
[33] Ibid., §23, pp. 92-4.
[34] See above, pp. 213-4.
[35] Goscelin's *Translatio* of the saint recorded that Edith was translated thirteen years after her death but did not record the precise date of either. Ridyard has estimated that this translation occurred c. 997, *Royal Saints*, pp. 37-44.
[36] 'Metrical Calendar of Ramsey,' p. 365, l. 95.

Cnut and Queen Emma were noted patrons of Wilton and Edith's cult; Cnut commissioned a luxurious golden shrine for the saint whose decoration highlighted Edith's virginal status.[37] In the early years of his reign, Cnut strategically supported religious houses in order to articulate his legitimacy as an English ruler and the continuity between his and King Edgar's reigns. Edith's kinship with Edgar may have been the initial attraction, however, the style of sanctity that she represented should not be discounted. Cnut promoted the cults of saints whose sanctity fit the ideals of the tenth century and Edith, as both a royal saint *and* a monastic one, would have been an excellent candidate.

Finally, Goscelin's *vita* and *translatio* of Edith deserve consideration in this context. Goscelin claimed to be composing his hagiography based in part on the testimonials of the nuns of Wilton. He defended the legitimacy of their memories and thus his *vita* provides an important representation of the ways in which Edith's sanctity was maintained and remembered by Wilton over the course of the eleventh century. It is significant that Goscelin deployed the generic conventions and themes of *passio* literature to relate Edith's life and sanctity. Edith's commitment to virginity was cast in terms of a heroic sacrifice, for example in a passage that echoed S. Agnes' own renunciation of the adornments of beauty Goscelin recorded that:

> Her mother did not want to obstruct her [i.e. Edith's] red hair with gold, nor to obscure the stronghold of the cross with gold plates or gems hanging down her forehead, and did not add anything to her natural beauty; [...] in the place of various adornments she prepared to adorn her with learning and virtue, through which she might be a preferable adornment for the Church and might shine more brightly in its splendor.[38]

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[37] Goscelin, *Translatio Edithae*, §13, pp. 280-1.
[38] Goscelin, *Vita Edithae*, §7, p. 49: 'Mater illi non auro rutilos crines impedire, non aurea lammina uel gemmis in fronte dependentibus arcem crucis obnubilare, nec addere quicquam naturali decori; [...] pro uariis ornatibus litterarum ac uirtutum decore hanc preparabat, quo in ecclesie ornari malebat, quo in ecclesie splendorem altius resplendeat.'

In Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, Agnes rejected worldly adornments in similar language: after her suitor, the son of the prefect Sempronius, tried to entice her with the promise of costly robes and precious gems, Agnes declared to him:

> Depart from me. I have another lover whose innate nobility is unlike yours and who has offered me better adornments, he gave to me the ring of His faith as a pledge and has adorned me with inconceivable worthiness.[39]

In the sermon for Agnes' feast day in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, the author urged his listeners to consider how the saint sought to be pleasing to Christ:

> because she was not eager to be pleasing in the elegance of her human body, and because she was afraid to displease the Lord by the foulness of her soul, she dedicated [herself to] the purity within through the faith of her mind, and developed the beauty of her soul; [...] and the more eager she was to displease the worldly ones in the appearance of her flesh, the more she pursued Christ and [was] pleasing to his messengers.[40]

Later in the *vita*, Goscelin made the connection between Edith and Agnes more explicit by comparing the royal nun's acceptance of the Eucharist to Agnes' declaration that she was united in body with Christ.[41] However, before making this comparison, Goscelin included several passages that evoked the essential plot-points of a virgin martyr's *passio*: at several points, Edith rejected worldly goods; she devoted herself to ascetic practices by wearing a hairshirt;[42] she created a wilderness just outside but attached to the nunnery's enclosure to

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[39] *LS* 7, l. 25-31: 'gewit fram me. Ic hæbbe oðerne lufiend þinne ungelican on æðelborennysse seðe me bead bæteran frætegunga and his geleafan hring me let to wedde and me gefrætewode mid un-asmeagendlicra wurðfulnysse.'

[40] Ps. Ambrose, *Sermo 48*, *PL* 17, col. 702-3: 'et quia non de elegantia corporis humani placer studebat, quia timebat de foeditate animae Domino displicere, dabat interius per fidem suae mentis candorem, atque pulchritudinem animae, quam excolebat; [...] tantumque studuit displicere carnalibus in carnis aspect, quanto Christo institit, et eius angelis complacere.'

[41] Goscelin, *Vita Edithae*, §22, pp. 90-1: 'Astat receptaculum mundum superni conuiue Editha, et de manu luctuosi patris libat angelici panis alimenta uiuifica, ut, sponsi dulcedine saginata, dicere mereretur cum Agnete beata: "Iam corpus eius corpori meo sociatum est, et sanguis eius ornauit genas meas".'

[42] Ibid., §12, pp. 70-1. Notably, Goscelin wrote that this practice constituted a hidden martyrdom: 'Gloriosiorem nimirum humilitatem fecerat publica elegantia, ut cum aurotexta Cecilia soli patri uidenti in abscondito abscondita placeret margarita, et spectate facecie archana conderent martyria.'

which she could retreat and demonstrate her faith – Edith's power over wild animals evoked the ways in which martyrs were able to tame animals in the arena;[43] and she renounced the power of her earthly status as a royal daughter in order to pursue a monastic life and preserve her virginity.[44] Throughout the *vita*, and particularly in these passages, Goscelin deployed the terminology of sacrifice and martyrdom to describe Edith's exemplary behaviour. The climactic moment of her *vita* best exemplifies Goscelin's commitment to framing the saint as a martyr. In the wake of Edward's death, Edith, according to Goscelin, was implored to accede to the throne, this represented the most serious test of Edith's faith and commitment to monasticism. Edith rejected the temptation of earthly power and status because 'the world had been crucified to her.'[45] Goscelin emphasised that this rejection was akin to martyrdom:

> But in both ways was the palm of victory placed upon the noble one. Both honours and torments crown victors, it is permitted to become illustrious in times of peace and war. Abstinence amongst delights and riches is also martyrdom.[46]

It is unlikely that Edith was offered the crown following Edward's death, due in no small part to the fact that she died at roughly the same time, however, this scene provided unequivocal

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[43] Ibid., §10, pp. 65-8, esp. p. 67: 'Stans intra portam lustralium apertam, ceruum, arboreis cornibus ferocissimum, iocundo nominee inclamitabat. Ille ad notam uocem exilire, et de manu uirgineae dominae, deposita feritate, blando ore panem accipere. Ceterae quoque ferae ad benedictionem concurrebant domine, cuius benignitatem sensere.'

[44] Ibid., §19, pp. 84-6.

[45] Ibid., §19, p. 85: 'et cum sibi mundus esset crucifixus, nolebat eam crucifixam sibi esse mundus;' 'and although the world had been crucified to her, the world did not wish that she should be crucified to it.'

[46] Ibid.: 'Sed in utroque genere palma reposita est uictorie. Et honores et tormenta uictores coronant, et uel pace uel bello clarum fieri licet. Martirium est etiam inter delicias et diuitias abstinentia.' Compare Goscelin's statement with the sermon for Agnes' feast day in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary in which the author argued that the martyr's crown was given both to those martyrs who suffered and those who triumphed over suffering: 'Nam qui consumptus est martyr, exsultat: et qui evasit victor, exsultat: et Isaiam sectum martyrem fecit, et Danielem leonum rabiem morsusque contemnemtem, probatissimum Deus confessorem expressit;' 'For he who was consumed [by fire] is a martyr, and exalted: and he who evaded [the fire] is a victor, and exalted: and it has been decided that Isaiah was made a martyr, and Daniel, too, who thought little of the madness of lion and his bite, God expressed his approval of these confessors,' Ps. Ambrose, *Sermo 48*, col. 704. Another sermon for a martyr's feast day in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary (Grégoire no. II.117) emphasised that, in times of peace, the Christian could be a martyr by rejecting the temptations of earthly wealth in favour of the virtues of honesty, mercy, and chastity – the author argued that the latter retained an eternal and constant value more precious than the 'cheap metals' of gold and silver, Maxime, *Homilia 82*, col. 429-432.

proof of the saint's heroic sacrifice – and, through this ultimate test, Goscelin fulfilled an essential requirement of a *passio*. The use of a *passio* framework to relate the life of S. Edith suggests that the nuns of Wilton particularly valued their saint according to the values of monastic sanctity, which transformed monastic men and women into martyrs. Indeed, the fact that at several points the required elements of this style of sanctity fit awkwardly onto the narrative belies that Goscelin was faced with the task of writing a *passio* for a saint who was in many respects not ascetic nor martyr-like. For example, when describing the hairshirt that Edith was reputed to have worn, the hagiographer had to transform Edith's explicit demonstration of her royal status into a testament to her likeness to the richly clad saints in heaven:

> The senior nuns who were aware of it testify that she suffered with a hairshirt which falsely appeared to have a delicate interior by its purple exterior, even though a black colour was required by the rule. Without doubt she made her humility more glorious through her public elegance, in order that, along with the gold-clad Cecilia, she might please the Father who sees in secret the hidden pearls and observes the torment of those who offer hidden martyrdom.[47]

By narrating Edith's life through the framework of a *passio*, Goscelin transformed the royal saint's monastic life into a martyrdom of heroic virginity. Edith, according to Goscelin's *passio*, was a true *monastic* saint of the tenth century.

Wilton's particular interest in developing Edith's cult according to the terms of tenth-century monastic sanctity is further reflected in the *Translatio* account that Goscelin also composed. This interest may also underly the selection of authentic and forged charters in Wilton's cartulary. Of the thirty or so royal grants recorded in the thirteenth-century

[47] Goscelin, *Vita Edithae*, §12, p. 70: 'Cilicio testantur conscie matres asperatam, quod delicata interula et exterior dissimulauerat purpura, que tamen religioni pareret nigra. Gloriosiorem nimirum humilitatem fecerat publica eligantia, ut cum aurotexta Cecilia soli patri uidenti in abscondito abscondita placeret margarita, et spectate facecie archana conderent martyria.'

cartulary,[48] seven charters claim to be pre-Conquest documents and, of these seven, three reputedly record grants made by King Edgar to Wilton.[49] Two out of the three are forgeries but may preserve otherwise unrecorded traditions at Wilton.[50] These forgeries suggest an effort to tie the abbey's fortunes and history to King Edgar. Placing these documents in the context of Edith's cult suggests that Wilton, from the late tenth century onwards, sought to represent itself as a particularly royal *and* monastic institution – the rival of any 'reformed' community.

III. Nunnaminster and Romsey

The two female houses of Romsey and Nunnaminster are treated together not only out of necessity – the pre-Conquest records for these two are especially fragmentary – but also because the surviving evidence reveals an intertwined history. Both houses were reformed in some capacity in the 960s and 970s, Nunnaminster by Æthelwold and Romsey by Edgar. A later Romsey tradition maintained that around the turn of the eleventh century the nuns of Romsey sought refuge at Nunnaminster in response to viking incursions.[51] This tradition may

[48] London, BL, Harley MS 436, see G. R. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain and Ireland*, eds. C. Breay, J. Harrison and D. Smith (London, 2010), p. 210.
[49] The charters which report grants from King Edgar are S 767, S 766, and S 799.
[50] Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 223-4.
[51] In his *VÆth*, Wulfstan of Winchester recorded that Æthelwold established a congregation of nuns at the Nunnaminster shortly after the subsequent expulsions of canons from the Old and New Minsters, §22. Documents relating to Romsey's history are preserved in the fourteenth-century Edington Cartulary (London, BL, Lansdowne MS 442), Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 72. These documents have been printed in Henry Lieving, *Records of Romsey Abbey: An Account of the Benedictine House of Nuns, with Notes on the Parish Church and Town (AD 907-1558)* (Winchester, 1906). Lieving also printed a translation of the *vita* of SS. Æthelflæd and Mærwynn included in the early fourteenth-century Romsey Legendary (London, BL, Lansdowne MS 436, ff. 43v-45v) on pp. 19-26. Two charters purport to date from the reign of King Edgar, whom William of Malmesbury claimed was the house's founder (*GP* §78): S 765 and S 812. In his chronicle, John of Worcester recorded that King Edgar established nuns at Romsey in 967, John of Worcester, *Chronicon*, s.a. 967. Based on Worcester's chronicle and the other fragmentary evidence for Romsey's pre-Conquest history, Foot has proposed two hypotheses for Romsey's mid-tenth-century status: Edgar may have ejected 'some quasi-religious women residing there without respect to the proper, Benedictine, forms; or it might be a sign that Edward the Elder's congregation had essentially died

underlie the apparent close relationship between the women of Romsey and the New Minster in Winchester, c. 1031 the *Liber Vitae of New Minster* recorded bonds of confraternity between the two houses and provided a list of Romsey's congregation.[52] Given the close relationship between Romsey and Nunnaminster, and their separate ties to the prominent reformed male houses of Winchester, it is perhaps not surprising that these nunneries developed cults of monastic saints; however, unlike the monks of the New and Old Minsters, the nuns of Romsey and Nunnaminster represented their exemplary monastic status through the heroic virginity and extreme commitment to chastity of their recent abbesses and nuns – not through an elaborate constructed history of decline, clerical expulsion, and reform.

The reform of Nunnaminster, according the Bishop Æthelwold's hagiographer, occurred shortly after that of the Old and New Minsters and, with these two, presented the city of Winchester as the home of the new monasticism. In this respect, Nunnaminster's rededication to the Virgin Mary communicated an essential point: the congregation of women, following in the footsteps of their patron saint, observed a chaste life that transformed them into an heavenly company of virgins, companions to the mother of Christ. Mary Clayton has demonstrated that Marian devotion was a marked feature of the reform monasticism espoused by Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald. Mary's exceptional virginity aligned with and supported the ideals of individual chastity and communal purity promoted by the bishops.[53] In addition to mandating a special mass for the Virgin on Saturdays and antiphons in her honour sung at the close of Lauds and Vespers in the *Regularis Concordia*, Æthelwold

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out leaving the house in need of recolonization,' *Veiled Women*, vol. II, p. 153. The fourteenth-century *vita* of SS. Æthelflæd and Mærwynn, which survives in the Romsey Legendary, claimed that the nuns of Romsey sought refuge at Nunnaminster during the Scandinavian invasions of Æthelred's reign, Lieving, *Records of Romsey Abbey*, p. 26.

[52] *Liber Vitae of New Minster*, pp. 62-3.

[53] Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin*, p. 135 and the tables on pp. 125-9.

may have also composed an Office of Mary.[54] The Marian Office in the prayerbook of the New Minster monk Ælfwine, compiled c. 1031, may represent Æthelwold's composition, at the very least it reveals a sustained interest in the Virgin at one of his houses. Significantly, the Nunnaminster may have developed its own Office of Mary around the same time that Ælfwine was celebrating the Office contained in British Library, Cotton MS Titus D.xxvii. The Nunnaminster's Marian Office survives as an appendage to the tenth-century psalter British Library, Royal MS 2.B.v, added on leaves attached to the psalter sometime between 1066 and 1098.[55] The Office in the Royal psalter has striking similarities to one composed in the mid-eleventh-century at Christ Church, Canterbury – the same arrangement of psalms, many of the same hymns, collects drawn from the Gregorian sacramentary, and antiphons, versicles, and responds drawn from the Offices for the popular pre-Conquest feasts of Mary.[56] The two Offices differ primarily in their arrangements for each hour and in the prescribed readings. The Royal Office drew all of its readings from the Song of Songs which had been associated liturgically with the Virgin through its use in the feast of the Assumption.[57] The addition of this Office to the tenth-century psalter suggests that the nuns of Nunnaminster maintained a consistent and conspicuous devotion to the Virgin from the time of the house's refoundation through to the Conquest. Indeed, the Marian Office in the Royal psalter is preceded by a prayer that styles the Nunnaminster as Mary's possession and appeals for the Virgin's intercession on behalf of *her* family.[58]

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[54] Ibid., pp. 68-70.
[55] Ibid., p. 70.
[56] Ibid., pp. 70-1.
[57] Ibid., p. 71.
[58] This prayer has been edited and discussed by Mary Clayton in *Cult of the Virgin*, p. 74-5. The prayer in its address to Mary repeatedly refers to the congregation as the servants of Mary (*tue famulamur*) and begs the saint to protect her possession: 'Presta igitur, domina, ut non gaudeat inimicus qui non timuit tuam inuadere possessionem.'

At a time when the vast majority of reformed male houses were dedicated to Mary, the Nunnaminster's claim to a particular and intimate relationship with the Virgin distinguishes the house amongst its male and female counterparts.[59] The cumulative effect of a pronounced devotion to Mary, association with Æthelwold's reform of Winchester, historic royal ties, and female congregation may have transformed the Nunnaminster not only into an important rival of the other prominent male and female houses in the tenth century, but more significantly into an ideal Marian community.

In addition to Mary, the Nunnaminster could boast of another divine protector: S. Eadburg. The royal princess, daughter of Edward the Elder, died roughly a decade before the Nunnaminster's refoundation and was recognised as a saint only a few decades later.[60] A twelfth-century *vita* of Eadburg, composed by Osbert of Clare for the monks of Pershore, recorded that the saint was translated twice: first from the church cemetery to a place near the high altar and then again into a silver shrine.[61] Osbert did not provide a date for either of these translations, however, it has been argued that the most probable context for the first translation is the Nunnaminster's reform by Æthelwold with the second occurring before Æthelwold's death in 984.[62] The earliest extant evidence for S. Eadburg's translation is the notice of its feast day in the calendar of Ælfwine's prayerbook, produced at the New Minster.[63] Given the power of an association with Bishop Æthelwold, successfully capitalised upon by the male houses in Winchester, it is noteworthy that Osbert's *vita* does not emphasise the

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[59] As the tables of houses dedicated to the Virgin in Clayton, *Cult of Virgin Mary*, p. 128-9, reveal, Nunnaminster was one among many male and female monasteries dedicated to the Virgin.
[60] S. Eadburg's feast was recorded in the calendar of the Salisbury psalter (Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150) which was produced sometime between 969 and 987.
[61] Osbert of Clare, *Vita Eadburgae*, ed. Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, pp. 253-308, at § 11, p. 280-1.
[62] Ridyard, *Royal Saints*, pp. 110-114 has argued that the saint's translation occurred almost entirely through the aegis of Bishop Æthelwold and that the bishop probably officiated the second translation. If this were the case, it is noteworthy that Nunnaminster did not develop this aspect of Eadburg's cult.
[63] Eadburg's feast days is the 15 June and the feast of her translation occurs on 18 July. Both feasts were included in the calendar of London, BL, Cotton MS Titus D.xxvii+xxviii, 1023x1031.

bishop's involvement – and nor do the other Winchester-based records of Eadburg's sanctity.[64] This may indicate that the saint's translation occurred after Æthelwold's death, perhaps around the same time that Eadburg's great-niece and nephew, Edith and Edward Martyr, were translated. It may also indicate that the Nunnaminster worked to preserve an Æthelwold-less tradition of S. Eadburg's translation.

Following hagiographic convention, Osbert claimed to be writing his version of Eadburg's life based upon earlier accounts. None of these accounts have survived and therefore it is difficult to determine what embellishments or apocryphal accounts Osbert introduced into the narrative. Nonetheless, if we take the broad strokes of his account of Eadburg's life several notable features attract attention: first, Eadburg's sanctity was unequivocally rooted in her observance of monastic discipline and virtue, second, her commitment to virginity was described in terms of a heroic sacrifice, and, third, the language of the Song of Songs permeates the *vita*.[65] In contrast to the male houses of Winchester, the Nunnaminster possessed the relics of a truly monastic saint – one whose sanctity developed and operated in its entirety within the cloister. The use of the Song of Songs to narrate important events in Eadburg's *vita* is perhaps an echo of the Marian devotion practised at the

[64] In the *GP*, William of Malmesbury, possibly working from Winchester sources, provided a brief summary of S. Eadburg's life in which he repeated the story that as an infant the saint chose religious ornaments over secular ones and that her humility was demonstrated in her habit of washing the sisters' shoes in secret, *GP*, §78.3-6. William also recorded that Nunnaminster had fallen into ruin by the time of Æthelwold's episcopacy and that the bishop revived the house, *GP*, §78.3; however, he makes no mention that Eadburg's remains were translated at all, let alone through Æthelwold's instigation. This summary of Eadburg's life – again without mention of the saint's translation – was also included in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. Mynors, Thomson, and Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), Bk. II, §217. The eight lections for Eadburg's feast day preserved in the Hyde Breviary (c. 1325) appear to share a common source with Osbert of Clare's *vita* of the saint, Laura Braswell, 'Saint Eadburga of Winchester: a study of her cult, a.d. 950-1500, with an edition of the fourteenth-century Middle English and Latin lives,' *Mediaeval Studies*, 33 (1971), pp. 309-10. The lections do not commemorate S. Eadburg's translation.

[65] References to the Song of Songs occur in the *vita* at p. 267 (Cant. 5:7), p. 269 (Cant. 7:1), p. 272 (Cant. 3:9), p. 274 (Cant. 4:3), p. 278 (Cant. 5:1), p. 279 (Cant. 4:8), p. 282 (Cant. 5:2; Cant. 4:8; Cant. 5:6), p. 283 (Cant. 5:6), p. 287 (Cant. 5:5), p. 307 (Cant. 2:9).

Nunnaminster.[66] Cumulatively, the cult of Mary and Eadburg in the late tenth and eleventh centuries suggest that Nunnaminster constructed a communal identity firmly rooted in the virginal status of its saints. This emphasis and status would have distinguished the Nunnaminster from its male neighbours in terms that aligned with their ideals of monasticism.

As was the case at the Nunnaminster, the 960s and 970s was a period of change for the nunnery of Romsey: the house appears to have been repopulated with monastic women who followed the *Regula Benedicti* and served as the burial site of King Edgar's infant son, the ætheling Edmund, by his third wife Ælfthryth.[67] Two tenth-century abbesses of Romsey were venerated as saints by the early eleventh century, indicating that the later tenth century was a formative period in more ways than one. The pre-Conquest evidence for the house and its monastic cults is incredibly sparse, so much so that the date of the house's foundation and its founder remain obscure.[68] Eleventh-century liturgical evidence, in the form of litanies and calendars, reveals that by the turn of the eleventh century Abbess Mærwynn was venerated at Christ Church, Canterbury and that Abbess Æthelflæd's cult grew in prominence over the course of the century.[69] Two calendars from the New Minster, Winchester suggest that S. Æthelflæd was translated sometime between 1062 and 1073: the calendar in British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius E.xviii, produced c. 1062, contains Æthelflæd's feast day on 23rd of October

[66] See above, p. 227. The readings for the Office in Royal 2 B V on fo. 2 drew from Cant. 3:6, 4:11-12, and 6:3 and 8. For an edition of the Office in Royal 2 B V, E. S. Dewick, *Facsimiles of Horae de Beata Maria Virgine From English MSS of the Eleventh Century* (London, 1902), fol. 2.

[67] The pre-tenth century history of Romsey, and thus the convent's beginnings, remain obscure: conflicting accounts are provided by post-Conquest historians and no foundation charter is preserved in Romsey's cartulary. For further discussion see Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 149-55, esp. p. 151-2.

[68] Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 154-5.

[69] The *Secgan B* resting-place list preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 201, s. xi$^{1/2}$ recorded that 'ðonne restað on Rumesige sancta Mærwyn, wæs seo forme abbodesse þæs mynstres, and sancta Balthild regina and sancta Æþelflæd and fela oðre halgan,' p. 150. See Table 3 below for the pre-Conquest litanies and calendars that commemorated SS. Mærwynn and Æthelflæd.

whereas the calendar produced a decade later in British Library, Arundel MS 60 contains a feast of her translation on 17 January.

Despite this sparse evidential record, the traditions represented in Romsey's fourteenth-century cartulary, British Library, Lansdowne MS 442, provide highly suggestive clues that Romsey, like its male and female counterparts, successfully capitalised upon its monastic cults and association with King Edgar. These later traditions are visible in a charter that purports to be a grant of privileges from Edgar to the nunnery in the abbacy of Mærwynn (S 812) and in the *vita* of Æthelflæd. The authenticity of the Edgar charter has been debated, its proem places it amongst a larger group that was possibly forged in the reign of King Æthelred.[70] If forged in Æthelred's reign or the pre-Conquest period, this charter reveals a deliberate attempt by the nuns of Romsey to assert their communal autonomy based upon their historic tie to King Edgar and his support for an elevated and exceptional monastic life. Significantly, the charter's proem rehearsed a scheme of Christian salvation in which virginal monastic women were transformed into the redeemers of postlapsarian humanity. Beginning with the creation of Adam, the expulsion from Paradise, and mankind's redemption through Christ's incarnation, the charter summarised the significance of this history to the matter at hand:

> Because evidently the crime is removed by the selection of the virgin for the virginal incarnation, and her purifying glory calls for the shining and bright [virginity] of all women.[71]

With the nunnery dedicated to the Virgin Mary and its congregation following the precepts of the *Regula Benedicti*, the narrative of salvation constructed in this charter transformed the nuns

[70] Keynes, *Diplomas of King Æthelred*, pp. 98-100.
[71] S 812, edition in Walter Birch, *Cartluarium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, vol. 3, AD 948-975 (1885), no. 1187, pp. 450-1: 'Quia videlicet sumpta de virgine incarnacione antique virginis facinus demitur, et cunctis mulieribus nitidis precluens caumatibus decus irrogatur.'

of Romsey into the 'shining and bright' companions of Mary whose virginity, like that of their patron saint, had the power to redeem.

This claim to a communal purity akin to Mary's in addition to a historic reaffirmation of the community's privileges and Benedictine practice by King Edgar may represent an effort to distinguish Romsey as a reformed community whose autonomy and integrity was based in the new monasticism of the tenth century. The development of two monastic cults in this period further suggests that the house sought to establish itself as an especially holy monastic congregation based upon its adherence to the *Regula Benedicti* and the exceptional monastic virtue of its abbesses. The *vita* of S. Æthelflæd preserved in Romsey's fourteenth-century cartulary is far removed from the pre-Conquest cult of the saint and it is difficult to determine the authenticity of the traditions it reports. Nonetheless, one episode may echo a pre-Conquest desire to frame the saint according to the terms of monastic sanctity: Æthelflæd, according to the hagiographer, maintained a habit of plunging herself into cold water each evening. In describing the saint's favoured ascetic practice, the hagiographer described the frigidity of the water and the abbesses' steadfast faith over the course of her nightly ordeal in terms that call to mind the suffering of the Forty Soldiers in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*. The Forty Soldiers, according to their *passio*, were condemned to spend a night in a freezing lake, they survived by singing psalms and maintaining a steadfast faith.[72] The resonance between the soldiers' suffering and Æthelflæd's ascetism, however, can only remain speculative.

[72] Ælfric, *LS* II, esp. ll. 144-8 and 153-5 for descriptions of the frozen lake in which the soldiers were submerged.

Table 3. Pre-Conquest Liturgical Evidence for SS. Mærwynn and Æthelflæd

Manuscript	Date and provenance	Calendar	Litany	Romsey	
				Mærwynn [feast day: 10 Feb.] included Yes (Y) or No (N)	**Æthelflæd [feast day: 23 Oct.] included Yes (Y) or No (N)**
London, BL, Add. MS 37517	s. x/xi, Christ Church, Canterbury	2r-3r	104r-v	Litany: N; Calendar: Y	Litany: N; Calendar: N
Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.v.32 (2074)	1012x1030, Canterbury? Glastonbury?	50r-55v	n/a	N	Y
London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius A.vii	s. xi^{1}, Ramsey? Exeter?	n/a	17v-18v and 22r-v	N	Y
London, BL, Add. MS 28188	s. xi^{2}, Exeter	n/a	2r-4v and 7r	N	Y
London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius E.xviii	c. 1062, New Minster, Winchester	2r-7v	n/a	N	Y
London, BL, Arundel MS 60	c. 1073, New Minster, Winchester	2r-7v	130r-132v	Litany: Y; Calendar: N	Litany: Y; Calendar: Y [feast of her translation only on 17 Jan.]

IV. Barking

Around the year 1030, Abbess Leofflæd of Barking translated the remains of her predecessor, Abbess Wulfhild (d. after 996), to the principal altar in the community's church.[73] This translation remained significant to Barking well into the fifteenth century. The calendar contained in the *Ordinale and Customary of Barking Abbey*, commissioned by Sibille Felton, abbess of Barking (1394-1419) and presented to the community in 1404, recorded the feast of Wulfhild's translation on September 2nd, distinguishing it from the feast of the translation of all three abbesses which occurred in the 1080s.[74] Wulfhild had revived the community in the mid-tenth century and, despite a long absence in the middle of her abbacy, had been a committed and inspirational leader for the fledgling nunnery. Her translation in the generation after her death reveals her significance not only to Barking's institutional history, but her importance to the community's corporate identity. According to late-eleventh-century traditions at Barking, the community was revived during the reign of King Edgar – however, not as a part of his support for monastic reform. Barking, in addition to other estates, was given to Wulfhild c. 950 as recompense for the king's unsuccessful attempt to press Wulfhild into marriage.[75] The late eleventh-century traditions at Barking remembered Wulfhild as a devoted spiritual mother to her community and, framed in this light, it is possible to see that

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[73] Goscelin, *Vita et Miracula de S. Wulfhildae*, §13. The edition of Goscelin's *vita* is that in Marvin Colker, 'Texts of Jocelyn of Canterbury which relate to the history of Barking Abbey,' *Studia Monastica* 7.2 (1965), references to sections in the *vita* correspond to Colker's divisions.

[74] The calendar in *The Ordinale and Customary of the Nuns of Barking* (Oxford, University College, MS 169) records three translation feasts: Mar. 7th, Sept. 23rd, and Sept. 2nd. The last celebrates the translation of Wulfhild alone whereas the two previous celebrate the translation of all three abbesses. This distinction for Wulfhild in Barking tradition demonstrates the abbess' particular significance to the community's historical identity. The calendar is edited and printed in J. B. Tolhurst (ed), *The Ordinale and Customary of the Benedictine Nuns of Barking Abbey* (London, 1927), pp. 1-12, the translation feasts occur on pp. 3 and 9, respectively.

[75] Goscelin, *Vita Wulfhildae*, §4. According to Goscelin, Wulfhild received Barking, enriched with twenty-four *mansions uillarum*, together with five other *domos familiarum*, including: Wilton, Shaftesbury, Wareham, Southampton, and Horton. The historicity of this endowment is dubious and is not supported in other sources, Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II, pp. 31-2.

translating the abbess to a position of prominence had the effect of binding the community to a dynamic and pious leader.

The evidence for Wulfhild's translation and her significance to Barking in the early eleventh century occurs only in a post-Conquest *vita* by the Flemish hagiographer, Goscelin of St. Bertin. In this *vita*, Wulfhild's sanctity was presented along the lines of a devoted spiritual mother:

> She did not rule by subjection but through love, she considered herself a mother not a ruler, and exercised charity not tyranny. She carried all in her maternal womb, she gave the milk of celestial desires from her breasts, and she rejoiced to serve in the cheapest habit and to yield to the most inferior ones. She had been promised as a handmaiden for Christ from a tender age; and with the blessed Agatha she showed her submissive character.[76]

Abbess Æthelburh, Barking's seventh-century founder, had also been framed in this way in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Bede had described her as 'mother and nurse of a company of women devoted to God' and 'mother of the congregation.'[77] Presenting the saint in this way effectively situated her sanctity in the community over which she acted as mother. At once figurehead and model, a spiritual mother saint represented and codified her 'family's' identity. In Goscelin's *vita* of Wulfhild, the revived community's 'founding' abbess, Wulfhild, figures as a spiritual mother to the same effect – she provided Barking not only with an origin point for its corporate identity as a spiritual family, but also with a model of sanctity which promoted

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[76] Goscelin, *Vita Wulfhildae*, §IV: 'Nesciebat dominatum in subditos sed affectum, matrem se nouerat non principem, caritatem exercebat non tyrannidem. Portabat omnes maternis uisceribus, lactabat caelestium desideriorum uberibus, uilissimo habitu seruire et obedire gaudebat inferioribus. Professa erat ex ingenua Christi ancillam; ideo cum beata Agatha se ostendebat seruilem personam.'

[77] Bede, *HE*, IV.6, 'devotarum mater ac nutrix posset existere feminarum,' and IV.7, 'mater congregationis.' Bede stated that he drew his information regarding Æthelburh from a *libellus* in circulation which recorded the signs and miracles that took place at Barking. It is significant that Bede designated Æthelburh a mother to her community: only four out of the thirteen abbesses described in the *HE* were given mother-epithets. This designation is even more notable when one considers that as a whole the language of motherhood is more systematically applied to abbesses than the language of fatherhood is applied to abbots in the *HE*, Foot, 'Bede's Abbesses,' *forthcoming*.

and supported committed membership of a monastic community.[78] It is notable that Goscelin's *vita* does not credit Wulfhild with the promotion of Barking's early abbesses/spiritual mothers, Æthelburh and Hildelith. In the *vita*, her model of sanctity, that of spiritual mother, was grounded in her practical and spiritual care for the recently revived Barking, not in her position in a long line of holy abbesses.[79]

Wulfhild's translation, as recorded by the *vita*, demonstrates that the eleventh-century community grounded its identity in her personal sanctity. In Goscelin's account of Wulfhild's translation, Abbess Leofflæd moved the community's beloved abbess to a prominent place within the church – the principal altar. Goscelin recorded that Wulfhild appeared in a vision to approve this move and also to stipulate that only the members of the community should be allowed to behold her remains:

> As it was attested by a certain veiled woman in that blessed monastery, the glorious Wulfhild appeared in a vision, providing with a clear sign this postulation: 'Let my tomb be opened,' she said, 'with my nearest relations in the translation, and do this favour for me let my corpse be covered with your garment so that it is not seen by the crowd.'[80]

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[78] In another scene in Goscelin's *vita*, Wulfhild miraculously cured a young woman named Lefleda. Once cured and with her nuptials approaching, Lefleda turned to Wulfhild for guidance, the saint encouraged Lefleda to remain with her and, following this encouragement, the young woman chose to take the habit: "Veniens ergo et amore castitatis consulens eam, protinus audiuit, 'Filia mi, remane hic mecum et elige sincere seruiendo donec ueniat expecta eum." Sic susceptor sacro habitu tam inseperabilis cum ipsa permansit quam hoc quod solum quesierat inuenit. Quam benignissima magistra ut conseruam et comministram in suis operibus habebat totaque probitate informabat, utpote quam sibi in regimine successuram prophetali animo preuidebat quatenus seruiendo disceret quomodo preesse deberet iuxta quod ipse docet Dominus ut sit seruus qui uult esse primus,' *Vita Wulfhildae* §VI.

[79] For example, Wulfhild's role as mother of the community was so deeply felt that even during her enforced twenty-year absence the sisters persisted in thinking of her as mother and holding her example before them: 'Sic suas orphanas consolata, exhortata, atque exosculata, assumtis secum quos poterat, ad hereditarium monasterium suum Hortunam recessit. Coepit inde Deo dilecta tanto ardentius ad caelestia anhelare quanto perspicatus uidebat nihil esse quod de terrena facultate posset amittere. Nec cessabat tam absentes quam presents sorores ad superna gaudia secum trahere atque has alloquiis et exemplis illas mandatis et nunciis crebro accendere,' *Vita Wulfhildae*, §9.

[80] Goscelin, *Vita Wulfhildae*, §13: 'Tum gloriosa Wulfhilda apparuit in visu cuidam femiane in eodem moansterio sacro velamina consignatae, clar indicio se prebens cum tali postulation: 'Cum proxime, inquit, 'tumba mea in translatione reserabitur, hanc mihi fac gratiam ut ea tuo panno operiatur ne corpus meum a turba conspiciatur.'

On the one hand, this stipulation is in keeping with standard tropes regarding the translation of female saints: keeping the saint's posthumous remains shielded from the gaze of onlookers, men in particular, served to emphasise the saint's inviolate body. However, it also serves to emphasise the intimacy between community and saint: the community as a whole was permitted to gaze upon Wulfhild's incorrupt remains and the wholeness of the saint's body represents the completeness and inviolability of the community's corporate body.

Wulfhild's translation to a position of great prominence and intimacy within the community's most sacred space calls to mind the successive translations of S. Eadburh at the Nunnaminster. S. Eadburh was translated to increasingly exclusive and intimate places within the community's church in the early eleventh century, effectively situating the saint at the heart of the community of nuns within the city of Winchester.[81] Like Eadburh, Wulfhild does not appear to have been a very popular saint outside of her community: she appears in no surviving liturgical material, either calendar or litany, from the eleventh century. However, just as in Eadburh's case, this suggests not an 'unsuccessful' cult, but one which was primarily directed at and served the needs of a specific community.

Following Wulfhild's translation, the saint rested alongside the early abbess-saints of Barking, Æthelburh and Hildelith.[82] Æthelburh's sanctity is well attested in early medieval England,[83] and we might imagine that placing Wulfhild's remains in the presence of

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[81] These successive translations are recorded in Osbert of Clare's twelfth-century *Vita S. Eadburgae*, §17. Osbert recorded that Eadburh's remains were first moved from the churchyard into the church, to a place just outside the monastic choir, and then again to a resting-place beside the high altar of the church. The second translation, to the high altar, would have placed the saint's remains in a prestigious, but highly restricted space: accessible primarily to the nuns of Nunnaminster rather than the Winchester laity. Helen Foxhall Forbes has argued that the first translation, from the churchyard into the church, most likely occurred sometime after 1013 and not during the episcopate of Æthelwold as the *vita* claims, Foxhall Forbes, 'Squabbling Siblings: Gender and Monastic Life in Late Anglo-Saxon Winchester,' *Gender & History*, 23.3 (2011), p. 665.
[82] Goseclin, *Vita Wulfhildae*, §16-17.
[83] Barking's first abbess, Æthelburh, was widely venerated across the network of prominent male and female monastic houses in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Æthelburh's sanctity had long been attested and remained popular since the *HE*: she appears in the Old English Marytyrology, two tenth-century calendars (Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS 150 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 579), and four eleventh-century calendars

Æthelburh's underscored the new saint's significance to the community's history and identity. Wulfhild's translation also placed Barking within the tradition set a generation earlier by the royal nunneries, these houses had translated and promoted the sanctity of beloved royal members, patrons, and founders. The three holy abbesses adorning Barking's church reveal a community seeking to craft an institutional memory and identity which was grounded in its most beloved and important leaders. It placed the contemporary community emphatically amongst the ranks of its peers at Shaftesbury, Wilton, Romsey, and Nunnaminster.

Conclusion

The communal histories integrated into the cults of the nunneries' founders, members, and leaders reveal that these houses for women sought to position themselves amongst their male counterparts in a larger scheme of monastic history and exceptionalism. As it has been demonstrated, the rhetoric of monastic sanctity and exceptionalism was firmly rooted in the individual and communal purity of a disciplined congregation. Through the practice of the monastic life, the individual was transformed into a companion of the divine host, a living saint. This transformation required sustained commitment to chastity and obedience, a feat of individual sacrifice akin to a martyr's persecution. Observing the *Regula Benedicti* facilitated this transformation, however, there were many ways to be Benedictine in the tenth century and applying a strict understanding of Benedictinism obscures the important contributions

(Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.v.32; London, BL, Cotton MS Nero A.ii; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 422; London, BL, Cotton MS Vitellius A.xii). She shares a name with another early Anglo-Saxon saint, making it difficult to determine whether the 'Æthelburgae' recorded in several eleventh-century litanies refers to the saint of Barking or of Kent. In consideration of the varying fortunes of Barking from its foundation to its revival in the mid-tenth century, it appears that Æthelburh's cult operated independently of community.

which many monastic congregations made to a wide-ranging network of religious houses. Romsey and the Nunnaminster appear to have adopted the *Regula Benedicti*, and perhaps even the *Regularis Concordia*'s version of it, but this does not mean that they operated within an inner circle of reformed Benedictine communities while Shaftesbury, Wilton, and Barking stood on its peripheries. On the contrary, each of these houses made powerful claims to the essential and transformative monastic virtues of chastity and obedience. The saints of Wilton, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking were unequivocally *monastic* saints: virgins who had offered themselves as sacrifices to holy monastic observance. Shaftesbury's saints, Ælfgifu and Edward Martyr, while not monastic in life were framed with the virtues of monastic sanctity, the indisputable success of their cults indicating that this framework succeeded in securing a prominent place for Shaftesbury in the religious landscape of the later tenth and early eleventh centuries. Whether relatively new foundations or ancient houses, the nunneries demonstrated that they were congregations of exceptional monastic virtue and thus the rival of any 'reformed' male house. They created and sustained important new cults whereas many of their male counterparts sought to revive ancient ones. The liturgical evidence for the period, the majority of which was produced by and for male houses, reveals that the nunneries' saints were quickly acknowledged and integrated into programmes of veneration in houses across the kingdom. These new cults operated alongside ancient ones and destabilise the concept of a centralised top-down reform – monastic sanctity was the not the exclusive tool of a tiny set of male houses.

Conclusion

This project originated with a simple question: why was there a proliferation of saint-making in England in the mid-to-late tenth century? New saints, ancient saints, universal saints, obscure saints were venerated with striking vigour. Litanies, calendars, prayerbooks, hagiographical collections in both Latin and the vernacular attest to a remarkable and devoted interest in the saints of Christian history. The answer to this proliferation of sanctity lies with the most enthusiastic custodians of saint cults in this period: male and female monastic communities. In order to understand the saint-making of the later tenth century, one has to understand the monastic context in which it occurred. The remarkable interest in creating and promoting cults coincided with a period of increased foundation and re-foundation of many prominent monastic houses, both new and ancient. Cults provided a focus for new communities, a mechanism to establish themselves as autonomous entities with distinctive identities and histories. Over the course of the later tenth century and into the early eleventh, the cults of these new communities eclipsed those of established houses and monastic congregations came to be seen as the sole legitimate caretakers of the saints. The reasons for these developments are many, but this thesis has proposed that the crucial factor in the intertwining of monasticism and sanctity in this period was the re-formation – or reconceptualization – of monastic life. Two generations of reformers elevated 'monk' to an exceptional status, a new order in the divine hierarchy, and ultimately placed sanctity into the hands of 'reformed' houses, i.e. those houses which cultivated a pure and disciplined life.

The 'Benedictine Reform' of the tenth century did not mark the widespread adoption of the *Regularis Concordia*, though perhaps it did begin a movement towards the Benedictine cursus. These are not the best measures with which to understand the impact of 'reform' on monastic life in the later tenth century. The *Regularis Concordia* articulated a vision of monastic exceptionalism that rested upon the principle that monastic life, if practised correctly, sanctified individuals and communities. The reform of monastic life that it proposed was not limited to adherence to a particular Rule, rather it urged a cleansing that would re-form men and women into true images of god. The ideology of reform monasticism was constructed through various media, including historical writing, charters, prescriptive literature, and hagiography. Its dissemination represents a far more profound measure with which to assess monastic life in the later tenth and early eleventh century. Whether the reformers' intention or not, this ideology conferred an extraordinary spiritual agency to individual monastic houses. Houses that could demonstrate a pure and disciplined life, a community re-formed into a holy state, effectively presented themselves as an elect group, distinct and superior to other competing forms of religious life. The houses that appear to have successfully capitalised upon the ideology of reform monasticism include monasteries and nunneries both proximal and distant from Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishops Dunstan and Oswald's spheres of influence. This prompts a new, inclusive understanding of 'Benedictine Reform' that highlights the striking success of individual houses rather than that of three bishops.

The veneration of the saints, both in daily monastic practice and in prominent cults, played an integral role in the construction and adoption of reform monasticism in the later tenth and early eleventh centuries. Chapter 1 revealed how the veneration of saints was embedded in almost every aspect of monastic life, at both the communal and individual level.

The intimate relationship between saints and monastic congregations constructed by this veneration provided the essential means to distinguish and elevate monasticism from other forms of religious life. Ritual encounters with the saints occurred on a daily basis as a community performed the Divine Office, litanies of saints were chanted at the close of Prime, Terce, Vespers, and Vigils and before the celebration of the mass at Compline. The daily meeting of Chapter concluded with a reading from a martyrology and individual monks and nuns could also perform further supplementary offices to the saints or invoke them in private prayer. The extant calendars from the period reveal substantial *sanctorale* cycles of feasts, the celebration of which required special readings (including both sermons and hagiographies), antiphons and responsories, and, for certain saints, masses. This omnipresence had a profound effect: the saints inhabited monastic space on both a physical and conceptual level. The intimate union between earthly monastic communities and the divine community of the saints had important consequences for members of a monastic congregation. In order for the Divine Office to effectively join earthly and divine in monastic space, individual members of the congregation had to commit to and cultivate appropriate bodily and spiritual purity. In pursuit of this goal, the saints acted as models for the individual monk or nun. Significantly, complete imitation of the saints produced a new state of being in the individual – the monk or nun was transformed into a fit member of the unified earthly and divine community. At a communal level, the veneration of the saints, and the union that it produced, served an important historical function: it integrated the monastic congregation into the unfolding of Christian history and situated the congregation in a larger Christian community. The saints provided fertile ground for constructing a specifically monastic identity and through their veneration monastic congregations revealed themselves to be the most appropriate custodians of saint cults.

The transformative nature of monastic practice formed the essential basis upon which the reformers, Bishop Æthelwold and Ælfric of Eynsham most notably, constructed an ideology of reform monasticism. Chapter 2 investigated how these men crafted an ideology that promoted monastic exceptionalism in their historical writing, prescriptive literature, and, in the case of Ælfric, hagiographical writing. In the *Regularis Concordia*, *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, and the New Minster Foundation Charter, Æthelwold presented monasticism as the most pure and exemplary mode of religious life. Monks, according to Æthelwold, functioned as elect members of a divine order because their regular life transformed them into exceptionally holy individuals. Æthelwold supported this vision of monastic exceptionalism by supplying an apostolic heritage for monasticism and emphasising its sacrificial character. Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, further developed Æthelwold's vision by presenting monasticism as the latest manifestation of martyrdom in Christian history. Significantly, Ælfric promoted his interpretation of monastic exceptionalism through a hagiographical collection, the *Lives of Saints*, in which the saints functioned as the demonstration of monastic superiority. The ideology constructed by these two men effectively sanctified monastic practice and its adherents, monks and nuns became living saints as sanctity and monastic virtue were intimately intertwined. Ultimately, this ideology elevated a mode of religious life rather than a particular person, place, or community – a congregation could claim to be 're-formed' by demonstrating its adherence to the virtues of chastity and obedience.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 explored the various means by which a diverse group of houses capitalised on the agency conferred by the ideology of reform monasticism. Chapter 3 examined how the reformers' own houses strategically adopted the ideology. The male houses in Winchester, the congregation at Ramsey, and the two Canterbury houses, Christ Church

and St. Augustine's, strategically promoted themselves as exceptional congregations through the cults of the reformers. Wulfstan of Winchester and Byrhtferth of Ramsey composed substantial hagiographies of Bishop Æthelwold and Archbishop Oswald, respectively, that presented the monks' houses as the fulfillment of these bishops' ideologies. Both authors did so at critical junctures for their communities: the deaths of their leaders, rival claims to their in-house cults, and political instability engendered by renewed Scandinavian invasion. Roughly a decade or two after these authors promoted the sanctity of their founding bishops, the two Canterbury houses also faced an existential crisis: with their archbishop recently murdered and suffering from significant recent losses to their endowments, the newly monastic community at Christ Church and the ancient one at St. Augustine's needed to reassert their significance as centres of spiritual authority. Both houses integrated narratives of clerical expulsion and monastic reform into their institutional histories, albeit to different effect. At Christ Church these narratives, key features of the ideology of reform monasticism, were used to create an institutional history that asserted the community's primacy in the English Church, whereas St. Augustine's promoted a re-formed identity through its cults of ancient leaders of the English church. The cult of the reformers and cult of reform itself re-orient the success of the 'Benedictine Reform' according to the function of reform monasticism in the hands of individual congregations.

By elevating the monastic life, the ideology of reform monasticism supported new houses seeking to firmly embed themselves in a dynamic religious landscape. Not only did it confer spiritual authority to these houses, it also provided a template for constructing a communal identity and history. Chapter 4 explored this consequence of the ideology at the 'revived' houses of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney and the new monastic foundation at Bury St. Edmunds. These houses faced a particular challenge as new congregations established in

ancient foundations. In the memorialisation of the reform, the refoundation of these houses represented the revival of a golden age for the English Church; however, this chapter questioned whether these houses memorialised themselves according to this interpretation of reform. Like any new congregation, the monks that repopulated these houses needed to construct an identity and communal history but unlike completely new congregations they had established traditions with which to contend. The tenth- and early eleventh-century monks of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney represented themselves in continuity with their ancient foundations through the narrative of monastic history constructed by the tenth-century reformers. Significantly, their in-house cults *and* their refoundation functioned as the essential continuity between ancient and new congregations. At Ely and Thorney, the memory of Bishop Æthelwold was interwoven into their cults of ancient saints. The bishop's memory, and his role in the houses' refoundation, functioned as the link between new communities and ancient saints. In contrast, Peterborough sought to establish its continuity with its ancient roots without the memorialisation of its refoundation. Its ancient cults were promoted as proof of the congregation's antiquity and continuous history. The case of Bury St Edmunds reveals that an identity grounded in 'reform' and 'revival' did not require a direct connection to Bishop Æthelwold or Oswald. The ideology of reform monasticism was not exclusive to these bishops' foundations – it supported the construction of monastic identity and authority writ large.

Chapter 5 examined a group of houses traditionally considered to have been excluded from the 'Benedictine Reform': the royal nunneries of Southern England. The new foundations of Shaftesbury, Wilton, Nunnaminster, and Romsey – all founded around the turn of the tenth century – as well as Barking, the only nunnery with a continuous history since its eighth-century foundation, each developed important saint cults which rivalled those

of their male counterparts. Significantly, these houses created and sustained important new cults according to the framework of monastic sanctity established by the ideology of reform monasticism. In contrast to the 'new' saints venerated at Winchester, Canterbury, or Bury (i.e. bishops or kings), the saints of Wilton, Romsey, Nunnaminster, and Barking were unequivocally *monastic* saints. The saints of these houses had been former nuns or abbesses of the communities and their veneration marked an achievement unmatched by many prominent male houses: the posthumous sanctification of exceptional members of the new congregation. Shaftesbury's saints, a queen and martyred king, were framed with the virtues of monastic sanctity and the success of their cults secured a prominent place for the house in the religious landscape of the later tenth and early eleventh centuries. In their own ways, each nunnery integrated a narrative of tenth-century institutional change into the cults of their founders and monastic women. However, rather than deploying the standard features of decline, expulsion, and revival that characterised the histories constructed by male re-formed houses, the nunneries created histories that emphasised royal connections and the house's exceptional communal purity. The liturgical evidence for the period, the majority of which was produced by and for male houses, reveals the striking success of the nunneries' cults: their 'new' saints were rapidly acknowledged and incorporated into programmes of veneration in houses across the kingdom. Both the liturgical evidence and the hagiographies produced for the nunneries' cults reveal that these communities successfully capitalised upon the agency conferred by the ideology of reform monasticism – destabilising the model of a centralised top-down reform that affected only the houses under the direct control of one of the three reformers. The ideology of reform monasticism elevated a mode of religious life, it conferred agency to those monastic congregations who could represent themselves as exceptional, holy individuals, companions to the saints, and, crucially, this applied to both monks *and* nuns.

The success of the 'Benedictine Reform,' then, should be understood in the terms of its ideological framework. The monasteries and nunneries studied in this thesis form a significant part of a group of houses that stands in sharp relief in the religious landscape of the later tenth and early eleventh century. These houses continued to be supported by royalty and prominent laymen and women even as many other monastic settlements contracted or were absorbed into secular public life as royal and noble residences, land-management centres, fortresses, and towns.[1] From the mid-ninth century through to the late eleventh, places which had begun the period as important and wealthy minsters ended it as secular sites with only a residually important church testifying to the minster's former presence. In addition, the eleventh century saw the rise of a bureaucracy of royal clerks, the increasing importance of local churches, and the diversification of religious life for women.[2] As many houses lost their centrality in the English landscape over the course of eleventh century, the re-formed and Benedictine houses remained fixed. While the ideology of reform monasticism elevated the religious order as a whole, only those houses which capitalised on its principles gained an exceptional status. As the evidence examined in this thesis demonstrates, 'capitalising' on the principles of reform monasticism entailed a sustained effort across various media. The tenth-century material preserved in twelfth-century chronicles, for example, reveals that many houses were in a continual process of reaffirming their

[1] Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 320-338.
[2] For the increasing influence of royal clerks see Gransden, 'Traditionalism and Continuity,' and Frank Barlow, *The English Church, 1000 – 1066: a history of the later Anglo-Saxon Church* 2nd ed. (London, 1979) and idem, *The English Church, 1066-1154: a history of the Anglo-Norman Church* (London, 1979), for this development in Cnut's reign in particular see Timothy Bolton, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the consolidation of power in Northern Europe in the early eleventh century* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 77-106. Blair has traced the development and increasing importance of local parish churches eleventh century England, see *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 368-425. Recently, Julia Barrow has provided a comprehensive study of the life cycle of clerics in the central middle ages, see *The Clergy in the Medieval World: secular clerics, their families and careers in North-Western Europe c. 800 – 1200* (Cambridge, 2015). Sarah Foot revealed that the decline in female monasticism in this period was due to the increasing diversification of religious life for women in this period in *Veiled Women*, vol. I.

exceptionality. The fact that the houses returned again and again to the rhetoric and material of the tenth century indicates the striking longevity of its ideology. The enduring success of 'reform' texts like Ælfric of Eynsham's *Lives of Saints* further reveals that monastic exceptionalism retained a powerful cultural cachet through the blended language of monasticism and sanctity over the course of the eleventh century.

The lasting significance of a powerful concept of monastic superiority necessitates a new model for the history of monasticism beyond the Benedictine Reform of the tenth century. In contrast to the dynamism of the Benedictine Reform, the period leading up to the Conquest and the reforms of the 1070s has been characterised as one of monastic quiescence, stagnation, decay, and erosion. The established model for monasticism in the century between 970 and 1070 emphasises a shift from prominence towards an increased localism: the great monasteries of the reform, it is argued, lost their prominence in a diversifying religious landscape, no longer a cohesive and powerful network the Benedictine houses of Southern England splintered into smaller spheres of local influence.[3] However, the continuous appeal to the rhetoric of reform throughout the eleventh century, whether by rulers like Cnut or by the re-formed houses themselves, and interest in developing prominent cults suggests that the congregations who had capitalised upon reform did not passively rest upon their laurels. As the religious landscape diversified, these houses had to secure their existence by actively negotiating a place in this dynamic environment.

A final example highlights the profound reach of the ideology of reform monasticism in early medieval England and, ultimately, uncovers new avenues of inquiry. The revival of monasticism in Northumbria and its significance to the consolidation of royal authority in

[3] Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154*, p. 179; Gransden, 'Traditionalism and Continuity,' p. 187; Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 354-5; Clayton, 'Centralism and Uniformity,' pp. 99-101.

William the Conqueror's reign reveals that 'reform monasticism' continued to confer a powerful authority both to new congregations and new English rulers across the Conquest. The revival of monasticism in Northumbria occurred in the 1070s and 1080s against the backdrop of recently suppressed rebellion, the murder of a bishop, and a wave of new monastic foundation throughout the kingdom. The new congregations established at ancient sites like Jarrow, Whitby, and Durham, like many of the tenth-century communities investigated in this thesis, faced the challenges of justifying their existence, representing continuity with their ancient roots, and asserting their communal authority. The monks at Durham, at least, turned to the ideology of reform to meet these challenges.

Immediately following the Conquest and the rebellions of the 1070s, episcopal and abbatial vacancies at established sites were filled by Norman men and over the course of the Conqueror's reign thirty-four new houses were established.[4] Orderic Vitalis represented this wave of foundation and strategic replacement as the consequence of English laxity, he recorded that William I 'appointed abbots of known virtue to the English monasteries, so that by their zeal and discipline monasticism, which for a time has been lax and faltering, revived and was restored to its former strength.'[5] Nonetheless, Norman leadership, according to Vitalis, did not immediately usher in a period of peace and prosperity for all monastic houses – many communities faced oppression and the depredation of their endowment.[6] Even

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[4] While most new monastic houses, whether independent or dependent, following the Conquest were founded in Henry I's reign, Cownie notes that new foundations were established fairly regularly during the Conqueror's reign: a total of 34 new houses were founded in the period from 1066-1087. These new foundations included 9 independent houses, 6 dependent houses, 18 alien priories established by either Cluniacs or Cistercians, and 1 nunnery, Emma Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England, 1066 – 1135* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 187-9.
[5] Orderic Vitalis, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. IV, p. 238-9: 'Probatas uirtute personas coenobiis Angliæ præfecit, quorum studio et rigore monachatus qui iam aliquantulum tepuerat reuixit et qui defecisse uidebatur ad pristinum robur surrexit.'
[6] Vitalis described how certain churchmen, motivated by worldly ambition and greed, pandered to the king and solicited bribes, consisting of bishoprics and abbeys, from laymen in order to further the laymen's causes. A consequence of this rapacity by new leadership was that 'Venerable abbots, terrified the threats of lay lords, were driven from their cures unjustly, without a hearing in any synod: and in their place hirelings, tyrants rather than monks, were intruded against the decrees of canon law'; 'Prisci abates sæcularis comminatione potestatis

William of Malmesbury, generally more sympathetic to Norman leadership, acknowledged that new appointees had a tendency to encroach upon the wealth of their new communities.[7] In addition, monastic houses in England also faced competition with new houses dependent upon powerful Norman monasteries which were established with increasing rapidity over the course of the successive reigns of William I, II, and Henry I.[8] Against this backdrop, in the late 1070s a monk of Winchcombe, Aldwin, along with two companions from Evesham travelled to the north of England to revive the ancient monastic foundation of Jarrow, a journey which marked the revival of monasticism in Northumbria and which ultimately resulted in the establishment of a monastic community at Durham.[9]

The earliest two texts to commemorate this mission reveal an intriguing use of the standard elements of reform monasticism. The precise relationship between Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de exordio* and the *Regnante apud Northanymbros* has been the matter of some debate. The *Regnante*, written in a hand of the second quarter of the twelfth century, occurs before the preface of the *Libellus de exordio* in one of the latter's earliest manuscript versions.[10]

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terrebantur, et sine sinodali discussion de sedibus suis iniuste fugabantur pro quibus stipendarii non monachi sed tiranni contra sanctorum scita canonum intrudebantur,' *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. IV, pp. 268-71.

[7] The appointment of Bishop Walkelin offers a notable example: William recorded that despite his praiseworthy care of the monks of Winchester 'there is a single point, and a very important one, where he did wrong: he took up to 300 pounds' worth of land from the monks and applied them to his own purposes and those of his successors'; 'Unum est permaximum quo peccauit, quod, ad trecentas libratas terrae monachis auferens, suis et successorum usibus implicuit,' *GP*, Bk II §77.2.

[8] See Table 2 in Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 187.

[9] One of the earliest texts to commemorate this mission, Symeon of Durham's, framed the repopulation of Jarrow, Whitby, and other ancient northern houses as an effort to restore a golden age of monasticism. According to Symeon, Bede's *HE* inspired the monks to revive the 'numerous choirs of monks and many hosts of saints' which had distinguished Northumbria in Bede's day, see Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie*, ed. and trans. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), III. 21, p. 200. Based upon internal evidence in the *Libellus de exordio*, Rollason argued that Aldwin's arrival in Northumbria probably occurred between March 1073 and March 1074, see p. 201 n. 75. For a recent analysis of the revival and development of monasticism in the region see Janet Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069 – 1215* (Cambridge, 1999). Anne Dawtry has stressed the fusion of Anglo-Saxon and Norman elements in this revival, arguing that it should be distinguished from the influence of Worcester and Evesham, see Dawtry, 'The Benedictine revival in the north: the last bulwark of Anglo-Saxon monasticism?' *Studies in Church History* 18 (1982).

[10] See Rollason, 'Introduction,' pp. xvii – xxii in *Libellus de Exordio* for a discussion of the manuscript, Durham, University Library, Cosin V.II.6, esp. xx-xi.

It offers a condensed history of monasticism in Northumbria from its origins in the reign of King Oswald up to the reinstatement of monks at Durham in 1083. Scholars remain divided over whether the *Regnante* constituted a source for the *Libellus* or whether it was written subsequently as a summary of that text.[11] At the heart of this debate rests the 'problem' of the anti-clerical rhetoric in the *Regnante*: while Symeon appears to have been fairly sympathetic towards the canons of Durham who immediately preceded the monks established by William of St Carilef in 1083,[12] the *Regnante* takes a harsh and hostile view of the canons and unequivocally supports a monastic cause. Significantly, the anti-clerical rhetoric in the *Regnante* forms part of a larger and now-familiar narrative of monastic history: a period of monastic excellence in Northumbria, the *Regnante* recorded, was abruptly brought to an end through viking attack, which introduced a long period of decline marked by clerical laxity and carnality. The re-introduction of monks to Durham, and to the region more broadly, marked a return to a former purity and proper service, and, importantly, following this re-form the monastic congregation was intimately bound to the service of St. Cuthbert's cult.[13] This history of monastic superiority would have provided the new congregation of monks at Durham with

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[11] Bernard Meehan has suggested that the 'Regnante' was composed in the last years of the eleventh century and provided a source for the *Libellus* while Meryl Foster has argued that it was a composition of the second quarter of the twelfth century when the Durham monks sent a representative to Rome, see Meehan, 'Notes on the preliminary texts and continuations to Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de exordio*,' in D. Rollason (ed), *Symeon of Durham: Historian of Durham and the North* (Stamford, 1998), pp. 130-2 and Foster, 'Custodians of St Cuthbert: the Durham monks' views of their predecessors 1083 – c. 1200,' in D. Rollason (ed), *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093-1193* (Woodbridge, 1994) pp. 61-2. David Rollason has not discounted the possibility that its composition preceded that of the *Libellus* but has preferred the hypothesis that it was composed as a summary text subsequently, see Rollason, 'Introduction,' *Libellus de exordio*, pp. lxvi-lxvii.

[12] Rollason, 'Introduction, *Libellus de exordio*, p. lxvi.

[13] 'Regnante apud Northanymbros,' in Appendix A, *Libellus de exordio*, ed. Rollason, p.264: 'For he [i.e. William of St Carilef] summoned from the aforementioned places the monks (who were now numerous, for the Holy Spirit had been gathering together the sons of God who had previously been dispersed) and transferred them to Durham, where, as they bore witness (as was the custom of their way of life) to their conversion and stability, he inseparably bound both them and their successors to the body of the blessed Cuthbert. Thus, he did not establish there a new order of monastic life, but rather he re-established an ancient one which God was renewing.' Sarah Foot has recently argued that William's support for St Cuthbert's cult was strategically undertaken in order to place William within a long and illustrious tradition of royal support for the saint, see Foot, 'Kings, Saints and Conquests,' in L. Ashe and E. J. Ward, *Conquests in Eleventh-Century England: 1016, 1066* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp. 144-51.

a distinctive history and justification for their existence – just as the monks of the Old Minster replaced corrupt clerics and thereby restored the health of the cathedral, so too did the new monks of Durham purify and re-form an ancient site of sanctity.

The *Regnante* also included another important feature of reform monasticism: royal involvement. It recorded that William I encouraged Bishop William of St Carilef to seek papal support for the re-introduction of monks and that once this had been received the king enthusiastically endorsed Bishop William's plans. Notably, the author of the *Regnante* cast William I and Bishop William's relationship in the mould of the seventh-century founders of Durham, King Oswald and Bishop Aidan.[14] The emphasis in the *Regnante* on the importance of royal support for monastic foundation highlighted the particular relationship between the king and monasticism in England. In their ideology of reform monasticism, the tenth-century reformers had created a special role for the monarch: the king was responsible for the rectitude of monastic practice across his kingdom. This role, codified in the *Regularis Concordia*, also required that royal consent support the election of abbots or abbesses, placing the king and queen not only in the role of defenders but also in that of spiritual parents to monastic communities.[15] The *Regularis Concordia* provided a framework for royal piety which went beyond general munificence towards monastic communities: a good king was personally responsible for the health of monastic life in his kingdom, thus laxity in monastic praxis

[14] 'Regnante apud Northanymbros,' pp. 260-5: '[Walcher], reading again the *History of the English* and the *Life of St Cuthbert*, both composed by the venerable Bede, he discovered that a congregation of monks, established in this church by its first bishop, Aidan, and by King Oswald (as we related earlier on) had served God before St Cuthbert's time as bishop, [...]. [...] As he was considering how to restore the former service of God in his Church, he prayed to God that He might go before him in favouring his actions and bestow His help on him. [...] He was succeeded as bishop by William, a man (as all who knew him attest) of great prudence and excellent counsel, who was sorrowed that the place was destitute of ecclesiastical and monastic observance. He too considered in his mind the ancient writings and found that this church had originally be founded and completed by monks, that is by Aidan, who was both monk and bishop [...].'

[15] *RC*, §9: 'Prefato equidem synodali conciliabulo hoc adtendendum magnopere cuncti decreuerunt, ut abbatum ac abbatissarum electio cum regis consensus et consilio sancta regule ageretur documento.'

indicated the failure of a specifically royal duty. Bishop Æthelwold further developed this model of good kingship in *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*, in this text Æthelwold presented reform as the incontrovertible proof of royal responsibility towards monastic life.[16] With the king uniquely responsible for his monastic subjects, who were presented as living saints, the royal duty of care towards these subjects was imbued with a sacral quality. Thus, in the *Regnante*, William's support for the re-introduction of monks at Durham completed not only the standard narrative of reform monasticism (decline, clerical expulsion, reform through monastic congregation) it also placed the new king in a particularly *English* tradition of rulership.

This representation of William I's support for monastic life prompts a new reading of his patronage of English monastic houses. Over the course of his reign, William supported monastic houses throughout his kingdom, including the troublesome Northern and East Anglian regions, in a pattern remarkably similar to his predecessors. He appears to have been particularly apt to confirm the endowment and grants of land made by Edward the Confessor. However, it is also apparent that he strategically supported houses with a distinctive tradition of exemplary monastic practice and royal support.[17] William's support for these houses, as well as ancient and neglected monastic sites, demonstrates his commitment to advancing a tangible connection between himself and earlier traditions.[18] St Peter's in Gloucester provides

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[16] Upon ascending the throne, the *EEM* recorded, Edgar recalled his spiritual beginning at Abingdon and sought to rectify his own life with true piety: 'After he had been amended himself he began zealously to set monasteries in order widely throughout his kingdom, and to set up the service of God. By the supporting Grace of God, it was performed thus: he availed himself continually of the counsel of his archbishop, Dunstan; through his admonition he constantly inquired about the salvation of his soul, and not that alone, but likewise about all the religion and welfare of his dominion. He cleansed holy places from all men's foulness, [...]. [...] and he established monks in the foremost places of all his dominion for the glorious service of the Saviour Christ,' *EEM*, pp. 149-50.

[17] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, pp. 187-9.

[18] It may also have been a strategic act of reconciliation following his order in 1070 that all goods deposited in monasteries for safekeeping by Englishmen should be confiscated and transferred to the royal treasury, for discussion of this order and its significance to the consolidation of William's authority in England see David Bates, *William the Conqueror* (New Haven, 2016), pp. 331-4.

a notable example: at the time of the Conquest, it was in an impoverished state, but by 1104 the abbey's landed wealth had increased five-fold due in large part to William's active and generous promotion.[19] Emma Cownie has argued that William sought to promote St Peter's in Gloucester because of its history as a traditional site for the early English royal court and the crown-wearing ceremonies of Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas. Patronage of this particularly neglected site emphasised William's active interest in advancing a tangible link with previous English kings.[20] I would argue that it also fit squarely within the tenth-century tradition of monastic revival in which the rejuvenation of neglected ancient sites functioned as a specifically royal responsibility.

William's support for Bury St Edmunds provides another illuminating example. Herman's *Miraculis Edmundi* commemorated the Conqueror as a generous patron of the community and as an important defender of the house's autonomy. In Herman's account of the struggle between Abbot Baldwin and Bishop Herfast over Bury's independence, the monk of Bury carefully noted William's support for Baldwin's case.[21] In his record of the Easter trial in 1081, at which Bishop Herfast and Abbot Baldwin presented their cases before the king and other English magnates, Herman emphasised that the magnates adjudicating the matter were compelled by Baldwin's case because it claimed the authority of previous kings:

> [...] they adopted the topic of argument known as 'from authority,' recounting God's great concern for the martyr's abbey, and the concern of kings who should carry weight on account of their authority, that the famous martyr and his resting place should possess commensurate liberty. Nor was it right, they

[19] For a full discussion and analysis of St Peter's, Gloucester, during the reigns of William I through to Henry I, see Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, pp. 54-7. The surviving diplomas which can be confidently ascribed to William's reign and which demonstrate his support for the abbey can be found in Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normanorum*, nos. 153, 154, and 157.
[20] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 57. Cownie noted that the possessions of the other two sites of crown-wearing ceremonies, Winchester and Westminster, were each worth at least six times those of Gloucester's, making William's support for St Peter's an even more visible demonstration.
[21] See H.E.J. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk, and Archbishop* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 164-7 for a discussion of Archbishop Lanfranc's role in this dispute, in particular his negotiation of secular and ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

> said, for the worthy foundation laid over many years by devout kings to be shaken.[22]

Herman recorded that William enthusiastically supported the judgement in favour of Baldwin, a rhetorical move that was certainly in the best interest of Bury itself. Nonetheless, it should not be discounted that William actually did support Baldwin's case. In a writ produced in 1081, William confirmed his verdict in favour of Baldwin and ordered that neither Bishop Herfast nor his successors make any further claims upon Bury.[23] In addition to supporting the judgement in favour of Baldwin, Herman also noted that William acted in accordance within the tradition of royal patronage towards the house. The king, according to Herman, offered support for a new church at Bury and was portrayed 'as Father Baldwin's friend.'[24] Bury's record and the surviving writ reveal that William, like his predecessors Cnut and Edward, supported the independence and purity a prominent re-formed house. It should also be noted that his visible support for disciplined monastic praxis extended beyond England: William presided over a council in Normandy in 1074 at which the *Regula Benedicti* was made obligatory for all monastic houses in the duchy.[25]

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[22] Herman, *Miraculis Edmundi*, §27: 'locus sumitur controuersie qui dicitur ab auctoritate, commemorando abbatiam martyris Eadmundi quante Deo fuerit cure, et eis regibus quorum auctoritas grauissima debuit esse, quo tantus martyr suusque locus tanta potiretur libertate. Nec infringi fore licitum deuotorum regum necnon plurium annorum bonum stabilimentum, potius in sancta Dei ecclesie ratum constare debere, quicquid boni Deo digni antecessores deposuere.'

[23] Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normanorum*, no. 40. A lengthier version of this writ was prepared at Bury in both Latin and Old English which explicitly placed William in the tradition of previous royal patrons to the house; however, this longer narrative version appears to have been prepared for but never ratified by the Conqueror, Bates, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normanorum*, no. 39.

[24] Herman, *Miraculis Edmundi*, §39: 'The glorious William I, king of the English, suggested, recommended, and finally commanded that another [church] should be built, promising his royal sponsorship and faithfully offering his backing, as Father Baldwin's friend'; 'a gloriossimi regis Anglorum Willelmi primi suasu, monitu, iussu est alia construe, promittendo se regaliter in hoc profuturum, et ut amicum patris Baldwini fideliter adiuturum.'

[25] J. D. Mansi (ed), *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collection*, editio novissima, vol. 20 (Paris, 1901-1927), col. 399, §VII: 'Ut regula Benedicti in utroque sexu incommutabiliter observetur, ut neque in vigiliis, neque in jejuniis, sive indumentis ab eius institutionibus dissideant.'

William's patronage of monasticism throughout his new kingdom, and particularly at sites imbued with ancient importance, indicates that the Conqueror was sensitive not only to the cultural significance of these sites, but also to an ideal of English rulership. His demonstrable support for the cults of English saints and their monastic custodians, Bury/Edmund and Durham/Cuthbert most notably, prompts further questions about the status of English saints in Anglo-Norman England. The debate about whether pragmatism, outright disdain, or acceptance characterised Norman attitudes to English saints can perhaps be recast. In consideration of the longevity of reform monasticism and its powerful intertwining of monasticism and sanctity, the debate about the status of English saints that occurred particularly at Canterbury during Lanfranc's archiepiscopacy was perhaps in reality a debate about the status of monasticism in the new Anglo-Norman Church.

The 'Benedictine Reform' of the tenth century established a powerful ideology of monastic superiority, the success of this ideology was tied not to that of the prominent bishops who constructed it but rather to the strategic endeavours of a diverse group of houses. The male and female monastic communities who capitalised upon its rhetoric and the spiritual authority it conferred succeeded so completely at creating a memory of reform that centuries of scholarship viewed monastic life in the period monolithically. This view has been dismantled, the 'Benedictine Reform' has necessarily been de-centred and its impact complicated. This thesis, however, has proposed one caveat: rather than measuring the success of the reform by the widespread adoption of one customary, the true measure of its 'success' lies rather in the enduring framework for monastic history and exceptionalism that it provided to many new congregations from the late tenth through to the late eleventh century. According to the ideology of reform monasticism, these new congregations re-formed themselves into true images of god and lived, incredibly, as saints.

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