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Heavenly Bodies: Christina *Mirabilis*, Purgatorial Piety, and Care Between the Living and the Dead in the Hagiographies and *Exempla* of Thomas of Cantimpré

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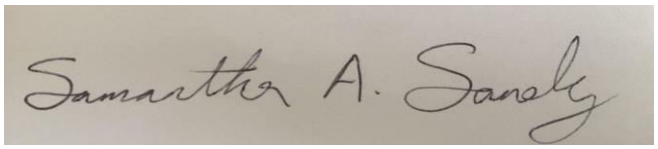

Samantha A. Sandy

Summary

This thesis examines the life of the twice-resurrected Christina of St. Trond (1150–1224) within the hagiographical and educational *corpus* of Dominican author, Thomas of Cantimpré (1201–1272). Thomas utilised Christina to encourage reciprocal relationships between the living and the purgatorial dead, as mediated through the Church, by crafting her *vita* around recognisable tropes while also depicting a unique and striking example of purgatorial care. This thesis argues that Thomas framed this purgatorial care, not only as important on a personal level, but a fundamental element of faith itself. This thesis is divided into three chapters, each focusing on a different interaction with the dead: the holy dead, the personal "beloved" dead, and the dangerous dead, who returned as revenants or ghosts.

The first chapter focuses on the holy dead, comparing Christina to other saints in Thomas's *hagiographies* as well as the broader Liégeoise corpus, particularly within the Cistercian imagery of the bridal ascent of the soul. Christina lacks the bridal imagery and external visions of the other *mulieres religiosae*, indicative of the spiritual perfection she had already attained. Her advanced spiritual perfection is further reflected in her difficulties interacting with a fallen world compared to her fellow female saints. As a Dominican author looking to reinvigorate engagement with the Church through new means of piety and, as Dyan Elliott has argued, a new cult of saints, Thomas would have found this compelling: Christina represented a "living relic," a once-dead woman, who went forth into her community and proactively strove on their behalves.

The second chapter compares how Thomas and his contemporaries, such as Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach, among others, depicted death and advocated for purgatorial care. Utilising the *Sermones vulgares* and the *Dialogus miraculorum*, as well as Thomas's *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*, the chapter discusses how Thomas approached these purgatorial suffrages compared to his contemporaries. Thomas's acts of purgatorial suffrage are centred around the intercession of women, most notably lay women and unaffiliated religious women, like Christina, compared to his contemporaries, particularly his fellow Dominicans like Humbert de Romans or Stephen of Bourbon. The acts of weeping and holding vigil only appear in Thomas's recommendations, and it is here where the hand of the holy women of Liège, particularly Christina, whose ministry was characterised by her wailing and vigils over the dead and dying, can best be seen. This chapter looks particularly at the role

of tears, and the encouragement to widen one's focus from the grief of losing a loved one to seeing and trusting in the full glory of God. Thomas focused on the roles of women, particularly mothers and widows, in carrying out these acts. Christina typified this perfectly for Thomas, setting the example for his most mature discussion of purgatorial care. It also examines the marriage of purgatorial piety to political power and orthodoxy in Thomas's adaptation of the Cluniac poem, the *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus*, and how that relationship remained at the core of Thomas's advocacy against heterodox belief.

Finally, the last chapter focuses on interactions with violent revenants, comparing Thomas's depictions of the undead to those found in both the previously mentioned *exempla* collection, as well as those of Walter Map in the *De nugis curialium* and William of Newburgh's *rumrum Anglicarum.* Christina's *vita* often evokes discussions of the undead or macabre: this chapter argues that Thomas deliberately kept these elements in place only to have Christina subvert them through the compassionate, selfless nature of her ministry. Rather than spreading pestilence and death, Christina provided her community with redemption and a chance at eternal life. This chapter will also examine her alongside a female revenant found in Thomas's *Bonum universale de apibus*, Agnes, a Christian woman murdered by a Jewish man for proselytising to his wife. This chapter will explore how Thomas utilises physical proof and where, exactly, he challenges the reader to faith. Agnes does not feel her murder, though the signs are left on her body; likewise, despite being a walking example of a soul in purgatory and a mediatrix, Christina seldom, if ever, receives the same purgatorial visions that Thomas's other saints, as well as other Liégoises, do. In doing so, Thomas frames purgatorial suffrages as acts of faith, self-renewing acts of love done even without the confirming and familiar face or voice of a dead loved one.

In exploring Christina's life in the context of Thomas's other works, particularly his *exempla*, it is possible to better understand the role that women played in developing purgatorial piety, as well as their relationships with death and caregiving in their communities. It is also possible to see where the influence of the holy women of Liège spread, and which authors and religious orders they interacted with most closely. This thesis argues that Christina's ministry as a once-dead woman was uniquely effective (and deliberately portrayed as such by Thomas) and that her influence reached further within Thomas's later career than has been previously suggested. This thesis also suggests that, in not continuously providing tangible proofs of effective suffrage or purgatorial

timelines within Christina's *vita*, Thomas framed purgatorial devotion as a uniquely Christian act; one based in faith rather sight.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the insightful, patient, and gracious supervision of Ruth Mazo Karras. Thank you for challenging me, pushing me to go outside of my comfort zone, and your profound generosity with your time, whether in proofreading Latin translations or pandemic Zoom calls, I'm so profoundly grateful to you. Thank you for helping me to see this project through to the end. I would also like to thank my examiners, Alicia Spencer-Hall, Catherine Lawless, and Martine Cuypers for their insight, humour, and kindness during the *viva*. This project would be the poorer without their thoughtful comments and recommendations.

To my wonderful fiancé, Brian: thank you for keeping me sane and kind on the stressful days, and for making Ireland truly a home. I could not have done this without you. To my family: I am infinitely grateful to my parents, Mark and Kathleen Sandy, for their love and support. I also want to thank my grandparents, Pat and Jim Rogers, for loving and believing in me while I studied and applied for grad school, encouraging me to apply for my master's at Trinity to begin with. I miss you every single day, Grandma. I'm here because of your faith in me, and I'm so grateful. I love you.

I would be remiss not to thank Professor Stephen Cole: you're the one who started all this the second I agreed to a dual major in history. Thank you for changing my life and for awakening my love for this field. You inspired me as a teacher and have made my life far brighter as a friend.

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Dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, Richard and Virginia Sandy
And to my grandmother, Patricia Hughes Rogers (1943–2024)
St. Christina Mirabilis: Pray for us.

Abbreviations

AASS	Société des Bollandistes, ed., *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur vel a catholicis scriptoribus celebrantur*, 68 vols (Antwerp, Brussels, Paris, Tongerloo 1643–1940; 4th repr. Brussels: Impression Anastaltique Culture et Civilisation, 1965–1971).
BUA	Thomas of Cantimpré, *Bonum universale de apibus*, in Julia Burkhardt (trans. and ed.), in *Von Bienen Lernen das Bonum universale de apibus des Thomas von Cantimpré Als Gemeinschaftsentwurf: Analyse, edition, Übersetzung, kommentar*, (2 vols, Regensburg, 2020), i and ii.
CCHLM	Société des Bollandistes, ed., *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis, pars 1: Codices latini membranei*, 2 vols (Brussels, 1886–1889).
Conf.Eng	Augustine of Hippo, in Henry Chadwick (trans.), *Confessions*, (Oxford, 1991).
Conf.Lat	Augustine of Hippo, in C.H. Bruder (ed.), *S. Aurelii Augustini: confessiones, ad fidem codicum Lipsiensium et editionum antiquiorum recognitas*, (Leipzig, 1837).
CPM	Augustine of Hippo, in Joseph Zycha (ed.), *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, *De fide et symbolo, etc. Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 41, (Vienna, 1900), 619–660. 2 vols.

CPMEng	Augustine of Hippo *'De cura pro mortuis gerenda'* ed. by Boniface Ramsey, Raymond Canning, Robert Kennedy and trans. by Michael Woodward in *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century: Morality and Asceticism,* (New York, 2023).
DCD	Augustine of Hippo, *S. Aurelii Augustini: De Civitate Dei*, B. Dombart and A. Kalb, (2 vols, Leipzig, 1981 and 1993), i and ii.
DCDEng	*Saint Augustine: The City of God, Books VIII–XVI,* G.G. Walsh and G. Monahan (eds.) *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation 14* (Washington, D.C., 1951).
DNC/DNCEng	Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ed. M.R. James, C.N.L. Brooke, and R.A.B Mynors. Trans. M.R. James. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983) Latin and English version.
DM	*Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. by Joseph Strange, (2 vols, Cologne, 1851).
DMEng	Caesarius of Heisterbach. *Dialogus miraculorum.* ed. S.H. Essen, B. C. Swinton, G. G. Coulton (trans.), *The dialogue on miracles*, (2 vols, New York, 1929).
DNR	Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum*, ed. by Helmut Boese (Berlin, 1973).
GrGr	Gregory the Great, *Dialogorum libri quatuor*, in PL, 77, cols. 149–428.

GrGrEng	Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, trans. by O.J. Zimmermann in *St. Gregory the Great: Dialogues*, *The Fathers of the Church*, 39, (Washington D.C., 2022).
HRA	William of Newburgh, *The History of English Affairs*, eds. P.J. Walsh and M.G. Kennedy, Book 1, (Liverpool, 1998).
HRAEng	William of Newburgh, Paul Halsall and Scott McLetchie (eds.) Joseph Stevenson (trans) *The History of English Affairs (Books I to V).* Internet History Sourcebooks Project. (New York, 1999).
MIJEng	Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. by J.H. Parker, i, (3 vols, London, 1844).
MIJLat	Gregory the Great, *S. Gregorii Magni Moralia in Iob (libri I–X),* in M. Adriaen (ed.) Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*,* cxlii, (Turnhout, 1979).
PL	J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*, 221 vols (Paris, 1861–64).
SV	Jacques de Vitry, *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the 'Sermones vulgares of Jacques de Vitry'*, ed. by Thomas Frederick Crane (London, 1890; repr. New York, 1971).
TDMP1	Stephen of Bourbon, *Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilibus: Prologus, Prima pars, de dono timoris*, in Jacques Berlioz (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum. Continuation Medievalis*, cxxiv, (3 vols, Turnhout, 2002), i.

TDMP2	Stephen of Bourbon, *Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilibus: Liber secundus, de dono pietatis* in Jacques Berlioz (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum. Continuation Medievalis*, cxxiv(a) (3 vols, Turnhout, 2015), ii.
VAS	Arnulf II of Ghistelles (?), *De B. Aleyde Scharembekana, sanctimoniali Ordinis Cisterciensis, Camerae iuxta Bruxellam,* ed. by Godfrey Henschen, in AASS, June II (11) (1688; repr. 1969), 477–83.
VASEng	Arnulf II of Ghistelles (?), *Life of St Alice of Schaerbeek*, trans. by Martinus Cawley (Lafayette, OR, 2000).
VBN	*The Life of Beatrice of Nazareth: 1200–1268*, ed. and trans. by Roger de Ganck (Kalamazoo, MI, 1991).
VCM	Thomas of Cantimpré, *De S. Christina Mirabili virg. apud Trudonopoli in Belgio,* ed. by J Pinius, in *AASS*, July V (24) (1727 (repr. 1969)), pp. 650–60.
VCMEng	Thomas of Cantimpré, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing,* trans. by Barbara Newman and Margot King in *Thomas of Cantimpré: The Collected Saints' Lives* (Turnhout, 2008) pp. 126–157.
VES	Philip of Clairvaux, *Vita Elizabeth sanctimonialis in Erkenrode, Ordinis Cisterciensis, Leodiensis dioecesis*, in *CCHLM,* I, 362–78.

VIC	Thomas of Cantimpré, *Vita Ioannis Cantipratensis*, in 'Une oeuvre inédite de Thomas de Cantimpré, la "*Vita Ioannis Cantipratensis*"', ed. by Robert Godding, *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 76 (1981) 241–56 (introduction); 257–316 (text).
VICEng	Thomas of Cantimpré, *The Life of John of Cantimpré* trans. by Barbara Newman and Margot King in *Thomas of Cantimpré: The Collected Saints' Lives*. (Turnhout: 2008.) pp. 57–111.
VIL	*De. B. Ida Lewensi virgine, Ordinis Cisterciensis Rameyae in Brabantia Belgica*, ed. by Remy de Buck, in *AASS*, October XIII (29) (1869 (repr. 1970)), 107–24.
VILEng	*Ida the Gentle of Léau: Cistercian Nun of La Ramée*, trans. by Martinus Cawley (Lafayette, OR, 1998).
VILov	*De vener. Ida Lovaniensi, Ord. Cisterc. in Brabantia prope Mechliniam*, ed. by Daniel Papebroeck, in *AASS*, April II (13) (1675 (repr. 1968)), 157–89.
VILovEng	*The Life of Ida of Louvain*, trans. by Martinus Cawley (Lafayette, OR, 2000).
VIN	Goswin of Bossut, *Vita Beatae Idae de Niuella Sanctimonialis in Monasterio de Rameya*, in *Quinque prudentes Virgines*, ed. by Chrysostomos Henriquez (Antwerp, 1630), pp. 199–300.
VINEng	Goswin of Bossut, trans by. Martinus Cawley, *The Life of Ida the Compassionate of Nivelles*, in *The Lives of Ida the Compassionate of Nivelles, Nun of*

	La Ramée, Arnulf, Lay Brother of Villers, and Abundus, Monk of Villers (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 228–299.
VJMC	*De B. Iulianae virgine, priorissa Montis–Cornelii apud Leodium, promotrice Festi Corpus Christi,* ed. by Godfrey Henschen, in *AASS*, April I (5) (1675 (repr. 1968)), 443–77.
VJMCEng	*The Life of Juliana of Cornillon,* trans. By Barbara Newman in *Living Saints of the Thirteenth Century: The Lives of Yvette, Anchoress of Huy, Juliana of Cornillon, Inventor of the Corpus Christi Feast, Margaret the Lame, Anchoress of Magdeburg,* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 181–302.
VLA	*De S. Lutgarde virgine, sanctimoniali Ordinis Cisterciensis, Aquiriae in Brabantia*, ed. by Godfrey Henschen, in *AASS*, June III (16) (1701 (repr. 1969)), pp. 234–263.
VLAEng	Thomas of Cantimpré, The *Life of Lutgard of Aywières*, in Barbara Newman and Margot H. King. (trans.), *Thomas of Cantimpré: The Collected Saints' Lives* (Turnhout: 2008), pp. 211–296.
VMO	Jacques of Vitry, *De B. Maria Oigniacensi in Namurcensi Belgii dioecesi*, ed. by Daniel Papebroeck, in *AASS*, June IV (23) (1707 (repr. 1969)), 636–66.
VMOEng	Jacques of Vitry, *The Life of Mary of Oignies*, trans. by Margot King, in *Mary of Oignies, Mother of Salvation*, (Turnhout, 2006) 33–128.

VMO–S	Thomas of Cantimpré, *Supplementum ad vitam Mariae Oigniacensis*, ed. by Daniel Papebroeck, in *AASS*, June IV (23) (1707 (repr. 1969)), pp. 666–77.
VMO–SEng	Thomas of Cantimpré, *The Supplement to the Life of Mary of Oignies* ed. by Anneke Mulder–Bakker, trans. by Hugh Feiss, OSB in *Mary of Oignies, Mother of Salvation*, (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 129–166.
VMY	Thomas of Cantimpré, *Vita Margarete de Ypris,* in G.G. Meerseman (ed.), 'Les frères prêcheurs et le mouvement dévot en Flandres au XIIIe siècle', *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum,* 18 (1948), 69–130 (pp. 106–30).
VMYEng	Thomas of Cantimpré. *The Life of Margaret of Ypres* trans. by Barbara Newman and Margot H. King in *The Collected Saints' Lives* (Turnhout, 2008), 163–206.
VPMLat	Tommaso Agni, and Ambrosio Taegio, O.P., *De. S. Petro martyre ex ordine Praedicatorum,* ed. by Daniel Papebroeck (1866) in *AASS*, April III (12), 686–727.

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Heavenly Bodies: Christina *Mirabilis*, Purgatorial Piety, and Care Between the Living and the Dead in the Hagiographies and *Exempla* of Thomas of Cantimpré

This thesis examines the *vita* of Christina Mirabilis (1150–1224) written by Dominican author, Thomas of Cantimpré (1201–1272) and explores Christina's overlap within three categories of the dead: the saintly dead and their relics, the beloved personal dead, and the often-dangerous returning dead. Thomas demonstrated throughout her *vita* how Christina interacted with, demonstrated, and subverted behaviours of the dead within these categories. In doing so, he centred her divine mission on remembrance and care for the dead in affirmation of orthodox teachings. By writing about a saint who stood at such an extraordinary crossroads of the divine and the macabre, Thomas advocated for purgatorial care for a wide variety of situations, centring the Church's authority, while providing an orthodox practice for the spiritual well-being of the bereaved *and* the dead. In doing so, Thomas celebrated and provided recommendations for a new lay piety for his audience, much of which was also espoused by the holy women of Liège who occupied an important space in his hagiographies.

Christina's knowledge of the spiritual status of others informed the salvific suffering she underwent in her purgatorial body, meant to liberate tormented souls already in purgatory and to provide an example for those within her community. However, Christina was also depicted advocating for communal aspects of care, such as almsgiving, vigils, and weeping, many of which wound up in Thomas's later *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*. Thomas already had a profound affinity with the "special" dead in his own life, especially his father, and many of his examples concerned

purgatorial care in his own family.[1] This thesis will examine Thomas's hagiographical output and *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*, as well as contemporaneous *exempla* from Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach. Likewise, it will explore accounts of the "unruly dead" by authors such as Walter Map and William of Newburgh, to provide a useful context to understanding her role in comparison to those of the other categories of dead in Thomas's works, especially their broader role in enforcing and affirming Church teachings and authority.

Christina often flirted with unorthodoxy, whether in baptising herself or hearing the deathbed confession of her patron, Count Louis of Looz before taking on some of his future punishment in purgatory. When considering this alongside her violent penitence, Christina could reasonably be considered a risky choice for a saintly example, demonstrating violent and solitary behaviour often associated with the demonically possessed or the often dangerous returning dead.[2] Indeed, the differentiation between two was often a fraught point given how many of Thomas's contemporaries, as well as Thomas himself, ascribed the returning dead to demonic possession.[3] The importance of discerning between the demonic and the divine was particularly emphasised when women

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[1] This is discussed beautifully in Robert Sweetman, "Thomas of Cantimpré, *Mulieres Religiosae*, and Purgatorial Piety: Hagiographical *Vitae* and the Beguine 'Voice'" in Jacqueline Brown and W.P. Stoneman (eds.), *A Distinct Voice: Medieval Studies in Honor of Leonard E. Boyle, O.P.*, (Notre Dame, 1997), 606–628; I am profoundly indebted to Sweetman for his insightful and inspiring work, and the concept of the personal "beloved" dead within Thomas's works is borrowed from the above article, on p. 612: "Purgatory is the face of the beloved dead, a face that seeks a boon of the living, a boon that, when given, gives itself in return."

[2] For excellent discussions on the physiology of possession and its associations with the returning dead, see Barbara Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit: Devout Women, Demoniacs, and the Apostolic Life in the Thirteenth Century' in *Speculum*, lxxiii, no. 3 (1998), 733–770 and Nancy Caciola, 'Mystics, Demoniacs, and the Physiology of Spirit Possession in Medieval Europe' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, xlii, no. 2 (2000), 268–306.

[3] Thomas of Cantimpré, '*Bonum universale de apibus*' in Julia Burkhardt (ed. and trans.), V*on Bienen Lernen das Bonum universale de apibusdes Thomas von Cantimpré Als Gemeinschaftsentwurf: Analyse, edition, Übersetzung, kommentar*, (2 vols, Regensburg, 2020), ii, 2.57, 22., p. 1028–1030 (Henceforth, abbreviated as *BUA*: all translations of passages from the *BUA* are my own unless otherwise indicated. This thesis utilises Julia Burkhardt's critical edition for access to the Latin text.

were either the discerners or the topic of discernment. Christina's dramatic return into her community after her first death led to an initial period of uncertainty, even violent persecution from her friends and family, much of which mirrored stories of communities struggling to deal with a revenant, such as those of Walter Map.[4] While she ultimately came to be reconciled with her family and embraced by her community, Christina remained unaffiliated with any religious order and still favoured her flights abroad, whether to other cities, such as Liège, or more solitary places like the graveyard or the wilderness.[5] Likewise, despite her professed love and respect for priests, Christina also did not have a relationship with a particular spiritual mentor, as her fellow female saints, such as Lutgard of Aywières and Margaret of Ypres. Unlike her better-educated and wealthier sister saints, God Himself was the spiritual mentor in question within her life, revealing to her everything from the Psalms to the spiritual health of others.[6]

Christina lacking these ties could have provided the potential for controversy. With the rise to prominence of the new mendicant orders, Thomas often placed Dominican preachers in the centre of pastoral interactions, including those between the living and the dead. This meant that Christina's lack of membership to a specific religious order and her seemingly unorthodox, occasionally defiant, behaviour, potentially lent themselves to more problematic readings of her *vita*: difficulties for a Dominican brother tasked with enforcing orthodoxy within his works. So, what was Thomas of Cantimpré trying to demonstrate in his portrayal of Christina? Why choose a female saint whose behaviour was so erratic: serene one moment, with heavenly harmonies rising from her body, and then ghostly and disturbing the next, wailing as though she were in labour before plunging herself into graphic torments? For each potentially heterodox episode,

[4] VCM, 17–19, 653–654.
[5] VCM, 10, p. 652.
[6] VCM, 26, p. 655; VCM, 16, p. 653.

Thomas strenuously emphasises her reverence and how her actions emphasise and support orthodox belief, particularly in her dedication to clergy and adherence to Church authority. Christina's depiction was intended as an illustration of Church doctrine, whose *vita* was to be read and interpreted within that context. However, as I will argue, Christina was also an illustration of the limits of these indicators in a saint's *vita*: as Thomas increasingly worked to depict a Christian identity, distinct for its faith rather than proofs or signs, there were limits to what Christina could show.

Christina's *vita* has also often been examined within the context of the beguine movement and the holy women of Liège, as well as her role as a "living relic," performing her purgatorial intercessions in a body that is a precursor of both purgatory and the glorious resurrected body on judgement day.[7] She has also been explored in the realm of the demonically possessed preacher, and, briefly, in how her dramatic resurrection mirrors contemporaneous accounts of revenants.[8] However, Christina's life has not yet been analysed fully within the diverse portrayals of the dead haunting Thomas's *corpus* or in her influence to his approach to caring for and understanding these different types of dead. Thomas used her *vita*, among other examples in his works, to reaffirm Church teaching and its role as mediator within a reciprocal relationship with a community of the personal dead, not limited only to the saints and their relics. He also utilised her and the purgatorial piety itself to create a distinct Christian identity during a time of challenges

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[7] Dyan Elliott, *Proving Women: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, (Princeton, 2004). Alicia Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints and Modern Screens: Divine Visions as Cinematic Experience*, (Amsterdam, 2018), pp. 245–248; for the saint as living relic, see Claude Carozzi, 'Douceline et les autres' in *La religion populaire en Languedoc: Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, no. 11 (Toulouse, 1976), 251–267; a discussion of Christina's body as preview of the glorified and the purgatorial body can be found in Alicia Spencer-Hall, 'The Horror of Orthodoxy: Christina Mirabilis, thirteenth-century 'zombie' saint' in *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, vii, no. 3 (2017), 352–375.

[8] For discussion of the demoniac preacher and the use of the demonic to affirm orthodox belief, Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 750–756; for further discussion of this ambiguity, see Caciola, 'Mystics' pp 273–281; concerning revenants and their return, Nancy Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual in Medieval Culture' in *Past and Present*, clii (1996), pp 3–45, 27–29.

to orthodoxy, based in a hopeful faith in the relief of and reunion with the purgatorial dead. In approaching Christina's life within the context of Thomas's other depictions of the dead and their care, this thesis will address the following questions: how did Thomas of Cantimpré utilise Christina's often ambiguous behaviour, particularly within the context of existing discussions concerning purgatory, to advocate for a deeper care for the dead and to centre them in affirming orthodox practices and identity? How do Christina's similarities and interactions with these different kinds of dead impact her purgatorial works? Finally, as scholar Robert Sweetman suggests, in how much of this was Christina directly influential in Thomas's future works?[9]

Methodology and Structure

This thesis will incorporate all of Thomas's hagiographical *corpus*, examining the *vitae* of John of Cantimpré, Christina of St. Trond, Margaret of Ypres, and Lutgard of Aywières, as well as his *supplementum* to the *vita* of Marie of Oignies, Finally, the thesis will examine his *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*, as a mature realisation of his beliefs in purgatorial practices, heavily influenced by Christina and the other holy women of Liège, as well as some of his most autobiographical writing around the topic of purgatorial piety. Each chapter will focus on one of the three categories of the dead within Thomas's works, comparing their appearances and interactions while analysing which aspects of purgatorial devotion or reciprocity between the living and dead were being promoted. The first chapter concerns the holy dead: these are regarded already as saints, whether formally canonised or not, and whose relics are venerated within the Church as intercessors. While these saints also experience the divine physically

[9] Robert Sweetman, 'Christine of Saint-Trond's Preaching Apostolate: Thomas of Cantimpré's Hagiographical Method Revisited' in *Vox Benedictina: A Journal of Translations from Monastic Sources*, ix, no. 1 (1992), pp. 66–107.

while still alive, this project will argue that within Thomas's *vitae*, these experiences intensify in power and intimacy as the saint approaches death, the culmination of their lifelong devotion to God leading to the ultimate union at His side in Heaven.[10] This is uniquely relevant for Christina as the only saint to experience an explicitly complete death and resuscitation, passing through judgement and receiving the option to remain at God's side before *choosing* to return.[11] I will compare Christina's unusually accelerated spiritual progression to those of Thomas's other saints and compare the feats she performed in her resurrected body to Thomas's depictions of his saints' post-mortem ministries.[12]

The second chapter will focus, to borrow an excellent phrase from Robert Sweetman, on the "personalised hauntings" by the "beloved" dead present throughout nearly all of Thomas's works. While these personal dead are not necessarily capable of the same miracles as the holy dead, and are not venerated as saints, the stories that Thomas includes of the personal dead are often prescriptive, encouraging purgatorial care and exhorting the reader to mind their own spiritual hygiene. This chapter will also compare

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[10] Barbara Newman, 'Introduction', *Thomas of Cantimpré: The Collected Saints' Lives*, Barbara Newman (ed.), Barbara Newman and Margot King (trans.), (Turnhout, 2008). p. 18, on steps of ascendancy in spiritual journey; see also Simone Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne dans le diocèse de Liège au XIIIe siècle*, (Louvain, 1947), pp 105–106 & 120–121; for these stages in Christina's life, see Margot King, 'The Sacramental Witness of Christina Mirabilis; The Mystic Growth of a Fool for Christ's Sake' in J. A. Nichols and L. T. Shank (eds.), *Peace Weavers: Medieval Religious Women*, (2 Vols, Kalamazoo, 1987), ii, pp 145–164, 149–156; for these stages within Lutgard's life, see Margot King, 'The Dove at the Window: The Ascent of the Soul in Thomas de Cantimpré's Life of Lutgard of Aywières' in J.A. Nichols and L.T. Shank (eds.), *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women,* (2 vols, Kalamazoo:1995), i, pp. 225–253, 226–229 & 232–243 and Alfred Deboutte, 'The *Vita Lutgardis* of Thomas of Cantimpré' in J.A. Nichols and L.T. Shank (eds.), *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women*, (2 vols, Kalamazoo, 1995), i, 255–281, pp. 257–261 & 263–267.

[11] Spencer-Hall, ' Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 354, n. 6: Spencer-Hall cites the examples of contemporaneous revivified saints, such as Marie of Oignies (d. 1213) and Ida of Louvain (d. c. 1261), as well as some slightly later examples, Peter Amengol (d. 1304), Agnes of Montepulciano (d. 1317), Margaret of Castello (d. 1320), Catherine of Siena (d. 1380) and Julian of Norwich (d. c. 1416).

[12] Suzan Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw als rolmodel voor geestelijken: Christina de Wonderbare van Sint-Truiden' in *Ons Geestelijk Erf*, lxxviii (2004), 5–22, pp.18–21; see also Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, pp. 193–204.

depictions of these apparitions within Thomas's *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*, to *exempla* found within contemporaneous works by authors who he likely would have been familiar with. That Thomas was influenced by Jacques de Vitry is undeniable, therefore, it seems only fitting to compare the appearances of the personal dead Thomas's collection to those in Jacques's *Sermones vulgares.* The second chapter will also examine two of Jacques de Vitry's sermons on providing care for the dead, and how these attitudes are reflected in Thomas's own writing on the subject. Similarly, I will compare Thomas's depictions of the personal dead to those found within the popular *Dialogus miraculorum* of Cistercian author Caesarius of Heisterbach. Thomas's purgatorial suffrages will be analysed against an extensive list of purgatorial acts recommended by Stephen of Bourbon, one of Thomas's Dominican contemporaries, in his *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*. Here it will be important to look at the existing monastic rites of mourning that Thomas adapted in his suffrages, making them more accessible for his audience. Indeed, Thomas adapted a specifically Cluniac poem for his longest *exemplum* on acts of purgatorial piety in the *Bonum universale de apibus.* In comparing the appearances of these dead, as well as who is portrayed as responsible for their care, it is possible to look at Thomas's portrayal of how women, especially mothers and widows, placed them within a specific role in caring for their beloved dead. The perception of women as especially effective intercessors for their loved ones in purgatory is a major facet of why Christina was chosen by God for her salvific role to begin with, something critical in a *vita* that otherwise often defeminizes her body as someone once dead.[13] By exploring the roles of these women as caregivers for their dead loved ones, Christina's pastoral work can be better understood.

[13] Katherine Clarke, 'Purgatory, punishment, and the discourse of holy widowhood in the high and later Middle Ages' in *Journal of the history of sexuality*, xvi, no. 2 (2007), pp 169–203.

The final chapter will examine Christina within the context of accounts of revenants, the "misbehaving" dead. While these returning dead often require the same kinds of purgatorial pastoral care that Thomas outlined in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, they occupy a more ambiguous space because of the danger associated with their pestilential bodies and their violent or aggressive behaviour, sometimes leading to the deaths of others in their communities.[14] Further complicating matters is that revenants are not always be laid to rest using the rites of the church and are sometimes dispatched through, more grisly means. Revenants were often attributed to demonic possession, usually portrayed as happening because of the dissolute life (or death) of the person in question. This final chapter will focus on the appearances of the more dangerous dead within Thomas's *exempla* collection, as well as the previously mentioned *exempla* collections. It will also include accounts of revenants in the works of Walter Map and William of Newburgh, whose works were not necessarily meant to be *exempla* in the same way as those of Thomas or Caesarius, but who used the returning dead to make observations about the world they lived and worked in. It will also examine the use of one other female revenant in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, the nun Agnes, whose murder and resuscitation lead to the conversion of a Jewish family.

I will argue that he utilises Christina's body, whose suffering is seen, but who does not receive confirmation of the end results of her labours from the souls she suffers for, mirroring the experiences of the average reader who would partake in purgatorial work for their loved ones without visions to confirm their status. Rather than spreading pestilence and doubt or confirming the horrors of hell and damnation, Christina and

[14] Nancy Caciola, *Afterlives: The Return of the Dead in the Middle Ages*, (Ithaca, 2016), pp. 126–131, 135, 151–154; see also, Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Rituals,' pp. 32–33, for discussions of the fleshly nature needed for these revenants to be able to return and move in their communities.

Agnes affirm faith, emphasising repentance and the mercy of God.[15] It will also compare revenants along gendered lines: while Christina acts out the violence behaviour often associated with male revenants, she is gradually reintroduced into her community in much the same way that female revenants often were. However, rather than being brought back into her community within the role she occupied in life, Christina rejoins herself to her community through a self-administered baptism. In depicting this, Thomas maintained the unknowability of the dead, and the need for and efficacy of the Church and its rituals, all of which are demonstrated in Christina and her interactions with the clergy in her *vita*.

While all passages quoted from Christina's *vita* are my own, I am indebted to the translations by Margot King and Barbara Newman of, not only Christina's life, but also those of Margaret of Ypres and Lutgard of Aywières, as well as the *supplementum* for Marie of Oignies. For these latter three, their translations will be used, as well as Newman's translation of John of Cantimpré's *vita*. Similarly, while the relevant passages quoted from the *Bonum universale de apibus* are also my own translations, I have compared them against the translations found in Henri Platelle's French edition of selections from the collection, as well as the German translation within the recent critical edition published in 2020 by Julia Burkhardt. I have also translated passages from the *Sermones vulgares* of Jacques de Vitry as reproduced by Henry Frederick Crane in *The Exempla Or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones vulgares of Jacques de Vitry*, but am indebted to Jean Longère's critical edition. Other translations throughout the following chapters, including passages from Stephen of Bourbon's *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus* and Jacques's sermons on death, among others, are also my own, and will

[15] Candace Reilly, 'The Revenant: Essentialist Gender Norms in Medieval English Histories' in *Hortulus: The Online Graduate Journal of Medieval Studies*, xiii, no. 1 (2017), pp 34–54; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp 244–246.

be indicated as such in the footnotes.

"The Remarkable Virgin of Christ," An Introduction to Christina of St. Trond

Thomas of Cantimpré's most experimental and daring *vita* is that of Christina of St. Trond, written just after he joined the Dominican Order in 1232. Christina was not a character who needed no introduction: she required a full disclaimer as a reassurance to the reader concerning Thomas's due diligence in investigating her life.[16] Thomas began his account by acknowledging the outstanding strangeness of her life, citing first her appearance in the hagiography of his friend and colleague, then bishop Jacques de Vitry, and then continuing on to discuss his research process in interviewing eyewitnesses to Christina's lives and deaths, writing:

> I do not say "certain" without cause, when plainly I have so many witnesses in many things, whose accounts I wrote down, that they were able to give an account of many things in the town of St. Trond at that time. And nor were these events carried out in remote places, but clearly among the people; nor had so much time passed, that oblivion had engulfed and buried these things, when it has not been even eight years after her death, that I wrote any of this.[17]

Later, Thomas set a concrete date for Christina's death, in the year 1224, at the convent of St. Catherine's, nearly forty-two years after she had first been resurrected from the dead.[18] Thomas also referred to her in his final *exempla* collection, the *Bonum universale de apibus*, and discussed her interactions with Lutgard of Aywières, his close

[16] VCM, prol.1–3, p. 650.
[17] VCM, prol. 2, p. 650: "Nec immerito certum me dixerim, cum tot plane testes habeam in pluribus, quae descripsi, quot tunc temporis in oppido S. Trudonis ut ratione potuerunt**.** Neque enim haec in angulo gesta sunt, sed plane in populis; nec tantum temporis transiit, quod ea absorbuit et sepelivit oblivio, cum non eo amplius quam anni octo sint, quo haec scripsi post mortem ejus." VCMEng, prol. 2, p. 128. While all of the English translations provided for Christina's *vita* are my own, I will also provide the corresponding page numbers for the English translation found in the critical edition by M.H. King and Barbara Newman.
[18] VCM, 5.54, p. 659.

friend and spiritual mentor.[19]

Born in St. Trond around 1150 and orphaned at a young age, Christina was raised by her two unnamed older sisters, both of whom wished to pursue a life of prayer and piety.[20] So that the eldest could be left to her devotions, the middle sister was tasked with the domestic work, while Christina, the youngest, was assigned the role of shepherdess, the "meaner and humbler office" of tending to the family's flocks.[21] It is here where Christina first developed an intimate relationship with Christ. Here, it is worth briefly discussing the world Christina lived in and how it likely shaped the events described in her *vita*. The St. Trond that Christina was born into was fast becoming a thriving spiritual and economic hub in the Low Countries. Having been granted its official designation as a city in 1060, the city was eyed as a prize for its rich assets in the wool trade and as a lucrative pilgrimage cite to the shrine of its founder, Saint Trudo.[22] The conflict of who was to rule and provide the military protection of the city itself was ever present: whether it was meant to be left to a noble protector, such as the Count of Looz or the Duke of Brabant, or an ecclesiastical authority, such as the abbot of St. Trudo or the Prince-Bishop of Liège. This led to many bloody conflicts in the decades before Christina's birth. In one such instance, the abbey of St. Trudo itself was set ablaze during a siege by the Prince-Bishop of Liège in 1086.[23] The Counts of Looz were prominently involved in Christina's life: around the year that Christina was born, Louis I of Loon would build a castle in

[19] BUA, 1.53.23, pp. 946–948; see also VLAEng 1.22, pp. 236–238, VLA 1.22, p. 195.
[20] VCM, 1.4, p. 651.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Jo Van Mechelen, Jozef Smeesters, and Camille Vanlangedonck, *Christina en Lutgardis: Het Verhaal Van Twee Mystieke Vrouwen in Sint-Truiden*, Patrick de Rynck (ed.), (Sint-Truiden, 2012), pp. 17–18.
[23] Ibid., p. 18; see also Bruno Desmoulins and J.L.–Kupper, *Histoire de la Principauté de Liège de l'An Mille A La Revolution*, (Liège, 2002),; and Claude Gaier, *Grandes batailles de l'histoire Liègeoise au Moyen Age* (Liège, 1980).

Brustem, with an eye towards securing and expanding his territories in the Haspengouw.[24] This was met with profound hostility by the citizens of St. Trond and the rival of the Count of Looz, the Count of Duras, who would ally with the Trudonese to drive the Count out and destroy his fortress.[25] Much later in Christina's life, Count Louis's grandson, Louis II, who eventually become her patron and spiritual son, aligned himself with the Prince-Bishop of Liège, Hugh of Pierrepont, against the Duke of Brabant, who sought to take over in St-Trond. This resulted in Louis' victory over the Duke of Brabant at the Battle of Steppes in 1213, with serious territorial gains for the Counts of Looz.[26] It is possible that the Count's decision to side with the Prince-Bishop may have influenced by Christina herself, particularly given her reproaches when Louis strayed from the Church or acted against its policies.[27]

Regardless of the extent of Christina's influence on her patron, being present for such pivotal conflicts left its mark on her life. Certainly, within Christina's own life, an episode intended to illustrate her gift of prophecy featured the Battle of Steppes as it was happening, where she urged a young nun to flee and beg for her father's life, saying, "Alas! Alas! I see the air full of swords and blood! Run, daughter, run to prayer swiftly; and ask God for [the life of] your father, because he is now in great peril."[28] Christina was depicted in this episode as being profoundly distraught by the violence and bloodshed: despite where her personal sympathies might have lain, she did not pick a

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[24] See Jean Baerten, 'Les origines des comtes de Looz et la formation territoriale du comté' in *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, xliii, no. 2 (1965), pp. 459–491, 474–475; Van Mechelen, et al. *Christina en Lutgardis*, pp. 20–21; Arnold Bijsterveld and Geert Souvereyns, 'De Graven van Loon' in *Limburg, het oude land van Loon*, lxxxvii (2008), pp 111–152.
[25] Baerten, 'Les origins,' pp. 469–470 for a breakdown of the territories of the counts of Duras and their relationship with the counts of Looz; see also Van Mechelen et al, *Christina en Lutgardis*, p. 20.
[26] Van Mechelen et al, *Christina en Lutgardis*, pp. 20–21.
[27] VCM, 4.41, p. 657.
[28] VCM, 3.29, p. 655: "Curre, filia, curre ad orationem velociter; et roga Dominum pro patre tuo, quia in maximo nunc discrimine constitutus est." VCMEng, 29, p. 143.

side, but rather grieved the entirety of the violence, lamenting like a woman in labour.[29] Christina's distress at the impact of warfare on her community is shared with her fellow holy women: earlier in the life of Marie of Oignies, Marie experiences a vision of the sack of Liège, where she sees: "... a great army of evil spirits returning from the devastation of Liège, bloody as if after battle, coming with a proud and pompous uproar and who were threatening even more evil deeds with elated countenances."[30]

While Marie is described as not being overcome with "an excess of grief" for her loved ones and spiritual community in Liège because of having already been forewarned by God, Jacques underscored the violence of the sacking, even as he spoke admiringly of the heroic virtue of the holy women of Liège, writing:

> Those who could not flee to the churches threw themselves into the river and chose to die rather than to incur harm to their chastity… Despite all this, the merciful Bridegroom so deigned to look after his brides that not a single one in such a great multitude was found who suffered either death to her body or harm to her chastity.[31]

While Jacques clearly intended for this to underscore the heroism of the beguines, as well as to the picture of the devastation and harm wrought by the Duke's forces, invading a holy land of feminine virtue and piety absolutely stood out. The threat of not only material devastation, but also sexual violence, would have been a very present threat.

It is against this tumultuous social and political backdrop that Christina died due to the excess of her devotion. But it would not prove the end of her story: in a dramatic re-entrance, Christina resurrected in the middle of her own funeral Mass, soaring to the

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[29] VCM, 3.29, p. 655.
[30] VMOEng, 2.6.57, p. 91; VMO, 2.6.57, p. 560: "Alia die vidit maximum iniquorum spirituum exercitum, qui quasi post praelium cruentati, cum superbo et pomposo strepitu de vastatione civitatis Leodiensis revertebantur, et adhuc majora mala elato vultu comminabantur."
[31] VMOEng, prol.5, p. 44; VMO, prol.5, p. 548: "Quae enim ad ecclesias confugere non poterant, in fluvium se projiciebant, magis eligentes mori, quam damnum castitatis incurrere… Ita tamen clemens Sponsus dignatus est Sponsis suis providere, quod in tanta multitudine non est inventa aliqua, quae mortem corporis vel detrimentum incurreret castitatis."

rafters while shrieking about the stench of human bodies in the church.[32] After she was coaxed down by the priest, she explained to her friends and family that, having passed through purgatory and witnessed the suffering there, she was offered the chance to either stay in heaven or to return to earth to suffer purgatorial punishments in her body to relieve souls in purgatory and to serve as an example for those who wished to avoid it.[33] Resurrected with a purgatorial body impervious to mortal harm, Christina's violent penances horrified her community: she plunged herself into freezing water, walked into burning ovens, hung herself from gallows, and hid herself among the tombs of the dead.[34] As will be discussed later, her community's bewilderment stemmed not only from the graphic nature of Christina's penances, but because of the specificity of her knowledge of the spiritual health of her community.

Christina's miraculous body was the focal point of her ministry for more than just her capacity to endure extreme pain: she sometimes lactated with miraculous milk or oil to heal and feed herself.[35] Due to the "subtle" lightness of her body, she could soar to vast heights, and when seized by the ecstasy of the Spirit, her body hovered, her limbs curling into her body as if she was made of wax.[36] Later in her life, divine harmonies with words beyond human comprehension would resonate between her throat and breast, and she displayed an uncanny understanding of the Psalms and of Scripture.[37] Indeed, after these displays of enthusiastic devotion where she would perform "as if drunk," Christina responded to the amazement of her convent community by attempting to flee in embarrassment for the sake of her modesty— if she could not escape, she began "wasting

[32] VCM, 1.8, p. 652; concerning her reaction to the "stench" of human bodies, VCM 1.5, p. 651.
[33] VCM, 1.6–8, pp. 651–652.
[34] VCM, 1.11–2.15, pp. 652–653.
[35] VCM, 1.9, p. 652, VCM 2.19, pp. 653–654.
[36] VCM, 2.15–16, p. 653: "Corpus ejus tantae subtilitatis, et levitatis erat, ut in arduis et sublimibus ambularet…" VCMEng, 15–16, p. 136
[37] VCM, 3.35, p. 656; for her understanding of the Psalms, see VCM, 1.16, p. 653, and for her miraculous knowledge of Scripture, see VCM, 4.39, p. 657.

away" in mortified "excessive sorrow," accusing herself of being foolish and stupid.[38]

Christina's biggest obstacle to her ministry was initially her own family and friends. After multiple attempts on behalf of her family to capture her ending in the Holy Spirit "rushing upon" Christina, enabling her to free herself through the strength and subtlety of her resurrected body, her family finally relented and sought her forgiveness.[39] However, at the behest of the more circumspect devout in her community, Christina immersed herself in a baptismal font, moderating her behaviour and enabling her to rejoin her community.[40] The rest of her life was dedicated to a relatively subdued ministry, with the most significant part of her pastoral care devoted to comforting and mourning over the dead and dying, particularly those in danger of being condemned to purgatory or hell.[41] In her later life, Christina spent her time between St. Catherine's convent in her home village or travelling wherever the "Spirit" compelled her.[42] It was on her travels that she formed other some of the more relationships in her life, such as her friendship with the recluse Jutta, or her relationship with her patron, Louis of Looz, who confessed to her on his deathbed and who she provided purgatorial care for.[43] Louis himself was

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[38] VCM, 3.36, p. 656: here Christina is described as returning to herself "quasi ebria" and Thomas describes her as being truly drunk on the spirit ("et vere ebria"). After these displays, she was mortified, and if she was detained and not allowed to retreat from her embarrassment, Thomas described her as "dolore nimio tabescebat; stultamque se ac fatuam indicabat." VCMEng, 36, p. 146.

[39] VCM, 2.17–18, p. 653: "Nam nocte quadam, cum divinitatis in eam spiritus irruisset, solutis vinculis, quibus ligata erat, sanata ab omni incommodo…" VCMEng, 17–18, p. 137.

[40] VCM, 2.21, p. 654, where Thomas described her as being able to behave more calmly and better endure the stench of mankind: "Quo facto, hoc inibi dicitur consecuta quod contemperatior, ex tunc fuit modus ejus vitae hominibus, quietiusque habuit postea, et melius pati potuit odores hominum, et inter homines habitare." VCMEng, 21, p. 139.

[41] VCM, 3.27–28, p. 655; see also Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565*, (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 78 for further discussion on the beguines as the "specialists of the dead" in their devotional work in keeping vigil over the dead and caring for the body; see also T. S. Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority*, (Philadelphia, 2014), pp. 115–116 and 123–125, for the importance and prominence of the act of singing the offices for and praying for the dead within beguine communities.

[42] VCM, 2.16, p. 653.

[43] VCM, 4.38, p. 657; VCM, 4.41–45, pp. 657–658.

likely a patron of the abbey of St. Catherine's where Christina resided, and whether this patronage was in response to Christina's relationship with him or an already standing patronage (equally likely) before encountering Christina is unclear in the *vita*.[44]

Christina's presence in the convent would have been considered notable, not only given her lack of holy orders, but her lack of noble status: twenty four years after her final death, the convent stipulated the necessity of an aristocratic or genteel background for its members.[45] Before her penultimate death, other notable miracles happened, including a dialogue between her body and soul, and continued ecstasies and bodily contortions. Upon her second death at the convent of St. Catherine's, she was summoned by one of her fellow sisters to answer a tantalisingly unspecified question before she finally passed onto her richly earned rest.[46] In many ways Christina was an unlikely candidate for a traditional narrative about a virgin of Christ.[47] Before her first death, she was set up as many of the other female saints in Thomas's *corpus*: Thomas began by detailing her humility, her virtue, and the courtship of the beloved maiden by an ardent God. However,

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[44] For a background on Louis, see Baerten, 'Les Origines,' pp. 472–473. See M. J. Wolter, *Notice historique sur l'ancienne abbaye noble de Milen près de Saint-Trond*, (Ghent, 1853), pp. 43–44: There is evidence of Louis approving of the donation of a substantial tithe from the grandson of the sheriff of Sint-Truiden in 1217, and when the nuns moved to Mielen later in 1232, it was because Arnulf had approved the sale of the house and land, along with all associated rights, of one Gotbertus de Orbays to the convent in return for prayers for Gotbertus, his wife, and his brother after their deaths. The text of this charter, written in Dutch and Latin, can be found in J. Martens and Antoine Zoete, *Regestenlijst der ookonden van de Benediktinessenabdij te Nonnemielen bij Sint-Truiden*, (Brussels, 1971), p. 5: "Lodewijk II, graaf van Loon, keurt de schenking goed van een tiende geheven bij de Grazen (apud Graast), gedaan door Libertus, dictus Bertune, zoon van Godefridus, zoon van Rudolphus, schout van Sint-Truiden, aan de kerk van Sint-Catherina, Deze tiende werd door Libertus in leen gehouden van graaf Lodewijk II…"

[45] Jules Bongaerts, *Abdij Nonnemielen Sint-Truiden* (St. Trond, 1999), p. 8; confirmation of this charter found in the *Regestenlijst,* p. 9: "Datum apud Alke, iij mensis novembris anno domini M° CC° XL° VIII. Henricus, elekt van Luik, ookondt dat het klooster van Sint-Catherina te Nonnemielen niet meer dan 40 nonnen mag herbergen en niet meer dan 20 verblii venden, tenzii het klooster uitbreiding neemt. 1248, 3 november."

[46] VCM, 5.52–53, p. 659.

[47] R.J.D. Smith, 'Exemplarity and its Limits in the Hagiographical Corpus of Thomas of Cantimpré,' (PhD thesis, Harvard University,2012), p. 95.

after her first death, Christina stood out for the unorthodox way she promoted orthodox beliefs and the authority of the Church. Despite baptising herself, begging for alms, even hearing a deathbed confession, Thomas repeatedly emphasised Christina's devotion to the Sacraments and her reverence for the clergy.[48] When taking into account the dispersal of her *vita* throughout the Low Countries and Northern Europe, Thomas clearly did not face any censure: in fact, given the environment in which he was writing, Christina was a timely and resonant example.[49] Beyond the personal impact of this purgatorial piety, the environment in which Thomas was writing, as well as his career as a Dominican preacher, also lent itself greatly to exploring this relationship in response to perceived threats to Church authority. Elliott has argued that saintly *vitae* such as those composed around Christina and the women of Liège were utilised to form a new cult of martyrs, "living relics" who could renew devotion to the Church and the cult of saints that theologians and clergy worried was being challenged by various heretical threats.[50] It is within this environment where Thomas's writings would flourish.

Thomas of Cantimpré: The Life of The Haunted Friar

The purgatorial elements of Thomas's career began far earlier and far more personally than his encounters with the holy women of Liège, and to better understand the impact of

[48] VCM, 4.40, p. 657; see also the emphasis on unique Eucharistic role of the clergy as established in the first canon of the Fourth Lateran Council in N. P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, (2 vols, Washington DC, 1990), i, Canon 1, p. 231; see also John Coakley, *Women, Men and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators*, (New York, 2006), pp. 81–86; and Miller, *The Beguines*, pp 81–102, for discussions of how these holy women worked alongside male clergy in pastoral work and exhorting others to prayer and faith.

[49] Suzan Folkerts, 'The Transmission and Appropriation of the *Vita* of Christina Mirabilis in Carthusian Communities' in *Church History and Religious Culture*, xcvi, nos.1–2 (2016), pp 80–105, p. 102; Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift. De overlevering en toe-eigening van de vita van Christina Mirabilis in de late middeleeuwen.* (Hilversum, 2010), pp. 303–304.

[50] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 190. It is important to note that Elliott treats the "death" of these women to the world, namely their redemptive suffering, as a martyrdom of itself.

purgatorial devotion on his writings and his later and choice to enter the Dominican Order, it is necessary to briefly explore Thomas's background. Thomas was born into a noble family, with a father who went on Crusade, possibly with King Richard I of England: as Thomas notes later in the *Bonum universale de apibus,* it was for the remission of his father's sins committed while on Crusade that he was dedicated to the priesthood as a small child.[51] This clearly shaped his views on purgatorial piety, as Thomas later recounted multiple deeply emotional visits with his father during his early studies, as well as his guilt-ridden experiences with bloodied visions of his father accusing him of spiritual neglect after he had died. Thus, the responsibility for his father's spiritual care placed Thomas in close proximity with the purgatorial dead; this clearly shaped much of Thomas's early beliefs and what he chose to record later. For example, Thomas extensively recorded the tragic ends of some of his fellow canons from early in his career at the cathedral school in Cambrai in his *Bonum universale de apibus*; these deaths clearly stuck with him well towards the end of his life.[52] Thomas would excel in his studies and prove an imaginative, and enthusiastic learner and writer. A young Thomas would get a chance to put his talents to good use early in his career, when he wrote the *vita* of John of Cantimpré while at the Victorine abbey of Cantimpré.

It was during his time as a young student at cathedral school at Cambrai, where he studied from 1206 to 1217, that Thomas encountered the fiery Crusade preacher, Jacques de Vitry, who changed the entire trajectory of his literary life.[53] Jacques likely drew Thomas's attention to the holy women of Liège, such as the mystic, Marie of

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[51] BUA, 2.53.32, pp. 960–962.
[52] BUA, 1.19.10, p. 152–154; see also Thomas Grzebien, 'Penance, purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles: The Life, Hagiography, and Spirituality of Thomas of Cantimpré *(1200–1270)*' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1989), pp. 9–10; I will come back and discuss this particular example in greater detail in my chapters featuring the *Bonum universal de apibus*.
[53] Newman, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, p. 5.

Oignies, whose purgatorial piety intersected profoundly with Thomas's extant care for his father.[54] Thomas recalled the first time he met the future cardinal in the introduction to his *supplementum* to the life of Marie: "When I was not yet fifteen years old and you were not a bishop, I heard you preaching in Lotharingia…. From then on a special love for you stayed with me. It is no wonder; the things we learn as children take firm root in us."[55]

Thomas's first *vita* was written around 1224 during his time at the Victorine abbey of Notre Dame of Cantimpré, and focused on its founder, John of Cantimpré: this would be the first and most conventional of Thomas's hagiographic *vitae*, as well as his sole male hagiography.[56] The commission was a special one, not least because one of the original members of the abbey who had known John was still alive by the time Thomas entered the abbey in 1217. This proximity to a holy man whose pastoral career touched on many of the priorities that Thomas found important would likely have been exciting for Thomas as a newly ordained priest.[57] Thomas focused on John's "zeal for souls," something that would prove to be influential in Thomas's choice to join the Dominican Order later in his life.[58] As Grzebien notes: "Cantimpré seems to have grown out of the late twelfth-century flowering of religious sentiment which we now associate with the larger penitential and devotional movement known as the *vita apostolica*."[59] Notably, the community and its *vita apostolica* at Cantimpré also appealed to women as well as men; while it unknown to what extent Thomas had contact with these women, it is not entirely

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[54] R.J.D. Smith, *Excessive Saints: Gender, Narrative, and Theological Invention in Thomas of Cantimpré's Mystical Hagiographies*, (New York, 2019), p. 46.
[55] VMO–SEng 4.27, p. 164; VMO–S 4.27, pp. 580–581: "Nondum enim annorum quindecim aetatem attigeram, cum vos necdum Praesulem in Lotharingiae partibus pradicantem audiens… ex tunc mecum vestri amor individuus perseverat. Nec mirum, dum ea quae pueri discimus, nobiscum quodammodo coalescunt."
[56] Newman, *Collected Saints' Lives*, p. 5; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 25–26.
[57] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' pp. 12–13.
[58] Ibid., p. 16.
[59] Ibid., p. 13.

unreasonable to suppose that their devout faith appealed to him as well as that of his brothers in the abbey, especially given his encounter with Jacques de Vitry's works and preaching.[60] While the *vita* was left unfinished for many decades, particularly as Thomas's career progressed and his ties to the abbey weakened, Thomas returned towards the end of his life in 1270 to add a prologue and John's post-mortem miracles at the request of new abbot of the abbey. In return, Thomas asked for prayers from the brothers at the abbey upon his death.[61]

After his ordination as a priest at the Victorine abbey around 1222 or 1223, Thomas quickly rose through the ranks by virtue of his education, hagiographical work, and enthusiasm for pastoral care.[62] Thomas was soon promoted to the rank of "confessor with plenary powers," able to absolve even the most "reserved" sins.[63] Grzebien observes that Thomas, a sheltered young man raised in the Church from childhood who displayed a profound anxiety about sexual impurity, would likely have been in the uncomfortable position of hearing about sexual encounters.[64] Thomas wrote that these confessions caused him to become "agitated inwardly with the stirrings of temptation" and he sought out the compassionate counsel of Lutgard of Aywières, a Cistercian nun who would become his spiritual mother.[65] Lutgard later became the subject of his final and most famous hagiography, often lauded as also being his most mature work.

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[60] Ibid., pp. 15–16.
[61] Newman, 'Introduction' to *The Collected Saints' Lives,* p. 10; Robert Sweetman, Dominican preaching in the southern Low Countries, 1240–1260 : materiae praedicabiles in the Liber de natura rerum and Bonum universale de apibus of Thomas of Cantimpré' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1988), p. 12.
[62] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 43. Smith notes that he was born in a bilingual region and likely would have grown up speaking both Dutch and French, in addition to his extensive Latin schooling.
[63] Newman, Introduction. *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 5–6.
[64] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 26.
[65] VLAEng, 2.38, pp. 266–267, n. 208, where Newman notes the connotation that these sins were likely of a sexual nature and illustrate his struggles with temptation as a young priest; VLA, 3.38, pp. 202–203: "internis tentationum stimulis agitari."

His next work, a *supplementum* to the *vita* of Marie of Oignies, completed around 1232, was written in at the behest of Giles, prior of Oignies, in honour of Marie's growing cult of relics, likely because of Thomas's professed admiration of Jacques.[66] Thomas also used this opportunity to reproach Jacques de Vitry, who had risen in the ranks to Bishop of Acre and then Cardinal of Tusculum, by depicting Marie as being critical of Jacques leaving Liège in favour of his career in the Church.[67] It was with Mary's *supplementum* that Thomas's interest in death, purgatorial care, and post-mortem miracles first began to find an outlet, culminating in his next *vita*: that of Christina of St. Trond, likely written during his novitiate just after he joined the Dominican Order in 1232.[68]

Given that the Dominicans were at the cutting edge of preaching and expanding on new means of purgatorial piety, it is not surprising that Thomas would have felt at home among their ranks, especially as he began to shift his hagiographical focus to the holy women of Liège. It is likely that Jacques de Vitry and Lutgard herself were deeply influential in Thomas's decision to join the Dominicans, but whatever the case, the mission of the Dominican Order aligned closely with the pastoral and educational care that was so dear to Thomas.[69] Thomas was then sent to the Dominican *studium* of St. Jacques in Paris from 1238 to 1240; passing through Ypres on his way back to Louvain, he wrote the *vita* of Margaret of Ypres (completed 1243) at the request of his colleague, Siger of Lille.[70] That Thomas was allowed to attend the *studium* is indicative of the extent

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[66] Hugh Feiss, Introduction, 'The Supplement to the Life of Mary of Oignies' in Anneke Mulder-Bakker (ed.), Hugh Feiss, OSB (trans.), *Mary of Oignies, Mother of Salvation*, (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 129–166.
[67] Brenda Bolton, 'Mary of Oignies: A Friend to the Saints' in Anneke Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *Mary of Oignies, Mother of Salvation*, (Turnhout, 2006), 199–220, pp 209–211; see also Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 50–51.
[68] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 60; Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' pp. 40, 74.
[69] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 40.
[70] Newman, *The Collected Saints Lives*, pp. 8–9; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 297–298.

to which he was respected as a scholar and author.[71] Not only would this have been proof of his skill as an academic, but also his ability as a preacher and confessor, as this education was meant to hone his preaching skills and rhetorical abilities.[72] This would prove to a worthwhile investment, as it was in Paris where Thomas completed his encyclopaedic work, the *Liber de natura rerum;* this work encompassed everything, from medicine to natural history, and was unique in how Thomas utilised his descriptions of animals and plants, even the cosmic order itself, to further his mission of proselytisation.[73]

Thomas's final hagiography was that of his beloved Lutgard of Aywières, completed in 1248 in exchange for a promised relic.[74] In 1250, Thomas attended the *studium generale* in Cologne, where he likely attended the lectures of Albertus Magnus on Aristotle, and began the last and most intimately autobiographical effort of his literary career: the *Bonum universale de apibus*, finished in 1263.[75] Shortly after the *studium* in Cologne, Thomas returned to Louvain and was appointed a preacher general there around 1251 or 1252.[76] The date of Thomas's death is unknown, but his return to the *vita* of John of Cantimpré provides some clues. His new prologue to the original *vita* provides evidence of a lasting fondness for his first spiritual home, twenty-three years after he began the *vita*:

> ... since I had not yet finished this book when I was living with you, I sent for a scribe, and in the space of scarcely a day, I finished what remained to be said about the death of the blessed John…. Dearest masters and brothers, receive the little gift that I send you, for I do not think you should spurn what is lacking to the origins of your foundation.[77]

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[71] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 65.
[72] Ibid., p. 65–66.
[73] Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' pp. 103–110, 139–144.
[74] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 56; *VLAEng* 3.19, pp. 290–292; *VLA*, 3. 19, pp. 208–209.
[75] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 72; Thomas of Cantimpré, *Les Exemples du "Livre des abeilles": Une Vision Médievale*, Henri Platelle (trans.), (Turnhout, 1997), p. 28.
[76] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 97.
[77] VICEng, prol., p. 57, VIC, Prologue, pp. 257–258.

However, at this point, Thomas described his waning health and expressed a desire that his former brothers should pray for him.[78] Despite his concerns with his impending mortality, it seems that Thomas hardly viewed old age as drudgery or the end of spiritual development; he described old age in the prologue as a stage of "consummation," with the ageing body soon to be cast off as the soul ascends to be with God.[79] Thomas's writing activity tapered off after 1263, following the publication of his *exempla* collection—while a concrete date cannot be defined, the current consensus is that he likely died between 1270 and 1272.

Manuscript Transmission and Readership for Christina's Vita

Christina's *vita* enjoyed no small amount of popularity, with the surviving manuscripts of her *vita* numbering second only to Marie of Oignies, and with extant translations of the life in Middle Dutch and English, in addition to the original Latin text.[80] For the most part, her *vita* appears mostly within the Low Countries, Northern France and Germany, areas in which Thomas was most active; however, her *vita* also appears in England later, particularly among Carthusian communities.[81] I will briefly examine the existing manuscripts and discuss their audiences before moving on to later studies of Christina's life. While by no means exhaustive, I hope to demonstrate the evolving use of Christina's *vita* as an educational and spiritual tool with diverse audiences. Christina's life was often

[78] VICEng, prol., p. 58, VJC, Prologue, p. 258.
[79] VICEng, prol., p. 58, VJC, Prologue, p. 257–258: "Tertius consummatiuus dicitur, quando ad decrepitam etatis uitam per membra defatigata deuenit, ut sic in labore diutino, excussis carnis exuuiis, ad auras libens euolaret."
[80] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 353; see also Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200–1350)*, (New York, 1998), p. 162; see Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift*, Table 1, p. 88, for list of Latin manuscripts, and Table 2, for list of vernacular manuscripts. p. 92.
[81] Folkerts, *Voobeeld op schrift*, pp. 89–90; Folkerts, 'Transmission and Appropriation,' p. 96–101.

paired with, not only the Liégeoise *vitae*, but religious treatises and more popular saints. For example, Spencer-Hall cites a seventeenth-century catalogue from the abbey of St. Trond that shows that the abbey housed the *vitae* of Christina, Ida of Léau, Ida of Nivelles, Lutgard of Aywières, Marie of Oignies, Margaret of Ypres, and Yvette of Huy.[82] Her *vita*, along with those of the other holy women of Liège, appealed across multiple religious orders as a model of sanctity and asceticism. While Folkerts has suggested that Christina's *vita* was largely copied and transmitted among and for monastic male audiences, Spencer-Hall has noted that one of the Middle Dutch versions of Christina's life, written by the Franciscan Gereart in the thirteenth-century, was commissioned by Femine van Hoye, a nun at the convent of Nonnemielen, which was previously St. Catherine's in St. Trond and which at one point was responsible for her relics.[83] This version was likely intended for public recitals for lay and religious audiences alike.[84] Likewise, Gereart emphasised much of Christina's post-mortem power, adding verses that celebrated her healing power from the grave; this indicates that not only were these recitals educational, but also intended to promote Christina's cult among the community who tended her relics.[85]

Folkerts notes that there are thirteen extant manuscripts of the full Latin version of Christina's life, with three shortened versions still surviving.[86] Of the existing

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[82] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 353*; see also* Anneke Mulder-Bakker, 'Holy Laywomen and Their Biographers in the Thirteenth Century' in Anneke Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *Living Saints of the Thirteenth Century: The Lives of Yvette, Anchoress of Huy, Juliana of Cornillon, Inventor of the Corpus Christi Feast, Margaret the Lame, Anchoress of Magdeburg*, (Turnhout: 2011), 1–42, pp. 39–40.

[83] Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift*, pp. 85–86; Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' pp. 13–21 for a comparison of Christina to lay saints such as Arnulf of Villers and why she may have been an appealing role model for Cistercian men; see also M. G. Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues: Monks, Lay Brothers, and Women in Thirteenth-Century Cistercian Saints' Lives' in Sharon Farmer and Carol Braun Pasternack (eds.), *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, (Minneapolis, 2003), 182–209.

[84] Ibid., pp. 93, 137–138; Mulder-Bakker, 'Living Saints,' p. 40.

[85] Ibid., p. 138–139.

[86] Ibid., p. 86: technically there are fourteen, as the *vita* appears in one manuscript twice; see appendix 2 in Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift*, p. 86; for a full list of manuscripts containing Christina's *vita*, pp. 241–242.

shortened versions, one version has two witnesses in manuscripts from Basel, while the second is included in a Carthusian English manuscript.[87] The third can be found in the *Sanctilogium* of Johannes Gielemans, written between 1470 and 1482, one of the largest hagiographic collections produced during the height of the *Devotio Moderna*.[88] Briefly, the *Devotio Moderna* was a reformist movement, begun in the late fourteenth-century by Geert Grote, that placed a heavy emphasis on the *vita apostolica*, emphasising poverty and the development of a deeply personal and intimate relationship with Christ, something resonant with laity and extant religious orders alike.[89] New religious orders sprang from the movement, such as the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, the Canons Regular of Windesheim, and the tertiaries of St. Francis; existing religious orders also underwent reforms inspired by this movement, as will be discussed in the second chapter.[90] Relevant to our purposes here, the movement greatly emphasised the copying and translating of *exempla* collections and hagiographies as both an act of pastoral care and a spiritual exercise.[91]Another shortened version can be found within the thirteenth-century *Speculum divinorum quorundam naturalium* by Henricus Bate van Mechelen.[92]

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[87] Ibid., pp. 86–87: Basel, UB, B IX 11, f. 92r–93v (s. xiiii *med.*); Basel, UB, A VIII 6, f. 210r–215r (s. xv *in.*); Oxford, BL, Bodley 240, pp. 708–712 (c. 1377). Ibid., pp. 86–87: Basel, UB, B IX 11, f. 92r–93v (s. xiiii *med.*); Basel, UB, A VIII 6, f. 210r–215r (s. xv *in.*); Oxford, BL, Bodley 240, pp. 708–712 (c. 1377).

[88] Ibid, pp. 87, 150–151.

[89] Ibid., p. 24; see also Rijcklof Hofman, 'Inwardness and Individualization in the Late Medieval Low Countries: An Introduction' in Rijcklof Hofman, Charles Caspers, Peter Nissen, Mathilde van Dijk, and Johan Oosterman (eds.), *Inwardness, Individualization, and Religious Agency in the Late Medieval Low Countries: Studies in The 'Devotio Moderna' and its Contexts*, (Turnhout, 2020), 1–34, pp. 14–16; for a brief biography of Geert Groote, see Rijcklof Hofman, "Geert Grote's Choice of a Religious Lifestyle Without Vows", in the same volume, pp. 51–66, and John Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2008), 12–14, pp. 45–47.

[90] Ibid., p. 24.

[91] Ibid., pp. 25–26; Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers*, p. 5, pp. 278–281; for a deeper discussion of this lifestyle, see 162–199 and pp. 266–304.

[92] Ibid., p. 87; Henricus's version is reproduced within Sylvain Piron and Armelle le Huërou, *Christine l'Admirable. Vie, chants et merveilles, précédé de Thomas de Cantimpré, Vie de Christine l'Admirable, éditée et traduite du latin en collaboration avec A. le Huërou*, (Bruxelles, 2021), pp. 176–179.

A full version of the Latin *vita* was formally published in 1572 by the Cologne Carthusian, Laurentius Surius.[93]

Folkerts divides the extant manuscripts into two clusters based on different variants in the texts, such as the addition of the two chapters by an unknown hand, or the addition of certain dates or locations: Cluster A is rooted in the two oldest Brabantine Cistercian texts of the *vita* and two slightly more recent texts from Carthusian monasteries around Trier and Koblenz.[94] The abbreviated Latin versions from Basel are related to Cluster A, as are three of the vernacular editions, including the thirteenth-century Middle Dutch version for the sisters at Nonnemielen, a fifteenth-century French translation, and a fifteenth-century Carthusian Middle English translation.[95] The Cistercian diffusion of Christina's *vita* is not surprising given the order's affinity for lay saints: Folkerts notes that at least 21 Cistercian manuscripts contain the lives of women from outside of the order, with the life of Marie of Oignies in eleven manuscripts and that of Christina in the two oldest Latin versions of her *vita*.[96] As will be explored further in the first chapter of this thesis, Christina's *vita* would have aligned with the physical labour and penances undertaken in the *vitae* of Cistercian lay brothers and sisters, as well as her ardent love for the Eucharist.[97]

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[93] Ibid., p. 87.
[94] Ibid., p. 103, Folkerts identifies the three oldest copies as the following manuscripts, Brussel, KB, 4459–70, Brussel, KB, 8060–64 and Brussel, KB, 8609–20.
[95] Ibid., pp. 116–117; for a list of the Middle English manuscripts and a discussion of their audiences, which also included lay and religious women, see the introduction to J.N. Brown, *Three Women of Liège: A Critical Edition of and Commentary on the Middle English Lives of Elizabeth of Spalbeek, Christina Mirabilis and Marie d'Oignies*, (Turnhout, 2008), 1–25, pp. 13–16, 18–20; for a complete list of the English manuscripts, see Patricia Deery-Kurtz, 'Mary of Oignies, Christine the Marvelous, and Medieval Heresy' in *Mystics Quarterly*, xiv, no. 4 (1988), 186–96, p. 195, n 3.
[96] Ibid., pp. 120–122.
[97] Ibid., pp. 120, 123; on bridal language and the overlap with Cistercian lay brothers, see Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' pp. 13–14; on this language within the life of Arnulf of Villers, see Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' pp. 188–189, 192–194.

Cluster B, meanwhile, was linked mostly to the fifteenth-century *Devotio Moderna* movement, with manuscripts from the Brothers of the Common Life, the Regulars of Windesheim, and the Friars of the Cross.[98] I will go into more detail on this reform movement within religious orders in a later discussion of the manuscript transmission of the *Dialogus miraculorum* in the second chapter, as this movement would come to influence extant mendicant movements and the utilisation of educational texts. The one exception within this cluster is a manuscript from the Cistercian convent of Ter Kameren (MS, KB, 8609–20) which combines Christina's *vita* with those of Alice of Schaerbeek, Ida of Nivelles, Lutgard of Aywières, and Margaretha of Maagdenburg.[99] Christina's *vita* enjoyed a renaissance of sorts with the renewed focus on the use of *exempla* and hagiographical texts to instruct as more religious orders turned their attention to reformation—something not dissimilar to the zeal of combatting heresy during Thomas's lifetime. Indeed, another manuscript in the "B" cluster, KB, 4459–70 from Villers, which provided the basis for multiple texts published in the *Acta Sanctorum*, is a perfect illustration of an earlier, thirteenth/fourteenth-century text taken and used in a new devotional context in the fifteenth century. Like the Ter Kameren manuscript, it paired Christina's *vita* with those of other Liégeoises, and mainstream saints such Anthony of Padua, as well as prayers and examples, including a dialogue between Christ and a beguine on the virtues she ought to possess; also included are different prayers, treatises, and historiography, including the *De quadam virgine ordinis Cisterciensis* which describes the mystical experiences of a Cistercian nun, and a prayer by Arnulf of Villers.[100] Folkerts notes within the manuscript that a sixteenth-century hand underlined

[98] Ibid., p. 116.
[99] Ibid., p. 123, Folkerts notes a similar pairing in a later manuscript (KB, 70 H 49) from IJsselstein in the Netherlands that combines the *vitae* of Elisabeth of Spalbeek, Marie of Oignies, Ida of Léau, and Catherine of Siena.
[100] Ibid., p. 128.

passages from Christina's *vita*, such as her penances and miraculous lactation, but most significantly noted that "like Christ and his apostles" Christina went barefoot in following Christ.[101] The motif of imitating and following the "naked Christ" regularly recurred within in later medieval reformist writings, and these annotations in Christina's *vita* indicate that her model of piety was still appealing centuries after her original *vita*. This situates Christina's *vita* within a larger context, both in terms of specific Cistercian models piety and mystical experiences, as well as within an educational and commemorative context.[102] Folkerts cites the colophon at the beginning of the manuscript, noting that it was exchanged from Villers in 1568 to the library of the regular canons at Sint-Maartensdal in Leuven who had joined the Chapter of Windesheim in 1564, and who expanded their library massively during this period.[103]

Folkerts has discussed the role of the Carthusian order in copying and transmitting Christina's *vita* in England in the later Middle Ages, but urges caution in linking this to pastoral care: as a strictly enclosed order, they did not need to preach.[104] However, Carthusians may have found the exercise of copying and translating Christina's *vita*, among those of other holy women of Liège, to be spiritually beneficial, as well as useful educational tools for illiterate members of the order.[105] The Carthusians also would have loaned books out to other religious orders and to laity for copying or reading.[106] Similar to the other religious orders discussed here, the Carthusians also paired Christina's *vita* with other hagiographies and religious treatises: for example, the fifteenth-century

[101] Ibid., p. 131.
[102] Ibid., pp. 128–129.
[103] Ibid., p. 129.
[104] Folkerts, 'The Transmission and Appropriation,' p. 96; Brown suggests that this may have been to keep the beguine lives, which often flirted with unorthodoxy, safely kept away in Carthusian libraries in *Three Women of Liège*, p. 20.
[105] Ibid., p. 97.
[106] Ibid., p. 97; see also Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago, 2007), pp. 44–46 and 50–56.

Oxford manuscript, MS Douce 114, situates a Middle English prose translation of Christina's life among the Middle English *vitae* of Elisabeth of Spalbeek and Marie of Oignies, and a Middle English version of the *Horologium* by Henry Suso.[107] Still another manuscript, from the Carthusian monastery of Beatusberg near Koblenz, includes Christina's life among the heroes of the Dominican order, including St. Dominic and the martyr Peter of Verona.[108] Similar to the Cistercians, Carthusians saw a model of asceticism, humility, and inner reform in Christina.[109] This can be seen in annotations of Christina's *vita* found in an English Carthusian manuscript donated and possibly copied by John Blacman, the hagiographer of Henry VI in the mid–fifteenth century.[110] Multiple episodes in Christina's *vita* were underlined, whether by Blacman or a different reader. Carthusians appeared particularly interested in the miraculous oil that came from Christina's breasts, noting parallels between Christina's divine nurturance from God and the Eucharist, something that also would have appealed across readership in different religious communities.[111]

Finally, eight fifteenth-century manuscripts containing the Latin *vita* of Christina can be found among the reformist movements of the *Devotio Moderna*, as well as one

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[107] Ibid., pp. 92–93; Brown, *Three Women of Liège*, p. 11; see also Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life*, pp. 16–17, for Suso's influence on Geert Grote and the transmission of the *Horologium* within the *Devotio Moderna*.
[108] Ibid., p. 99.
[109] Ibid., pp. 98–99.
[110] Ibid., p. 91; Brown, *Three Women of Liège*, pp. 11, 19.
[111] Ibid., p. 92; Folkerts, 'Voorbeld op schrijft,' p. 87 and p. 131, where Folkerts points out similar annotations surrounding Christina's miraculous "lactation", in the fourteenth-century Cistercian manuscript of her *vita* from the monastery at Villers, Brussels, KB, 4459–70 (3161), fols. 170r and 172r. and within the shorter adaptation of her life found in a fifteenth-century manuscript from the Canons Regular of Sainte-Croix-de-La-Bretonnerie in Paris, fol. 107r; on the significance of lactation, A. E. Passenier, 'The Life of Christina Mirabilis Miracles and the Construction of Marginality' in *Women And Miracle Stories*, (Leiden, 2001), pp 145–178, pp. 173–174; C. W. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, (Berkeley, 1987), pp. 122–123, pp. 131–132, and C.W. Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and The Human Body in Medieval Religion* (Brooklyn, 1991), pp. 93–97, 101–114 for Christ-as-mother and iconography around breast-feeding.

abridged version of her life found in Gieleman's *Sanctilogium* and one Middle Dutch translation of her *vita* and that of Marie of Oignies created by the Regulars of Windesheim at St. Agnes at Neerbosch.[112] This was not uncommon within the *Devotio Moderna* movement, as new orders situated themselves within wider spiritual traditions and struggled against, not necessarily an external heresy, but rather an inwards relaxation of discipline or spiritual vigilance. Folkerts notes that, within three of these manuscripts, from Rookloster, Clairlieu, and IJesselstein, Christina's *vita*, again paired within these manuscripts with other Liégeoise *vitae* and theological treatises, was meant to inspire meditation rather than imitation in the reader, a call to remember the saints themselves and to reflect on their spiritual gifts.[113] The Middle Dutch translation by Regulars of Windesheim at St. Agnes commissioned by the sub prioress Maralde van Sallant, is of particular interest for the purposes of this thesis, as Christina's *vita* appears alongside a translation of the Dominican Johannes Gobi's *Historia de spiritu Guidonis*, a dialogue between Gobi and a spirit in purgatory.[114] Following the previous pairings of the lives of the Liègeoises and religious treatises, it is possible that Christina's *vita* being read alongside this text provided a cohesive educational tool on purgatory or an exercise in meditation and remembrance for deceased members of the convent. In any case, Christina's *vita* resonated across multiple centuries and languages and was still utilised as an educational and spiritual tool well beyond her lifetime.

[112] Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift*, pp. 129–130, 203–204, 222–224, see also the second appendix in the work for a full list of the manuscripts containing Christina's *vita*, p. 248; Ibid., p. 198, Folkerts notes the importance of commemoration among new and old religious orders during this period, see also Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers*, pp. 6–7, 131–137 for examples of memorials.
[113] Ibid., pp. 177–178.
[114] Ibid., pp. 200–201.

Christina as Beguine or Part of the Mulieres Religiosae

While this thesis discusses purgatorial piety as a means of combating threats against Church authority, it is by no means a comprehensive discussion of existing heresies nor will it enter into the debate on whether or not groups such as the Cathars existed in a formally organised way.[115] However, for the sake of better understanding Christina within the political and theological movements of her time, especially in terms of the Church's own understanding of heretical groups or the beguine movement, it will be useful briefly outline some of the scholarship here.[116] While none of the holy women of Liège in this thesis explicitly described themselves as being part of beguine communities or lived in beguinages, they remained examples of the female lay piety that inspired many of the beguines as women seeking an apostolic life while still in the world. It is helpful to understand the rise of the *mulieres religiosae*, influencing popular piety (and causing their own controversies) even as Christina was beginning her pastoral career.

The definition of a "heretic" was often as fraught as that of a "beguine," and this influenced Church responses toward them. Earlier scholars on the movement, such as Grundmann, believed that all mediaeval religious movements sprang and diverged in legitimacy from a common desire to pursue the *vita apostolica*, a life of poverty, chastity, and preaching; this included groups that later would be considered heretical, such as the

[115] Deborah Shulevitz, 'Historiography of heresy: The debate over 'Catharism' in medieval Languedoc' in *History Compass*, xvii, no. 1 (2019), 1–11; for a detailed discussion of this ongoing debate, see Antonio Sennis, 'Questions about the Cathars' in Antonio Sennis (ed.), *Cathars in Question*, (Woodbridge, 2016), pp. 1–20.

[116] Dyan Elliott, 'Violence against the Dead: The Negative Translation and *damnatio memoriae* in the Middle Ages' in *Speculum,* xcii, 4 (2017), 1020–1055. This idea of post-mortem punishments towards heretical bodies as a means of both subverting potential cults of relics and as a means of keeping them out of their communities will be particularly important in later chapters when discussing both Gordon and Lauro's works on revenants and pestilence as indicators underlying sin or heresy.

Waldensians.[117] In a much later study, however, Barber notes that given the thoroughness of rebuttals from the Church, surviving "Cathar" documents, like the *Book of Two Principles*, and the testimonies of ex-Cathars like Ranieri Sacconi, there is little reason to doubt that there was some kind of cohesive dualist theology that existed and organised independently of the Roman Church.[118] Meanwhile, in a 2016 collection of essays, *The Cathars in Question*, the very nature of their existence is called into question, with Pegg noting that "Cathars" was not the term used by heretics themselves, but rather a later designation formed both through the persecutions and pre-emptive responses of the Church to perceived dualist beliefs, and the later 'inventions' of historians.[119] Regardless of the true nature of "Catharism," whether it was institutional and replete with its own infrastructure or lay people swept up in larger political conflicts, the Roman Church was centralising its power at this time in response to perceived threats—and in response to the rise of new lay movements, which needed to remain answerable to its authority.[120]

As Simons has observed, the Low Countries, where the beguines thrived, became known for their dissent, often centred around lay criticisms of the clergy.[121] This potential for dissent within these female lay movements provides some degree of context for Thomas's insistent depiction of Christina's reverence for priests, as well as the emphasis on these women's relationships with their spiritual advisors found in many of the Liégeoise *vitae*.[122] As more stringent measures were taken against heretics, the Church

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[117] Herbert Grundmann, *Religiose Bewegungen im Mittelalter*, Steven Rowan (trans.), (Notre Dame, 1995), pp. 53–56.
[118] Malcolm Barber, *Cathars: Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages*, (2nd ed. London, 2017), pp. 94–95.
[119] M.G. Pegg, 'The Paradigm of Catharism; or, the Historians' Illusion' in Antonio Sennis (ed.), *Cathars in Question*, (Woodbridge, 2016), 21–52, pp. 21–22, 35, and 49.
[120] Ibid., pp. 74–75.
[121] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 15–19.
[122] Rosalynn Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices: The Discernment of Spirits in the Writing of Late-medieval Women Visionaries*, (Martlesham, 1999), pp. 57–61; see also John Coakley, 'Friars as Confidants of Holy Women in Medieval Dominican Hagiography' in Renate

regarded lay movements with a more critical eye to nip any potential heterodoxy in the bud; beguines who were not affiliated with or under the charge of a specific order were increasingly at risk of being caught in the crossfire. This is vital to bear in mind when discussing Christina, someone who remained free from the authority of a spiritual advisor or convent for her entire life.

McDonnell, one of the earliest scholars of the beguines, noted the "patrician and bourgeois" nature of the movement during most of the thirteenth-century, and that the beguine movement occurred in response to the *Frauenfrage*, with their role as educators and caregivers providing an honourable and affordable alternative to marriage or the convent.[123] Simons expands on these ideas, examining the demographics of working class and poor women in the beguinages, as well as the networks of care that women provided to each other, noting that many women already lived in urban areas as they sought work to support themselves.[124] Simons also counters McDonnell's argument, noting that many of the women were attempting to avoid marriage altogether, with the beguinage offering a permanent, relatively stable way of life outside of marriage or joining a religious order. It was precisely this, as well as the active roles that many beguines took within their communities, which may have made it so attractive to so many women.[125] Miller explores the women's active roles in the silk trade in Paris and expands on Simons' work concerning their charity work and support networks between wealthy and poor beguines.[126] Miller's work also focuses on royal, clerical, and lay support beguinages

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Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (eds.), *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, (Ithaca NY, 1991), pp. 222–246, p. 223.; see also Brian McGuire, 'The Cistercians and Friendship: An Opening to Women' in J.A. Nichols and L.T. Shank (eds.), *Hidden Springs: Cistercian Monastic Women*, (2 vols, Kalamazoo, 1995), i, 171–200, pp. 187–195.

[123] Ernest McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture, with Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene*, (New Brunswick, 1954), pp. 120, 267.

[124] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 7–9, 91, 97.

[125] Ibid., p. 111.

[126] Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris*, pp. 50–53, 74–78.

received, particularly in return for their intercessory work, indicating the spiritual prestige of patronising beguinages.[127]

These active, independent roles found within beguine communities and the Liégeoise *vitae* have been deeply relevant in studying Christina's freedom of movement, as well as the relationship between Christina and her patron, Louis of Looz. Christina lived independently of any religious affiliation, only occasionally boarding at the convent of St. Catherine's. She would later rise to some degree of influence within her community despite her lack of either spiritual advisor or religious community to shape her ministry. This thesis will argue that this freedom was indicative of her not needing the same spiritual guidance as someone who had died and returned from the afterlife, rather than simply the grey area that some beguines were at risk of occupying. However, this also meant that it was vital for Thomas to emphasise her greater obedience to the Church, so that her life could not be interpreted as anything other than orthodox. This is not to say that all solitary *mulieres religiosae* automatically fell under suspicion. For example, Mulder-Bakker studies the paths of worship that some of the holy women of Liège pursued as anchoresses, and the influence they wielded in these roles, often viewed by their contemporaries as being above any potential corruption.[128] Anchoresses took on roles as advisors and prophets, esteemed in the purity of their lives and their divinely given wisdom outside of but still complementary to the intellectual sphere of the clergy.[129]

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[127] Ibid., pp. 44–45, 53–55.

[128] Anneke Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses: The Rise of the Urban Recluse in Medieval Europe*, (Philadelphia, 2005), pp. 35–39 and 130–34.

[129] Ibid., pp. 35–39, p. 90; for discussions about the intuitive nature of feminine knowledge as typified in Hildegard of Bingen's life, see A. C. Bartlett, 'Miraculous Literacy and Textual Communities in Hildegard of Bingen's Scivias' in *Mystics Quarterly*, xviii, no. 2 (1992), 43–55, pp. 47–48; for a more detailed discussion on these dynamics among the holy women of Liège and their male collaborators, see John Coakley, 'James of Vitry and the Other World of Mary of Oignies' in *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power: Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators*, (New York, 2006), 68–88, pp. 78–88; for more on Thomas's relationships with these women in particular, especially when compared to Jacques de Vitry, see John Coakley, 'Thomas of

This perception of women's unique receptivity to a uniquely intimate connection with God is constantly found within Thomas's female *vitae*, including Christina's. This receptivity to divinely given wisdom also appears in female saints much earlier than Christina, such as Hildegard of Bingen, who likened her reception of divine wisdom to a ray of sun, warming everything around and within her and making her able intuitively grasp the divine.[130] Christina, never mentioned as receiving any formal education, was able to eloquently recite and discuss the Psalms in Latin after her resurrection, presumably through the divine revelations she received.[131] For their perceived purity and wisdom Mulder-Bakker emphasises that these anchoresses and recluses, far from being isolated and irrelevant, were often beloved and influential "living saints" in their communities.[132]

Certainly, Piron's later 2021 study of Christina's life focuses on the shamanic elements of her life, such as her more direct spiritual communications with God.[133] Piron notes that this connection made her able to see the spiritual status and prescribe practices of care, not just to Christian communities, but also to Jewish communities, particularly for Shabbat.[134] Piron notes a possible appearance of Christina in an exemplum concerning a Christian matron who returns from the dead found within a significant Jewish educational text, the *Sefer Hasidim*. While I will discuss Christina in relation to Thomas's

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Cantimpré and Female Sanctity' in Rachel Fulton and Bruce Holsinger (eds.), *History in the Comic Mode: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person*, (New York, 2007), pp 44–55.

[130] Bartlett, 'Miraculous Literacy,' pp. 47–48.

[131] For more on the phenomenon of xenoglossia and the ambiguity of intuitive knowledge, particularly anxieties around it being demonic rather than divine, see Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' p. 751; while this could also be attributed to her picking up Latin from the convent community at St. Catherine's, it does not stand to reason that those who witnessed this would have been as impressed with her theological holding forth if she had simply picked up in the convent.

[132] Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses*, pp. 198–199.

[133] Piron and le Huërou, *Christine l'Admirable*, pp. 135–143.

[134] Ibid., pp. 41–42; see also Elisheva Baumgarten, 'A Tale of a Christian Matron and Sabbath Candles: Religious Difference, Material Culture and Gender in Thirteenth-Century Germany' in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, xx, no. 1 (2013), 83–99.

views on Judaism in the third chapter, it is worth noting here that the author of the *Sefer Hasidim* does not explicitly mention Christina and may have only based the character on her as a recognizable local oddity.[135] Similarly, while Thomas does not portray Jewish souls negatively or positively in Christina's *vita* or confirm their fates in the afterlife, given his later treatment of Jewish conversion stories, this compassion was likely not meant to imply a lack of need for conversion. Rather, Piron notes that the lack of hostility between Christina and the Jewish community may have been a rare glimpse of Christina herself, particularly given Thomas's hostility towards the Jewish community.[136]

Meanwhile, the responses of clergy to beguines ran a wide gamut, from hostile to admiring. Miller examines the clerical and lay support of beguines even after the Council of Vienne (1311–1312) and the decrees of Pope Clement V, which condemned beguines but paradoxically allowed for "honest" women to continue living as beguines, leading to all manner of legal confusion.[137] The later steps taken by Pope John XXII through the *Ratio recta* (1318) and the *Cum de mulieribus* (1321) placed pressure on bishops to bring beguines to order, and have sometimes been cited as the "decline" of the beguines. However, in Miller's and Kolpacoff Deane's respective studies of the beguinages of Paris and Würzburg demonstrate, this was not universally true, and beguines still received a great deal of popular support.[138] Coakley has also written about these dynamics, noting that women provided a spiritually complementary "other," presenting an ecstatic form of

[135] Baumgarten, 'Tale of A Christian Matron,' pp. 94–96.
[136] Piron and le Huërou, *Christine l'Admirable*, pp. 41–42.
[137] For examples of the many confusing acts meant to bring the beguines more firmly under the authority of the Church, see Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris*, pp. 163–164 and 167–172.
[138] J.K. Deane, 'Geistliche Schwestern: The Pastoral Care of Lay Religious Women in Medieval Würzburg' in Fiona Griffiths (ed.), *Partners in Spirit*, (Turnhout, 2014), 237–270, pp. 238–240.

spiritual intimacy that men felt they could not experience in the same way within their intellectual spaces within the Church.[139]

Other scholarship has navigated the complicated relationship between the male hagiographer and the female saint, especially in identifying the agency and authority of the female saint within what is usually a male portrayal of her life. Coakley's work has been integral in this, comparing how of Jacques de Vitry and Thomas of Cantimpré interpreted the ministry of Marie of Oignies.[140] Coakley observes that while Thomas acknowledged the divine inspiration and power of the holy women, he was far more wary than Jacques de Vitry, emphasising, even in a borderline unorthodox life as that of Christina, the need for orthodox guidance and Church authority.[141] Mooney has compared the relatively active voices of saints such as Hildegard of Bingen, in their own words, as opposed to the passive, mystic voice that male hagiographers often gave them.[142] Indeed, the concern for where women's authority is justified is a prevalent theme among studies on the women of Liège, particularly in their relationships with clergy and the desire to distance themselves from heretics, who were said to allow women to preach and hold roles of authority. Deery-Kurtz explores the role of these *vitae* in combating heresy and addressing this tension: for example, Christina's love for Creation and the reconciliation of her spirit and body directly counters the dualist beliefs the Church claimed to be combatting.[143] This is significant given the association of the female body with physical and moral weakness, especially when contrasted with Christina's "subtle" purgatorial

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[139] Coakley, *Women, Men*, pp. 1–3; see also T.S. Miller, 'What's in a Name?: Clerical Representations of Beguines of Parisian Beguines (1200–1328)' in *Journal of Medieval History,* xxxiii (2014), 60–86, p. 76.
[140] Ibid., 68–70.
[141] Ibid., p. 70.
[142] C.M. Mooney, 'Voice, Gender, and the Portrayal of Sanctity' in C. M. Mooney (ed.), *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters*, (Philadelphia, 1999), 1–15, p. 10.
[143] Deery-Kurtz, 'Mary of Oignies,' pp. 189–190.

body which rejects worldly goods and typical gender roles.[144] Christina counters dualist beliefs about the soul and body, demonstrably fulfilling the promise of the soul reunited with the body on the final day of judgement.[145]

Mendicant orders such as the Dominicans, despite the policies of their orders, developed close relationships with beguine communities, with the care of *mulieres religiosae* often regarded as mutually spiritually beneficial to both parties. Certainly, Thomas had a great deal of this exchange between those in the spiritual and secular worlds in mind throughout his career. For example, purgatorial piety itself was something that took care for the dead out of the monastic spheres it had thrived in and made aspects of it practicable for those living "in the world." While Christina encouraged the more traditional offerings for the dead such as almsgiving and fasting, Thomas later advocated within the *Bonum universale de apibus* for the even simpler acts of weeping and remembrance as being beneficial for the care of the dead.[146] Given Christina's propensity for wailing with compassion or grief for individuals at their deathbeds and publicly mourning in the streets, encouraging remembrance and the open expression of sorrow, it is possible that Thomas saw the value of this act and incorporated it into his own recommendations.[147] While offering Masses for the dead was still the most important offering on behalf of the dead and something that could only be *paid* for, as opposed to participated in, by the laity, the accessibility of tears and remembrance could be done by everyone, regardless of means. In this respect, it is not necessarily a given that all pastoral

[144] Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 261–265.
[145] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp.362–363, and Passenier, 'The Life of Christina,' pp. 175–177; see also Sharon Farmer, *Surviving Poverty in Medieval Paris: Gender, Ideology, and the Daily Lives of the Poor*, (Ithaca, 2002), p. 40.
[146] VCM, 3.26, p. 655 and VCM, 5.50, p. 659; weeping was also recommended as a suffrage for those in purgatory, see BUA, 2.II, 53., 16–17, pp. 938–940.
[147] VCM, 3.26, p. 655.

pursuits or contributions made by beguines or *mulieres religiosae* would be regarded with hostility: certainly for Thomas, it is apparent that lay piety coloured the practices that he recommended and placed women at the centre of within the *Bonum universale de apibus*.

In understanding the wide array of opinions held on the beguines and their work by clergy and laity alike, as well as how often they trod a fine line between heresy and orthodoxy, Christina's sometimes ambiguous position can be properly contextualised. It also, then, comes as no surprise that one of the beguines' most well-known ministries was purgatorial care of the dead: an ambiguous community in their own right.

Christina as a Living Relic or New Martyr

The impact of Christina's status as a resuscitated woman on her pastoral work has been studied before, often within the context of the physical nature of the ministries of the women of Liège, such as their fasts or prayers. Cazelles has noted that to discuss a saint was to necessarily discuss their body, as hagiographies were usually centred around their relics and commemorating them.[148] Likewise, both Cazelles and Carozzi have looked at the "fragmentation" of the saint's body while alive or dead, both as indicative of their ultimate fate as relics and as the future wholeness of the body at resurrection.[149] Elliott analysed Christina and the holy women of Liège within the context of the Church attempting to create and promote a new "cult of martyrs" to encourage piety and counter

[148] Brigitte Cazelles, *Le Corps de sainteté: d'après Jehan Bouche d'Or, Jehan Paulus et quelques vies des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, (Geneva, 1982), pp. 47–48.
[149] See Carozzi, 'Douceline et les autres,' pp. 256–259, 266–267, for discussion of the saint as a relic while still alive in the life of Douceline of Digne (d. 1274); Cazelles, *Le corp de sainteté*, pp. 48, 64 for discussion of the saint as the "living dead" and, conversely, conveyor of life after their death.

potential popular sympathy with executed heretics.[150] With their emphasis on self-mortification and the miraculous visions and works enacted through their bodies, Elliott describes these holy women as being "relics before their time," citing how even Jacques de Vitry cast an acquisitive eye on the finger bone of Marie of Oignies while she was still alive: an impulse that he would share with Thomas.[151] Carozzi notes that the ultimate destiny of a saint was to become a relic, a lifeless object, yet Spencer-Hall has more accurately maintained the "liveliness" of the relics of the "living Veronicas" of Liège, citing the active participation of these women in the post-mortem activity surrounding their bodies, particularly the translations of their relics, and their intercessions.[152]

The Church was not unequivocally comfortable with this new cult, but faced with the relative failures of their attempts to revivify the cult of saints by encouraging the veneration of new martyrs such as Peter of Castro, whose murder in 1208 Elliott describes as sparkling the Albigensian Crusade, or later, Peter of Verona, a Dominican brother and inquisitor murdered while preaching to heretics in 1252, there was a need to revivify the cult of martyrs with new blood.[153] With heretics potentially garnering sympathy by mirroring martyrdom and growing concern over perceived dualist theologies negating the orthodox interpretation of the afterlife and care for the dead, a great deal of the *exempla* and hagiographies of the period were centred on death and the fate of the soul in the

[150] Elliott, *Proving Women*, pp. 59, 67–68; see also Elliott, 'Violence against the Dead,' p. 1020 for an analysis of the history of the *damnatio memoriae*, a practice which entailed the destruction and scattering of the remains of heretics or excommunicates. Here, the damned dead served as a negative mirror to their saintly, orthodox counterparts, with the potential to form a cornerstone for a devotion that ran contrary to the authority of the Roman Church.
[151] Elliott, *Proving Women*, p. 70; see also Katrien Heene, 'Hagiography and Gender: A Tentative Case-Study on Thomas of Cantimpré' in Etienne Renard, Michel Trigalet, Xavier Hermand, and Paul Bertrand (eds.), *'Scribere sanctorum gesta': Recueil d'estudes d'hagiographies medieval offert a Guy Philippart*, (Turnhout, 2005), 109–123, p. 114.
[152] Carozzi, 'Douceline et les autres,' p. 266; and Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 251–254.
[153] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 61.

afterlife.[154] This project intends to expand on this idea of a "living relic" by arguing that Christina represented a reciprocal relationship with the personal dead. Rather than returning to her community seeking help for her own soul or because she was called upon for aid or veneration, she returns voluntarily.

Bartlett and Geary have focused on the role of the relationship with the dead, emphasising the importance of its reciprocal nature.[155] Yet, it was not only the holy dead who rebuked, set examples, and healed: Caciola examined the role of the wraith and the revenant in *exempla* collections and sermons, who often served as negative examples of the consequences of immorality or a "bad" death, returning to their families to warn them to avoid their fate.[156] This is particularly compelling, especially given that the cause of revenants returning is often presented as a demonic possession of their dead bodies, enabled by the sinful life or bad death of the individual in question. This would prove relevant to initial reactions to Christina's first resurrection, and will be discussed more in depth later in this review of literature. Walker Bynum discusses the concern with material continuity and the eschatological question of purgatory, with the ultimate resurrection and reunion of body and soul as something that set Christians apart from the heretical sects.[157] Thus, purgatorial piety became critical in characterising the *mulieres religiosae*, asserting the legitimacy of the Church, and forming a distinct orthodox identity.

The defining pastoral act of many of the holy women of Liège became their intense physical self-mortification, matched by periods of ecstatic raptures and agonising

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[154] Elliott, 'Violence Against the Dead,' pp. 1043 and 1054.
[155] Robert Barlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?*, (New Jersey, 2015), p. 96; Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages*, (Ithaca, 1994), p. 90.
[156] Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants and Ritual,' pp. 7–10.
[157] C.W. Bynum, 'Material Continuity, Personal Survival, and the Resurrection of the Body: A Scholastic Discussion in Its Medieval and Modern Contexts' in *History of Religions*, xxx, no.1 (1990), 51–85, pp. 52–53.

grief.[158] In particular, many of these women, particularly Christina and Lutgard, found their mourning a devotional act in and of itself, with their reactions often based on their direct knowledge of a person's spiritual status. Most of the scholarly work on the raptures and mortifications of the beguines links their unique devotion, not only to a new focus on affective piety, but the unique relationship to the physical and emotional that mediaeval women were said to possess. Sweetman, among many other scholars, has covered Christina's mourning and purgatorial suffering as a mode of imitable care (or, as Smith argues, less than imitable, with the saint becoming effectively monstrous in her bizarre body.)[159] This thesis argues, along similar lines, that much of Christina's acts of penance, like almsgiving, fasting, and weeping, would influence later acts of care for the dead that Thomas recommended. Within the self-mortifications and ecstasies of the Liégeoises, there was agency and intense compassion, something that would endear the beguines to their communities, even as the dramatic nature of their penances often drew mockery from their critics.[160]

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[158] J.A. McNamara, 'The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages' in Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (eds.), *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, (Ithaca, 1999), 199–221, pp. 210–214; see also J. A. McNamara, 'The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy: Clerical Authority and Female Innovation in the Struggle with Heresy' in Ulrike Wiethaus (ed.), *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, (Syracuse NY, 2004), 9–84, pp. 13–20 for discussions on how women used painful penances and self-denial to counter perceived heretic beliefs; Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, pp. 143–146, 195–196, 240; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 17–20, 63–64, 234; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 11–17, 58–74.

[159] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 80; see also Sweetman, 'Thomas of Cantimpré, *Mulieres Religiosae*,' pp. 616–622.

[160] Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 'Satirical Views of the Beguines in Northern French Literature' in Juliette Dor, Lesley Johnson, and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (eds.), *New Trends in Feminine Spirituality: The Holy Women of Liège and Their Impact*, (Turnhout, 1999), 237–249, see criticisms and mockery of the beguines in pp. 237–245; B.M. Kienzle, 'The Prostitute-Preacher: Patterns of Polemic against Medieval Waldensian Women Preachers' in B.M. Kienzle and P.J. Walker (eds.), *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*, (Berkeley, 1998), 99–113, pp. 101–105; on accusations of heresy against the beguines and beghards, particularly how their behavior was seen to mirror those of heretics, see J.C.–Schmitt, *Mort d'une hérésie: l'eglise et les clercs face aux béguines et aux béghards du Rhin supérieur du XIVe au XVe siècle,* (Paris, 1978), pp. 64–70, particularly the fourth chapter, 'L'impossible distinction,' pp. 96–114; see also A.E. Passenier, "Women on the Loose.' Stereotypes of Women

Bynum observes that the emphasis on hunger and fasting in these women's lives was something that, given their relationship with the preparation of food and feeding, made their penance uniquely related to their roles as women.[161] Meanwhile, McNamara observes that this suffering was both devotional and a chance for agency, a chance to be an active "giver."[162] Newman and Miller have discussed the role of courtly love and works such as the *Regle des fins amans* in the lives of the beguines, and the identification of their own suffering for Christ as being that of a languishing lover, desiring to match Christ's Passion with their own. Christina's own suffering is often identified as an imitation of Christ's redemptive suffering, and she often exhorts the world to return God's infinite, passionate love with their own.[163]

Christina's purgatorial pastoral work also echoes the role that the beguines (among other women) played in the care of the dead: Simons refers to the beguines as "specialists of death," noting their roles in funerals and patron requests for their intercessory prayers for the dead, as does Miller, who discusses the role in praying for the living and the dead in the four stages of prayer for beguines in their communities.[164] This link with the care of the dead further placed beguine devotions in a realm of marginality, a realm where Christina would carry out most of her ministry.[165]

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in the Stories of Medieval Beguines" in Ria Kloppenborg and W. J. Hanegraaff (eds.), *Female Stereotypes in Religious Traditions*, (Leiden, 1995), 61–88.

[161] Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 189–194.

[162] McNamara, 'The Need to Give,' p. 204.

[163] VCM, 3. 37, p. 656; for discussions of this passionate language especially within the context of courtly love, see Barbara Newman, 'La Mystique Courtoise: Thirteenth-Century Beguines and the Art of Love' in *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature*, (Philadelphia, 1995), 137–167, and Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris*, pp. 112–116, 118–125 discussing this courtly love as translated to a holy love for God within the devotional *La Règle des fins amans*.

[164] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 78–80; and Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris*, pp. 115–119.

[165] Passenier, 'The Life of Christina,' pp. 149–150.

Thomas and Christina's Pastoral Work: A Purgatorial Dream Team?

This thesis will focus largely on Thomas of Cantimpré's pastoral focus on the mutually intercessory relationship between the living and the dead, and how Christina's identity as a once-dead woman interacts with his pastoral agenda. While this project will focus on Christina within the context of the works of Thomas and his contemporaries concerning the dead and their care, other scholars have focused on the credibility and intention of her biography, trying to place her as a historical figure with or without the fantastic miracles attributed to her. The earliest examples of this work originated with scholars from the Low Countries trying to historically situate the life of Christina. J.H. Borman wrote at length about the Middle Dutch version of her life in the mid-nineteenth century, and provided an in-depth analysis of the translation of her life.[166] However, some of the earliest work that attempted to make sense of Christina as a historical figure (rather than simply focusing on the text and educational or spiritual function of her *vita*) was that of Hector Nimal, who was part of the Redemptorist order responsible for Christina's relics.[167] Nimal's work discussed both Christina's legacy in St. Trond as a beloved (if odd) saint and attempted to contextualise her life by discussing the credibility of Thomas's account, looking at the contemporaneous nature of the *vita*, written only eight years after the saint died in 1224, and the witnesses he was able to utilise from her hometown.[168] He also established Thomas's intellectual reputation, citing the time he spent studying in Cologne and Paris, and his methodological approach to Christina's life, noting that Thomas's dogged approach to collecting testimonies suggests that the *vita* was

[166] J.H. Bormans, *Leven van sinte Christina de Wonderbare, in oud-dietsche rijmen*, (Ghent, 1850).
[167] R.P.H. Nimal, *Vie de Sainte Christine l'Admirable, est-elle authentique? Suivi d'un mot de réponse aux Archives Belges*, (Liège, 1900), pp. 491–502.
[168] Ibid., p. 493.

not merely for clergy consumption but also to convince and compel the laity.[169] A few decades after Nimal, Simone Roisin wrote extensively about beguine hagiography and its Cistercian influences: while Roisin notes, as does McDonnell, the "gullibility" of Thomas in his fascination with the women mystics, she also acknowledged that, given his *vita* of Lutgard, Thomas knew what lent itself to a credible hagiography and wished to use Christina's remarkable life to edify with a memorable example.[170] This focus on Christina's credibility and the details of her historical life continued well into the mid twentieth century.[171]

It was in the late twentieth century that Thomas's focus on purgatorial suffrage, and Christina's role in carrying out and shaping this ideal began to take the centre stage. Grzebien and Sweetman wrote a great deal on the topic, with both scholars exploring Thomas's early life. Sweetman's 1988 thesis focuses on the evolution of Thomas's preaching career and "pastoral" aims as reflected in his encyclopaedia and *exempla* collection. Sweetman focuses on the evolution of these aims, noting that within the *De natura rerum*, Thomas was much more concerned with exhorting *religious* penitents to avoid future sin, while in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas demonstrated a vision of spiritual growth still attainable "in the [secular] world" and which "presupposed" and nurtured that growth by assimilating the religious life to the secular life.[172] This same vision can clearly be seen in Thomas's prescriptive and personal approach to intercessory purgatorial piety—as Sweetman notes, those who were "zealous for souls" like the Dominicans were not overly picky as to where those souls were to be found![173] However,

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[169] Ibid.
[170] Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, p. 53, 77; McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards*, pp. 54–56.
[171] P.J. Clerinx, *Christina de wonderbare: gedenkboek 1150–1950 / studiën en essais onder leiding van P. Clerinx*, (Leuven, 1950).
[172] Robert Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' p. 219.
[173] Ibid., p. 232.

while Sweetman would later go into depth on Christina's pastoral work, including observing that her *vita* was constructed more *for* its uniqueness than *despite* it, he did not explicitly link her influence to the suffrages outlined in the *Bonum universale de apibus.*[174] Sweetman returned to the visions of purgatory within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, particularly in the inclusion of the laity, even the purgatorial dead themselves, in the process of conversion, as he beautifully puts it:

> In it the voices of purgatory too are heard adding their descant to the preacher's call to conversion, confession… As Thomas grew older, then, his world resolved itself into an image of simple clarity… created and ruled by Love, strives in love to turn sinners to Love…[175]

Ritchey examined Christina and the Liégeoises as providers of care, exploring the therapeutic value that the pastoral activities of these women, ranging from pilgrimage and prayer to the more practical, daily acts of care such as cooking and cleaning, possessed.[176] Christina's own pastoral work fell under this category: alongside her extraordinary physical penances were the daily tasks of distributing alms, praying, and keeping vigil with the dying. Ritchey describes the roles of these women in caring for the dead and dying:

> They were the linchpin in establishing and sustaining salubrious relations within and across their community, the community of the living, the dead, and the divine… they consolidated the relations that constituted remedy.[177]

In addition to her focus on religious women as caregivers, Ritchey also devotes a chapter to discussing the efficacy and value of relics, describing them as being part of a

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[174] Sweetman, 'Christine of St. Trond's Preaching Apostolate,' pp. 72–74.
[175] Robert Sweetman, 'Visions of Purgatory and Their Role in the *Bonum universale de apibus* of Thomas of Cantimpré' in *Ons Geestelijk Erf*, lxvii (1993), 20–33, p. 32.
[176] S.M. Ritchey, *Acts of Care: Recovering Women in Late Medieval Health*, (Ithaca, 2021), p. 27.
[177] Ibid.

larger "healing community."[178] For example, Thomas's recommendation that a petitioner visit Lutgard's tomb as a site of healing encouraged a dual approach of the physical presence of the relic or body itself, and the act of remembrance or pious reflection, in seeking saintly intercession.[179]

This occurs throughout Thomas's *vita* and *exempla*, with much material that demonstrates how he encouraged similar dynamics within interactions with the personal dead. This project will do so by examining Thomas's purgatorial suffrages within both the context of the recommendations of his fellow Dominicans, such as Stephen of Bourbon and Humbert de Romans, and within Christina's own influence in developing his understanding of purgatorial care. To understand Christina's role in forming Thomas's beliefs, it is important to look at the depictions in his works of the intimate bonds between the living and the dead: particularly since the care of the dead is not left only to women in religious orders, with lay women featuring prominently in Thomas's suffrages for the purgatorial dead. Building off Sweetman's idea of the ministering beloved dead, with Christina best understood as one of them, Grzebien's thesis provided a foundational framework for understanding the biographical details of Thomas's life, with a focus on his pastoral zeal for purgatorial piety in particular.[180] Grzebien notes that Thomas would likely have seen the relative failure to thrive of Peter of Verona's cult and that the Dominicans already had a significant involvement in promulgating the cult of saints, writing, "The cult of the saints became a primary weapon in the order's battle for recognition and credibility in the eyes of the faithful."[181] This is particularly relevant when considering Thomas's approach to the holy women of Liège and his emphasis on

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[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., p. 58; Cynthia Hahn, 'What Do Reliquaries Do For Relics?' in *Numen*, lvii (2010), 284–316, pp. 310–312.
[180] Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism, and Miracles,' pp. 16–18.
[181] Ibid., p. 131.

intercession. After all, if the living couldn't impact the afterlives of the dead, then the efficacy of the saints themselves, and the legitimacy of the Church, was open to doubt.[182]

Other recent attempts have been made to contextualise Christina and the *mulieres religiosae* within Thomas's life and spiritual development, most notably Folkerts, who has situated Christina within the broader corpus of hagiography concerning holy women from the Low Countries and the audience for the *vitae*. Her work focused mainly on the transmission and intended reception of the *vita*, arguing that the *vitae* of lay saints, male and female alike, was for male clerical consumption.[183] However, as discussed earlier, Spencer-Hall has observed that the transmission of Christina's *vita* indicates a wider audience, noting surviving versions of the text in Middle Dutch and English, as well as the original Latin.[184] Likewise, Mulder-Bakker cites the anonymous thirteenth-century biography of hermit Gerlach of Houthem (d. 1165) noting that saintly *vitae*, presumably including those of Christina and the other holy women of Liège, were read aloud at recitals to both religious and lay audiences at the abbey of St. Trond.[185] Spencer-Hall also notes that a vernacular adaptation of Christina's life was composed between 1280 and 1290, commissioned by the nuns at St. Catherine's for public recitations similar to those at the abbey of St. Trond.[186] Both Folkerts and Elliott explore the lack of traditionally "feminine" bridal imagery in Christina's life which are usually found in hagiographies concerning holy virgins.[187] While Folkerts compares Christina's life with that of Arnulf

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[182] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 58–63 for a detailed discussion on this need for a renewed cult.
[183] Folkerts, *Voorbeeld op schrift*, pp. 302–304.
[184] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy' p. 353; see also Mulder-Bakker, *Living Saints*, p. 39, and Deery-Kurtz, 'Mary of Oignies,' p. 195, n. 3, for details of Christina's life as found within English Latin manuscripts.
[185] Mulder-Bakker, *Living Saints*, p. 39, citing C.H. Kneepken's translation of the *Vita S. Gerlaci*, 1.10. p. 164 in Anneke Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *De kluizenaar in de eik: Gerlach van Houthem en zijn verering*, pp. 148–21; Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 353.
[186] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 353; citing, Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 175, n. 45 and Mulder-Bakker, *Living Saints*, p. 40.
[187] Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' pp. 5–22.

of Villers, arguing that Christina's lack of bridal imagery is due to her proactive ministry, Elliott observes that the often violent nature of Christina's ministry an her uncanny resurrected body were likely explanations for the lack of bridal imagery in her *vita.*[188] This project expands on this existing scholarship to understand the lack of bridal imagery as an indication of Christina's expedited spiritual ascent after her first death and resurrection.

Christina as Demoniac or "Madwoman"

Christina is nearly impossible to untangle from the macabre, and any attempt to understand her journey from shepherdess to purgatorial mediatrix must necessarily include discussions around contemporaneous beliefs regarding the demonically possessed and the returning dead. Other scholars have attempted to understand her from a medical or psychological perspective, but deciphering Christina's condition as any definable mental illness presents multiple problems. The closest to such a retroactive diagnosis is found in Barbara Newman's 1998 article, "Possessed By The Spirit," one of the first works that sought to understand Christina's resurrection as a medical phenomenon.[189] Newman raises the possibility that Christina suffered brain damage following a seizure or coma, and that this possibly explained much of her antisocial

[188] Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' p. 17, where she specifically compares the bridal ascent imagery used in discussing the spiritual progression of cloistered brothers in the Cistercian order to the portrayal of illiterate lay brothers, such as Arnulf of Villers who were treated as imitators of Christ in their labours. Folkerts compares Arnulf's self-inflicted punishments and the proactive nature of his pastoral work to that of Christina; Dyan Elliott, *The Bride of Christ Goes to Hell: Metaphor and Embodiment in the Lives of Pious Women, 200–1500*, (Philadelphia, 2012), pp. 192–193; see also Jacques le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, Arthur Goldhammer (trans.), (Chicago, 1981), p. 3; see also Newman, *The Collected Saints' Lives,* p. 43 on the ties between Thomas, Dominican hagiography, and Cistercian literature, particularly William of St Thierry's *Expositio super cantico canticorum* as found in Lutgard's life.

[189] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 734–738.

behaviour, as well as the initially bewildered response of her family and community.[190] Other attempts to medically diagnose Christina are based around the physical contortions of her raptures, with epilepsy presented as a potential cause behind her strange bodily movements.[191] This is entirely possible, especially considering the often fraught nature of establishing whether or not a person was truly dead: Caciola observes that Christina would not have necessarily had a doctor on hand to formally pronounce her dead, and it would have been difficult to do so to begin with if Christina had any medical conditions.[192] This thesis is less concerned with the historicity of Christina's "resurrection" or in discussing whether potential medical conditions were behind her strange behaviour.[193] For all intents and purposes, Christina, her community, and her biographer sincerely believed that she had died and been resurrected; it is within that understanding that her pastoral care can best be discussed.

When discussing the scholarship around Christina, demonology, and the returning dead, it is worth noting Christina was still a risky hagiographical choice even *without* her potential to be seen as a demonically reanimated corpse with an uncanny knowledge about the spiritual trajectories of her community. Smith compares Christina's *vita* within the context of the rest of Thomas's hagiographical *corpus,* noting that Christina presented a form of *imitatio Christi* that was horrific and largely inimitable, potentially even monstrous, even as it inspired compassion and reverence in her community:

> Christina's fearsome sanctity exceeds the boundaries of the arguments it seeks to make, rendering her body… unassimilable to any ideological

[190] Ibid., p. 766; Newman, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 33–34.
[191] Sallie Baxendale, 'The intriguing case of Christina the Astonishing' in *Neurology,* lxx (2008), pp. 2004–2007; K. M. Giglio, 'Spirituality and Self-Representation in The Life of Christina *Mirabilis*' in *Essays in Medieval Studies*, xv (1998), pp. 115–117.
[192] Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 51.
[193] For a discussion on the problematic language surrounding "hysteria" in analysing the *mulieres religiosae*, see Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy: Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History*, (Chicago, 1995), pp. 241–247.

> regime... Her excessive body becomes a mode of negative theology insofar as the saint who unites with Christ becomes monstrous and thus inimitable, her sanctity pointing to the divine life… which cannot be captured within a system of signs.[194]

While it is true that many of Christna's mortifications are only possible within the context of her inimitable purgatorial body, Christina presents a two-pronged approach to purgatorial care. As Sweetman has pointed out, her suffering mirrors that of the shades of purgatory, sent back to simultaneously be helped by their loved ones and to save them in turn by showing them a glimpse of the afterlife. However, almost all of Thomas's practical acts of care on behalf of the purgatorial dead, whether in weeping, almsgiving, or prayer, are also mirrored in Christina's work, and a significant part of her mission is spent getting her community to participate in these practices regularly. With a foot in each world, Christina could serve as a representation of an ongoing reciprocal relationship with the dead, where the dead, saintly or personal, were active participants.

Christina and her three deaths lend themselves irresistibly to comparisons with zombies or ghosts, as Spencer-Hall has explored extensively. Focusing on how and where Christina diverges from a modern-day understanding of zombies and the undead, Spencer-Hall compares modern anxiety about the subversion of peaceful death reflected in the mindless, violent, zombie body with Christina's sublime body, one that ultimately fulfils the promises of heaven and confirms the terrors of purgatory and hell.[195] Caciola has also touched upon some of the eerie similarities between revenants and the corpses of saints: namely, the perception of the person's life and death by their communities, the often untimely nature of their demise (in the case of a saint, usually brought on by

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[194] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 276–277; for further discussion on the potentially monstrous nature of Christ's body, see Robert Mills, 'Jesus as Monster' in B. Bildhauer and R. Mills (eds.), *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, (Cardiff, 2003), 28–54, pp. 29–32.
[195] Spencer-Hall, 'The Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 354–355, 370–371.

excessive fasting), and the act of discerning between the nature of the returning dead person in question.[196] Since Christina revived so dramatically at her own funeral before proceeding to her intense physical penances, there was ample room for her community to speculate that she had been sinful or else done something while alive to make the demonic possession of her corpse possible. Caciola also observes that for a revenant to be a revenant, there must still be flesh on the bones, whether in clerical accounts of demonic possession or in secular accounts of revenants stalking the earth.[197] The frightened, violent reactions to Christina's resurrection had some basis in popular belief concerning revenants: Christina was still fully corporeal, even if her body was sublime, instead of putrescent. This corporeality added another dimension to the fear inspired by revenants. In bearing the faces of known deceased loved ones, but none of the things that once made them familiar and no capacity to reason with them, revenants were uncanny and frightening.[198]

As discussed earlier, Elliott presents Christina and the holy women of Liège as a cult of the living dead, with the intense self-mortification in their lives used to engineer a new definition of martyrdom and its attendant cult.[199] This observation is fascinating in its exploration of the political and social roles of the dead, and I would like to expand it further. While the other holy women often did exist in a space caught between the earthly and the divine, it was Christina who is actually shown Purgatory, Heaven, and Hell upon after her death: she is interpreted as being literally dead and risen, able to pass unscathed through the different realms of the afterlife, even offered a chance to stay, while Lutgard and Marie are still very much alive or, in the case of Ida of Louvain, are shown as only

[196] Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants and Ritual,' p. 36.
[197] Ibid., pp. 30–33.
[198] Kenneth Rooney, *Mortality and Imagination: The Life of the Dead in Medieval English Literature*, (Turnhout, 2012), p. 37.
[199] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 61–63, 70.

temporarily left their bodies to rather than actually having returned from the dead.[200] Christina's identification as a once-dead woman who has witnessed hell, purgatory, and heaven is central to her perception of herself, as well as how others perceive her ministry and form relationships with her.

However, the animated corpse debate is not the only interpretation of Christina's life, and, as will be explored in the final chapter of this thesis, it is nearly impossible to discuss revenants without also delving into the demonic. Newman and Caciola have written at length about the possibility of demonic possession, particularly the striking similarities between demonic possession and divine prophecy.[201] Newman explores the "demonic preacher" trope, not only for its memorable dramatic impact in the minds of the audience, but the confirmation of orthodox beliefs concerning the afterlife and the legitimacy of the Church that demons confirmed in their preaching.[202] While it is not necessarily unheard of to find more sympathetic, even benevolent, demons in the works of Thomas's contemporaries, these stories were meant to confirm the order of the afterlife and the role of the clergy and orthodox ritual in casting out demons.[203] Whether regretful or malicious, the intent within most accounts concerning demonic possession is the affirmation of orthodox beliefs and rituals and, more importantly, the authority of those enforcing them.

This depiction of Church authority triumphing over demonic forces is also often found within the revenant genre, and goes towards explaining a dual discomfort with Christina: revenant risings were often attributed to demonic possession and the advice of

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[200] Passenier, 'The Life of Christina,' p. 169.
[201] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' p. 738; Caciola, 'Mystics,' pp. 273–281; Newman, Introduction in *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 33–37.
[202] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 738, 756.
[203] Ibid., p. 749.

clergy was sought out in dealing with the revenant. However, there were some instances where priestly intervention did not work and the undead body had to be beheaded or otherwise destroyed before it was finally put to rest.[204] Caciola also notes the ambivalent, if not outright bewildered, response of the public towards holy women who prophesied and underwent ecstasies. This cautious yet fascinated attitude is perhaps not overly surprising given that women were perceived to be more deeply receptive to spiritual influences, whether demonic or divine.[205] Within Thomas's own *exempla* a majority of those possessed were women, and Christina's behaviour lent itself perfectly to descriptions of demonic behaviour. Newman compares the wild behaviour of the *obsessio*, someone "under demonic siege" to Christina's behaviour: the howling and wailing, self-harming, and fleeing to deserted places all align with someone possessed.[206] Newman interpreted Christina's submersion in a baptismal font (which still survives today) as a possible form of self-exorcism.[207] This interpretation best holds up when arguing for her being seized by *a* spirit, leaving room for a potentially demonic connotation, and this may have been how her contemporaries outside of her immediate friends and family perceived her, especially those who had not heard or did not believe her explanation of her resurrection and behaviour.

However, while it was not uncommon to include demonic tropes in hagiography, it would be more in line with the rest of Christina's story to interpret this as her being filled by the divine Spirit, particularly given her deal with God. Her community's inability

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[204] Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual,' p. 20.
[205] Caciola, 'Mystics,' pp. 274–280, 286–290, 294–295; Voaden, *God's Words*, pp. 18–27, 66–72; Jessica Barr argues for a far more active role in female subjects' receptivity in, *Willing to Know God: Dreamers and Visionaries in the Later Middle Ages*, (Columbus, 2010), pp. 17–19, 53–55; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 229–233.
[206] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' p. 763.
[207] J.C. Ghislain, 'A Twelfth-Century Baptismal Font from Wellen' in *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, xliv (2009), pp 37–46; Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' p. 763.

to initially understand her erratic behaviour is framed as rooted in their lack of understanding Christina's holiness, which surpasses their own earthly morals, a common plot in other hagiographies.[208]

Christina as Mediatrix

There is a less demonic side to Christina: her role of mediatrix and Christ-like saviour, which culminates in her becoming a spiritual mother to Louis of Looz. Almost all of the aforementioned studies touch on the redemptive nature of her ministry, whether within the context of her actions within her contemporaries' discussions of gender roles (especially around pastoral work) or comparisons of her life to those of other female saints, or in looking at different aspects of theology or imagery within her *vita*. Mulder-Bakker explores Christina's role as a mother figure within the context of a "third age group," something significant given the lack of traditional feminine imagery within her *vita*.[209] Mulder-Bakker questions whether this title is an honorary one, similar to calling a priest "father," or whether it is to highlight her lack of traditional parenthood due to her lifelong chastity, something also found in the descriptions of Christina wailing as if in labour when she experiences a vision or grief from the sins of man.[210] As noted in *The Lives of the Anchoresses*, women who lived as anchoresses were trusted due to their isolation and the parameters of their life being in full view of the public; they were not merely "incidental," but rather trusted members of their communities with a respected

[208] Roisin, *L'Hagiographie cistercienne,* p. 125.
[209] Anneke Mulder-Bakker, 'The Prime of Their Lives: Women and Age, Wisdom and Religious Careers in Northern Europe' in Juliette Dor, Lesley Johnson, and Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (eds.), *New Trends in Feminine Spirituality*, (Turnhout, 1999), 215–236 p. 222; the connotation of an "age group" for Christina's final role as mother is also particularly interesting within the context of the dead also being treated as an "age group" by scholars such as Caciola in *Afterlives*, p. 51 and Geary, *Living with the Dead*, p. 36.
[210] Ibid., p. 222.

position.[211] The way that Christina's own life overlaps with this role, as well as her own association with a recluse in her older years, might account for much of the esteem she enjoyed from her community, whether from the nuns at St. Catherine's or the Count of Looz. Likewise, Christina's death and resurrection served as a means of salvation and a purgatorial example for those around her, as well as her perpetual mourning for the unsaved dead, placing her in the same sacrificial role as Christ.[212] Sweetman has examined how the salvific roles of Christina and her sister saints coloured Thomas's views of purgatorial piety; he describes this influence as "thickening and deepening" Thomas's understanding of purgatory, writing,

> It was from them that he learned how one could be haunted by one's beloved dead, and… how such haunting when suffused with love worked salubrious wonders both for the shades of the dead and for one's own salvation. Thus one hears within Thomas of Cantimpré's rich baritone the ghosts of women singing.[213]

It is this point that this thesis expands upon, comparing Christina's pastoral work to those of her contemporaries, and examining how Thomas was influenced by her ministry, as well as those of her fellow Liégeoises and, most importantly, how Thomas incorporated them in a manner distinct from many of his contemporaries. More recently, Fanger has examined how Christina's sacrifice was made poignantly painful by her

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[211] Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses*, pp. 47–48.

[212] Sarah Macmillan, 'Invisible Injuries: The Salvific and Sacramental Roles of Christina *Mirabilis*' in *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality*, lii, no. 2 (2017), 44–69, pp. 49–54; for similar discussions of Christina's salvific role, see Claire Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity At The Turn Of The Thirteenth Century: The Metamorphosis Of Body And Community In The *Vitae* Of Christina Mirabilis And Francis Of Assisi' in D. J. Collins (ed.), *The Sacred and the Sinister: Studies in Medieval Religion and Magic*, (Philadelphia, 2019), 17–40; likewise, Brown, Introduction, *Three Women of Liège*, p. 8: "Suffering also, through *imitatio Christi*, brings them closer to Christ than their piety can alone. By introducing their pained bodies into their devotional practice, they become closer to understanding Christ's humanity. The women's physical agony also becomes part of the devotion for those around them."

[213] Sweetman, 'Thomas of Cantimpré,' p. 622.

choice to voluntarily step away from a heaven when she had already earned her place there—Fanger interprets her penances as carrying extra weight given that she had already known the bliss of God's presence.[214] This is something this project will explore within the context of Christina's spiritual progression, with Christina not having to progress gradually throughout her second life as Thomas's other saints do throughout their first.

Conclusion

This thesis focuses on Christina's role as a once-dead woman and how it shaped her redemptive ministry and Thomas's perceptions of a category of the dead who remained invested in those left behind. Her experience with death would prove indispensable in her role as mediatrix in her community and greatly distinguished her from her contemporaries among the other holy women of Liège. While these women all shared in the belief of purgatory and often endured penances on behalf of those there through prayer, fasting, and other forms of self-mortification, Christina is set apart by experiencing a complete death and being resuscitated in a purgatorial body, a divine creation confirming the final resurrection on judgement day. Thomas utilises this within her *vita* to advocate for a form of purgatorial piety that focused on advocating for a lifestyle of spiritual growth and salvific work that was not exclusive to the clergy, but which could be imitated and followed by the laity.

Thomas's use of the dead in storytelling has a precedent, both in his *exempla* and within his personal life as a minister, writing for an audience, lay and clergy alike, during a time where the Church was concerned with centralising its own authority. The shocking stories of ghosts, revenants, and demonic possessions found within his educational works,

[214] Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity,' p. 20.

beyond their dramatic value, could be used to contradict alleged heretical beliefs, all while asserting the role of the dead, and by extension the authority of the Church. It is vital to look at Christina's *vita* within this context: in doing so, it makes it easier understand how her role as a living dead woman, one of the many returning dead in Thomas's *corpus*, reflects the "ghost ridden"' friar's zeal for souls and the community of the living and dead he hoped to nurture in his pastoral work.

Christina Mirabilis, the "Living Relic": The Holy Dead and the Pursuit of Orthodoxy

Introduction

This chapter will explore Christina's *vita* within two contexts. Firstly, it examines how Christina's life and deaths are portrayed within the context of Thomas of Cantimpré's hagiographical *corpus*: the abbot John of Cantimpré (d. c. 1210), the *supplementum* to the *vita* of Marie of Oignies (c. 1177–1213), Margaret of Ypres (1216–1237), and Lutgard of Aywières (1182–1246).[1] Secondly, it will compare Christina's *vita* to those of the other holy women of Liège portrayed as purgatorial mediatrixes and examples of purgatorial care. In particular, this chapter will look briefly at Alice of Schaerbeek (1220–1250), as well as Ida of Louvain (*c.* 1212–1261), Ida of Léau (c. 1200–c. 1266), Ida of Nivelles (1199–1231), and Elisabeth of Spalbeek (c. 1246–after 1278).[2] While returning from the afterlife was nothing new within hagiography as a genre, Christina's uniqueness lay in her resuscitated, purgatorial body, which gave her the capacity to endure what were implied to be specific purgatorial punishments for specific sins.[3] The pains she endured

[1] For these dates, I am particularly indebted to the work of Alicia Spencer-Hall, whose tables outlining the dates for the holy women of Liège I am utilising here, Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 22–23.
[2] Ibid., pp. 22–23.

[3] For a brief list of examples of saintly returns from beyond the grave, see Alicia Spencer-Hall, 'Post-mortem Projections: Medieval Mystical Resurrection and the Return of Tupac Shakur' in *Opticon1826*, xiii, (2012), pp. 57–58. See also Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 354, n.6 for a list of holy women who have undergone similar experiences of resuscitation or resurrection. For a seminal study on voyages to the afterlife, see Claude Carozzi, *Le Voyage de*

made the pains of purgatory tangible for her community and demonstrating the potential of salvation for themselves and their loved ones.[4]

This chapter will focus on how Christina's resuscitated body and often unorthodox behaviour was utilised by Thomas to counter perceived heretical arguments against the reciprocal relationship between the living and the dead, while reaffirming the Church's role in interpreting and curating that relationship through the cult of the saints and their relics. To do so, this chapter will expand on a concept discussed and developed by historian Dyan Elliott in her book *Proving Woman*: the "living relic."[5] To some extent, all saints, including those found in Thomas's works, are "living relics" in their ability to "...work miracles and a power to intervene beneficently in the spiritual destinies of both the living and the dead… with an access to God's presence typically reserved for the entirely dead."[6] Yet Christina, unlike the others, is framed as explicitly dead and returned. After her death, she was depicted as being offered a chance to remain in heaven: something that none of her contemporaries or successors received on their own brief journeys into the afterlife. If Christina had chosen, she could have stayed dead and enjoyed her just reward at God's side. If the female saints in Thomas's other *vitae* are

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l'âme dans l'au-delà d'après la littérature latine (Ve–XIIIe siècle), (Paris, 1994). Christina's life shared many aspects of earlier journeys to the afterlife. For example, Irish St. Fursey also finds himself repulsed by his body upon his return from his tour of the beyond and has to be reassured by his angelic guide that his body has been purged of sickness and sin. (Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 129.). Not all such returns to the body are so simply resolved: the Monk of Wenlock remains repulsed by his earthly body and his community, as well as his bleeding from the eyes. Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p.197.) as well as the permanent alteration of the monk Orm upon his return (Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 435) Christina is also not the only one to be resurrected in an impervious body of sorts, as St. Fursey is also resurrected in a body purged of sin and illiness (though not explicitly a purgatorial body) that does not feel pain and has been purged of illness (Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 128).

[4] See Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 96–102, for a detailed discussion of Christina's suffering within the context of purgatorial time.

[5] Elliott, *Proving Woman,* pp. 189–190; see also Carozzi, 'Doucline et les autres' pp. 251–267, as well as Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 243–247 on the "Living Veronicas of Liège."

[6] Ibid., pp. 195–196.

figuratively "living relics," in that they had not yet died or experienced the afterlife, then Christina's willingness to return from Heaven and suffer to redeem her community provided a direct, palpable example of the compassionate, involved dynamic between the holy dead and their surviving communities. Christina's death and resurrection provide her with a unique authority on the afterlife and purgatory. Rather than her life being a continuous struggle to progress closer to God, her sacrificial pastoral work after her first death indicates a spiritual ascent that was already perfect, with Christina rejecting the option to remain in heaven to provide pastoral care for her community.

Methodology

To explore these differences, this chapter will focus first on what is missing from Thomas's depiction of Christina: bridal and feminising imagery. Thomas largely framed the spiritual progression of his female saints with the bridal imagery found within Cistercian works, such as those of William of St-Thierry, often depicting their deathbed scenes as the final consummation of their relationship with Christ. Likewise, the other holy women, without exception, are described within this context at multiple points in their *vitae*, including the *vita* of Marie of Oignies, who predeceased Christina by eight years and whose *vita* Thomas was deeply familiar with. This language is pointedly missing in Christina's life. Christina is also not feminized: she is not described as sweet or gentle after her first death, nor are her beauty or wisdom praised beforehand. Other holy women who undergo extensive penances on behalf of those in purgatory, such as Alice of Schaerbeek and Elisabeth of Spalbeek, are not precluded from this imagery; the graphic horror of Alice's leprous body does not preclude her hut from being described as a bridal bower.[7] While Christina's lower class background and general spookiness may

[7] VASEng, 2.12.13, p. 13; VAS, 2.12., p. 474.

have meant that Thomas simply did not associate this imagery with her, I argue that the absence more strongly suggests a degree of unknowability and distance from these frameworks due to her undead status.[8] It also suggests that Christina has no spiritual progressing to do after she died the first time, something further supported by the offer to remain in heaven.

This lack of bridal imagery provides further context for the next way in which Christina's experience differed from her peers: Christina is not depicted experiencing external visions of Christ, Mary, or the saints after her first death. She does not encounter the demonic, either in her own journey to the afterlife, or in her intercessions on behalf of others. These visions are standard fare throughout the *corpus* of the holy women of Liège, consoling them in periods of spiritual crisis and affirming their sanctity. These visions also serve broader thematic purposes, whether in drawing the reader's attention to cultivating a relationship with God and the communion of saints, or emphasizing the relief and sweetness provided by the Sacraments. I argue that the lack of these visions within Christina's *vita* serve a twofold purpose: firstly, to emphasise her spiritual perfection, fully achieved after her first death, and secondly, to keep the focus of the reader firmly on the purgatorial regimen Christina had been sent back to demonstrate.[9] Christina's *vita* affirmed the expanding theology around purgatory as an "intermediate" place for repentant sinners, and her radical actions encouraged a more daily maintenance of both one's own soul as well as those of the beloved dead.[10]

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[8] Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' 182–209, is a particularly important study on this, as is Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' 5–22, which compares Christina to the lay brothers of the Cistercian Order and positions her life against that of Arnulf of Villers.
[9] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 364–365.
[10] Barbara Newman, 'On the Threshold of the Dead: Purgatory, Hell, and Religious Women' in *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature*, (Philadelphia, 1995), 108–136, pp. 113–114.

Likewise, this chapter will compare Christina's *vita* and spiritual growth to other saints within Thomas's hagiographical *corpus.* In the last interaction specifically, Thomas placed a heavy emphasis on the intercession of the saints through their relics, with their bodies serving as a meeting point between their earthly communities and God.

Finally, we will turn to the death bed sequences, the treatment of the saintly body, and the post-mortem activity of these saints, exploring how Thomas approached their deaths and what he emphasised at the time of their deaths. There is a profound difference along gendered lines in the deathbed sequence of Thomas's sole male saint compared to those found within his female hagiographies. In the *vitae* of Lutgard of Aywières and Margaret of Ypres, for example, the deathbed scenes linger, with graphic descriptions of their dying moments, filled with intermittent visions and ecstasies as each woman nears the end of her life.[11] This is significant as the period in which the holy body itself is transformed from a dying mortal body, to a glorious body, a promise of the life to come. Here, too, is where their surviving communities step in to curate their memory and access to their bodies. While Christina has a relatively brief deathbed scene, the radical transformation of her body and her initial reincorporation into her community through the rites of the Church and the care of the nuns at St. Catherine's mirror the post-mortem events around Thomas's deceased female saints. The post-mortem miracles of the saints within Thomas's works serve to mirror the care they receive from their surviving communities. In this sense, Christina's entire life is one massive, extended post-mortem miracle.

In exploring Christina within these aspects of Thomas's hagiographies, this chapter will demonstrate how Christina's proximity to the dead, in both her resurrection,

[11] VLAEng, 3.16, pp. 287–288, VLA, 2.16, pp. 207–208; VMYEng, 48–51, pp. 200–203, VMY, 48–51, pp. 127–128.

and her purgatorial pastoral care, breaks the mould of Thomas's female hagiographies and introduces a relationship with the holy dead that is proactive and reciprocal. Thomas depicted a once-dead holy woman, who, while uncanny and disturbing in her purgatorial body, was depicted as caring and concerned about her community, whether in purgatory or on earth.

His hagiographical interest in these holy women was hardly surprising, especially given the zeal of Thomas's role model, Jacques de Vitry for this new movement of feminine piety. Jacques gave a vivid description of these women while addressing recently ousted Fulk of Toulouse in the prologue of the *vita* of Marie of Oignies:

> ... when you came to our country, it seemed to you that you were in the promised land, for I heard you say how you left Egypt in your own regions and… how you found the promised land in the diocese of Liège… as you said to me, you were filled with wonder by certain women who wept more for a single venial sin than did the men of your land over a thousand mortal sins…[12]

Roukis-Stern observes that in comparing the zealously blooming, tear-stained devotions of the "holy virgins in the lily gardens" of Liège to the "dry desert" of male "callousness" and heresy in Fulk's own home in Toulouse, Jacques positioned these new communities of female sanctity as a solution to threats to the Church's authority and unity.[13] Given Jacques's significant influence on Thomas, especially since he shifted exclusively to female *vitae* after encountering Jacques's preaching, it is clear that lay sanctity, particularly female lay sanctity, held a significant place in Thomas's spiritual

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[12] VMOEng, prol.2–3, pp. 41–42, VMO prol.2–3, pp. 547–548: "… quod reliqueras Aegyptum in partibus tuis, et… terram promissionis in partibus Leodii invenisti… imo (sicut mihi dixisti) quasdam mulieres magis pro uno veniali lugentes, quam homines in partibus tuis pro mille mortalibus, mirareris…"

[13] Christina Roukis-Stern, 'A Tale Of Two Dioceses: Prologues As Letters In The *Vitae* Authored By Jacques De Vitry And Thomas De Cantimpré' in Scott Wells and Katherine Smith (eds.), *Negotiating Community and Difference in Medieval Europe: Gender, Power, Patronage and the Authority of Religion in Latin Christendom*, (Leiden, 2009), 33–47, p. 37.

devotion and development. Therefore, the lack of bridal or feminising language, in Christina's life, the first full female hagiography that Thomas wrote, is striking. To compare the nuptial imagery found within in his *vitae* within the context of contemporary influences on Thomas's ideas of spiritual development, especially the "bridal" stages of growth that he borrowed from works such as the *Golden Epistle* and the *Expositio super cantico canticorum* by Cistercian William of St-Thierry, it is possible to better understand how Christina's journey aligns with (and noticeably departs from) the spiritual growth of Thomas's other saints.[14] Given the heavy Cistercian influence found within Thomas's works, especially bridal imagery that William used in describing the soul's ascent to God, it is clear that Christina's life diverges from and confirms the "long engagement" of the soul with God.[15]

Voyages: The Question of Purgatory and First Trips to the Beyond

Before continuing to Thomas's discussion and utilisation of purgatorial examples in his hagiography and *exempla*, we must begin with a brief and by no means comprehensive discussion of purgatory in its context within Church history and within the context of the heresies Thomas wished to combat. In addition to providing some useful context, I hope to emphasise that, for Thomas and his peers, purgatory offered a theological sticking point that placed the Church squarely in the centre in caring for and interpreting the dead during a period in which its authority was being challenged. Having studied in Paris and Cologne, Thomas likely would have encountered a great deal of these discussions, and it

[14] See discussion in Newman, Introduction, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 43–48.
[15] See Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, pp. 105–106 on the spiritual ascent of the soul and the anticipation of the afterlife and presence of God, as well as pp. 112, 119–120 for discussions of the "celestial bridegroom" imagery shared in Cistercian hagiographies as well as those of Thomas of Cantimpré; see also King, 'The Dove at the Window,' pp. 226–229, 232 and King, 'The Sacramental Witness,' pp. 149–156.

is impossible not to conclude that he was influenced on some level by them. Le Goff's theory of purgatory in formally coming into existence as a place only in the twelfth century has come under a certain degree of criticism given that there are much earlier discussions and imaginings of a sort of "third place" in the early Church.[16] While keeping these excurses brief , it is worth taking a moment to discuss these early ideas of a "third place" to situate Thomas's portrayal of Christina within a broader context of these journeys to the beyond.

One of the earliest portrayals of purgatory occurs within *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas*, with Perpetua experiencing a vision of her deceased young brother, Dinocratus, in a place of darkness. She is ultimately able to pray for him to relieve his sufferings there.[17] Le Goff names Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–c. 215) and his pupil Origen (c. 185–c. 253) as the "founders" of purgatory, as they adopted the idea of a purifying trial by fire after death from multiple components of the Old and New Testaments and Pauline writings.[18] The stances of both Clement and Origen of a merciful God with the capacity to purify and forgive, even after chances of earthly repentance ended death, would prove controversial.[19] Origen took things a step farther by speculating

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[16] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 52–57, Le Goff does note the influence of Clement of Alexandria (d. prior to 215) and Origen (d. 253/254 as proto–purgatorial thinkers; see also Brian McGuire, 'Purgatory, the Communion of Saints, and Medieval Change' in *Viator*, xx (1989), 61–84, pp. 61–66; for more on proto–purgatorial thought, see J. L. Walls, *Purgatory: The Logic of Total Transformation*, (Oxford, 2012), pp. 14–17; see also Megan McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints: Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, 1994), p. 183.

[17] Walls, *Purgatory*, p.14. Walls provides an excellent, overview of the development of purgatory in his first chapter of the volume, "A Short History of Purgatory." Le Goff also cites this example as an early form of proto-purgatorial thinking, but does not argue that Perpetua is thinking of purgatory in *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 48–51; see also Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 35–37 for a discussion of "The Vision of Paul" and pp. 46–48 for a discussion of Tertullian and *refrigerium*.

[18] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 52–53.

[19] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 7.26, cited and translated in Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 53; "God does not wreak vengeance, for vengeance is to return evil with evil, and God punishes only with an eye to the good."; for an English translation, see *The Stromata*, 7.16 (as it appears in) *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of*

on what happened to souls immediately after they died: in his view, there was no permanent damnation, as even the wicked could expect salvation after a sufficient period of purgation and correction.[20] So stalwart was Origen's faith in God's goodness prevailing against evil that he hoped that even demons could expect to benefit from this mercy, writing, "For all wicked men, and for daemons, too, punishment has an end, and both wicked men and daemons shall be restored to their former rank."[21] It was this stance that would provoke much of the defining commentary on purgatory in the coming centuries, including one of the most influential writers on the care of the dead: Augustine of Hippo. Since Augustine's and Gregory the Great's discussions of relationships between the living and the dead will get a deeper exploration in the final chapter concerning revenants and the returning dead, this section will be brief. However, it is still worth looking at the perceptions of the afterlife that Augustine argued for, as well as his perceptions of the relationship with the holy dead. Not only did Augustine wish to

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Alexandria, Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A.C. Coxe (eds.), (10 vols, New York, 1885, reprint 1995), ii, p. 653; see also Isabel Moreira, *Heaven's Purge: Purgatory in Late Antiquity*, (Oxford, 2010), pp. 27–28 for a more detailed discussion of this, as it is not absolutely certain exactly how "universal" Clement's idea of purification and salvation was, particularly given that he did specify that punitive flames were the lot of the "incorrigible."

[20] Origen, *On First Principles*, 2,10.4, cited and translated in Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 29; Moreira utilises the translation from the Greek and the Latin found in G. W. Butterworth (trans.), and introduction by Henri DeLubac, *On First Principles*, (Gloucester, 1973), pp. 141–142. See also Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 55–57.

[21] Origen, *On First Principles*, 2,10.3, as cited and translated from the Greek in Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 29; Moreira utilises Butterworth's translation, *On First Principles*, p. 141; Butterworth here relies on a surviving Greek fragment of Origen's *De principiis* as paraphrased in Justinian's *Epistola Epistula ad. Mennam Patriarcham Folitanum*, reprinted in its original Greek and a Latin translation in *Concilium omnium*, col. 518 C: "… omnium impiorum hominum, ac praeterea daemonum poenam finem habituram esse, restitutumque iri tum impios homines, tum daemones in pristinum ordinem suum."; Butterworth presents it alongside Rufinus's Latin translation, which sidesteps Origen's original discussion altogether. On the reliability of these fragments, as well as the varying degrees of editing and omission in later early Latin translations, such as those of Rufinus or Jerome, see Butterworth's introduction to the English translation, pp. xxviii–xli; Origen himself appears to have possibly disavowed this controversial belief about the nature of eternal punishment in order to avoid further backlash, toeing a fine line between the belief in the all-powerful nature of God's love and the necessity of divine justice, see J.A. Trumbower, *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 116–119.

emphasise that ornate funeral and burial rites were not a prerequisite for the well-being of the dead, but they were also not a "last chance for purgation" or a way to alter the post-mortem destination of the person in question.[22] Augustine also expanded on the categories of sinners put forth by Clement and Origen, creating a fourfold model:

> It cannot be denied that the souls of the dead are helped by the piety of the living who are close to them… For there is a certain way of living which is not so good that the person does not require these things after death, nor so bad that these things do not benefit him after death. Indeed, there are those so good that they do not require these things, and… those so bad that they cannot be helped by them...[23]

Augustine directly contradicted Origen, emphasising that without good works and devotion to faith in life, prayers for the dead could not be effective. While purgatorial acts of care for the dead were indeed important, they could not make up the balance of a lifetime of sin or disbelief, particularly if the dead person in question had not repented or shown contrition in a timely manner. However, Augustine also noted that offerings and prayers made on behalf of the "very bad" could serve as a consolation for their surviving loved ones, even if they did not aid someone who was already damned, and he does not explicitly forbid them in his *Enchiridion*.[24] If nothing else, these acts of care could

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[22] McGuire, 'Purgatory' p. 70; see also Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 71–74; Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, pp. 32–36; Walls, *Purgatory*, pp. 15–16.

[23] Augustine of Hippo, *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide et spe et caritate*, 110, cited and translated in Megan McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, p. 191; McLaughlin utilises the critical edition of the text, in *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide et spe et caritate (Aurelii Augustini Opera*, pars 13. CC, SL, E. Evans (ed.), (46 vols, Turnhout, 1969), xlvi, pp. 108–109: "Neque negandum est defunctorum animas pietate suorum uiuentium releuari… Est enim quidam uiuendi modus, nec tam bonus ut non requirat ista post mortem, nec tam malus ut ei non prosint ista post mortem; est uero talis in bono ut ista non requirat, et est rursus talis in malo ut nec his ualeat cum ex hac uita transierit adiuuari." See also Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 71–73; and McGuire, 'The Communion of Saints' p. 65.

[24] *Enchiridion*110, p. 109 (translation found in McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, p. 191) .: "So when the sacrifice of the altar or alms are offered for all the dead who have been baptized, they serve as thanksgiving for the very good; for those who were not very good they serve as propitiations; in the case of the very bad they serve as a kind of consolation for the living, even though they are of no help to the dead." ("Cum ergo sacrificia, siue altaris siue quarumcumque eleemosynarum, pro baptizatis defunctis omnibus offeruntur, pro ualde bonis gratiarum actiones

potentially serve to turn the minds of the mourners towards God and the paradise their loved one had forfeited. This is further demonstrated in his reflection on his relationship with his mother Monica, and the grief that he expressed over her passing within his *Confessions*, begging pardon on her account and asking God's forgiveness for any sins she may have committed after her baptism.[25] Even as Augustine expressed confidence that his prayers had already been answered, he ultimately deferred to the judgement of God, calming his tears and redirecting his sorrow. This hopeful obedience and room for grief would also show itself in a later work as well.

While setting a clear delineation for where the dead are (either heaven or hell) Augustine discussed the importance of this care of the dead in his *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, likening the care of the body to the affection of a child for their deceased parent's belongings.[26] Although Augustine considered it natural to cherish the body of a loved one because of the memories represented, he denied the idea of the dead as sensate beings capable of interacting with the living, writing that a mother burying her son near a saint's tomb benefitted:

> … when a faithful mother has desired that the body of her faithful departed son be placed in the basilica of a martyr, if she truly believed that his soul would be helped by the merits of the martyr… if anything was of benefit, this was of benefit. And the fact that in her mind she returns to this same tomb… commends her son over and over again by her prayers, helps the spirit of the departed—not the place of the dead body but … the living affection of the mother from the memory of the place.[27]

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sunt, pro non ualde bonis propitiationes sunt, pro ualde malis etiam si nulla sunt adiumenta mortuorum qualescumque uiuorum consolationes sunt.").

[25] *Conf.Eng* 9.13, pp. 34—37; *Conf.Lat* pp. 163–164.

[26] CPMEng 5.7. p. 351; CPM, 5.7, p. 631.

[27] Ibid: "Cum ergo fidelis mater fidelis filii defuncti corpus desiderauit in basilica martyris poni, si quidem credidit eius animam meritis martyris adiuuari… et haec profuit, si quid profuit. Et quod ad idem sepulcrum recurrit animo et filium precibus magis magisque comraendat, adiuuat defuncti spiritum non mortui corporis locus, sed ex loci memoria uiuus matris affectus."

In this reciprocal relationship, the soul of the dead son benefits from the mother's prayers, while she benefits spiritually from remembering both her son and the martyr she prays to on his behalf. However, the dead body itself is not considered an active agent or a meeting point for the living. Augustine was clear about the nature of the dead's interactions with the living: while acknowledging that visions (mostly dreams) of the dead can happen and that martyrs have a special licence with God, the dead are fully *gone*, either to their reward or to damnation.[28] Schmitt notes in *Ghosts in The Middle Ages* that while it is true the dead grasp the living, it is perhaps truer that the living cling to the dead, giving them an existence after death.[29]

Finally, before moving on, I wish to discuss two voyages to the beyond that also stood to answer Origen's claims: the *Vision of St. Fursey* and the *Vision of Drythelm* as recounted by the Venerable Bede (d. 732) Bede rejected Origen's claims of universal salvation, but more importantly, he also explicitly framed purgatory as orthodox belief to counter a perceived heresy.[30] In an Advent homily, Bede not only laid out a vision of the afterlife, but also expressed specific suffrages that his audience could undertake to relieve the suffering of their loved ones in purgatory, such as "petitions, almsgiving, fasting, weeping, and oblation of the saving sacrificial offering."[31] This is significant when

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[28] CPMEng, 10.12, pp. 356–357 and CPM, 10.12, pp. 640–641; CPMEng 16.19, p. 364 and CPM 16.19, pp. 652–653; for a detailed discussion on dreams within Augustine's works, see S. F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 35–42; for a discussion of Augustine's three *Visiones* (corporeal, spiritual, and intellectual) within his writings, as well as his discussions around spiritual discernment, particularly in looking at the "fruits" of the vision itself, see Jesse Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions in the Early Middle Ages: The Reception and Use of Patristic Ideas, 400–900*, (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 137–145; for further discussion of Augustine's handling of spiritual discernment, see W. L. Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages*, (Tübingen, 2011), pp. 30–35; for medieval debates on material continuity, particularly discussions on saints' relationships to their relics see Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 74–77.

[29] J.C. Schmitt, T.L. Fagan (trans.), *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: the Living and the Dead in Medieval Society* (Chicago, 2007), p. 5.

[30] Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, pp. 159–160.

[31] Bede "Homily 1.2 in Advent," in David Hurst (ed.), Lawrence T. Martin and David Hurst (trans.) *Bede the Venerable: Homilies on the Gospels, Book One: Advent to Lent*, (289 vols,

considering the later purgatorial practices that Thomas himself would promote, especially the act of weeping, positioned here as an act of sincerity and repentance which would boost the effectiveness of the petition being offered. While the purgatorial suffrages Thomas would later recommend will be explored in the second chapter on the personal dead, it is worth noting the earlier versions of these suffrages. Thomas did not invent these, but rather repackaged them to make them more accessible, particularly the suffrages of weeping and vigil-keeping.

Similarly, Bede's accounts of purgatory as found within the visions of the Irish St. Fursey (d. 650) and the layman-cum-monk, Drythelm, are two examples I wish to contrast with Christina's later journey. Bede's recounting of these visions is particularly notable, as Moreira argues that the *Vision of St. Fursey* and the *Vision of Drythelm* cemented Bede as a major contributor to the development of purgatory within the Church alongside Origen and Clement.[32] Like Christina and countless other voyagers to the afterlife, Drythelm is described as having died after being stricken with illness; similarly, when he is sent back to his body, the first thing he must do is console his understandably terrified loved ones and explain what he had seen.[33] The first place he journeys to with his angelic guide is purgatory, where he describes seeing the following:

Kalamazoo, 1991), cx, 9–18, pp. 16–17, cited in Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 160; for the Latin version of the text, see David Hurst (ed.) *Bedae Venerabilis Homeliarum Evangelii Libri II, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, cxxii(Turnhout, 1955) pp. 12–13: "… precibus elemosinis ieiuniis fletibus et hostiae salutaris oblationibus…"

[32] Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, pp. 11–12; see also McGuire, 'Purgatory,' p. 74.

[33] Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 5.12, Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (eds. and trans.), (Oxford, 1969), p. 489:"Do not be afraid, for I have indeed risen from death which held me in its bonds, and I have been permitted to live again amongst mankind; nevertheless after this I must not live as I used to, but in a very different way." (see p. 488 in the same edition for the Latin text: "Noli… timere, quia iam uere surrexi a morte qua tenebar, et apud homines sum iterum uiuere permissus; non tamen ea mihi, qua ante consueram, conuersatione sed multum dissimili ex hoc tempore uiuendum est.'" Drythelm's statement here very much mirrors Christina's own affirmation that she had fully died (as opposed to being raptured in spirit or in a deathlike state) as found in VCM, 1.6, p. 651: "Immediately when I was dead, the attendants of light received my spirit, the angels of God…" ("Statim… ut defuncta sum, susceperunt meam animam ministri lucis, angeli Dei…") and VCMEng, 6, p. 131. It also

> Both sides were full of the souls of men which were apparently tossed from one side to the other in turn… When the wretched souls could no longer endure the fierceness of the terrific heat, they leapt into the midst of the deadly cold....[34]

Drythelm later sees the souls that "… are not in such a state of perfection that they deserve to be received immediately into the kingdom of heaven" but who will ultimately be saved due to their faith and good works in life resting in a peaceful meadow.[35] Despite his illness and apparent death, Drythelm is not offered a chance to remain in the afterlife as Christina is, but is promised that he will attain this peaceful sanctuary in the afterlife contingent upon his actions after he is resuscitated.[36] While Drythelm does not ascribe specific punishments to specific sins, this and other descriptions of purgatory situate Christina's journey and penances within a larger tradition. Indeed, they both become purgatorial advocates on two levels, both in how they lead their lives post-resuscitation and, to a slightly more limited extent, their penances. The experiences of Drythelm and Christina are framed as edifying specifically because they discuss their experiences with those around them, advocating for how their communities can better the lot of those who have died, as well as nurturing their own spiritual well-being.[37] Likewise, although Drythelm is not portrayed as inhabiting an impervious or purgatorial body after his

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mirrors her explanation of her return after agreeing to suffer for those in purgatory, VCM, 1.7–8, pp. 651–652: "I answered without any hesitation, under the conditions having been proposed to me, that I wished to return. And without delay, the Lord, rejoicing in my response, commanded my soul to return to my body." ("Respondi sine aliqu haestitatione, sub conditione mihi proposita, velle reverti. Nec mora, mihi Dominus in responsione congratulans, jubet animam meam reduci ad corpus.") and VCMEng, 7–8, p. 131.

[34] Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 5.12, p. 491 (see p. 490 in the same volume for the Latin: "Vtnimque autem erat aniniabus hominum plenum, quae uicissim hue inde uidebantur… Cum enim uim feruoris inmensi tolerare non possent, prosiliebant miserae in medium rigoris infesti…"). See also Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 153; see also Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, pp. 230–247

[35] Ibid., 5.12, p. 495. (see p. 494 in the same volume for the Latin: "… non tamen sint tantae perfectionis, ut in regnum caelorum statim mereantur introduci…")

[36] Ibid., 5.12, p. 495.

[37] Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, p. 154; McGuire, 'The Communion of Saints,' p. 73; see also Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, pp. 246–247, 257.

resurrection, he is portrayed as living austerely; even submerging himself in icy waters like Christina, saying to concerned onlookers, "I have known it colder."[38]

Fursey also experiences a physical change during his journey to the underworld, having been accidentally burned by the flaming disembodied spirit of a sinful man who he had accepted property from.[39] However, Bede's account of Fursey is somewhat shorter than that found in the longer account found within the anonymously authored seventh-century version, the *Visio Fursei*, and does not include Fursey's hesitancy to re-enter his body after his journey. The angel guiding Fursey back to his body tells him not to fear, as his body has been purged of infirmity and sin.[40] The angel then advises Fursey to sprinkle holy water on himself, so that he might be free of all pain, save the burning reminder of his encounter in the afterlife.[41] Unlike Christina's sacrificial acceptance of suffering, Fursey is vulnerable to pain *because* of his acceptance of goods from a sinner and the purity of his intentions must be defended by his angelic guide.[42] This is true of both Bede's account of Fursey and the account found in the *vita*. However, like Christina, his transformed body becomes a visible example of purgatory, and the hale health that he is gifted, as well as the burn that serves as the only pain he is able to meaningfully feel, aid him in his ministry.[43] This is all to observe that Christina existed within a larger, longer tradition of these sorts of journeys and discussions on the "third place". What would make

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[38] Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.12, p. 499 (p. 498: "Frigidiora ego uidi.")
[39] Ibid., p. 275; Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, pp. 104–128; for discussion of this vision within a larger historical context, see Moreira, *Heaven's Purge*, pp. 114–118.
[40] *Vita Sancti Fursei*, 17.4, as translated and reproduced in Carozzi, *Le Voyage l'au-delà–*. 127–128; see also Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 223; see Meg Leja, 'Beyond the Body and Back Again: Visions of Otherworldly Journeys in Carolingian Theology' in *Traditio*, lxxviii, (2023), 105–139, pp. 120–123 for further discussion of Fursey's discomfort in his body.
[41] Ibid., 17.4, in Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 128.
[42] Ibid, 16.6, in Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 128
[43] Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, p. 128; Fursey is not the only one to struggle at the prospect of re-entering his body, and Carozzi includes other instances of this such as the Monk of Wenlock, who experiences intense revulsion towards his body and even towards his monastic community, see pp. 197–198. The Monk of Wenlock also bleeds from his eyes upon his return, struggling to readjust to his resurrected body, see p. 224.

the portrayal of her life unique would be how Thomas would utilise her story for his readers.

Purgatory and the University

Here, it will be useful to briefly discuss some of the background on the leading scholarly discussions on purgatory at the time. Both Thomas and Jacques de Vitry were extremely well educated and well-travelled: Thomas spent time at the *studium generale* in Paris, as well as the one in Cologne where he encountered Albertus Magnus. While agreeing with Newman that these thinkers were not the sole nor main innovators of purgatorial thought, particularly within the context of later Cistercian and Cluniac practices, it is nevertheless worth discussing some of the thinkers that Thomas was likely to have encountered during the course of his studies.[44] Although Le Goff argues that Peter Cantor was the first to "integrate" purgatory fully into theological teaching, he does credit the following as being nonetheless significant: Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141), Gratian of Bologna (c. 1100), Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), and Peter Lombard (d. c. 1159–60.)[45] Not only were discussions of intercession on behalf of the dead occurring during this period, but also questions of material continuity, the apocalypse, and the resurrection of the dead. While these thinkers preceded the later scholastics, they are worth mentioning here for their influence later, particularly thinkers such as Peter Lombard, whose *Sententiae* would become a key purgatorial text in twelfth and thirteenth-century universities.[46]

The canon Hugh of St. Victor was concerned not just with purgatory, but questions of material continuity. As Bynum points out, Hugh wondered whether or not the

[44] Barbara Newman, 'Hildegard of Bingen and the Birth of Purgatory' in *Mystics Quarterly*, xix, no. 3 (1993), pp 90–97, p. 90.
[45] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 142.
[46] Ibid., 142; for a summary and discussion of the *Sententiae*, Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 54–55.

resurrected would be able to open their eyes or not, one of many such discussions being held on the nature of the resurrected body itself.[47] This consideration of the nature of the purgatorial or spiritual body is discussed further in his seminal work, *De sacramentis Christianae fidei,*, where he dedicated an entire section to the punishment of souls in purgatory and hell, writing:

> But it is most truly proven by testimony on the authority of the Sacred Scripture and Catholic faith that souls even before the reception of bodies are tortured by corporeal and material fire. For if corporeal fire is said to have been prepared for demons who are spirits, what wonder is it if souls without bodies are tortured by corporeal fire?[48]

The influences of both Augustine and Gregory the Great can still be seen in how Hugh divides the souls themselves: the perfectly good go directly to Heaven, while the evil go to hell. Like Augustine, Hugh allowed for redemption of the imperfectly good, and believed that the "imperfect or less evil" were ultimately destined to be damned, although he did not specify where he believed they would be held.[49] As Le Goff notes, Hugh did not expand purgatorial suffrages or the souls who would benefit from them, and mostly stuck to the ideas expounded on by Augustine and Gregory.[50] The same is true of the writing of many of these authors, although some did try to discuss different locations for departed souls in the afterlife. For example, Bernard of Clairvaux introduced the idea

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[47] Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' p. 55.
[48] Hugh of St. Victor, *On The Sacraments of the Christian Faith*, Roy J. Deferrari (trans.), (Cambridge, 1951), 2.16.3, pp. 438–439; for the Latin, see Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*, 2.16.3, PL 176, col. 584D: "Sed verissime auctoritate sacri eloquii et catholicae veritatis probatur testimonio, corporali et materiali igne animas etiam nunc ante susceptionem corporum cruciari. Si enim daemonibus qui sunt spiritus, corporalis ignis praeparatus dicitur, quid mirum est si animae a corporibus extuae corporali igne crucientur?"
[49] Ibid., 2.16.4, p. 441; Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis*, 2.16.4, PL 176, col. 587A–B.
[50] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 144.

of three hells in a sermon for a deceased brother in 1148: a permanent hell for unrepentant sinners, a second hell for purgation, and a third "remissive" hell.[51]

Like Hugh's suffrages, Gratian of Bologna recommended acts of care for the dead in his *Decretum* that aligned with earlier practices, repeating a list of suffrages that had been accepted since the time of Augustine and Gregory the Great: "The souls of the dead are delivered in four ways: by the sacrifices of the priests [masses], by the prayers of the saints, by the alms of dear friends, and by the fasting of relatives."[52] However, once again, there is no question of who has a chance of purgation and ultimate redemption.[53] This line of thinking continued within the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard, who largely upheld Augustine's recommendations, but added two new categories to those that were described in the *Enchiridion*.[54] Within the twenty-first distinction of the fourth book, Peter added the categories of medium good and bad, with those who fell under the category of medium good, able to receive full absolution from the suffrages of others, while the medium bad could have their punishment mitigated.[55] Le Goff notes that this is significant: rather than lumping the not-so-wicked and the wicked together, Peter classed them in the same category as the medium good, thus extending the possibility of salvation, or relief, through suffrages.[56] This may be attributed to Peter's views on the effectiveness of

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[51] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 145–146; for a similar idea espoused by Hildegard of Bingen, see Newman, 'Hildegard of Bingen,' p. 94.
[52] Gratian, A. Friedburg (ed.) *Decretum Magistri Gratiani*, (2 vols, Leipzig, 1879), i, col. 728: "Animae defunctorum quatuor modis soluuntur, aut oblationibus sacerdotum, aut precibus sanctorum, aut karorum elemosinis, aut ieiunio cognatorum." as cited and translated in Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 146.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Peter Lombard, Giulio Silano (trans.) *The Sentences* (Toronto, 2010), 4.21, pp. 128–129 and 4.45.1–5, pp. 244–248 for discussions of suffrages Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 148–149; see Bynum, "Material Continuity," pp. 54–55 for a brief overview of distinctions 43–50 within the second book of the fourth of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* , where Peter questions the particulars of the body in heaven/
[55] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* p. 149.
[56] Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, 4.17.5, p. 105; for more on Peter Lombard and penance, as well as a brief discussion of his treatment of suffrages, see Lucas Briola, 'A Case Study of

contrition itself. While Peter did not negate the importance of the sacraments, he emphasized the need for true contrition, something that would become especially important in the wake of the Fourth Lateran Council's later focus on confession. He argued in his *Sententiae* that sins could be blotted out with true contrition and humility, even if they had not yet formally confessed to a priest—this did not render confession unnecessary, but rather that contrition would make the fullest engagement with the sacrament possible. On the topic, Peter wrote:

> And so, if it is asked for what is confession necessary, since the sin is already blotted out in contrition, we say: because it is a kind of punishment for the sin, as is satisfaction in deed. Also, through confession the priest understands what judgment he is to give as to the crime. Through it, too, the sinner is made humbler and more careful.[57]

Briola argues that in this instance, the inner contrition becomes concrete and sanctifying in the external action of confession itself.[58] As will be explored in the third chapter, this idea of true contrition as fundamental to a meaningful confession would take on extra importance for Thomas and his fellow Dominicans.

Peter Lombard's philosophy was further expanded upon by Peter Comestor (a nickname he gained due to the voracity with which he consumed books) who taught at

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Scholasticism: Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard on Penance' in *Journal of Moral Theology*, v. no 1. (2016), pp. 73–78.

[57] Peter Lombard, *The Sentences*, 4.17.5, p. 105; Peter Lombard, *De sententiae*, PL 4. col. 883: "Si ergo quaeritur an confessio sit necessaria, cum in contritione jam deletum sit peccatum, dicimus quia quaedam punitio peccati est, sicut satisfactio operis. Per confessionem etiam intelligit sacerdos qualiter debeat judicare de crimine. Per eam quoque peccator fit humilior et cautior." Briola, 'A Case Study of Scholasticism,' pp.77–78; Finn also characterises Peter Lombard as a "contritionist" as opposed to a staunch "confessionalist" like Gratian, see T. M. Finn, 'The Sacramental World In The Sentences Of Peter Lombard' in *Theological Studies*, lxix (2009), 557–582, pp. 573–574, Finn characterises Peter Lombard as a "contritionist" as opposed to a staunch "confessionalist" like Gratian.

[58] Walls, *Purgatory*, p. 18; Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 155–156.

Notre Dame from 1170 to 1180.[59] Le Goff cites a sermon, previously attributed to Hildebert of Lavardin, in which Peter discusses the "purgatorial" cleansing of souls, citing him as one of the first to use the term.[60] In many ways, the views Peter Comestor expressed on purgatory within his own treatise on the sacraments, *De sacramentis*, were fairly conventional, invoking Augustine's *Enchiridion*, affirming that sin could not go unpunished, those who died unrepentant were condemned, but that God was also merciful and would not unjustly condemn "medium" sinners to eternal pain.[61] However, the length and severity of the punishment would depend on the true contrition of the sinner themselves. Le Goff observes that Peter Comestor placed the middling dead within the "bosom of Lazarus" in his work, the *Historia scholastica*:

> Lazarus was placed in the bosom of Abraham. He was actually in the upper reaches of the infernal place, into which a little light penetrated and where there was no material suffering. Here the souls of the predestined remained until Christ's descent into the underworld. This place, because of the calm that reigned there, was called the bosom of Abraham...[62]

Finally, we come to Peter the Chanter. In his *Summa de sacramentia,* he affirmed that those guilty of more venial sins pass through purgatory, but that purgatory is not a pit-stop for the damned on their way to hell.[63] He also argued that purgatory was for the elect ultimately destined to attain heaven, and held a twofold view of purgatory, both that which would be experienced "in the future after death" and another purgatory which is

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[59] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 155–156, 213; see also Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 392–393, n. 4 for a discussion of the scholarship around the sermon and its ultimate attribution to Peter.
[60] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 156; I rely here on Le Goff's translation of the text, which is quite difficult to find, but Le Goff cites the following, Peter Manducator *De Sacramentis, De penitentia*, chaps. 25–31, in R. M. Martin (ed.), *Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense*, (Louvain, 1937), vol. 17, pp. 81–82.
[61] Peter Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, in J.P. Migne (ed.) PL, 198, col. 1589–90.
[62] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 164–165.
[63] Ibid., p. 166.

the penance imposed for sins.[64] Peter advocated for two suffrages, the offering of masses and other good works: in this sense, the categories of "medium" good and bad and collapsed: for one to achieve redemption in purgatory one must necessarily be one of the "elect."[65]

From even this brief look at the evolution of purgatory, it is possible to situate where discussions on the doctrine were at by the time authors like Jacques de Vitry and Thomas of Cantimpré were active. By this point, the origins of purgatorial debate evolved into a balancing act between confessionalists and contritionists, between the desire to uphold the sacraments and the authority of the Church, while also emphasising the mercy of God and the salvation that true contrition could attain.[66] These discussions may have reflected the pastoral concerns of some of these thinkers. As McLaughlin notes, discussions of purgatory were not limited to these theologians and the laity may have held a wide variety of beliefs, shaped by their engagement with saintly *vitae* or texts and sermons about visions of the afterlife, as well as local beliefs.[67] Nonetheless, in 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council would make confession at least once a year mandatory, but it would also make another significant contribution to eschatological discussions in its attempt to curb heresy by insisting on resurrection of the body on judgement day and the reunion of the soul with its body.[68] This would be further cemented by the Second Council of Leon in 1274.[69] Even earlier than the Fourth Lateran Council, this desire to cement

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[64] Ibid., p. 166.
[65] Ibid., p. 166.
[66] C. W. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336*, (Berkeley, 1987), p. 310, n. 114: Bynum notes that Peter the Chanter would influence authors such as Jacob of Voragine in *The Golden Legend*, and certainly both he and Jacques de Vitry utilise Peter's example of Master Silo returning from the dead to visit his student that will be discussed in the next chapter.
[67] McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints*, pp. 198–199, as well as pp. 203–204 for an example of this found in early prayers for those whose "souls were in doubt" in the pre-Gregorian *Liber sacramentorum Gellonensis*.
[68] Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, p. 240.
[69] Ibid.

orthodox authority through care for the dead would find a champion in the future Pope Innocent III. Innocent would emphasise the role of the "Church in Purgatory" during a homily for All Saints' Day, advocating for prayer for the dead in solidarity with the communion of saints, and for the benefit of the supplicant as well as the ones who would benefit from the supplications.[70]

Almost all of these were at least partially in response to dualism as a heresy which rejected the glorified resurrected body, purgatory, and the effectivity of care offered for the spiritual well-being of the dead—something which, by extension, negated Church authority and the sacraments. Bynum notes that this, in part, is attributed to these heretics essentially viewing the body and all organic material, including the bread of the Eucharist itself, as abject rot, destined for nothing more than decay.[71]

A House Divided: Heresy and the Rise of the Mendicants

In examining these early visions of purgatory, we can see a clear precedent for the purgatorial voyages that Christina went on, as well as the background of proto-purgatorial discussions, the gradual expanding of who could find redemption in the afterlife. We have also briefly examined objections to purgatory, particularly the dualist heresy, and it is here where we can move to Thomas and his milieu. Thomas's works have often been framed as anti-heretical propaganda, with the women of Liège countering the dualist heresy in their physical suffrages and purgatorial piety.[72] Here, it is critical to acknowledge the historiographical debate on the existence of the Cathars. If the Cathars

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[70] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 174–175.
[71] Bynum, *Resurrection*, pp. 218–219; see also Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, & Demonology in the Middle* Ages, (Philadelphia, 1999), pp.117–118: for a brief discussion on eucharistic anxieties of the period, and 146–148, for some exploration of dualist views on the body, particularly the anticipation of the shedding of the body as permanent relief; see also Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 195–199, 200–218.
[72] Elliott, 'The Beguines: A Sponsored Emergence' in *Proving Women*, pp. 47–84; see also Deery-Kurtz, 'Mary of Oignies,' pp. 188–189.

existed as a cohesive movement with uniform beliefs and even diocesan organisation, or if Catharism was ultimately non-uniform and individualistic in nature, is a source of contention among historians of this period.[73] Bynum notes that even if these anti-heretical polemics were not against a clearly extant and organised religious group or ideology, they were used to create and define a legitimate, orthodox Christian identity against the challenges of an unorthodox "other."[74] For the sake of simplifying identification and to reflect Thomas's understanding of these heretics, I will be referring to these perceived threats against Church orthodoxy either as the "dualists" or, in Thomas's own words, the "Albigensian heretics."[75] Thomas was writing in a rich environment for polemics that would dare to threaten the tie between living and dead, and it can be reasonably inferred that the anxiety about that bond being broken was a serious one the Church felt it needed to address, whether from extant organised heretical groups or not.

These anxieties about challenges to the effectiveness of the Church's intercessions on behalf of the dead, as well as the ability of the dead to intercede for the living, existed well before Thomas's career. In his *Sermones super cantica canticorum* (c. 1135), Bernard of Clairvaux responded to alleged heretical irreverence, citing the heretics' contempt for the Sacraments and the ability of the Church to intercede on behalf of the dead:

> They mock us … when we pray on behalf of the dead, when we ask for the prayers of the saints… They deprive the dead of the help of the living, and rob the living of the prayers of the saints because they have died.[76]

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[73] Shulevitz, 'Historiography of Heresy,' pp. 1–11, provides an excellent overview of the historiography of the study of Catharism, as well as the fraught nature of the term "Cathar" in studies on mediaeval heresy; see also M. G. Pegg, 'The Paradigm of Catharism' in Sennis (ed.), *Cathars in Question*, pp. 21–52.
[74] Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' p. 52.
[75] Thomas refers to these heretics as some variety of this in the VMO–SEng,1.4, p. 142 see the VMO–S 1.4, p. 574, where he refers to the "... adversarios Christi Albigenses haereticos" and in the *VLA*Eng 2.2, p. 240; VLA, 2.1.2, p. 196: "… peste gravissima Albigensium haereticorum."
[76] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermones super cantica canticorum* (*Sermons* 36–86) J. Leclercq, C.H. Talbot, H.M. Rochais (eds.) in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, (2 vols, Rome, 1957–1958), ii, 66.4, pp.

Bernard, whose writings would likely have been familiar to Thomas as a scholar, wrote contemptuously concerning these alleged heretics' lack of belief in purgatory and the immediate release of the soul into damnation or paradise.[77] Bernard also addressed the "martyrdoms" of heretics: while he discouraged violence against the heretics, believing that "faith should be a matter of persuasion, not force," he also conceded that, "... it is better for them to be checked by the sword of someone who does not bear the sword without cause than be allowed to lead others into their heresy."[78] This was a step towards increasing violence against heretics, culminating finally in the Albigensian Crusades which would dominate a large part of Thomas's lifetime.

In his treatise *De fide Catolica,* dated between 1185 and 1200, Alain of Lille wrote far more extensively concerning this challenge to the intercessory power of the Church, especially the cult of relics. While Alain passed in 1202, it is not unreasonable to think that Thomas, a scholar at the *studium* of St. Jacques in Paris, would have been familiar with his anti-heretical work, particularly as a Dominican concerned with countering challenges to orthodox Church teachings. Alain outlined the heretical argument against prayers for the dead and saintly intercession: that these prayers were not useful because the saints know who was saved and who was damned, and would be unable to help

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180–182and 66.9, pp. 183–184: "Irrident nos quod baptizamus infantes, quod oramus pro mortuis, quod sanctorum suffragia postulamus… mortuos viventium fraudantes auxiliis, viventes nihilominus sanctorum, qui decesserunt, suffragiis spoliantes." (Translation mine.)

[77] *Sermones super cantica canticorum*, ii, Sermon 66.11, p. 185.

[78] *Sermones super cantica canticorum*, ii, Sermon 66.12, p. 186: "… quia fides suadenda est, non imponenda. Quamquam Melius… gladio coercentur, illius videlicet qui non sine causa gladium portat, quam in suum errorem multos traicere permittantur." Certainly, Bernard's imagery is used within Lutgard's *vita* when describing her spiritual oneness with God, as King and Newman note in *The Collected Saints' Lives*, p. 272, n. 239; see also VLAEng, 2.43, p. 272, where Lutgard is described as one with God, "like a drop of water in a cask of wine." VLA, 2.3.43, p. 204: "… instar guttae aquae in dolium vini…"

through their merits either way, rendering their prayers ineffective.[79] He claimed that the heretics cited the story of Lazarus and the rich man to deny the efficacy of the saintly dead, quoting Abraham speaking to the rich man in hell concerning his pleas for help for himself and his living relatives: "'A great chasm is placed between us and you'…. so much so that even the saints might not take pity on the damned. If… they cannot take pity, neither can they pray for them."[80] In his rebuttal of these arguments about the permanent separation of the holy dead from the living, Alain did not limit efficacious prayers of intercession to the saints, but rather to the relationship between all living and all dead who die in communion with the Church. Further, he explained that if the rich man could be concerned for his living relatives while condemned in hell, the saints would not be less compassionate than the damned.[81] If even the most hopeless of the dead, the damned, could seek to be involved in the affairs of the living, then why not the saints closest to God? For Alain, the most significant reason for this mutual relationship was that the intercessions of the saints were necessary for the prayers of the Church to be effective: therefore, it would follow, that the relationship with and veneration of these saints gave the authority of the Church meaning. As Alain wrote:

> For, unless the saints who are in heaven are praying on our behalf, the daily prayer of the Church would be frustrated, which is made by the saints, that they might pray on our behalf, nor would they hold a place in the litany. Who also would dare to say the Church of God to be deceived in this, and her prayers frustrated?[82]

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[79] Alain of Lille, *De fide Catholica*, 72, PL 210, col. 373C. All translations for the *De Fide Catholica* are my own.
[80] *De fide Catholica*, 73, PL 210, col. 374A: "'Magnum chaos firmatum est inter nos et vos.' … ut etiam sancti damnatis non compatiantur. Si… non compatiuntur, nec orant pro eis."
[81] *De fide Catholica*, 73, PL 210, col. 374A.
[82] *De fide Catholica* 72*,* PL 210, col. 374A–374B: "Nisi enim sancti qui sunt in paradiso pro nobis orent, frustratoria esset quotidiana Ecclesiae oratio, quae fit ad sanctos, ut pro nobis orent, nec locum haberent litaniae. Quis autem dicere audeat Dei Ecclesiam in his decipi, et suis orationibus frustrari?"

One of the most interesting arguments made concerning these heresies was that of Ralph of Coggeshall in his *Chronicon Anglicanum*, in which he differentiated between the deaths of the martyrs and the executions of "heretics," citing Bernard of Clairvaux's *Sermones super canticum canticorum* before adding his own analysis:

> The men of these impious sects would rather choose to die, than be converted from error by anyone; but the constancy of the martyrs of Christ and that stubbornness of theirs have nothing in common, because the contempt of death in those [the heretics] is piety in them, hardness working in their hearts.....… They are rustic [ignorant/unlettered] men, and therefore not convinced by reason, not corrected by those in authority, nor softened by persuasion. They choose to die rather than be converted from this wicked sect.[83]

Ralph specifically attributed the deaths of heretics to their ignorant obstinacy as opposed to genuine, *learned* piety. The account is accompanied by a description of the trial and death of a young woman accused of heresy by the cleric Gervase of Tilbury after he made unwanted sexual advances. In a response that would not have been out of place in other hagiographies of virgin martyrs of the Church, she equated the loss of virginity with damnation, causing Gervaise to "recognize" her dualist heresy.[84] To differentiate her death from virgin martyrdoms, Ralph argued that it was not enough to be willing to die to preserve virtue, which Ralph described as "contempt" for death rather than "constancy" of faith, but that this willingness to die needed to be informed by obedience and

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[83] Ralph of Coggeshall, *Radulphi De Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum, De expugnatione Terræ Sanctæ libellus, Thomas Agnellus de morte et sepultura Henrici Regis Angliæ Junioris, Gesta Fulconis Filii Warini, Excerpta ex otiis Imperialibus Gervasii Tileburiensis. Ex Codicibus Manuscriptis*, Joseph Stevenson and Thomas Agnellus (eds.), (Wiesbaden Kraus Reprint, 1965), p. 124: "Homines hujus impiissimae sectae mori magis eligunt quam ab errore converti; sed nihil simile habent martyrum Christi constantia et istorum pertinacia, quia mortis contemptum in illis pietas, in istis cordis duritia operator… Rusticani homines sunt, et ideo nec rationibus convincuntur, nec auctoritatibus corriguntur, nec persuasionibus flectuntur. Mori magis eligunt quam ab impiisima secta converti." (Translation my own).
[84] Ibid., pp. 122–123.

conformity to the truth *as taught* by the Church. However, this account also demonstrates the anxiety about the executions of heretics leading to sympathy or reverence for them.

Elliott attributes the necessity of creating a new cult of martyrs, alongside the campaign to combat heresy (both through ideology and force), particularly in Languedoc, to a need to revitalise the cult of martyrs with fresh blood, as it were.[85] Allowing sympathy, or, far more dangerously, a rival cult of relics, to spring up around the deaths of heretics, would present a serious threat to the authority of the Church. In addition to treatises written against these heretics, negative translations, or the removal and destruction of heretical bodies, served as a dark mirror to the reverence given to the bodies of the saints during their translations and elevations within their shrines. Elliott refers to this *damnatio memoriae*, writing that if the worthy dead were rewarded through remembrance, then the unworthy dead would be punished through "conscientious acts of forgetting," a more permanent severance from the living.[86] These acts ranged from the forbidding of a "Christian" burial on hallowed ground to the exhumation and burning of heretics' corpses.[87] The Church itself appears to have been concerned with enforcing these delineations: in 1179, the Third Lateran Council ruled that it was not only the bodies of excommunicates, but also their supporters that should be refused Christian burial.[88]

As conflicts with heresy grew in scope and intensity in the wake of the Albigensian Crusades, as well as the rise of new mendicant orders such as the Dominicans, sent forth to counter heretical arguments, the Fourth Lateran Council was convened by Innocent III in 1215. This council would solidify the role of clerical authority

[85] Elliott. *Proving Woman*, pp. 170–173. Elliott notes that this was particularly crucial given the flagging cults of martyred mendicants and Inquisitors at the time.
[86] Elliott, 'Violence against the Dead,' p. 1021. In the same article, Elliott also notes that Innocent III, in a letter to the Bishop of Norway, called for the exhumation and translation of excommunicants from holy ground, p. 1040.
[87] Elliott, 'Violence against the Dead,' p. 1041.
[88] Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, i, Canon 27, pp. 224–225.

through a required yearly confession, and by affirming a priest's exclusive ability to consecrate the Eucharist.[89] Most notably, the council gave a definitive statement regarding how heretics were to be dealt with: unequivocally excommunicated, placed under the "sword of anathema" unless innocence was proven, and then formally condemned if persisting in such heresy for a year after excommunication.[90] Furthermore, the Council ruled on the appropriate display and handling of saintly relics, notably against "indiscriminately" displaying relics without the context of a reliquary.[91] This was to prevent the sale of relics for profit, as well as to discourage false advertisement directed towards those who had come to venerate the body or belongings of a saint. Thus, the Church developed its priority of combatting a heretical stance that not only indicated a severing of the community of the living with the community of the dead, something which resonated strongly within secular and religious cultures alike, but which also threatened the legitimacy of the Church itself. It is to this ideologically torn world that Thomas of

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[89] Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, i, Canon 21, p. 233; ibid, Canon 1, p. 230, the first to reference transubstantiation, most notably: "His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been changed in substance, by God's power, into his body and blood, so that in order to achieve this mystery of unity we receive from God what he received from us. Nobody can effect this sacrament except a priest who has been properly ordained according to the church's keys, which Jesus Christ himself gave to the apostles and their successors." (for the Latin, see p. 229 in the same volume: "… cuius corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter continentur, transsubstantiatis pane in corpus et vino in sanguinem potestate divina, ut ad perficiendum mysterium unitatis accipiamus ipsi de suo, quod accepit ipse de nostro. Et hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere, nisi sacerdos, qui fuerit rite ordinatus secundum claves ecclesiae, quas ipse concessit apostolis et eorum successoribus Iesus Christus.") This is significant given both the constant theme of seeking holy union with Christ through the Eucharist within the saintly *vitae*, and the confirmation of the role, authority, and heritage of priests.

[90] Ibid, i, Canon 3, p. 233. For the Latin, see p. 232 in the same volume: "… anathematis gladio feriantur…"

[91] Ibid., i, Canon 62, p. 263. For the Latin, see p. 262 in the same volume: "… eas *passim* ostenderunt…" (emphasis mine); on some level, this was related to the need for relics to be presented withing a recognisable context. See also Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions*, pp. 28–35 on the role of dreams in relic identification, as well as pp. 35, 41–45on the gradual development of the use of familiar saintly images to discern dreams or visions of saints. This was not necessarily ubiquitous but began to feature in stories featuring a discussion on the need for prudence in interpreting dreams; more broadly on the importance of reliquaries, see Hahn, 'What do reliquaries do,' pp. 284–316

Cantimpré would address his stories and would seek to inextricably knit together the ties between the living and the dead.

Thomas, the Dominican Order, and A New Cult of Saints

As conflicts with heterodoxy grew, the Church found itself in need of new tools and organisations to combat, not only heresy but also pastoral ignorance and neglect that could lead to lay believers deviating or becoming alienated from orthodox belief. It was here where the Dominican Order would not only place a special emphasis on supplementing the pastoral care and theological education provided by parish priests but place a great deal of focus on charity and purgatorial devotions—particularly important as the theology surrounding purgatory developed. The educational and pastoral mission of the Order itself would likely have appealed to Thomas and influenced the development of his pastoral practices over the course of his career. Thomas was quite clear in the *Bonum universale de apibus* about the great pride he took in his career and the pastoral mission of the Order[92] In describing his own pastoral career, Thomas goes first into the spiritual hardships of hearing confession, writing:

> What shall I say of the labour of counsel in hearing confessions, in which they are forced to bear away the filth of sins, so that they make the passage through the ears to the heart, and completely exhaust the spirit and body… I believe that there are, and have been, many in the order, who would rather have endured the flames of bodily conflagration for a time, than endured the hardships of this spiritual conflagration.[93]

This is not surprising given Thomas's past struggles as a plenary confessor in his early career, something that he likely would have encountered time and again in his fellow

[92] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 306–365.
[93] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 316–: "… Quid dicam de labore consilii in confessionibus audiendis, in quo spurcitas peccatorum tollerare coguntur, ut per aures ad cor transitum faciant et spiritum corpusque totaliter defatigent… Credo multos esse et fuisse in ordine, qui potius per tempus sustinuissent flammas incendii corporales, quam huius spiritualis incendii angustias pertulerint."

brothers throughout his time with the Dominicans. However, it is the next part of this passage where Thomas spelled out what would most deeply define his mission as a mendicant preacher:

> And this is the consolation of the good brethren, that if they should grieve a little in hearing the confessions. For when a woman gives birth, she is sad, yet she rejoices in hope, because through penance man is born into the world… For I do not believe that in the heart of a good brother a greater joy can be born under heaven than when he sees sinners converted to penance by prevenient grace and his exhortation...[94]

It is here where perhaps Christina's influence can be seen, even at this later stage in Thomas's career: in juxtaposing the "labour pains" of bringing a soul to God for "rebirth," Thomas placed the confessor in a maternal role, suffering the spiritual (and often physical) discomforts of the "filth" of sin, only to give "new life" to a repentant sinner.[95] As will be explored in a later chapter, this would also align with Thomas's treatment of purgatory in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, where many of the purgatorial "suffrages" that he prescribed were illustrated by the actions of women on behalf of their loved ones, usually mothers acting on behalf of their children, whether in tandem with a priest or in individual acts of piety.[96] However, Thomas's "zeal for souls" was apparent long before he joined the Dominican Order, and so it is not unreasonable to infer that

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[94] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 316–318: "Hec est autem consolatio bonorum fratrum, ut si ad modicum in confessionibus audiendis eos oporteat contristari. Mulier enim cum parit, tristitiam habet, gaudet tamen in spe, quia per penitentiam natus est homo in mundum. … Neque enim credo in corde boni fratris maius sub celo posse gaudium generari quam quod videat per prevenientem gratiam et suam exhortationem converti ad penitentiam peccatore…"

[95] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 316–318; this maternal imagery was not necessarily uncommon, see C.W. Bynum, *Jesus As Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, (Berkeley, 1982), pp. 115–118, 119–120 for Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St-Thierry's usage of this imagery and its prevalence among Cistercian writers. Given Thomas's familiarity with Cistercian works, it is not unlikely that he would have also seen this imagery used. See also male writers utilising feminising language as a rejection of the world, and its typical usage, Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 144, 146–154; see also Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 188.

[96] BUA, 2.53, pp. 916–967.

doctrinal changes within the Church also heavily influenced his decision to join the Dominicans.

After the Fourth Lateran Council, there was a renewed emphasis on the education and training of clergy, informed by the need to have orthodox influences to counter perceived heretical influences.[97] Sweetman also points out that this *vita apostolica* would also have greatly appealed to Thomas's sensibilities and pastoral passions, potentially even motivating him to seek out a change from a monastic order to a mendicant order.[98] What made this movement so popular was that it could be emulated by laity themselves, with high spiritual standards that could be achieved while still "in the world."[99] However, while there was excitement surrounding new religious movements and lay piety, there was also a degree of worry: if many of the heretical movements described by anti-heretical authors also called for a rededication to "purifying" the Christian faith, seeming to mirror many of the Church's own calls to personal holiness in poverty, chastity, and piety, then there was a fear that these new lay movements could fall into unorthodox practices if they were not under some kind of supervision. Cistercian writer and educator Caesarius of Heisterbach included such a tale of misleading heretical *perfecti* in his famous *exempla* collection, the *Dialogus miraculorum:*

> Two men, simple in dress, but not in heart, ravening wolves rather than sheep, came to Besançon, pretending the deepest piety. They were pale and wasted, they walked barefoot, they fasted every day; never were they absent from solemn matins in the cathedral, nor would they accept from anyone more than the most meager food. When by such hypocrisy they had gained the goodwill of all the people… they began to pour forth their hidden poison, and to preach new and unheard of heresies to the unlettered folk.[100]

[97] Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' p. 42.
[98] Ibid., p. 72.
[99] Ibid., p. 34.
[100] DMEng 1.5.18, p. 338, DM 1.5.18, pp. 296–298: "Duo homines, non mente, sed habitu simplices, non oves, sed lupi rapaces, Bizunzium venerunt, summam simulantes religiositatem. Erant autem pallidi et macilenti, nudis pedibus incedentes, et quotidie ieiunantes; matutinis sollemnibus ecclesiae maioris nulla nocte defuerunt, nec aliquid ab aliquo praeter victum tenuem

Clergy, then, had reason to be concerned about potential heretics-in-lay-saints'-clothing. Whether or not heretical groups existed in organised forms, separate from the orthodox Church, as some texts vividly describing dualist practices from the era argued, was not the point. Rather, the greatest sticking point was the fear that clergy not seen to be practising this *vita apostolica* might be compared unfavourably to an individual or group outside of the Church who *was* seen to be doing so, which would undermine the authority of the Church itself.[101] Likewise, it would become important to define a Christian identity to differentiate between orthodox practitioners and potential heretical groups within the movement. Therefore, it had to have been with a somewhat reserved, if not indeed deeply cautious, position that the Church found itself in, both encouraging these new forms of devotion while also insisting on its own supremacy in legitimising certain rites and practices and in dictating orthodox doctrine and belief. This anxiety was mirrored in Thomas's own writings, especially in how he depicted Christina. Throughout her *vita*, Christina often flirts with heterodox practices but then withdraws into a relatively safe position of reverence, her *vita* emphasising her dedication to clergy and adherence to Church authority.[102]

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receperunt. Cumque tali hypocrisi totius populе in se provocassent affectum… coeperunt latens virus evomere, et nova atque inauditas haereses rudibus praedicare."

[101] Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' p. 34.

[102] On the relationship between hagiographer and their community, T. J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford, 1988), pp. 5–6, 15–16, 18–22, 32–37, particularly pp. 19–20. See also Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, p. 74 and Brigitte Cazelles, *The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century*, (Philadelphia, 1991), p. 44 for a discussion on the need for an individual to become "visible"—with public signs of holiness that can be recognised and approved by their community; see also Sarah Salih, 'Introduction: Saints, Cults, and Lives in Late Medieval England' in Sarah Salih (ed.), *A Companion to Middle English Hagiography* (Cambridge, 2006), 1–23, pp. 3, 10–11; E. A. Petroff, *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism*, (Oxford,1994), p. 162 ; for additional discussion of hagiography as entertainment, see S. K. Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy,* (Cambridge MA, 2007), pp. 6–7, especially p. 9.

It is here where the devotion of the Dominican Order to relic culture and purgatorial devotions must be explored more fully, particularly given their influence on Thomas's career. Relic culture already had great impact, not only because of the often-personal nature of preserving the remains of early martyrs, or the relic's role as a tangible site for divine presence, but because of its role in proselytization. Early Christian missionaries, with an eye towards appealing to the sensual and the spiritual alike, dazzled their intended converts: "... it was the majesty of pontifical celebrations or processions… and the beauty and power of the relic in its reliquary which made divine justice, mercy, and largesse present and real to and for the whole community of the faithful."[103] Following this tradition, in Thomas's time, how recently the saint in question had died, as well as the manner of their death, had a significant bearing on how impactful and compelling their cult was: as Grzebien discusses, while older shrines of martyrs and holy saints still retained their importance, there was also an excitement for the newer lay saints who were emerging.[104]

While the Fourth Lateran Council placed great emphasis on how older relics were to be handled there was also a stipulation that *new* relics not be displayed without the approval of the Pope: this meant that there was an anticipation of newer saints, and a revitalization of the cult of saints by new lay saints.[105] This did not mean that there was no scepticism surrounding these new saints, but rather that there was room to foster enthusiasm around their cults while also curbing any unorthodoxy. Thomas himself would likely have seen some of this revitalization as he was commissioned to write John of Cantimpré's *vita*, a text he composed with the assistance of John's surviving friends

[103] Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' p. 40.
[104] Grzebien, ''Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 121.
[105] Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, i, –Canon 62, p. 263; see also Grzebien, 'Penance, Purgatory, Mysticism and Miracles,' p. 121.

and community. Certainly, Thomas's focus on lay saints after his departure from Cantimpré, particularly women, demonstrates the significance of this cult of saints in his private devotions, and that his work was continuously in demand reflects that even within the new mendicant orders, there was a market for such works, both for teaching or devotional material and for conferring legitimacy on the order. Even though none of Thomas's female saints were ever formally canonized, Thomas did not hesitate to link holy women like Margaret of Ypres or Lutgard of Aywières to the Dominicans, using their spiritual gifts to bolster the authority of the order.[106] If the saint herself had no explicit links to any order, like Christina, her life could still be adapted as a tool for preaching orthodoxy. Nonetheless, the second cause, the need to confer legitimacy, would prove urgently important.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Thomas, a proud member of this active and dynamic order, would have been interested in promoting the legitimacy of the Dominicans and their work, and eager to preserve the observations related to the cult of saints—especially the role of the Church and clergy in curating those relics. This is important to consider when discussing whether heretical groups existed in an organised way: even outside of an organized movement, the bodies of executed heretics were potential threats to the cult of relics itself, and by extension, the Church's ability to intercede on behalf of the dead or their surviving loved ones. As demonstrated above, this was a sticking point for multiple authors: Caesarius of Heisterbach dedicated an entire section in the *Dialogus miraculorum* to countering the heretical denial of the power of intercession and the resurrection of the dead before (perhaps pointedly) moving on to discuss demonic possessions, writing: "They deny the resurrection of the body; they mock at any benefit coming to the dead from the living; they say that there is no profit in going

[106] VMYEng, 57, pp. 205–206, VMY 57, p. 130; VLAEng, 3.3, p. 276, VLA, 3.3, pp. 204–205.

to church, or in praying there; and in these things they are worse than Jews or Pagans, who believe them all."[107] Thus, the seriousness of denying the intercessory power of the Church for the dead was seen as being so far beyond the pale of acceptability that even practitioners of Judaism and paganism were framed as more "godly" than a heretic who denied them. It stood to reason that a counter to heresy was needed in the form of compelling intercessors, a dead who were not emotionally divested from the well-being of the living.

The first serious push within the Dominican Order to begin such a new relic cult (outside of that of Saint Dominic himself) started with the murder of the inquisitor Peter of Verona in 1252. Peter's death had all the promising hallmarks of a new martyr: murdered by heretics while performing his duties as inquisitor in Lombardy, Peter was already known for his charity, virtue, and public debates with heretics, and his martyrdom had even been compared to that of Thomas Becket by some of his contemporaries.[108] Peter was one of the fastest canonizations in Church history, something precipitated by the rise of heretical strongholds and the enthusiasm of the Dominican Order for their saint.[109] Prudio notes that Peter was born among those with dualist sympathies, and that his *vita* portrays his earliest proselytization effort as confronting his "Manichaean" uncle at age seven.[110] This likely would have made Peter's eventual conversion to Catholicism and his participation in the first generation of Dominicans a compelling narrative for new and old members of the Order alike, especially since he met Dominic de Guzmán during

[107] DMEng, i, 1. 5, 21, p. 344; DM, i, 1. 5. 21, pp. 300–301: "Corporum resurrectionem negant; quicquid beneficii mortuis a vivis impenditur irrident; ire ad ecclesias, vel in eis orare, nihil dicunt prodesse. In his deteriores sunt Judaeis et paganis, quia illa credunt."
[108] Ibid.; Donald Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor: The Life and Cult of Peter of Verona (d. 1252)*, (Burlington, 2008), pp. 119–121. These are also quite similar to John of Cantimpré's career.
[109] Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 81; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 61–62.
[110] Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 5.

his time at the University of Bologna and was present at his death bed.[111] In the *vita* written by Tommaso Agni da Lentino, while most of Peter's encounters with heretics are divinely aided, some specific talking points to counter heretical ideas could be gleaned and used by mendicants and their listeners alike.[112] A common theme in Peter's *vita* is his restoration of speech to Christians left "mute" and unable to serve as witnesses to their faith. For example, in one of the miracles in his *vita*, Peter was praying in front of the church of Sant'Eustorgio where, after a flurry of miracles during his sermon, a mute boy was led to him for healing. Peter placed his finger in the boy's mouth, leading to a touching miracle (and a somewhat impertinent response from the boy):

> He asked the boy who had been mute for so long (nearly ten years) what he had in his mouth. "Your finger," he said and at once erupted in abundant thanksgiving in the presence of all, and returned an offering to Christ from his lips so newly opened.[113]

This is immediately followed with an aside against heretics: "... on account of this the iniquitous lips of the heretics ought to be stopped up with shame, yet those impudent dogs are not upset by salutary confutation and are ignorant of shame…"[114] These depictions of Peter silencing heretical arguments while enabling orthodox speech, with crowds left awestricken in the face of his rhetorical skills, are all critical parts of

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[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid., pp. 21–24; It is worth pointing out that Prudio also thinks it is "circumstantially probable" that Peter wrote a treatise against heresy and that his authorship is accepted by some historians, see Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 33, n. 93, and Appendix A in the monograph, pp. 181–182.

[113] Tomasso of Lentino, Donald Prudio, '*Vita Sancti Petri* 2.11' in *The Martyred Inquistor*, 200–262, pp. 210–211; for this episode in the *AASS*, see VPMLat, 2.11, p. 698: "… mox interrogatus puer, qui diutacuerat. id est decem annis, quid in ore habuisset, 'Digitum,' inquit, 'vestrum': et statim in uberes gratiarum actiones coram omnibus erumpens, apertorum novitor Christo vitulos labiorum reddidit…" See also p. 106 in *The Martyred Inquisitor* for analysis of these themes of muteness.

[114] Tomasso da Lentino, as translated by Prudio, '*Vita Sancti Petri* 2.11' in *The Martyred Inquistor*, p. 211. VPMLat, 2.11, p. 698: "… propter quod iniqua haereticorum labia prae confusione obstrui debuissent, sed ipsi tamquam canes impudentissimi salutifera confusione nou sunt confusi et erubesccre nescierunt…"

Peter's life: only the righteous in Peter's *vita* have any room to speak, making him a compelling saint for the Order of Preachers.[115]

From his life as depicted in the examples of martyred brothers in the *Vitae Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Peter was framed within powerful and miraculous images of Dominicans achieving victory over heretics, often through divine means. Within this collection, Peter's sainthood was intended as an example for new Dominicans and confirm the spiritual favour the Order possessed, with his martyrdom conferring sanctity and authority onto the Order.[116] Despite Peter's cult gaining a somewhat more significant following than some of his martyred predecessors, Elliott notes the relative "ambivalence" with which Peter's murderers were treated, particularly the Church's slowness in actually prosecuting them; indeed, one of Peter's murderers was ultimately venerated after his remorseful entry into the Dominican Order.[117] However, Prudio counters that multiple popes went out of their way to promote and protect Peter Martyr's cult, alongside the Dominicans, with Pope Clement IV granting a "100-day reduction in penances" for those who made a pilgrimage to his tomb.[118] Elliott and Prudio alike note that many of Peter's more difficult personality traits, which had made him a dogged inquisitor, were downplayed in favour of an emphasis on his charity and martyrdom rather than his actual role as inquisitor.[119]

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[115] Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor,* p. 106.
[116] *Vita Sancti Petri* 5.35–36, as translated in Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 224–225. See particularly Peter's respons to his death in the same volume, 5.35, p. 224 "Let them do as they will, I shall be worse to them in death than in life!" (For the Latin, see the VPMLat, 5.35, p. 705: "'Sed agant,' inquit, 'quid velint, plus quam vivus fecerira, mortuus faciam contra eos.'") This section on Peter's life and martyrdom includes an episode with Peter's uncle, where Peter uses the Creed to confront his uncle's dualism. Prudio, in *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 61–62, points out that Peter's life is book-ended with this specific argument against heresy, with his dying words being a repetition of the Creed.
[117] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 138.
[118] Prudio, *The Martyred Inquisitor*, p. 88.
[119] Ibid., p. 173; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 61; see also C. C. Ames, 'Peter Martyr: The Inquisitor as Saint' in *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, xxxi, no. 1 (2000), 137–174, pp. 163–174 for the mixed reception of Peter's cult.

These difficulties in "selling" Peter's cult to the public indicate that a multiple-pronged approach on behalf of Dominican preachers was necessary in utilising the cult of the holy dead to encourage and enforce orthodoxy. While Peter Martyr, with his connections to Dominic and his image as a principled convert zealously defending the faith, was ideal for the prestige of the Order, his cult appears to have been mostly popular in Italy and the Mediterranean, rather than expanding further into the continent.[120] While the circumstances leading to his murder by heretics largely lent itself favourably to the establishment of his cult, this was not universally the case.[121] An example of this irreverence is recorded in Peter's *vita* of the less-than-pious reception of his cult: in Utrecht, somewhat closer to Christina's part of the world, local women were heard to exclaim, "Behold these Preachers have found all ways for money to be made, for instance they are able to accumulate cash and build wide palaces, and now they do honour to a new martyr."[122] There was a very real possibility, then, of the new cult being seen as a disingenuous attempt to generate wealth for the Order rather than real devotion, especially given the more difficult aspects of his inquisitorial career.

While Peter himself would be martyred much later in Thomas's career, 28 years after Christina's passing, his was an example of what should have been an effective martyr's cult that failed to land in an atmosphere of lay devotion and renewed apostolic zeal. It was necessary and understandable, in the absence of any other serious contenders for Dominican saints at the time, that Thomas sought out models of orthodoxy closer to home to use in his pastoral work: models whose pastoral zeal and spiritual goals were in alignment with those of the Dominicans, and who could serve as imitable examples for

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[120] Ibid.
[121] Ames, "Peter Martyr," p. 172.
[122] *VSP* 8.60. 705, as translated in Prudio, *The Marytred Inquistor*, p. 234; see VPMLat, 8.60, p. 712: "Ecce isti Praedicatores omnes lucrandi modum invenerunt; nam ut magnam possent pecuniam cumulare, et lata aedificare palatia, novum nunc invenerunt Martyrem."

his audiences. Unable to give eloquent sermons or speeches, Thomas's female saints allowed their tears, ecstasies, visions, and bodies to serve as their witness for Christ; while their ecstasies and visions could not be replicated, their penances and almsgiving, even their weeping, served as accessible practices. Peter's vehemence towards the heretics he encountered, or at least that which is demonstrated by his hagiographer, came at a period much later than Christina and during a period of political turmoil and escalating violence, and was indicative of a change in policy towards heretics. This was not the case within Christina's *vita*, where she works to build community, engaging others in practices that would ultimately draw them closer to God and make them mindful of the wellbeing of their own souls.

It is here where Christina and Peter can be most meaningfully compared, not as a race for whose cult resonated most (Peter's would be more far reaching than Christina's and he was officially canonized) but rather as two different methods of countering heresy and promoting orthodox Church teaching, something deeply important to the Dominican Order at the time. If Peter's career reflected later concerns and doctrinal changes, offering a way to counter heretical doctrine through the preaching of the newly formed Dominican order with his teachings and miracles, Christina's pastoral career focused on accessible practices: most notably an emerging doctrine of remembrance and reciprocal care of the dead.[123]

The Spiritual Ascent of the Soul: William of St-Thierry and the Cistercian Influence

Before understanding how Christina's spiritual development was so different in relation to Thomas's other saints, it is important to first understand the spiritual "stages of ascent"

[123] See Sweetman, 'Dominican Preaching,' pp. 33–35 for the escalating violence against heretical groups, as opposed to some initial attempts at reconciliation and re-education.

as put forward by the Cistercian author William of St-Thierry in his *Golden Epistle*. While this has been discussed to an extent in the critical edition of Christina's life, it is important to discuss how these stages, as well as Cistercian literature itself, shaped Thomas's ideas of spiritual development.[124] These ideas about the progress of the soul were present throughout his *vitae* but appeared in a very different way in Christina's *vita*.

William of St-Thierry (c.1085–1148?) was born in Liège, likely from a noble background like Thomas's own.[125] Much about his early life and childhood has been lost to time. While William began his career in the Benedictine order, becoming a formidable scholar and accomplished author rising through the ranks to ultimately become the Abbot of St-Thierry in 1119 or 1120, it was at the urging of his beloved friend, Bernard of Clairvaux, that he would join the Cistercian order in 1135.[126] William enjoyed a profound friendship with Bernard, and the reformed Cistercian practices, particularly the emphasis on frugality and austerity, appealed greatly to his ascetic sensibilities.[127] As William wrote of his first meeting with Bernard at Clairvaux, recalling with a touch of envy Bernard's freedom for spiritual devotions compared to his own restrictions as abbot:

> … I found him living in that hut of his, which was like the hovels that are built for lepers at the cross-roads… he had been relieved entirely of the charge of the monastery, by the order of the bishop and the abbots, and I found him in this freedom, devoting himself solely to God and the affairs of his soul, as happy as a saint in paradise…. And I felt such joy… so great a desire to share the poverty and simplicity of his life, that had the choice that day been given me, I would have chosen to stay there with him for ever and to serve him.[128]

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[124] Newman, Introduction, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, p. 18.
[125] William of Saint-Thierry, 'Introduction' by Justin McCann in *The Golden Epistle of Abbot William of St. Thierry to the Carthusians of Mont Dieu*, Walter Shewring (trans.), (London, 1930), p. x.
[126] Ibid., p. xxiv
[127] Ibid.
[128] William of St-Thierry, *Vita prima Sancti Bernardii Claraevallis abbatis*, Paul Verdeyen (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis*, lxxxix, (Turnhout, 2011), 1.33, pp. 58–59, "... inueni eum in suo illo tugurio, quale leprosis in compitis publicis fieri solet. … ex praecepto... episcopi et abbatum feriatum ab omni sollicitudine domus, tam interiori quam exteriori, uacantem Deo et sibi, et quasi in deliciis paradisi exsultantem. Tantaque affectus sum

The admiration was mutual: Bernard not only encouraged William to join the Cistercian Order, but sent him his writings, at one point even saying of William in a letter to another friend: "... why should I be afraid that my little book should pass under the eyes of him, under whose gaze I would willingly spread my whole soul?"[129] In any case, William's spiritual development came to its ultimate fruition in the Cistercian Order, under Bernard's careful and affectionate eye, where William finally laid down the burdens as abbot that he felt had hindered his spiritual development. In some senses, it is not surprising that Thomas would find himself drawn to William's works. They shared a similar background: both were dedicated and zealous scholars, both had changed their affiliations to religious orders that better reflected the goals of their pastoral work, both had an influential spiritual mentor, and both spent considerable time in the diocese of Liège during times of major theological change.

William's 1145 work, the *Golden Epistle*, was written with an educational intent in mind, much like Thomas's *Bonum universale de apibus.* While Thomas's work was more diversified, ranging from moral tales to saints' lives, William's treatise was intended specifically as a manual for novices on how to obtain spiritual perfection by degrees over time in their monastic practices.[130] Written on the happy occasion of a visit to an old friend at the Carthusian Abbey of Mont-Dieu, the treatise was filled with admiration for the spiritual practices of the order.[131] William outlined three main stages of spiritual

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suauitate… tantoque desiderio in paupertate illa et simplicitate cohabitandi ei, ut si optio illa die mihi data fuisset, nil tam optassem quam ibi cum eo semper manere ad seruiendum ei." This passage is found translated within Justin McCann, *The Golden Epistle of Abbot William of St. Thierry*, p. 33.

[129] Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Epistola lxxxviii' as translated by Justin McCann, *The Golden Epistle of Abbot William of St. Thierry*, p. xix; for the Latin text, see J. Mabillon (ed.), *Sancti Bernardi abbatis Claraevallensis: opera omnia*, (4 vols, Paris, 1839), i, 'Epistola lxxxvii,' col. 260C: "Utquid enim libellus meus oculos ejus formidaret, cui se videndum animus quoque meus totum, si posset, expanderet?"

[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid., pp. xxvi–xxviii–

development, starting from a beginner's position to a perfect state: the animal, the rational, and the spiritual.[132] The "animal" stage is that of the beginner, who must be nourished and nurtured: "Therefore, the love of God, having been born in man by grace, reading nourishing/suckling [it], contemplation feeding [it.]"[133] The image of feeding, particularly suckling, suggests a sort of spiritual infancy and dependence on a nurturing spiritual environment and reliance on God as a person is "weaned" from their earthly senses off of worldly influences and desires and towards spiritual awareness and ascent.[134] In Thomas's *vitae,* these were characterised by incidents such as God's secret spiritual courtship of Christina before her first death, or Lutgard's rejection of wealth and marriage.[135]

The rational stage is characterised by the seeking of wisdom. King observes that as far as female saints were concerned, most male theologians did not believe them to be capable of the more masculine "rationality."[136] She also notes that this "masculine" virtue of rationality was important for William, who was writing largely for a male audience. This was in contrast to Thomas, who was often writing for convents and for audiences which could include female listeners, and who regarded feminine "receptivity" as necessary for the ultimate bridal union of the soul with God.[137] This also meant that, on some level, women could essentially bypass the rational phase, moving directly to unity

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[132] William of St. Thierry, *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei*; I have consulted the Latin and French edition, Jean Déchanet (ed.) *Lettre aux Frères du Mont-Dieu (Lettre D'Or)*, Sources chrétiennes (Paris, 1975) 1.2.41, pp. 178–179
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[133] Ibid., 2.5.171, pp. 280–281: "Amorem ergo Dei, in homine ex gratia genitum, lectio lactat, meditatio pascit, oratio confortat et illuminat." (Translation my own)
[134] Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 154–155; for the association of Christ's wounds with nurturing and breast–feeding, see Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 79–117; see particularly, King, 'The Sacramental Witness,' pp. 150–151 for a discussion of this in Christina's life, as well as King's note in the VCMEng, pp. 132–133, n. 12. For similar events in Lutgard's life, see King, 'The Dove at the Window,' pp. 234–236.
[135] VCM, 1.4, p. 651; VLAEng, 1.1, pp. 215–217, VLA 1.1, p. 191.
[136] King, 'The Dove At The Window,' pp. 226–227.
[137] Ibid., p. 227.

with God after achieving the stage of spiritual perfection.[138] For Christina, this is best characterised by her revelations from the Holy Spirit early on in her life. King argues that in Lutgard's case, Thomas portrayed her journey in this stage as a shift from the consolation of her faith through outward, physical visions and experiences with Christ to a much more internalised and intimate relationship with Christ, characterised by a knowledge of him that surpassed her corporeal senses.[139] This is not to say that her corporeal visions ceased; as the following sections will explore, these visions intensified in frequency and scope near the end of her life, with some of the most notable visions happening while she was on her deathbed. Rather, the visions no longer appear because of shaken or troubled faith, but rather as an affirmation of impending consummation: which brings this discussion to the final phase of spiritual union.

In this final phase, the soul and God are completely one, with soul being entirely attuned to the love of God, and in total agreement with His will, with William writing:

> But "unity of spirit" with God, for the man who keeps his heart on high, is the perfection of the will's progressing toward God, when he no longer only wills what God wills… but it is perfect in its love, so that it cannot will anything but what God wills.[140]

For many of Thomas's saints, the soul's perfect alignment to the workings and will of God was depicted as the ultimate ascent of the soul. The "consummation" of this devotion usually came at the end of their lives, and it is here where the most bridal imagery can be found. William marked this stage in a description that may have been

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[138] Ibid., pp. 227–228.
[139] Ibid., pp. 238–239; see also R.E. Elder, 'The Way of Ascent: The Meaning of Love in the Thought of William of St. Thierry' in J. R. Sommerfeldt (ed.), (Kalamazoo, 1964), 39–47.
[140] William of St Thierry, *Lettre aux Frères du Mont-Dieu (Lettre D'Or)*, 3.1. 257, p. 348–349: "Unitas vero spiritus cum Deo, homini sursum cor habenti, proficientis in Deum voluntatis est perfectio, cum jam non solummodo vult quod Deus vult... sed in affectu perfectus, ut non possit velle nisi quod Deus vult." (Translation my own).

striking to Thomas, given how he later described Christina's ministry: "... to become of no worth in his own eyes as he contemplates God, to subject himself to every human being for the love of his Creator, to offer up his body as a holy victim, living, pleasing to God…"[141] King points out that within Thomas's *corpus,* the description of Lutgard's sublimation mirrors that of Bernard of Clairvaux, as she was described as being "wholly transformed into God, like a drop of water in a cask of wine, she was mingled with him as one spirit."[142] This language is strangely absent in Christina's *vita*, with the exception of the dialogue between her body and spirit towards the end of her life, where she expressed a longing to return to the union which she had already had a taste of in the wake of her first death:

> O unhappy and pitiable body! How long will you torment me, as wretched as I am? … For what do you hold back my wretched soul in yourself? For how long will you keep me from seeing Christ? When will you discard me, so that my soul may return unimpeded to its Creator? Woe to you, O most wretched body! And woe to me, who am yoked together with you![143]

Otherwise, there are relatively few instances within her *vita* to the doubt and longing that Lutgard often experienced and which Thomas depicted as being countered by visions and interactions, whether physical or spiritual, with God. In this light, it is possible to see the interpretation of her "nutrita" phase, nurtured with the milk from her virginal breasts, less as the nutrition of the beginner, spiritually unnourished and not yet

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[141] Ibid., 3.2.300, pp. 384–385: "… in contemplatione Dei vilescere sibi; in amore Creatoris subjectum esse omni humanae creaturae; exhibere corpus suum hostiam sanctam, viventem, Deo placentem…" Here I prefer Déchanet's phrasing in the French translation of the Latin "vilescere sibi," found on p. 385 of the same volume: "… de s'abaisser à ses propres yeux…"
[142] VLAEng, 2.43, pp. 270–272, VLA, 2.3.43, pp. 203–204: "… sed tota translata in Deum, instar guttae aquae in dolium vini, unus cum eo spiritus miscebatur…" See also King, 'The Dove at the Window,' p. 239.
[143] VCM, 5.48, p. 658: "O miserum et miserabile corpus! quam diu me miseram cruciabis? … Quid tibi tam diu miseram animam detinere? Quam diu retardabis me a conspect Christi? Quando derelinques me, ut anima ad Creatorem suum libera revertatur? Vae tibi, miserrime! et vae mihi, quae conjuncta sum tibi!" VCMEng, 48, p. 151.

weaned from the worldly, but rather as the reluctant acceptance of her resuscitated body's physical needs after returning to a fallen hurt. It is also worth noting that William does not describe these stages as strict in their definitions or even linear categorizations.[144] Despite not being necessarily linear or rigidly defined, these stages of spiritual growth would prove to be a useful hagiographical tool for Thomas in framing the spiritual development of his saints. This is certainly true of his *vita* of Lutgard of Aywières, where he explicitly outlined the nature of her spiritual development in these terms, dividing her life, as he did with John of Cantimpré's *vita,* into three books where her devotions become increasingly intense, culminating with the "consummation" of her life-long love of God at her death. Thomas wrote, in the prologue to Lutgard's life:

> I have divided the whole work into three books according to the three states of the soul: the state of beginners, of those who are progressing, and of the perfect. The first book will tell how she began her conversion as a nun in the Order of St. Benedict; the second, how she progressed when she crossed over to the Cistercian Order; and the third book will contain the stage of perfection… and tell what the Lord deigned to accomplish in her… before her death, in her death, and after her death.[145]

It would be a conflation to argue that the respective spiritual ascents of Christina and Lutgard were the same, even as Thomas utilised a similar framing device and language. King argues that, in her three deaths, Christina was effectively a "living sermon," with each of her respective deaths imparting a lesson to her community, bringing them closer together and guiding her community along the same stages of spiritual growth that she was experiencing.[146] King observes that during her first stage of

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[144] William of St Thierry*, Lettre aux Frères du Mont-Dieu (Lettre D'Or)*, 3.3. 140, p. 254.
[145] VLAEng, Prologue, pp. 211–212, VLA, Prologue, p. 189: "… tribus libris opus omne distinguens; secundum triplicem statum in anima, inchoantium, proficientium, et perfectorum. Primus quidem, quomodo in ordine S. Benedicti conversionis sanctimoniam inchoavit: secundus quomodo ad Cisterciensem Ordinem transeundo profecit: quid autem annis undecim ante mortem et in morte et post mortem per eam Dominus dignatus est operari, quasi perfectionis gradum Iiber tertius obtinebit et continebit."
[146] King, 'The Sacramental Witness,' pp.156–157.

"nutrita," she "fed" her community with direct displays of the justice and judgement of God, while she demonstrated the second stage with the compassion of her ministry.[147] At the end of her life, Christina's third (seemingly permanent) death "... shows how the divine power continues to work in society through the agency of a lifeless material body…" reflective of the "liberation of spirit" in the final phase of spiritual ascent.[148] As with Elliott's discussion of Christina as a "living relic," these are compelling interpretations of her *vita* and pastoral care. However, it is also possible to explore these stages within a slightly different context: while Christina brought her community together through her ministry and represented a new kind of martyr saint, as Elliott describes, she was also unique in that she was someone whose death meant she had already experienced union with God, however briefly. Because of this, Christina brought the care and involvement of the holy dead in their earthly communities quite literally back to life in tangible and visceral ways.[149]

While Christina's body was an eloquent "living sermon" on God's justice and purgatorial suffrage, it was in her ministry, as one divinely resurrected and fully attuned to God's will, that Thomas found the seedlings for the later care of souls in purgatory that would be expressed in their fullest form in his *exempla* collection. Christina's penances were not presented as a flawed mortal undergoing purification for her own sins as well as those of others: rather, Christina was a walking example of the pastoral care and loving intercession that the holy dead maintained for their living communities.

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[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid., p. 157.
[149] Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity,' pp. 24–27.

Always a Purgatorial Mediatrix, Never a Bride: Bridal Language, Deathbed Visions, and the Body in Christina's Vita

In Thomas's works, the body of a saint was often a physical reflection of their own sanctity and their closeness to God.[150] The best way to begin exploring the nature of Christina's undead body is in looking at what is *not* there. The lack of bridal and courtship imagery, as well as the lack of visions of either a divine or infernal nature, have been noted multiple times in scholarship surrounding Christina's *vita.*[151] Folkerts attributes this to the proactive nature of Christina's ministry, arguing that rather than passively developing this union with God, Christina's suffering was a perfect imitation of Christ's sacrificial love for humanity.[152] This also made Christina an appealing model for clergy, presented as being a religious leader in her own right, preaching through her penances and her body. While not disagreeing with this interpretation, I would like to note another possible interpretation: Christina did not require the same spiritual "progression" that Thomas's other female saints do, and Thomas may have deliberately omitted this language. Throughout the rest of Thomas's female *vitae*, there is a steady courtship between the soul of the beloved and Christ, with Christ often first coaxing the saint in question away from worldly pleasures and mortal romantic love. This appears not to have been an issue for Christina, unlike Thomas's other female *vitae*. For example, in

[150] This not only true of Thomas, but rather a common hagiographical trope; see Heffernan, *Biography*, pp. 287–288, particularly, on virgin motherhood and the manifestation of spiritual truths as an echo of the Incarnation of Christ; see also, Cazelles, *Le corps du sainteté*, pp. 47–49, 59, 74–75; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 273–276, for a discussion of the association with the somatic within the *vitae* of *mulieres religiosae* in particular. Importantly, however, this was not necessarily how women characterised their own spirituality in their own writings, see Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, p 194, and Hollywood explores this difference comparing Beatrice of Nazareth's writings to those of her hagiographer in Amy Hollywood, *The Soul as a Virgin Wife: Mechtild of Magdeburg, Marguerite Porete, and Meister Eckhart*, (Notre Dame, 1995), pp. 27–39.

[151] Elliott, *Bride of Christ*, p.193, Elliott describes Christina as being "too weird" to inspire nuptial thoughts, and within the context of Christina's bizarre bodily punishments——this is not difficult to imagine; see also Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity' pp. 21–22.

[152] Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' p. 17.

Margaret's *vita*, her "burning love" ("*amore ferventissimo*") for a young suitor was a source of temptation, until weighed against Christ, who she had loved "... from her youth and sought to take him as her spouse, and he became the lover of her beauty."[153] Lutgard was briefly tempted by fine clothes and suitors until Christ appeared to her, showing his wounds and saying, "Do not seek any longer the caresses of unseemly love. Here you may perpetually contemplate what you should love and why you should love it."[154]

Courtship and nuptial language were common hagiographical tropes and can be found throughout the Liégeoise *vitae*.[155] For example, Alice of Schaerbeek, another purgatorial mediatrix, is consistently described as a bride of Christ in her *vita* and her virtues are enumerated at length at the beginning of her life.[156] Christina and Alice share a great deal of similarities: they both inhabit roles that could be interpreted as potentially morally ambiguous or a punishment for their own sins (a resuscitated woman and leper, respectively) and they both offer their unique bodily sufferings on behalf of others.[157]

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[153] VMYEng 5, pp. 167–168, VMY 5, pp. 108–109: "… et hunc amavit a iuventate sua et quesivit eum sponsum assumare et amator factus est forme illius."
[154] VLAEng, 1. 2, pp. 217–218. VLA, 1.1.2, pp. 191–192: "Blanditias inepti amoris ulterius non requiras: hic jugiter contemplare quid diligas, et cur diligas…" This ultimately culminated in a literal exchanging of hearts between Lutgard and Christ after she had been committed to the religious life (VLAEng, 1. 12, pp. 225–228 and VLA, 1.1.12, p. 193).
[155] For a discussion of bridal imagery within hagiography itself, particularly within the Liégeoise *vitae*, see Elliott, 'The Eroticized Bride of Hagiography' in *The Bride of Christ Goes to Hell*, pp. 174–232, especially pp. 177–188, 188–213. For depictions of feminine beauty within female *vitae*, see Petroff, *Body and Soul*, p. 26; Cazelles, *The Lady as Saint*, pp. 34–35, and Cazelles, *Le corps de sainteté,* pp. 49–51. For more general discussions of romantic and courtly love imagery among the *mulieres religiosae*, see Newman, 'La Mystique Courtoise,' pp. 137–167; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 245–250 and Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 132–133; Emma Campbell, *Medieval Saints' Lives: The Gift, Kinship and Community in Old French Hagiography*, (Martlesham, 2008), pp. 5–6.
[156] VASEng 1.2.2.–1.4.6, pp. 3–7; VAS. 1.2–6, pp. 472–473.
[157] VASEng, 3.26.26, pp 23–24, VAS, 3.26, p. 476; Alicia Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds: Leprosy in the *Vita* of Alice of Schaerbeek (d. 1250)' in Kelly DeVries and Larissa Tracy (eds.), *'His brest tobrosten': Wounds and Wound Repair in Medieval Culture*, (Leiden, 2015), 389–416, pp. 397–399. While at one point Alice does present herself as a "blameworthy culprit", Cawley argues that this is more of an expression of desire for suffering in *imitatio Christi* than indicative of any sins Alice needs to purge; see Cawley, VASEng 1.4.4, p. 6, n.14; I will discuss this topic more in the following chapter, but: on the ambiguity of lepers, see Bynum, *Fragmentation*, p. 276; S. N. Brody, *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature*, (Ithaca, 1974), 60–106; for Alice's status as a leper and its impact on her life, see

Christina occupies a purgatorial body, and Alice occupies a body dying with agonizing slowness, shut away and treated in many respects as though she were already dead. The way her hagiographer establishes Alice's beauty, graciousness, and humility, particularly her spiritual maturity at a young age and her disinclination towards the worldly, is not necessarily unique: Lutgard receives the same treatment in her *vita*, as do a number of the other holy women of Liège. However, Christina does not receive this treatment, either before or after her first death. Nor does Alice's leprous body preclude her from this bridal imagery, even towards the end of her life where she is graphically described as having dry skin that cracked like tree bark and legs that "closely resembled a calf that has been skinned."[158] Even her suffering is received "with the glad delight of a bride receiving from her Groom so many long-desired gifts.[159] Similarly, when she is moved to the hut she is isolated within, she is depicted as being immediately embraced by the Lord, who promises to remain with her, and in the succeeding chapter her heart is described as a bridal chamber for Christ to enter.[160] Again, while these are not unique to Alice's life, they are still significant in that her leprous body does not exclude her from being framed as a bride as Christina's purgatorial body does. Alice is described as "rotting" and "corpse-like", enduring a kind of death to the world that she then offers up on behalf of others, both the living and the purgatorial dead, but she remains feminine and knowable.

Martinus Cawley (trans.), (Lafayette OR, 2000), Introduction, VASEng, p. xxiii; on dual attitudes of revulsion and reverence surrounding lepers and pious interactions with them, see also Carole Rawcliffe, "The Sick and the Healthy: Reactions to Suffering" in *Leprosy in Medieval England*, (Woodbridge, 2006), 104–154, particularly, pp. 142–154.

[158] VASEng, 3.31.31, p. 28; VAS, 3. 31, p. 476: "Crura ejus, vitulo excoriato erant simillima…"

[159] VASEng, 3.31.31, pp. 27–28, VAS. 3.31, p. 476: "Cujusmodi passiones pariter et infirmitates, magis solito ingruentes, tanta suscepit delectatione et laetitia, ac si sponsa ab sponso acciperet munuscula diu desiderata." For a discussion of the parallels between Alice's rotting skin and the vellum of her manuscript, see Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' pp. 400–401.

[160] VASEng, 2.11.12–2.12.13, pp. 12–13; VAS, 2.12–13, p. 474.

Meanwhile Christina's actual death and subsequent resuscitation clearly alters her relationships with God and with others. Christina remains removed, never depicted as moving closer to God as a bride or regaining some original sweetness or beauty when she dies for the final time. This disparity is perhaps best illustrated by a vision of Alice's soul as a beautiful child robed with the sun, ascending into heaven after her death.[161] This revelation is meaningful on two levels both in the little girl who witnesses this ascension, and in its revelation about Alice herself. Freed from her dying body, the true Alice is seen at last, beautiful and whole, with her appearance as a child demonstrating her spiritual purity.[162] Conversely, in the one apparition added to Christina's *vita* by a different author, a person who seemed "like an aged woman" appeared in a white robe 25 years after Christina's presumed final death to demand the translation of her body. It is not confirmed in the text whether it is Christina herself, but Spencer Hall notes that this ambiguity, including the lack of any description of Christina's remains beyond her scent, is part of the purgatorial example of Christina's resuscitated body: Christina could theoretically die, and be resurrected again and again. [163]

Christina's only real glimpses of divine romance occur when she lives as a shepherdess before her first death; left alone to do the most menial tasks, the Lord visited her in a furtive, tender courtship, tantalisingly vague on details:

> … Christ did not fail to console the girl assigned to the meaner and humbler office; indeed he gave her the grace of an inward sweetness, and secretly visited her often with heavenly glory. Nevertheless, she remained

[161] VASEng, 3.33.34, p. 30; VAS, 3.34, p. 477; Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' p. 399, notes this vision of Alice as child is linked to the visions of Christ appearing as a child in the Eucharist; see Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 130; Spencer-Hall notes that the vision of the child Christ is common in the Liégeoise *vitae*, p. 399, n. 46, citing the *vitae* of Beatrice of Ornacieux and Ida of Nivelles, respectively. A particularly memorable episode can be found in the *vita* of Ida of Louvain, VILEng, 2.11.22a–22c, pp. 55–57, VIL, 2.22–23, p. 177, where she refuses to relinquish a vision of the baby Christ back to his mother.
[162] Spencer Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' p. 399.
[163] Spencer Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 83–86, and Spencer-Hall,'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 370.

> unknown to all, and only known so much to God, in being much more hidden… Indeed, God is a modest lover.[164]

Thomas finished discussing Christina's modest beginnings and the tender intimacy in which she was courted and educated by God with a quote from the book of Isaiah that can also be found at the end of William of St. Thierry's *Golden Epistle* to finish the chapter on the final ascent of the soul: "My secret is my own, my secret is my own."[165] The private nature of her courtship with God, as well as the deliberate use of the same Scripture found in the *Golden Epistle* to describe the perfect union of the soul with God, all indicate an early closeness to God that would be important after her first death. It is never revealed in the *vita* what her interactions were with God during this period: while these visions were a consolation for her more lowly status, in a manner like the other divine interactions found in the other female *vitae*, Christina was not depicted experiencing any crisis of faith or having doubts about her own devotions as Thomas's other female saints do.

After this, the narrative continues directly into her first death, and no further incidences of this courtship or bridal language are made until a brief reference included in Christina's final miracle after the second translation of her body, possibly by an unknown hand in 1249.[166] This avoidance is significant when considering how Thomas

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[164] VCM, 1.4, p. 651: "… viliori et humiliori officio deputatae Christus non defuit consolator; quinimo illi dedict gratiam internae dulcedinis, secretisque coelestibus eam saepius visitabat. Mansit tamen cunctis incognita, solique Deo tanto notior, quanto secretior… Est enim ipse verecundus amator." VCMEng, 4, pp. 129–130.

[165] VCM, 1.4, p. 651: "Secretum meum mihi, secretum meum mihi." VCMEng, 4, p. 130. See also William of St-Thierry, *The Golden Epistle*, (1971), v*,* 2.24.300, p. 105.

[166] VCM, 5.59, p. 660. To address this briefly: according to King and Newman, VCMEng, p. 155, n. 64, it is around this time in 1249 that an "unknown hand" added in the final chapters of Christina's *vita*. Pinius in the introduction to the VCM, p. 640, acknowledges the possibility of a new hand in the *AASS* edition, noting in particular the mistakes and lack of elegance in the script, he also acknowledges that it is by no means certain; Folkerts acknowledges that Thomas could possibly have been the author of this chapter, but that since the imagery of a *sponsa christi* is often found in female Cistercian hagiography, it is possibly a Cistercian author, see

utilised and these betrothal and wedding images as indicators of spiritual status throughout his other *vitae*.

It is possible that Christina did not receive this description because of her class. Newman notes that Cistercian lay brothers were often characterized without bridal imagery in their *vitae*, distinguishing them from their literate and higher-status brothers while emphasising their labour. The mortifications of lay brothers were often linked directly to the passion of Christ, with their labour treated as a form of *imitatio Christi*.[167] Roisin notes that there was shift as the hagiographers of these *vitae* initially described women using nuptial imagery similar to that used for monks "… but they later associated these women with the virile language and bodily mortification already attributed to the lay brothers."[168] This may have been due to the similar social backgrounds of some of the holy women of Liège and the lay brothers.[169] Newman notes that the grueling physical penances undertaken by the *mulieres religiosae* and the lay brothers may have been a new form of piety developed due to their exclusion from the priestly rituals practiced by the literate clergy and a way of exploring the characteristics that were attributed to them by their literate counterparts.[170]

Folkerts, *Voorbeldt Op Schriifjt*, pp. 98–99; However, Cistercian influences were present throughout in Thomas's work, and new writers may have tried to "logically follow" what was present in the original text. See King, VCMEng p. 155, n 64; for this apparition as potentially Christina herself, see Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 104, 251–252, and Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 370.

[167] Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' pp. 187–188.

[168] Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, p. 96, as quoted in Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 197; see also Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 146–154 for an overview of the use of feminising language in Cistercian spirituality; see also Bynum, "… And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages,' in *Fragmentation*, 151–179, pp. 165–166 on the usage of feminising imagery as a form of reversing worldly gender roles and power by Cistercian writers, as well as her observations on p.171 and p. 176 that women do not similarly use femininity as a symbol of renunciation or humility, nor could they do so with male imagery which would serve to elevate them—hence their use of physicality.

[169] Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 197.

[170] Ibid.,' p. 197.

Folkerts briefly notes the similarities between Arnulf of Villers and Christina in the self-imposed penances they undertook to free souls from purgatory.[171] As a lay brother, Arnulf would not have been literate, and Christina was far less educated than many of her peers in the *corpus* of the holy women of Liège. Newman argues that the "wisely unlearned" Arnulf is portrayed as learning and imitating aspects of the Passion of Christ through the vivid torments he inflicts on himself, beating himself with a cane wrapped in hedgehog quills and even dying on a Friday.[172] In this, Arnulf is not the bride of Christ, but rather a student, something confirmed after a series of visions where he asks Christ to reveal more to him beyond his crucifixion. Arnulf tells Christ that this knowledge is not enough, as he desired a vision of the holy Trinity; Christ complies with his request, also revealing Mary and the heavenly choirs to Arnulf before showing him the Trinity.[173] Goswin characterizes this as Arnulf being taught "in a school of highest divinity what the wise of this world could not find through their knowledge."[174]

However, if Arnulf is depicted as a student of the Passion, learning through the pains that he inflicts on himself, as well as external visions, then Christina is a teacher of purgatory. Her "education" takes place fully in the afterlife, and she revives with a clear mission and the purgatorial body needed to undertake it. While Arnulf's masculinity is emphasized, particularly in respect to his penances on behalf of others and his increasing spiritual perfection in the face of temptation, this virile language never makes it into Christina's life in describing her suffrages nor is she seen vigorously shaking off feminine impediments to her virtue. Meanwhile, Lutgard is described as manfully repulsing a

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[171] Folkerts, 'Een vrome vrouw,' p. 17–18.
[172] Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 191.
[173] Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 192.
[174] Goswin of Bossut*, Vita Arnulfi*, in D. Papebroeck (ed.) in the *AASS* (Paris, 1867), June 7, 556–579 –, 2.19, p. 569: "… vir equidem simplex, a gratia instructus, in schola summae divinitatis didicit, quod mundi hujus sapientes per sapientiam suam invenire non potuerunt…", as cited and translated in Newman, 'Crucified by the Virtues,' p. 193

would-be suitor with "abusive speech" and later is described in same terms putting an end to the feelings she had for a young man.[175] Even the Virgin Mary is described in the *vita* of Ida of Léau as "manfully" and "authoritatively" repulsing demons away from the soul of a dying woman at Ida's behest.[176] Thomas does not frame Christina's femininity as something she must overcome as a stumbling block, nor does he emphasise her gentleness or sweetness as a maiden or bride.

I suggest that this absence in Christina's life was less to do with her gender, class, or overall strangeness, but rather that she had simply already achieved this union, with her purgatorial mission a temporary pause. Spiritual progression within this bridal context was portrayed as advancing to a state of perfection, desiring nothing other than total oneness with God, which William punctuated with the cry, "Let him kiss me with a kiss from his mouth!"[177] This blissful union was one that Christina had already experienced after her first death and prior to her resurrection. When she first stood before God she was offered the chance to stay in heaven, unlike any of the other holy women. Further, God was portrayed as rejoicing with her, implying that she had already been found worthy of the joys of heaven.[178]

Visions within Christina's Vita:

Like bridal imagery, visions could be used to indicate the spiritual status of a saint. Visions within the lives of the saints, particularly female saints, often serve a twofold

[175] VLAEng, 1.4, p. 220, VLA, 1.1.4, p. 192: "… ab ea illo in tempore contumeliosis sermonibus est repulsus."
[176] VILEng, 55c–56a, p. 59; VIL, 6, 55–56, p. 123: "Obiciens ergo regaliter, *potestative* respuens, et rejiciens *viriliter* illos immundos spiritus…" (Emphasis mine.)
[177] William of Saint-Thierry, 'Exposé sur le Cantique des Cantiques' in J.-M. Déchanet, OSB. (ed. and trans.), *Sources Chrétiennes*, lxxxii (Paris, 1998), pp. 99–103, pp. 401–403: "Osculetur me osculo oris sui." This organisational style of the ascent of the soul is found in the prologues of the VJC, VCM, and VLA.
[178] VCM, 1.7, pp. 651–652.

purpose. Firstly, the visions can served as a tool for reflection in the reader of the hagiography, helping them to "see" as the saint sees, however imperfectly or briefly, drawing them into closer intimacy with God.[179] This could entail drawing their attention to devotion to a range of spiritual topics or objects of devotion, from the sacraments, to the Virgin Mary, to souls in purgatory. Secondly, visions often established the moral authority of the saint herself and situated her as a reliable receiver and interpreter of revelations from God. This was particularly important, as women were viewed as more susceptible to spiritual deception.[180] As Voaden observes, there are several steps outlined for a female saint's vision and her interpretation of it to be valid: she needed to be living virtuously under a (usually male) spiritual director, the vision needed to affirm her faith and obedience to the church, and the vision needed to be in accordance with orthodox church teachings, and bear fruit accordingly.[181] These rules also served to enforce orthodoxy, with Innocent III writing in a letter to the clergy of Metz in 1199: "It does not suffice if someone merely asserts that he is sent by God, since any heretic can assert this; but he should demonstrate this invisible sending by working miracles or by the special witness of the Scriptures."[182] However, many of the holy women of Liège lacked spiritual

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[179] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 122–128; Martinus Cawley, Introduction in Martinus Cawley (trans.), *Send Me God: The Lives of Ida the Compassionate of Nivelles, Nun of La Ramée, Arnulf, Lay Brother of Villers, and Abundus, Monk of Villers, by Goswin of Bossut* (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 20–22 on the *mulieres religiosae* "sending God" to others who asked for mystical consolation; Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 17, 49; Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits,* pp. 63–67 on identification of good/holy visions and their discernment.

[180] Rosalyn Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices: The Discernment of Spirits in the Writing of Late-Medieval Women Mystics* (York, 1999), pp. 19–27 for discussion of misogyny and the tension of women's physicality; Caciola, "Mystics,' pp. 268–306, for a brief study on the physiology of possession and discerning spirits among the holy women of Liège and later female saints, and Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 733–770.

[181] If not a male spiritual director, then at least affiliated with a religious order and under that rule. For a full list, including post-mortem requirements, see Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices*, pp. 50–51 and Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits,* p. 34, on discernment as God-given virtue rather than something possible to cultivate. See also Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions*, for early patristic thought on the discernment of dreams and visions.

[182] Innocent III, *Cum ex iniuncto*, in Othmar Hagender, Werener Maleczek, and Alfred A. Strand (eds.), *Die Register Innocenz' III*, (Vienna, 1979), *ii*, p. 273: "… "non sufficit cuiquam nude tantum asserere quod ipse sit missus a Deo, cum hoc quilibet haereticus asseveret, sed oportet,

directors, and Christina herself was not affiliated with a spiritual director, nor does she take religious vows. So how could the authority of her revelations or those of similarly unaffiliated women be validated?

The answer may have been, quite literally, love of God. On the one hand, intellectualist Dominican thinkers like Thomas Aquinas argued for the *intellectus* (passive, understanding) and the *ratio* (active, reasoning) as two parts of the same faculty of attaining and interpreting knowledge. The *intellectus* was the closest that humans had to divine knowledge, and drove the will to strive for a "towards an understanding of the infinitely great substance which is God."[183] If the intellectualists believed that the intellect guided the will, then later voluntarists argued that the will was not necessarily beholden to these principles, but that it could follow this desire for higher knowledge on the part of the *intellectus*.[184] Therefore, to orient the will towards love of God was to allow the active mind to rest in contemplation and to receive knowledge from that love of God through the *intellectus*.[185] Franciscans particularly espoused this devotion through affective piety, intensely meditating upon and visualizing Christ's passion.[186] This same affective piety is found throughout the lives of the holy women of Liège and may have provided a framework through which to receive and interpret divine revelations.

As Barr notes, the dreamer or visionary must be "… properly motivated by a love for God; second, the… will must be directed by that love and, therefore, in accord with the divine will; and third, the visionary or dreamer's cognitive faculties must be driven

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ut astruat illam invisibilem missionem per operationem miraculi vel per Scripture testimonium speciale." as quoted and translated in Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits*, p. 48

[183] Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles* III: 50: "… sed adhuc naturali desiderio tendit ad intelligendum substantiam quae est altitudinis infinite…" as cited and translated in Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 19–21. Barr argues that both the *intellectus* and the *ratio* are ultimately necessary for visionary knowing; for the Latin, see Peter Caramello (ed.), *Summa theologiae et Summa contra gentiles, seu de veritate Catholicae*, (Turin, 1905), pp. 275–276

[184] Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 19–21.

[185] Ibid., pp. 21–22.

[186] Ibid., pp. 22–23.

by his or her rightly motivated will."[187] This meant that there was a degree of agency for the visionary: rather than being a passive recipient of a vision, the saint needed to have a "rightly motivated" will in order to be able to receive and understand it.[188]

Christina does not receive any external visions of God, Christ or the saints. She also does not experience demonic visions on earth or in her journey to the afterlife. The one exception to this within her life was when the ghost of her patron, Count Louis of Looz, appeared to her to ask her for help in delivering him from purgatory.[189] This was in stark contrast to Thomas's other female saints, Margaret and Lutgard, whose visions of Christ, the saints, or even the holy dead were often rooted in either an affirmation of their faith or as an act of consolation when their strength or confidence began to flag. Margaret continually received consolation from Christ when she feared she had offended him or, in another episode, worried that she was an unworthy vessel. This led to Christ showing her the state of her own heart in the form of a small, beautiful chapel, saying to her: "Do not fear, daughter, to approach me, your spouse, because in such a place and such a manner, I have prepared for myself a dwelling in your heart."[190] However, aside from the bargain that Christina struck with God at the beginning of her *vita,* there was no such room for doubt in her spirituality, no need for this consolation. These visions clearly served a reaffirming purpose, deepening the faith of the saints within Thomas's *vitae*, as

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[187] Barr, *Willing to Know God,* p. 9.
[188] Ibid, p. 17; see also Barr. 'Worldly Attachment and Visionary Resistance in *Pearl*,' in *Willing to Know God*, pp. 122–151, and how the lack of this proper will to love God can lead to a misunderstanding or inability to absorb a vision's meaning).
[189] VCM, 4.44–45, pp. 657–658.
[190] VMYEng 28, pp.188–189, VMY 28, p. 120: "Ne verearis, filia, ad me tuum sponsum accedere, quonium in tali loco et in tali cordis tui schemate michimet hospicium preparavi." This episode is a continuation of the romantic imagery in which Christ plays the jealous lover in the face of a potential, worldly rival, and the episode culminates in Margaret shunning the young man in question entirely; see also VMYEng, 1, pp. 171–172, and VMY, 10, pp. 110–111. The imagery of giving of the heart to God/the heart as dwelling place for God is particularly relevant in Thomas's works, as there is a similar episode within Lutgard's *vita*, where she asks her love to be mingled with that of Christ in her heart in response to Christ asking her to give Him her heart.

Lutgard received similar encouragement from Christ regarding her concerns about the state of her soul or when she feared she had not said her Hours correctly.[191] These visions did not just serve to depict the heavenly consolation of the saints themselves, but also to reassure the readers: as they vicariously "experience" what the saints witness, they engage with their *vitae* and remember or imagine their struggles and triumphs.

Others within the *corpus* of the holy women experience similar comforting visions, particularly during times of isolation or uncertainty. For example, when Alice of Schaerbeek is stricken with leprosy and restricted from receiving the chalice at Mass, she is inconsolable until she hears a heavenly voice saying:

> Oh most loving daughter, do not be disturbed… Firm faith calls for any who have tasted of my Body to rejoice in the belief beyond doubt that they are also being refreshed with my Blood. Since where the part is, there is also the whole. Nor should it even be called a part; it must rather be considered simply the whole.[192]

This episode of her life does not only provide a chance to discuss the nature of the Eucharistic gifts themselves, even though that is almost certainly a major point. Rather, Alice is shown to the reader as being blessed because of and despite her leprosy and seclusion; just as Christ's Body cannot be separated from Christ's Blood, Alice is not rendered truly separate from Christ or her heavenly community due to her inability to formally receive both.[193] For the reader, possibly even one unable to receive themselves due to similar illness, this could serve as an affirmation of orthodox faith (after all, Alice

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[191] VLAEng, 2.5, p. 243 and VLA, 2.1.5, p. 197; see also VLAEng, 2.17, p. 252 and VLA, 2.2.17, p. 199.

[192] VASEng, 2.14.15, pp. 14–15 and VAS, 2.15, p. 474: "O amantissima filia, noli turbary… quia firmae congruit fidei, ut quicumque de Corpore meo gustaverit, similiter et de Sanguine gaudeat se indubitabiliter recreari: quia ubi pars, ibi totum; nec pars potest dici, sed totum debet reputari."

[193] Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' pp. 14–15, on this episode and the spiritually generative nature of Alice's leprous body. See also Bynum, "Women Mystics and Eucharistic Devotion in the Thirteenth Century" in *Fragmentation*, pp. 119–150.

does not challenge the injunction against receiving the chalice) and a reassurance of continued unity, the presence of Christ a reward for their obedience and faith. Nor was this limited to an exploration of theology of the sacraments or the body: Lutgard also received visions, often from the Blessed Virgin or other saints, confirming Church doctrine. In one such episode, the Blessed Virgin appeared to her to accuse the "peste gravissima Albigensium haereticorum" of once again crucifying her son with their obstinance, telling Lutgard, "You then must take up a lament and fast continuously for seven years to appease the anger of my son."[194] Thomas utilises this episode to provide an example of actions that the devout could, whether living "in the world" or not, undertake in answer to the heretical challenges the Church was facing, with the theological tool of Lutgard's *vita* and the spiritual tools of repentance and fasting.

The lack of external visions in Christina's life could be attributed to the ambiguity of her life, with her behaviour mirroring that of the demoniac, or some of the more negative connotations typically surrounding the resurrected dead. After all, in a later story in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas would attribute the return of the dead body prior to judgement day to demonic reanimation.[195] While a more in depth discussion of this mirroring of the unholy and unruly dead is reserved for the final chapter of this thesis, it is worth noting Christina's violence towards herself, and the seeming ambiguity of which "spirit" seizes her all could have lent themselves to a potentially negative reading of her life.[196] With her intense penances and bizarre, at times even ghostly, body,

[194] VLAEng, 2.2, p. 240, VLA, 2.1.2, p. 196: "Tu ergo assume tibi lamentum, et jejuna annis septem continuis ut quiescat ira Filii mei…" For a discussion on the role of fasting in women's penances, particularly around redemptive suffering, see Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*.
[195] BUA 2.57.8–9, pp. 1010–1014, for a demonically possessed corpse and Thomas's explanation of the occurrence—I will be expanding further on this in the next chapter. See Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual,' concerning the physiology of revenants and the overlap with demonic possession, pp. 10–12.
[196] See Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 763–766.

Christina's life undeniably overlapped with stories of the possessed and the revenant.[197] While this is certainly a valid interpretation—after all, as the final chapter will argue, there is a degree to which these tropes are deliberately presented to then be subverted—it is worth noting again that Christina herself was never under any illusions as to the nature of her "penance." It was never for her own sins.[198] Both Thomas and Jacques de Vitry were unambiguous about the nature of Christina's mission in how they discussed it in their respective texts. Jacques describes Christina as being "afflicted by the Lord" after "obtaining" from God her request to endure purgatory in her body on earth.[199] While it is possible to interpret her request as wishing to purge *herself* of her sins, Jacques focused on her merits and her extraordinary ability to lead souls "as far as purgatory, or through purgatory as far as the kingdom of heaven, without any harm to herself."[200] Meanwhile, Thomas depicted Christina immediately explaining herself to her friends and family, stating her mission outright, all after establishing Christina's intimate relationship with God before her death.

For someone who often appears to be possessed, Christina notably also never appears to grapple with the demonic, even during her trip to the afterlife or while carrying out her penances. While she describes purgatory as being populated with demons, they do not afflict her and unlike some of the other Liégeoises, she carries purgatorial torments out on herself, rather than God allowing demons to torture her.[201] Thomas may have been

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[197] This will be expanded upon in the third chapter.
[198] Fanger, 'Extreme sanctity,' p. 20: "In other words, according to Thomas, Chrstina, once back on earth, had no need to do penance on her own behalf; she has truly died and knows she is among the elect. She chooses to return solely in order to help others."; see also MacMillan, 'Invisible Injuries,' pp. 55–56. –
[199] VMOEng, prol.8, pp. 48–49 and VMO, prol.8, pp. 548–549: "… et a Doinino obtinuit, ut in hoc seculo vivens in corpore, purgatorium sustineret. Unde longo tempore ita mirabiliter a Domino afflicta est…"
[200] VMOEng, prol.8, p. 49 and VMO, prol.8, p. 549: "… usque in purgatorium, vel per purgatorium sine aliqua laesione usque ad suprema regna conduceret."
[201] VCM, 3.28, p. 655.

reluctant to add demons to the mix when discussing a woman who often appeared to toe the line between saintly and possessed in order to dissuade any reader from mistaking her purgatorial suffrages as possession. Yet, beyond a brief aside about the nature and location of purgatory, Christina herself is never shown discussing demons, being tempted or tormented by them, or aiding those who are afflicted by them. The exclusion is remarkable as encountering and being harangued by demons is a regular feature in purgatorial voyages, as well as many of the *vitae* of the holy women of Liège.[202]

In his survey on purgatorial visions, Carozzi provides multiple examples where the traveler to the afterlife is assaulted by demons, usually to either edify them on a flaw that could prevent their salvation if it goes unanswered (such as Fursey accepting property from a sinful man) or to attempt to undermine their confidence in their own salvation. For example, in the seventh-century *Vision of Barontus*, Barontus is accosted by demons and brought to the seat of judgement, where they reproach him with all of his sins, from childhood to adulthood, until St. Peter himself defends him and reassures him that, pending his penance of twelve sous that Barontus had neglected to pay for the poor upon his conversion, he will be saved.[203] Demons also attack the Monk of Wenlock during his vision by recounting his sins to him, even appearing to manifest a man who the Monk had physically harmed in life, with the man's bloody wound crying out against him.[204] They also demand his soul, just as with Barontus. Interestingly, in one of the few women covered in the study, the tenth-century visionary Flothilde is only briefly harassed by demons while raptured in spirit, but her salvation is depicted as not being at risk.[205]

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[202] Fanger, 'Extreme sanctity,' pp. 21–22, Fanger notes that this may be reflective of Christina's role as a purgatorial soul, as the demons would not be there to tempt her away so much as torment her (and her efficiency at those torments makes them redundant; hence their absence).
[203] Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, pp. 147–148.
[204] Ibid., p. 196.
[205] Ibid., p. 410.

The other *mulieres religiosae* routinely grapple with demons, and this often served to reaffirm their sanctity, whether in demonstrating their fortitude or their selfless ability to embrace redemptive suffering.[206] Christina's immediate contemporary, Marie of Oignies, was often depicted as battling demons, taking on long fasts and vigils to free others from their torments, including delivering a dying widow from the demons who were waiting to waylay her soul.[207] Likewise, Ida of Léau successfully calls upon the Virgin Mary through prayers and vigils to chase away demons from a dying devotee they were attempting to tempt into despair.[208] Christina never encounters this during her own deathbed vigils, and the peril of demonic deathbed torments is notably absent. Rather, Christina is a comforting and cheerful presence at deathbeds, even at those of the Jewish community.[209] While not dismissing the reality of demonic presences within purgatory, the demonic is seldom her focus, nor is her bedside manner characterised by her twisting purgatorial torments. Rather Christina is depicted as more emphatically drawing the attention of the dying (and, by extension, the reader) to a God who longs to be reconciled with them. In the chapter on her care for the dying, she is shown describing God as "unwilling" and "saddened" to have to punish sinners, and "lovingly" seeking out occasions where He could extend His mercy to them.[210] This compassion characterises

[206] Some even asked for torments in order to sanctify themselves, as Ida of Léau did, VILEng, 14b–17a, pp. 16–18 and VIL, 2.14–17, p. 112. This could also be a mixed bag, as women were viewed as more likely to be possessed or deceived by demons as well, see Caciola, "Fallen Women and Fallen Angels", in *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 129–175; see also Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 735–736, p. 749, for discussions of how predominant female possessions are and the need for clergy in discerning visions and casting out demons

[207] See VMOEng, 2.4.52, pp.87–88 and VMO, 2.4.52, p. 557.

[208] VILEng, 55c–56a, pp. 58–59, VIL, 5.55–56, p. 123.

[209] VCM 3.27–28, p. 655.

[210] VCM, 3.27, p. 655: "Misericordissimum autem Christum Dominum referebat… et invitum valde illum vindicatam sumere de peccatis hominum, et contristari eum, quotiens hoc facere, peccatis hominum exigentibus cogeretur; occasiones vero ipsum diligenter inquirere, per quas salutem miseris dare possit." VCMEng, 27, p. 142.

God throughout the *vita*, both in how Christina initially interacts with him in heaven, and in how she discusses him for the rest of her lives.[211]

While this thesis has already discussed how Christina was not tempted by the worldly, she is also not beset by the demonic to cultivate her virtue or to thwart Satan through her resistance to them, as other holy women, such as Ida of Léau and Marie of Oignies, are. Ida is afflicted by demons in an effort to undergo purgatorial penances for herself and she perseveres so successfully that Satan is left, "… so confounded and utterly defeated, [that] he dismissed Ida completely, never again daring to tempt her further."[212] Marie is so effective in her prayers and fasting that the devil confronts her, saying, "May you have quiet with us in hell. I am not the less tormented by your rest as I am tortured by your toil and your prayers."[213] Marie smiles at this and forces him to leave with a single genuflection.[214] The devil also makes no real attempt to disrupt Christina's actual penances or to attack the souls she is saving; something he does with Juliana of Mont-Cornillon, disrupting her vigils on saints' holy days by shaking her bed or by turning others against her.[215] This eventually escalates in such a way that Satan begins to assault her directly, physically and mentally:

> He even appeared to her visibly, assuming spectral forms—perhaps to make her stop freeing the souls he had captured, or at least to cause her as much pain as he could by frightening her. But the more he attacked her, the more gladly she strove to deliver souls from his meshes. For she

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[211] Barbara Newman, 'On the Threshold,' pp. 133–136, for discussion of this emphasis on God's compassion in the lives of the *mulieres religiosae*.
[212] VILEng, 14a–17b, pp.16–18 and VIL, 2.14–17, p. 112: "… confusus et victissimus, nunquam audens ulterius tentare virginem…"
[213] VMOEng, 1.3.32, pp. 68–69, VMO, 1.3.32, p. 554: "Malo tuo… requiescas; nobiscum in inferno quietem habeas; non minus enim tua quiete torqueor, quam labore tuo, tuisque orationibus crucior."
[214] Ibid.
[215] VJMCEng, 1.3.15, pp. 199–200, VJMC, 1.3.15, p. 447; the trope of a saint facing diabolically inspired resistance and overcoming it to then clarify with their loved ones can also be found in the life of Ida of Louvain (VILovEng, 1.4.7a–9d, pp. 8–11, VILov, 1.2.7–9, pp. 160–161). Marie of Oignies (VMOEng, 1.1.15, p, 55, VMO, 1.1.15, p. 150) and Margaret of Ypres. (VMYEng, 1.9, p. 17, VMY.) This is by no means a comprehensive list.

> knew that the more this work pleased Christ, the more it would drive the evil spirit mad with rage.[216]

The lack of demonic temptation or confrontations makes it more compelling to consider that she was one of the elect already, voluntarily returned to earth to redeem souls after striking a bargain with a God who already offered her the chance to remain with him.[217] Through her suffering, she is able to reclaim souls from purgatory for God, and every aspect of her purgatorial suffrages are centred on the extension of God's mercy towards all who would repent: something reflected in her compassionate and comparatively unfraught relationship with the Jewish community in St. Trond. Rather than utilising the demonic, Thomas centres her *vita* on the punishments in purgatory as made visible through what Christina inflicts on her purgatorial body, as well as her more imitable suffrages. In doing so, while the reader must contemplate both the twin horrors of death and purgatory, they also are given tangible actions to lessen their stay, or someone else's. The fear of the infernal is not the point: the hope of the eternal with God is.

Consequently, rather than external visions of the divine or the infernal being experienced and then interpreted by Christina (and by extension, the reader) throughout her *vita*, Christina's body remains as the proof of her sanctity and authority as a purgatorial mediatrix. After all, she explained this to her loved ones after her first death,

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[216] VJMCEng, 1.6.39–40, pp. 222–223, VJMC, 1.6.39–40, p. 454: "Ipsi etiam, larvales protendens figuras, visibiliter apparebat; forsitan ut eam ab animarum. ab ipso captivarum, liberatione desistere cogeret; vel saltem ipsam feriendo, poenas eidem, quas poterat, irrogaret. Sed quanto ille in eam amplius grassabatur, tanto ipsa libentius animas ab illius nexibus solvere nitebatur: sciebat enim intantum Christo id operis complacere, in quantum malignum perpendebat spiritum super hoc insanire." Juliana eventually gets her own, beating the Devil up, saying, "So, so! He who wanted to make himself equal to the Most High has been trampled by a little woman!" (VJMCEng, 1.6.40, p. 223, VJMC, 1.6.40, p. 454: "Sic sic, qui se Altissimo coaequare voluit a muliercula calcabatur…").

[217] VCM. 1.7, pp. 651–652.

encouraging them not to be afraid of her or her mission.[218] Their later decision to capture her was not motivated by concern that she might have been lying or misled by a diabolical power, but for altogether more worldly reasons: "... her sisters and her friends, blushing not a little from shame, that people *might think* she [Christina] was full of demons…"[219] They could not understand her holiness because they lacked Christina's experience of death and her subsequent closeness to God. Their resulting embarrassment and fear of the opinions of others overtook any wonder at God's miraculous work in her redemptive suffering. When her loved ones ceased their attempts to capture her and asked for forgiveness, they promised to no longer resist the *will of God* in Christina's miracles, weeping and prostrating themselves before her while begging her for forgiveness.[220]

The initial fear and hostility that Christina encountered was a normal hagiographical trope rather than any indication of the diabolical. Caciola notes that the "misunderstood" or persecuted saint whose ministry and visions are initially misconstrued by their community was an existing trope from hagiographies of the period.[221] Since the source of her behaviour is never cast in any doubt, other than by those who do not understand her, and Thomas, who would have been aware of the risks of linking the demonic to a female saint, wanted her *vita* to inspire and edify, then the lack

[218] VCM, 1.6–8, pp. 651–652.
[219] VCM, 2.17, p. 653: "… sorores ejus, et amici erubsecentes non modice, eo quod eam homines plenam daemonibus *reputarent*…" (Emphasis mine). VCMEng, 17, p. 137.
[220] VCM, 2.19, pp. 653–654.
[221] Caciola, "Mystics, Demoniacs, and the Physiology of Spirit Possession," p. 273, specifically on the trope of the saint meekly enduring accusations and persecution to affirm their goodness and moral superiority. This is not a trope that Thomas invented, but it does get utilised within Christina's life; see also Hippolyte Delehaye, *Les Saints stylites, Subsidia hagiographica* (Paris, 1923, repr. Brussels, 1962), pp. xxx–xxxi and Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne,* p. 125; see also Heffernan, *Sacred Biography,* pp. 213–221 for a brief discussion of the "triumphant victim" and the *vitae* of early martyrs. This feels particularly relevant to Christina, as her self-martyrdom is juxtaposed against her frightened community; if the early martyrs represented a triumph of Christ over imperial death sentences, Christina could be argued to represent a triumph of redemption over purgatorial punishment.

of nuptial imagery or visions must be interpreted differently from past interpretations of mere strangeness or the ambiguity presented by her demoniac behaviour.

Spiritual Knowledge in Christina's Vita:

Christina's spiritual unity with God after her first death is further supported by her uncanny knowledge of the status of souls, including her own, without the aid of external visitations from the divine, or, with the sole exception of Louis's ghost, the dead who she helps.[222] While spiritual knowledge of others factors into the lives of the other holy women, particularly as it relates to purgatorial suffrages, almost all of the holy women within Thomas's *corpus*, with the exception of Margaret of Ypres, receive external visions of the divine or of those who they help in the afterlife. For example, Marie of Oignies receives confirmation that her mother is in hell within the *supplementum*, and Lutgard receives a series of illustrious purgatorial visitors, such as Pope Innocent III, Jordan of Saxony, the Grand Master of the Dominican Order, and Jacques de Vitry.[223] It is here where Christina's purgatorial nature becomes relevant to her lack of visions and the nature of her suffering. While she shares a great deal with the other *mulieres religiosae*, the purgatorial nature of her body colours much of how she encounters the world and her own penances. The knowledge gained by her previous unity with God also explains the antisocial nature of her behaviour, stemming from her pastoral care that, "… makes it necessary not only to know their sins but to suffer for them: because of her role in the economy of human salvation, her divine knowledge of their sin is immediate, visceral, and physically uncomfortable."[224]

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[222] VCM, 3.26, p. 655.
[223] VMO–SEng, 2.12, pp. 149–150 and VMO–S, 2.12, p. 576; for the vision of Pope Innocent III, see VLAEng, 2.7, p. 244 (VLA, 2.1.7, p. 197); for the vision of Jordan of Saxony, see VLAEng, 3.2–3, pp. 274–276 (VLA, 3.1.2–3, pp. 204–205); for the vision of Jacques de Vitry, see VLAEng, 3.5, pp. 277–278 (VLA. 3.1.5, p. 205.).
[224] Fanger, 'Extreme sanctity,' p. 25.

Further proof of Christina's divine knowledge can be found in her penances. Unlike the penances of Thomas's other saints, which were mostly private and entailed relatively orthodox methods of prayer and fasting, Christina's mortifications were public and violently unorthodox.[225] Christina punished herself with "mean and vile" food, with scraps from dirty dishes and barely edible bread.[226] This was not unusual, of itself: in their zeal for the Eucharist and the oneness with Christ it provided, many of the *mulieres religosae*, both within Thomas's *corpus* and not, find mortal food disgusting, if not inedible.[227] Jacques de Vitry describes them as "wasting away in languor, finding no peace or satisfaction unless their souls were frequently invigorated by the delights of this meal."[228] Ida of Léau is so filled after receiving the Eucharist that she is too full to eat mortal food, making all attempts to feed her while she was resting "in the deep sleep of the spirit" were not only futile, but potentially even harmful to her.[229] Jacques de Vitry juxtaposes the sweetness of the Host that Marie consumed, with the other, earthly bread she ate, "… such hard black bread that even the dogs could barely chew it and her mouth bled from the gashes and wounds caused by its extreme roughness and hardness."[230] Marie is also depicted eating soup made from weeds to avoid consuming anything unjustly donated or stolen, afraid that it would lead to spiritual laxity.[231] In this sense,

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[225] See, Smith, 'Gendering Particularity: A Comparison of The Life of Christina the Astonishing and The Life of Abbot John of Cantimpré' in *Excessive Saints*, pp. 83–87; Macmillan, 'Invisible Injuries,' pp. 53–54, the on nature of the wounds to Christina's body and her ability to physically suffer as an immortal soul in purgatory.
[226] VCM, 3.24, pp. 654–655.
[227] Bynum, *Holy Feast*, for a discussion of *inedia*; for further examples of this, see VILovEng, 3.1.3c, p. 73, VILov, 3.1.3, p. 183; VLAEng, 2.2., p. 240, VLA, 2.1.2, p. 196; VES, 1.29, p. 378; VJMCEng, 1.3.15, pp. 199–200, VJMC, p. 447.
[228] VMOEng, prol.8, pp. 48–49, VMO, prol.8, pp. 548–549: "… sed penitus in languor deficientes, nisi suavitate cibi illius animae earum frequenter vegetarentur."
[229] VILEng, 36b, pp. 37–38, VIL, 4.36, p. 118: "… quiete et tranquilliter dormitione spiritus…"
[230] VMOEng, 1.2.23–24, p. 61, VMO, 1.2.23–24, p. 552: "Panem nigerrimum et asperrimum, de quo vix canes manducare poterant, longo tempore comedit; ita quod prae nimia asperitate et duritia fauces ejus interius lacerabantur, et ex vulneribus sanguis eliciebatur…"
[231] VMOEng, 2.2.44, p. 81, VMO, 2.5.44, p. 557: "… tantum herbas quae non seminantur et alia sponte nascentia frequenter colligi faciebat, ut inde sibi pulmentum faceret: ne forte raptum a

Christina's preference for the spiritual nourishment of the Host fits neatly within the context of both her contemporaries and successors.

However, if Christina was intended as a purgatorial model in her other penances, then it is important to consider her relationship with food in a similar light. Spencer-Hall has explored Christina's suffering within the context of purgatorial time, noting that it was not only the violence of Christina's penances, but what should have been their immediate deadliness to a mortal body undertaking the same:

> These self-inflicted tortures are emphatic intensifications of mortal temporality. Notionally, any of these activities should take mere minutes to kill an individual. For Christina, the minutes of mortals stretch out for days. Her experience of a 'thickened' temporality reflects the fact that time in purgatory often seems to progress more slowly than earthly time.[232]

In begging alms for herself and others in need, her reactions to ill-gotten goods is depicted as painful and instantaneous:

> … when anything was unjustly acquired, and had been given to her in alms to eat, it seemed to her like she had swallowed down the innards of frogs and toads, as well as the intestines of serpents… And beating her breast and body, she said: "Oh wretched soul, what do you want? Do you so ardently desire these horrible things? For what purpose do you feed on this [same] filth?"[233]

The language used here to describe the taste of the food is not only gruesome, but reflective of extant ideas of purgatorial punishment: such as the one found for gluttons

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bestia, id est eleemosynas, quas domibus leprosorum raptores et foeneratores dare solent, manducaret."

[232] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints,* p. 96; Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 290–295; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, 171–175; Robert Mills, 'God's Time? Purgatory and Temporality in Late Medieval Art,' in Gerhard Jaritz and Gerson Moreno-Riaño (eds.), *Time and Eternity: The Medieval Discourse*, (Turnhout, 2003), 477–500, pp. 478–482.

[233] VCM, 3.24, pp. 654–655: "Et tamen cum injuste aliquid acquisitum, et sibi in eleemosynam datum comederet, videbatur ei quod ranarum ac bufonum viscera aut intestina serpentium deglutiret… Tundensque pectus et corpus, dicebat: 'O anima misera, quid desideras? Quid concupiscis haec horrida? Cur iis sordibus vesceris?'" VCMEng, 24, pp. 140–141.

within the *Visio Lazari*, condemned to consume toads and other poisonous creatures.[234] While I will discuss these later parallels further in the third chapter, this is to observe that Christina's reaction reflected not only an prescribed orthodox revulsion towards the sin of theft or deception, but also the purgatorial ripple effect of sinful almsgiving. The action harmed the future post-mortem trajectory of the sinful almsgiver *and* the spiritual health of the person who received the alms, making them became complicit, willingly or not. Christina's reaction could horrify on two levels, demonstrating the agony of the purgatorial dead *and* the potential future repercussions for the sinful giver: by staring at Christina's anguished face, they could see their own purgatorial self.[235]

Thomas used Christina's violent bodily reaction to these alms both to promote legitimate almsgiving and to illustrate the inadequacy of the nourishment of a sinful, fallen world, especially for a woman who had already experienced oneness with God. By extension, the reader was required also consider their own spiritual health, as demonstrated in Christina's enigmatic response to someone who denied her alms: "Even though you are not willing [to part with this] now; afterwards, yet you will not be sorry for having had this taken away; and then it will be useful to you, that which is not useful now."[236]

This could encourage the prospective almsgiver in question to consider that if they gave her alms, those same alms that would immediately serve the needy would also spiritually benefit the almsgiver later in the afterlife. Meanwhile, the only food she could partake of without pain or disgust came directly from God, whether the milk or oil from

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[234] Jo Van Mechelen and Camille Vanlangendonck, 'Christine der Wonderbare: *Visio Lazari*' in Jo Van Mechelen and Camille Vanlangendonck (eds.), *Werkgroep Christina: Voorstudies en werkdocumenten in verband met Christina de Wonderbare*, (Sint-Truiden, 2010), p. 10; while the *Visio Lazari* comes later than Christina's life, Margot King also notes these parallels to Christina's penances, including this specific punishment for gluttony in VCMEng, p. 141, n. 34.
[235] Spencer–Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 371.
[236] VCM 3.24, pp. 654–655: "Etsi modo non vis; postea tamen non dolebis ablatum; et tunc proderit tibi, quod modo non prodest." VCMEng, 24, p. 141.

her breasts, or the only food she truly craved: the body of Christ in the Eucharist, which gave her a temporary reunion with God in the transubstantiated Host.[237] Far from needing to be weaned off of worldly goods and food, Christina was only at peace while on Earth in those moments where she could once more have what she experienced all too briefly.

Deathbeds and Visions in Christina's Vita

As we have established, Christina was keenly aware of the spiritual state of people around her, and this was a vital part of her ministry. While the ability is found often within the hagiographical *corpus* of the holy women of Liège, it is consistently shown amplifying closer to death within Thomas's hagiographies. For example, this ability came to Margaret only towards the end of her very brief life, where God "frequently revealed to her many things about the conditions of other people."[238] While Margaret was given the freedom to reproach or encourage others based on these revelations, she was also admonished to be cautious and to never reveal what she saw to anyone other than Siger of Lille, her spiritual advisor. [239] While this can be compared to the secretive nature of Christina's courtship in the beginning of her *vita*, Christina was no longer required to keep this secret after her first death. This indicates that Christina enjoyed a privileged freedom from God after her death, a freedom not found in the other women's *vitae* until they began to reach the ends of their lives. For example, it was on her deathbed where Lutgard shared one of these visions with her erstwhile companion, Sybille de Gages,

[237] VCM 1.10, p. 652.
[238] VMYEng, 36, pp. 195–196, VMY, 36, p. 123: "De statu aliorum hominum frequenter multa ei Dominus revelavit…"
[239] Ibid.: Margaret was only allowed to disclose her revelations to her spiritual advisor, Father Siger. Even then it is worth noting the difference in these revelations between the "frequenter" utilised to describe these revelations, which only occur at a much later period in Margaret's life implying that this happened frequently but not daily, as opposed to the "quotidie" Thomas uses to describe them within Christina's life (e.g. VCM, 3.26: "... quippe cui Deus morientium quotidie vel ad salutem vel ad interitum merita revelabat…").

remarking, "Look, the monastery is filled with the heavenly hosts! The souls of the blessed are here, with many of our sisters who have passed from the world." [240] Lutgard also experienced increased visions of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the communion of saints while she was on her deathbed.[241] She shared these visions with her community at her death, and when Lutgard finally died, her fellow sisters experienced:

> … such sweetness and alacrity of spirit that they could not contain themselves for wonder. They knew with perfect certainty that Jesus himself, the prince of our salvation, had come in person, amid the measureless exultation of the saints, to call her soul to the delights of paradise.[242]

At last, in death, Lutgard was gathered by her divine Bridegroom after a very long engagement. As her epitaph, written by Sybille de Gages, attested: ".... In hunger and thirst for heaven, she mourned;/Now let the Bridegroom's face, pure light of morn,/Illumine her."[243] While Christina had only the one vision of Christ at her first death, and the vision of the Count of Looz as a supplicant later on, her impervious body, always on the verge of flight, served as a literal medium for "angelic harmonies" which emanated from between her breast and throat in languages no human could understand after her ecstasies [244] There is enough textual evidence to infer that Christina's body, however bizarre, was seen as a medium for the divine goodness and mercy of God, reflective of

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[240] VLAEng, 3.16, pp. 287–288 and VLA 3.2.16, pp. 207–208; Deboutte, 'The *Vita Lutgardis*,' p. 268; Petroff, *Body and Soul*, pp. 40–44; on saintly attitudes towards death, as consummation and anticipation of the life with God to come, see Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, p. 273 and Campbell, *Lives of the Medieval Saints*, p. 85.
[241] VLAEng, 3.12–13, pp. 284–286, VLA, 3.2, p. 207; VLAEng, 3.16, pp. 287–288 and VLA 3.2.16, pp. 207–208.
[242] VLAEng, 3.17, pp. 288–289, VLA, 3.2.17, p. 208: "… tanta spiritus dulcedine, tanta alacritate rcpletae sunt, ut se non caperent prae stupore; et nimirum perfecte sentirent, quod cum immenso tripudio supernorum, ipse praesentialiter salutis nostrae princeps Jesus, animam illius ad delicias evocaverit paradisi."
[243] VLAEng, 3.20, pp. 292–293, VLA, 3.3.20, p. 209: "Esuriens haec et sitiens coelestia, luxit; Mera dies, sponsi facies, illi modo luxit."
[244] VCM, 3.35, p. 656.

the purity of her soul; something which also appeared in the other *vitae* of the women of Liège, but increasingly as they approached death. Notably, these markers of the ascent of the soul as it neared or experienced death were *not* included in John's *vita*, with his final moments largely a vocalised plea for the safeguarding of his soul. By this time, Thomas had been in a different religious order for decades and was suffering with his own final illness, so it is possible that the recreation of a "good death" may have held more urgent significance for him.[245] As previously mentioned, the affection he held for the Abbey of Notre-Dame at Cantimpré clearly remained, as he was inspired to preface his return to his first *vita* with:

> I beseech you in closing, dearest brothers, that when you hear of my death, you will do me the kindness of offering the same rites that are customary for a deceased brother among yourselves. For even though I am now a friar of a different order, yet I lived among you as your brother… for fifteen years and more. But now, suffering the daily pain of arthritis and gout, I believe I shall not live much longer.[246]

Meanwhile, in comparison to Lutgard and Christina's relatively painless passings, Margaret endured a haemorrhage, which, to the surprise of onlookers, caused her deathbed to be "filled with an aromatic fragrance, as if from the most precious spices."[247] When she finally died, she did so smiling, "showing by her bodily attitude that the wise

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[245] VICEng, 3.7, pp. 120–121, VIC, 3.7, pp. 315–316. Especially poignant are Thomas's final lines in the *vita*, expressing how badly he was struggling with his illness by that point in time: "I should note that he appeared to many friends at his death and afterward and revealed the glory of his reward. But I omit these events and many more because I too am caught in the grip of sickness." (VIC, 3.7, p. 316: "Notandum autem quod in morte et post mortem pluribus amicis apparuit et gloriam sue glorificationis ostendit, que quidem scribere, et languore detentus, obmisi et prenimia plura.")

[246] VICEng, Prologue, p. 58; VIC, Prologue, pp. 257–258: "Nunc igitur in fine peto, charissimi, quatinus mihi, audito die mortis mee, hoc beneficium impendatis, ut sicut fratri defuncto solet fieri apud uos, idem fieri mihi concedatis. Licet enim alterius professionis frater nunc sim… frater uester annis quindecim et eo amplius uixi. Nunc autem langore diutino arthetice et podagre detentus, diu uiuere non confido."

[247] VMYEng, 41, p. 198, VMY 41, pp. 124–125: "... odore aromatico quasi ex pigmentis preciosissimis replebatur."

and faithful servant had entered into the joy of the Lord..."[248] Lutgard died with her eyes opened to heaven, with her face and skin soft and shining like the "lustre of a lily," her body a clear reflection of the rapturous joy of her soul upon its ascent into heaven.[249] While this was not a writing trope unique to Thomas, the body as a mirror to the soul is important in his works for good reason: without establishing a saint's body as a divine locus, indicative of their power to intercede for the living, the prayers and liturgy of the Church herself could not be accomplished. [250]

The "Dormant Power" of The Dead: Legitimacy, Reciprocity, and Curating Memory

If the deathbeds and spiritual developments of Thomas's female saints were distinct and vivid, their afterlives were no less busy. To understand them within the context of the relic culture and interaction with the dead that Thomas advocated for, it is important to understand the role of the relic itself during the time that Thomas was active. The reliquary of a saint was often referred to as a "memoria" or "a memory." It is with this word in mind that the canon passed by the Fourth Lateran Council can be best understood.[251] It was not enough to merely possess a relic; rather, the act of remembering and reflecting was itself vital when engaging with the holy dead. Likewise, because the relic was a vehicle for a relationship between the living and the dead, it needed to be properly contextualised and interpreted within the setting and rituals of the Church.[252]

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[248] VMYEng, 50, pp. 202–203, VMY, 50, p. 128: "… gestu corporis demonstrante, quoniam fidelis et prudens Domini sui gaudium intravit…"
[249] VLAEng, 3.17, pp. 288–289, VLA 3.2.17, p. 208: "… cum nitore lilii…" See also Anneke Mulder-Bakker, *The Invention of Saintliness* (London and New York, 2002), pp. 30–32.
[250] Andre Vauchez*, Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, Jean Birrell (trans.), (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 427–435, for the quality of *virtus* in a saint manifesting through their dead body as a reflection of their soul.
[251] Bartlett, *Why Can The Dead*, p. 264; see also Bynum on the reciprocal role of the veneration of the holy dead in, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 75–76; see also Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 245, 251–253.
[252] Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, pp. 283–287 on the joyful outcomes of properly translating a relic and, conversely, the deadly dangerous consequences of not doing so.

Relics held an active role: capable of sentient responses, legitimising authority, righting wrongs, and healing hurts in return for the act of prayer and remembering.[253] This can be seen in the *supplementum* of Marie of Oignies' *vita*, when Jacques de Vitry loaned her relic to Hugolino of Ostia, a bishop struggling with the "spirit of blasphemy."[254] Jacques firmly insisted on having him read her *vita*; the bishop did so, which left him "in wondrous hope and peace" as he felt the spirit of blasphemy depart from him while holding onto her fingerbone.[255] Thomas made this act of physical proximity *and* active remembrance vital components in asking for the intercession of a dead saint and forming a reciprocal relationship with them. It was not enough to interact with the physical remains of the saint. Rather, it was vital to engage with their memories and the events of their lives and ministry, drawing the focus of the supplicant to what the saint contemplated on and devoted herself to.[256] The *vita* also served as a relic in this respect, causing the audience to become an active participant in the pursuit of grace.[257] As Barr notes in her discussion on the *Speculum* of Marguerite d'Oingt (d. 1310):

> Reading becomes equated with meditative practice, with clear implications for the readers of Marguerite's book: just as Marguerite "reads" the book of Christ's life and is thereby led to amend her own life, so can her readers amend their lives by considering her example.[258]

In framing the veneration of Marie's relics alongside the act of meditating on her life, Thomas encouraged a spiritual practice that would have been beneficial for his

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[253] Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 37
[254] VMO–SEng, 3.15–17, pp. 155–156, VMO–S, 3.15–17, pp. 577–578: "Spiritus blasphemae…"
[255] Ibid.: "… et in ea quidem miram spem et sui quietam inveniens…"
[256] It is not that a saint's relics cannot be effective from far away, merely that proximity to a relic was held to be significant; see Bolton, 'Mary of Oignies,' pp. 211–212, on the combined use of both Mary's *vita* and her relic to chase away the "spirit of blasphemy".
[257] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 252–253, and Spencer-Hall, 'Suppurating Wounds,' pp. 400–401; Mulder-Bakker, Introduction, *Living Saints*, pp. 30–31.
[258] Barr, *Willing to Know God*, p. 55

listeners, as people in need of intercession, healing, or an orthodox spiritual example to reflect on.. These practices would have been beneficial in affirming orthodox belief, while also placing the Church at the centre of access to the holy dead and the benefits of their intercession. Church rituals contextualised the dead, who could often occupy a morally ambiguous place, into an emotional, theological, and cultural space where their memory and, in the case of the saintly dead, their sanctity, could be properly curated, whether in their shrines and *vitae* or in the new canonization process itself. [259] Christina, a reanimated woman curated and interpreted by these rituals, possessed a reverence for priests and the rituals of the Church, particularly the Eucharist—she acted, in her once dead body, as a means of drawing her community closer to the orthodox practices of the Church, cultivating a deep love for God and reverence for His priests.[260] However, that is not to say that the dead were demystified in this affirmation of orthodoxy: Christina remained strange, "partly disclosed, partly beyond knowing," well after her self-baptism in Wellen moderated her behaviour.[261] While Christina baptised herself, which would have seemed unorthodox to the people around her, the very act of reaffirming her communion with the Church draws her, as a woman who has already passed through the afterlife, back into her community. While still mysterious and with a marvellous body, it was these rites that enabled her to rejoin and participate in the world around her, whether with the nuns at St. Catherine's or as advisor to Louis of Looz.[262]

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[259] Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual,' p. 36: Caciola describes the similarities between the appearances and causes of revenants against those of the saints, categorising the holy relics as a special kind of "undead."
[260] VCM, 4.40, p. 657; likewise, VCM 1.5, p. 651; and VCM, 1.10, p. 652 for her hunger for the Eucharist, something only a priest could provide; for the particular devotion of the *mulieres religiosae* to the Eucharist, see in particular Bynum, *Holy Feast* , pp. 58–59, 63–64, 76–78, 117–119, 274–275; for the writings of Hadjewich and Beatrice of Nazareth, with discussion of examples of this Eucharistic devotion within their writings, see Bynum, 'Food in the Writings of Female Mystics,' in *Holy Feast*, pp. 150–186.
[261] Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity,' p. 25; VCM, 2.20–21, p. 654.
[262] VCM 3.30, p. 655; VCM, 4.41–45, pp. 657–658.

Before developing such a relationship with the holy dead, there was the occasionally fraught matter of obtaining the relics themselves. In the *supplementum* of her *vita*, Marie was shocked by the violence perpetrated against a dead holy man by the prior, Giles of Oignies, in the removal of his teeth for relics. She protested that she would clench her teeth tightly against such indignity after her own death, to which the prior laughingly responded that she could not stop him from taking relics from her after she was dead.[263] Marie was as good as her word, however, and the prior was unable to open her jaw to remove her teeth, until he humbled himself, saying:

> … I ask and implore your gentle charity that you kindly allow me to receive some of your teeth as solace for my sorrow… it is really true, that what I wished to do (although…. as is now clear, such violence does not befit your dignity) I arranged to do for your honour and glory. So now allow what is asked of you.[264]

At this respectful supplication, Marie helpfully shook several of her teeth loose.[265] While the Church might curate the dead and honour their memory, consent was needed; reciprocity between the dead and the living remained contingent on the proper adherence to ritual and piety. While Thomas was not the originator of such a story, he portrayed the relics (or, in this case, intended relic) as active participants in this relationship, capable of

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[263] VMO–SEng, 3.14, pp. 152–153, VMO–S, 3.14, p. 377.
[264] VMO–SEng, 3.14, pp. 152–153, VMO–S, 3.14, p. 377: "Rogo ergo et peto tuam mansuetissimam caritatem, ut me patiaris dentium tuorum partem in solatium mei doloris accipere… et vere sic, est, id quod facere volui (etsi… quia talis violentia, ut vere nunc patet, tuam reverentiam non decebat) tamen ad tuum honrem et gloriam facere disponebam; a te ergo, quod flagito nunc permitte."
[265] Ibid.: "Mira res! … cum ecce corpus exanime… os aperit, et sponte sua in manu Prioris septem numero dentes excussit." This mirrors the stories of "helpful" incorruptible bodies in Bartlett's *Why Can The Dead?,* p. 100 where Bartlett cites a similar miracle to that of Marie of Oignies, nearly a hundred years later, when Saint Brigit of Sweden considerately decomposes to make accessing her relics easier.

giving and revoking consent or blessing. This was critical in his advocacy for the active remembrance and engagement with the special dead.[266]

Like Marie, Lutgard had a similar experience of pre-emptive enthusiasm for her relics well before her death.[267] Thomas recounted a time when Lutgard gently teased him concerning his seeking out her arm for a relic after her death, when Lutgard said that she could not imagine what he would do with her hand.[268] Blushing profusely and grumbling against the abbess Hadjewich for giving him away, Thomas protested, "I believe your hand would be good for my soul and body if I manage to get it, as I intend!"[269] Lutgard replied that her little finger would be sufficient for his needs.[270] While it is impossible to fully know how Lutgard might have felt at her future relics being divided up among her loved ones while she was still alive it is certain that her finger was eventually given to Thomas by the "inexorable" abbess Hadjewich, in exchange for him agreeing to write the *vita* of Lutgard for her surviving community.[271]

Once again, personal devotion and public, communal memory were not mutually exclusive, but had to go hand in hand to fully benefit from a relationship with the holy dead. In a similar story of framing death through ritual and obedience to Church authority, after her second death, Christina's fellow nun, Beatrice, summoned her back to life to answer a burning question, urging Christina to remember her obedience to her in death as in life: "O Christina! You who obeyed me always in life, I beg you now and invoke

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[266] See Georgina Fitzgibbon, "To be associated with their sacred remains': Saints' Burials and Sacred Objects in Early Cistercian *Exempla* Collections' in *Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies*, x (2021), pp 123–156, pp. 145–146, p. 152 for tooth related miracles within the *Dialogus miraculorum.*

[267] VLAEng, 3.19, pp. 290–292, VLA, 3.3.19, pp. 208–209.

[268] VLAEng, 3.19, pp. 290–292, VLA, 3.3.19, pp. 208–209.

[269] Ibid.: "Credo… quod in bonum animae et corporis mei tua mihi manus obveniet, si eam consequar, ut intendo."

[270] Ibid.

[271] Ibid.; see also King, 'The Dove at the Window,' pp. 230–231 on that power that Hadjewich wielded in curating Lutgard's remains and memory through this exchange.

through the Lord Jesus Christ, who in life you loved with burning desire, to obey me even now...”[272] Christina grudgingly but obediently returned, answered the questions which were required of her, and died a final time, with her community around her and all loose ends resolved.[273] Her death was not isolated from her broader spiritual community, who were as necessary a part of her life as her long-anticipated reunion with Christ.

If rituals and memorialization were adhered to, and the final wishes of the saint were honoured, an effective intercessory relationship could begin, whether on an individual or communal scale. While many of Thomas’s post-mortem miracles hinged on personal reciprocity between the living and the dead, they also played a critical role in legitimising the authority of the Church. For example, in her post-resurrection state and her ability to foretell major events, or to know them without being told, Christina foretold the sacking of Jerusalem in 1187, rejoice in the opportunity for Christians to repay Christ’s sacrifice with “great devotion” in taking it back.[274] However, the benefits provided by the holy dead could be revoked if a saint’s wishes were not honoured. When Thomas criticised Jacques de Vitry towards the end of the *supplementum* of Marie’s *vita*, he portrayed a disapproving Marie who threatened to withdraw her support from Jacques, with Marie appearing in a vision to Prior Giles on the eve of Jacques’s departure, saying:

> You needn’t doubt that I am just as opposed as you are to the bishop’s journey. Hence, I will not accompany him as he goes; rather, three women will accompany him. He won’t escape their hands. So let him do what he wants; you can’t turn him from his purpose now.”[275]

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[272] VCM 5.52, p. 659: “O Christina! obediens sempe mihi in vita fuisti; adjuro ergo nunc te et contestor per Dominum Jesum Christum, quem in vita ardenti desiderio dilexisti, ut obedias mihi etiam nunc…” VCMEng, 53, pp. 153–154. See also Spencer–Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 104–105; Spencer-Hall, ‘Horror of Orthodoxy,’ p. 370.
[273] VCM 5.52, p. 659.
[274] VCM 3.33, p. 655: “… in magna devotione…” VCMEng, 33, p. 144. .
[275] VMO–SEng, 4. 23, pp. 160–161, VMO–S, 4.23, p. 579: “Sicut contrarium tibi est iter Episcopi sic et contratrium mihi esse non dubites, et ideo non comitabor euntem; sed comintantur eum tres mulieres, de quarum manibus non evadet. Sine ergo illum, faciat quod vult, non eum ab intentione revocare nunc poteris.” The “three women” in question are the “Episcopate” (“episcopatu”), “Cardinate” (“cardinalitate”), and an unknown third (“tercia vero

Similarly, when Thomas admonished Jacques for leaving the souls under his care in Liège, it was not just his diocese that Jacques was reproached for disappointing, but Marie herself:

> I said, 'through the prayers of his handmaid', but I confess I spoke in doubt. For I do not know if she still holds back her prayers in anger because she foretold that the journey of the bishop would be made in spite of her opposition.[276]

Marie was spoken of as a continual presence, involved with Jacques's ministry even after death, and still invested in her home diocese of Liège. [277] This would have been a powerful appeal to Jacques, citing a woman whose faith and wisdom he admired, and whose life influenced a significant part of his career.[278] Happily, not all patronage was as fraught as that between Marie and Jacques: many of the dead women in Thomas's *oeuvre* were well heeded and reflected the dead's focal role in the Church, as well as the nature of female mystics as they related to their male counterparts. For example, one of Margaret of Ypres' post-mortem appearances entailed her assisting one of Thomas's fellow Dominican brothers, with a vision of herself standing in front of him with an open book as if to guide him in what to say.[279] Thomas, while stressing the importance of clerical authority, still revered the holy dead and their ability to give guidance in a unique way, the one always helping the other.

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mulier que esse possit ad presens quidem dilucide scire non possumus.") Perhaps Thomas was implying the papacy itself?

[276] VMO–SEng, 4. 25, pp. 162–163, VMO–S, 4.25, p. 580: "Per preces Ancillae suae dixi: sed fateor in dubio me locutum. Nescio enim si adhuc in ira contineat preces, quia contrarium sibi iter Episcopi esse praedixerat."

[277] See VMO–SEng, 4.19–21, pp. 157–160, VMO–S, 4.19–21, pp. 578–579, for examples concerning her role in Jacques de Vitry's career after her death.

[278] Coakley, 'Women, Men and Spiritual Power,' pp. 80–83, in which the partnership of Jacques and Marie is discussed.

[279] VMYEng, 56, p. 205, VMY, 56, pp. 129–130.

Once again, one of the most telling pieces of evidence surrounding Christina's post-mortem career is what is not there. Christina's miracles after her final death are surprisingly few and far between, of a calmer nature that is surprising for an otherwise ambiguous and vehement figure. There are no visitations, and only one minor miraculous cure added by an anonymous author in 1249.[280] In her final death, in Thomas's account of her life, her body was a source of unity and peace at her first translation; to Thomas, the holiness of her work and sanctity of her body was already well-established.[281] Therefore, the lack of the same vivid post-mortem miracles in Christina's life was not meant to be interpreted in the same way as the lack of those miracles in John's life, with a focus on the exemplary and imitable end of a "good death." Rather, this was indicative of a tumultuous *vita* that was one large volume of post-mortem miracles centered around her heavenly, resurrected body. To see or have contact with Christina's resuscitated body while she was on earth was to contemplate the horror of purgatory for oneself and the inevitable reality of death and judgment. However, it was also a call to action to provide purgatorial care for one's own dead, transforming her *vita* into a commemoration for the personal dead as well*;* this is something we will also encounter in Thomas's own writings about his family as found within the *Bonum universale de apibus.*

A Personalised Haunting: The Visits of The Beloved Dead

The saintly dead in Thomas's *vitae* used their proximity to God to break the rules of the Church while simultaneously affirming the legitimacy of the Church's authority. This section will be dedicated to three types of interactions with the dead found in Thomas's

[280] VCM, 5.57, p. 660: There is one ambiguous appearance of a woman in white (presumably Christina) but she does not reveal herself to the person she appears to, unlike Margaret, Marie, or Lutgard, who all make their presences very explicitly known. See Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 370–371.
[281] VCM, 5.54, p. 659.

hagiographic works: firstly, visits asking for help, secondly, a final confirmation of the status of the dead, and, finally their responses to upsets in order, usually with the intent of setting them to rights.[282] Within the *vitae,* these appearances rarely carried negative connotations, but were rather a chance to act in love and solidarity with the dead. Well before their respective deaths, Marie, Margaret, and Lutgard experienced visits from not only the holy dead, but their own personal dead. Marie experienced a visit from the ghost of her mother shortly after her death, where she found out that her mother was in hell due to her "usury and unjust commerce."[283] Her mother lamented that in "exchanging a fruitless life for death, I was lost to the future life of the world [to come]."[284] After considering her mother's damnation in an "orderly" way ("consideratis per ordinem") in light of God's just judgement, Marie found closure concerning her mother's fate and was in harmony with God's decision. As Newman points out, while the redemptive suffering of the women of Liège was rooted in their intense empathy for the dead, they also could not imagine a God less compassionate or merciful than they were: if a soul did wind up in hell, it could only have been after a just judgement from a loving God.[285] However, the *mulieres religiosae* of Liège were optimistic that no soul could possibly resist succumbing to such a deep and passionate redemptive love.[286]

Indeed, if Christina were to have a mission statement of sorts, it would perhaps be this moment in her *vita* where, after returning from a moment of divine ecstasy, in tears at being separated from paradise and exasperated with an earthly community that does

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[282] Schmitt. *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, p. 173.
[283] VMO–SEng, 2.12, pp. 149–150, VMO–S, 2.12, pp. 576: "… per usuras et injusta mercimonia…"
[284] VMO–SEng, 2.12, pp. 149–150, VMO–S, 2.12, pp. 576: "… infructosam vitam morte commutans, a futura seculi vita deperii."
[285] Newman, 'On the Threshold,' pp. 133–134. It is important to note that Newman does not interpret this as questioning the justness of God's judgement: merely a boundless, passionate trust in His love.
[286] Ibid.

not understand or return the full extent of God's profound love for them, she declared: "If you would look on His goodness… gainsaying the world, you would not be able to turn away, in fact you would love Him."[287] The sadness that she experienced lay in the perceived rejection of a God whose love was all-consuming and redemptive. Christina's bargain with God, her intense sorrow at the loss of the damned, her wild joy at the salvation of the living, were all indicative of her belief in a God who desired to save above all else.[288] In this understanding of purgatory and final judgement, as reflected in Thomas's writings, the reading of Marie's experience with her mother could be interpreted two ways: it confirmed the penalty for usury in the eyes of the Church and, in Marie's personal and spiritual severance with her mother, illustrated the tragedy of a permanent break with an all-loving God.

As the only "family" within Christina's *vita* were her sisters, who disappeared shortly after their final attempt to capture her, the next closest thing to family was her patron and "spiritual son" Count Louis of Looz. In this relationship, the reader would have seen the roles shift: Christina initially only appeared from her liminal spaces of the wilderness or the graveyards she frequented to admonish the Count for his behaviour or warn him about future danger.[289] The Count became her supplicant rather than patron after his death. Before his death, Christina heard his sins and guided him towards settling his earthly affairs, and then experienced a vision of his soul descending into purgatory as he died.[290] When he appeared to her after his death, begging her to help him, she readily agreed to "pay the difference" with her body.[291] This is the only willing "personal" favour Christina performed in at the behest of another in terms of personal intercession, as an

[287] VCM, 3.37, p. 656: "Bonitatem ejus si videres… contradicente mundo, averti non posses, quin eum diligeres." VCMEng, 37, pp. 146–147.
[288] VCM, 2.27, p. 655.
[289] For examples of this, see VCM, 4.41–43, p. 657.
[290] VCM, 4.44–45, pp. 657–658.
[291] VCM, 4.45, p. 658.

example that will be examined in the third chapter will demonstrate. However, it is worth noting that the one "personalised" act of salvific intervention Christina made was for a powerful nobleman, and that well before his death, she had had a close relationship with him as a guide and spiritual advisor.[292] Christina also tried to remind Louis of the beauty and goodness of God: in one such instance, as Louis encountered Christina, she exclaimed, "How beautiful you are, Lord!" much to the bewilderment and amusement of Louis' soldiers.[293] Louis was quick to clarify, saying, "I know whom she praises. It is not me, but she praises her heavenly Lord, who is the creator of great beauty, and all things beautiful."[294] Christina replied "It is true what you have said. So why is it that you do not love Him?"[295] This was a gentle reproach, reminding Louis of a truth he already knew and was able to express, because of his relationship with Christina.

It is relatively rare in Thomas's biographies to see purely personal accounts of regular lay people rising from purgatory to seek intercession, or of the dead women themselves appearing to ordinary people. The holy and illustrious dead were useful here, particularly as an opportunity for Thomas to offer criticism or a more personal reproach through an emotionally powerful medium. When Innocent III appeared to Lutgard, he told her that there were three reasons for his time in purgatory, and that he was only able to hope because of the monastery he had built in the name of his intercessor, the Virgin Mary.[296] While the reasons were serious enough to keep Innocent out of heaven until judgement day, Thomas never specified the three reasons out of respect to the deceased

[292] VCM, 4.41, p. 657.
[293] VCM, 4.42, p. 657: "O quam pulcher es, Domine!" VCMEng, 42, pp. 148–149
[294] VCM, 4.42, p. 657: "Novi, inquit, quem laudat. Non sum ego, sed laudat coelestem Dominum suum, qui pulchritudinum creator est, et pulcherrimus omnium." VCMEng, 42, p. 149. I will discuss this episode more in the third chapter of this thesis.
[295] Ibid.
[296] VLAEng, 2.7, p. 244 and VLA, 2.1.7, p. 197.

pope.[297] It was likely Innocent's prohibition of new religious orders that Thomas was criticising and this interpretation is supported by a later vision of Lutgard in which Jordan of Saxony (1222–1237), Master General of the Dominicans and Dominic's successor, appeared to her. Jordan affirmed that he had passed on to glory with God, asking her to continuously pray for him: and for the betterment of her own soul since she would soon follow to be "crowned by the Lord."[298] Most notably, Thomas took this opportunity to make Lutgard, while living and with strong and intimate ties to the Cistercian Order, the patroness and "mother" of the Order writing: "We saw how devoted and diligent she was toward the friars above all other orders, so that every day she offered God diligent service especially for them."[299]

Jacques de Vitry likewise gained a post-mortem audience with Lutgard to confirm his own entry into heaven.[300] This happened well after his first audience with Marie in her afterlife, in which she scolded him for leaving Liège behind. It can be assumed that whatever falling out Thomas and Jacques had was resolved, and if Thomas could utilise post-mortem visions to illustrate the penalties of severing oneself from the Church, then he could also cement someone's legacy within it in a positive light. This is also certainly true of Christina and Louis: while Louis appeared only briefly in her *vita, Christina* promises to shorten his time in purgatory, to speed up his redemption, by taking on some of his pains. In all of these visitations, whether in Christina's life or Thomas's other *vitae*, the reader was granted the same privilege of knowing with certainty the post-mortem trajectory of the dead, even the most powerful and influential dead, at times in great detail.

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[297] VLAEng, 2.7, p. 244 and VLA, 2.1.7, p. 197; Tanner, 'Fourth Lateran Council– 1215,' in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, i, Canon 13, p. 242.
[298] VLAEng, 3.2–3, pp. 274–276 and VLA, 3.1.2–3, pp. 204–205: "… ut a Domino coroneris."
[299] VLAEng, 3.2–3, pp. 274–276 and VLA, 3.1.2–3, pp. 204–205: "… quam etiam super omnes Ordines devotam et sedulam vidimus erga Fratres; unde pro eis specialiter quotidie sedulum Deo obsequium exhibebat."
[300]VLAEng, 3.5, pp. 277–278 and VLA. 3.1.5, p. 205

In doing so, Thomas confirmed the legitimacy of the Church and its continuance into the communion of saints, something critical in the face of heretical arguments against that very communion.

Thomas's saintly dead were also depicted as returning to prevent harm or to set the world back into harmony with God. For example, after her interment on the right side of the choir, Lutgard protected the nuns of Aywières from a fatal plague, frightening one of the nuns with a vision of Lutgard rising out of her tomb and chasing an attacking mob from the church with "the greatest violence."[301] This signalled the end of the plague, Lutgard having routed it from her convent from beyond the grave.[302] As discussed previously, Marie returned in a vision to express her disapproval of Jacques de Vitry leaving Liège for the sake of advancement, presumably out of compassion for the community he left behind. Christina's own dramatic return in the middle of her funeral and her violent self-mortification was motivated by the compassion she felt towards those in purgatory, and her desire to deliver sinners, both in purgatory and on earth alike. At times, this was profoundly painful to her as someone who had once been face to face with God; her body reflects this grief and frustration, not only at the lack of total union with God and the joy she had found in heaven, but at the perceived obstinacy of the very people she has returned from the dead to protect. At these moments, Christina cried out "as if in labour," wailing as her limbs twisted painfully.[303] However, when she discerned that a person had been saved, her dancing was such "...that it was a wondrous manner to see, for her to live in such joy."[304] Despite her eeriness, the tenderness with which she

[301] VLAEng, 3.22, p. 294 and VLA, 3.3.22, p. 209: "… cum maxima violentia…"
[302] VLAEng, 3.20–22, pp. 292–294, VLA, 3.3.20–22, p. 209; Thomas's account of Lutgard, particularly compared to his other saintly lives, was filled with small, personal details such as this example.
[303] VCM, 3.29, p. 655: "… clamabat quasi parturiens…" VCMEng, 29, p. 143.
[304] VCM, 3.26, p. 655: "… quod miro modo esset mirabile, eam in tanta jocunditate vivere." VCMEng, 26, p. 142.

embraced a deeply flawed and sinful humanity with the intent to redeem it can perhaps best be illustrated in her own dialogue with her own exhausted, pained body, reassuring it of its eventual rest.[305]

After this interaction, Christina was filled with such inner gladness that she feared she might break. Out of her many interactions with a sinful world that often hurt and bewildered her in her spiritual perfection, this joy at the salvation of others perhaps most exemplified her choice to love and to suffer for redemption. For Thomas, who viewed purgatorial care as the ultimate act of compassion, this was perhaps what made her strange life so compelling as an example of devotion and remembrance to the holy and personal dead: the love invested in them was not a one-sided or futile endeavour. In Thomas's works, the dead are deeply invested in the living and in the *vitae* of his saints, especially that of Christina, portraying this enduring love between the living and the holy and "beloved" dead was as much of a priority as legitimising the Church through their sanctity.

Conclusion

Throughout Thomas's hagiographical *corpus*, the dead play a significant and necessary role. However, Christina's position as a once dead woman uniquely impacted how her resuscitated, purgatorial body interacted with a sinful world. Her momentary union with God in heaven gave her the ability to discern the spiritual status of those around her in a way that most of Thomas's other female saints only experienced towards the end of their lives. In choosing not to depict Christina as needing a spiritual progression to perfection, Thomas emphasized that her intercession was particularly compassionate and effective *because* of her experience of death and union with God, and her willingness to give up

[305] VCM, 5.49, pp. 658–659.

heaven for those in purgatory. Christina exemplified the reciprocal aid of the holy dead and the benefits of purgatorial piety for the living and the dead in her bodily sufferings. If Thomas's other saints typified a *vita apostolica* that could be emulated through their charity, reverence, and prayer, then Christina encouraged not only those aspects of holiness, but a piety that encouraged individual agency in determining their position in the afterlife and a call to care for the dead and the dying, both out of compassion and to develop a greater spiritual intimacy with God and the communion of saints.

The ultimate sacrifice that Christina gave, then, one that the other saints could not: leaving a God who she loved and wished to remain with above all things, returning and suffering within a fallen world twice. The compassionate act of the blessed dead returning to aid and console those left behind, coloured her entire ministry and informed Thomas's portrayal of the relationship between the living and the holy dead. For Thomas, the holy dead and the personally beloved dead, were not emotionally removed or indifferent actors, waiting to be called upon or summoned before they did good for their surviving loved ones. Rather, they were actors in relationships with the loved ones they had left behind, still loved by and loving towards them, and filled with a desire to bring the experience of God's love, now seen face to face, to the families and friends they hoped would one day join them.

"The Ghost Ridden Friar": Thomas of Cantimpré, The Personal Dead, and The *Bonum universale de apibus*

This chapter examines a different category of the dead found in Thomas of Cantimpré's work: the "beloved" or personal dead. These dead are perhaps the most important, especially since Thomas's ministry and personal piety were firmly rooted in the post-mortem care for his father that he been dedicated to the priesthood for. After a career centred around the holy women of Liège and their purgatorial piety, Thomas would culminate his life's work with the *Bonum universale de apibus*; meant for the consumption of clerical and lay audiences alike, the educational manual was filled with many of the usual stories of the dead that can be found in other contemporaneous *exempla* collections. However, fittingly for a man whose first major experimental hagiography was of a woman who resurrected shrieking and soaring to the rafters at her own funeral, Thomas expanded on the purgatorial suffrages made on behalf of the beloved personal dead. Within his section on care for the dead, Thomas included profoundly autobiographical elements from his personal life, expanding on the role of death and purgatory using experiences from his own family. For Thomas, to discuss the purgatorial was, necessarily, to discuss the personal.

Thomas did not use the section on suffrages merely to expound on his own personal relationship with the beloved dead, nor was it included only to make his audience more aware of purgatory as a concept. Rather, Thomas took a monastic tradition of care for the personal dead and adapted a version of it that his audience could smoothly incorporate into their own spiritual practices, whether they were in the world or not. The purgatorial acts of care espoused in Christina's *vita* reached a mature culmination in the *Bonum universale de apibus* in Thomas's discussion of purgatorial suffrages. The laity

and clergy were depicted as working together to address anxieties over the care and commemoration of their beloved dead.

These practices and the texts that encouraged them also served to preserve the memories of the deceased, both in individual cases and as a wider spiritual community. Although damnation was never outside of the realm of possibility, Thomas focused much more strongly on what could be done to *avoid* it in his section on the care of the dead. As Sweetman observes, this hopefulness was indicative of a much more mature Thomas, confident in his pastoral work and influenced heavily by the purgatorial piety of the holy women of Liège.[1] This hopefulness could then serve to help those who were bereaved or anxious about the fates of themselves or their loved ones in the afterlife by providing a blueprint of care.

It is mostly women shown engaging with the purgatorial dead within the *Bonum universale de apibus*: whether it is Thomas's own grandmother, mothers working together with clergy, or Christina and her colleagues among the holy women of Liège, it is clear that the spirits of the beloved dead, usually men, are depicted predominantly relying on women as their earthly intercessors. Within the chapter on suffrages, there is only one instance of a lay man doing this purgatorial work to any good effect in the story of a duke who delivers an army's worth of souls who then come to his aid. Otherwise, women bear the responsibility of their deceased husbands and sons' welfare in the afterlife. Despite his own lifelong devotion on behalf of his deceased father and an existing precedent for male monastic offices for the dead, particularly in Benedictine and Cistercian communities, Thomas often depicts instances of purgatorial care where women are uniquely capable of compassionate and effective intercession for the dead. This can be

[1] Sweetman, 'Thomas of Cantimpré, *Mulieres Religiosae*,' pp. 620–622; see also Sweetman, 'Visions of Purgatory,' pp. 31–32.

seen in Thomas's descriptions of the maternal nature of Christina's ministry and the motherly delight that he described his fellow Dominicans as experiencing when they "delivered" souls. Given that these are the few instances where feminising language was used within Christina's *vita*, it is important to analyse it within the context of Thomas's depictions of the role of women in caring for the dead.

Methodology

This chapter will compare the *Bonum universale de apibus* with two contemporaneous *exempla* collections Thomas would very likely have encountered in his lifetime: the *Sermones vulgares* by Jacques de Vitry, a great influence on Thomas, and the widely popular *Dialogus miraculorum* by Caesarius of Heisterbach. Likewise, it will be critical to examine how women, particularly mothers and widows, were depicted as engaging in purgatorial piety within Thomas's recommendations in the *Bonum universale de apibus* and to compare their interactions with Thomas's female *vitae*. In comparing these later acts of care by women as found in Thomas's work against those depicted in Christina's own acts of purgatorial care, it is possible to see where Thomas's ideas for a "maternal" purgatorial piety began to take a tangible shape. The evolving roles of death, purgatory, and apparitions as they pertain to Thomas's ideas of post-mortem pastoral care are most clearly demonstrated in these *exempla*, as well as how Thomas would turn his own purgatorial *exempla* into lasting memorials for his own family by including his personal recollections alongside specific instructions. In addition to those personal experiences, Thomas also adapted an example of purgatorial piety found within an older Cluniac poem, the *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus*.

This chapter will argue that Thomas took what were often monastic examples and adapted them for a wider audience, making these purgatorial devotions both available to

the laity in new ways and something they could perform alongside with existing, orthodox acts of devotion in the Church. Given that care for the dead already thrived in beguine communities around the time Thomas was active, and the rising enthusiasm for the *vita apostolica* among the laity, it may well be that Thomas realised that he was writing for an audience who were already looking for ways to be more intimately connected with the care of their dead.

This chapter will not argue that Thomas invented the practice of purgatorial suffrages, but rather, he simplified the heavily involved practices that fellow Dominican Stephen of Bourbon recommended, such as pilgrimage or going on Crusade, and which the head of the Order, Humbert de Romans would later adapt. In doing so, Thomas heavily utilised the ideas on purgatorial care presented by Jacques de Vitry and those shown within the *vitae* of Christina and the holy women of Liège. The purgatorial suffrages of Stephen and Humbert briefly intersect with the women of Liège—indeed, Stephen, a contemporary and friend of Jacques de Vitry, mentioned Marie of Oignies in his section on purgatory.[2] The reference to Christina within Marie's *vita* was also cited by Stephen, but he did not name her explicitly or cite anything from Thomas's *vita*.

While Dominicans were on the frontlines in developing purgatorial care, given their focus on confession and reinforcing Church authority, the purgatorial imaginations of many of Thomas's contemporaries often remained predominantly androcentric. If the roles of women in caring for the dying and the dead were relegated to a casual aside in the recommendations of Stephen and Humbert, however, then Thomas made their ministries his entire focal point. It is this unique focus that this chapter will focus on. The Liégoises' exemplary and embodied compassion, particularly that of Christina and Lutgard, still resonated fiercely with Thomas towards the end of his life; along with the

[2] TDMP1, ex. 174, 1.5.8, lines. 1037–1047, p. 175.

traditional works of almsgiving and having Masses said, he advocated for the simple acts of weeping and holding vigil over the dead, echoes of Christina trailing behind funeral processions or weeping at the sides of the dying.

Within orthodox Church writings on purgatory and the dead, apparitions of deceased loved ones often served as a confirmation of the rewards or punishments of the afterlife, validating orthodox belief. However, both within the Church and the secular world, portrayals of interactions with the dead also served to affirm these relationships and to provide personal comfort to the bereaved. They could also affirm broader social and political roles or maintain moral and social norms. While the final chapter of this thesis will predominantly focus on the "unruly" dead, it is inevitable that there will be some degree of overlap between them and the holy dead (Chapter 1) and personal dead (this chapter). It is at this intersection where Christina stood and where she truly shone.

The Bonum universale de apibus

Thomas began his *exempla* collection with a simple prologue, acknowledging the head of his order and humbly effacing himself: "To the venerable Father in Christ, Brother Humbert, master of the Order of Preachers, [from] a humble brother who at present there is no necessity pressing to name."[3] It was in answering a call from the General Master of the Dominican Order, Humbert de Romans, for preachers to collect stories and examples of the miraculous they had found in their lives that Thomas would write the last major work of his career. Here, Thomas set the tone for the entirety of the work, a tome ranging in authors from Pliny to Jacob of Acanensis, to his own circle of friends and colleagues, both in and out of the Dominican Order.[4] In the 2020 critical edition of the *Bonum*

[3] BUA, Prologue, pp. 2–6: "Reverendo in Christo patri fratri Humberto, magistro ordinis predicatorum, frater humilis cuius nomen ad presens non urget necessitas nominari."
[4] Ibid.

universale de apibus, Burkhardt discusses the call for these stories as a need to build community throughout the mendicant orders and the laity under their care, arguing that these *exempla* were uniquely situated to do this because whether the story was located in the past or not, the moral of the story was compelling at any time.[5] These *exempla* collections gave preachers the building blocks for their sermons, and provided a means of meaningfully engaging with audiences who potentially had little to no theological education.[6] This desire to create a community based around a set of moral and spiritual "norms" factored into Thomas's thematic organisation of the stories within a virtuous, idealistic community of bees.[7]

This structure of storytelling was not, strictly speaking, new: authors of Antiquity like Seneca and early Christian authors also utilised bee imagery to get a point across about community and power.[8] However, as Burkhardt observes: A special feature of the work is not simply the use of this [bee] allegory (which was well known to contemporaries anyway), but rather the possibility of showing the 'internal' relationships of a community in this way as well as positioning them in a broader context.[9] Burkhardt also emphasises the biographical nature of this work in comparison to the rest of his *corpus*, and how this impacts the structure: Thomas travelled widely in his lifetime as a preacher, and personal contacts and "narrative prominence" far outweigh social standing or political power

[5] Julia Burkhardt, *Von Bienen Lernen Das Bonum universale de apibus Des Thomas Von Cantimpré Als Gemeinschaftsentwurf: Analyse, Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (2 vols, Bayern, 2020) i, p. 51.
[6] Jacques Berlioz, Introduction to *Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilibus: Prologus, Prima pars, De dono timori*s, ed. by Jacques Berlioz and Jean-Luc Eichenlaub, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis*, cxxiv (Turnhout, 2002), pp. xxxi–xxvi; for a more detailed study on the genre and its uses, see Claude Brémond, Jacques le Goff, and J.C.–Schmitt, *L'exemplum* (Turnhout, 1982).
[7] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, p. 45.
[8] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, p. 58.
[9] Ibid., p.74.

within the collection.[10] Similar to Sweetman, Burkhardt argues that Thomas's *exempla* could potentially be interpreted as a stringently prescriptive set of recommended virtues and practices, particularly when considering the dire consequences for unrepentant sinners within the *Bonum universale de apibus.* However, both Burkhardt and Sweetman observe that within the moral framework of the collection, Thomas allowed, even devoutly encouraged, room for the limitless capacity of God's mercy and intervention.[11] Even the demonic are often utilised as machinations of God's greater truth and deliverance that could be experienced even by those conforming to the morals espoused in the collection.[12] In doing so, Thomas took the unpredictable and contextualised it within a higher order of God's love and mercy.[13]

Thomas has sometimes been accused of gullibility by scholars of his works.[14] However, when looking at his authorial choices as a deliberate move to creating a distinct community identity, Thomas's motivations can perhaps be better understood: particularly as he attempted to establish credibility with the evidence he gathered his corroboration of accounts with other community members, both in and outside of the Church, and how he utilised these *vitae* and examples to reinforce orthodox belief. There may also have been a more pressing motive in collecting these stories for an ageing and increasingly ailing Thomas: towards the end of his dedication to Humbert of Romans, Thomas requested his

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[10] Ibid., p. 106; see also Platelle in Thomas of Cantimpré, *Les Exemples du "Livre des abeilles": Une Vision Médievale*, Henri Platelle (trans.), (Turnhout, 1997), pp. 28–30 on Thomas's ideas of power and hierarchy, particularly on the necessity of moral rulers and a surprisingly flippant attitude towards hierarchies based on anything other than reciprocal virtue and duty, in both secular and clerical settings.
[11] Ibid., pp. 90–91; Sweetman, 'Visions of Purgatory,' pp. 30–31.
[12] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, pp. 90–91.
[13] Sweetman, 'Visions of purgatory,' p. 32, n. 27; Sweetman, 'Thomas of Cantimpré, *Mulieres Religiosae*,' p. 621.
[14] Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, p. 53; see also Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, p. 167, n.2, where Burkhardt quotes Arnold Kühl, 'Die Dominikaner im deutschen Rheingebeit und im Elsaß während des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts' (PhD thesis, University of Freiburg, 1923), pp. 162–163, as dismissing the *Bonum universale de apibus* as "artificial," and "credulous and uncritical."

"highest" payment, asking for Masses to be said in his hour of need or after he had passed away.[15] Thomas likely died a few years after this work was finished, and had already revisited the *vita* of John of Cantimpré to add an exemplary deathbed sequence. This topic may have been weighing more immediately on Thomas's mind by this point in his life. As such, the *Bonum universale de apibus* is useful as a literary work that can explore different social groups and dynamics, as it covers a broad spectrum of mediaeval life and specifically reflects on that using the bee imagery in each new chapter or section.

As Sweetman notes, the work was written at the height of Thomas's career as a Dominican, and it is reasonable to assume that his work as a mendicant, alongside the opportunities for salvation to be found in the new doctrine of purgatory and its associated devotions, influenced his writing.[16] As discussed in the previous chapter, writings on purgatory abounded and Thomas could explore purgatory further in his writing. For example, Sweetman notes that Thomas deviated from the normal "locations" of the dead, such as Mount Etna or graveyards, the typical locations for the returning personal dead, and that this was a significant departure from many of his contemporaries. For example, within the *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*, Stephen devoted a large section to discuss the location and nature of purgatory, focusing on the natures of the demonic torments faced by souls who were sentenced there, particularly the demons themselves; whether it was the flame-breathing dragon that he depicted in the vision of St. Margaret or a cat-like demon of monstrous proportions, complete with flaming eyes and a long bloody tongue, this served as a harrowing, effective build-up to the concluding section on

[15] BUA, Prologue, p. 4: "Quod autem in fine libri lectores singulos suppliciter depracabar, ut in missa una mihi misero subvenirent vel subveniri facerent decedenti. Hoc unum a vobis pro tanto labore, pro summa remuneratione requiro. Neque enim spernendum opus legentibus credo, ut mihi hanc vicem rependere negent."

[16] Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' p. 165 in particular on Thomas's structure of the bees and emphasis on their authority; this is also relevant when considering his struggle in favour of orthodoxy in the face of heresy.

acts of care for those in purgatory already (and those anticipating that they might wind up there.)[17] Meanwhile, the "access point" of purgatory for Thomas, as well as the motivating force for the dead who appear from purgatory on earth, was not to be found in a physical location. Rather, it was within the enduring love that their surviving loved ones still held for them, as well as the compassion and mercy of holy men and women willing to deliver them from purgatory.[18] A mature brother of the Dominican order with a long pastoral career behind him, Thomas saw the care of personal dead as the opportunity of a lifetime for those who desired to save souls. The apparitions of the personal dead served as calls for repentance for their surviving loved ones, even as they sought out their assistance.

The *Bonum universale de apibus* was likely completed somewhere between 1263 and 1270 and enjoyed more than a fair amount of success.[19] The Latin version survives in over 120 manuscripts all over western and eastern Europe, within secular and monastic contexts, either in its full form or a slightly abridged version. There are at least sixteen known vernacular copies dating from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries.[20] This wide variety of texts and the existence of multiple translations, some created centuries after Thomas's death, testify to the enduring resonance and popularity of the collection. I will begin with a brief and by no means comprehensive discussion of the Latin manuscripts and their readership before moving on to later translations. For this thesis, I will be relying on Burkhardt's critical edition, which utilises one of the two earliest Latin manuscripts of the text as a base text, Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria, cod. 1674 (864), while collating

[17] See examples in the TDMP1: particularly, St. Margaret's vision of purgatory in TDMP1, ex. 157, 1.5.6, lines. 714–733 pp. 163–164. See also Stephen's description of the demons that appear in St. Dominic's purgatorial vision, TDMP1 ex. 159, 1.5.6, lines. 756–778, pp. 165–166
[18] Sweetman, 'Visions of purgatory,' pp. 31–32.
[19] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, p. 15.
[20] Ibid., p. 16, pp. 107–108.

it with four other manuscripts.[21] While the Bologna manuscript is used as the base manuscript, Burkhardt states that it is not used as the leading manuscript, and any text that was incorrectly copied or shortened has been amended according to the other manuscripts consulted.[22]

123 known Latin manuscripts of the *Bonum universale de apibus* were created and circulated between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, although a majority were made during the fifteenth century.[23] Burkhardt notes that several other manuscripts were lost or destroyed over time, sometimes as a result of war, and twelve do not contain the entirety of the text. In some cases, this is due to missing pages (e.g. Mainz, Statsbibliotheque, cod. I 124) or the relevant passages were simply not copied (e.g. Paris, BNdF, cod. Lat. 14628); others contain large parts, but not complete copies, of both books, as is this case with manuscript KBR, cod. 11488, which contains the second book only up to the sixteenth chapter, or the manuscript Bibliothèque municipale of Grenoble, cod. 380, which contains the second book only to the thirty-first chapter.[24] Much like Christina's *vita*, the geographical distribution of the book appears to have been based largely on where Thomas was most active: most of the existing manuscripts have their origins in modern-day Belgium, the Netherlands, Northern France, and Western Germany.[25]Another manuscript group from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,

[21] See Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, pp. 191–192 for a brief explanation of the manuscripts used for the critical edition and then pp. 196–220 for the manuscript descriptions. There are five manuscripts chosen for being representative of the different groups/branches: Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria, cod. 1674 (864); Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, cod. Vat. Lat. 4846; Vienna, sterreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 14073; Paris, Bibliotheque nationale de France, cod. Lat. 3309; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. Clm 7000.
[22] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, p. 191.
[23] Ibid., p. 109.
[24] Ibid., pp. 110–111.
[25] Burkhardt notes some exceptions to this: see Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, pp. 115 for a discussion of two fourteenth century copies of the *Bonum universale de apibus* found in Spain, as well as a separate tradition group found in the Southern German-Austrian-Bohemian region with its own organisational structure. Burkhardt notes the odd lack of copies of Italian origin, particularly given the intended Dominican audience.

complete with their own organisational differences, can be found in the southern German-Austrian-Bohemian region. Strangely, not many of the manuscripts come from Italy, which is surprising given the Dominican influence there.

Less than half of the manuscripts contain solely the *Bonum universale de apibus*; while the text usually is usually found alongside smaller works, it was occasionally found alongside larger works like Nider's *Formicarius*, Gobi's *Scala Coeli*, or Jakob von Cessolis's *Book of Chess*.[26] The *Bonum universale de apibus* can be found packaged within a variety of texts, including passion accounts, saintly *vitae*, sermons, and excerpts from larger *exempla* collections.[27] The work was also occasionally paired with the chapter on bees from Thomas's *Liber de natura* rerum or other bee related treatises.[28] It appears that Thomas's work largely remained in circulation among the Dominicans and within an educational context. The two earliest extant Latin manuscripts, found in Bologna and Clermont-Ferrand, respectively, date back to the thirteenth century, about twenty years after Thomas had died, and both are linked to the Dominican Order. The Bologna manuscript belonged to Bishop Teodorico Borgognoni (1205–1298) who bequeathed many books to the convent of San Domenico, and his copy of the *Bonum universale de*

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[26] Ibid., p. 117.
[27] Ibid., pp. 117–118.
[28] Ibid., pp. 118, 157–159, there is a recent 2023 critical edition of the *Formicarius*, which I was unfortunately unable to consult for this thesis, Catherine Chène, *Le Formicarius de Jean Nider O.P. (1438): la société chrétienne au miroir de l'Observance* (2 vols, Florence, 2023); for more on Nider and the *Formicarius*, see M. D. Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages, (Philadelphia, 2003)*, pp. 4–5, 98. See particularly 'The Threat of Heresy: Hussites, Free Spirits, and Beguines' in Bailey, *Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform*, pp. 55–74, for a detailed discussion on Nider's attitudes towards these groups, as well as his relatively heightened concern with preventing witchcraft in comparison. For a brief analysis of Nider's views on reform, see 'Reform of the Orders, Reform of the Religious Spirit,' in *Battling Demons*, pp. 75–89. For a brief background on the conciliar movement of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Antony Black, 'The conciliar movement' in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350– c. 1450*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 573–587; for how these reforms impacted the Mendicant Orders, see Petra Weigel, 'Reform als Paradigma – Konzilien und Bettelorden' in Herbert Müller and Johannes Helmrath (eds.), *Die Konzilien von Pisa (1409), Konstanz (1414 – 1418) und Basel (1431 – 1449)*, (Ostfildern, 2015),—289–336, p. 289.

apibus went to the monastery through his nephew Hugo of Lucca; meanwhile, the Clermont-Ferrand manuscript contains a dedication that indicates that it was owned by the prior of the Paris Dominican convent.[29] These notes are also found in other manuscripts of the *Bonum universale de apibus* within the Dominican Order: for example, 200 years later, Dominican Johannes Burger from Douai noted in a local copy of the collection that he had bound and completed that volume in addition to numerous other volumes of the convent library, and a brief note at end of same codex written in the sixteenth century refers to the "Book of Bees" as being intended, "for the use of the preaching brothers of Douai."[30] This is consistent with Thomas's intended use for the *exempla* collection as preaching material and indicative of the relevance and use of that material hundreds of years after his death. However, the *Bonum universale de apibus* was not confined to Dominican use. Indeed, Burkhardt observes that a majority of the manuscripts originated from clerical circles, with Augustinian Canons and Benedictines owning the most copies besides the Dominican Order.[31] This indicates a wide readership among mendicant and non-mendicant orders alike, as well as a significant amount of interest from clergy, with more modest interest from scholarly circles. Only two extant copies hail from women's monasteries: the Codex Ross. 673, found in the Vatican Library, has a note indicating its ownership by the "House of the Penitent Sisters of the Order of Saint Clare in Trier" and a later note made on the first folio further indicating

[29] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, pp. 111–112: The Clermont-Ferrand manuscript contains a slightly more modern entry at the beginning, as well as an older entry at end of the text, that declare it to be the property of convent. However, there is note glued into the cover that contains a dedication to the head of the province of Francia and the prior of the Paris Dominican convent.
[30] Ibid., p. 112, n. 25: "Ad usum Fratrum Praedictorum Duacensium…"
[31] Ibid., pp. 113–114: To be more precise, Burkhardt notes that 11% of the extant manuscripts (eleven manuscripts total) today are of Dominican origin, and breaks down the extant manuscripts by religious order (or lack thereof) as follows: Augustinian Canons (14%), Benedictines (18%), Premonstratensians and Cistercians (5% each), Carthusians (7%), clerical (approx. 21%) and scholarly circles (approx 4%).

that it was the "Book of the Poor Clares in Trier."[32] The other manuscript dates from 1462, and was donated as part of larger book foundation and monetary donation bequeathed to the Augustinian nuns of Heiningen by the priest Elerus Swarten (died. c. 1481), who initially worked at the Petrikirche in Hamburg before moving to Heiningen as a cleric.[33] His book donation to the convent, which was one of the largest made at the time in late medieval Lower Saxony, provided the sisters with various *exempla* and sermon texts. Indeed, a great many of the existing copies of the *Bonum universale de apibus* appear to have been donated to religious communities by private owners, usually those in preaching positions. While it is extremely unlikely that the nuns themselves would have been preaching as the mendicants did, this may have been used for in-house teaching. The convent community might have found the reading material edifying and entertaining, and male clergy who attended to their pastoral needs might have utilised the texts found in the library. Although women were not typically the ones preaching with the *exempla* in question, they sometimes copied them as scribes. Notably, several vernacular manuscripts can be either be attributed to late medieval women's monasteries (e.g. the Cistercians of Lichtenthal, the Oude Nonnenklooster of Saint Mariënveld near Amsterdam, the Mariënburg Monastery near Nijmegen.) or contain evidence of female scribes who can be identified.[34]

Still other copies of the Latin texts can be examined for the motivation in copying them, particularly in notes left by the scribes themselves about who commissioned the text and the networks in which they were working. For example, a fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Bonum universale de apibus* was copied by a French clergyman,

[32] Ibid., p.114–115.
[33] Ibid., p.114.
[34] Ibid., p. 115.

William of Bruollo, in the fall of 1388, and, pleased with his work, he left the following note:

> In the year of our Lord 1388, on 3 September, this book was finished. It was written by order of the venerable lord Guy of Roye, who was then archbishop of Sens, and was copied by William of Bruolio, his chaplain and servant. This was all done in Avignon, where the said lord had stayed with the holy father in Christ, Clement, pope by divine providence. I therefore ask the readers to pray to the Lord and ask for the health and well-being of the named fathers and their friends and benefactors.[35]

Burkhardt notes that this note is remarkable for its insight into the relationship between Guy of Roye and the antipope Clement VII, and that the manuscript itself was probably made using a copy of the *Bonum universale de apibus* from the local episcopal library, on behalf of the archbishop who wanted a copy made for his own personal use. Likewise, the scribal notes provide context for monastic networking, as is demonstrated by a fifteenth-century copy of the text from the Dominican convent in Vienna: Burkhardt argues that friar Leonhard Huntpichler was likely both the owner and responsible for the compilation of the text itself, and that the copy was made possible by the Dominican convent's relationship with Martin of Leibitz, the abbot of the Benedictine *Schottenkloster* in Vienna.[36] The scribal note left in the manuscript mentioned that the *Bonum universale de apibus* was difficult to find in Vienna, and that it was Martin who was able to get the Dominican convent a copy of it.[37] Not only is this indicative of the working relationship between monasteries in sharing and copying manuscripts, but

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[35] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, pp. 119–120, n. 60 (translation mine, although Burkhardt provides a translation from the Latin into German): "Anno Domini M CCC octogesimo octavo, die III mensis septembris, finitus est liber iste quoad scriptorum, de precepto reverendissimi patris domini Guidonis de Roya tunc archiepiscopi Senonensis, scriptus per Guillelmum de Bruolio, ipsius capellanum et servitorem. Et fuit hoc in Avinione, ubi idem dominus erat tunc degens cum sanctissimo in Christo patre domino Clemente, divina providentia tunc papa VIIo, anno ipsius Xo, indictione undecima. Idcirco rogo legentes quot rogent Deum pro prosperitate et salute prefati reverendi patris et omnium amicorum et benefactorum suorum."
[36] Ibid., pp. 127–128.
[37] Ibid., pp. 128–129.

confirms that in Austria, an area where Thomas was not as active, the work was more difficult to find compared to regions where Thomas worked during his lifetime.

In any case, most copies of the *Bonum universale de apibus* were not usually richly illuminated, with no ornate initials or lettering, and given the texts that it was usually paired with (on the occasions it did not appear on its own) it is not unreasonable to assume that most copies were typically used within a monastic or scholarly context.[38] This might partially explain why the most popular form of transmission for the *Bonum universale de apibus* seems to have been through excerpts, with excerpts found in 112 Latin and German manuscripts from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, a majority dating from the fifteenth century.[39] Like the transmission of the non-excerpted texts, most of these manuscripts are located within Thomas's area of activity and are not limited to mendicant or monastic settings but also found in secular and scholarly contexts, with 78 manuscripts written in Latin and 24 in the vernacular.[40] Significantly more copies of the excerpted version can be found in women's convents, all of which contain excerpts from the *Bonum universale de apibus* written in the vernacular and of which at least three were copied by women as compared to the mostly, if not exclusively, male scribes of the full versions of the text.[41] These excerpts were also usually placed within collections of sermons, saints' lives, and other educational texts, and most were likely designed to be

[38] Ibid., pp. 130–131, 136.
[39] Ibid., p. 144.
[40] Ibid., pp. 145–147.
[41] Ibid., p. 146: two notable examples include the manuscript located in the Bibliothèque Royale of Brussels, Cod, 1683–87 written by Sister Lijsbeth Mols in the sixteenth century, and cod. II 2454 from the same library, written in 1463 by Sister Waltraud in the monastery of Sint-Luciendael near St. Trond; for a discussion of female scribes and copying as a spiritual and intellectual exercise, particularly within the *Devotio Moderna,* see also Wybren Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women in the Low Countries: The 'Modern Devotion', The Canonesses of Windesheim and Their Writings* , D. F. Johnson (trans.), (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 65–70, pp. 106–107 and Anne Winston-Allen, 'Making Manuscripts as Political Engagement by Women in the Fifteenth Century Observant Reform Movement' in *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, xlii, no. 2 (2016), 224–247, pp. 235–237.

used as reference books, or for preaching material on the organization of monastic life and the edification of the religious.[42] Sometimes the excerpts taken from the *Bonum universale de apibus* were based on the location of the monastery itself, as is the case for a fifteenth-century theological manuscript created in St. Michael in Hildesheim, which contains excerpts specifically related to the visions of Conrad II, the Bishop of Hildesheim, which will be covered in more depth later on in this chapter.[43] The excerpts could also be used to entertain guests of the monastery, such as the example of a fifteenth-century excerpt manuscript owned by Teutonic Knights in Cologne that was intended to be kept in refectory to read to visitors.[44]

The excerpt tradition of the *Bonum universale de apibus* swung into motion especially at the convent of the Teutonic Knights in Cologne and the Birgittine Abbey of Vadstena in Sweden. Burkhardt observes that in Cologne, this was certainly due to an ongoing reformation movement undertaken in the fifteenth century, with an emphasis on strengthening the existing system of preaching and calling for a renewed study of Scripture.[45] As we have seen with the rise in copies of Christina's *vita* during the fifteenth century, their manuscript production was heavily influenced by the rise of the *Devotio Moderna* and a renewed concentration on copying and distributing spiritually edifying material. The convent produced at least several manuscripts in the fifteenth century with excerpts taken from the *Bonum universale de apibus*, as well as excerpts from hagiographical, legendary, and other spiritually edifying literature.[46] Which excerpts were included largely depended on the topics being dealt with in the rest of the codex or on the personal preferences of the scribe or the person who commissioned the manuscript. There

[42] Ibid., p. 146.
[43] Ibid., p. 147.
[44] Ibid., p. 146.
[45] Ibid., pp. 148–149; Van Engen, *The Sisters and Brothers*, pp. 136–143, 267–281, 281–285.
[46] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, p. 149.

can be found multiple scribal hands within these manuscripts, something which Burkhardt observes would align with the Teutonic Knights' use of writing as a spiritual practice during this time.[47] This is all to observe that the collection was still seen as useful, well after Thomas's death, and that some of the concerns around preaching and education appear to have been as relevant during this period of reform and new forms of devotion as they were during Thomas's time as brother.

Certainly, during this period of reform, Burkhardt notes that some of the most popular excerpts taken from the *Bonum universale de apibus* are those that criticise the secular clergy and those on the accumulation of benefices found in the nineteenth chapter of the first book. The other texts most frequently excerpted from appear to have been from the second book of the collection, particularly those emphasising the purity of youth, the virtue (and keeping) of innocence, and, notably for the purposes of this thesis, the fifty-third chapter dealing with suffrages for the dead.[48] Interest in the chapter can be ascribed to two factors: firstly, the chapter is one of the longest within the work, making it a worthwhile inclusion; secondly, it contained some of the richest and most entertaining stories in the collection, potentially serving as riveting material for a congregation or a guest in the refectory after a meal.

The other notable source of excerpt tradition for the *Bonum universale de apibus* is found in the Birgittine convent at Vadstena. The convent was a double monastery, with monks responsible for pastoral care of the sisters living there. This led to a significant amount of manuscript production, with Birgittine sisters being documented as scribes, particularly for excerpts written in the vernacular.[49] This monastery produced the largest number of manuscripts of the *Bonum universale de apibus* found within the excerpt

[47] Ibid.; Van Engen, *The Sisters and Brothers*, p. 6.
[48] Burkhardt, *Von bienen lernen*, i, pp. 147–148.
[49] Ibid., pp. 150–151; see also Voaden, *God's Words*, pp. 35–36.

tradition, with fifteen extant manuscripts coming from Vadstena that contain excerpts from *Bonum universale de apibus* in Latin, largely tying in the *exempla* with their own devotions and preaching material, including stories and sayings by St. Birgitta.[50] An example of the *Bonum universale de apibus* being adapted for these purposes at Vadstena can be found in a sermon written in the fifteenth century to commemorate Birgitta's martyrdom; in it, the story of Count Theobald IV of Blois, who is too ashamed to give up his hat to a beggar after giving the man the rest of his clothing because it would show his bald spot.[51] This incomplete act of charity and humility was then juxtaposed against the complete charity that St. Birgitta demonstrated to the poor, emphasizing that this was not merely meant to praise Birgitta herself, but also to serve as a call of action for those within the monastery. This would characterise a great deal of how the excerpts from the *Bonum universale de apibus* would be used, and the adaptability of the material ensured no small degree of usefulness far beyond Thomas's lifetime.

The first critical edition of the *Bonum universale de apibus* was printed in 1597 by George Colvenerius (1564–1649), who was responsible for publishing other medieval authors, including Johannes Nider.[52] This edition remains, as Burkhardt points out, the authoritative critical edition to this day of the Latin text, providing a foreword and biography of Thomas, as well as registers with the authors and events referenced in the *exempla*. Colvenerius also included excerpts from works of the early church fathers, and cross-references from other treatises on bees, along with detailed commentary. Colvenerius used three prints from earlier centuries, as well as three fifteenth-century manuscripts from Cambrai, Douai, and Mons.[53] Colvenerius used the Cambrai

[50] Ibid., pp. 150–151.
[51] Ibid., pp. 151–152.
[52] Ibid., p. 169.
[53] Ibid., p. 170.

manuscript to divide the work into two books and chapters, taking earlier medieval versions into account. Much like the manuscript transmission of Christina, the transmission of the *Bonum universale de apibus* reflects the versatility and adaptability of the work, which could be paired, in full or in excerpt form, within the context of other spiritually edifying texts for a wide audience.

Jacques de Vitry: A New Influence

It is now that attention must be turned to Thomas's contemporaries, starting with the man who had the most profound influence on his career. Longère argues that Jacques was likely born in Vitry-en-Perthois, close to Reims, noting that many of Jacques's sermons in the *Sermones feriales et communes* take places in Reims and Champagne and that he maintained a close relationship with the future bishop of Liège, Hugh de Pierrepont, whose family had possession of the close-by Vanault-le-Chatel.[54] Like Thomas's, his family was likely distinguished in rank since he was able to afford a good education, and he would eventually pursue theological studies at the University of Paris.[55] Sometime between the years 1208 and 1210, he heard about the devotions of Marie of Oignies, abandoning his studies to go and meet her in her hometown of Saint-Nicolas-d'Oignies.[56] Marie would be profoundly influential in Jacques's life and one of his most lasting spiritual friendships, with Jacques present at Marie's deathbed and later authoring her *vita*.[57]

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[54] Jacques de Vitry, *Sermones vulgares vel ad status I*, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, ccxxv, Jean Longère (ed.), (Turnhout, 2013), i, p. vii.
[55] Ibid., pp. vii–viii.
[56] Ibid., p. viii.
[57] Ibid., p. viii.; VMOEng, 2.8.79, pp. 104–105 and VMO, 2.8.79, pp. 565–565; see also Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 38; for an in depth discussion of Jacques's career, see McDonnell, 'The Education of Jacques de Vitry in Belgium,' pp. 20–39; for discussions of Jacques's influence on Thomas, see Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 24–28; for further comparisons of their respective careers, see Spencer-Hall, 'The Xtian Factor, or How to Manufacture a Medieval Saint,' in Spencer–Hall, *Medieval Saints and Modern Screens*, 147–192, pp. 158–165.

During his time in Liège, Jacques would encounter other *mulieres religiosae*, including Christina and Lutgard, and be profoundly impacted by their unique piety. According to Thomas, Jacques returned to Paris to complete his studies at the behest of Marie, and was ultimately ordained as a priest.[58] Jacques's time in Liège would colour the rest of his ministry and the "simplicity" of Marie's devotion would shape his own views on piety: in the introduction to her *vita*, addressed to the newly-exiled Fulk of Toulouse, Jacques made a point to contrast the feminine piety of Liège with the masculine callousness of the heresy that drove Fulk from his diocese:

> ... I repeat, that when you came to our country, it seemed to you that you were in the promised land, for I heard you say how you left Egypt in your own regions… how you found the promised land in the diocese of Liège… Indeed, as you yourself said to me, you were filled with wonder by certain women who wept more for a single venial sin than did the men of your land over a thousand mortal sins.[59]

After rumbles of war had been brewing against "heretics" for years, Pope Innocent offered a plenary indulgence in 1208 for those who would be willing to take up arms against the Albigensian heretics. Innocent not only called for the king and other nobles to violently escalate the measures taken against heretics, but offered incentives for "every faithful Christian" to do so:

> … we want those who shall have faithfully laboured against heretics to rejoice in the same indulgence as we grant for those crossing the sea for the aid of the Holy Land, provided that those who have made vows to aid the Holy Land shall follow through their vow faithfully and that the

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[58] Longère, Introduction, *Sermones vulgares*, p. viii; Longère does not entirely discredit the account given of Jacques's career by Vincent de Beauvais, in his *Speculum historiale*, who wrote that Jacques had been in charge of the parish of Argenteuil before he went to meet Marie; see also Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 45, Mulder-Bakker, *Mary, Mother of Salvation,* p. 38; McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards*, pp. 22–25, for more of Marie's influence on Jacques's career.

[59] VMOEng, prol.2–3, pp. 41–42 and VMO, prol.2–3, pp. 547–548: "… quod reliqueras Aegyptum in partibus tuis, et… terram promissionis in partibus Leodii invenisti… imo (sicut mihi dixisti) quasdam mulieres magis pro uno veniali lugentes, quam homines in partibus tuis pro mille mortalibus, mirareris…" See also Roukis-Stern, 'A Tale Of Two Dioceses,' p. 37.

> devotion of those who are willing and able to set out for the succour of that land (the Holy Land) should not be impeded for this reason…[60]

In the upheaval of the Albigensian Crusade, Jacques earned a remarkable reputation as a fiery, passionate preacher, and it was during this period of his career that Thomas first encountered him.[61] Jacques later led an army of crusaders to the Siege of Toulouse, but did not stay for the entirety of the siege; it was here where he wrote his *vita* of Marie at the request of Fulk of Toulouse.[62] Jacques's reputation eventually spread, with the fame of his preaching reaching far enough east that in 1214, he was elected Bishop of Acre.[63] When he was eventually relieved of his bishopric, he returned to Liège and continued to preach against heresy, returning to Oignies to visit the church and shrine built in honour of Marie and to leave her relics there.[64] Marie was not the only holy woman of Liège who left her mark on Jacques's career: Jacques was also significantly influenced by Lutgard of Aywières, enjoying an intimate correspondence with her where he would ask for her spiritual support in the later part of his career.[65] This intimacy can be seen in a letter addressed to her and the convent at Aywières, among other friends, shortly after his arrival in the Holy Land:

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[60] Innocent III, 'Etsi nostri navicula' as cited and translated by Rebecca Rist, 'Salvation and the Albigensian Crusade: Pope Innocent III and the plenary indulgence' in *Reading Medieval Studies*, xxxvi (2010), 95–112, p. 105: "… cum illes, qui contra haereticos fideliter laborarint, eadem indulgentia gaudere velimus quam in terre sancte subsidium transfretanttibus indulgemus, ita dumtaxat ut hii, qui se ad terre sancta subsidium devoverunt. votun suum fideliter prosequantur nec per hoc impediatur devotio in ejusdem terre succursum volentium et valentium proficisi, cum circa utriusque necessitatis articulum ea sit discretio adhibenda ut sic utiliter provideatur utrique quod neutri per alteram gravitcr derogetur." Rist quotes the Latin text of the document, as found in Hagender, et al, *Die Register Innocenz' III*, *vii*, p. 319.

[61] McDonnell, *Beguines and Beghards,* p. 23; see also Smith, *Excessive Saints,* p. 46.

[62] Longère, Introduction, *Sermones vulgares*, p. x.

[63]T.F. Crane, *The exempla or illustrative stories from the Sermones vulgares of Jacques de Vitry,* (London, 1890), p. xxvii.

[64] Ibid., p. xxxiii.

[65] Jacques de Vitry, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry (1160/1170–1240) éveque de Saint-Jean-d'Acre. Édition critique*, R. B. C. Huygens (ed.), (Leiden, 1960), pp. 79–97; Iris Rau (trans.), University of Leeds, https://ims.leeds.ac.uk/wp–content/uploads/sites/29/2019/10/James–of–Vitry.pdf.

> Minds which have been united by the Holy Spirit cannot be severed by a difference of places, but [rather] they are impressed upon the minds of friends by the seal of love. They do not easily slip away from memory because of the distance [passing?] of time…. But if God arranges [things] in another manner, I often beg Him that I shall see you after death in the splendour of the saints and in the council and congregation of the righteous. I desire that, as long as you live, you should have a fresh memory of my humble self, just as I always have the memory of you.[66]

That Lutgard was singled out in this address alongside the "Parisian masters" indicates Jacques's profound regard for her. Jacques's spiritual connection with Lutgard was so intimate that Thomas portrayed an episode in Lutgard's *vita* in which Lutgard "sensed in her spirit " that Jacques was being tempted by an "all too human love" for a religious sister shortly before he became bishop of Acre; while Jacques initially resisted Lutgard's intercession, he later thanked her as the "handmaid" of his Divine Liberator.[67] In any case, Jacques valued Lutgard's intercession so greatly that he finished his letter to her and his friends at home with this request: "[Moreover] all of you pray to the Lord, who hates nothing of what He has made and wills that all men come to the recognition of the truth, so that He may deign to illuminate the Eastern darkness in these days."[68] Indeed, during his cardinalate, he left property that he had acquired in Aywières to the abbey there out of his esteem for Lutgard.[69]

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[66] Huygens, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry,* II, lines 7–20, pp. 79–80: "Mentes quas spiritus sanctus coniunxit, locorum diversitas non disiungit: que autem caritatis sigillo mentibus amicorum imprimuntur, non facile temporis intervallo a memoria labuntur… quod si deus aliter disposuerit, ipsum frequenter deprecor ut videam vos post mortem in splendoribus sanctorum, in consilio tustorum et congregatione. Cupio autem quatinus, quamdiu vixeritis, recentem parvitatis mee memoriam habeatis, sicut vestri semper memoriam habeo…" Translation by Iris Rau, University of Leeds, https://ims.leeds.ac.uk/wp–content/uploads/sites/29/2019/10/James–of–Vitry.pdf.

[67] VLAEng, 2.3, p. 241, VLA, 2.1.3, pp. 196–197: "… sed nimis humano diligeret. Pia ergo Lutgardis… in spiritu sentiens. … Liberatori suo et ejus famulae benedexit."

[68] Huygens, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry,* II, line 446–448, pp. 97: "Vos autem orate dominum, qui nichil odit eorum que fecit et omnes homines vult ad agnitionem veritatis venire, ut ipse in diebus istis orientales tenebras illuminare dignetur." (Translation mine).

[69] Longère, *Sermones vulgares*, pp. xiii–xiv: it is worth noting that Jacques still retained the "usufruct," the right to use or profit from another person's property, short of destroying or wasting the property; for more on his relationship with Aywières, see Ursmer Berlière, 'Jacques de Vitry.

Jacques was made Cardinal of Tusculum at the end of 1228 by Pope Gregory IX and, much to Gregory's dismay, who did not want Jacques to leave his side, was elected the Patriarch of Jerusalem.[70] It was during this time, between 1229 and 1240 that he likely wrote the *Sermones feriales et communes*. McDonnell notes that, despite Jacques de Vitry's many travels, the manuscripts of the *Sermones feriales et communes*, "occur only in Belgium" and are clearly influenced by his time there, unlike his earlier *Sermones vulgares*.[71] To better focus on purgatorial *exempla* , this chapter will focus on the *Sermones vulgares,* which contain some of the more salient *exempla* concerning death and care of the personal dead, as well as some of Jacques's discussions of purgatory found in other works. The *Sermones vulgares* were likely written for both laity and clergy, its wide audience making it far more likely to have been encountered by Thomas as a fellow preacher and long-time admirer.[72] As both men were significantly influenced by holy women such as Marie, Christina, and Lutgard, it is useful to compare their respective treatments of purgatorial piety and the role of women within it; this is also relevant to understanding their use of both in promoting orthodoxy through the care of the dead. While there is some difficulty in contextualising the *exempla* within their sermons given the lack of a full critical edition of Jacques's sermons, it is still possible to extract some of Jacques's thoughts on purgatorial care from the *exempla* themselves. Further to this, there are two sermons on the dead with the translation and Latin text provided by Longère in which Jacques expanded on his views concerning care for those in purgatory towards the end of his life, recommending how such care should be carried out and, expressing anxiety about the nature of dying and the agony of the soul being separated from the

Ses relations avec l'abbaye d'Aywières et de Doorezeele' in *Revue bénédictine,* xxv, (1908), 185–193, pp. 192–193.

[70] Longère, *Sermones vulgares*, pp. xiii–xiv.

[71] McDonnell, *Beguines and Beghards,* p. 21.

[72] Crane, *The exempla,* pp. xl–xli, this is evidenced by prefaces to some of the sermons, discussing specifically whom they are meant to be addressing.

body.[73] While none of the *exempla* I have utilised are found within these two sermons, they do provide some needed context for Jacques's thoughts on post-mortem care, as well as means of providing community and spiritual support for surviving loved ones.

Jacques de Vitry likely died in Rome in the year 1240; while the date of his death is contested, what is certain that Jacques chose to be interred at the church of St. Nicholas in Oignies, alongside his beloved Marie, finally resting at his spiritual home where, to use his own words in Marie's *vita*, "... there is life without death, day without night, truth without falsehood, joy without sadness, security without fear, rest without labour, eternity without end, where one is not troubled with cares… where we both know and are known."[74]

Transmission and Readership of the Sermones vulgares

Jacques de Vitry structured his *Sermones vulgares* according to his intended audience, rather than organising his sermons as part of a broader encyclopedic collection like some of his preaching contemporaries, including Humbert de Romans.[75] The work functions similarly to the *Bonum universale de apibus* as a compilation of preaching material, often

[73] Jacques de Vitry, in Jean Longère (trans.), 'Deux sermons de mortuis du recueil inédit *De sanctis*' *Moines et moniales face à la mort : Histoire médiévale et archéologie*, vi, (1993), 183–222; see also P.J. Cole, 'Purgatory and Crusade in St Gregory's Trental,' in *The International History Review*, xvii, no.4 (1995), 713–725, which briefly discusses Jacques de Vitry's view on taking up the Crusade as a form of penance on behalf of those in purgatory.

[74] VMOEng, 2.12.109, p. 127 and VMO, 2.12.109, p. 572: "… ubi vita sine morte, dies sine nocte, veritas sinu fallacia, gaudium sine tristitia, securitas sine timore, quies sine labore, aeternitas sine fine: ubi curis non anxiatur animus… ubi et cognoscemus, sicut et cogniti sumus…" For more on Jacques's death date, see Longère, *Sermones vulgares*, p. xiv, where he cites Jean Fichefet, *Histoire du prieuré de l'église Saint-Nicolas (Chanoines réguliers de Saint-Augustin) et du Béguinage d'Oignies*, Maitre-Imprimeur José Henin (ed.), (Farciennes, 1977), pp. 136–137; the date aligns with Crane, *The exempla or illustrative sermons*, p.xxxiv, and his observation of the letter of Gregory IX, Jacques is described as being of *bonae memoriae*; for more recent scholarship on Jacques de Vitry's death, see also Robert Bartlett, 'Jacques de Vitry (d. 1240) and the Religious Life of his Time' in *History*, cviii, nos. 379–380 (2023), 3–19.

[75] Monica Sandor, 'The Popular Preaching of Jacques de Vitry' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1993), p. 259.

addressing the would-be preacher himself, and Sandor notes that it could fairly be considered the first collection of *ad status* sermons specifically directed mostly lay audiences.[76] Jacques asked for his work be divided into six parts, while he did not specify the successive audiences targeted, the general prologue indicates the following major divisions of the sermons: prelates, priests, monks, nuns, crusaders, knights, merchants, and married or unmarried women.[77] There are at least ten copies of the full *Sermones vulgares* and eight manuscripts with excerpts taken, usually combined with other preaching material. Several of the complete copies were created in the thirteenth century. With its various intended audiences in mind and its creation during a period with a revitalised interest in preaching, the collection is among the most widely spread of Jacques de Vitry's works.[78]

The *Sermones vulgares* often appears alone in extant manuscripts, with a few exceptions: the manuscript Douai BM 503 also contains the *De sanctis* and *Ad status* sermons and another manuscript housed at Liège offers sermons from another collection called *Sensatus* by Dominican author Guy d'Evreux (fl. c. 1290–1293.)[79] Similarly, Paris, BNF lat. 3284 pairs the *Sermones vulgares* with Jacques's *Historia transmarina* (f. 201–245V.) This is indicative of a desire to pair Jacques's works with relevant material for preaching, providing a means of easy referencing for the reader or preacher. Still other manuscripts only contain a long excerpt of the existing 74 sermons, While Jacques's works were known all over Europe, it appears that, like Thomas, he was best known within regions where he was most active during his lifetime, most notably in Liège and Namur.[80]

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[76] Sandor, 'Popular Preaching,' pp. 260–261.
[77] Longère, *Sermones vulgares,* i, p. xlvi.
[78] Longère, *Sermones vulgares*, i, p. xlvi.
[79] Longère, *Sermones vulgares*, i, pp. xlvii–xlviii.
[80] Ibid., p. lxxiii.

Longère identifies four "family" groups of the *Sermones vulgares*, with a main text presenting a complete version of the *Sermones vulgares* and modes of structuring or organisation that then influences other copies in the same "family."[81] These are useful for understanding what the work was often paired with, and how the organization of some of the manuscripts can provide information about how the work was typically used. If the lack of ornate decoration on copies of the *Bonum universale de apibus* can provide some insight to its use as a scholarly text, then the organization of the *Sermones vulgares*, particularly the subheadings and *exempla* tables, indicate its use as a preaching aid. The first "family" that Longère discusses is family "A" based off manuscript, Trento, Biblioteca comunale 1670 (F 55.)[82] The parchment dates from the middle of the thirteenth century and contains the prologue to the *Sermones vulgares* and all 74 sermons, including what appears to be an extra sermon directed towards children and adolescents before the final sermon of the *Sermones vulgares*.[83] The collection ends with the seventy-fourth sermon, concluding with exhortation to confession and a small *explicit*: "Sacred scripture is food and drink. Concerning many teachings and *exempla*, concerning many ways of preaching."[84] Within the manuscript, there is an indication of the recipients of each sermon located in a column before the scriptural *incipit*, and there are rubrics present that divide each sermon into parts.[85]

The second identifiable "family" is family "B," based on the manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 17509. The manuscript dates from the mid thirteenth century to the early fourteenth century, and was donated to the library of Notre

[81] Ibid. For the sake of clarity, I am choosing to utilise Longère's phrasing here.
[82] Ibid., pp. xlviii–xlix.
[83] Ibid., p. xlix.
[84] Ibid.: "Sacra scriptura est cibus et potus/De multiplici doctrina et exemplis/De multiplici modo predicandi." (149vb).
[85] Ibid., p. xlix; the other manuscript listed as being in the same family is R: Roma, Santa Sabina, Arch. OP XIV–36.

Dame of Paris by Claude Joly (1607–1700) who was a canon of Paris in 1631 and a cantor in 1671.[86] Joly stipulated when he donated the manuscript in 1680 that the public was allowed to consult it. Unlike family "A," the *Sermones vulgares* texts in family "B" are preceded by indication of intended recipients and there are specific references to chapters of the Biblical books from which the sermon's lessons are based around, although this referencing is rare within the sermons themselves.[87] After ending on the seventy-fourth sermon's call to confession, the text ends with a brief *explicit*. The manuscript, Douai, Bibliothèque municipale 503 belongs in the same family, but also pairs the *Sermones vulgares* with the *De sanctis* sermons and another unattributed text.[88] The last two families, "C" and "D" respectively, have more manuscripts than either "A" or "B", with three manuscripts each. The type text (the manuscript on which other copies within a "family" of manuscripts are based) of "C" is Cambridge, (MA) Harvard Riant 35, purchased in 1426 by the prior of the Benedictine Abbey of Saint-Jacques de Liège, and copied in the thirteenth century in Flanders by several hands.[89] It contains the prologue and all 74 sermons, and is organised along similar lines to the manuscripts found in the "A" and "B" families.[90] Another manuscript in this family dates back to the fifteenth century, and belonged to the Franciscan Recollects of the Brugge Convent; within this manuscript, unlike the type manuscript from Saint-Jacques de Liège, the Biblical or patristic sources are underlined and the references to Biblical chapters are cited in-text rather than in the margin. It also includes eight sermons to priests and prelate, three to

[86] Ibid., p. lii: This is further confirmed by a note left by Joly himself in the manuscript on the inside cover.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., pp. liii–liv.
[89] Ibid., p. liv, see note concerning the prior's purchase on. f 123ra: "liber mo(na)steri s(an)c(t)i Iacobi in i(n)sula leodien(si) que(m) acquisiuit p(ri)or de com(mun)ni bursa ecc(les)ie in an(n)o d(omi)ni MC XVI P(ro) tribus griffonib(us)."
[90] Ibid., pp. liv–lv.

canons and secular clerics, and two to adolescents and boys.[91] The final manuscript in the family, Liège, Bibliothèque universitaire 344 (416) was also created in the fifteenth century, is slightly more ornamented, and belonged to the Crosiers Convent of Huy. Its organisation style is closer to that of the Paris manuscript, with the Biblical sources underlined in body of sermon, and references to chapters are in the margin. This manuscript pairs the *Sermones vulgares* with Guy d'Evreux's *Sensatus*.[92] Thus far, we have seen that the sermons, particularly those confirmed as belonging to a Mendicant Order, focus on making the manuscript a handy preaching tool, structured to make topics and their intended audiences easier to find within the manuscripts. The final family is family "D" based on the manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 3284, which dates back to the sixteenth century, copied n in 1537. It contains not only the *Sermones vulgares* but Jacques de Vitry's *Historia transmarina*.[93] It is not clear which, if any, religious house it belongs to, but it bears the arms and figure of Jean-Baptiste Colbert.[94]

The manuscript, Brussels, KBR (previously BR) 3772 also hails from the sixteenth century, written in 1516, and comes out of Notre Dame in Korsendonck, copied by the Canons Regulars of the congregation of Windesheim, near Turnhout, who were known for their manuscript production, and who also copied manuscipts of Jacques's *Ad tempore* sermons.[95] It is likely that the Paris manuscript shared a common ancestor with this one, particularly given the similarity of their organisation; however, the Korsendonck canons switch up the order of the texts, placing the sermons directed to the canons

[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., pp. lvi–lvii.
[93] Ibid., p. lix.
[94] Ibid., p. lviii.
[95] Ibid., p. lxxii.

regulars at the beginning of the collection, immediately after the prologue.[96] As we have seen already with some of the adaptations of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, the *Sermones vulgares* could be arranged or rearranged based around the needs or interests of the copier or the religious house or profession they belonged to. This is also indicated within the diverse excerpt tradition of the *Sermones vulgares*, with a wide readership both within the regions where Jacques was most active, and also slightly further afield. For the sake of brevity, I will focus on some of the most notable excerpt manuscripts. The texts are often paired with other works, whether from Jacques's contemporaries such as the Franciscan author Gilbert of Tournai or a treatise on human nature written by Innocent III (paired with a sermon from Jacques on cardinals and prelates.)[97] Other excerpts are more notable for their owners, such as the manuscript owned by John XXII, pope in Avignon from 1316 until his death in 1334.

While the Canon Regulars were not the exclusive owners of these manuscripts, it is worth pointing out that their tables and tools for organizing the material seem to be the most comprehensive, something which is the case for Brussels, Bibliothèque royal 1817–40 (Van den Gheyn, n. 1691), a fifteenth-century manuscript owned by the canons of St. Martin de Louvain. The four sermons taken from the *Sermones vulgares* are 41 through 44, and focus on lepers, the infirm, the suffering, and the poor, a possible indication of the pastoral interests of the convent.[98] A sizable number of manuscripts are produced by the canons regular in Rouge-Cloître, St. Martin de Louvain, or Korsendonck, but the interest clearly spread outside of Jacques's own order.[99] That so many of the extant

[96] Ibid.; see also, Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers*, pp. 286–288, and Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women*, pp. 111–112.
[97] Ibid., pp. lxviii and lxix; for a discussion of Jacques de Vitry's influence on Gilbert of Tournai's works, particularly within some of his sermons on marriage, see D. L. D'Avray and M. Tausche, 'Marriage Sermons in the 'Ad Status' Collection of the Middle Ages' in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, xlvii, (1980), 71–119, pp. 85–108, 117–119.
[98] Longère, *Sermones vulgares* p. lxviii.
[99] Ibid., pp. lxxii–lxxiii.

manuscripts belong to the canons regular is not surprising, given Jacques's own connections with them, and high emphasis that the canons regular placed on preaching and pastoral work. Certainly, for the canons of Jacques de Vitry's day, the edification and education of others was often treated as a form of spiritual practice.[100] Cistercians and Carmelites also owned copies, either excerpted or in full, though more likely for personal edification— something Jacques likely would have approved of given his feeling that those in the contemplative life should be seen and not heard in regards to preaching.[101] In any case, Jacques's works were popular, whether for private or public edification: the Crosiers at Huy copied not only full version of the *Sermones* vulgares, but also the *De sanctis* and the *Sermones vel ad status,* and the Benedictines of St. Jacques of Liège copied full and excerpted versions of the *Sermones vulgares*.[102] Curiously, I have found no indication that the work has ever been copied in the vernacular, not even in excerpted collections, nor any indication of female scribes for the work, which possibly suggests that it did not enjoy the same popularity of Thomas's *Bonum universale de apibus* or Caesarius's *Dialogus miraculorum*.[103]

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[100] Jessalynn Bird, 'The Religious's Role in a Post-Fourth-Lateran World: Jacques de Vitry's Sermones Ad Status and Historia Occidentalis' in *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History*, xc, (1998), 209–230, pp. 218–219; C. W. Bynum, *Docere Verbo Et Exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, (Boston, 1979), pp. 2–4, pp. 18–21; Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 22–36, 36–40.

[101] Bird, 'The Religious's Role,' pp. 215–218 on Jacques's conflicted views on Cistercian preaching; for a discussion of canon and monastic spirituality, C. W. Bynum, *Docere verbo et exemplo : an aspect of twelfth-century spirituality*, (Boston, 1979), pp. 117–119, 181–191, 194–196; see Bynum, *Jesus as* Mother, pp. 59–81, for discussion of the Canon Regulars' views on teaching as opposed to their cloistered peers, such as the Cistercians. While Canons viewed preaching and edifying others as a crucial part of their own spirituality, Cistercians placed a far heavier influence on independent spiritual growth— this is not to say that Cistercians never preached or had any interest in preaching or pastoral care, but rather that there was some degree of tension between that and their pursuit of contemplation; see also M.G. Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity: Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform, 1098–1180*, (Stanford, 1995).

[102] Longère, Introduction, *Sermones vulgares*, pp. lxxii–lxxiii.

[103] Michel Lauwers, 'L'experience beguinale et recit hagiographique: A propos de la *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis* de Jacques de Vitry (vers 1215)' in *Journal des savants*, ii (1989), 61–103, pp. 82–83.

Caesarius of Heisterbach

While Caesarius of Heisterbach was writing in very much the same period of political and spiritual upheaval, he wrote from a different position of than that of Jacques, a Crusading cardinal, or Thomas, a mendicant brother. As a Cistercian, Caesarius was writing in what could arguably be described as a golden age for Cistercian recruitment and culture, particularly after the influence of Bernard of Clairvaux. (d. 1153)[104] The influence of the Cistercian Order on Thomas's works is undeniable, particularly in his understanding of spiritual development, pastoral care, and the care and keeping of the dead. To better understand the influences that would shape the *Dialogus miraculorum*, a brief overview of Caesarius's life is necessary.[105]

Caesarius was born into an affluent family in Cologne: in the first book of the *Dialogus miraculorum,* Caesarius included a story about his aunt, who was wealthy enough to be able to afford to purchase an enslaved girl and have her baptised, writing that he was also cured from a minor ailment by the same girl's still-wet baptismal cloth.[106] It was likely his family's wealth and standing that enabled Caesarius's education at the monastery of St. Andras.[107] This would prove to be a spiritually and intellectually stimulating environment for Caesarius. As a young boy, Caesarius heard the "crusade" sermon in 1188 of Heinrich von Albano. He described the encounter in a dialogue between the novice and his self-insert character in his *Dialogus miraculorum,* saying:

> When I was still a boy, I heard this venerable bishop and monk preaching the cross in the church of S. Peter at Cologne, and I saw him there giving the cross to many; he was a just and holy man, one who *shook his hand*

[104] Caesarius of Heisterbach, Horst Schneider, Introduction, in –*Dialog über die Wunder*, i, Horst Schneider and Nikolaus Nösges (eds.), (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 14–15.
[105] Fitzgibbon, 'To Be Associated,' p. 124.
[106] DMEng, ii, 2.10.44, pp. 208–209 and DM, ii, 2.10.44, pp. 248–249.
[107] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, pp 45–46.

> *from the holding of bribes* (Isa. xxxiii. 15), and who edified many both in word and example.[108]

Caesarius admired Heinrich from a young age, as Thomas did Jacques de Vitry and John of Cantimpré, and enthusiastically absorbed his passion for reclaiming souls for God and the Church. Caesarius also shared with his contemporaries a desire to combat heresy throughout his own career in the Church.[109] Caesarius's role in combating heresy is perhaps best known from his account of Albigensian heretics in Book Five of his *exempla* collection. This particular example is notable for a few reasons: firstly, it is the story that Caesarius is possibly most famous for, and includes a rather infamous order to Arnold, abbot of Citeaux, at the siege of Beziers. In response to a question about how soldiers were to tell heretics and Christians apart, Caesarius quoted Arnold as replying, "Kill them all; for the Lord knoweth them that are His!"[110]

Caesarius was deeply horrified by the heretical lack of belief in intercession for the dead and the ultimate resurrection of the body, even going so far as to accuse the "Manicheans" of believing in a kind of reincarnation, whether it entails the worthy soul going onto to inhabit a more powerful and affluent spot in its next life, or, conversely, for the unworthy soul, "even those of animals and reptiles."[111] Much of his views on heresy stemmed from his experiences as a student in Cologne. For example, Caesarius witnessed the burning of heretics, recalling the fate of a beautiful young woman who sympathised with the heretics, and whom the crowd attempted to spare. Instead, the woman replied:

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[108] DMEng, i, 1.4.79, pp. 281–282, DM, i, 1.4.79, pp. 246–248: "Ego eundem venerabilem Episcopum et monachum in ecclesia sancti Petri Coloniae adhuc puer audivi crucem praedicantem, et plurimos ibidem vidi signantem, eratque vir iustus et sanctus, manus suas ab omni munere excutiens [Isa. xxxiii. 15] et tam verbo quam exemplo multos aedificans."
[109] Schneider, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 45.
[110] DMEng, i, 1.5.21, pp. 343–347, DM, i, 1.5.21, pp. 300–303: "Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius."
[111] DMEng, i, 1.5.21, pp. 343–347, DM, i, 1.5.21, pp. 300–303: "… etiam animalium atque serpentum."

> 'Tell me, where does that seducer lie?', and when they pointed out to her where Master Arnold [the ringleader of these heretics] lay, she slipped from their hands, veiled her face with her robe, and threw herself upon the body of the dead man, and with him went down to burn forever in hell.[112]

This story of the heretic Arnold and the woman who followed him in death is the second example in Caesarius's section on heresy in the *Dialogus miraculorum* and clearly sets a tone for how to deal with heretics as people who, in many ways, have already accepted a death that would permanently render them from their communities, both spiritual and earthly.

Once Caesarius had completed his elementary education at St. Andras, he studied at the Cologne Cathedral School and ultimately entered Heisterbach in 1199 when he was about 19 or 20 years old. Caesarius described his conversion story within the *Dialogus miraculorum* itself, emphasising the role of one Gevrard, abbot of Heisterbach, who:

> ... related that at a certain harvest time when the monks were reaping in the valley, the Virgin Mary, the holy mother of God, and her mother, S. Anne, and S. Mary Magdalene, in full view of a holy man who was standing on the opposite hill, came down the mountain side into the valley in a great flood of light, and wiped the sweat from the brows of the monks and fanned them with the flap of their sleeves...[113]

Caesarius was "much moved" by this story of divine favour to the Cistercians at Heisterbach, and after completing his pilgrimage to St. Mary of Rocamadour, returned to the abbey, where he completed his conversion to the order.[114] He rose quickly through

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[112] DMEng, i, 1.5.19, pp. 341–342, DM, i, 1.5.19, pp. 298–299: "'Dicite mihi, ubi iacet seductor ille?' Cumque ei demonstrassent magistrum Arnoldum, ex manibus illorum elapsa, facie veste tecta, super exstincti corpus ruit, et cum illo in infernum perpetuo arsura descendit."

[113] DMEng, i, 1.1.17, pp. 25–26, DM, i, 1.1.17, pp. 24–25: "… quod quodam tempore messis, cum conventus in valle meteret, beata Dei genitrix virgo Maria et sancta Anna mater eius ac sancta Maria Magdalena de monte venientes, quodam viro sancto, qui stabat ex adverso, aspiciente, in vallem eandem in magna claritate descenderunt, monachorum sudores terserunt, flabello manicarum suarum ventum admoverunt..."

[114] DMEng, i, 1.1.17, pp. 25–26, DM, i, 1.1.17, pp. 24–25: "Sermone huius visionis in tantum motis fui…" See also, McGuire, *Friendship and Faith*, pp. 230–231.

the ranks, and was possibly made the novice master by Abbot Heinrich in either 1221 or 1222.[115] It is unclear exactly how long Caesarius served in that capacity, particularly given his relative freedom of movement and the mention of a different novice master later in the *Dialogus miraculorum*. The only indication from Caesarius comes from the *Dialogus miraculorum* itself, where he described his "responsible post" as the novice master.[116] However, the education of young novices informed the entirety of the shape of his collection, so Caesarius likely had some experience with and continued interest in education.

It is not clear whether or not Caesarius ever became prior, but he was very likely a teacher of theology, and almost certainly he would have been taught and taught students himself with *exempla*, given that these were part of teaching novices even in his probationary days in Heisterbach.[117] However, it is known that he travelled often and widely with Abbot Heinrich, and that he went with him to the consecration of Archbishop Heinrich von Mullenark to Cologne in 1233.[118] His talent as a writer was such that he was commissioned by von Mullenark on the day of his consecration to write a *vita* about his predecessor Engelbert I, and was also commissioned to write about Elisabeth of Thuringia.[119] It was during the course of his teaching and travels, with experiences ranging from Crusade preaching to the "excesses" of relic worship, that his magnum opus, the *Dialogus miraculorum*, was written, likely between 1219 to 1223.[120] Like Jacques de Vitry, Caesarius's exact date of death is largely unknown, but he likely died between 1237 and 1240.

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[115] Schneider, *Dialog über die Wunder*, p. 47.
[116] See DMEng, i, Prologue, p.1 and DM, i, Prologue, p. 1: "Cum ex debito iniunctae sollicitudinis…"
[117] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, pp. 47–48.
[118] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, pp. 49–50.
[119] Ibid., p. 50.
[120] Ibid., pp 59–60: Schneider notes that the "thematic conception" and "material organization" likely came later, after the initial writing of the materials.

Like Thomas, Caesarius preferred to utilise stories from friends and colleagues about contemporary events, as well written reports about vivid "examples" to educate rather than relying on theological arguments alone.[121] Like the stories in Thomas's *Bonum universale de apibus* or the *Sermones vulgares* of Jacques de Vitry, Caesarius's *exempla* served as more than just a pedagogical or rhetorical purpose: rather, they provided insight into the personal lives and feelings of Heisterbach, and the relationships Caesarius experienced there. He was also likely one of the first authors to incorporate *exempla* into his sermons, and, with the prevalence of his work during the cultural and artistic heyday of the Cistercian order, these *exempla* helped to reinforce the legitimacy and importance of the order to their brothers and sisters.[122] the structure of the *Dialogus miraculorum* reflected Caesarius's role as an educator, with the collection itself structured around a dialogue between master and novice; the novice monk served as a stand-in for the reader, pre-empting questions that the reader might have about the topics and themes explored in the stories. The *Dialogus miraculorum* proved an enduring collection of stories, making Caesarius a popular author in his lifetime. In fact, Caesarius would give out writings to his friends for reading, and many were hastily copied without his knowledge and with errors: so much so that at times he expressed concern for his reputation.[123]

The lives and ministries of Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach shared similar interests and goals to those of Thomas of Cantimpré. As the Dominican order began to develop their own forms of *exempla*, they would draw heavily from the examples and writings of collections that developed before, or, indeed even alongside, them. These overlaps existed not only in the concerns that all these men shared regarding pastoral ministry, education, and the maintenance of orthodoxy and Church authority, but in more

[121] Ibid., pp 55–56.
[122] Ibid., p. 57.
[123] Ibid., p. 84.

personal areas: whether in the fascination with the holy women of Liège, as in the case of Jacques de Vitry, or in the curiosity concerning purgatory and the afterlife, shared vigorously by both Thomas and Caesarius.

Transmission and Readership of the Dialogus miraculorum

The *Dialogus miraculorum* enjoyed great popularity in its time, and Smirnova observes that the work can be found, in partial and full forms, in over 60 surviving manuscripts, as well in as excerpts included in other works.[124] Like the works of Jacques de Vitry and Thomas of Cantimpré, Caesarius's work was most popular in the regions where he was most active, with a majority of the manuscripts created or found in Northern France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Austria.[125] Caesarius appears to have made the largest impact on German sermon and *exempla* collections, such as the fifteenth-century *Viaticum narrationem* by Heinemann of Bonn, who drew half of his stories from the *Dialogus miraculorum* and the *Libri miraculorum*, the Marian sermons given by Johann von Kayserburg (1445–1510) and the Augustinians Gottschalk Hollen (d. 1481) or Abraham a Santa Clara (1644–1709) respectively.[126] German Franciscan Johannes Pauli (1455–1530) would adapt stories from the *Dialogus miraculorum* into a collection of examples and jokes called *Schimpf und Ernst*, with the intention of using them for educational purposes.[127] Distinctions six through twelve were translated into Early New High German in 1460 by Bavarian doctor Johann Hartlieb, who took the medieval stories and tried to translate them into the milieu of the Munich court and bourgeoisie of the fifteenth century.[128] This is notable as a translation outside of a monastic context, since

[124] Victoria Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla in Transition: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogus Miraculorum and Its Readers,* (Athens, 2023), p. 17.
[125] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 69.
[126] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 86.
[127]Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 87.
[128] Ibid., p. 87.

Hartlieb, employed in the court of the Duke of Brunswick, was writing for a public lay audience further demonstrates the versatility and longevity of the *Dialogus miraculorum*.[129] Schneider notes that the work was also popular in the Netherlands, citing two translated manuscripts from the fifteen century, one in Middle Dutch and the other in Southern Dutch.[130] The latter translation was linked to Flemish nunneries in the region: this is another aspect that it shares with Jacques's and Thomas's works, with women often reading or writing these collections in the vernacular.[131]

Smirnova has identified four "families" of the *Dialogus miraculorum* based on the fifteen extant manuscripts of Cistercian origin or provenance, either of the Clairvaux or Morimond lines.[132] The first version, version "A" is the full version of the text, while version "B" is slightly abridged, but contains several additions.[133] Version "B" omits a few chapters, particularly *exempla* from the third distinction concerning confession; the reason for this and the other omissions is unclear. In terms of the additions made, they are mostly smoothly incorporated and occur in the first six distinctions.[134] Smirnova notes that the changes likely originated in Alsace: one of the added stories concerns the belligerent abbot of Murbach, an Alsatian house, and another story is presented as coming from the abbot of Neubourg (a daughter house of Lucelle) who later became abbot of Morimond.[135] Other additions originate from areas where Caesarius was most active in

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[129] Elena Koroleva, 'The *Dialogus miraculorum* in the Light of Its Fifteenth-century German Translation by Johannes Hartlieb' in Jacques Berlioz, M. A. P. de Beaulieu, and Victoria Smirnova (eds.), *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion*, (Leiden, 2015), 227–241, pp. 227–230, 241.
[130] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 85.
[131] Ibid., p. 85.
[132] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 68–69.
[133] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 70; see Appendix 2 in *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 337–341 for brief summaries of these additions.
[134] Ibid., p. 91; for all manuscripts containing the *Dialogus*, see Appendix 1, in *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 275–278.
[135] Ibid, p. 94; Smirnova notes that the identity of the abbot is not conclusive.

Northwest Germany and were likely not penned by one person, but rather many Cistercian hands within the houses of the Morimond line who wanted to add their own flourish.[136]

Version "C", found in two manuscripts from Altzella and Rein, is even more concise, but retains a few of the additions found in "B." This version often cuts out identifying information about the people and places within the *exempla* themselves.[137] It is not clear why this is the case, although the compiler may have been concerned with brevity or keeping the examples more broadly relevant as opposed to focusing on any particular region, period of time, or people. The Altzella manuscript confines its additions to clusters within distinctions four and sevcn, but then adds 37 additional examples after the final distinction, taken from various collections, including Dominican texts like the *Bonum universale de apibus* and the *Vitae fratrum*, and popular Cistercian collections like the *Liber miraculorum* by Engelhard of Langheim (d. 1210.) [138] Smirnova notes the potential Mendicant influence, as the compiler for the Altzella manuscript clearly tried to organise these additions according to the structures of Mendicant collections, even going so far as to organise chapters by what person they were discussing or by principal theme.[139] Version "D", originating from Eberbach, only exists in a fragmentary form, and dates back as early as thirteenth century.[140] It contains several stories from the end of *distinctio* six (distinction six) and contains additions that attempt to imitate Caesarius's style, particularly in the dialogue between the novice and the monk.[141] Version "E" originates from Zwettl, a daughter house of Heiligenkreuz, in Lower Austria. It is heavily

[136] Ibid, pp. 97–100.
[137] Ibid, p. 107: one such example is from a story provided by Conrad, a former bishop of Halberstadt. In the original DM, it is much more detailed, naming the story's provider, the timeline in which it was said to happen, etc. In version "C", it begins immediately with, "In the kingdom of France, there was a certain priest."
[138] Ibid., p. 110.
[139] Ibid., p. 116.
[140] Ibid., p. 122.
[141] Ibid., p. 122.

abridged, but adds seven additional examples from the *Liber miraculorum Beatae Mariae Virginis* and the *Vision of St. Fursey*, both popular but not related to the Cistercians directly; while it is uncertain whether the manuscript was created by Cistercian hands, it came to be owned by Cistercians[142] The truncated versions of the text likely stemmed from a desire for digestible, generic *exempla* that could be more broadly applicable.[143] The attempts to reorganise the work after other Mendicant collections also hints at a Cistercian interest in their work.

Smirnova notes that Cistercian readership of the *Dialogus miraculorum* appears to have been mostly limited to Cistercian houses within the Clairvaux and Morimond lines.[144] Certainly among the extant Cistercian manuscripts, there is not nearly as much heavy annotation as those intended for preaching aids: however, a number of annotated manuscripts of the *Dialogus miraculorum* do exist and are useful for getting a sense of what Cistercian readers may have gravitated towards in the collection.[145] Smirnova notes that many of the highlighted stories concern the daily struggles of adopting the strictures of cloistered life:

> … for example, a fifteenth-century reader highlighted a metaphor of the monastic life as one long bearing of the cross with the marginal rubric "in [crucem?] assignificatio hec bona" ("this is a good explanation on the cross"), and an image of monastic conversion as a transition from one battle to another with the rubric "militia secularis in spiritualem sic conuertatur vide" ("see how the secular soldiery is converted to the spiritual one").[146]

[142] Ibid., pp. 125–126.
[143] Ibid., pp. 126–127.
[144] Ibid., p. 69.
[145] Ibid., pp. 129–130: here, Smirnova provides a list of annotated Cistercian texts: Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, II 1067 (2121), Düsseldorf, Universitäts und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf, Universitäts und Landesbibliothek MS. C 26, Heidelberg Cod. Sal. IX, 46, Innsbruck, Universitäts und Landesbibliothek Tirol, Cod. 185, and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 2687.
[146] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 130–131.

Similar to the annotations found in Christina's *vita* or those left in the other *exempla* collections discussed in this chapter, other readers left *notae* on *exempla* relating to the *vita regularis*, particularly concerning the quality (or lack thereof) of daily meals, the dangers of pride when on choir duty, or concerning the dangers of laziness and disobedience.[147] There are also notes left in appreciation of some of Caesarius's moral arguments such as the notes found in a manuscript of the *Dialogus miraculorum* in Heidelberg that were left next to discussions of contrition, the justification of sinners, and charity.[148] The use of the novice and the master made complex theological or scholastic lines of thought more accessible and conveyed the manner of spiritual love in which the brothers were meant to engage with one another.[149]

Smirnova also notes that these reiterations of the tenets of faith in between stories helped to solidify a unity of not just belief, but also how those beliefs were experienced by placing the *exempla*:

> under the authority of a person or an institution … to accentuate the shared experience of the group and evoke the union of the believers with each other and with God…. Thus, the dialogical framework… actualises important concepts of monastic theology and contributes very efficiently to the establishment of a collective Christian identity.[150]

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[147] Ibid., pp. 131–132.

[148] Ibid., p. 132; see also Victoria Smirnova, 'Narrative Theology in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum*" in Victoria Smirnova, M. A. P. de Beaulieu, and Jacques Berlioz (eds.) *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miaracles and its Reception*, (Leiden, 2015), 121–142, pp. 130–131, 139, for a discussion of the utilization of the novice/master framework in particular to make scholastic and theological concepts more accessible to the reader or listener.

[149] See Brian McGuire, 'The Monk Who Loved To Listen: Trying to Understand Caesarius,' in Victoria Smirnova, Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, and Jacques Berlioz (eds.) *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miaracles and its Reception*, (Leiden, 2015), 31–47, pp. 41–42; see also Victoria Smirnova, 'Caesarius of Heisterbach Following the Rules of Rhetoric (Or Not?)' in the same collection, 80–96, pp. 87–88.

[150] Sminorva, 'Narrative Theology,' pp. 130–131, this in relation to the tenth distinction of the *Dialogus miraculorum*, on the Eucharist and the presence of Christ in the transubstantiated host.

Annotations in copies of the *Dialogus miraculorum* also indicate a lively interest in the outside world, with *notae* found by stories of the consequences for usury and other sins, criticisms against bishops, and miracle stories around the Host.[151] There are occasional concerns surrounding pastoral care, although Caesarius seemed to be of two minds about how much Cistercian brothers should be involved in it. One of the annotations found in a manuscript from Salem is next to a bit of dialogue between the novice and the monk on public displays of devotion, to which the monk replies:

> The answer to this question depends on the intention. If he desires others to see his tears only for their edification, while he himself preserves true humility at heart, then it is well with him; but if not, it is ill.[152]

Despite the complicated feelings towards publicly edifying others, stories about the care for the dying and the dead were annotated spots of interest, particularly as to which acts of care were most effective for the departed.[153] In any case, for Cistercians, the *Dialogus miraculorum* remained an important manual for edification and entertainment.

Cloistered orders, such as the Benedictines and the Carthusians, also owned, copied, and engaged with the *Dialogus miraculorum*. There are thirteen extant manuscripts of the *Dialogus miraculorum* of Benedictine provenance, the Benedictines provided a number of stories within the *exempla* collection itself.[154] Like the other

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[151] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 133, n–20–26, citing the Düsseldorf, Salem, and Aldersbach manuscripts as examples.
[152] DMEng, i, 1.2.21, pp. 100–101, DM, i, 1.2.21, pp. 90–91: "Secundum intentionem orantis pendet solutio huius quaestionis. Si ei placet, ut alii lacrimas eius videant, quatenus per eas aedificentur, ipse tamen humilitatem in corde custodiat, meretur; sin autem, demeretur." Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p.132.
[153] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 134: in this instance, within the story annotated in the Stams manuscript, alms were preferable than prayers.
[154] Ibid., p. 205: the Benedictines provided the following stories within the *Dialogus miraculorum*: 1.2.31, 2.9.50, 2.10.11, 2.10.62, 2.12.53; see also Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 205–206 for a list of the manuscripts associated with the Order.

exempla collections discussed in this chapter, many of these manuscripts were written within the *Devotio Moderna,* which centered on a renewed dedication to the monastic lifestyle, spiritual education, and pastoral care. Smirnova notes that almost all of the Benedictine abbeys in possession of Cistercian exempla collections were part of a series of reformations within the Benedictine order, which was begun in Melk Abbey in 1418 after the appointment of Nicholas Seyringer as the new abbot, and which advocated for a stricter adherence to the Rule of St. Benedict.[155] Since many manuscripts are not dated, it is impossible to say whether they were copied or acquired before or after the official implementation of these reforms; however, the manuscripts containing the *Dialogus miraculorum* that do have dates are all from the post-reform period.[156] The manuscripts from this period have little to no annotation, but the few that exist show concerns over the *vita regularis* and calls for reform from within the order; one such manuscript was annotated by Johannes Schlitpacher of Weilheim (d. 1482), who was one of the most prominent voices of Benedictine reform at Melk Abbey.[157] The most heavily annotated manuscript comes out of Tegernsee, where Caesarius and the *Dialogus miraculorum* were held in high esteem, and the *notae* largely focus on the *vita regularis*: attracting newcomers, and, like their Cistercian counterparts, adapting to a sparse monastic diet.[158]

The Carthusians were even more secluded than their Cistercian and Benedictine counterparts; nonetheless, they were avid readers of *exempla* collections and sermons. It is far more likely they utilised these stories to entertain visiting guests with readings in the refectory, particularly donors and protectors who came to visit.[159] Smirnova cites the

[155] Ibid., pp. 208–209 for a brief discussion of Melk's role within these reforms.
[156] Ibid., p. 210.
[157] Ibid., p. 212.
[158] Ibid., pp. 212–213: Smirnova notes that in the library catalogue at St. Quirin in Tegernsee, the *Dialogus miraculorum* is referred to in glowing terms as *egregius* and *optima*, with Caesarius specifically credited as well.
[159] Ibid., p. 216.

examples of the Carthusian houses in Basel and Milan (Garegnano) which owned the *Alphabetum narrationum*, the house of Bourgfontaine (in the diocese of Soissons), which owned the *Bonum universale de apibus* and some of Jacques de Vitry's *exempla*.[160] The Carthusians never underwent much reform themselves compared to the other orders discussed here but were rather influencers within the *Devotio Moderna*, presenting a meditative tradition and austerity that was clearly deeply appealing to reformers such as Geert Groote.[161] However, this lack of reform or need to provide pastoral care may be the reason why, despite their clear love of reading and copying, particularly monastic "classics" like the *Vitae Patrum*, they did not overly concern themselves with *exempla* collections compared to the other religious orders that engaged with the *Dialogus miraculorum*.[162]

Another significant audience of the *Dialogus miraculorum* were the Canons Regular, who made quite a few appearances within the *Dialogus miraculorum*. The Canons Regular owned more copies across three orders of the *Dialogus miraculorum* than other works of Cistercian literature, with over twenty extant copies between the Augustinian Canons, Premonstratensians, and Crosiers (Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross.)[163] In the thirteenth century, there were two manuscripts of the *Dialogus miraculorum* from the Premonstratensian and Augustinian abbeys that had direct ties to Heisterbach: the Premonstratensian abbey of Rommersdorf, close to Heisterbach, and the Augustinian abbey of Sint-Maria en de Twaalf Apostelen in Utrecht, part of the reformist Congregation of Windesheim, which came to own three copies of the collection.[164] In the

[160] Ibid., p. 215.
[161] Ibid., p. 218; see also John Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers*, pp. 13, 125, 135, 142, as Groote spent some time with the Carthusians on retreat in the late 1370s.
[162] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 221.
[163] Ibid., p. 177; see pp. 176–179 for a full list of manuscripts of the *Dialogus miraculorum* owned by the Canons Regular.
[164] Ibid., pp. 181, and 176–177 for Premonstratensian stories in the *Dialogus miraculorum*: 1.3.49, 2.9.50, 2.12.47 in the *Dialogus miraculorum* are all Premonstratensian stories, though

case of the latter, two of Heisterbach's monks who hailed from Utrecht appeared within the collection, and Caesarius cited a "certain canon" from Utrecht in a story on the conversion of Abbot Phillip of Ottirburg.[165]

The impact of different reformation movements both within and without these orders influenced their production and consumption of the *Dialogus miraculorum*. In the fifteenth century, copies of the *Dialogus miraculorum* belonging to the Crosiers in Liège were copied by Godefroid Withus de Kamen, who also introduced the works of reformers like Groote and others associated with the *Devotio Moderna* to the monastery.[166] While copying work for the Cologne Crosiers' copy of the *Dialogus miraculorum* would not begin until 1440, the subprior and librarian Conrad von Grunenberg (d. 1465/66) had already obtained reformist works by Geert Groote, Florens Radewijns, Thomas à Kempis, Geert Zerbolt van Zutphen, Johannes de Schoonhoven, and Dirc van Herxen for the *scriptorium*.[167] In 1418, Conrad was a scribe in Deventer; while it is not know which institution he worked for, he had contacts with Brothers of the Common life in Florenshaus, founded by Florens Radewijns. Conrad then moved to Cologne and joined the Crosiers, where, in 1425, he became sub-prior and librarian. The *Dialogus miraculorum* excerpt manuscripts created under Conrad's supervision were often paired with works from these authors, such as the fourth book of the *Imitatio Christi*, the *Soliloquium animae* by à Kempis.[168]

The Canons Regular often utilised the *Dialogus miraculorum* as a preaching tool: for example, Smirnova notes the names of feast days like the Annunciation or the Nativity of the Virgin Mary marked down in one manuscript, from Saint Leonhard in Basel, next

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only one actually concerns the Premonstratensian Order itself; one other comes from Canons Regular, 4. 101.

[165] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p.181; DMEng, i, 1.1.38, pp. 49–50, DM, i, 1.1.38, p. 46.

[166] Ibid., p. 185.

[167] Ibid., p. 183.

[168] Ibid., p. 186.

to relevant *exempla*.[169] Other versions of the *Dialogus miraculorum* are paired with preaching material and instructive tracts, as is the case for a Munich manuscript which pairs the *Dialogus miraculorum* with the *Tractatus de modo praedicandi* and the Franciscan compilation, the *Flores temporum,* both of which were intended to help craft sermons.[170] Certainly, the *Dialogus miraculorum* lent itself to the preaching goals associated with the *Devotio Moderna*: the monastery of Thomas à Kempis owned a copy of the *Dialogus miraculorum*, and it is clear that the text's potential for didactic material that did not need to be limited to a monastic context rendered the *exempla* as attractive educational tools.[171] The *exempla* could also be easily incorporated into one of the practices of the *Devotio Moderna* known as *ruminare* or to "re-chew" in which they digested the lecture of the day, often based on the memorization of an *exemplum* from the lecture.[172] This could be organised based on day and topic, which likely made Caesarius's *Dialogus miraculorum*, with its distinctions by theme, an excellent option for the practice.[173]

Even still, it is likely that the Canons Regular utilised the examples for their own instruction more so than they did for widespread preaching. As in the *notae* found in manuscripts owned by the cloistered orders, a concern for the *vita regularis* and its upkeep is prominent in the Canons' manuscripts.[174] Amusingly, the annotated example on the adjustment to monastic food concerns Caesarius's advice on how best to spiritually season the bland food with a parable about the three grains of "pepper ": long vigils,

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[169] Ibid., pp. 186–187
[170] Ibid., pp. 188.
[171] J.M. Hlatky, 'On a Former Mayor of Deventer: Derick van den Wiel, the *Devotio Moderna* and the Middle Dutch Translation of the *Dialogus miraculorum'* in Jacques Berlioz, M.A.P. de Beaulieu, and Victoria Smirnova (eds.), *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle-Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miracles and its Reception*, (Leiden, 2015), 211–226, p. 216, p. 223.
[172] Hlatky, 'On a Former Mayor,' pp. 223–224.
[173] Ibid., p. 224.
[174] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 188.

manual labour, and the fact that there isn't anything else to eat![175] There were also many of the usual concerns found about offenses against communal life, such as gossip, envy, or negligence.[176] Like the Cistercians, there is also the tension of whether or not to instruct others, including the question that the novice asks his master regarding the seemliness of showing inner contrition.[177]

Caesarius's influence can be seen in preaching material collections created by the Mendicants, such as the *Alphabetum narrationum* by the Dominican Arnold of Liège, who took 166 examples from the *Dialogus miraculorum* and explicitly credited Caesarius as an *auctoritas*.[178] Arnold's work would heavily influence the fourteenth-century *exempla* collection, the *Scala coeli*, by French Dominican Johanne Gobi. Gobi adapted much of the *exempla* as they appeared within Arnold's work, and also referred to Caesarius as the source of the text 63 times.[179] While he did not explicitly cite the *Dialogus miraculorum* itself, it is obvious he was familiar with Caesarius's stories as they appeared within Arnold's work.[180] Other famous Dominicans, such as John Bromyard (d. 1352) and Johannes Herolt (d. 1468) also utilised the work in their own compilations of

[175] Ibid., p. 190; DMEng, 1.4,78, pp. 280–281 and DM, 1.4,78, pp. 245–246: "Primum granum piperis sunt longae vigiliae matutinarum; secundum labor manuum; tertium granum est desperatio ferculi lautioris."
[176] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 190–191.
[177] Ibid., p. 190: DMEng, i, 1.2.21, pp. 100–101, DM, i, 1.2.21, pp. 90–91.
[178] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 222.
[179] M.A.P. de Beaulieu, 'Dialogus miraculorum: The Initial Source of Inspiration for Johannes Gobi the Younger's *Scala coeli*?' in Jacques Berlioz, M.A.P. de Beaulieu, and Victoria Smirnova (eds.), *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle-Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miracles and its Reception*, (Leiden, 2015), 183–210, p. 184. Beaulieu provides multiple comparisons of the Latin texts of the *Alphabetum narrationum*, the *Scala coeli*, and the *Dialogus miraculorum*
[180] Ibid., pp. 208–210; see also Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 232 where she notes that the *Alphabetum narrationum* may well have been why Mendicant friars often expressed no specific interest in acquiring the *Dialogus miraculorum*.

preaching material.[181] In the *Formicarius*, discussed earlier in the chapter, Nider would structure much of the work as a dialogue between a novice and his teacher.

The Mendicant friars appear to have had similar concerns with reform and the maintenance of the *vita regularis*. The Dominicans only possessed four copies of the *Dialogus miraculorum*, likely due to the effective adaptation by Arnold of Liège.[182] It appears that most of the Dominican manuscripts transmit the abridged version "C" found in the Altzella and Rein manuscripts, and occasionally pair Caesarius's work with other *exempla* collections.[183] This copy is particularly helpful in understanding what may have interested Dominican audiences of the period, as most *notae* found within the manuscript indicate an interest in preaching. For example, one fifteenth-century manuscript from Soest provides some insight to Dominican interests in the *Dialogus miraculorum*: the sections highlighted by Dominican readers indicate an interest in *exempla* surrounding different kinds of vices (particularly concerning greed and usury), exemplary acts of virtue, and stories of damned sinners, especially in the twelfth distinction on the judgement of the dead, as well as the lives of the saints.[184].Much like the *Bonum universale de apibus* and the *Sermones vulgares*, the *Dialogus miraculorum* enjoyed renewed popularity as reform movements increased among religious orders, particularly with a focus on writing and preaching/pastoral work. For example, the *Speculum exemplorum*, written by Johannes Busch, the regular canon of Windersheim in 1481, contained a block of 103 stories from the *Dialogus miraculorum* from the sixth distinction

[181] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 85; Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla in Transition*, p. 232.
[182] See Smirnova, *Medieval Example*, p. 222, for a full list of Dominican manuscripts of the *Dialogus miraculorum* and their locations.
[183] Ibid, pp. 224, 228–229.
[184] Ibid., p. 229–230: Smirnova notes that the addition of a table on the first folio which repeats the titles of the different distinctions and includes marginal annotations supports this conclusion, likely making the collection much easier to search through for the would-be preacher.

on singleness of heart.[185] It would later be rearranged by the Jesuit Johannes Maior in 1603 in Douai as the *Magnum speculum exemplorum* by alphabetized keywords, and enjoyed a print run of 23 editions in Antwerp and in Cologne, with the last print occurring in 1747.[186] The extant manuscripts owned by Franciscans, the Poor Clares and Augustinians also mostly transmit the abridged versions of the text.[187] The relationship between the Franciscans and this reform movement is not clear.[188] Certainly, one manuscript with the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, 551 (2120), was donated by the Franciscan Peter de Ligno to Colette of Corbie, who had founded the convent of the Poor Clares in Ghent in 1442, wanting to adhere more strictly to the observance of the original rule of the Order, emphasising the poverty and simplicity that she felt was crucial.[189] The collection may have been provided for the benefit of the nuns themselves, or for those friars responsible for their pastoral care.[190]

The work remained popular after the Middle Ages, with a first print in Cologne made by Ulrich Zell (d. 1507) in 1475 and another, also in Cologne, by Johann Koelhoff the Elder (d. 1493).[191] The complete text was printed five times between 1591 and 1605 in Cologne, Douai, and Antwerp.[192]. Caesarius's work would continue to be popular well

[185] Ibid., pp. 225–227; Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, pp. 85–86; see also Beaulieu, '*Dialogus miraculorum*,' p. 210; Paul Jensen, 'Devotio moderna,' in George Thomas Kurian (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization* (4 vols, Hoboken, 2011), i, pp. 1–3.
[186] Ibid., p. 86.
[187] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 223–225; see p. 223 for a full list of the other manuscripts owned by Mendicants or of Mendicant provenance.
[188] Ibid., p. 228.
[189] Ibid., p. 228; Joan Mueller, 'Colette of Corbie and the 'Privilege of Poverty' in Joan Mueller and N.B. Warren (eds.), *A Companion to Colette of Corbie*, (Leiden, 2016), pp. 120–125; see also N.B. Warren, "The Life and Afterlives of St. Colette of Corbie: Religion, Politics, and Networks of Power" in Joan Mueller and N.B. Warren (eds.), *A Companion to Colette of* Corbie, (Leiden, 2016), 6–31, pp. 22–24 for a discussion of Colette within the context of Franciscan reformation politics.
[190] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, p. 228.
[191] Ibid., pp. 17, 242; Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, i, p. 85.
[192] Ibid., p. 17.

into the twentieth century, where examples from his texts would be utilised as teaching material for Latin students in German schools.[193]

New Orders, Old Influences, and One Community of the Living and the Dead

Having established the shared theological and educational interests between Thomas and his contemporaries, we can compare the portrayals of purgatory within the works of these authors. While Thomas and Jacques de Vitry shared experiences with the purgatorial ministries of the holy women of Liège, it is Caesarius who emphasised purgatorial devotion in a way that nearly matched Thomas's discussions in the *Bonum universale de apibus*. This is significant when remembering that the Cistercians would become well known for their own prayers and care of the dead, despite their criticisms of the wealth amassed from their other monastic forebears at Cluny for the same kinds of intercessions.[194] The Cistercians would dramatically deviate from their predecessors, attempting to avoid the accumulation of worldly gains and the economic burden of almsgiving on behalf of the dead by opting for collective memorials rather than individualised prayers for the dead.[195] On the eleventh of January, the "white monks" prayed for all their benefactors, then for individual supporters and patrons on the fifteenth of September, and, finally, on the twentieth of November, they would pray for their fellow brothers.[196] There was also a daily Mass for the deceased, except for on major holy days and feast days.[197] While the Cistercians adapted their post-mortem care from what they believed had become a corrupted system, the dead were very much central to the

[193] Ibid., pp. 87–88.
[194] Emilia Jamroziak, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe: 1090–1500*, (1st ed., London, 2013), p. 97.
[195] Ibid., p. 57.
[196] Ibid., p. 97–98: the original date for prayers for individual benefactors was September seventeenth, but this was changed after 1187.
[197] Ibid., p. 98.

devotions that would come to inform Caesarius's career and writings. Not only would Thomas likely have encountered Cistercian *exempla*, as he appears to have been quite well versed in their literature, but Lutgard, his spiritual mother, was a Cistercian.[198] As will be discussed in a later section in this chapter, it was on this tradition of prayers and care for the dead found, first in Cluniac writings and later Cistercian discussions on the nature of purgatory and purgatorial care that Thomas drew from for his section on purgatorial piety. It was an older Cluniac poem that Thomas would use to illustrate his most powerful penance for those in purgatory: a narrative about prayers and Masses for the dead leading to the victory of a duke over his enemies when an army of freed souls arrives to fight for him.

So, how did these authors treat the act of dying itself? While both Thomas and Caesarius were keen to outline what constituted a good or bad death, Jacques did not take the time to do the same within his *exempla* themselves, but two of his sermons on death and caring for the dead may provide more detail on the subject. In the first sermon, Jacques outlined suffrages for purgatory, including standard acts of care, such as giving alms instead of building elaborate memorials, or having Masses said for the soul of the departed.[199] In both sermons, Jacques discussed anxieties around making a good end, emphasising the fragility and fallibility of the body, as well as the agony of the soul leaving the body.[200] Longère notes that Jacques was speaking of death "in the evening of his life" and potentially had reason to consider his own anxieties around aging and dying.[201] Jacques went into particularly graphic detail concerning the "fruits" that dead bodies produce, and lingered on the anguish of the dying process, writing, "Therefore

[198] See Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 324–326: Le Goff describes the mendicants, particularly the Dominicans, as supplanting the Cistercians in purgatorial ministries; see also Bird, 'The Religious's Role,' pp. 216–217, 219–220.
[199] Longère, 'Deux sermons de mortuis,' pp. 194–202.
[200] Ibid.; see also, SV, 132, p. 59, for an example of the soul's reluctance to leave the body.
[201] Longère, 'Deux sermons de mortuis,' p. 193.

there is great anguish and a day of affliction, when the wretched man must be torn away from his wife, children, and riches, which he loved so ardently."[202] The following section focuses on advancing old age and the need to change one's life, as Jacques enumerates the various aspects of decline in the elderly, such as grinding their teeth, eating alone in silence and sadness, an inability to sleep, and trembling in their limbs.[203] Jacques ended by writing that he outlined these frailties:

> … that we may not be numbed in security, but…say with the prophet, "Make known to me, Lord, my end," so that "I may always have my end before my eyes," paying attention that life ends in death, death in judgement, the world in passing away, wickedness in hell, and virtue in glory.[204]

With these attitudes in mind, the portrayal of death and purgatory within Jacques's *exempla* can be used to explore his ideas on the topic and what he hoped to get across to his audience. There are many stories of the beloved dead in his *Sermones vulgares* that involve purgatory, as well as many aspects of apocalyptic or "end times" thought in his sermons and writings, all of which indicate the rich and fraught eschatological landscape in which he was operating.[205] This did not serve merely as a dramatic call for reform, but also as a reminder to his listeners and readers that they were part of a larger cosmic plan.[206]

In the case of Caesarius of Heisterbach, his focus on purgatory and death may have been shaped by his experiences of witnessing death firsthand: whether as a student

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[202] Jacques de Vitry, *Sermo Memento Creatoris Tui*, 12, in Jean Longère, 'Deux sermons de mortuis,' pp. 210–211, translation my own: "Magna igitur est angustia et die afflictionis, cum miser homo ab uxore filiis et diuitiis quas ardenter amabat, avellitur."
[203] *Sermo Memento Creatoris Tui*, 15, p. 214.
[204] *Sermo Memento Creatoris Tui*, 16, p. 215: "… ut securitate non torpeamus sed frequenter futuras miserias recolamus, et dicamus cum propheta: 'Notum fac mihi, Domine, finem meum,' ut scilicet 'finem meum ante oculos semper habeam,' attendendo quod vita consummatur ad mortem, mors ad iudicium, mundus ad defectum, malitia ad infernum, virtus ad gloriam."
[205] L.M. Walker, 'Living in the Penultimate Age, Apocalyptic Thought in the Sermons of Jacques de Vitry' in Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Morton (eds.), *The Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources*, (Leiden, 2017), 297–315, p. 307–308.
[206] Ibid., p. 315.

seeing the executions of heretics in Cologne, or the mass death at sieges during the Albigensian Crusades. Likewise, his role as a Cistercian necessarily entailed for the dead and dying. Prayers and vigils for dying members of the community, whether within the monastery or without, was a routine part of life, and Caesarius would have witnessed and participated in the dying and funerary rites of his fellow Cistercians, following an elaborate ritual that was vital to the salvation and care of the dying monk's soul.[207] As Paxton notes, the death ritual in its original form was so profoundly sacred and significant that, "… the monastery became a single performance space where everyone concentrated on the fate of the protagonist… until his body was laid to rest and his soul was well on its way to the other world.[208] The ritual of the Cistercians would have been similar, if not identical, to those of the Benedictines: after the dying brother, "feeling himself weakening," initiated the death ritual and confessed to the lord abbot or prior, he was brought into the presence of his community, publicly confessed and asked pardon for his sins, and forgave anyone he felt the need to pardon.[209] The dying person was then anointed and laid in his bed where his brothers could keep vigil and chant the collects until the final blessings or Eucharist had been administered.[210] After this, the dying brother was offered a cross "… that he may adore and kiss it", and would then offer a final goodbye kiss to each member of his community as they filed out of the room.[211] He would then be monitored by the servants in the infirmary who would make sure that he would not die unattended: when the final hour came, the servants would notify the prior. If the dying

[207] This monastic rite is laid out elegantly in Latin and English in F. S. Paxton and Isabella Cochelin (trans.), *The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages / Le rituel de la mort à Cluny au Moyen Âge central* (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 55–171.
[208] F.S. Paxton, 'Performing Death and Dying at Cluny in the High Middle Ages,' in Joanna Ziegler, Bruce Morrill, and Susan Rodgers (eds.), *Practicing Catholic: Ritual, Body and Contestation in Catholic Faith*, (London, 2006), 43–57, p. 49.
[209] Paxton, *The Death Ritual At Cluny*, p. 57.
[210] Paxton, *The Death Ritual at Cluny,* p. 189.
[211] Ibid., p. 195.

person was conscious, then the passions of Christ would be read to him, but if he was not, then two or four brothers would read the psalms.[212] Finally, when the moment of death was imminent, a servant would loudly beat a tablet, and "running then, from wherever they might be" the brothers would re-enter the room, chanting the Creed until the person passed away.[213] If the dying process was "prolonged," the brothers were instructed to chant the Litany of Saints until death occurred.

Caesarius portrayed the importance of this communal deathbed ritual within the *Dialogus miraculorum* itself: a young monk, Brother Mengoz, was told on his deathbed by his abbot Gisilbert, "Brother Mengoz, you must not die, but you will wait for me."[214] When Mengoz replied that he would do his best not to die until the abbot could be present, the abbot put his foot down, saying: "I order you to do so."[215] When the abbot returned to find that the board being beaten and the bell for the dying ringing out, he admonished Mengoz twice—on the third attempt, the abbot placed his mouth next to the dead man's ear, calling out: 'I ordered you not to die until I came. Again I command you to answer me.'"[216] In a scene much like that of Christina's death, Mengoz revived and groaned, "Oh, father, what have you done?" before explaining how he was dragged back from his spot in paradise due to his lack of obedience.[217]

For the Cistercian deathbed scene, everything was in the timing. The "foreknowledge" of the dying concerning the time of their death was often a large element

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[212] Ibid., p. 197.
[213] Paxton, *Death Ritual at Cluny*, pp. 93–95: exceptions were made for brothers busy "regular hours, at the Maundy, or at a conventual mass; then, only those who are not in the choir run." A modern day chorister might well relate to the instruction that "Those who are in the choir all move themselves as if they wished to run."
[214] DMEng, ii, 2.11.11, pp. 245–246, DM, ii, 2.11.11, pp. 278–279: "Frater Mengoz, non debes mori, sed exspectabis me."
[215] DMEng, ii, 2.11.11, p. 245, DM, ii, 2.11.11, p. 278: "Ego praecipio tibi."
[216] DMEng, ii, 2.11.11, p. 245, DM, ii, 2.11.11, p. 278: "Ego tibi praeceperam, ne morereris donec venirem. Ego tibi iterum praecipio, ut respondeas mihi."
[217] Ibid.: "Och pater… quid fecisti?"

in approaching the ideal death: the dying brother had to be aware of the pacing of his dying so that his brothers could be present, and he could die properly. This sense of timing was also important within saintly *vitae* where it demonstrated the saint's intimacy with God. Lutgard's deathbed was an excellent example of a good Cistercian death, with Lutgard attuned perfectly to God and able to serve as an example for her community.[218] Another example is found in the life of Maiolus: as he realised he was dying, he no longer directed his words to his community when they began chanting prayers around him. When asked if he felt any pain, he stated that he was already enjoying the blessings of God in the land of living. This could be taken to mean that his closeness to God as he approached death was intensifying and could also be interpreted as the prayers of his brethren being a foretaste of the perpetual worship of God in heaven.[219] With that foreknowledge came, at the very least, the implication that forewarned was forearmed: whether, as in the last example, in questions of obedience, or in ability to time one's death in conjunction with the community. This also heavily hinted at a community attuned with the afterlife, underscoring the efficacy of Cluniac (and later Cistercian) care for the dead.[220]

As can be seen in the multiple contingencies for the deathbed ritual, the communal act of preparing for death was well-rehearsed and intimate. On some level, the intimacy and communal closeness of this ritual has already been seen at least partially in the lives of Christina and Lutgard, the latter herself being a Cistercian sister; Christina was summoned back to her community in an act of obedience before she was allowed her final

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[218] Paxton, *The Death Ritual at Cluny*, p. 177; Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices,* pp. 87–88.

[219] *Vita Maioli* as quoted in Patrick Henriet, 'Chronique de quelques morts annoncées: les saints abbés clunisiens (Xe–XIIe S.)' in *Médiévales*, xxxi (1996), 93–108, pp. 101–102.

[220] Ibid., p. 102: Henriet looks at the writings of Jotsald, a companion of Odilo, which were later adapted into longer hagiographic works by Peter the Venerable; see also Pierre Boglioni, "La scène de la mort dans les premières hagiographies latines," in *Essais sur la mort: travaux d'un séminaire de recherche sur la mort, eds. Guy Couturier, André Charron, Guy Durand (Montreal: Fides, 1985)*, 269–98.

death, and Lutgard died surrounded by her beloved sisters in the convent. In hagiographical texts, the deathbed scene was often meant to provide imitable behaviour for the reader or listener. Heffernan points out that the death of St. Aelred of Rievaulx, while written by hagiographer Walter Daniel, also a close friend of the holy man, is structured in such a way that it is meant to point to a deeper spiritual truth rather than simply portraying a death scene as it literally happened.[221] After depicting a much more intimate exchange with Aelred, where Walter urges him to keep his eyes on the cross, "where your [Aelred's] heart is," before Aelred utters the words, "In Your hands I commend my spirit," before passing away.[222] The display is both personal—Walter knew Aelred and was there when he passed— but also contains Christ's final words, a trope deliberately meant to draw the reader's attention, placing Aelred, "… in a tradition… and the… point of such placement is to direct the audience's attention to Aelred's relationship to that tradition."[223] With this, the death of the historical Aelred is no longer the sole focal point of the episode, but rather how his death moves the reader to contemplate the death of Christ.[224] It also pushes the reader to an "apprehension of what is shared": Daniel depicts Walter's final words in a way that draws attention to the motivating, creative spirit of God which had moved in Aelred throughout his mission, as well as exemplifying the filial obedience demonstrated once before in Christ on the cross, and now in Aelred himself.[225]

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[221] Heffernan, *Sacred Biographers*, pp. 72–79.
[222] Ibid., pp. 75.; Heffernan utilises the English translation of Walter Daniel's Latin *vita* of Aelred by F.M. Powicke in *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx* (Edinburgh, 1963), p. 61. (The Latin text can be found on p. 61 in the same volume: "… et ibi sit oculus tuus ubi est etiam cor…" and "In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.") For further discussion of the symbolic significance of Aelred's final words, see Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, pp. 75, 76–87.
[223] Ibid., p. 78.
[224] Ibid., p. 79.
[225] Ibid., p. 101; Campbell, *Medieval Saints' Lives*, p. 188.

Like Aelred, Christina's death needed to be witnessed in order to provide an imitable model and a subject for contemplation. In her long-suffering obedience, Christina dies under the approved rites of the Church as found in the convent, blessing her sisters in return as she passes, but the episode also encourages the reader to call upon the intercession of Christina. After all, if Christina would return after a lifetime of purgatorial intercessions for sinners, even on behalf of the much-maligned Jews in her community, to answer an unspecified question, then she would surely also hear the petition of a reader.[226] Her "good" death is an example for any audiences in religious orders, as it was for the sisters attending to her deathbed who benefitted both directly (from her blessing) and indirectly (from her example.) After all, Christina was only a guest in the convent and yet was still show adhering obediently to the death rituals of the Order, returning even when it meant tearing herself away from Christ's presence. Even those not bound by religious vows could still take some lesson from the obedience and charity Christina is depicted as displaying on her death bed.

With the advent of the holy women of Liège, lay movements like the beguines, and the Mendicant orders, Caesarius was writing during a time of expansion in *who* exactly cared for the dead.[227] It was no longer exclusively a monastic role—however, it is worth noting, as Easterling does, that Caesarius "underscores" the limitations of a newfound popular piety which believed that even the damned could have a chance at salvation.[228] Nonetheless Caesarius was not rigid or uncompassionate to the endeavours of surviving family and friends trying to assist their dying loved ones. Caesarius organised

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[226] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 104–105; see also Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 370.
[227] J.S. Easterling, 'Strange Confessions: Salvation and Prayers for the Dead in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogue on Miracles*' in S. C. Thomson (ed.), *Strangers at the Gate! Explorations in Medieval Culture*, xxi (Leiden, 2022), 183–201, p. 188; Bird, 'The Religious's Role,' pp. 226–227.
[228] Ibid., p. 197.

the *Dialogus miraculorum* into "distinctions" that covered various topics, meaningfully arranging them by specific numerical and corresponding symbolic significance, including his section on purgatory. For example, the ninth "distinction" focused on the Eucharist, with the number nine corresponding with death, as Christ died on the cross at the ninth hour of the day.[229] Meanwhile, the eleventh distinction, on death, is associated with the hour of sunset and frail old age: "The eleventh hour of the day draws the sun to its setting. This is the decrepit age which is nigh unto death."[230] The *Dialogus* has two chapters dedicated to the dead and dying, and goes into detail in discussing what constitutes a "good" death, labelling three different kinds of death: "…sharp, untimely, and natural: Sharp is that of infants; untimely, that of the young… natural, that of the old."[231] Caesarius then elaborated further on the classes of the dying: "Some live well and die well; others live ill and die ill; others live ill, but by the grace of God, die well; and there be those who have lived well, but by the righteous judgement of God, die ill."[232] The twelfth and final distinction focuses on the judgement of the dead and is the climax of the entire *exempla* collection. In addition to these categorizations of death and the dying, Caesarius also explores the nature of dying, expounding on the agony of the soul being separated from the body, even when it has the guaranteed promise of heaven before it. Even Christ is not exempt from this agony:

> The King Himself of glory, Jesus Christ, God and man, shrank from death through his sensibility so much as to sweat blood in his fear. A soul

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[229] Schneider, *Dialog über die Wunder*, p. 71; Schneider notes that Caesarius also loved using acrostics, and in the concluding remark itself, there is one that spells out "Cesarii manus sumat amica manus:" That a friendly hand might accept Caesarius's work. p. 73; see also McGuire, 'Tales from the Cloister' in *Friendship and* Faith, 167–247, pp. 199, for discussion of when the various "distinctions" were finished.

[230] DMEng, ii, 2.11.1, p. 231, DM, ii, 2.11.1, p. 266: "Undecima hora diei solem trahit ad occasum. Haec est aetas decrepita, quae morti vicina est."

[231] DMEng, ii, 2.11.1, p. 231, DM, ii, 2.11.1, p. 266: "… acerba, immatura, naturalis. Acerba infantum; immatura iuvenum… id est naturalis, senum."

[232] DMEng, ii, 2.11.1, p. 231, DM, ii, 2.11.1, p. 266: "Quidam bene vivunt, et bene moriuntur; alii et male vivunt, et male moriuntur; alii male quidem vixerunt, sed Dei gratia bene moriuntur; et sunt qui quidem bene vixerunt, sed iusto Dei iudicio male moriuntur."

> naturally seeks to be in the body and cannot be separated from it without great bitterness.[233]

The stories of the dead and dying within the *Dialogus miraculorum* cover each kind of death from different walks of life, ranging widely in terms of class and gender. While acknowledging the agony of dying, Caesarius also emphasised the importance of a good death, writing "Now he [Ezekiel] says of those that live well and die well, 'If a man hath been just and hath done that which is lawful and right', after enumerating many good works, he ends thus, 'he is just, he shall surely live.'"[234] Caesarius explored multiple facets of dying: not just the process of entering the afterlife, but the mechanics of dying itself and the emotions surrounding the soul as it leaves the body.[235]

The organisation within the *Bonum universale de apibus* is somewhat different from the other collections: as discussed earlier, the sermons were arranged around the themes of different virtues as demonstrated in the lives of bees. While the sermons were arranged topically, like Caesarius of Heisterbach's organisation, Thomas did not have a specific section dedicated to the dead or to the process of dying. Rather, Thomas placed his recommendations for the purgatorial dead in a section describing the hibernation of the beehive in the second book of his collection, opening with a brief comparison between the slumbering bees and the faithful dead:

> They lie dormant during the winter and then feed on the honey they have collected during the summer. We say that winter is the middle season between that in which the soul, having been stripped of its body, passes to

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[233] DMEng, ii, 2.12.50, pp. 336–337, DM, ii, 2.12.50, pp. 355–356: "Ipse Rex gloriae Jesus Christus Deus et homo, in tantum secundum sensualitatem mortem abhorruit, ut timore illius sanguinem sudaret. Anima naturaliter appetit esse in corpore, nec potest ab illo separari sine magna acerbitate." See also Jacques de Vitry's story about a pilgrim who cannot be coaxed out of his body until David reassures him of heaven (and even then, the pilgrim is afraid): SV, 132, p. 59.

[234] DMEng, ii, 2.11.1, pp. 231–232, DM, ii, 2.11.1, pp. 266–267: "De bene autem viventibus, et bene morientibus dicit: 'Vir si fuerit iustus, et fecerit iudicium et iustitiam; post enumerationem multorum operum bonorum ita concludit: Hic iustus est, vita vivet…"

[235] DMEng, ii, 2.12.51, pp. 337–338, DM, ii, 2.12.51, p. 356.

> rest or to punishment, and the last day of resurrection, when the soul will be joined to the body and clothed with perpetual immortality.[236]

The honey gathered in summer could be interpreted as devotion to God and good deeds done during life that could benefit the soul in the afterlife: however, this "summer" is expanded into a community and family effort rather than purely an individual pursuit. The *Bonum universale de apibus* included some of the most elaborate discussions of caring for the dead and dying, and Thomas placed some of his most personal tales in the section on suffrages, discussing the impact of death and purgatory on his own family and ministry. Thomas included stories, not only of his father, for whom he entered the priesthood, but also of his grandmother, with an *exemplum* concerning her intense mourning over her beloved dead son. Likewise, Christina and Lutgard made appearances in the *exempla* collection within the context of their pastoral care towards others, their presence a lingering, intimate association with care for the dead in Thomas's devotional ideals. Apart from one *exemplum* in this section of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, almost all of the stories centred on purgatorial piety focus on the roles of women in mediating these relationships, and this feature sets Thomas apart from his fellow Dominicans in the suffrages he recommended.

Another unique focus for Thomas is the marriage of religious and political power with the sanction of the dead. In some cases, this is quite literally *foundational*: long before getting to the section on reciprocal purgatorial devotion, Thomas included a discussion of the relics found in the cathedrals of Rome, Jerusalem, Trier, and Cologne, and specified that these cathedrals were considered especially holy because of the special

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[236] BUA, 2.53.1, p. 916: "Hyeme latent et tunc vescuntur melle, quod estivo tempore congregarunt. Hyemem dicimus medium tempus inter id, quo anima exuta de corpure transit ad requiem vel ad penam, et diem resurrectionis ultimam, quo anima sociabitur corpori et immortalitate perpetua vestietur.

bonds that they shared with the saints buried there. The cathedrals of Rome and Jerusalem were sanctified by the blood of the apostles Peter and Paul and the blood of Christ, respectively.[237] Meanwhile, the cathedrals of Trier and Cologne were sanctified by the community they fostered between the holy dead and the personal dead buried within them, with the dead communities serving as a mirror to the living who came to seek the benefits of proximity to them. The cathedral of Trier is sanctified, not only through the martyrs by which it had already "stood forth to be crowned" but for the citizens of the city who had been "martyred and slain" in the three times which had been occupied and destroyed.[238] In Cologne, the cathedral was consecrated not only with the martyrs of the "glorious company" of St. Ursula and her virgins, but also the countless "men, women, virgins, nobles, and those of low birth entered and returned from Rome together and [who] with them were martyred."[239] Later, the memorial stones of "many bishops, kings as well as queens" were discovered and "raised."[240] While these, presumably, were among the many martyred alongside St. Ursula, it is notable that Thomas made a specific note of their status, and that their memory was contingent on their place among the "innumerable" virgin martyrs, and one could not be "elevated" in communal memory without the other. Thomas emphasised that the personal dead, whether civilians killed during the occupations of Trier or the memorials of kings and bishops in Cologne, were buried and remembered alongside the saints: to remember the holy dead in these places was, by necessity, to remember and pray for the other. The relics of these martyrs were critical to the cathedrals in that their relics both sanctified the cathedrals themselves and

[237] BUA, 2.53.6, p. 928.
[238] BUA, 2.53.6, p. 928: "… martyriis, quibus a principio fidei frequenter extitit coronata… tamen tota illa civitas pro Christo martyrizata legitur et occisa."
[239] Ibid.: "… ab illo glorisissimo virginali collegio… tamen tot milia virorem, mulierum, virginem, nobilium et ignobilium cum illis ineuntium et redeuntium a Roma coniuncta et cum eis martyrizata sunt…"
[240] Ibid.: "… multi episcopi, reges atque regine… reperta sunt et levata."

confirmed the effectiveness of the church's intercession. This is notable, firstly because the Dominican order was undergoing its own development of a cult of martyrs to sanctify its own authority and legitimacy, as explored in the previous chapter with the discussion of Thomas's saintly hagiographies and the quick canonization of Peter of Verona.

While the intercession of the holy dead played an important role in the works of Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach, the consolidation of political and spiritual power through purgatorial devotion is something that appears to be uniquely Thomas's. This is relevant when considering the evolution of how Cistercians came to view relics and relic cultures alongside their developing care for the dead both in and out of their communities. Fitzgibbon notes that Caesarius's *Dialogus* contains far more relic stories than previous Cistercian *exempla* or miracle collections.[241] Where at the start of the Cistercian order, there was a somewhat reluctant approach towards relics, especially in sharing them with the laity, the *Dialogus* contained a sanctified smorgasbord of saintly relics in the possession of Heisterbach Abbey, particularly those associated with Crusade. Heisterbach owned the tooth of St. John the Baptist, and a piece of the True Cross; these were two major relics, but the abbey also possessed some smaller treasures, such as a piece of the cross taken from the Hagia Sophia or two relics taken from the shrine of St. Katherine at Sinai.[242] Where Bernard of Clairvaux had once expressed a reluctance about the use of relics in their beautiful reliquaries and shrines in inspiring devotion, concerned that visitors might ".... admire the beautiful more than they venerate the sacred…" and believed that monks within the order should not need to be motivated by material objects, Caesarius presented stories about relics associated with some of the most significant

[241] Fitzgibbon, 'To be associated with,' pp. 141–142.
[242] Ibid., p. 142

worldly events going on at the time.[243] While Fitzgibbon observes that this could be attributed to the diverse backgrounds of novices at Heisterbach, who were beginners "yet to progress on the ladder of spiritual perfection" and for whom tangible aids like relics could be helpful, it is not unreasonable to suggest that in the face of religious and political turmoil, these relics could also be helpful for those far further along the rungs as well.[244]

However, whether in Thomas's cornerstone saints or in the wealth of Cistercian relics described by Caesarius, the holy dead are a resource for spiritual aid, a tangible community, and a source of stability during times of unrest. While this chapter will look more closely at the personal dead as opposed to the holy dead, the theme of an approachable, reciprocal relationship with the dead is a common one among Thomas's works, and one to bear in mind when considering his purgatorial suffrages.

A Communal Affair: Caring for the Personal Dead Within the Church

Before understanding the expansion of purgatorial caregiving roles within these *exempla* collections, it is first worth exploring stories of the personal dead and dying within their own communities that these authors looked at. As discussed previously, this death ritual was quite elaborate, with a special eye towards any possible contingencies. The Dominican Order also appears to have had a shorter and less elaborate ritual. While it was communal and included prayers over the dying, it left out elements such as the beating of

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[243] Fitzgibbon, 'To be associated with,' p. 142; for the full quote from Bernard of Clairvaux, see Bernard of Claircaux, *Apologia* 28–29, as cited and translated in Conrad Rudolph, *The "Things of Greater Importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the medieval attitude toward art*, (Philadelphia, 1990), p. 11: "The thoroughly beautiful image of some male or female saint is exhibited and that saint is believed to be the more holy the more highly colored the image is. People rush to kiss it, they are invited to donate, and they admire the beautiful more than they venerate the sacred." (For the Latin text, see the second appendix in the same volume, p. 280: "Ostenditur pulcherrima forma Sancti vel Sanctae alieuius, et eo creditur sanetior, quo coloratior. Currunt homines ad osculandum, invitantur ad donandum, et magis mirantur pulchra, quam venerantur sacra."

[244] Ibid., p. 142–143; Ritchey, *Acts of Care*, pp, 68–76, 116, 213–214; on the function of reliquaries within these devotions, see Hahn. 'What do reliquaries do,' pp. 286–289, pp. 291–293.

the board.[245] However, it is clear from Thomas's hagiographical writings that elements of the Cistercian way of dying resonated with his sensibilities concerning the afterlife and providing education on the care of those in purgatory. In the *Bonum universale de apibus*, death was seldom, if ever, presented as a solitary affair, especially for those within the Church itself. The only times where a member of the clergy met a lonely end usually occurred due to an undisclosed or unrepented-of sin or some betrayal of orthodoxy—Thomas clearly felt more strongly about sin or unorthodox behaviour when clergy were involved.

For example, an entire chapter of the *Bonum universale de apibus* focuses on the punishments of bad bishops, using a rather harsh heading which compares the punishment of corrupt church leaders to the "unanimous votes" of the bees of the hive to kill an "insolent" bee "lest they disperse the ranks and stir up sedition."[246] The first story in this chapter entailed the grisly end of an unnamed bishop, who was "contemptible in morals and way of life."[247] His ascension to the episcopate did nothing to improve his behaviour, until finally God sent a scourge to cast him down.[248] Either at the same time or very soon after his death, another bishop (and fellow anti-Albigensian preacher) Conrad of Hildesheim was "raptured in spirit" and witnessed:

> … a certain bishop, with his face veiled, but marked by his badge of office, carried to the seat of the Judge. Soon, attendants with fierce expressions appeared. They accused the slippery bishop: one of plundering, another of homicide, and others of slipping into luxury … Without delay, the adjudicators obey the judge, they bring in a joint sentence. The judge confirms the order, assistants blacker than soot appear, and place the mitre removed from his head, the ring, the vestment, the dalmatic, and the other episcopal garments at the feet of the judge, and with a roar they snatch the

[245] Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125–1325*. (Philadelphia, 2005), pp. 392–394.
[246] BUA, 1.3.1, p. 30: "… insolentes—omnes concordi suffragio… ne… excitant seditiones."
[247] BUA, 1.3.4, p. 32: "… sed moribus et vita degener…"
[248] BUA, 1.3.4, pp. 32–34.

> naked, wailing remnant, and drag him away from the face of the judge to Hell, bringing nothing with him except his sins.[249]

As the man was dragged to his eternal punishment, Conrad heard the heavenly assistants singing a refrain: "With the time that we have, let us work for the good of all."[250] Inspired by this, Conrad returned to his senses, only to receive news of the errant bishop's passing. Thomas ended the story by depicting Conrad grieving out of compassion for the man, and "although his piety was in vain" for the damned, "...he poured out the most bitter tears" on behalf of the dead man.[251] Here we can see consistent images, most already seen in some of Thomas's hagiographies, such as those within Christina's ministry: the holy person becoming attuned, however briefly in Conrad's case, to the judgement of others in the afterlife, followed by an act of compassion. This was sometimes efficacious, as in Christina's case, and sometimes only the simple but profound act of weeping for someone already lost who has no one else to weep for them. In that sense, the community aspect of clerical death was still present and even for the damned, there was still room to feel compassionate grief on their behalf. In the case of the unnamed bishop, Conrad's role as compassionate mourner was not a mistake: in the lead-up to the vision, Conrad was working on a sermon, and so it was implied that his vision would lead to the edification of both himself, as a fellow bishop, and those under his care.[252]

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[249] BUA, 1.3.4, pp. 32–34: "… episcopum quendam velata facie, sed infulis insignitum ad tribunal iudicis rapi. Mox assunt truci vultu satelites. Accusant episcopum: unus ni rapina, alius ni cede hominum, atque alii in luxuriis lubricantem… Nec mora assessores parent iudici, ferunt in commune sententiam. Iudex approbat latam, accedunt ministry super fulignem nigriores et ablata mitra de capite, anulum, casulam, dalmaticam ac reliqua episcopalia vestimenta detracta ad pedes iudicis ponunt nudumque relictum cum clamore rapiunt eiulantem te a facie iudicis trahunt ad tartara, nihil secum preter peccata portantem."
[250] BUA, 1.3.4, p. 34: "Cum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes."
[251] Ibid.
[252] Anderson, *The Discernment of* Spirits, p. 42; Smith, *Excessive* Saints, p. 27; Roisin, *L'hagiographie cistercienne*, p. 77.

However, in cases of heresy or blasphemy, even the compassion that Thomas seemed capable of extending to the doomed had its limits. Thomas brooked no hint of betrayal of orthodoxy, and this virulence is found especially in his *exempla* concerning Jews. In a story found within the same chapter, Thomas discussed another bishop, this time someone he encountered during his time in Paris during the Disputation of Paris, in which the Talmud, which Thomas believed to contain "unheard of heresies and blasphemies against Christ and his Mother," was hotly debated by Christian and Jewish religious leaders.[253] Thomas attributed the zeal of King Louis IX to dispute these alleged blasphemies to the influence of one of his fellow Dominicans, Henry of Cologne, whose influence would ultimately lead to Louis ordering that all copies of the Talmud be burned.[254] However, the books were temporarily saved from the fire when a delegation of Jewish people approached the archbishop, one of Louis' closest advisors, seeking to save the books in exchange for "countless" riches: the avaricious archbishop agreed, but on the day that the books were meant to be returned to the Jewish community, he was "seized with terrible pain in his guts, and on the same day, with the greatest lamentation, he died."[255] The king, having intended to meet with the archbishop that day, fled, fearing the same fate, and the burning of the Talmud proceeded as originally planned.[256] Thomas did not depict a trial: there was not a moment of potential salvation, none of the rituals for the dead were observed, and there was no compassionate eyewitness to weep for the dead archbishop. This was almost certainly in part due to Thomas's profound hatred and distrust for Judaism, and because of the undermining of a Dominican brother's efforts to

[253] BUA, 1.3.6, p. 36: "… qui Talmuth dicitur, in quo inaudite hereses et blaspheme contra Christum et matrem eius locis plurimis scripte errant."
[254] BUA, 1.3.6, pp. 36–38.
[255] BUA, 1.3.6, p. 38: "… et pecuniam… innumerabilem optulerunt.... dictus archiepiscopus consultationem regis veniens diro viscerum dolore correptus est, et eadem die cum eiulatu maximo vite finem accepit."
[256] BUA, 1.3.6, p. 38.

contain a perceived threat to the Church. The latter is significant, given that in a separate section about the importance of supporting the new Mendicant orders, Thomas also included a story about a Pope who revokes certain privileges of the Dominicans and Franciscans—after his death, his case was left to be judged by Dominic and Francis of Assisi.[257] Thomas also included a story about the Parisian Masters regretting their persecution of the Dominicans shortly after, an indication that it was important to him to protect the Order against critics and to display their legitimacy, whether through supernatural means or the more mundane modes of regret and conversion. Thomas's vehemence about heresy and disloyal church leaders is most underscored by how he ended the example:

> Note, reader, that all of the Eastern Jews regard these Jews as excommunicated heretics, who, contrary to the laws of Moses and the prophets, receive and copy this book, which is called the Talmud. And yet, the archbishop, of the law of Christ, defended such![258]

For an authority figure like an archbishop to defend this perceived blasphemy as official policy—even worse, as Thomas emphasised, Jews who were considered heretics by their co-religionists within a faith that Thomas already regarded as wicked and impious—was unworthy of any compassion or community in the face of God's judgement.

What about those within the clergy who did hold the same spiritual authority as an archbishop? Thomas included multiple stories of clerical death and dying, as did Caesarius and Jacques de Vitry. Happily, even in cases where purgatory is involved, not all of Thomas's stories ended bleakly: spirits of the dead were seen returning, often to

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[257] BUA, 2.10.21, p. 338: this was likely Innocent IV.
[258] BUA, 1.3.6, p. 38: "Nota autem, lector, quod omnes orientales Iudei hereticos excommunicatos reputant hos Iudeos, qui contra legem Moysi et prophetas hunc librum, qui Talmuth dicitur, recipiunt et conscribunt. Et tamen archipresul legis Christi defendit talem."

thank their communities for their care, or to warn them with their example. In this, Thomas could explore both the reciprocal relationship between living and dead and discuss his ideal of a spiritual leader and what that leadership needed to entail. Thomas included a story told to him by Henry of Cologne, where a deceased presbyter named Bruno appeared from purgatory to his younger counterpart and protege, also named Bruno, concerning his two benefices and lack of pastoral care towards his flock: "You govern badly and lamely in the flock entrusted to you. Look at [your] future punishment and turn back."[259] Given Thomas's own experiences with his ghostly father's rebukes, it is easy to see where this story of a young priest delegating his duties and being faced with the anger of his elder relative may have resonated with him. Indeed, mirroring the gory wounds that Thomas's father revealed while reproaching him for negligence, the older Bruno, described as a good man, was not unscathed in the afterlife: "… he lifted the hat in which he appeared to be clothed, he showed himself violently afflicted by the flames."[260] Bruno the Younger wakened with a start, sure that these dreadful apparitions were a dream, and went back to sleep, only to have his uncle appear to him again, saying: "You are the cause of [my] punishment, because of you I am denied rest. Remember, thus, [that you will be] the food and meat of the fire to come."[261] Bruno the Younger, undaunted and with an apparently unflappable indifference to ghosts, fell asleep again, prompting his uncle to appear to him for a third and final time.[262] After this, the young Bruno woke up and promised his uncle that he would fulfil his vows. At this, his dead uncle reappeared, with "great splendour and spoke rejoicing with the one who had made

[259] BUA, 1.19.3, p. 142: "In grege commisso male te geris et pede scisso claudus es, inspicito que pena futura redito."
[260] BUA, 1.19.3, p. 142: "Et hoc dicens iterum illi tormentum ignis ostendit."
[261] BUA,1.19.3, p. 142: "Tu pene causa, requies per te mihi clausa. Adice sic uri cibus ignis et esca futuri."
[262] Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 29: Keskiaho notes that the threefold dream is a common feature within the *inventio* of a saint's relics.

the vow," before ascending at last into heaven.[263] In this story, there was room for the living priest to immediately better his superior's position in the afterlife while simultaneously altering his own fate. For Thomas, this community care among clergy was critical, not just for the souls of the priests involved, but more importantly for the well-being of the people under their care, who could not be left in negligent hands[264] This link between the spiritual welfare of the clergy, whether living or dead, and the ultimate spiritual well-being of their communities was inextricable.

In looking at Caesarius's work, the significance of community involvement at a dying brother's side was made clear in quite a few examples. As Caesarius explained in his discussion of a "good" or "bad" death:

> He who departs in love, shall by means of his light see eternal light. Hence is it that those dying in the world hold a blazing light in their hands. But he who dies without love, shall be sent into outer darkness.[265]

The love that Caesarius was referring to in this discussion was a love of God—however, it could also be interpreted as the love of God as found and fostered within a holy community, especially given the necessity within Cistercian monasteries for the entire community to be involved with an individual's death. As referenced earlier in the death of Maiolus, this earthly community at the deathbed served as a foretaste of that which would be found with God and the communion of saints in heaven after death. This did not mean that a solitary death could never be a holy death, but that community engagement, in the chance to confess, to forgive, and to receive the Host, meant that there

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[263] BUA, 1.19.3, pp. 142–144: "… cum splendore nimio… apparanes et voventi congaudens dixit…"
[264] BUA, 1.19.3, p.144
[265] DMEng, ii, 2.11.1, pp. 232–233, DM, ii, 2.11.1, p. 267: "Qui in caritate decedit, per lumen eius videbit lumen aeternum. Hinc est quod foris morientes lumen ardens tenent in manibus. Qui vero sine caritate moritur, mittetur in tenebras exteriores."

was a spiritual safeguarding of the dying, from the deathbed to the grave. One such death takes place in one of Caesarius' distinctions on the dying and the dead, in an example surrounding the deathbed of a lay brother named Obert. Obert, who seemed as if he was about to die, heard beautiful celestial music while on his deathbed:

> … the board of the dying was beaten for him and rising in haste the brothers came to strengthen their brother in his departure with their prayers. Now he was lying, as is the custom, stretched upon the mat, drawing his last breath. The litany being said, whilst there still seemed to be some breath left in him, they began the seven psalms.[266]

The rite proved to be premature, as Obert was not yet at the point of death, saying, "What am I doing here?... I was amongst the angels, soothed by the sweetness of heavenly music… I had been appointed to the blessed protomartyr to be his companion and colleague... What do I [do] here? Truly I desire to return."[267] Obert died peacefully soon afterwards, his brothers once again beating the board for the dead. Caesarius wrote of this death that,

> … he lost the glory first shown to him, returning for a season, we do not doubt that in this our cowardice was considered, that is to make us less anxious and to spur us on to better aims.[268]

In the example, the death rites were not only important for the dying, but for those who would be edified by being present at his deathbed. Both Thomas and Caesarius treat engagement of the living with the dead as beneficial. If the "glory" of the afterlife shown

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[266] DMEng, ii, 2.11.6, pp. 240–241, DM, ii, 2.11.6, pp. 274–275: "... pulsata est tabula defunctorum pro eo, et surgentes festinanter, advenerunt fratres, orationibus munientes fratris exitum. Jacebat autem ut moris est positus super mattam, extremum trahens spiritum. Dicta letania cum adhuc aliquid spiramenti superesse videretur, incepti sunt septem Psalmi."

[267] DMEng, ii, 2.11.6, p. 241, DM, ii, 2.11.6, p. 275: "Hic ego quid facio? … Modo eram inter angelos, coelestis harmoniae suavitate demulcebar, deputatus eram beato prothomartyri… Hic ego quid facio? Certe redire volo."

[268] DMEng, ii, 2.11.6, p. 241, DM, ii, 2.11.6, p. 275: "Quod… sibi gloria reversus ad horam caruit, in hoc pusillanimitati nostrae consultum esse non ambigimus, videlicet ut minus sollicitos devotos faceret, et proficientes studiis melioribus accenderet."

to the dying was not immediately tangible for the living, they could be inspired to cultivate goodness and sanctity to one day join their deceased brother in Paradise. While the heavily choreographed death ritual was not as much of a factor in Thomas's collection, there was a story that referenced a post-mortem appearance by a Cluniac monk, dead at a young age, to the prior who raised him saying, "I give thanks… that you acted towards me with your foresight, so that I would not slip little by little into childish insolence and at length would have slid into."[269] The young man's soul then "shone with such radiance that scarcely a corner remained in that place which was free from that light."[270] While Thomas did not discuss monastic funeral rites in depth within this *exemplum* or the *Bonum universale de apibus*, he still emphasised the role of community in changing the fate of a soul *and* the reciprocal care between the dead and those left behind in doing so. The young man in question, unlike many apparitions, did not appear to warn a colleague about his damnation or to express thanks for post-mortem care to shorten the length of his stay in purgatory. Notably, the prior was not portrayed as experiencing doubts about the fate of the young man, nor had the young man made a prior agreement to return and confirm elements of the afterlife, as was the case in many of the *exempla* in these collections.[271] Instead, the young man appeared as an act of gratitude to reassure the prior his good upbringing had saved him from the fires of hell.

This raises a fascinating question: to what extent can the care and guidance of a soul secure or alter its final fate, as in the case of Christina, who was sometimes described

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[269] BUA, 1.17.4, p. 126: "Tue correctioni gratias ago, prior, qui mecum tua providentia id egisti, ne insolentia puerili paulatim defluerem et tandem prolaberer in dampnanda."
[270] Ibid.: "… tanto fulgore resplenduit, ut vix in loco angulus remaneret, qui ab illo lumine expers fuit."
[271] For an in-depth discussion these apparitions, see Catherine Rider, 'Agreements to Return from the Afterlife in Late Medieval Exempla' in *Studies in Church History*, xlv (2009), pp. 174–183; see in the same volume, R.N. Swanson, 'Ghosts and Ghostbusters in the Middle Ages,' 143–173, pp. 155–156; for a famous example of one of these purgatorial apparitions, see Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 87–92, for a discussion of the Ghost of Beaucaire, as well as Swanson's discussion of the same episode in 'Ghosts and Ghostbusters,' pp. 157–159.

as walking in and out of purgatory with ease?[272] Whether or not it was believed she could literally do so, she still had the ability to win souls from purgatory, which begs the question: if one boundary was potentially permeable, why not another? This debate was something Thomas and his contemporaries would have almost certainly encountered during the development of doctrine around purgatory.[273] Caesarius focused less on the "dos" and "don'ts" of purgatorial piety, but rather the location of purgatory and absolutism of divine judgement. As Easterling points out, Caesarius himself had his own theory about the "altering" of someone's status without the subversion of the will of God. Easterling uses as an example one of the more unusual stories of the *Dialogus miraculorum,* a heretic who confesses his sins to a female recluse *after* his death.[274] The choice was odd for two reasons: firstly, the choice of "confessor," and the confession of his sins after his death. The second choice could potentially be attributed to his heretical beliefs, not desiring to partake in confession with a priest whose authority he might not have believed in. Sadly, his repentance proved too little, too late: the recluse had no power to absolve him, and confirming to her that he occupied an important place in hell, his surviving community relegated his body to unhallowed ground.[275] Within this story, there no chance of salvation for the soul of a heretic, only a belated chance to confess his errors, and an emphasis on the necessity of dying within the rites of the Church.

However, Caesarius wrote these interactions within a context of expanding intercessory roles, particularly for women, as reflected in the heretic's choice to appear to the recluse rather than to a priest. While this may have been meant to indicate a

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[272] VMOEng, prol.8, pp. 48–49, VMO, prol.8, pp. 548–549.
[273] C.W. Bynum, Introduction, in C.W. Bynum and Paul Freedman (eds.), *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia, 1999), pp. 5–10; see especially Peter Brown, 'Amnesty, Penance, and the Afterlife,' pp. 41–59 in this volume; see also Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 53–54, 64–76.
[274] DMEng, i, 1.5.22, p. 351, DM, i, 1.5.22, p. 307; Easterling, 'Strange Confessions,' pp. 183–184.
[275] DMEng, i, 1.5.22, p. 351, DM, i, 1.5.22, p. 307.

disrespect for priestly authority and the sacrament of confession, it may also be read as the heretic seeking out some degree of compassion from the last possible source. As Easterling points out, Caesarius believed that it was *only* purgatory in which the souls of the dead could receive help, as demonstrated by the heretic's apparition from hell. Easterling also argues that indulgences and suffrages, such as those as outlined by Thomas and his contemporaries, served different purposes, with suffrages being uniquely for the dead,

> … effectual only for those who had confessed, or at least felt contrition for, their sins prior to death, a condition which placed them irrecoverably beyond the church's jurisdiction, and thus beyond the hope of its sacraments, including penance.[276]

However, new contingencies were also available: clergy, men and women in religious orders, and even family and friends, could suddenly seek to help the dead. This is seen in Thomas's own recommendations for those in purgatory, where almost all of the people involved in obtaining aid for their deceased loved ones were lay women, often working in tandem with a priest or a member of Dominican Order. Indeed, even without the highly choreographed monastic rite, these practices also extended themselves to numerous contingencies. For example, Easterling cites the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, noting that true contrition was what was required to receive absolution during a confession, and that priests often would not have necessarily known whether a person giving their confession was truly contrite.[277] Confession, even when open to everyone who wished to confess, could never be effective without true humility and contrition. Easterling points to the unusual example of a demon, who truly wished to confess his sins, but was ultimately unable to do so due to his pride and lack of true contrition in a

[276] Easterling, 'Strange Confessions,' p. 187.
[277] Easterling, 'Strange Confessions,' pp. 187–190.

story within the *Dialogus miraculorum*.[278] There is a similar story in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, where Thomas discussed the exorcism of Margaret, a devout woman in Brabant that he presided over, during which the demon claimed that it was able to possess her because, in grief and compassion for her dead husband, Margaret had pursued unspecified suffrages for his soul.[279] Thomas did not believe the demon, claiming that Margaret's virtue and devotion were to the credit and gain of her soul, not its detriment.[280] Thomas then baited the demon into admitting its longing for heaven, telling him that if he could show true contrition by acknowledging the authority of God, he could be redeemed. The demon twisted agonisingly in Margaret's body, but the closest thing to contrition it could say was to call out to *Margaret's* God, not his own.[281] These two examples of the worst of all possible sinners, a demon, being offered the chance to confess, illustrating that salvation was, at least theoretically, available to everyone who might want it, provided they were sincerely willing to do the spiritual legwork..[282] However, without the care of the Church and engaging with their communities, this repentance would not mean much

Yet there was clearly much to be done on the behalf of spirits in purgatory who required aid and expressed contrition that they had not been able to express fully in life. In terms of purgatorial care, this exploration of true contrition was a potential loophole for salvation: if verbal confession before dying was not possible, then sincere contrition,

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[278] Ibid., p. 187; see also, DMEng, i, 1.3.26, pp. 161–162, DM, i, 1.3.26, pp. 143–144, for the amusing and singularly odd incident of the demon who confesses to a priest illustrates the point; the demon rattles off an extraordinarily long list of sins but cannot muster the proper spiritual disposition (i.e. humble contrition) required for salvation.
[279] BUA, 2.57.67, pp. 1092–1094.
[280] BUA, 2.57.67, pp. 1092–1094.
[281] Ibid.
[282] See Coree Newman, 'The Quest for Redemption: Penitent Demons Leading Christians to Salvation in Medieval Christian *Exempla* Literature' in *Mediaevalia,* xxxiii (2012), pp 47–77, pp. 61–65, 65–68; These demonic confession stories were also used to combat the dualist worldview of a wholly good or wholly bad world. Newman cites Bynum's discussion of the discovery of the individual and how this is reflected in these stories within *Jesus as Mother*, p. 87.

along with the intercession of the Church and the saints, could save the dead from being stuck in purgatory. This left exciting new possibilities open for the laity, especially those devoutly pursuing the *vita apostolica*: if suffrages could secure the well-being of the dead, then their surviving loved ones in the world could have as much of an active role as the clergy or those in religious orders who said Masses and prayed for their souls.

Reciprocal Care: The Personal Dead and Their Communities

If in the last chapter, the living curate the memories of the holy dead and help to distribute their power through the aid of the Church, then within the reciprocal relationship encouraged in purgatorial devotions, the personal dead could also guide and influence their surviving community, albeit in a different capacity. They could not carry out the same miracles as the saints: for example, the personal dead were not able to intercede in the same way that saints could, nor did they possess the same capacity for healing miracles as saintly relics did. Yet, if the saints and their relics were places where the grace of God could directly encounter the devout petitioner and manifest itself to them, then the personal dead might best be described as offering a preview of existence in the afterlife, whether divine, purgatorial, or infernal, and either confirming orthodox belief or relieving doubts by confirming their status.[283] The personal dead also served as a litmus test for the spiritual well-being of the person they were visiting or asking for help from. The response of the person being visited was directly influenced by their spiritual capacity and understanding or love of God.[284] A dead person visiting a devout loved one to ask for

[283] Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 78–82**;** see also, C.S. Watkins, 'Sin, Penance and Purgatory in the Anglo-Norman Realm: The Evidence of Visions and Ghost Stories' in *Past and Present*, clxxv, no. 1 (2002), 3–33; Eastling, 'Strange confessions,' pp. 186–194; Sharon Farmer, 'Personal perceptions, collective behavior: twelfth-century suffrages for the dead' in *Persons in Groups. Social Behavior as Identity Formation in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, (New York, 1985), 231–239, pp. 236–237.
[284] Barr, *Willing to Know God*, p. 9, and, more extensively, "Worldly Attachment and Visionary Resistance in Pearl," pp. 122–151.

help was more likely to be taken seriously and actually receive help; meanwhile, their loved one would benefit by having their faith confirmed and in knowing that their loved one's status was secured. Conversely, a dead person appearing from purgatory or hell to someone who was sceptical or, worse, sinful might be successful at turning them from their path with a warning, but also ran the risk of going unaided, with their warning falling on deaf ears.

This ability to adequately discern a vision and its meaning, whether divine, diabolical, or from the personal dead, was contingent on the spiritual "fitness" of the reader. This also applied to the understanding of *exempla* or sermons themselves: the reader or listener, whether they were laity or not, would only get back whatever reflection or contemplation they put into it.[285] As Smirnova notes, while a preacher could utilise an *exemplum*, it was the audience who had to then interpret it, based on the practices and understanding they shared with their community.[286] Thus, creating an orthodox community was important, and it was vital for the preacher to be clear and accessible in their own beliefs to effectively do so. Before getting into what these authors may have intended for their *exempla* concerning death and purgatorial care, I will briefly explore how they understood and portrayed these relationships between the living and the dead.

Like Thomas, Jacques de Vitry viewed instances of the returning personal dead as reflections of social and moral virtues and the continuity of certain hierarchies in heaven. The dead also provided guidance and warnings for their communities, usually

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[285] On the importance of reading and rightful interpretation, see Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 19, 53–54, 59–60, 190–193; see also Jacques Berlioz, 'L'auditoire des prédicateurs dans la littérature des exempla (XIIIe –XIVe siècles)" in *Medioevo e rinascimento*, iii (1989), 125–158 pp. 127–131; and Jacques Berlioz and M.A.P. de Beaulieu, 'The Preacher Facing a Reluctant Audience According to the Testimony of Exempla' in *Medieval Sermon Studies*, lvii, no.1 (2013), 16–28, pp. 21–26; see B.M. Kienzle, 'Medieval Sermons and Their Performance: Theory and Record' in *Preacher, sermon and audience in the Middle Ages*, (Leiden, 2002), 89–124, pp. 98–103, 120–122, for a discussion of recommended modes of sermon delivery— and examples of failed deliveries.

[286] Smirnova, *Medieval Exempla*, pp. 21–22.

regarding the afterlife itself. One of the most notable *exempla* in the *Sermones vulgares* concerns a student who, in death, confesses that he had "squandered [his] days in sophistries and curiosities" rather than in pious studies.[287] After his death, he appeared to his master in a cape covered in minute letters of these fripperies, saying "Each of these letters weighs on me more heavily than if I were carrying the tower of this church around my neck."[288] He then gave his master a drop of his sweat so that he could understand the fires that tormented him under the cape.[289] Jacques closed the example with the master departing for the Cistercian order, saying: "I leave croaking to the frogs, cawing to the crows, and the vain to the vain. I go to the reason that does not fear death."[290] While a similar story can be found in Thomas's *Bonum universale de apibus* about the striking down of the blasphemous scholar Simon of Tournai, there was no post-mortem vision after Simon's demise.[291] In this instance, Simon's demise is demonstrably frightening enough to make a point without depicting his torments in the afterlife. Simon blasphemes against Christ and is subsequently stricken with a violent seizure before being struck mute. Thomas further illustrated Simon's moral descent by noting that Simon, with what little speech he had left, could name his concubine, but could no longer remember Boethius's *De Trinitate*, which he had once known by heart.[292] In rejecting God, Simon is left without the gifts of reason that he had abused, rotting in his own newly revealed sinful ways until he finally dies. Meanwhile, Jacques de Vitry not only utilised the apparition of the student to make a point about the distinction between acceptable and not-acceptable study, but the mark left by the dead man on his living master demonstrated

[287] SV, 31, p. 12: "… sophysmata et curiositates in quibus dies meos consumpsi…"
[288] SV, 31, pp. 12–13. "Quelibet harum litterarum magis me gravat pon dere suo quam si turrem hujus ecclesie super collum portarem."
[289] SV, 31, p. 12:
[290] SV, 31, p. 12: "Linquo coax ranis, cra corvis, vanaque vanis, ad logicam pergo que mortis non timet ergo."
[291] BUA, 2.48.5, p. 828.
[292] BUA, 2.48.5, p. 828.

the spiritual consequences of wasting time on "sophistries" as opposed to pious learning.[293]

Jacques also explored the order of these spiritual priorities through the "death" to the world that clergy, whether in the world or in a monastic order, had to make. Two such *exempla* concern a monk refused to grant his secular brother's request because he was "dead" in the cloister and a novice who was sent to bless and then curse the bones of the dead and record their reactions by his master.[294] When the novice reported that the bones remained silent in the face of these contradictory actions, his master replied: "And thus you must be dead if you which to remain in this monastery so that you may be affected by neither blessing nor curse."[295] The metaphorical death to the world made the focus on God totally absolute, relinquishing all emotional or other ties to the world; however, the actual dead have a profoundly different idea of their roles.

Caesarius utilised a wide variety of "good" and "bad" deaths to describe the judgement of the dead. Despite the many interactions with the dead within his work, he did not emphasise reciprocal devotion to the dead as strongly or specifically Thomas did. In fact, some of the interactions that he depicted are left much more ambiguous, such as the death of the monk Conrad, who was summoned by Richwin, a monk who had died earlier, and whose siren song to death had been rejected by another monk named Lambert.[296] This disturbing story made for an opportunity to explore the ambiguity of the interactions with the dead: the dead monk summoned not necessarily the person who was destined to die next, but rather anyone who was willing to go (the doomed brother in question responded to his own encroaching death with: "I care not. I should like to be

[293] SV, 31, pp. 12–13.
[294] SV, 117, p. 54and SV, 118, p. 54.
[295] SV, 118, p. 54: "Cui abbas: 'Ita et te oportet esse mortuum si vis in hoc monasterio remanere ut nec benedictione nec maledictione monearis.'"
[296] DMEng, ii, 2.11.33, pp. 265–266, DM, ii, 2.11.33, pp. 296.

dead.")[297] There was an element of horror in discussing the potential dangers of seeing the returned dead, who were sometimes seen as harbingers of death themselves. The reappearance of the dead, especially of the personal dead was not always an unambiguously good or bad thing. As will be explored in the next chapter, Thomas was particularly concerned about what reanimated the dead, and whether it was the person themselves returning by the permission of God or a demonic trick.[298] While Jacques de Vitry also touched on this topic of the spirit's departure and its link to physical animation, especially in his story of a pilgrim reluctant to leave his body, he did not do so nearly as much as either Caesarius or Thomas.[299]

While all the authors discussed good and bad deaths to some extent, there were different factors that impacted what kind of deaths they focused on and what manner of care and interactions were made with the dead. Certainly, there was an existing degree of ambiguity that interactions with the dead held in both popular and theological imaginations alike. For many of the early Church Fathers, interactions between the living and the dead were inextricably linked with necromancy, most notably in the story of Saul using a sorceress to summon the ghost of the prophet Samuel.[300] While necromancy had been discounted as a real practice by the Early Church, by the time purgatorial piety

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[297] DMEng, ii, 2.11.33, p. 266, DM, ii, 2.11.33, p. 296: "Non curo, modo vellem esse mortuus." A similar story of an undead congregation calling a priest to his own demise can be found in Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon* I.VII, excerpt as found in Andrew Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories: An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies*, (Martlesham, 2001), p. 17; see discussion in Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 133–140.

[298] BUA, 2.49.7, p. 844. Thomas notes that the devil can enter an intact body and wear it similarly to an article of clothing. However, this is only as long as the body is intact, and without the soul, it is not possible to remain intact for long: see also Caciola, 'Mystics, Demoniacs,' on the physiology of demonic possession and the parameters of demonic possession in the body (e.g. only God being able to truly possess the soul, while demons can only wreak havoc elsewhere) pp. 281–285; see also Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 71–87 for further discussions of this.

[299] Cynthia Ho, '*Corpus Delicti*: The Edifying Dead in the *Exempla* of Jacques de Vitry' in *Textes Et Etudes Du Moyen Âg*e, (2009), 203–218, pp. 208–209.

[300] Martha Rampton, 'Up from the Dead: Magic and Miracles' in E.E. DuBruck and B.I. Gusick (eds.), *Death and Dying in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1999), 275–299, pp. 280–284; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 272–273

became an important point of discussion and tales of agreements to return from the afterlife to reveal one's spiritual status, usually to a loved one or friend, became popular, how licit these agreements were was a subject of debate.[301] While Caesarius and Thomas treated these interactions as sources of edification for their readers, other contemporaries saw them as invoking magic or as undermining the need for faith by having the dead confirm the nature of the afterlife. If Caesarius and Jacques subverted these concerns about necromancy by focusing on the edification that encounters with the dead could provide, whether as positive or negative examples, then Thomas went a step further and emphasised a different angle: that the dead, whether good or bad, could only return expressly at the wish of God.

This is significant: within the context of an *exempla* collection where Thomas was often at pains to try to understand the mechanics behind the reanimation of dead bodies, specifically by demonic powers, he was careful to legitimise the return of dead *spirits* by stipulating that the permission of God was needed first. In the case of the personal dead, their return could be an illustration of God's compassion for the community they left behind, allowing them to re-enter the world to seek help while edifying their loved ones in the hopes of a potential reunion in heaven.

A common theme with both Thomas and Caesarius was the legitimization of their respective religious orders, the relatively new Dominicans and the longer-established Cistercians. For the Cistercians in particular, Bernard of Clairvaux and his teachings inspired a popular "boom" in Cistercian membership up until his death in 1153.[302] Indeed, Bernard was so popular that, with the many novices he attracted to the burgeoning order, new monasteries were founded every year after his entry, with 300 new establishments

[301] Rampton, 'Up from the Dead', pp. 280–284.
[302] Schneider, Introduction, *Dialog über die Wunder*, pp. 14–15.

founded by his death in 1153.[303] Relevant to the growth of purgatorial piety's popularity in this period, offices and prayers for the dead were significant within Cistercian reform, which might explain Caesarius's focus on the topic within the last two chapters of the exempla collection.[304] Caesarius was particularly concerned with the efficacy of the Mass for the well-being of the dead in the afterlife, including an example where his own abbot celebrated Masses for a woman who appeared to him from purgatory to beg him for help.[305] Like Thomas, he also reflected on how the manner of death often reflects the nature of the soul leaving the body, not just poetically, but in its physicality. In a rather gruesome example of this in the *Dialogus*, demons in the form of birds destroy a woman who had committed usury as she lay dying. The demons terrified her community, until she was buried in unhallowed ground "as a brute beast."[306] Her death and burial are a foreshadowing of what her afterlife will be, her body torn by demons and cut off from her community of faith.

The Authors: Death, the Dead Body and the Care of the Personal Dead

Throughout all these works, the dead body is a place of truth. Like saints' relics, the corpse of the personal dead can be a source of community or a source of discord. In one of the first translated editions of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Platelle writes extensively about the "voice of blood" in Thomas's works.[307] Discussing the corpse's

[303] Ibid., pp. 15–16
[304] Ibid., pp. 42, 339.
[305] DMEng, ii, 2.12.26, pp. 315–316, DM, ii, 2.12.26, pp. 337–338; see also another example, DMEng, ii, 2.12.33, pp. 321–322, DM, ii, 2.12.33, pp. 342–343, this time a dead man, who requests Masses to be said on his behalf from the Cistercians.
[306] DMEng, ii, 2.11.41, p. 272, DM, ii, 2.11.41, p. 301: "Quod bestiali sepulturae tradiderunt." See also Elliot, 'Violence against the Dead,' pp. 1021–1024, 1038–1043.
[307] Platelle, *Les Exemples*, p. 35: "… la voix du sang…" (translation mine.); see also Henri Platelle, 'Vengeance privée et réconciliation dans l'œuvre de Thomas De Cantimpré' in *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis / Revue d'Histoire du Droit / The Legal History Review*, xlii, nos. 3–4 (1974), 269–281, on the body as witness/evidence and reflection of the truth.

role in identifying murderers throughout Thomas's collection, Platelle notes the body as a witness, bleeding unnaturally in front of its assailant; in this respect, the body is revelatory, always evocative of the day of judgement and the ultimate resurrection or casting down of that body.[308] As explored in the last chapter, Thomas's portrayal of the bodies of the women of Liège, reflected a deeper truth about the spirituality of the women themselves or the world around them. While there are *exempla* in which male bodies demonstrate this truth, it is notably often the bodies of women, living or dead. For instance, Jacques de Vitry related a story about the corpse of a nun who was chaste, but "haughty and garrulous" in life; when she died, demons made a point to scorch her body "above her kidneys" to reflect the part of her life which offended most.[309] A similar moment of truth can be found in the *Bonum universale de apibus* concerning the beguines of Nivelles, with their bodies being cured or scorched in specific places by the relics of Saint Gertrude based on where their bodies had offended or glorified God.[310]

The master in Caesarius's *Dialogus miraculorum* is depicted explaining to his novice that, while the deaths of the good were not always "acknowledged" with post-mortem miracles or indications of their spiritual fate in their bodies, the purpose in these revelations was:

> … that the hidden holiness of holy men should be manifested to the living; another that men may imitate their virtues, whereby they earn their reward; the third is that the innocence of good men may be clearly shown if they have been slandered.[311]

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[308] Platelle, *Les Exemple*s, p. 40. "

[309] SV, 272, pp. 113–114; the tale ends with the statement: "Therefore it stands [to reason] that virginity without humility is like a lamp without oil; if you take away the oil, the lamp will not light; if you remove humility, chastity is not pleasing." ("Patet igitur quod virginitas sine humilitate est quasi lampas sine oleo; subtrahe oleum lampas non lucet; tolle humilitatem castitas non placet.") Jacques borrows this tale from Gregory's *Dialogues*, see GrGr, 4.53, p. 263.

[310] BUA, 2.51.12, pp. 900–902.

[311] DMEng, ii, 2.11.8, p. 243, DM, ii, 2.11.8, p. 276: "… ut latens sanctitas morientium viventibus manifestetur; alia, ut eorum virtutes quibus hoc meruerunt, imitentur; tertia est, ut iustorum innocentia, si male fuerint ut saepe fit infamati, demonstretur."

The dead bore witness for better or worse: if God could allow the positive witness of some for the betterment of their surviving communities, then it was also possible to allow for negative examples—or to forebear entirely for His own reasons. In either case, the personal dead, both in their bodies and their apparitions, were tools for revealing a deeper spiritual truth. However, for these visitations to have the intended impact, the intended audience needed to be instructed on the care and keeping of the purgatorial dead.

An Army of Souls: Purgatorial Suffrages and The Power of Orthodoxy

Purgatorial care was an immediate concern for Thomas and given that he likely wrote the *Bonum universale de apibus* close to his own death, he addressed these concerns in a different way than his contemporaries.[312] While the authors discussed here address purgatory and recommend suffrages, the aspects of purgatorial care that Thomas focused on were largely unique to him. His Dominican contemporaries, such as Stephen of Bourbon and Humbert de Romans, focused on the nature of purgatory and the sufferings there, devoting large sections of their discussions on purgatory to these subjects. Caesarius was, like Thomas, much more concerned with making moral points and ensuring orthodoxy. While he predominantly viewed purgatory as "the loss of God's presence," Caesarius focused on the nature and location of purgatory, as well as its suffering and sentencing:

> In fact if in it souls are freed from their bodies and the sight of God is denied to them, that delightful place is to them a purgatory. But with this seems to agree what St. Gregory says in his dialogue… 'For there are souls of certain good men who are yet placed away in mansions apart from the realm of heaven. In this loss by being kept away, what else is implied than this, this in some respect they fell short of perfect goodness?'[313]

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[312] Newman, Introduction, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, p.10.

[313] DMEng, ii, 2.12. 37, p. 326, DM, ii, 2.12.37, pp. 346–347: "Revera si in eo animae sunt corporibus exutae, et eis visio Dei negatur , idem locus deliciosus eis est purgatorium. Cui consentire videtur quod sanctus Gregorius in Dialogo dicit, sub his verbis: 'Nam sunt quorundam

In the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas was mostly preoccupied with how to deliver souls from purgatory, and at his most personal in the examples used.

Before looking at Thomas's recommendations, it is important to compare them to those of his contemporaries. The most extensive recommendations came from Dominican inquisitor and author Stephen of Bourbon, within his *exempla* collection, the *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*. Stephen's were the most athletic of the recommendations discussed in this chapter, including pilgrimage and going on Crusade. The *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus* advocated for the following penances for the dead:

> … the celebration of Masses; secondly, the pious offerings of the faithful; thirdly, the prayer of the good [virtuous]; the generous giving of alms; the good common suffrages of the Church, or penances made on their [the dead person's] behalf, that is, the penances made by their friends; also, the pilgrimage of their friends and relatives; likewise, the assumption of the Cross [going on Crusade] on their behalf and the carrying out of pious bequests; paying [debts]; restitution; devotion to the faith.[314]

Stephen also emphasised devotion to the saints as particularly important to the wellbeing of the purgatorial dead.[315] He then included various examples to illustrate these suffrages, largely centring men caring for other men: a son caring for his father, priests caring for the dead, or friends carrying out pilgrimages on behalf of dead friends.[316] In *De dono timoris*, Humbert de Romans adapted Stephen's suffrages and did not add

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iustorum animae quae a coelesti regno quibusdam adhuc mansionibus differuntur. In quo dilationis damno quid aliud innuitur nisi quod de perfecta iustitia aliquid minus habuerunt?'"

[314] TDMP1, 1.5.7, lines 827–830, p.168: "... missarum celebratio; secundo, fidelium pia oblatio; tertio, bonorum oratio; elemosinarum largitio; Ecclesia bona suffragia communia seu pro eis facta penitentia, id est penitentia a suis facta; item, peregrinatio suorum; item, crucis pro eis assumptio et executio legatorum piorum; solutio; restitutio; fidei deuotio."

[315] TDMP1, 1.5.8, lines 1232–1252, p. 182.

[316] For the story, of the two friends, see, TDMP1, ex. 176, 1.5.8, lines, 1059–1077, p. 176; for the story of the son going on Crusade for his father, TDMP1, ex. 177, 1.5.8, lines 1081–1091, pp. 176–177; for priestly suffrages, see, TDMP1, TDMP, 1.5.8. lines 1092–1099, p. 177.

anything new, instead streamlining the practices recommended in the *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*.[317]

Jacques de Vitry briefly touched on purgatorial suffrages in his sermon on the benefits of visiting the bereaved and the tombs of the dead. In this sermon, written towards the end of his life, he advocated for the following: firstly, visiting the body of the dead in the home of the bereaved, weeping with them, and showing compassion to the dead person and their loved ones alike, following the example of Christ weeping over Lazarus.[318] Likewise, Jacques saw such vigils over the body of the dead as a chance for his audience to reflect on the frailty of their own bodies, repent for their sins, and prepare for their own deaths.[319] Thomas also included vigil-keeping within his penances, and it is unique to both his and Jacques's recommendations, and both urged their audiences not to fall into despair as they mourned.[320] Jacques also spoke against lavish memorials, advocating for almsgiving instead, noting, "... Then they would be useful for the soul of the dead, while the ornate graves do not benefit them."[321]

There are no *exempla* utilised within the sermon itself. However, the vivid imagery describing the bereaved and the suggested steps to support the mourning and recently deceased alike possibly been sufficiently effective without the need for further examples. Jacques emphasised the communal aspect of grieving, something Thomas would also advocate for. If *exempla* and sermons were interpreted by their audiences based on shared understandings and practices (e.g. the orthodox beliefs of the Church,

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[317] Humbert de Romans, '*De dono timoris*' in Christine Boyer (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina,* ccxviii (Turnhout, 2008), 5, lines 290–465, pp. 96–103.
[318] Jacques de Vitry, *Secundus Sermo Mortuorum*, 2, in Longère, 'Deux sermons de mortuis,' pp. 194–195.
[319] *Secundus Sermo Mortuorum*, 8, pp. 200–201.
[320] Ibid.; see also BUA, ii, 2.53.17, p. 940.
[321] *Secundus Sermo Mortuorum*, 4, p. 197: "Tunc enim anime defuncti prodessent, cum illis ornata sepulchra non prosunt sed obsunt, quando propter seculi vanitatem et pompam ista in vita sua fieri preceperunt."

shared beliefs about the afterlife) then this communal aspect of grief was an important part of the sermon.[322] In advocating for these mourning practices, the bereaved and their communities could grieve and remember their dead together. This could draw attention, in turn, to the purgatorial care of deceased loved ones—and by extension, care for their own souls. This enforced orthodox belief surrounding the dead, not just in the pulpit, but in the everyday practices of those who undertook these acts of care.

It is now that we can turn to Thomas's penances. Utilising the first book of Maccabees, which exhorts readers to, "Weep, petition [pray], fast, keep vigil, give [alms], pay back [debts]…," Thomas then added the importance of Masses for the deceased; following this are discussions of several methods to provide help for the purgatorial dead.[323] Unlike the writings on suffrages presented by his fellow Dominicans, most of the stories are centred around women, whether in Thomas's family, Scripture, or within his hagiographical *corpus*. This is not to say that his fellow Dominicans entirely discounted the role of women: merely that Thomas featured them more prominently and consistently, and that some suffrages within his work (and, to some extent, that of Jacques de Vitry) that reflected his closeness to their ministry.

While Stephen referred to Marie of Oignies and Christina within his section on purgatory, Humbert was far briefer. He referred to Marie's vision of hands reaching out to her from purgatory while praying, the same that Stephen used, to confirm that souls in purgatory wanted prayers, and then moved on.[324] Humbert did include one story not found in the *Tractatus* where a grandmother pays off her dead grandson's debts after he appeared to her from purgatory; the rest of the examples mostly followed Stephen's

[322] Campbell, *Medieval Saints' Lives*, pp. 8–12, 200–203; Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, 5–6.
[323] BUA, 2.53.15, p. 938: 'Fle, pete, ieiuna, vigila, da, redde, celebra!'
[324] *De dono timoris*, 5, lines 385–402, pp. 100–101; see TDMP, 1.5.8, p. 175 for the mentions of Marie and Christina.

structure and do not feature women as purgatorial caregivers. This was not the case with Thomas: mothers held a special place within this sort of piety, providing post-mortem care to their children.[325] Wives and widows held an equally important role providing purgatorial care for their husbands. As we shall see, this devotion was seldom reciprocated by sons and husbands.

An Event? A Duration?: The First Suffrage of Tears

This section will also look at the role of purgatorial piety in Thomas's career and how Thomas married purgatorial piety to secular power and church orthodoxy within the "climax" of his suffrages, which outlined the most important way of helping the dead: the celebration of Mass. In these suffrages, Thomas offered a form of post-mortem care that those in the world could follow, and which was spearheaded by the holy women of Liège. Christina's life centred on performing these suffrages, modelling them for her community even as she took on the more inimitable penances, performing the punishments in purgatory themselves.[326] The first act Thomas suggested was simple, accessible, and unique to his collection: weeping for the dead. This provides insight into how the expression of grief *and* the expression of faith care for the dead. However, Thomas cautioned against falling into despair, specifying not to weep "like those who have no hope," but rather to weep for and remember the dead so as to lead them "up to God."[327] Like Jacques de Vitry, Thomas warned that "immoderate tears... shed for the dead, are

[325] See H. P. Broedel, 'Gratuitous Examples and the Grateful Dead: Clerical Interpretations and Appropriation of Traditional Oral Narratives in Late Medieval Exempla' in Laura Hollengreen (ed.), *Translatio or The Transmission of Culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* xiii (Turnhout, 2009), 97–112, pp. 103–104, where Broedel explores the trope of the ghost as a "fetch" in some medieval ghost stories, and deceased mothers featuring as spirits who lead their children into the afterlife.
[326] Alice Bennett, *Afterlife and Narrative in Contemporary Fiction*, (London, 2012), pp. 75–78: Bennett here refers to Jacques Derrida, *The Specters of Marx*, (London, 2006), pp. 120–121.
[327] BUA, 2.53.16, pp. 938–940: "Fle, hoc est plora, non sicut ceteri, qui spem non habent, sed secundum Ecclesiasticum… idest… duc, ad Deum… ."

empty, and they will not offer any relief" for those in purgatory.[328] This call to remembrance echoed the story Thomas included about Hugolino of Ostia with Marie's relic; if the holy dead were efficacious through their relics *and* reflection on their lives, then the active remembrance of deceased loved ones, alongside a hopeful reflection on their trust in God, were beneficial to the dead and to those they left behind.

The story which Thomas utilised to illustrate this is one of the first autobiographical moments in the section. Thomas recounted his grandmother inconsolably mourning the loss of her first-born son of "distinguished character and special beauty," particularly given that her younger son was a "prodigal squanderer" and soldier.[329] Her dead son appeared to her with some other young men as his companions, but he struggled to keep up with them. When she asked him why, he showed her his water-logged clothing and replied:

> … Behold mother, the tears which you have foolishly poured out for me, the weight of which keeps me from following the others… change your tears to God and in the presence of the sacrifice of the body of Christ, pour out a pious and devoted heart in alms for the poor on my behalf… I shall be freed from that burden, which I am now weighed down with."[330]

Thomas does not describe his grandmother's son as having any sins to repent of, but as being burdened by his mother's tears while striving to pass on to heaven; rather than being a boon for her son, her grief becomes a hindrance. For her son to find peace, she had to redirect her grief and the love she had for her son in life towards God. In the

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[328] BUA, 2.53.16, p. 940: "… lacrimas… immoderates pro mortuo fleveris, inanes sunt, et nullum refrigerium prestant." See also Jacques de Vitry discussing the same topic in *Secundus Sermo Mortuorum*, 2–3, 194–196.

[329] BUA, 2.53.17, p. 940: "… indole insigni et decore precipuum…" and "… dilapidator prodigalissimus…"

[330] BUA, 2.53.17, p. 940: "Ecce, inquit, mater, lacrime, qua pro me inaniter effudisti, quarum pondere ab aliorum prosecutione retardor. Ad Deum ergo lacrimas commutabis et in presentia sacrificii corporis Christi cum elemosinis pauperum pro me cor pium et devotum effundas, et tunc liberabor ab incommodo, quo nunc gravor."

story, it is her despairing grief that she is shown atoning for rather than her son's sins. This example reinforced that the actions of the living had a tangible impact on the dead. Her son was not only figuratively tied to Earth because his mother was unable to emotionally relinquish him into God's hands but was weighted down by her tears. Women weeping as a means of relieving the state of their loved ones in purgatory was already prevalent in Thomas's works and those of other hagiographers. However, Thomas drew a line between weeping as a form of intercession and the necessity of not sinking into the spiritually dangerous state of despair.

Despair and Loss

Before addressing the benefit of tears, I would like to briefly address the emphasis on avoiding despair. It would not be unreasonable to view the steps that Thomas puts forth in both the *Bonum universale de apibus* and Christina's *vita* were not only for helping a deceased loved one out of purgatory, but also for avoiding despair in the face of loss. These practical acts of care took the natural urge to act on grief and gave it an outlet that turned the focus of the mourner to God, even as they provided relief for the suffering. The concern with eliminating despair was present within the lives of the other holy women of Liège, and with good reason: grief or melancholy left an individual vulnerable to despair or "acedia."

Grief was not regarded as shameful to experience, but rather an honest and natural reaction to loss.[331] Winkler notes that grieving as characterized in medieval thought was thought to have three key qualities: "it involved an impulse to act; it could not be

[331] E.A. Winkler, 'Grief, Grieving, and Loss in High Medieval Thought' in *Traditio*, lxxvii (2022), 129–183, p. 161.

meaningfully measured; and it endured in time."[332] Likewise, not all grief was in danger of leading to "acedia" and medieval authors did not attempt to dismiss or minimise the condition, acknowledging grief's persistent nature.[333] However, they were careful to direct that outpouring of grief towards a certain end. A case like Thomas's grandmother, whose grief paralyzed both herself and her son in purgatory, would have been a cause for concern. For example, although Augustine wrote honestly in his *Confessions* about the depth of his sorrow on his mother's passing, he distinguished between two different kinds of grief. He described his sorrow at losing the relationship he enjoyed with his mother on earth: "… recalling her devout attitude to you and her holy gentle and considerate treatment of us… I was glad to weep before you about her and for her, about myself and for myself."[334] However, Augustine emphasised the brevity of his display at his mother's death, which he only allowed himself to express once he had ascertained it was coming from the correct place. In contemplating her goodness, particularly her tears that led to his conversion, Augustine could redirect his sorrow to reflection on how Monica brought him closer to God in her lifetime and continue to pray for her in the afterlife.[335]

Expressing grief was important to Augustine, who noted in the *City of God* that Christ experienced grief in his time on earth when he chose to do so.[336] Humanity shares those natural affections, but must consider those emotions within the context of their

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[332] Winkler, 'Grief, Grieving, and Loss,' p. 161; see also Lee Templeton, *Grief, Gender, and Identity in the Middle Ages: Knowing Sorrow*, (Leiden, 2021), pp. 6–7. Templeton here cites T.L. Martin and K.J. Doka, *Men Don't Cry… Women Do: Transcending Gender Stereotypes of Grief* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 15.
[333] S.W. Jackson, 'Acedia the Sin and its Relationship to Sorrow and Melancholia in Medieval Times' in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, lv (1981), 172–181, p. 173.
[334] *Conf.Eng*, 9.12.33 p. 378; *Conf.Lat*, 9.13 p. 162: "… reducebam in pristinum sensum… conversationemque eius piam in te et sancte in nos blandam atque morigeram… et libuit flere in conspectu tuo de illa et pro illa, de me et pro me."
[335] *Conf.Eng*, 9.12.33 p. 378; *Conf.Lat* 9.13.33, pp. 162–163.
[336] DCDEng, 14.9, pp. 367–372; DCD, ii, 14.9, pp. 21–25; See also Paul Helm, "Augustine's Griefs," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*, xx, (2003), 448–59, pp. 448–451, 456.

relationships with God, bearing in mind the full picture of, "what they are destined to become once they have reached that immortal home toward which they are now traveling."[337] In drawing a parallel to Christ, who experienced human emotions and loss but who was not overcome, even by death, Augustine provided a model for his readers to imitate, however imperfectly. As Helm notes, the privacy and briefness meant that his tears could not then be interpreted as certainty that his mother was suffering or that after death she had ceased to exist: in short, Augustine's grief could not be interpreted as despair over Monica and criticised (or worse, internalised) by anyone who witnessed it.[338]

For Augustine, it was imperative that grief should not be an obstacle between the mourner and the love of God.[339] Other influential authors, such as Gregory the Great, saw grief as a potential to know God more intimately: the greater the loss, the greater the dependence on God would be, with a greater need to draw closer to Him.[340] In his *Moralia on Job*, Gregory observes that grief can cause a person to consider where they exist in the broader span of God's time.[341] As he observes in a section of the treatise dealing with Job's reaction in the wake of his own devastating losses:

> when the minds of the elect perceive that all things transitory are nought, they seek out which be the things for which they were created…. finds rest in the hope and contemplation of its Creator, longs to have a place among the citizens above; while yet in the body an inhabitant of the world, in mind [he] already soars beyond the world… with the ceaseless incitements of love urges himself on to the country on high.[342]

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[337] DCDEng, 14.9, p. 372, DCD, ii, 14.9, p. 25: "… et quales in ilia, quo tendunt, inmortalitate futuri sint."
[338] Helm, 'Augustine's Griefs,' pp. 455–457.
[339] Helm, 'Augustine's Griefs,' p 458; Winkler, p. 133.
[340] MIJEng, 1.25.34, p. 50; MIJLat, i,1.25.34, p. 43; Winkler, 'Grief, Grieving, and Loss,' p. 133; Jackson, 'Acedia the Sin,' p. 175.
[341] MIJLat, i, 1.25.34, p. 43; MIJEng, 1.25.34, p. 50.
[342] MIJLat, i, 1.25.34, pp. 43–44: "... electorum mentes dum cuncta transitoria nulla esse conspiciunt, ad quam sint conditae exquirunt… in conditoris sui spe et conemplatione requiescit, supernis interseri ciuibus appetit. Et unusquisque eorum adhuc in mundo corpore positus, mente iam extra mundum surgit, aerumnam exsilii quam tolerat… et ad sublimem patriam incessantibus se amoris stimulis excitat." MIJEng, 1.25.34, pp. 50–51.

Grief can enlighten the bereaved to hope rather than leaving them despondent: Job's acceptance of God's will, even as it entailed the loss of everything he loved, drew him closer to God. As Gregory points out in the preface to the work, Job is first scourged, but then enters a more intimate relationship with God in his continued steadfastness: "… God, in recompensing him after the scourge, speaks to him in a more familiar manner, it is plainly shewn how much greater he became by the stroke…"[343]

These authors did not disavow the feeling of grief or the process of mourning. As Winkler notes, to feign indifference would not only lead to isolation or madness, but would also lead a person farther from Christ's model of humanity and compassion.[344] However, they attempted to provide a trajectory and a model of behaviour that could bring God's consolation to the bereaved. This prevalent emphasis on dealing with grief in a spiritually healthy way predated and likely influenced Thomas in his own work, particularly given the models of salvation that he presented in his work. This distinction between grief and despair was important for authors like Thomas, particularly in the context of pastoral care. After all, identifying what differentiated despair from healthy mourning was critical in providing the needed comfort. *Acedia*, a kind of spiritual sloth, while often linked to monastic contexts of spiritual sluggishness or struggles within the religious life, began to expand within a lay context in the thirteenth century. The avoidance of spiritual sloth and despair became the focus of confessional literature hoping to combat it.[345] The act of confession was often depicted as a cure, particularly after the Fourth Lateran Council; this led to more preaching in order to aid the laity in

[343] MIJLat, i, pref. 5.12, p. 18: "… quem post flagellum Deus dum remunerans familiarius alloquitur, aperte quantum de uerbere creuerit indicatur." MIJEng, pref.12, p. 25.
[344] Winkler, 'Grief, Grieving, and Loss,' p. 183; also pp. 167–174 in the same article for a case study of grief and time concerning the loss of Henry II's eldest son.
[345] See Siegfried Wenzel, 'The Popular Image' in *The sin of sloth : acedia in medieval thought and literature*, (Chapel Hill, 1967), pp. 68–96 for a detailed discussion of confessional literature of the time.

understanding spiritual conditions such as *acedia*.[346] While penance was recommended for *acedia*, it was not harsh, meant as a "medicine" for the soul, with the confessor in question treated as a kind of physician.[347] Confessional literature provided diagnostic tools, even questionnaires and confessional formulas that could aid the afflicted in helping them to identify and articulate their affliction.[348] With this in mind, Thomas's purgatorial suffrages could be interpreted as an extension of this kind of literature, especially when considering the everyday laywomen he depicted carrying out these suffrages. With this, it was not just the concept of *acedia* that would have penetrated pastoral care for the laity, but practices for combatting it that would have been previously limited to monastic communities. Thomas would also have been familiar with the efforts to combat despair in the lives of the holy women of Liège. Within the *vita* of Marie of Oignies, a Cistercian nun of great virtue falls into despair while under demonic attack:

> She, however, was not able to endure it since she did not open the wound of her heart to anyone to receive a medicine and she therefore fell into despair because of her faint-heartedness. The enemy had so depressed her mind that she could not say the Lord's Prayer or the Creed, nor did she even want to confess her sins.[349]

The afflicted woman left unable to receive the Sacraments tries to kill herself, and the prayers of her community are not effective; happily Marie intervenes to great effect through tears, fasting, and prayerful vigils. It is noteworthy that Marie is only able to help the sister after she comes to Marie and is received "both in her [Marie's] cell and in her

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[346] Wenzel, 'The Popular Image,' p. 69; Jackson, 'Acedia the Sin,' p. 176; Lee Templeton, 'Transformative Tears: Grief and Masculine Identity in *Sir Orfeo*' in *Grief, Gender, and Identity in the Middle Ages*, 211–233, p. 216.
[347] Jackson, 'Acedia the Sin,' p. 177.
[348] Wenzel, 'The Popular Image,' pp. 80–84; Ritchey, *Acts of Care*, pp. 184–186.
[349] VMOEng, 1.3.31–32, pp. 67–69, VMO, 1.3.31–32, pp. 553–554: "… tandem vero non sustinens, nullique vulnus cordis sui, ut medicamentum reciperet, aperiens, ex pusillanimitate quasi in desperationem deridit. Adeo vero inimicus mentem ejus depresserat, quod nec Orationem Dominicam, nec Credo in Deum dicere poterat: peccata vero sua confiteri nolebat."

heart."[350] She must seek Marie out and confide about her troubles, something she had been unable to do within her convent community. Marie also intervenes on behalf of a friend who falls into despair when he is attacked by the "noonday demon": here, the demon initially appears as an angel of light, initially giving her friend truthful revelations, before "slipping in the poison" and leaving him in "miserable confusion."[351] Interestingly, it is Marie who discerns the infernal nature of the visions correctly here, not her male friend, who is described as arguing "from the spirit, not the Holy Spirit."[352] King notes within her translation that the demon utilises a call to scrupulosity to entice the man, citing Bernard of Clairvaux's *Super canticum canticorum*: "But what he does not dare openly he will attempt in disguise; and when he is aware that a man will abominate what he sees to be patently evil, he tries to seduce him by means of a counterfeit good."[353]

Likewise, Thomas depicts Lutgard warding off the despair of others multiple times within her *vita*. These cures often happened through the act of speaking to Lutgard: something that Thomas himself had benefitted from in the past. For example, a young woman named Hespelendis is driven to excessive despair by a "measureless sadness" and seeks out Lutgard's help.[354] Lutgard offers her tears of compassion and prayers, urging the girl to direct her eyes to the Cross during the adoration on Good Friday, saying, "… When the priest lifts up the cross and says "Behold the wood of the Cross", you will be

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[350] VMOEng, 1.3.32, p. 38, VMO, 1.3.32, p. 554: "… non solum in cellam suam… sed in corde…"
[351] VMOEng, 1.3.30, pp. 65–67, VMO, 1.3.30, p. 553: "… daemonio meridiano…", "ut… subinferet venenum…", "… miserabilem… confusionem…"
[352] VMOEng, 1.3.30, pp. 65–67, VMO, 1.3.30, p. 553: "… spiritu suo, non Spiritus sancti respondebat…"
[353] VMOEng, p. 66, n. 56; here King cites *On the Song of Songs,* 33. 13, in Walsh and Edmonds (trans. and eds.) in *On The Song of Songs III,* (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1979) pp. 155–56; for the Latin text, see *Sermon sur le cantique*, Tome 3 (*Sermons* 33–50), ed. Jean Leclercq, H.M. Rochais, C.H. Talbot, Sources Chrétiennes, cdxxxi, (Paris, 2000) iii, 33.13, pp. 64–66: "Venit proinde occultus qui manifestus mon audet; et quem satis expertus est apertum omne horrere malum, falso bono supplantare molitur."
[354] VLAEng, 2.26, pp. 259–260, VLA, 2.2.26, p. 201: "… prae nimia tristitia…"

freed from every assault of temptation and attain confidence and comfort."[355] Lutgard's words prove true, and the girl finds the comfort she so desperately sought. Thomas takes an example of "measureless" sadness and, through Lutgard's compassionate tears and prayers, redirects the focus of the despairing one back to Christ's salvific Passion; this is mirrored in the recommendation of his grandmother's son urging her to redirect her tears and longing to God. Two similar events happen within Lutgard's life with two other despairing individuals: the first is depicted as being relieved by her mere presence, seeing a divine brightness around her as he listened to her words, and in the case of the second, Lutgard was able to miraculously communicate with her and console her in French.[356]

While Lutgard was unable to give absolution, her ability to listen to the despair of others, offer them advice, and then redirect their activities towards God mirrors much of Thomas's own work in hearing sins and assigning penances. Similarly, Christina is unable to offer Louis of Looz absolution as a priest would but is able to suffer on his behalf and offer him comfort as he dies. Rather than assigning penances, Lutgard and Christina often choose to take them upon themselves instead. For a non-priestly audience encountering these *vitae*, these models of behaviour for consoling and providing care to others without infringing upon the duties of priests may have been inspiring: anyone could be capable of a kind word or a prayer, even if they were not as readily able to radiate divine light or miraculously speak in a foreign tongue.

What of Christina herself? While her life lent itself as an example of avoiding despair and taking proactive measures to help those in purgatory, she is never depicted curing spiritual sloth. For that matter, she is also never depicted curing the physically ill,

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[355] VLAEng, 2.26, p. 260, VLA, 2.2.26, p. 201: "Cum... Crucis Sacerdos exaltando Crucem dixerit, Ecce lignum Crucis; tu ab omni tentationem impetu liberaberis, et consolationis fiduciam consequeris."

[356] VLAEng, 2.31, p. 261, VLA, 2.2.26, p. 201; for a similar story, see VLAEng, 2.40, pp. 267–268, VLA, 2.3.40, p. 203; it is important to note that Lutgard was miraculously unable to learn French, see VLAEng, 2.1, p. 239, VLA, 2.1.1, p. 196.

at least not until the translation of her relics to a proper shrine.[357] Likewise, for a purgatorial mediatrix constantly in the company of the dying, Christina is never shown bringing back someone who is either dead or on the verge of dying, unlike Marie of Oignies, Ida of Louvain, and Alice of Schaerbeek. Marie of Oignies is described as curing a priest from Nivelles after doctors had given up hope of saving him, and Alice is so upset by her sister's potentially mortal sickness that she lashes out in anger at the Lord.[358] Meanwhile, Ida of Louvain brings her deceased sister back to life after her unforeseen death. Ida initially reacts with intense grief, throwing herself on her sister's body, "earnestly and compassionately deploring how pitiably she had perished and muttering her name over and over."[359] However, she swiftly changes her prayers of grief to prayers of entreaty: not just for the return of her sister, but also for the Lord to raise her up from the "deadly gloom" and anxiety that had been afflicting her.[360] Ida then reflected on Biblical episodes of resurrection, from Old Testament prophets such as Elisha and Elijah, to Christ's own miracles in raising Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus. When she had done so, she touched her sister's mouth several times, echoing the several sneezes of the dead child Elisha raised, and her sister awoke.[361] When Ida resurrected her sister, not only was her despair relieved, but the grief of everyone who witnessed it was too, filled with "… a serenity… which dissipated the earlier clouds of gloom."[362]

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[357] VCM, 5.59, p. 660.
[358] VMOEng, 2.6.55, p. 90, VMO, 2.6.55, pp. 559–560; VASEng, 2.16.17, pp. 16–17, VAS, 2.17, pp. 474–475.
[359] VILovEng, 1.17.41a, p. 33, VILov, 1.5.41, p. 169: "… miserandum illius interitum compassivo miserationis affectu, sororis nomen frequenter ingeminans, instantissime deploravit."
[360] VILovEng, 1.17.41b, p. 34, VILov, 1.5.41, p. 169: "… mortifero… moeroris dolorisque…"
[361] VILovEng, 1.17.41b, p. 34, VILov, 1.5.41, p. 169.
[362] Ibid.: "… effugata prioris tristitiae nebula… serenavit." See also S.M. Ritchey, 'Saints' *Lives* as Efficacious Texts: Cistercian Monks, Religious Women, and Curative Reading, c. 1250–1330' in *Speculum*, xcii, no. 4, (2017), 1101–1143, pp. 1101–1103; see also Spencer-Hall in *Medieval Saints*, p. 84, n.85; Spencer-Hall also discusses the spiritually edifying impact of Ida's stigmata on those who witness it in pp. 74–75.

This episode did more than just not only to illustrate Ida's effective piety; Ritchey observes the link between health and salvation, citing Caesarius's own observation that the salvation provided by Christ was medicinal.[363] To engage with a saint's life or spiritual exercise "…by reading… meditating, watching, or participating in a performance, or… any other activity of the imagination" could have a practical impact on the health of the person doing so.[364] To follow Ida's example was also to banish despair: if not at an immediate resurrection of the dead in the face of their passing, then at the contemplation of the ultimate resurrection of the dead.

This may explain why the resurrection of the dead does not factor in Christina's *vita.* The one instance where she prevents someone's death occurs when a woman asks her to protect her husband during his pilgrimage. Christina is depicted as obliging her request with labours and prayers to God.[365] However, when the man returns and his wife thanks Christina, Christina responds in anger, stating that she would only enjoy the presence of her husband briefly, and he dies within a few days.[366] This episode could be indicative of the futility of such a temporary reprieve, assuming the man had been in real danger of dying while on pilgrimage and Christina averted his date with death. Even if he had died and Christina managed to bring him back, he would ultimately have had to face another permanent death.[367] The true and lasting resurrection could not happen until Christ's return. More to the point, in a *vita* focused on care of the dead, is the more practical facet: while miracles of resuscitation were not commonplace, happening only by God's grace, the more mundane suffrages in Christina's *vita* could be emulated and were beneficial, both in the short and long term, to the living and the dead. Most of the

[363] Ritchey, 'Saints' *Lives* as Efficacious Texts,' p. 1104.
[364] Ibid, p. 1104; in this, Ritchey notes the pairing of some of the Liégeoise *vitae* with healing prayers and mantras, as well as Eucharistic treatises.
[365] VCM, 3.31, p. 655.
[366] VCM, 3.31, p. 655.
[367] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 83–84.

dead would remain that way until the Day of Judgement and the purgatorial dead would have pressing needs for care in the interim. Therefore, that care was necessarily more important and practical to focus on. Rather than longing for their lost loved one, and everything that that person had meant to them in life, it was necessary to expand the vision of the bereaved, to "pan out" from the grave to the existence of the beloved dead in the afterlife. Tears of grief could then make way for hopeful tears of love and compassion, seeing beyond loss and into eternity.

The Gift of Tears: Getting the Full Picture

Tears of compassion or conversion were not inventions within Thomas's works. Thomas may have based his suffrage of tears on earlier theological texts, such as Augustine's tears of repentance, or from proto-purgatorial literature like the *Vision of St. Fursey* discussed in the first chapter.[368] Certainly, Thomas's first hagiographical subject, John of Cantimpré was shown weeping out of compassion, most notably when modelling sorrow over sins for a person making a confession who did not appear to be sufficiently contrite: "In this way he dissolved stony minds into tears and compelled the stubborn to despise the wrongs they had done so that hardly anyone came to him, no matter how hard-hearted, without leaving much improved."[369]

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[368] A.J. Weisl, 'Confession, Contrition, and the Rhetoric of Tears: Medievalism and Reality Television' in Gail Ashton and D. T. Kline (eds.), *Medieval Afterlives in Popular Culture,* 129–143; for more discussion on weeping as ritual and the history of the gift of tears, see Piroska Nagy, 'Religious Weeping as Ritual in the Medieval West' in Don Handelman and Galina Lindquist (eds.), *Ritual in Its Own Right Exploring the Dynamics of Transformation*, (New York, 2004), 119–137, pp. 120–126; Mary Carruthers, 'On Affliction and Reading, Weeping and Argument: Chaucer's Lachrymose *Troilus* in Context' in *Representations*, xciii, no. 1, (2006), 1–21, pp. 7–9; Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp. 438–439; for a general background on the development of compunction, see S. J. McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction in Medieval England: Holy Tears,* (New York, 1990), pp. 15–31.

[369] VICEng, 2.19, pp. 105–106, VIC, 2.19, p. 302: "Hoc agens, lapideas mentes soluebat in lachrimas, cogebatque obstinatos in scelere retroacta respuere, ut ita uix quisqua, adeo induratus aduenerit, qui non abscesserit emendatus." For a similar episode, see VICEng, 2.20, pp. 106–107, VIC, 2.20, p. 303.

However, it is also possible that Thomas adapted this suffrage from Jacques, whether from his sermons on caring for the dead, or from his *vita* of Marie of Oignies, famous for her boundless outpouring of tears.[370] In any case, for these tears to be effective, they had to be motivated properly by a desire to repent and grow closer to God, part of an inner spiritual transformation; for this reason, tears within a saintly context, such as those of John, Christina, or Marie of Oignies, could be interpreted as an outward sign of inner sanctity, as well as a model for the repentance.[371] It is here where we can return to the story of Thomas's grandmother and her excessive tears for her son.

As noted in the first chapter, weeping could be a sign of repentance, conversion, or sincerity, something which could be offered on behalf of the dead, or for oneself. Within a hagiographical context, they could represent the sanctity of the saint in question, an outward manifestation of their inner spiritual transformation, or they could model desired emotional responses.[372] Tears were seen as a spiritual gift rather than something that could be earned.[373] While one could contemplate sacred things that could induce tears, like the Passion of Christ or the Host, tears of compunction were gifts from God that, like visions, could not be merited on demand.[374] As such, the gift of tears was held

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[370] VMOEng, 1.1.18, p. 58, VMO, 1.1.18, p. 551.
[371] Nagy, 'Religious Weeping as Ritual,' pp. 131–132.
[372] Nagy, 'Religious Weeping as Ritual,' pp. 133; Weisl, 'Confession, Contrition,' pp. 139–140.
[373] Nagy, 'Religious Weeping as Ritual,' pp. 123. One can make oneself cry, but the actual healing tears of compunction were a token of God's grace. Nagy cites particularly Bernard of Clairvaux in distinguishing these kinds of tears: "In Bernard of Clairvaux's words, which apply from the age of the Church Fathers for the whole Middle Ages, 'Sufficit ad meritum scire quod non sufficiant merita' (In order to be worthy of merit, it is sufficient to know that merit is not sufficient; Sermo 69 in the *Sermones super cantica canticorum*, 6, 2:200); in other words, God's arbitrary grace does not depend on one's merits." See also McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 27, 37–38.
[374] Ibid., p. 123; see also Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 50–55: while the visionary cannot be entirely passive and must deliberately direct their minds and practices towards God to be in a spiritual state to correctly interpret a vision; on the occasionally thorny question of merit and visions, particularly in lay visions as opposed to those occurring in a monastic context, see Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions*, pp. 47–50, 100–101, 113–115; Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp. 49, 55.

to be particularly sincere, "… because they came directly from the heart or the soul and were not manipulated by reason and will."[375] Here it will be helpful to briefly utilise Barthes's terminology of the *studium* and the *punctum*, as also used to frame Christina's life by Spencer-Hallin her analysis of Christina and her post-mortem career.[376]

Spencer-Hall studies Christina's *vita* here within the context of Christina as an image serving a "photographic function" defined as: "1) the apparent objectivity and authenticity of the image; 2) the ontological connection between the image and its object (the index); 3) the confusion of temporality implicit in the image and its reception."[377]

Studying Christina (and by extension other hagiographical subjects) as serving the function of a photographic image, both examines her ambiguous relationship with time itself, as a revivified purgatorial mediatrix *and* as a hagiographical subject.[378] This framework can also be applied to the purgatorial dead, returning to their loved ones: their well-remembered faces and voices, recognisable immediately to their loved ones, and the disruption they present to their static memories after their deaths by confirming their ongoing existence in the afterlife.[379]

For Barthes, writing in a study of photography after the death of his own mother, the *studium* is the intellectualized, deliberate interest or pursuit in something—for example, his interest in photography or his reaction to a certain photographical topic—with an expected reaction or understanding in interpreting the subject that Barthes describes as almost by "training."[380] It invests the subject of contemplation with the self,

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[375]Nagy, 'Religious Weeping as Ritual,' pp. 123; McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 41–43, 44–50.
[376] Spencer-Hall, 'Pause/Play/Rewind: Temporalities in Flux' in *Medieval Saints,* pp. 65–105.
[377] Ibid, p. 70.
[378] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 71–76, 77–79, 86–89, 95–96, 104–105.
[379] See particularly, Emma Mason, 'Punctive Grace: Reading Religion in Barthes' *Mourning Diary*' in *Textual*, xxx, no. 2 (2016), 327–343, pp. 337–339 in particular on this.
[380] Roland Barthes, in Richard Howard (trans.), *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* (New York, 1981), p. 26; Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image*,

with the interests of the self, and Barthes describes it as the difference between "liking" and genuinely "loving" a subject.[381] Meanwhile, the *punctum*, the "wound," is a specific detail which inflicts itself on the viewer and changes their perception of the subject entirely, provoking what is a poignant or heightened reaction, and drawing the reader "toward the absolute excellence of a being, body and soul together."[382] Spencer-Hall utilises Christina's pre-mortem existence to illustrate the *studium* as her humble existence, typical of hagiographical tropes, would have been familiar to the readers of the genre. The *punctum*, then, is Christina's demonstrations of purgatory in her revivified body, "wounding" the audience as they witness her purgatorial transformation and penances and, by extension, their own fates of, not only death and likely purgation, but future redemption.[383]

The feeling of "compunction" is one Nagy describes as, "a kind of puncture of the heart that results in the efficacious religious tears, [that] cannot be provoked, formalized, or prescribed, as it depends on God's grace."[384] Compunction cannot be confused with worldly mourning or despair: God is the cause of these tears, not the nature of human mortality or the fallen world itself.[385] Therefore, mourning that fails to consider the hope of resurrection is an incomplete picture, seeking the expected in remembering the deceased as they were without the necessary, unexpected *punctum* to draw the reader into seeing the excellence of God. If God is the subject of contemplation by a saint, and a saint's *vita* is then the object of contemplation by the reader, then the capacity to be transfixed by this *punctum* is perpetual, even if it cannot be wholly actively won and is

(London, 2006), pp. 61–62, 64–65; also André Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image' in Hugh Gray (trans.), *Film Quarterly*, xiii, no. 4 (1960), 4–9, pp. 4–5, p. 8.
[381] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 26–28.
[382] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 59; Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 75, 79.
[383] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 43, 59; Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 371.
[384] Nagy, p. 120; Mason, *Punctive Grace*, pp. 337–338; McEntire, *Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 33–36.
[385] McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 33–36.

wholly dependent on God's grace.[386] The saints experience this puncture, and then react and are reacted to accordingly, demonstrating their inward sanctity outwardly. But what about a grieving parent like Thomas's grandmother? The scene within the *exemplum* could be seen as a kind of "deterritorialization": as Barthes's mother dying leaves him at a loss because his old identity as "son" no longer matches his new identity as "mourner," Thomas's grandmother's image of herself no longer matches the role she once occupied as mother to her firstborn son, further exacerbated by her disappointment in her living child.[387] She is left unable to conceptualise her son's existence outside of what he represented to her in life, and his memory becomes the *studium* of her mourning, a static image of her once living son in which she can find no comfort, no transformation.[388] This image is contingent on her memories of the child who was once alive on earth, and not of the soul who still exists, feels weighed down in purgatory, all while longing for heaven. In clinging to her image of her son as he was in life, Thomas's grandmother inadvertently keeps him in limbo and denies herself the true "compunction" that would allow her to find comfort in her sorrow.[389]

Thomas's grandmother was not alone in being blinded by sorrow: Christ's own mother struggled with the same grief. There was an ongoing debate as to whether Mary knew the full extent of her son's salvific role, if she knew whether he would be

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[386] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 24; Mason, *Punctive Grace*, p. 337.
[387] For a poignant example of this: Barthes, "October 30th," in *Mourning Diary*, p. 22: "Many others still love me, but from now on, my death would kill no one—which is what's new." See further examples of this in Barthes, *Mourning Diary*, pp. 190–192; Shaimaa El-Ateek, "Thanatogenos: Photographing Death and Writing Mourning in Barthes's *Camera Lucida* and *Mourning Diary*" in *Journal of Comparative Poetics*, xlii (2022), 58–84, pp. 60–61; see also *Men Don't Cry… Women Do*, p. 15: on how grief "motivates an individual's desire to: (a) maintain his or her assumptive world as it was before the loss, (b) accommodate themselves to a newly emerging reality resulting from his or her loss, (c) incorporate this new reality into an emerging assumptive world."; see also Anne Dufourmontelle and Jacques Derrida, *On Hospitality*, Rachel Bowlby (trans.), (Stanford, 2000), p. 28.
[388] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 85; Brown, *Punctive Grace*, p. 337.
[389] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 90, 92–93; McEntire, *Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 58–59 on immoderate laughter and tears as obstacles to the gift of tears.

resurrected. While a significantly later text, the fourteenth-century *Dispute between Mary and the Cross* reflected the same kinds of tensions that Thomas's grandmother might have encountered.[390] In the poem, Mary blames the Cross for the murder of her son, accusing the object of treachery in the death of her son rather than recognizing it as part of a broader salvific scheme. Within the poem, an angry and grieving Mary reframes the events of the Crucifixion within her own sense of loss and injustice in accusing the Cross:

> Cross, your nails must be blamed – My fair Fruit you have beguiled… Through judgement you are legally enjoined/To bear foolish sinners; My Son should have been excused from you,/And His blood on you should never have run.[391]

Mary then recounts Christ's death, reliving the anguish she experienced as a parent seeing her child die, and focusing on the graphic details of Christ's execution.[392] Mary even enlists three separate accounts from other anonymous Jewish eyewitnesses, present at the crucifixion, with the second witness giving a graphic account of Christ's mangled body as it was removed from the Cross and the third focusing on Mary's own pain, saying, "The sword of love through her did pierce – She fell swooning through that event."[393] That these witnesses are described as Jewish seemingly further validates

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[390] K.G. Tracy, 'Maternal Lament and Misremebering in *Dispute Between Mary and the Cross*' in Lee Templeton (ed.), *Grief, Gender, and Identity in the Middle Ages: Knowing Sorrow*, (Leiden, 2021), 37–52.

[391] *Dispute Between Mary and the Cross*, stanzas 14–15, 32–34, 40–43, this and following stanzas from the poem as cited and translated in Tracy, 'Maternal Lament,' p. 39; for the original Middle English text version of the poem, with discussion, see S. G. Fein (ed.), *Moral Love Songs and Laments*, (Kalamazoo, 1998), 87–160, with the poem's text on pp. 106–122. The stanzas I have quoted here are found on pp. 106–107: "Cros, thi bonds schul ben blamed/Mi fayre Fruit thou hast bigyled… Thorwh jugement thou art enjoynet/to bere fooles ful of sinne;/Mi Sone from the schulde boen ensoynet,/And nevere His blod uppon the rinne."

[392] Tracy, 'Maternal Lament,' p. 40: Tracy cites the following examples: "With phrases such as "Mi Fruit I seo in blodi bleo" [My Fruit I see in bloody state] (5) and "His veynes tobursten with this breid" [His veins burst asunder with your torment] (33), the image of Christ's broken and bloody body is painted with a heavy hand."

[393] Tracy, 'Maternal Lament,' p. 41. *Dispute Between Mary and the Cross*, stanza335, p. 116: "The swerd of love thorw hire gaun launce/Heo swapte on swownyng thorw that chaunce…", p.

Mary's pain as objective, complete truth: with no reason to be devoutly loyal to Mary, but still shaken by the brutality her son faced, these witnesses make a compelling case for her account of her loss.

However, despite Mary's real pain, it is an incomplete picture. The Cross points out in response to Mary's accusations: "That Blossom bloomed up in your bower (womb)./But not for you alone, But for to win all this world, That perishes under the devil's sword,/God let himself be stabbed through feet and hand,/To amend man's misery."[394] Pointing out how Mary's grief colours her understanding of Christ's sacrifice is not to minimize her pain within the context of the poem, but rather to draw her attention to the broader picture of her son's salvific mission. The text acknowledges that it "reinvents" Mary's emotions: there is no indication within Scripture itself that she felt this way.[395] Rather, while her pain is understandable, motivated by her love for her son, her excessive grief causes her to focus exclusively on her son's death, impeding her ability to understand his sacrifice and take comfort in his resurrection.

If this sorrow could impede Mary, the mother of Christ, how much more could it impede the audience witnessing her grief? While the *Dispute* may have been a cautious injunction against excessive affective piety, the poem serves as an apt illustration of the spiritual truths that could be hidden under the fog of grief.[396] Like Mary in the *Dispute*, Thomas's grandmother is forced to reckon with her child's existence outside of his context as *her* child: the *punctum*, poignant enough both to "correct and console" her, is seeing her son's continued existence in the afterlife confirmed to her as he appears to her and she is shown the direct effect of her excessive grief. She is also granted the grace of

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[394] Tracy, 'Maternal Lament,' p. 48. *Dispute Between Mary and the Cross*, stanzas 112–117, p. 109: "That Blosme blomed up in thi bour./Ac not for the alone,/But for to winne all this werd,/That swelte undur the develes swerd,/Thorw feet and hond God let Him gerd,/To amend monnes mone."
[395] Tracey, 'Maternal Lament,' pp. 49, 52.
[396] Ibid, pp. 45–47.

true tears of consolation and purification in turning her heart towards God.[397] In her son's exhortation to turn her love for him to contemplation of God, she is reminded that her earthly reality is not the only extant one, and that her motherly care for her son can still make a difference for him in the afterlife. She is also granted the grace of true tears of consolation and purification in turning her heart towards God and works of mercy. In this, Thomas's grandmother can move towards fully loving her son, seeing the "absolute excellence" of his freedom from purgatory, and arranging her life in such a way that she can deliver him and one day be reunited with him there.

El-Ateek notes that in writing of his mother after her passing, Barthes can "reterritorialize" her in the vacuum created by her death, thus preserving her memory.[398] So too do purgatorial suffrages recontextualise and memorialise the dead within God's ultimate plan of salvation: to commemorate the dead in this way is to perpetually draw the mind back to God, attaining a comfort that is a foretaste of heaven. As Gregory the Great writes:

> And when the eyes of our heart are purged from sin, that joy of our heavenly home is disclosed to them, that we may first wash away by sorrow what we have done and afterwards gain in our transports a clearer view of what we are seeking after.[399]

It is with this need for clarity of vision in mind that we can interpret how Christina's own penances potentially influenced Thomas's later suffrages. With the prominence of tears in Christina's purgatorial care, it is hard not see her influence, and those of the other holy women of Liège Thomas encountered, in this specific act of care.

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[397] Brown, *Punctive Grace*, pp. 338–339.
[398] El-Ateek, 'Thanatogenos,' pp. 74–75; Mason, *Punctive Grace*, p. 338.
[399] Gregory, *Morals in Job*, 24.6.11, as cited and translated in McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction*, pp. 78–79; MIJLat, iii, 24.6.11, p. 1195–1196: "… et tunc mundatis oculis cordis illa laetitia patriae caelestis aperitur, ut prius purgemus lugendo quod fecimus; et postmodum manifestius contemplemur per gaudia quod quaeramus."

Christina was repeatedly depicted wailing like a woman in labour, lamenting and mourning for a humanity who could not see the full picture of the goodness of the God she had encountered directly, and which suffered as a result, whether temporarily in purgatory or permanently in hell. If her suffering served simultaneously as a performance of ongoing punishments for those already in purgatory, as well as potential future punishments for those would end up there, then her weeping could be a dual model of grief and hope as well, whether in her deathbed vigils or her tears of joy as she reassured her long-suffering body of its rest and resurrection. However, when considering the context of Jacques's sermons on the care of the dead, which Thomas would likely have heard, Christina's tears become part of a blueprint of care for those in purgatory.

Her tears did not just serve to demonstrate her sanctity, which was confirmed immediately after her first death: rather, her tears were a means of drawing those who witnessed her, whether in the streets of St. Trond or within the pages of her *vita*, to be moved to compassion for the purgatorial dead, to the well-being of themselves or their loved ones, a deeper contemplation and love of God.[400] Similarly, in depicting his grandmother's sorrow, Thomas invites the reader to remember and sympathize with her and her son, even as they are being taught to avoid her excessive grief. In witnessing her sorrow and her healing, a reader had an opportunity to remember and care for their own dead. Jacques de Vitry notes in the prologue to Marie's *vita* that these compassionate tears, as seen in a nameless holy woman, '…these tears did not leave her head depleted but… restored her mind with a certain fullness… and gladdened the whole city of God with the holy stream of the river (Psalm 45. 5)."[401] However, Sweetman does not treat the

[400] VCM, 3.26, p. 655; see also Newman, 'On the Threshold,' p. 133.
[401] VMOEng, prol.6, p. 46, VMO, prol.6, p. 548: "… quae tamen caput non evacuabant, sed quadam plenitudine mentem refovebant… et Sancto fluminis impetus totam Dei Civitatem laetificabant."

depiction of these suffrages as purely being Jacques's influence, arguing that it was holy women of Liège, rather, like Marie and Christina, who coloured the purgatorial devotions recommended by both Jacques and Thomas.[402] While Marie also wept often throughout her life, for sorrow at her own sins or for those of others, or for compassion towards the people in her life, Thomas explicitly links Christina's tears to her purgatorial penances and the burden of her spiritual knowledge.[403]

By including tears in this later suffrage, Thomas acknowledged the intensity of mourning and then offered a redirection for the tears and love of the bereaved that would ultimately turn the "cruel, sterile deficiency" of an incomplete picture of the deceased loved one "as they were" into a hopeful contemplation of their continued life after death. It was this jarring wound from which the outpouring of tears, a sign of God's mercy and healing, could flow.[404]

Give A Little, Get Forever: The Second Suffrage of Almsgiving

Another act of maternal piety follows in the next section on almsgiving and fasting. This example took place in a town near Louvain: a mother of a dissolute young man not only called upon the confessional services of a "priest of lepers" named Lambert at her son's deathbed, but also fasted for five years on behalf of his soul.[405] Eventually, the priest Lambert died, and a week after his death, her son appeared to her, saying:

> Behold now, my most beloved mother, by your help I am going up to rest, away from the most painful punishments that I have endured for my sins, and with me Lambert the priest, who called me wholesomely to the confession and acknowledgment of my sins, for this, and many others who

[402] Sweetman, 'Thomas of Cantimpré, *Mulieres Religiosae,*" pp. 617–620.
[403] Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity,' pp. 25–26.
[404] BUA, 2.53.17, p. 940.
[405] BUA, 2.53.21, pp. 944–946: "…presbiter leprosorum…"

> he has led from punishment to salvation, he will be overwhelmed with the greatest reward.[406]

Thomas depicted the direct teamwork between a pious laywoman and the local priest, echoing some of the relationships between these writers and the women of Liège at the time. Certainly, it mirrored Thomas's utilisation of the piety of the holy women of Liège as a means of advancing his own pastoral work. Despite it being the mother's penance and foresight in calling the priest to aid her son, the example exclusively focused on the eternal reward of the priest, described as being "zealous for many souls" rather than the mother's role in her son's salvation.[407] This was not intended to negate the importance of the mother's role in her son's post-mortem care, but rather to illustrate a point about the roles of the clergy. While the actions of the bereaved were significant there were certain actions, like confession or the saying of Masses, that were reserved for male clergy.

More importantly for Thomas may have been emphasising the roles of the Dominican Order itself in the salvation of souls. Thomas wrote extensively about the role of the Order in the collection, often pre-empting critics of the Order, whether in response to real criticisms or as a rhetorical device for brothers who might encounter those critics later in their careers.[408] The twentieth chapter of the second book is dedicated to the "labours" of the Dominican Order, with Thomas paying special attention to the fruits of hearing confession, recalling his time as a plenary confessor.[409] The first chapter of this thesis has already discussed how Thomas described the potential distress caused by

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[406] BUA, 2.53.21, pp. 944–946: "Ecce nunc, mater karissima, adiutorio tuo ad requiem transeo de gravissimis penis, quas pertuli pro peccatis et mecum dominus Lambertus presbiter, qui me ad confessionem et cognitionem peccatorum meorum salubriter provocavit, pro quo et aliis multis, quos ad penitentiam salutis adduxit, multa mercede cumulabitur premiorum."
[407] BUA, 2.53.21, pp. 944–946.
[408] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 316–318.
[409] BUA, 2.10.7, pp. 316–318.

hearing sins as offset by the joy of delivering a soul through a successful confession, drawing a comparison to the act of a woman giving birth.[410] This comparison to spiritual motherhood was not necessarily unique to Thomas: his superior, Humbert of Romans, expressed a similar sentiment in his treatise on preaching:

> … who could adequately describe all the pains that a preacher, poor and zealous for the good of souls, endures in the care he expends in their behalf, in the fatigues of travel, in numerous privations… so that he has been compared to a woman in the pains of childbirth, exposed to sufferings truly inexpressible?[411]

Both men also saw the dangers of laxity or reluctance in preaching and pastoral work as "seeds" that would ultimately never come to fruition, comparing them to "barren" women. Yet it was Thomas who discussed the physical and emotional toll of hearing confession, and when considering the impact of Lutgard and Christina on his ministry, it is impossible not to see their influences here. Yet, in making these parallels, whether in his hagiographical texts or in the roles of women, particularly mothers, in purgatorial suffrages, Thomas acknowledged that while women could not do what ordained priests did, they could still help to successfully deliver the souls of their loved ones.

Virgin mothers, or virgins who experience aspects of motherhood such as breastfeeding or spiritually nurturing another, were a common trope in women's hagiographies. Heffernan notes that the Bible itself was filled with examples of virgin or barren women who miraculously conceived children, listing Sarah, Samson's mother,

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[410] Ibid.

[411] Humbert de Romans, *Treatise on Preaching*, 4.21, Walter Conlon, O.P. (ed.), (Westminster,1951), 4.20, p. 83; for the Latin, see Humbert de Romans, *Liber de eruditione Praedicatorum*, in J.J. Berthier (ed.) *B. Humberti de Romanis quinti Praedicatorum magistri generalis opera de vita regulari* (2 vols, Rome, 1888), i, 4.21, p. 431: "… quis posset plene describere quantas afflictiones sustinet pauper praedicator, animarum zelator, in sollicitudine providendi, in discursuum labore, in indigentiis multis, in anxietate proficiendi, et hujusmodi? Et ideo comparatur mulieri parturienti, cujus sunt dolores inestimabiles."

Ruth, Hannah, Elizabeth, and Mary.[412] This juxtaposition ultimately illustrates the theological message of the Incarnation itself: in giving birth to Christ, effecting the Incarnation of the Son of God, Mary became the spiritual mother and intercessor of all Christians redeemed by her son.[413] This dynamic plays out, writ smaller, in the lives of the saints. For example, a different type of Incarnation of Christ is described in the life of Ida of Louvain in her consumption of the Eucharist as it transformed into a fish inside her throat. In this episode, the roles are reversed: for her devotion to consuming the Sacrament, the Host, mirroring the whale that swallowed Jonah, absorbs her spirit from within, transporting her spiritually to God.[414] Her hagiographer describes this as a reversal of the Incarnation:

> The Word made flesh in the womb of the Virgin, was minded to dwell also in the hearts of the saints. And here was this other virgin, in whom he was renewing the mystery of his Incarnation in a new manner of his own choosing.[415]

This mirroring of Mary's pregnancy was, in Ida's case, a reflection on her intimacy with Christ in the Host, resulting in her ability to carry the Word inside of her and to digest it at her leisure in her "inner library."[416] In her consumption of Christ in the Host, Ida is figuratively impregnated, permanently carrying this truth with her and bearing its fruits, both inwardly in her private devotion and externally in her actions throughout her *vita*.[417] In their devotion to Christ and the acts it inspired, these female saints,

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[412] Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, p. 286; see also Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 265–269.
[413] Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*,p. 286.
[414] VILovEng, 1.10,24c–d, pp. 21–22, VILov, 1.4.24, p. 165.
[415] VILovEng, 1.10,24d, p. 22, VILov, 1.4.24, p. 165; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 148–150, see also p. 212 for a discussion of Mary as priest in her bearing of Christ to the world.
[416] VILovEng, 1.10,24d, p. 22, VILov, 1.4.24, p. 165.
[417] See VILovEng, 2.3.5b, pp. 41–42, VILov, 2.3.5, p. 172, for further images of nuptial embrace, where Christ visits Ida after she receives the Host on her sickbed and returns her embraces: "… in this divine embrace… when her soul was gathered up into one part of her body, as by a pressing of divine limbs around it, she was firmly coupled to her Spouse in all the joyous, amorous affection befitting such mutual squeezing, mutual pleasing."; Elliott, *The Bride*

simultaneously chaste and maternal, birthed a spiritual truth that could nurture and convert.[418]

Thomas identified Lutgard as his spiritual mother after a period of spiritual crisis, as did Jacques de Vitry with Marie.[419] Both Christina and Marie were depicted as having maternal relationships with the troubled noblemen in their lives, whether in Christina's care for Louis of Looz, or Marie's outpouring of tears and prayers for her relative, Ywain of Zoania.[420] This maternal imagery can be found within the *corpus* of the holy women of Liège, often between the women themselves: one instance of this is when Ida of Nivelles becomes the spiritual mother for Beatrice of Nazareth.[421] The most poignant example is perhaps the cry of Alice of Schaerbeek, longing to be made spiritually fertile: "O, how often, how forcefully, she voiced to her Bridegroom that cry of Rachel's, 'Give me children or else I die!' (Gen 30.1)"[422] This wish is ultimately granted to her when Alice is eventually stricken with leprosy. She offers up her suffering on behalf of her community and the purgatorial dead, even offering up her eyes one by one for different individuals as her living body gradually decays.[423] In doing so, she bears yet another version of the Incarnation: as Spencer-Hall observes, her body bears out the Five Wounds of Christ, with the five components of her diagnosis with an incurable, undesirable illness corresponding with the five wounds inflicted on Christ's hands, feet, and side as the

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of Christ, pp. 176–181, 285; see also Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 145–146; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, p. 61.

[418] Heffernan, 'Sacred Biography,' pp. 286–288.

[419] VLAEng, 3.19, p. 290, VLA, 3.3.19, p. 208; VMOEng, 2.8,79, pp. 104–105, VMO, 2.8.79, pp. 564–565.

[420] VCM, 4.45, p. 658; VMOEng, 2.6.58–60, pp. 92–94, VMO, 2.6.58–60, pp. 560–568.

[421] VBNEng, 1.10, pp. 58–66. pp. 59–60.

[422] VASEng, 1.3.3, p. 4, VAS, 1.3.3, p. 472: "O quoties vociferabatur ad Sponsum suum cum Ra chele, Da mihi inquiens liberos, alioquin moriar…"

[423] VASEng, 3.23.23, pp. 21–22, VAS, 2.23, p. 475, and VASEng, 3.27.27, p. 24, VAS, 3.27, p. 476; see also VASEng, 2.20.20–21.21, pp. 18–20, VAS, 2.20–21, p. 475 for her initial purgatorial commitment.

reader takes in each detail as a blow.[424] Further, while her wounds are not in the traditional locations of Christ's wounds, her relentless deterioration and the incurability of her condition makes her suffering as continuous as that of the crucified Christ.[425] In Alice's suffering, her wish for spiritual fertility is fulfilled: her salvific acts of "labour" deliver souls from purgatory, and her illness serves as an opportunity for her community to care for her in charity and to see the redemption of Christ's Passion played out in her salvific suffering.[426]

Christina follows a similar path in her own spiritual motherhood. While a virgin, she becomes a spiritual mother, not just to Louis, but the souls she delivers and the people who witness her actions, whether in her lifetime or as the audience of her *vita*. Her body is purgatorial and, like the other saints, carries a version of Christ's Incarnation: in this case, the dual truth of purgatory and redemption. However, if her life is meant to provide actionable care for those in purgatory, then her spiritual motherhood is also imitable through the suffrages she carries out. By embracing her faith and adherence to orthodoxy, it is not only possible, but laudable for the reader to participate in "birthing" souls out of purgatory through following the same (albeit safer) purgatorial regimen. Within the context of Thomas's second purgatorial example, women are invited to perform similar acts of spiritual motherhood for their personal dead, as Christina did. Rather than encroaching on the territory of male clergy, women could pursue the imitation of the

[424] Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' p. 405; for Christ's wounds as vaginal, see Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' pp. 401–403 and Karma Lochrie, 'Mystical Acts, Queer Tendencies' in Karma Lochrie, Peggy McCracken, and J.A. Schultz (eds.), *Constructing Medieval Sexuality*, xi (Minneapolis, 1997), 180–200, pp. 188–194; on the maternal Christ and Christ's wounds as womb-like, see Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 197–200, 221–222, 278; on the feminisation of spiritual language, see Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 129–169.
[425] Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' p. 407.
[426] Ibid., pp. 407–408.

salvific work of the saints, of Mary— even of Christ himself, who was sometimes depicted as a nurturing mother.[427]

This is not to say that motherhood was the only significant role for women within purgatorial piety: widows also played a crucial role in their husband's afterlives and their own fates were particularly entwined with them. However, there is only one story of a widow within Thomas's section on purgatory, with a far weightier emphasis on mothers or mother figures interceding for a younger generation who ran the moral gamut from the virtue of Thomas's grandmother's devotion to her first-born to the dissolute young man of Brabant.

The Third and Fourth Suffrages: Vigils

The next of the seven suffrages featured the Old Testament story of a Biblical mother alongside Christina's own appearance: firstly, Thomas discussed Rizpah who refused to allow her sons' hanging bodies to be desecrated by their enemies or by ravaging animals. Thomas made her vigil an example of purgatorial piety, with those keeping vigil for the dead acting as guardians for those who are "suspended, but [if not in] torment in purgatory of the soul."[428] This act of piety was the monastic ritual writ small that any surviving loved one could do: while a mother could not perform the highly choreographed offices of a priest that would be prescribed later within this section, the simple act of keeping vigil by the body of her child was enough. This particular suffrage echoes not only Jacques de Vitry's sermon encouraging his listeners to spend time with the dead, whether at vigils with their bereaved loved ones or at the burial places of their beloved dead, but also the vigils that Christina routinely held throughout her life at the sides of the dying,

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[427] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 125–129.
[428] BUA, 2.53.22, p. 946: "Quid per suspensos, nisi excruciante in purgatorio anime designator?" See also Clarke, 'Purgatory, Punishment,' on the roles of women in mourning.

something she did willingly and cheerfully, "... exhorting to a confession of sins, and the fruits of penance, in the hope of everlasting joy, and the deadly dread of fire."[429] More in line with Jacques's line of thinking, Christina was often found in places where the dead already were. She continuously wept in the "houses of the dead" and was often found hanging on the same gallows as dead men.[430] In the first, Christina mirrored the acts of compassion for the dead that Jacques called for, drawing her viewer's attention to the "houses of the dead" and inviting remembrance and contemplation. Yet in the second, Christina demonstrated both purgatorial torment and the time it took to endure such a punishment in purgatory relative to the time it took on earth. Torments, such as hanging, that would immediately kill a normal person carry on for days for Christina, illustrating the disparity between purgatorial and terrestrial time.[431] Her immortal body hanging alongside that of an executed criminal would have been a jarring juxtaposition, as well as a call to mercy—and, crucially, a moment for the audience to take measure to loosen the purgatorial noose around their own throats. Christina was described as constantly mourning, especially for those who had been damned, sorrowing over the permanent loss of a soul within her own community.[432] Her vigils benefitted not only the dying, but also the living, whether they saw her example at the deathbed, or witnessed her mourning in the streets, they could be drawn towards considering their own afterlives.

The next story, which featured Christina and Louis of Looz, was an abridged version of the episode in Christina's *vita*, where a dying Louis called for Christina so that she could hear his sins: Thomas emphasised that Christina was *not* able to absolve his

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[429] VCM, 3.27, p. 655: "Libentissime ac benignissime morientibus assistebat, exhortans ad peccatorum confessionem, et poenitentiae fructum, ad spem perennis gaudii, et horrorem exitialis incendii." VCMEng, 27, p. 142.
[430] VCM, 1.13, p. 652, VCMEng, 13, p. 135.
[431] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, p. 97.
[432] Ibid.

sins, but rather that Louis confessed to her so that she might "be moved to pray by such a sacrifice" of humble contrition on his part.[433] Christina did so "with no small amount of compassion," taking on his purgatorial pains in her own body, weeping in places where he was "wont to sin" with "inconsolable tears."[434] As will be discussed in the next chapter, unlike the same episode in her *vita*, Thomas includes a direct purgatorial vision of Louis confirming his safety in heaven because of her work: a kind of interaction strikingly absent within her original *vita.*

"With no small amount of compassion" is perhaps the most apt summary of these women's work, as they interceded for their children with tears and physical deprivation, if not the acts of gruelling physical penance as found in Christina's *vita*. Thomas was not alone finding the compassionate acts of these women compelling, with Jacques de Vitry echoing many of these sentiments on the importance of tears and vigils. Certainly, it was Thomas's belief in the unique compassion of women, as he experienced through the piety of these mothers, whether literal mothers or spiritual mothers. It is difficult not to see Christina's mark in Thomas's suffrages: her endless tears and vigils for the dead and dying, her willingness to suffer for the spiritual son she loved so deeply, all significant enough that she was the only named saint within his hagiographical *corpus* found with his section on suffrages.

The Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus: A Dominican Adaptation of a Cluniac Poem

The last and most important act of care for the dead was that of the saying of Mass: in the final example, Thomas described an entire army of dead souls dressed in what appeared

[433] VCM, 4.44, pp. 657–658: "… sed ut magis ad orandum pro eo tali piaculo moveretur…." The "sacrifice" here being that Louis, despite being prostrate on his deathbed, is willing to fling himself at her feet and "with his whole body" to express his contrition. VCMEng, 44, p. 149.
[434] VCM, 4.45, p. 658: "Loca vero, in quibus comes peccare vel insaniis falsis gaudere solebat, lacrimis irremediabilibus irrigabat." VCMEng, 45, p. 150.

to be Templar garb arriving to help a powerful duke facing treason from his nobles.[435] This story was not original to Thomas, originating from the Cluniac Order, but Thomas deliberately dressed up this older work in the fresh-pressed garb of the new Dominican order. The *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus* was originally written in poem form in the middle of the twelfth century by an anonymous Cluniac monk. The original anecdote around which the later poem is based was possibly written by the fourth abbot of Cluny, Maiolus (c. 906–994) who allegedly faced imprisonment under the "wicked" duke in the poem, Ostorgius.[436] Both Thomas and Maiolus shared concerns over the care and commemoration of the beloved personal dead, which Maiolus prioritized majorly during his tenure as the abbot of Cluny.

While it would be Maiolus's successor, Odilo of Cluny (c. 962–1049) who established the Feast for All Souls, an important holy day of prayer for the dead, with both private and public masses and alms given on behalf of the departed, it was Maiolus who first promoted post-mortem care in a meaningful manner.[437] As Bruce and Jones observe, before Maiolus's tenure, there were no meaningful mentions of prayers for the dead in Cluniac charters: once these were included, there was a flurry of donation and expansion that could very likely be linked to an expansion of prayers for the dead.[438] This also makes sense within a context of developing rituals and care for the dead within the Cluniac community itself, as discussed earlier in the chapter. With the efficacy of Cluniac prayers for the dead already promoted in the Feast for All Souls, as well as Maiolus's earlier efforts, it is entirely possible that, if Thomas came across Maiolus's works, he might have felt that he had found a kindred spirit.

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[435] BUA, 2.53.30, pp. 954–960.
[436] C.A. Jones, and S.G. Bruce, Introduction, *The Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus: A Twelfth-Century Cluniac Poem on Prayer for the Dead*, *Journal of Medieval Latin*, x (Turnhout, 2016), p. 2.
[437] Ibid., pp. 4–5.
[438] Ibid., pp. 6–7.

Beyond Maiolus's own appeal, Thomas might have found yet another commonality: the Cluniacs also countered heretical groups who doubted the efficacy of prayers for the dead, such as the Petrobrusians.[439] The Petrobrusians' rejection of infant baptism, the cross (seen purely as a symbol of death), and the Eucharist itself were not too dissimilar to the heretical talking points Thomas wrote against. Most notably, the efforts of Peter the Venerable (c. 1092–1156) to defend the care of the dead in a treatise published after the death of Peter of Bruys hold much in common with Thomas's concern, indicating ongoing concerns with the afterlife and where and how the dead that continued well into Thomas's day, as we have explored in the previous chapter. For example, Peter also chastised heretics as denying the full capacity of God's mercy in denying intercession for the dead.[440] While he emphasised that the works of the living would not get the dead out of facing God's judgement or get them out of hell, Peter cited the "hidden mercies" of a God who knew the entirety of the merits of the dead, and that their punishment or purification could be mitigated by:

> … the hidden dispensations of God's justice and mercy, by the pious works of the good living…for the remedy of the good but imperfect dead…imperfect, because they need purification. This purification, separate from eternal damnation, is either offered by the hidden judgement of God… or is repaid by the inexhaustible goodness of the Church with sacrifices, prayers, alms, and the like…[441]

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[439] Ibid., pp. 8–9.

[440] Peter the Venerable, "Tractatus contra petrobrussianos," in PL 189, cols. 819D820 (translation my own): "Quis enim, o Catholici lectores, non advertat Satanam, cujus cogitationes juxta supradictum Apostolum, non ignoramus (II Cor, 11), hoc cogitasse ut tot bona a tantis bonis [a]ssidue per orbem pro mortuis facta, hoc astu averteret, et juges eleemosynas,continua sacrificia, irrequietas orationes, et his similia, et vivis comparant meritum, et defunctis requiem, consilio infernali auferret?"

[441] Ibid.: "… occultas dispensationes justitiae et misericordiae Dei, piis operibus bonorum vivorum… ad remedium bonorum, sed imperfectorum mortuorum… imperfectos, quia indigent purgatione. Quae purgatio ab aeterna damnatione secernens, aut per occultum Dei judicium… aut per inexhaustam ejus bonitatem Ecclesiæ sacrificiis, orationibus, eleemosynis et his similibus recompensatur… ."

Peter used the example of Christ's ministry, arguing the following: that the living Christ benefitted the living spiritually and bodily, and that the dead Christ benefitted the dead, "rescuing the souls of innumerable saints and restoring them to eternal bliss."[442] Moreover, the *living* Christ benefitted the dead, as Peter illustrated with the resurrections of Lazarus, the centurion's servant in the Gospel of Luke, and the dead girl in the Gospel of Matthew.[443] If the living Christ could benefit the dead through his miracles, and the dead Christ could prove beneficial to the living, this set a precedent for the reciprocal relationship between the living and the dead and set an imitable example for the care of the dead. The suggestion that works of the living for the dead were an extension and reflection of God's mercy extended into the story of the two dukes itself and fit neatly in Thomas's purgatorial suffrages. However, while Maiolus was preoccupied with the suffering of the dead in his account of the two dukes, the good Eusebius and the wicked Ostorgius, respectively, Thomas showed more interest in what reciprocity with the purgatorial dead could entail. In doing so, he placed the Dominican order at the heart of his thesis concerning the reciprocal relationship between the living and the purgatorial dead.

In the story, related to Thomas by a brother from his order, a duke, described as being "wholly devoted to superfluous expenses and to secular glory," was called to a better life by the "painstaking preaching of a certain one," possibly a Dominican preacher, given Thomas's source.[444] In any event, the duke ultimately proved controversial in his newfound piety, saying to his followers:

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[442] Ibid.: "De quibus innumerabilesi sanctorum animas eruens, et beatitudini aeternae restituens…"
[443] Ibid.
[444] BUA, 2.53.30, p. 954: "… narravit mihi, quod dux quidam dives et potens valde supervacuis expensis deditus erat totus et glorie seculari. Qui ad correctiorem vitam sedula cuiusdam predicatione conversus…"

> As I look truly at the life which so far I have led, there is no salvation for me, and I have spent my life to no avail and condemnation. Therefore I want to refrain from expenditure, reduce my household, restore what was taken away by force, and redeem the sins that I have done by alms.[445]

In the original Cluniac poem, Eusebius was not exhorted away from a sinful life by an outside influence. If anything, Eusebius was much more of a preacher himself, a saintly leader who sermonised at length throughout the poem. He was described by the author of the poem, recounting Maiolus's recollections, as possessing a "kind disposition," and that he, "looked after beggars…. Giving generously to them in the villages and in public places… 'To feed orphans,' he said, 'is to possess beryls; to give bounty to the sick is better than the beauty of a sapphire.'"[446] By changing the story to a duke who converted thanks to a "diligent" preacher, Thomas placed the act of preaching itself (and, as is implied, the Dominican Order) at the core of the narrative. This preaching later bore purgatorial fruits: because of the preacher's diligence, a relationship was fostered between a repentant sinner and the purgatorial dead. Thomas described the duke as beginning with "a generous hand to the poor," then appointing chaplains to celebrate Mass for the relief of those in purgatory.[447] The Cluniac poem went into far more detail concerning Eusebius' care for the dead:

> … he strove to benefit the dead through many prayers; for them the Mass was a source of light and a welcome repose. A retribution after death purges the crimes of some through flame and water; Masses diminish their

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[445] BUA, 2.53.30, p. 954: "Ut vere video in vita, quam hactenus duxi, mihi salus non est et vitam inutiliter et dampnabiliter iam expendi. Volo igitur expensis igitur expensis parcere, imminuere familiam, vi ablata restituere et elemosinis redimere peccata, que feci."

[446] Anonymous, *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus*, in C.A. Jones, and S.G. Bruce, *The Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus: A Twelfth-Century Cluniac Poem on Prayer for the Dead*, *Journal of Medieval Latin*, x (Turnhout, 2016), stanzas 146–148, pp. 82–84: "… largius ore meo mentis fuit ille benigne. Fouit enim uictu mendicos, fouit amictu. Donans largus eis in uicis atque plateis… 'Pascere pupillos est,' inquit, 'habere beryllos; egris largiri melius quam forma saphyri.'"

[447] BUA, 2.53.30, p. 954.

> torment, as do monetary gifts offered for the succour of our loved ones in their pitiful state.[448]

While the Cluniac poet advocated for two of the most significant suffrages for the dead found in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, prayers and the saying of Mass, Thomas advocated for more personal forms of remembrance, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Meanwhile, neither iteration of the poem indicates that the duke had reason, beyond compassion and piety, to grieve the dead he worked for. Given that Thomas set this story at the end of a long series of stories of lay people caring for their personal, beloved dead, it is not difficult to see where his audience could utilise the example of the good duke, caring for their own dead and those outside of their immediate circle.

The duke's piety did not go over well with his former supporters in either version of the Cluniac poem. Angered that their lord favoured the clergy, "the seducers of this world" instead of bestowing favours on them, his nobles rallied an enemy king to march against him, causing the duke to take shelter in a fortified castle.[449] Here we find the most significant departure in Thomas's adaptation of the poem: rather than a story of two dukes, equally pitted against each other, the poem was transformed into a tale about a lone saintly leader standing against a world that had turned against him, bolstered only by faith. Suddenly, the duke spotted an army dressed in white, carrying shields with red crosses, ready to fight on his behalf because:

> They are here prepared to help you by the order of God, they who by suffrages of almsgiving and masses you have liberated from purgatory.

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[448] *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus*, stanzas, 257–263, pp. 90–91: "… precibus multis studuit prodesse sepultis, missa quibus caus lucis fuit et bona pausa. Crimina quorundam per flammam colat et undam ultio post fatum; minuunt misse cruciatum, symbola carorum circa curam miserorum."

[449] BUA, 2.53.30, p. 956.

> Moreover at the appointed time others too will be delivered, who will come with us to your aid.[450]

In the Cluniac poem, the army of the dead who responded to Eusebius's wondering question about their identities, saying they were:

> spirits whom the agony of burning and freezing has purified… all of us, after being assailed by torments, you have rescued, O duke… Holy Masses were virtuously offered as remedies for us; they absolved us and placed us in heaven[451]

The dead also confirmed for Eusebius that his almsgiving and charity freed many of them from their torment, not only the Masses offered for them. Unlike the almsgiving shown in Thomas's poem, the almsgiving in the original was also explicitly done by Eusebius for the dead.[452] If this news from the dead was a revelation for Eusebius, then for the duke in Thomas's account, it is framed as part of what the Dominican approach to the dead already entailed, especially since the story was placed in the context of previous suffrages that included almsgiving. This is not to say that the Thomas's suffrages were necessarily read consecutively, but given how Thomas placed them in a specific section and order, it is not unreasonable to suppose that almsgiving and the Mass were meant to be read as going hand in hand.

When the king arrived the next day to seize the duke and his lands, he found himself surrounded by this celestial army and surrendered; the duke showed mercy to all of his enemies and, after insisting that that the armies pause to "… give thanks to God,

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[450] BUA, 2.53.30, p. 958: "Ne verearis, fidelissime principum, venturi regis adventum. Assunt illi divini iussu parati iuvare te, quo elemosinis et missarum suffragiis de purgatorio liberasti. Medio autem tempore condicti diei liberabuntur et alii, qui nobiscum in tuum adiutorium sunt venturi."
[451] Anon., *Relatio metrica de duobus ducibus*, stanzas 729–740, pp. 114–115: "... quique sumus flatus, quos colauit cruciatus ignis et algoris; non unis orbis in horis sed tormentorum pressos ubicumque locorum corpore cum Christi, dux, omnes eripuisti. Misse sacrate bene nobis sunt medicate, nos absoluerunt et celis inseruerunt."
[452] Ibid.

and glorify God in his wondrous majesty " everyone returned to their own lands.[453] In the original poem, the dead also lectured Ostorgius, while in Thomas's poem, the dead leave immediately when their business is concluded.

This is the longest of Thomas's stories in this section as the culmination of the purgatorial suffrages. The army of the dead was not necessarily a new phenomenon; as Caciola observes, an account of a deathly army by chronicler Ekkehard of Aura appeared as early as 1126:

> In the province of Worms a not inconsiderable multitude of armed knights was seen coming and going for several days. At about the ninth hour they would go back into a certain mountain that they earlier had been seen to leave.[454]

In the case of Ekkehard, rather than being holy souls emerging from purgatory, the army was described as knights, suffering a sort of penance on earth for their sinful behaviour in participating in tournaments, as they explained:

> … we are the shades of knights who recently were killed. The arms and armour and horses that previously were our tools for sin are now the instruments of our torment. For truly, everything that you see us with is burning, though you cannot see it with your bodily eyes.[455]

Given that the topic will be covered in the next chapter, I will not expand on the "misbehaving" dead in these armies. This is to note that the imagery of an army of the

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[453] BUA, 2.53.30, pp. 958–960: "Hinc denique factum est, ut rebus in summa tranquillitate peractiis gratias Deo exercitus in communi persolverent et glorificarent in suis mirabilibus Dominum maiestatis, et sic quique cum gaudio ad propria remearunt."

[454] Ekkehardus Uraugiensis, *Chronicon Uraugiensis*, in PL, 154, cols. 1051–52 as cited and translated in Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 157: "In pago Wormaciensi, videbatur per aliquot dies non modica et armata multitudo equitum euntium et redeuntium... circa nonam vero horam cuidam monti, a quo et exisse videbantur, se reddere."

[455] Ibid.: "… Non sumus… sed animae militum non longe antehac interfectorum. Arma vero et habitus atque equi quia nobis prius fuerant instrumenta peccandi, nunc nobis sunt materia tormenti, et vere totum ignitum est quod in nobis cernitis, quamvis id vos corporalibus oculis discernere non possitis."

dead was not unique to Thomas; indeed, as the next chapter will explore, the returning dead appear in the works of many of his contemporaries, such as those of Stephen of Bourbon or William of Auvergne, often marrying purgatorial discussions with existing folklore and superstitions.

What set this tale apart from Thomas's other suffrages, as well as those recommended by his contemporaries, was how purgatorial piety was explicitly tied to the legitimisation of secular authority, marrying a typical aristocratic conversion story into one where, with the aid of the Order of Preachers, purgatorial interactions with the dead were seen as the basis and protection of worldly authority. Because the duke cared for the purgatorial dead, offering Masses for their souls, the dead defended his power: not against a fellow duke, as in the original Cluniac poem, but against a king. The duke's purgatorial piety and obedience to preaching enabled him to defy his superior with divine support. Rather than the saintly dead coming to his aid, it was the mobilized purgatorial dead, who reward his piety and reinforced his power.

While Caesarius also explored this sort of interaction between religious brothers and secular power, particularly in a story about a nobleman who was delivered from purgatory by the prayers and Masses said by the Cistercian order at Clairvaux, there was not the same emphasis placed on intercession for the dead and the legitimization of secular authority.[456] Caesarius's stories concerning the topic might have been written with restitution or endowments for Cistercian intercession in mind: however, not wishing to imitate their Cluniac forbearers, Caesarius made certain to condemn greedy behaviour. In an example of the punishment for refusing to aid the dead, a priest neglected to say prayers for a dying pilgrim who bequeathed his cloak to him; the priest was then brutally beaten

[456] DMEng, ii, 2.12.33, pp. 321–322, DM, ii, 2.12.13, pp. 342–343, for one example of this efficacy.

about the head with cloak after devils dip it in lava.[457] Perhaps tactfully, Caesarius followed this story, not with his usual further reflection on a topic, but by abruptly moving onto stories of heavenly reward.[458] Jacques included a humorous story in the same vein about a greedy priest refusing bury the mother of a poor man without pay. The son bundled his mother into a sack, convincing the priest that he had placed wool skeins in it to pay for his mother's funeral. The priest, gleeful at the thought of payment, opened the sack when,"it happened that the feet of the old woman that her son had bent back, with great impact struck the breast of the priest strongly."[459] The thoroughness of this kicking (and the pricking of conscience that followed) led the priest to carry out the appropriate rites for the dead woman.[460] While the dead woman served as a reminder to the priest of his duties, there was no mingling of secular and religious authority. The dead woman was simply, even inadvertently, positioned to frighten the priest with a swift kick into remembering his duties.

Women as Caregivers:

These stories of neglect were in stark contrast to the compassion of the *mulieres religiosae*. Beyond the purgatorial acts of care demonstrated in the *vitae* of the Liègeoises, the beguines were already known for the care they provided for the sick, the dying, and

[457] DMEng, ii, 2.12.42, pp. 330–331, DM, ii, 2.12.42, pp. 350–351.
[458] Ibid.
[459] SV, 197, p. 82: "Cum autem os sacci solveret, accidit quod pedes vetule quos filius ejus reflexerat cum magno impulsu pectus sacerdotis fortiter percusserunt."
[460] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 78; Ritchey, *Acts of Care*, pp. 96–100 and Christine Guidera, 'The Role of the Beguines in Caring for the Ill, the Dying, and the Dead' in E. E. DuBruck and B. I. Gusick (eds.), *Death and Dying in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1999), 51–72, on the *mulieres religiosae* and their palliative and post-mortem care. See also Sharon Farmer, 'The Leper In The Master Bed Room: Thinking Through A Thirteenth Century Exemplum' in Rosalynn Voaden and Diane Wolfthal (eds.), *Framing the family: Narrative and representation in the medieval and early modern periods*, (Tempe AZ, 2005), pp. 79–100, especially pp. 88–93, in discussing how pious women, especially wives, were allowed to step outside of their spheres for piety's sake.

the dead. Jacques notes this in the prologue to his *vita* of Marie, praising widows in particular:

> … because holy widows 'share with any of the saints who are in need', they washed the feet of the poor, 'made hospitality their special care' (Romans 12. 13), applied themselves to works of mercy, and promised to bear fruit sixty-fold (cf. Matthew 13. 18).[461]

The beguines were known for their palliative and post-mortem care, whether in chanting the Psalms for a sister who had passed, or in the vigils that they kept over the body.[462] While these women faced some restrictions about the acts of post-mortem care they were allowed to do, there is some evidence that their care became increasingly desirable outside of the beguinage community. Simons cites a few examples of laity requesting the presence of the beguines at their deathbed or asking for prayers and vigils to be provided after their passing.[463] Likewise, some exceptions could in their provision of post-mortem care could be made for male benefactors.[464] However, the question remains: why were these women in particular, whether the beguines or the holy women of Liège, so drawn towards this kind of care? What made their intercessions particularly effective? Simons argues that the "liminality" of these women, as adult virgins or chaste widows, leant itself to hospice and post-mortem care, their "in-between" status placing them in a better position to aid those passing into the next word.[465] This can be seen in much of the Liégeoise *corpus*, particularly when we consider Christina or Alice of Schaerbeek. However, there was a spiritual reason for their identification with the sick, the dying, or those in purgatory. As Orlemanski notes in a study on the leprous kiss, while

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[461] VMOEng, prol.3, pp. 42–43, VMO, prol.3, pp. 547–548: "… quod sanctae viduas, quas Sanctorum necessitatibus communicant, quae pedes pauperum lavant, qua hospitalitatem sectantur, quae operibus misericordiae insistunt, fructum sexagesimum promerentur."
[462] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 78.
[463] Ibid., pp. 78–79.
[464] Ibid., p. 79.
[465] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 79.

this care was often seen as a chance for transformation, there was also "desire for disability" to take on, literally and figuratively, the experiences and embodiment of the abject.[466]

The difficulty of the leprous kiss is that its intimacy is often one-sided in its portrayal, and the kiss itself could serve as a paradoxical act of intimacy. In drawing closer to another person in an act of intimacy or love, the identifiable features of the face as markers are obscured as a person leans in for a kiss, "intensifying" into the purely tactile.[467] Its enjoyment is contingent on the understanding of the relationship between the kissers in question.[468] There is some indication of how those providing the care might have felt: in his *Historia occidentalis*, Jacques describes the work of hospital workers and the stinking "impurities" they suffer through in their care for others as a kind of martyrdom all its own.[469] Meanwhile it is difficult to discern how the leper themselves might have felt about some of these interactions. Orlemanski observes two major types of interactions: disgust and/or disappearance.[470] The first kind of interaction is one of spiritual devotion, overcoming the initial disgust upon seeing the leper to the inward transformation of love and compassion, illustrated externally with a kiss. Then the leper usually disappears, revealing themselves to have potentially been a vision of Christ, or is completely healed of their affliction by the kiss.[471] For example, this is evident in the tale

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[466] Julie Orlemanski, 'How to kiss a leper' in *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, iii, no. 2 (2012), 142–157, p. 143; Orlemanski borrows the phrase utilised by Robert McRuer and Abby Wilkerson 'Introduction to Desiring Disability: Queer Theory Meets Disability Studies' in *GLQ*, ix, nos. 1–2 (2003), 1–23, pp. 13–14 for a discussion of the meaning of this term.
[467] Orlemanski, 'How to kiss a leper,' p. 146; here Orlemanski utilises a translation of Ambrose of Milan found in N.J. Perella, *The Kiss Sacred and Profane: An Interpretative History of Kiss Symbolism and Related Religio-Erotic Themes*, (Berkeley, 1969), p. 28.
[468] Ibid., p. 146.
[469] Farmer, 'The Leper in the Master Bedroom,' p 83.
[470] Orlemanski, 'How to kiss a leper,' pp. 149–151.
[471] Ibid., p. 151.

of St. Francis overcoming his aversion to a leper, and kissing him, only to have the subject of his discomfort, potentially Christ in disguise, then disappear.

The leper as an individual further disappears in examples of Christ-as-leper. In an episode within the *Dialogus miraculorum*, a particularly devout bishop is stopped by a leper.[472] After offering the man the kiss of peace and alms, the leper refuses, asking the bishop instead to lick a piece of dangling flesh from his nose. Here, the leper specifies the type of intimacy in question, demanding to be physically cared for on his own terms. The bishop obliges and is rewarded with a precious gem, and the leper is revealed to have been Christ all along. Peyroux observes that in doing so, the dynamic changes from earlier saintly examples of kiss-as-cure: rather, the challenge is presented to find Christ within the leper's suffering, wounded form.[473]Peyroux notes that in a different example featuring a bishop kissing a leper, Hugh, the Bishop of Lincoln, he is depicted as saying "the leper's kiss healed my soul," juxtaposing his experience with that of St. Martin, whose kiss healed the leper.[474]

While a slightly later example than the time period this thesis covers, the fifteenth-century English would-be mystic, Margery Kempe perfectly exemplifies this desire for experiencing and embodying the abject in order to more deeply identify with Christ.[475] Orlemanski cites this as the reason Margery Kempe struggles with her emotions when overcome with a desire to kiss with lepers for the love of Jesus: when she sees their wounds, she sees Christ rather than the leprous individual.[476] In seeing Christ in the wounds of lepers, she responded by seeking him through touching those bodies, wanting

[472] DMEng, ii, 2.28.32, pp. 31–33, DM, ii, 2.8.32, pp. 105–106.
[473] Catherine Peyroux, 'The Leper's Kiss' in Sharon Farmer and B. H. Rosenwein (eds.), *Monks and Nuns, Saints and Outcasts*, (Ithaca, 2000), 172–188, p. 183.
[474] Ibid., p. 184; Orlemanski, 'How to kiss a leper,' p. 152.
[475] See Spencer-Hall's comparison of Margery's attempts at spiritual fame to influencers such as Kim Kardashian in, 'The Xtian Factor, or How to Manufacture a Medieval Saint,' in *Medieval Saints*, pp. 167–187.
[476] Orlemanski, 'How to kiss a leper,' p. 152.

to imitate him in healing the afflicted, but also ultimately hoping "to access Christ via the surrogate activity of receiving contamination and potential pain."[477] Yet here, at least in Kempe's own description of her actions, the benefit is mutually therapeutic: Margery's physical contact and kind words to leprous women bring her closer to Christ, but she in turn provides physical contact, which they would ordinarily be excluded from, and, in one instance, literally redirects a blind leprous woman's despairing thoughts back to God in telling the woman about her own visions.[478] Despite her desires, Margery does not become a leper, instead choosing to distance herself as a religious authority while thanking God for favouring her by not afflicting her, proof of what Kalas calls the "divine prophylactic" of her spiritual maturity.[479] Such is not the case with saints like Christina or Alice. Christina does not merely offer up her earthly pains for purgatorial suffering: she dies and returns in a purgatorial body, enabling her to experience the full extent of purgatorial pain.[480] In doing so, Christina becomes another Incarnation of Christ's

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[477] Laura Kalas, *Margery Kempe's Spiritual Medicine: Suffering, Transformation and the Life-Course*, (Cambridge, 2020), pp. 144–145. Kalas lists some examples of this that Margery would have likely been aware of, such as St. Elizabeth of Hungary and Angela of Foligno; for the leper's associations with Christ, see Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England*, (Woodbridge, 2006), 104–54, pp. 114–115; see also on myths surrounding contagion, F.-O. Touati, 'Contagion and Leprosy: Myth, Ideas and Evolution in Medieval Minds and Societies in Contagion' in L. I. Conrad and Dominik Wujastyk (eds.), *Contagion Perspectives from Pre-Modern Societies*, (London, 2000), 179–202, pp. 185–198.

[478] Kalas, *Spiritual Medicine*, p. 147; I realise that there is some degree of contention on delineating Margery Kempe, the historical person, from the Margery Kempe depicted in *The Book of Margery Kempe*, either by Kempe herself or clerical hands. For the sake of clarity, I am going to adhere to the delineation that Spencer-Hall utilises in *Medieval Saints*, p. 168, citing Lynn Staley who "enacts a functional delineation between 'Margery, the subject, and Kempe, her author.'" This most clearly delineates the hagiographer from her topic (made even more tricky than the usual conventions of hagiography is the author is Kempe writing about herself.) For a brief but comprehensive discussion of some of these debates, see *Medieval Saints*, p. 168) Spencer-Hall also discusses the difficulties of interpreting Margery's "autobiography" as both its subject and an "influencer" working to frame her own narrative with her male hagiographers, particularly alongside similar wanna-be influencers like Thomas of Cantimpré himself (and more successful bids at influencer life from the Kardashians) see *Medieval Twitter: Modern Media, Literary Criticism, and Medievalism*, (Leeds, 2024), pp. 95–101. For a seminal study on the subject, see Lynn Staley, *Margery Kempe's Dissenting Fictions*, (University Park, 1994), pp. 1–38.

[479] Ibid., p. 146.

[480] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 96–97.

suffering and resurrection: as Spencer-Hall notes, she can die again and again as needed, whether literally in how she summoned back or figuratively in how she can be "called" upon in her *vita*.[481] Similarly, the "fruits" that Alice begs God for towards the start of her life are fulfilled in her leprosy, even if she does not beg to be a leper specifically. Before the chapter in her *vita* where she is stricken with leprosy, Alice has a vision in which a golden Cross is lowered to her. She ardently embraces the Cross, holding it "as a bundle of myrrh between her breasts" simultaneously demonstrating her love of Christ and her willingness to embrace a Passion similar to his.[482] In her identification with the souls in purgatory, Christina then becomes like one of them in order to provide care; in Alice's passionate love of Christ and willingness to embrace his Passion, she is stricken with an illness where her suffering is continuous, "… every moment of her leprous life is one in which she is joined with Christ on the Cross."[483]

By embracing such suffering, these women imitate Christ's Incarnation and sacrifice; as discussed earlier, this also meant that their spiritual fruits could lead to the salvation of souls, making them a participant in the kind of deliverance that Christ offered humanity. In this, the care of the dead could be an appealing practice for lay women of average holiness who were otherwise excluded from many ministries. While unable to necessarily take up the *exact* penances as Christina or Alice, women could play a role in the care of the dead that was therapeutic for themselves and the people in their care. Unlike many of the leper stories, the dead were often explicit about what they needed to get out of purgatory and how best to go about it.

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[481] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, p. 104.
[482] VASEng, 1.6.8, pp. 8–9, VAS, 1.8, p. 473: "… ut fasiculum myrrhae inter ubera deportabat…"; Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' pp. 406–407.
[483] Spencer-Hall, 'Christ's Suppurating Wounds,' p. 407

In any case, unorthodox means could be forgiven if they bore the appropriate spiritual fruit. In an example presented by Jacques, a noblewoman carries a leprous man up to her bedroom while her husband, who hates lepers, is away so that the sick man can rest comfortably. When her husband returns, the wife is frightened, fearing for her life. Rather than finding the leper however, the husband marvels at the sweet fragrance in their bedroom and is converted, made as gentle as a "lamb" by his wife's example.[484] In presenting this story to hospital workers, many of whom would have been married themselves, Jacques presented a woman putting herself at the dual risks of illness and being accused of adultery to carry out an act of mercy.[485] Caught between two spouses, one in heaven and one on earth, Jacques presented a model where the heavenly spouse took precedence—however, without a corresponding miracle, there was room for dangerous ambiguity.[486] However, if the fruits of these acts of piety played out, then there was room for bargaining. Spencer-Hall describes the "patriarchal bargain," in which, in return for upholding the orthodox beliefs of the Church, a male-dominated space, with their sanctity women could then enjoy certain benefits.[487]

In caring for the purgatorial dead, particularly by the models presented by preachers like Thomas or by holy women like Christina, ordinary women could then find an outlet for their own piety. As they cared for the dying at their deathbeds or held vigils over the dead, their compassionate prayers could then be turned to contemplation of Christ. When they prayed for the purgatorial dead, they could participate in Christ's

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[484] SV, 95, pp. 44–45: "… mansuescere cepit velud agnus." Farmer, 'The Leper in the Master Bedroom,' pp. 81–82.
[485] Ibid., p. 85.
[486] Ibid, p. 90; Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock*, (Princeton, 1993), pp. 185–188.
[487] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 249–250; see Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Bargaining With Patriarchy' in *Gender and Society*, ii, no. 3 (1988), 274–290, p. 275; J. M. Bennett, 'Medieval Women in Modern Perspective,' in B.G. Smith (ed.), *Women's History in Global Perspective*, (3 vols, Champaign, 2004–2005), ii, 139–186, pp. 148–149.

salvation of souls. Further, in the suffrages these women could perform, whether part of a beguinage or a living in the world, they participated in care that was previously reserved for monastic communities.[488]

"Till Death Do Us Part?": Widows, Devotion, and The Curation of Memory

The story of the divine army is followed by Thomas's discussion of his father's stint in purgatory and his dedication to the priesthood as a boy to mitigate his father's sins committed while on Crusade. Thomas recalled multiple emotional meetings, with his father "calling him forth" to the priesthood with "tears and reverence."[489] When Thomas was fully grown and ordained as a priest, he describe being visited by the ghost of his father whenever he failed to or was delayed in saying Mass, where his father, "... having been wounded with many wounds… sincerely rebuked me on account of why I would not help the father as a son."[490] This was a formative experience that shaped Thomas's pastoral work, decades later. However, it was also useful as an example, given that his concern for a dead loved one was likely one that many of his audience shared. Much of his *exempla* focused on a similar dynamic, with grieving families caring for the dead and tending to their spiritual well-being in the afterlife. However, how this care was expected to be initiated and reciprocated along gendered lines varied vastly between men and women.

Men were certainly capable of providing purgatorial care, as stories of devout priests, religious brothers, and even the odd lay man all attest to. Yet, there was an

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[488] Ritchey, *Acts of Care*, pp. 99–101; Christopher Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066–1550*, (London, 1997), pp. 27–29, for a discussion of the monastic rituals that the beguines mirrored in their care of the dying.

[489] BUA, 2.53.32, pp. 960–962: "Sed et patrem meum, ut me adhuc puerum ad litterarum studium vitam celibem provocaret, sepius mihi cum lacrimis et devotione referentem audivi."

[490] BUA, 2.53.32, p. 962: "Mihi quoque Christus testis sit, quod si quando pro eo celebrare distulissem alias impeditus, ipse mihi apparebat in sompnis et manibus ostensis, plagis plurimis vulneratis, me utique, quare patrem filius non iuvarem, sinceriter arguebat."

emphatic focus on women's practical and embodied compassion for the dead, whether in their prayers for the dead or their redemptive suffering on their behalf. The embodied aspect was particularly important: among Thomas's contemporaries, such as William of Auvergne or Albertus Magnus, the "permeability" of women's spiritual and physical natures was widely accepted, along with the idea that excessive devotions were more likely to bring on melancholia in women than in men.[491]

In an example of this, Ida of Nivelles toes the line when she feigns an episode of *acedia* after being denied the Eucharist.[492] While this episode ends happily when Ida ultimately receives the Eucharist after some contrivance, the perceived zeal that women were said to have for "fantastic" experiences muddied the waters around interpreting women's piety: was it true Incarnation, a transformative affective piety, or potentially a spiritual illness? It did not clarify matters that scholars like Albertus Magnus saw women's natures as making them naturally eager to encounter the fantastic as a kind of novelty; further, their nature offered an opportunity for the infernal to deceive and permeate while posing as the divine.[493] When discerning the nature of women's spiritual experiences, the answer appears to have lain in the outcome: while melancholia could provide some illuminations, the "vapours" would eventually dry up, alienating the melancholic and driving them mad, unlike true spiritual maturation, where truly divine visions would lead to greater certainty and comfort in faith.[494] Meanwhile, a spiritual

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[491] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 203–211 for a discussion of this; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, 273–276, Bynum, *Fragmentation*, p. 194, Hollywood, *The Soul as a Virgin Wife*, pp. 27–39; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 131–137, 141–150, on the fraught physical nature of women and their perceived susceptibility to possession and, particularly concerning the "porousness" of women, 151–158; Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices*, pp. 19–27.
[492] VINEng, 3a–3c, pp. 36–37, VIN, 3, pp. 208–210; Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 115–119; Elliott, *The Bride of Christ*, pp. 186–187.
[493] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 207; Dyan Elliott, "The Physiology of Rapture and Female Spirituality," in *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, (York, 1997), 141–173, pp. 148–151; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 34, 68–72.
[494] Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices*, pp. 46–56; Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp. 50–53.

illness or, worse, demonic illusions led to doubt and ultimately despair. This concern was also reflected in contemporary debates on the physicality of rapture or possession themselves. Caciola notes however that demons occupied different parts of the body than the Holy Spirit or God: demons could enter through the senses, but only God could truly possess a soul, as illustrated in an *exemplum* by an anonymous author about a possessed woman. Upon receiving the Host, the demon residing in her was asked whether or not Christ was inside with him, and the demon responded, "No, the Lord is in her soul, and I live in her intestines."[495] Caesarius echoes this in his *Dialogus miraculorum*, saying:

> And here is the difference between the approach of the Holy Spirit and that of a wicked spirit, that the Holy Spirit is properly said to pass into the soul, and the other to inspire it.… When the devil is said to be within a man, this must not be understood of the soul, but of the body… [496]

Returning to Ida's case, it is not true *acedia* but an indication of the depths of her passion for Christ, rather than any infernal causes or spiritual sickness. Her hagiographer juxtaposes her torment over the Host to those in monastic communities who found "… fasting, vigils, prayers and any spiritual exercises quite heavy and unbearable (Matt. 23.4.)", but also situates the Host as the cure for this spiritual listlessness,[497] She is immediately cured by gaining access to him in the Host, seeking him through the rites of the Church.[498] In any case, these discussions all indicate an anxiety around the nature of women's visions and how best to interpret and contain them within orthodox practices.

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[495] A. Little, *Liber exemplorum ad usum praedlcantlum* (Aberdeen, 1907), 1.17, p. 9: "… Michi vero non in animam eius set in corpus est data potestas." as found and translated in Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, p. 198.
[496] DMEng, i, 1.5.15, p. 335, DM, i, 1.5.15, p. 294: Et haec est differentia inter adventum Spiritus sancti et spiritus maligni, quod ille proprie dicitur illabi, iste immitti. … Cum diabolus dicitur esse in homine, non intelligendum est de anima, sed de corpore…"
[497] VINEng, 3b, p. 36, VIN, 3, p. 209: "… ieiunia, vigilias, orationes et spiritualia quaevis exercitia gravia valde et importabilia reputant…"
[498] VINEng, 3b, p. 36, VIN, 3, p. 209.

As Elliott notes, the difference between a martyr's pyre and the stake of a heretic was dependent on the context in which their actions were interpreted.[499]

As established earlier, Thomas featured women the most prominently as intercessors in his suffrages, something likely reflective of his own encounters with these practices. However, despite his enthusiasm for the piety of the holy women of Liège, Thomas also shared some of his contemporaries' anxieties on the physical experiences of women. In his encyclopaedia work, *De natura rerum*, he notes the propensity of some women, particularly widows, to collapse as if dead; he attributes the cause to the uterus "compressing the heart and the spirit" and becoming unduly expanded due to the retention of menses or abstinence from sexual intercourse.[500] In this light, Christina's initial collapse could be read less miraculously and more as a physical health problem: chaste widows pursuing purgatorial devotions might find themselves in a similar predicament. However, Thomas and a great deal of his contemporaries would discern the truth of Christina's spiritual status through the fruits of her labour. With these suffrages as a blueprint, devout women had a means to demonstrate their piety through acts widely understood to produce good spiritual fruit that was less likely to leave their endeavours in question.

A vast majority of these stories around purgatorial care involved a deceased loved one, usually a man, appearing to a loved one, most often a female relative, to ask for help. It was rare in his examples for a man who was not a priest or a monk to consider his afterlife in any detail, relying on his relatives to care for him: consider the example of the mother who sought out the priest Lambert on behalf of her "son. This was not always the case. In another example in the same section, concerning prayers on behalf of the

[499] Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 230.
[500] *DNR*, 1.60.16–23, p. 66; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 206–207; Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy*, pp. 245–246.

deceased, the devout Emperor Otto appears to a female relative in her convent to request prayers for his soul, specifying:

> I am dead and being tormented in the pains of purgatory, therefore direct messengers to different devout monasteries and have read ten thousand psalters read on my behalf, so that for each psalm ten blows [of discipline] will be received, and at every verse the angelic salutation, "Ave Maria,' and the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father" should be added, [and] truly the Psalm, "De Profundis," when accepting discipline, should be said.[501]

This was easily done since the Emperor had already made abundant donations to different monasteries and the poor while still alive, and had undertaken severe penance as he was dying, allowing himself to be scourged daily.[502] Yet, even with Otto's preparations, the his female relative's devotion was necessary to ensure that his final wishes were carried out: happily, her intercession was effective, and Otto was soon able to pass on into paradise after a relatively short stint in purgatory.[503]

However, in another story, this time about a man interceding for a family member in the same section, the deceased man in question was not as lucky. Thomas recounts that a soldier who served in the army of Charlemagne for sixty years summoned his cousin, his sole surviving relative, to his deathbed and asked him to sell his sole belonging, a horse, for alms on behalf of his soul.[504] Despite this, the cousin of the dead man saw the horse and decided to keep the animal for himself, paying little attention to the plight of his relative. After half a year had passed, the ghost of the dead man appeared to, protest

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[501] BUA, 2.53.19, p. 942: "Defunctus ego sum et in purgatorio excrucior penis, diriga ergo nuntios ad diversa et devota cenobia et mille decies psalteria pro me legi facias, ita ut ad singulos psalmos accipiatur decem ictuum disciplina et ad unumquemque additur salutation angelica, 'Ave Maria,' et oratio dominica, 'Pater noster.' Psalmus vero, 'De profundis,' quando accipitur disciplina, dictator." This is likely referring to Otto IV (c. 1175/76–1218), taking notes from a Cistercian account of his death; see Burkhardt's note, BUA, p. 943, n. 27.
[502] BUA, 2.53.19, p. 944.
[503] BUA, 2.53.19, p. 944.
[504] BUA, 1.53.25, p. 950.

his neglect: "You did not take the trouble to do that which I had set up to deliver my soul, and during the time in which I should have been freed through almsgiving, I have suffered grave punishments."[505] Rather than disappearing back to purgatory like other souls failed by their families did, the soldier pronounced a grim fate for his relative:

> … the Almighty who weighs all works has given judgement, and all His adjudicators, the angels, have decided that… my soul will pass into rest and that your soul will suffer the penalty that I was until now paying off through torture."[506]

The cousin, soon fell ill and confessed what he had done to a priest, before dying and fulfilling the rest of his cousin's time in purgatory, presumably on top of what he had incurred for himself during his lifetime.[507]

Thomas seems to have had more faith in, not just the intercessory capabilities of women, but in their very willingness to intercede for their beloved dead. This could certainly be due to Thomas's encounters with the purgatorial piety of the holy women of Liège. As established earlier, his work also came during a period when monastic ideas of providing purgatorial care were being made available to the laity, to say nothing of the burgeoning spiritual movement of the beguine movement that often placed women at the centre of post-mortem care

Widows occupied important roles within these narratives. Newman explores their unique roles within the context of "purgatorial marriage," a relationship which expanded the roles of wives into spiritual caretakers of their husband's memories at a time when

[505] BUA, 1.53.25, p. 950: "Non curasti facere, quod pro anima mea statueram liberanda et ego medio tempore, quo per elemosinas liberari debueram, passus sum graves penas."
[506] BUA, 1.53.25, p. 950: "Sed ecce nunc iudicium dedit operum ponderator omnipotens et omnes eius assessores angeli iustum esse decernunt, ut anima mea ad requiem transeat et anima tua penas excipiat, quas exacturus adhuc fueram in tormentis."
[507] BUA, 2.53.25, p. 950.

marriage was being sacramentalised.[508] The widow held a special position in the mediaeval imagination, particularly in regard to the particular sanctity that widows were thought to have. Jerome wrote about a hierarchy of sanctity for women, with widows receiving a sixtyfold blessing compared to wives, who only received a thirtyfold blessing in heaven.[509] Ideally after being widowed, women would not remarry but would remain chaste and pray for the souls of their husbands.

This was important: not only would women potentially share in their husband's fates in the afterlife, but it also reflected on their own virtue. Clarke suggests that in many ways, widows were similar to the purgatorial dead in that widows worried about how their own chastity would be perceived against the "ideal standard" of virginity in heaven––like souls in purgatory worrying about facing and passing their own final judgement.[510] Given the often ambiguous or even precarious status women often found themselves in, it is perhaps not surprising that many of women's devotional practices were motivated by viewing sin, not through a lens of judgement, but as "a way of talking about human pain, estrangement, and lack of love."[511] While believing in the ultimate infallibility of God's judgement, these women, consumed by God's love, refused to believe that a soul could resist that love.[512]

In his section on suffrages, Thomas related a story by a fellow Dominican whose widowed mother was required to settle her husband's affairs in order to free him from purgatory after he incurred massive debt.[513] His mother helped two men, both the blacksmith, who had fallen ill with worry over the debt, and her husband, who she was

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[508] Newman, 'On the Threshold,' pp. 111, 115–116; Clarke, 'Purgatory, Punishment, and the Discourse,' p. 170; McGuire, 'Purgatory,' p. 68.
[509] Clarke, 'Purgatory, Punishment, and the Discourse,' pp. 170–171; here, Clarke cites Jerome's *Adversus Jovianianus*, 1.3. Virgins still took precedence over both wives and widows.
[510] Ibid., 178.
[511] Newman, *From Virile Woman,* p. 135.
[512] Ibid., p. 136.
[513] BUA, 2.53.27, pp. 952–954.

depicted as literally unbinding from his torments in purgatory.[514] Interceding on her husband's behalf, her purgatorial piety expanded her role as a wife and made her responsible for his spiritual well-being in the afterlife and preserving his reputation by settling his debts. Widows often served as arbiters for their deceased spouses within these collections; there are two stories in a similar vein within the *Dialogus miraculorum* with husbands returning to their wives after death, demanding either restitution or pilgrimage on their behalf.[515]

While there were some stories of widows who do not provide the same care to their husbands' souls, they were usually more of a cautionary tale against laxity and a criticism of women in general. In contrast, men were often shown neglecting their wives' well-being in the afterlife, if not well beforehand. For example, in a tale from the *Sermones vulgares*, a man who gave the custody of his wealth to his wife, a woman named Berthe, was asked by the community around him whether he would give alms to the poor to better the position of his wife's soul, given that she was not overly charitable in life.[516] The man, already planning to remarry, responded: "Berthe had all the good things in my power, let her have everything she did on behalf of her [own] soul."[517] While this could be interpreted as Berthe reaping what she sowed for not utilising some of her husband's wealth for charity, it is notable that many husbands in these stories do not "reap what they sow" in life thanks to the intercessions of their wives. While these behaviours were not necessarily smiled upon by the authors of the works, there was clearly a difference in expected devotion to the dead along gendered lines.

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[514] BUA, 2.53.27, p. 952.
[515] DMEng, ii, 2.11.37, p. 269, DM, ii, 2.11.37, p. 299; see also DMEng, ii, 2.12.7, p. 298, DM, ii, 2.12.7, pp. 322–323.
[516] SV, 182, p. 77.
[517] SV, 182, p. 77: "Berta omnia bona mea in potestate habuit, totum habeat quod pro anima sua fecit. Berte fu ale mait se le sen dona si en ait." I am indebted to Crane's translation of the French, in Crane, *The Illustrative Exempla*, p. 207.

Likewise, while fathers might appear to sons or daughters seeking help, as Thomas's father appeared to him, it was rare for daughters or wives to appeal to their husbands for purgatorial intercession, and successful devotions by men for their female loved ones are seldom presented. In fact, some of the deceased men are shown demonstrating contempt for the fates of their loved ones after their deaths. Caesarius wrote about one Bertolph, the duke of Zahringen, deliberately withholding his wealth, reducing it "to a lump," to incite his family to violent strife over the splitting of his wealth.[518] This affected the line of succession and this disruption to both his family, and presumably the territories he was responsible for, demonstrated the duke's malice and ultimately landed him in Gyber , the "jaws of hell."[519] Continuing on a similar theme, Caesarius discussed another disruption to the well-being of the dead and the continuity of authority/community: in this story, the sons of a knight agreed to allow him to suffer in hell rather than lose ill-gotten property. The knight appeared wrapped in sheepskins and with a great mound of earth on his back, riding on a black warhorse "whose nostrils shot smoke and fire" to a man named Erkinbert (the father of the monk who Caesarius heard the story from.)[520] The knight turned to Erkinbert, saying: "I am in very great pains; those skins I took from a widow and now I feel them red-hot… I made an unjust claim to a portion of land, under whose weight I am now crushed."[521] He asked Erkinbert to plead with his living sons to make restitutions for the sake of his soul, but the sons were ultimately too happy to allow their father to suffer in order to retain his stolen goods.

[518] DMEng, ii, 2.12.13, pp. 301–302, DM, ii, 2.12.13, pp. 325–326.
[519] DMEng, ii, 2.12.13, pp. 301–302, DM, ii, 2.12.13, pp. 325–326: "Os dicuntur esse inferni…|
[520] DMEng, ii, 2.12.14, pp. 302–303, DM, ii, 2.12.14, pp. 326–327: "… de cuius naribus fumus et flamma procedebat."
[521] DMEng, ii, 2.12.14, pp. 302–303, DM, ii, 2.12.14, pp. 326–327: "Ego… in maximus poenis sum; pelles istas cuidam viduae tuli, quas nunc ardentes sentio. Similiter partem cuiusdam agri mihi iniuste vendicavi, cuius pondere modo premor."

These behaviours by men were not meant to be imitated. The Duke of Zahringen was condemned, not only for the "malice" he bore towards his family, intended to lead them to sin, but also for upsetting a line of succession and endangering his community by not ensuring a smooth transition for the next leader responsible for his territories. However, it is women who are, by and large, depicted as responsible, not only for caring for their family members in purgatory, but also for behaving in life in such a way as to not require that same devotion for themselves: women who died in a precarious position were left to shift for themselves in the afterlife.

Conclusion

The *Bonum universale de apibus* served as a manual for encouraging forms of purgatorial piety, emulating previous aspects of monastic care for the dead for those still in the world and featuring lay and religious women in significant roles in caring for the dead. The practices found within Thomas's *vitae* of the holy women of Liège, particularly those of Christina and Lutgard, followed him well into the later years of his ministry, impacting his views on purgatorial care. Thomas built his ideas of purgatorial, not just from his own experiences within his family, but also in the existing devotional movements and theological development happening around him. Existing monastic rites for the dead, as well as the rich *exempla* and recommendations for care that Thomas's contemporaries provided formed a vibrant framework in which Thomas could work. Existing offices for the dead were incorporated within a new doctrine of purgatory and expanded: the deathbed offered a chance for both a loving farewell and a spiritual example through a holy death. With purgatorial piety, the elaborate contingencies already considered in older offices of the dead could be translated into rituals within lay communities, playing an important role alongside those of the clergy.

The efficacy of women's piety in on behalf of the dead was a key theme throughout Thomas's work, with women consistently being the most effective and willing advocates for the beloved dead; especially widows, whose virtue and spirituality were already highly regarded. Men in these stories, at least those in the laity, had a marked tendency to keep their feet firmly planted in the world when it came to purgatorial requests, whether in keeping a horse meant for alms or allowing their wife's soul to languish in purgatory. However, it is impossible not to see the compassionate purgatorial piety of women such as Christina and Lutgard as inspiring a vision of the afterlife in Thomas's works, portrayals in which the living and dead could reach out to one another, confident in receiving care. In providing stories of purgatorial suffrage within his family alongside Christina's own acts in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas perpetually commemorated his own personal dead while inviting the reader to reflect and do the same.

A Bone To Pick: Christina Mirabilis, Revenants, and The Dangerous Dead

The previous chapters explored how Thomas emphasised the community of the living and the dead through the purgatorial care outlined in Christina's *vita* and the suffrages emphasized in the *Bonum universale de apibus*. They have also argued that Thomas's interactions with the holy women of Liège, especially Christina, influenced his purgatorial recommendations. Now, we turn to the "unruly" dead: restless revenants, often assumed by Thomas and his contemporaries to be demonically possessed. Unlike purgatorial apparitions, these revenants were depicted as corporeal, at least within the regions where Thomas was active in Northern Europe, compared to their Mediterranean and Southern Europe.[1] While their disembodied counterparts could be equally dangerous, with some while looking for a body to inhabit, revenants were often physically violent or pestilential.[2] However, revenants could also cause spiritual harm, spreading fear and doubt as easily as plague. This chapter demonstrates how Christina's *vita* subverts these tropes: if the revenant's body spread fear and sickness, then her purgatorial body was a hopeful illustration of salvation.

Newman has explored Christina as a demoniac-cum-prophet, confirming orthodox belief and Church authority itself, and Spencer-Hall discussed her *vita* within the context of zombie media, her resurrection illustrating both the purgatorial and

[1] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 109–110, 255–257; Christian Livermore, *When the Dead Rise: Narratives of the Revenant, from the Middle Ages to the Present Day*, (Martlesham, 2021), p. 28; and Rooney, *Mortality and Imagination*, p. 38.
[2] For a detailed discussion of spiritual possession (and who was considered more susceptible to becoming possessed) within the Mediterranean region, see Caciola, "Spectral Possession," in *Afterlives*, 302–314, particularly pp. 308–311 for the conditions said to create non–corporeal returning dead; see also Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Rituals,' pp. 31–35.

glorified bodies of the dead.[3] This chapter focuses on Christina's *vita* within the context of revenant stories in sermons and *exempla* collections, particularly her divergence from typical stories of male and female revenants, neither violent nor passively returning to the role she possessed in life. Thomas used tropes commonly found in revenant stories from the Low Countries and Northern Europe in her *vita* to demonstrate the often terrifying and unknowable nature of the returning dead, while emphasising the comparative safety found in Church rituals. Then, after seemingly indicating Christina's potential undead danger, he turned these tropes on their heads through her sacrificial care and adherence to Church authority.[4]

However, this chapter will also compare Christina's *vita* to that of another revivified woman, a former nun named Agnes, found in the *Bonum universale de apibus*. Specifically, it will look at both women's revivified bodies as ambiguous proofs, such that required faith on the part of the reader. The *exempla* of Agnes and the ambiguity surrounding her murder at the hands of her Jewish employer is found within a section in the second book that focused on Mary's virgin motherhood, a departure from earlier sections where Thomas utilised unambiguous physical proofs to relay spiritual truth. In this section, Thomas largely featured Jewish conversion framing the stories as leaps of faith rather than "blind" reliance on physical proof as a requirement before converting. The first chapter discussed Christina's lack of divine visions as indicative of her spiritual

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[3] See Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 733–770 and Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 352–375, respectively.

[4] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 763–768; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 76; Walter Simons, 'Reading a Saint's Body: Rapture and Bodily Movement in the '*Vitae*' of Thirteenth–Century Beguines' in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, (Manchester, 1994), 10–23, pp. 18–19; on Thomas's authorial choices, as well as the potential for misinterpretation of Christina's life, see Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 359, 364, and Smith, "With Wondrous Horror She Fled': Dissimilarity and Sanctity in The Life of Christina the Astonishing' in *Excessive Saints*, 48–82, pp. 65–69, 78–82; for discussion of demonic reanimation and corpses, see Caciola, 'Afterlives,' pp. 208–212; for a discussion on the increasing discussion of the demonic and possession during the period in which Thomas was active,, see also, Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, pp. 10–14, and Elliott, *The Bride of Christ*, pp. 233–241.

perfection, but she also never experienced purgatorial visions confirming that her suffrages, extraordinary and mundane alike, had worked to free a specific soul. Thomas only retroactively included her patron Louis appearing to her within the *Bonum universale de apibus* years later.[5] In not providing this closure within the *vita*, Christina mirrors what most people providing purgatorial care for a loved one would have experienced. Visions were uncommon, assuming one was in a spiritual state to receive and correctly discern their meanings to begin with.[6] Likewise, this lack of timeline demonstrated the unknowability of purgatorial time for mortals: Christina agreed to take on half of Louis's suffering, indicating she knew the extent of his punishment, but Louis never reappears to confirm his deliverance within her *vita*. This framed purgatorial care for the beloved dead as a lifelong and distinctly Christian act of faithful hope in their deliverance and an eventual reunion with them.

Methodology

This chapter examines the revenant stories within *exempla* and story collections from both immediately before and during Thomas's time as a mendicant preacher. It will also examine the returning dead within the collections of Caesarius of Heisterbach and Jacques de Vitry, as well as a few accounts of revenants from Thomas's other contemporaries, like Stephen of Bourbon and William of Auvergne. Finally, this chapter analyses the most well-known stories of revenants in Northern Europe from the works of Walter Map and William of Newburgh. Within these stories, I will examine what was portrayed as causing revenants themselves as well as what could (and, occasionally, could not) be done about them. What made the returning dead possible was an evolving topic and a source of much

[5] BUA, 2.57.23, pp. 946–948.
[6] Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 44–48, 123–125, 205–206.

debate among Thomas and his contemporaries, particularly when looking at what space the dead were meant to occupy: the manner of living and death, the possibility of demonic possession, the amount of decomposition present, the location of the grave, and the question of how to contend with or prevent revenants, would all have factored into the theologically uncomfortable discussions around the returning dead. Likewise, popular association of revenants with demonic reanimation and their decaying bodies often signified a physical reflection of their sinfulness or unresolved conflict in life: in any case, they were shown spreading disease, physical and spiritual alike, into their communities with deadly effect. I will examine how Walter Map and William of Newburgh discussed unrest, whether spiritual or political, as an infection that could lead to both physical and spiritual consequences for those the revenant haunted. This context would have made Christina sitting bolt upright in her coffin at her funeral especially terrifying to her community.

It will also be useful to compare Thomas's account of Christina to other accounts of specifically *female* revenants. Compared to their grotesque male counterparts, female revenants were usually depicted as beautiful and capable of returning to the roles they had occupied in life, most often as wives and mothers. While the line between these returning dead women and fairy women were often blurred, female revenants are usually not depicted as illusions or explicitly enchanted beings.[7] These domestic descriptions never comfortably applied to Christina: however beloved she became later, she seldom enjoyed intimate friendships or a return to familiar feminine roles. While neither a wife or mother, having been an unmarried virgin at the time of her first death, her sisters are unable, or unwilling, to reclaim her to her previous role within their family. These specifically gendered aspects of revenant stories also influence Thomas's own framing of

[7] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 244–245

the returning dead within his hagiographies and his *exempla* collections. The dead in Thomas's works were a paradox: at once beloved and untouchable, present, even integral, and yet necessarily apart.

"I Ain't Afraid of No Ghost!": Augustine of Hippo, The Earliest "Ghost-Buster"

First, it will be helpful to begin with a discussion of the returning dead in early Church thought. Augustine was one of the first authors within the Church to address anxieties concerning death and whether the return of the dead was even possible. While Augustine worried that these anxieties stemmed from pagan superstition that could lead to an unhealthy fixation with appeasing the dead, bordering on worship, he did not wish to dismiss his contemporaries' experiences with dreams or visions of the dead. Augustine's scepticism around the returning dead was foundational to later discussions of the topic within the Church.[8] To begin, the early Church's veneration of its martyrs, with their relics forming its literal and figurative foundations, was often regarded as morbid by pagan observers.[9] Brown notes the disgust with which pagan contemporaries viewed the "charnel horror" of Christianity, as new cults developed around the bodies of martyred saints.[10] As the Roman emperor Julian described the veneration of martyred bodies of the saints: "… The carrying of the corpses of the dead through a great assembly of people, in the midst of dense crowds, staining the eyesight… with ill-omened sights of the dead."[11]

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[8] It is here where I am incredibly indebted to Caciola's work on the topic in *Afterlives*, particularly within the first chapter, 'Mors: A Critical Biography,' pp. 23–65, in which she succinctly discusses this growing evolution on ghosts, revenants, the place of the dead within theological and doctrinal discussions in the Church, as well as the utilisation of the dead in *exempla*.

[9] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 34–36.

[10] Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, (Chicago, 1981), p. 7.

[11] Emperor Julian, as quoted in Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, p. 7; here Brown translates from the Latin as found in J. Bidez and F. Cumont (eds.) *Epistulae et leges*, (Paris, 1922), pp. 194–95: "Secundum illud est quod efferri cognovimus cadavera mortuorum per confertam populi frequentiam et per maximam… densitatem, quod quidem oculos hominum infaustis incestat aspectibus."

Julian's concerns about the "ill-omened" and insalubrious consequences in bringing the corpse back into the community are echoed in later accounts of revenants. With the intensifying desire of Christians to bury their dead near the shrines of saints, Augustine wished to differentiate the veneration of the saints from pagan ancestor worship.[12] He had already expressed concerns about Christians practising pagan pageantry:

> Our forebears… thought it best to make a concession for the time being to weakness and to permit them [pagan converts] to celebrate, instead of the feasts they had renounced, other feasts in honor [sic.] of the holy martyrs—not with the same sacrilege, but with the same elaborateness…[13]

Now, he worried that preoccupation with the care and burial of the body rather the spiritual well-being of the dead, might lead to worshipping the dead themselves.[14] As Augustine established in the *City of God*, there was no in-between space, nor was it possible for the dead to come back, displeased with their burial or not: "... For as there are three times, before death, in death, after death, so there are three states corresponding, living, dying, dead."[15]

However, where did that leave the dead themselves, returning or otherwise? What duties did the living owe them? While replying to Paulinus about the benefits of burial

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[12] Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 33; Paula Rose, 'Augustine on the Relations between the Living and the Deceased: A Discourse-Linguistic Commentary on De cura pro mortuis gerenda' (PhD thesis, VU University Amsterdam, 2011), p. 3; however, Peter Brown has noted that this was not reflective of the need to accommodate large swathes of pagan converts, and may have been a deliberate framing on Augustine's part to call for more "abstemious" behaviour, see *The Cult of the Saints*, p. 29.

[13] Augustine of Hippo, Epistle 29.8ff., quoted in translation in Ramsay Macmullen, *Christianity & Paganism in the Fourth and Eighth Centuries*, (New Haven, 1999), pp. 114–115, cited in Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 33; for the Latin text, see Augustine, Epistle 29.9, PL 33, cols. 118–119: "… visum fuisse majoribus nostris, ut huic infirmitatis parti interim parceretur, diesque festos, post eos quos relinquebant, alios in honorem sanctorum martyrum vel non simili sacrilegio, quamvis simili luxu celebrarentur…"

[14] Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 22–23.

[15] DCDEng, 13.11, p. 312; DCD, i, 13.11, p. 568: "… ad modum tria sunt cum dicimus 'ante mortem, in morte, post mortem,' ita tria singulis singula 'vivens, moriens mortuusque' reddantur."

near the shrines of the saints in his *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, Augustine delineated the duties of the living to the dead. Citing the desecration of the bodies of the martyrs of Gaul, Augustine argued that after death, nothing that could be done by the living to harm the dead:

> … if what was done with immense savagery to the bodies of the martyrs might have harmed them… so that their most victorious spirits would rest less blessedly, it would certainly not have been allowed to happen… the Christian happiness of the deceased would not in the least be diminished…[16]

Augustine noted that the burial of the dead comforted the living more than the dead themselves, but could still be beneficial as act of Christian compassion, rather than necessary to avoid the consequences of the dead's pain or displeasure.[17] This is significant when considering later stories about revenants returning after an untimely or violent death, or because of business left unresolved by them or their loved ones, something that became a growing concern as purgatorial doctrine developed. Augustine argued that the spirit was more important than the body, and its rest did not depend on a proper or ornate burial, however compassionate and worthy the impulse in providing one.[18] He still noted the significance of caring for the dead body as a reflection of what they had been to the living, their body being as beloved as a garment or heirloom left behind by a loved one.[19]

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[16] CPMEng, 6.8, pp. 352–353; CPM, 6.8. pp. 633–634: "… hoc enim quod ingenti saeuitia de corporibus martyrum factum est, si eis quidquam noceret, quo minus beate requiescerent eorum uictoriosissimi spiritus, non utique fieri sineretur… nihil quo minueretur christiana defunctorum felicitas fieret…"

[17] CPMEng, 2.4, p. 348, CPM 2.4., pp. 625–627, and CPM, 6.8., pp. 352–353 and CPM, 6.8. pp. 633–634.

[18] CPMEng, 3.5, pp. 346–350, CPM, 3.5, pp.627–629; this compassion was considered a positive virtue, and Augustine considered it natural to show that care both for the bodies of others and for the pity/compassion a person might have and want shown for their own body when the time came. However, Augustine is careful to point out that this is not a condition for the dead body *staying* dead.

[19] CPMEng, 3.5, p. 349, CPM, 3.5, pp. 627–628.

Augustine reserved far more scepticism for apparitions and the returning dead, writing,

> When it [the spirit] left [the flesh], it took with it the awareness by which it could determine how it is what it is, whether in a good or an evil state. It does not expect its life to be aided by that flesh …because the flesh does not gain the merit of the resurrection itself for the spirit, but rather the spirit for the flesh…[20]

How, then, to explain apparitions which, according to Augustine, appeared even to more rational and better educated people than him?[21] Augustine likened this to images of living loved ones appearing in dreams rather than their actual selves, describing his own appearance in a close friend's dream to explain a quandary about the works of Cicero.[22] The dead person in the dream was not necessarily aware (in that it was their *image*, rather than they themselves) and these visions happened mostly for the benefit of the bereaved living. For example, in regard to visions or dreams of the personal dead asking for burial or some other help, Augustine conceded that it could be the work of angels, allowing an image of the deceased to appear the bereaved:

> … when such a thing, whether permitted or commanded from on high, takes places through angelic interventions, so that [the dead] seem to say something in dreams about burying their bodies, this sometimes takes place beneficially, whether as a consolation… or so that by these admonitions the humaneness of burial…may be commended to humankind.[23]

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[20] CPMEng, 5.7, p. 351, CPM. 5.7, p. 631–632: "… qui cum inde exiret, secum abstulit sensum, quo interesse possit quomodo quisque sit siue in bonis siue in malis, nec ab ea carne expectat adiuuari suam uitam… quoniam non caro spiritui, sed spiritus carni etiara ipsius resurrectionis meritum comparat, utrum ad poenam an ad gloriam reuiuescat."

[21] CPMEng, 10.12, pp. 356–357, CPM, 10.12, pp. 639–641.

[22] CPMEng, 11.13, pp. 357–358, CPM, 11.13 641–643; see also CPMEng, 11.13, p. 358, CPM, 11.13, pp. 641–642 for the story of a son who has a dream of his dead father and repays his debts.

[23] CPMEng, 10.12, p. 357, CPM, 10.12, p. 640: "… angelicis igitur operationibus fieri crediderim, siue permittatur desuper siue iubeatur, ut aliquid dicere de sepeliendis corporibus suis uideantur in somnis, cum id penitus nesciant, quorum illa sunt corpora… id autem aliquando utiliter fit siue ad qualecumque solacium… siue ut his admonitionibus generi humano sepulturae commendetur humanitas, quae… culpanda tamen inreligiositate neglegitur." See also the discussion of this

Augustine attributed images of the dead appearing to their loved ones to a loving God providing solace to the living and inspiring compassionate care for the dead. While Augustine felt that caring for the dead was a beneficial practice to cultivate Christian "humaneness," he did not believe it bettered the spiritual situation of the dead, unaware of what was happening to their bodies or graves.[24] With rare exceptions, the dead were either at rest in their reward or in the middle of an inescapable punishment.[25] On a more personal note, Augustine noted that if the dead could return, this his mother:

> who followed me over land and sea in order to live with me, would never forsake me… For it is inconceivable that… she would not comfort her saddened son…whom she loved uniquely, whom she never wished to see sorrowful.[26]

Monica echoed Augustine's views on burial in the ninth chapter of his *Confessions*, saying to her sons, "Bury my body anywhere you like. Let no anxiety about that disturb you. I have only one request to make of you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you may be."[27] This was significant given that Monica had previously expressed a desire to be buried next to her husband.[28] Augustine interpreted Monica's wishes as a fearless expression of faith in the face of her mortality. Despite his profound grief over her loss, Augustine was heartened after learning about other interactions Monica had with his friends concerning her future death:

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within Livermore, *When the Dead Rise,* pp. 33–34; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 20–21.

[24] CPMEng, 13.16, pp. 361–362, CPM, 13.16, pp. 648–649.

[25] CPMEng, 13.16, p. 362, CPM. 13.16, p. 649.

[26] CPMEng, 13.16, p. 361; CPM, 13.16, p. 647: "… quae terra marique secuta est, ut mecum uiueret. Absit enim, ut facta sit uita feliciore crudelis usque adeo ut, quando aliquid angit cor meum, nec tristem filium consoletur, quem dilexit unice, quem numquam uoluit maestum uidere."

[27] Augustine, *ConfEng*, 9.11.27, p. 173; *ConfLat* 9.11. pp. 159–160: "'Ponite hoc corpus ubicumque, nihil vos eius cura conturbet: tantum illud vos rogo, ut ad Domini altare memineritis mei, ubi fueritis."

[28] Augustine, *ConfEng*, 9.11.28, p. 173; *ConfLat* 9.11, p. 160.

> …asked whether she were not afraid to leave her body so far from her own town. "Nothing," she said "is distant from God, and there is no ground for fear that he may not acknowledge me at the end of the world and raise me up." [29]

As can be seen, Augustine's writings on death and burial rites were informed by his own experiences with grief: he described losing his mother as having "... lost the immense support she gave… my life as it were torn to pieces, since my life and hers had become a single thing."[30] However, Augustine emphasised the need to acknowledge grief without falling into despair, and to not allow care for the dead to lapse into pagan idolatry.[31] He pointedly noted that Monica's body was not "sumptuously wrapped, embalmed with perfumes, or given a choice monument…"[32]

Despite this, there were matters concerning the dead that left Augustine uncertain. In a story within the *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, Curma, a member of the curial class from Tullium, became deathly ill and was left in a nearly comatose state.[33] When he awakened, as if "revived from death," Curma requested that someone go to the house of another Curma in the same town. However, it was discovered that this Curma had died at the same moment that the first Curma revived.[34] Curma explained that while unconscious, he experienced visions of dead people he had known in life, and his presence among them was an accident: Curma the ironsmith was supposed to die, not Curma the official.[35] The

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[29] Augustine, *ConfEng*, 9.11.28–12.29, pp. 173–174; *ConfLat*, 9.11–12, pp. 159–160: "… quaerentibusque utrum non formidaret tam longe a sua civitate corpus relinquere: 'Nihil,' inquit, 'longe est Deo, neque timendum est, ne ille non agnoscat in fine saeculi, unde me resuscitet.'"

[30] ConfEng, 9.12.30, pp. 174–175; ConfLat*, 9.12*, pp. 160–161: "… deserebar tam magno eius solatio… quasi dilaniabatur vita, quae una facta erat ex mea et illius."

[31] ConfEng, 9. 13.36, pp. 177–178; ConfLat, 9.13, p. 164.

[32] ConfEng, 9.13.36, p. 177; ConfLat, p. 164: "… sumtuose contegi, aut condiri aromatibus, aut monumentum electum coneupirit…"

[33] CPMEng, 12.15, pp. 359–361; CPM, 12.15, p. 644–647.

[34] CPMEng, 12.15, p. 359; CPM, 12.15, p. 644.

[35] CPMEng, 12.15, pp. 359–360; CPM, 12.15, pp. 644–645

first Curma also saw paradise, where God told him that if he wished to return there, he needed to be baptised.[36] This story left room for more uncomfortable questions: could someone die prematurely because of an eschatological error? Could people who had died also come back after being mistaken for someone else? How were these mistakes even possible for an omnipotent God, even if they could then be used to guide someone into true belief? While these stories were useful rhetorical tools, they also reflected anxieties surrounding death and dying, particularly given that death was held by theologians before Augustine to be an implicitly unnatural and violent event, incurred by Original Sin.[37] Augustine also understood the act of dying as a painful consequence of sin, describing the process of the body failing and the soul leaving the body as something "harsh and unnatural… the violent sundering of what… were so closely linked and interwoven"[38] Tertullian (c. 155) also treated death in this way, arguing that because of Adam and Eve's fall from grace, death was brought into the world where it previously had no need to exist.[39] As he wrote in his *De anima*, death could only be considered non-violent if it was humanity's lot from the beginning, but since it was a consequence of sin, he argued:

> … death is not the natural destiny of men … it arises from sin and is unnatural… even though there are as many ways to die… no death is so gentle as to be without violence. The very fact of death is… a form of violence.[40]

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[36] CPMEng, 12.15, p. 360; CPM, 12.15, p. 646.
[37] For Tertullian's earlier arguments predating Augustine, see Chapter 52 of *A Treatise on the Soul*; for the English translation, see Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul' in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. C. Coxe (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (10 vols, Buffalo, NY, 1885), iii, p. 229; Latin edition, Tertullian, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De Anima*, J.H. Waszink (ed.), (Leiden, 2010), pp. 70–71. Caciola also discusses this in *Afterlives*, pp. 38–41.
[38] DCDEng, 13.6, p. 306; DCD, i, 13.6, p. 563: "Habet enim asperum sensum et contra naturam vis ipsa qua utrumque divellitur, quod fuerat in vivente coniunctum atque consertum…" See also DCDEng, 13.13, p. 316, DCD, i, 13.13, p. 572; for a discussion of Adam's punishment, DCDEng, 13.15, pp. 317–318, and DCD, i 13.15, pp. 573–574.
[39] Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 39.
[40] Tertullian, *De Anima*, 52, as cited and translated in Caciola, *Afterlives,* pp. 40–41; Latin edition, *De Anima*, pp. 70–71: "… mortem non ex natura secutam hominem, sed ex culpa, ne ipsa quidem naturali.. etsi varii exitus mortis... nullum ita dicimus lenem, ut non vi agatur. Ipsa ilia ratio operatrix mortis... vis est."

The potential to die arbitrarily, before one's time, or even to experience death twice, as will be discussed later in this chapter, may have proven to be a source of anxiety: particularly as those who did return, like Curma, were often not on the path to heaven before their journey to the beyond.[41] As will be explored later in this chapter, Thomas and his contemporaries faced many of the same quandaries in their handlings of accounts of revenants. However, while the restless dead posed a quandary for Augustine, they would prove a useful rhetorical tool for Pope Gregory the Great.

Gregory the Great: The Ghosts in the Dialogues

Gregory's *Dialogues* brought the returning dead into the limelight as illustrations confirming the ultimate resurrection of the body.[42] It was also here where a proto-purgatorial pastoral care of the dead by the living can be observed, with the dead not only returning, but often requiring help from their loved ones and the Church.[43] This allowed for a certain permeability in the boundaries between the living and the dead compared to Augustine's thoughts on the topic. In affirming the presence and continuity of the soul after death, Gregory also expounded upon the nature of the spirit, as well as that of the afterlife, confirming the resurrection of the bodies of the elect—as well as the eternal "wasting" punishment of the damned, something which eerily foreshadowed the mouldering revenant:

> Not even in the punishment of the reprobate does the flesh waste away to complete nothingness; it continues… to waste away without ever ceasing

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[41] Carol Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys: Accounts of Near-Death Experiences in Medieval and Modern Times*, (New York, 1987), pp. 46–50 and Isabel Moreira, 'Purgatory's Intercessors: Bishops, Ghosts, and Angry Wives' in *Imagining the Afterlife*, (Cambridge, 2020), 133–152, pp. 143–144; Carozzi, *Le voyage*, pp. 48–49; on the difficulty of incomplete deaths and resurrections, see Caciola, "Diagnosing Death," in *Afterlives*, particularly, pp. 95–107.
[42] Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 49, see also Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, p. 41, on Gregory's attitude towards the corpse. Carozzi, *Le voyage*, p. 87.
[43] Caciola, *Afterlives*, 63.

> to exist. Those … who have sinned through the spirit and the flesh will continue to live, only to experience an eternal dying in body and soul.[44]

Gregory emphasised the post-mortem intercession and care of the saints, particularly through their relics, as proof of the blessed soul's continued life and awareness.[45] However, Gregory agreed with Augustine about which dead benefitted from the care of the living: only those who died without mortal sin would receive benefits from the spiritual care of their loved ones.[46]

Gregory emphasised that the unholy dead needed to be separated from the community of the holy and personal dead within the Church. Despite this distinction, Gregory's returning dead largely lacked the violence and ghastly physical appearances found in later revenant tales, even those who were ultimately damned. For example, two of the first stories of the returning corporeal dead in the *Dialogues* are found in Gregory's account of the life of Saint Benedict of Nursia. In the first, two nuns die in a state of sin after Benedict excommunicated them for their pride and sharp tongues.[47] Whenever the deacon asked non-communicants to leave during Mass, the nuns rose from their tombs and left the church. [48] Their old nurse appealed to Benedict, who gave her an oblation to offer on the nuns' behalf, after which they never left their graves again.[49] This was followed by a similar story of a young monk who died on unfavourable terms with Benedict after leaving the monastery because of his attachment to his parents.; his body repeatedly left his grave, unable to rest while unreconciled with Benedict.[50] The young

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[44] GrGrEng, 4.3, p. 192; GrGr, iii, 4.3.2, p. 24: "Quae tamen caro nec in reprobis inter supplicia perfecte deficit, quia semper deficiendo subsistit, ut qui spiritu et carne peccauerunt, semper essentialiter uiuentes, et carne et spiritu sine fine moriantur."
[45] GrGrEng, 4.6, pp. 199–200; GrGr, iii, 4.6.1, pp. 39–40.
[46] GrGrEng, 4.52, pp. 263–264; GrGr, iii, 4.52. 1–2, p. 184.
[47] GrGrEng, 2.23, p. 92; GrGr, ii, 2.23.2 p. 206.
[48] GrGrEng, 2.23, p. 92; GrGr, ii, 2.23.4, pp. 206–208.
[49] GrGrEng, 2.23, pp. 92–93; GrGr, ii, 2.23.5, p. 208.
[50] GrGrEng, 2.24, p. 94; GrGr, ii, 2.24.1–2, pp. 210–212.

monk's body was not depicted as a source of horror, and, like the nuns, he did not menace or harm his community. Moved by the grief of the young man's parents, Benedict gave them a transubstantiated Host to bury with the body, allowing the young monk to finally rest in peace.[51] In both stories, while the dead did not directly approach their loved ones, they were still dependent on them for help. Significantly, the prescribed way to deal with the revenant in both scenarios was not to destroy their bodies or to sever them permanently from their communities, but rather to provide absolution.

The closest Gregory came to depicting the frightening dead found in later stories was the example of a servant boy who, reviving from his apparent death during a plague, spoke multiple languages he was unable to speak before and predicted the deaths of his master's family.[52] The boy then died "through an unknown judgement of God… in a frenzy, biting his hands and arms," and the individuals whose deaths he foretold died shortly after.[53] The story foreshadows tropes found in later revenant stories: the ambiguity of the boy's return, the implication that some hidden sin led to his bad end, and the death he brought into his master's household during a time of contagion, are found in later revenant stories.[54] Gregory believed that the dying were more capable of seeing and interacting with the "invisible" world as they grew closer to their end, which may explain some of the boy's abilities.[55] Moreover, within the *Dialogues*, the deathbed was a spiritual

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[51] GrGrEng, 2.24, p. 94; GrGr, ii, 2.24.2, pp. 210–212.
[52] GrGrEng, 4.27, pp. 222–223; GrGr, iii, 4.27.10–13, pp. 92–94.
[53] GrGrEng, 4.27, p. 223 and GrGr, iii, 4.27.13, p. 94: "… quo occulto iudicio nescitur, manus ac brachia lacertosque suos dentibus laniauit…" See also Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, pp. 46–48 and Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, 90–95.
[54] Carozzi, *Le Voyage*, 46–47; Stephen Gordon, 'Social monsters and the walking dead in William of Newburgh's *Historia rerum Angelicarum*' in *Journal of Medieval History*, xli, no. 4 (2015), 446–465, p. 456. R. I. Moore, 'Heresy as Disease,' in W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst (eds.), *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages (11th to 13th C.): Proceedings of the International Conference, Louvain, May 13–16, 1973* (Leuven, 1983) 1–11, pp. 1–3.
[55] GrGrEng, 4.11, pp. 202–203, and GrGr, iii, 4.11.2–4, pp. 46–48; for a similar story, see also GrGrEng 4.13, pp. 204–206, and GrGr, iii, 4.13.1–4, pp. 52–54; for stories about these dying visions; Carozzi, *Le voyage*, p. 48. Keskiaho, *Dreams and Visions*, pp. 60–61.

battlefield, where saints and angels could console the dying person or where demons drove them to despair before dragging them away spiritually (and sometimes bodily).[56] This also influenced later concerns about what manner of "spirit" possessed the returning dead., However, Gregory focused mostly on the care of the dead, with the holy or redeemable dead either finding or being reinstituted in a place where they could receive that care. The walking dead are usually managed within the rites of the Church, and the conclusions of many of Gregory's ghost stories served a dual purpose, exploring anxieties about dying or loss and promoting seeking comfort specifically within the Church.

Gregory included the story of a man named Stephen who, like Augustine's Curma, seemingly died and spent time in the afterlife by mistake, having been mixed up with another Stephen. After witnessing the torments of hell, Stephen was given a chance to mend his ways, though his fate after his final death was left unknown.[57] However Gregory noted that there was no mistake as God deliberately used these opportunities to put humans back on the right track through a fear of damnation.[58] Like other purgatorial journeys discussed in this thesis, this narrative could be inverted and expanded depending on what the author hoped to discuss. For example, Christina does not discuss the graphic punishments she witnesses in purgatory, acting them out in her own body instead, but does elaborate on her bargain with God when she first returns, as well as His zeal to save souls. Thus, these visions could be causes for hope, as much as warning about hell. At any rate, this story, among others in the *Dialogues*, allowed for death to be a process that could be suspended or stopped; as well as something that, without faithful adherence to

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[56] GrGrEng, 4.54–55, pp. 264–265 and GrGr, iii, 4.54.1–55.3, pp. 180–182: Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory,* pp. 92–94; Susan Snyder, 'The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition' in *Studies in the Renaissance*, xii (1965), 18–59, pp. 42–49; as noted in the first chapter, demons are a routine part of purgatorial voyages, often calling the voyager to despair of God's mercy.

[57] GrGrEng, 4.37, pp. 238–239 and GrGr, iii, 4.37.5–7, pp. 128–130; Carozzi, *Le voyage,* pp. 48–49.

[58] GrGrEng, 4.37, p. 241, and GrGr, iii, 4.37.14, p. 134; See Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 52.

Church rituals, would not entail a peaceful end. This is mirrored within later revenant stories, like those of Walter Map and William of Newburgh, where the returning dead are usually troubled, whether they are the purgatorial dead or something more malevolent. While Gregory wrote in a time before purgatory was officially Church doctrine, these themes were revisited in later works as challenges to the Church's authority arose in the form of questioning the Church's effectiveness in interceding for the dead.[59]

"Them Bones, Them Bones": Walter Map and William of Newburgh

We can now turn to the backgrounds of Walter Map and William of Newburgh. Walter Map (c. 1130–1210) was a secular clerk who worked under Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford and London, and Henry II, eventually becoming the archdeacon of Oxford and the canon of St. Paul's in London.[60] Map was well educated and widely travelled, having begun his education from an early age at St. Peter's Abbey in Gloucester, and studying in Paris under the direction of Gerard la Pucelle in 1154; it was due to his education that he was later selected to represent Henry II at the Third Lateran Council in 1179. [61] Map travelled with Henry's court and was present during many of the major events of his reign, perhaps most notably at Saumur when Henry received news of his eldest son's demise in 1183.[62] By the time his *De nugis curialium* was completed around 1181 or 1182, Map was well versed in court life, with a reputation as an elegant and witty author.[63] The collection did not circulate widely, despite some of its stories being repeated in the works

[59] See, Gordon, 'Disease, Sin, and the Walking Dead,' p. 60; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 262–263.
[60] C.N.L. Brooke, "Introduction," Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, M.R. James, C.N.L. Brooke, and R.A.B. Mynors (eds.), M.R. James (trans.), (Oxford: 1983), p. xiii–xiv.
[61] J.B. Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, (Philadelphia, 2017), p. 2; Brooke, Introduction in *De nugis curialium*, p. xvii.
[62] Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, pp. 2–3; Gordon, 'Monstrous words, monstrous bodies: irony and the walking dead in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium'* in *English Studies*, xcvi, no. 4 (2015), 379–402, pp. 383–384.
[63] Brooke, Introduction, in *De nugis curialium*, p. xix.

of authors such as Gerald of Wales.[64] As Brooke notes in James's critical edition of the text, the work was likely for a private audience, and the content, ranging from courtly and religious satire to *exempla* to "frivolities," reflected the Plantagenet court's interest in local folklore and storytelling.[65] Brooke describes the work as "a common-place book of a great after-dinner speaker; and if one is entirely sober when one reads it, it is easily misunderstood."[66]

As humorous as this observation is, recent scholarship suggests that there was some method to Map's madness: he was heavily, if cautiously, critical of Henry II's court and consequently, some of his stories about the returning dead may have carried deeper moral implications. For example, Map opened the *De nugis curialium* by comparing Henry's court to the pains of hell themselves, noting the Sisyphean struggles of the courtiers:

> Here too there are many who reckon it nothing to have climbed the hill of riches, but try to urge their souls, fallen back into the valley of covetousness, to the summit of a hill yet further removed; … again their soul cannot abide, for what they have gained grows cheap when they gaze at what they desire…![67]

Map softened this, complimenting Henry by emphasising the presence of more "merciful judges" at court, exceptions in what was otherwise a "vale of misery."[68]

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[64] Ibid., p. xxxii.
[65] Ibid., pp. xxxiii, xli; Gordon, 'Monstrous Words,' pp. 388, 389–392; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 79–81.
[66] Ibid., p. xlv.
[67] DNCEng, 1.4, p. 9; DNC, 1.4, p. 8: "Sunt et hic multi qui montem ascensi diuiciarum nil actuam putant, et relapsam in auaricie uallem animum reuocare conantur ad montem adhuc ulteriorem; quo quidem consistere non potest, quia contemplacione cupitorum uilescunt adepta." See also John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, C. J. Nederman (trans.), (Cambridge, 2012), Prologue, pp. 4–5; see also *Policraticus*, 8.25, pp. 230–231 where John exhorts Henry II and his court to a more virtuous life in the closing of his work; Gordon, 'Monstrous Words,' pp. 385–386.
[68] DNCEng, 1.9, p. 11, DNC 1.9, p. 10: "… valle miserie…" Map revisits this again in his concluding remarks, DNCEng, 5.7, p. 507, DNC, 5.7, 306.

Another example is seen in Map's treatment of the story of King Herla and his court, a more untamed version of the "army of the dead" explored in the last chapter.[69] Map compared the Plantagenet court to this wild court, formed after King Herla was duped into an arrangement with a mysterious king:

> … a pygmy in respect of his low stature, not above that of a monkey. This little creature was mounted on a large goat… his visage was fiery red, his head huge; he had a long red beard reaching to his chest…: his belly was hairy and his legs declined into goats' hoofs [sp.][70]

The strange creature attended Herla's wedding in return for Herla's promise to reciprocate by attending his own future nuptials; the strange king brought many precious gifts of gold plate and jewels for Herla and his bride.[71] When the day of the strange king's wedding arrived, Herla went with his retinue into the strange king's dwelling place, an ethereally beautiful and richly decorated cave palace. When Herla gave the little king his wedding gifts, the king presented Herla with a bloodhound, making him promise that he and his party would not dismount from their horses until the bloodhound leapt from his arms.[72] When Herla finally returned to his kingdom, he encountered an elderly shepherd and asked for news of his queen; the shepherd, shocked, claimed that the queen Herla named was ancient:

> the wife of King Herla… [who] disappeared in company with a pygmy at this very cliff, and was never seen on earth again, and it is now two

[69] DNCEng, 1.11, pp. 26–30, DNC, 1.11, pp. 25–31; for a discussion of Herla and earlier examples of bands of the traveling dead in early Christian and medieval writings, see A.E. Bernstein, "The Ghostly Troop And The Battle Over Death: William Of Auvergne (d. 1249) Connects Christian, Old Norse, And Irish Views," in Mu-chou Poo (ed.), *Rethinking Ghosts in World Religions*, (Leiden, 2009) 115–161, pp. 121–124, 124–137; see also Claude Lecouteux, *Chasses fantastiques et cohortes de la nuit au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1999)

[70] DNCEng, 1.11, p. 27; DNC, 1.11, p. 26: "… qui pigmeus uidebatur modicitate stature, que non excedebat simiam. Institit homuncio capro maximo… ardenti facie, capite maximo, barba rubente prolixa pectus contingente… cui uenter hispidus et crura pedes in caprinos degenerabat."

[71] DNCEng, 1.11, p. 29; DNC, 1.11, p. 28.

[72] DNCEng, 1.11, p. 29 and DNC, 1.11, p. 28; Schmitt notes that this is an original element of the story, Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, p. 115–116.

> hundred years since the Saxons took possession of this kingdom and drove out the old inhabitants.[73]

Upon hearing this, some of the king's company, forgetting their promise, dismounted and immediately disintegrated into dust. Herla and his remaining company remained mounted, with Map noting their supernatural court was still seen until first year of Henry's reign, when they disappeared altogether.[74] Map drew a parallel between Herla's wanderings and the restlessness of Henry's court, observing that Herla had vanished because Henry had taken on his mantle as itinerant monarch.[75] Harf-Lancner notes that Map utilises the story of Herla and, later, King David, to illustrate two facets of Henry as a leader, restless and mercurial as well as just and capable.[76]

Concerning Map's revenant tales, Gordon points out that Map categorised the creatures as *mirabilia*, rather than *miracula*: *miracula* were defined as a "suspension of the natural order through the will of God," while *mirabilia* had less clear meanings or causes.[77] Revenants and similar subversions of the natural order were often read as portents, if not consequences, of disorder or immorality; Gordon describes an example where an entire village is not only subjected to a revenant who returned after a sinful life, but that many of the villagers died in a plague caused by the creature because they were vulnerable due to a similar immorality.[78] This meant that Map possibly used these

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[73] DNCEng, 1.11, p. 31 and DNC, 1.11, p. 30: "… uxor Herle regis, qui… cum pigmeo quodam ad hanc rupem disparuisse, nusquam autem postea super terram apparuisse. Saxones uero iam ducentis annis hoc regnum possederunt, expulsis incolis." See Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 111–113 on the unusual passage of time in these tales.
[74] DNCEng, 1.11, p. 31; DNC 1.11, p. 30.
[75] Gordon, 'Monstrous words', p. 388.
[76] Laurence Herf-Lancner, 'L'enfer de la cour: la cour d'Henri II Plantagenet et la Mesnie Hellequin (dans l'oeuvre de Jean de Salisbury, de Gautier Map, de Pierre de Blois et de Giraud de Barri)' in *L'Etat et les aristocracies (France, Angleterre, Ecosse) XIIe – XVIIe siècle*, (Paris, 1989), 27–50, pp. 42–43; see also Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 175–176, 178–179.
[77] Gordon, 'Monstrous words,' p. 389.
[78] Ibid, p. 393; Gordon also notes the conflicts happening with the Welsh at this time, with Map emphasising the Welsh king Herla and the Welsh village to which the aforementioned revenant belonged. Likewise, the inability of the bishops in Map's stories to quell the revenants may have

revenant stories, like his story of Herla, to entertain while imparting an intended moral message.[79] Nonetheless, Map closed the collection blithely, saying: "Every reader must cut into shape the rough material that is being served up to him… I am but your huntsman. I bring you the game, it is up to you to make dainty dishes of it."[80]

Conversely, William of Newburgh (1136– c.1198) took a more academic approach to the undead in his *Historia rerum Anglicarum.* Born during the first year of Stephen's tempestuous reign, William likely joined the Augustinian priory at Newburgh after receiving his early education there.[81] It is uncertain when he composed the *Historia rerum Anglicarum,* but it was likely begun in the 1190s, and left incomplete due to William's chronically poor health or death in 1198.[82] William noted that incidents with the returning dead happened frequently during this intense periods of unrest in England.[83] Certainly there was no lack of societal upheaval during William's career: around the time the *Historia rerum Anglicarum* was written, England had suffered from pestilence and famine, and war was renewed between Richard I and Philip II of France.[84] William deliberately placed revenant stories between these accounts of political and religious

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been informed by their own political allegiances; for example, the Bishop of Worcester is unable to stop a revenant from resurrecting, potentially due to his loyalty to Thomas Becket over Henry II; see also Gordon, "Social Monsters," p. 447.

[79] For discussions of *exempla*, their definition, and their function, see Claude Bremond and Jacques Le Goff, *L'Exemplum*, pp. 29–36; Christoph Daxelmüller, 'Narratio, Illustratio, Argumentatio. Exemplum und Bildungstechnik in der frühen Neuzeit' in Walter Haug and Burghart Wachinger *(eds.), Exempel und Exempelsammlungen*, (Berlin, 2015), 77–94, pp. 80–81; on received wisdom and its basis in shared community belief and practice for hagiographical texts (relevant also to the interpretation of these stories) see Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, p. 19–20; for discussion of lay familiarity with hagiography or religious writing, places where they would have encountered it, and the broader uses of hagiographical texts, see Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past*, pp. 6–9; on Thomas's departing from the usual lack of personal details in his own examples, see Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 35–36.

[80] DNCEng, 2.32, p. 209; DNC, 2.32, p. 208: "Singuli lectores appositam ruditatem exculpant… Venator uestrum sum: feras uobis affero, fercula faciatis."

[81] M. J. Kennedy, Introduction, in P. J. Walsh and M. J. Kennedy (eds.), *The History of English Affairs*, (2 vols, Liverpool, 1998), i, p. 3.

[82] Kennedy, Introduction, *The History of English Affairs*, pp 4–5.

[83] HRAEng, 5. 24, p. 658; HRA, 5.24, pp. 185–186.

[84] Gordon, 'Social monsters,' pp. 447–452.

conflict, emphasising that these things had never happened before in England and that ancient writers had also never noted such things occurring.[85] This significant because, in saying this, William appears to have been placing these stories outside of extant history, especially given the well-known treatments of the topic by Augustine and Gregory. Likewise, some scholarship has commented on the potential influence of earlier accounts of *draugrs* in English revenant tales, other scholars such as Simpson note the presence of archaeological evidence of Roman and early English ritual burials to prevent the dead from rising, indicating older beliefs surrounding the returning dead. While William deliberately did not cite ancient precedents to these occurrences, it is possible that he and Map might have drawn from local superstition and incorporated it into their broader narratives, or that these influences may have been ubiquitous.[86]

In any case, William framed these revenants as a total departure from prior accounts of the returning dead; given his juxtaposition of revenant stories alongside accounts of tumultuous events like the riots of 1196, he may have been implying that the social unrest, too, was unprecedented.[87] As Gordon notes, William placed the revenant tales between his account of the 1196 rebellion of William FitzOsbert and his account of pestilence. William emphasised FitzOsbert's treachery against his own brother in denouncing him to the king; when that failed, FitzOsbert stirred up rebellion against the king, as William recounted that:

> Urged onward by two great vices, pride and envy… and unable to endure the prosperity and glory of certain citizens, whose inferior he perceived

[85] HRAEng, 5.24, p. 658 and HRA, 5.24, pp. 185–186; Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' pp. 452, 458–460; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 218–219; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 82–83

[86] Both Caciola and Gordon have pointed out the similarities between later revenant tales and the "draugr," see Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 212–215, and Gordon, "Social monsters", pp. 451–452; for discussions of early burial rites that also reflect anxiety about a hostile returning revenant, see Jacqueline Simpson, 'Repentant Soul or Walking Corpse? Debatable Apparitions in Medieval England' in *Folklore*, cxiv, no. 3 (2003), pp 389–402.

[87] Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' pp. 456–457; Moore, 'Heresy as Disease,' pp. 1–2.

> himself to be… he plotted impious undertakings in the name of justice and piety…[88]

William indicates that it was not only FitzOsbert who lacked virtue, but that his sinfulness infected the spiritually weak around him, rousing "… the envy of the poor against the insolence of the powerful," while blasphemously framing himself as their saviour.[89] After the revolt failed, FitzOsbert was executed, with the expectation that his wicked rebelliousness would die with him[90] However, this was not to be the case: William specifically noted that while individuals with "more healthful and cautious dispositions" were pleased with FitzOsbert's execution, the remaining conspirators began a kind of relic cult around FitzOsbert, stealing the gibbet on which he was hanged and collecting the earth on which it stood.[91] William heavily emphasised FitzOsbert's violence and sexual immorality, stating that the cult around FitzOsbert made him even more culpable for leading others to revere him as if he were a saint. Gordon observes William's juxtaposition of "healthy" people, those not swept up in the contagion of sinful rebellion, with those who infected by FitzOsbert's wicked ambition, who then continued FitzOsbert's pestilential influence in venerating him.[92] Their actions serve as a negative image of the veneration of saints: if a saint and their actions can only be interpreted and understood by a community within a framework of accepted belief, then it is implied that FitzOsbert's supporters were already spiritually inclined to receive and embrace the

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[88] HRAEng, 5.20, pp. 652–653; HRA, 5.20, pp. 175–176: "Quippe duobus magnis vitiis stimulantibus, superbia scilicet atque invidia… quorundam civium sive optimatum, quibus se imparem esse cernebat, fortunas gloriamque non ferens… sub praetextu justitiae et pietatis in ausus impios conspiravit."
[89] HRAEng, 5.20, p. 653 and HRA, 5.20, p. 176; Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' p. 459.
[90] HRAEng, 5.20, p. 654; HRA, 5.20, pp. 178–179.
[91] HRAEng, 5.21, p. 655 and HRA, 5.21, p.180; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, pp. 59–63, 121–141, and Elliott, 'Violence Against the Dead,' pp. 1043, 1046–1047; Moore, 'Heresy and Disease,' pp. 4–5.
[92] Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' pp. 457–460.

wickedness that he spread.[93] For William, if FitzOsbert's "cult" flourished, it could only do so among those already inclined to sin.

Like Thomas within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, William ultimately concluded that it must have been demonic activity animating these revenants, a further disruption of the natural order.[94] However, why would God allow for demonic possession to occur? Schmitt notes that William treated these stories as "mira et prodigiosa" (marvelous and wondrous things) defined less by their "rarity" and more by their "hidden reason"; if God was the single Creator then He had distributed "... forces and powers that, with his permission, the angels (good and bad) and the people might use to produce amazing things."[95] With God's ultimate authority being implicitly understood, it was easier to explore the occasionally theologically tricky accounts of the returning dead without accidentally implying a lack of control from God. Likewise, if the environment most conducive to the revenant was one of unrest or spiritual decay, then revenants served, not just as a dark mirror of the glorified resurrection body, but a chance to demonstrate the power of the Church in dealing with them.[96]

Familiar Faces Haunting Places: Revenants Within the Collections

Most of Walter Map's and William of Newburgh's revenants, as well as those found in other collections, were often characterised by the following: they usually met a violent or sinful death after living equally tumultuous lives, occupied decaying bodies, had unresolved business or required aid, and often spread illness and death within their

[93] Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' pp. 458–459.
[94] HRAEng, 5.23–24, pp. 657–661 and HRA, 5.23–24, pp. 184–190: in these stories, William attributes the reanimation of the corpse in question explicitly to demonic activity.
[95] Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, p. 80.
[96] Simpson, 'Repentant Soul,' p. 394.

communities.[97] As noted previously, revenants often served as a dark mirror of the resurrection body, their rotting form evincing their spiritual health or fate in the afterlife. While Thomas and many of his contemporaries discussed *how* the dead could return, other authors, such as Stephen of Bourbon and William of Auvergne remained sceptical, dismissing revenants as products of either superstitious imagination or demonic illusions. Meanwhile Jacques de Vitry did not concern himself much at all with the reanimated dead in the *Sermones vulgares* beyond featuring apparitions confirming their status in the afterlife to their loved ones. Ho observes that Jacques made little explicit differentiation in his *exempla* between a corporeal revenant and an apparition.[98]

An under-examined element of revenant stories was the fear that the familiar, even beloved, dead could become unpredictable, even deadly, while wearing a deformed version of the face and form of a deceased loved one. It was also difficult for the living to imagine experiencing death itself, as Rooney notes:

> … such anxiety stems ultimately from… the natural human difficulty of imagining the experience of death for the deceased… the hardest thing for the bereaved to imagine is that the deceased has simply ceased to think and experience anything: if it looks human, it must be aware.[99]

The idea that the returning and regular dead alike retained some degree of familiarity or awareness can be seen throughout the revenant stories explored in this

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[97] See Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 231–235; Gordon, 'Social Monsters,' p. 452; Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, pp. 6, 37–38; Rooney, *Mortality in the Medieval Imagination*, pp. 37–38; see also Paul Barber, "How Revenants Come Into Existence" in *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality*, (New Haven, 2010), 29–38, for detailed explanations of common beliefs around what caused revenants; for discussions of what constituted a "good" or "bad" death, see Philippe Ariés, *The Hour of Our Death*, Helen Weaver (trans.), (New York, 1981), pp. 5–92.

[98] Ho, 'Corpus Delicti,' pp. 207, 210.

[99] Rooney, *Mortality and Imagination*, p. 37; see also, Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, pp. 10–11.For a discussion on attitudes towards the dead body, see also Vanessa Harding, 'Whose Body? A Study of Attitudes towards the Dead Body in Early Modern Paris' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (ed.), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge, 2000), 170–187, pp. 171–176.

section, as well as in interactions with purgatorial shades and interactions with saintly relics.[100] As Harding notes, the dead body itself was associated heavily with that individual's concerns and relationships in world, and the rituals developed around caring for the dead were created to provide comfort and closure around those concerns for the bereaved.[101] Thomas's attempts to address these concerns can be seen in Christina's *vita* as well as the recollections of loss within his own family in the *Bonum universale de apibus*. The growing interest in purgatorial practices alongside these existing anxieties over the dead reflected, not only a need for a spiritually constructive outlet for grief, but fears of permanently losing connections with the personal dead for good and a desire to be reassured about their well-being in the afterlife. This anxiety about the beloved dead no longer being capable of that connection or of the dead not resting in peace because they required spiritual care was mirrored in many stories of the returning dead in the period. Whether in William of Newburgh's revenant who tried to crush his widow or the account of Henry Nodus haunting his daughter's house made a revenant's return, especially if it became violent, even more disturbing to their loved ones. As we will explore in a later section, Christina's own resurrection and return to her community mirrored the mingled emotions of love, fear, and grief experienced by those "haunted" by their deceased loved ones, seeking the familiar in once-loved faces and hoping to find recognition there.

Like William of Newburgh and Walter Map, Thomas linked the manner of death to the judgement that would follow in the afterlife and portrayed the manner of death as a reflection on the way the person comported themselves in life. For example, Christina's first death was relatively understated, setting the stage for her dramatic resurrection; her

[100] Harding, 'Whose Body?' p. 184
[101] Harding, 'Whose Body?' p. 171; Winkler, 'Grief, Grieving, and Loss,' p. 149.

second and third deaths were also peaceful, with Christina presumably finally receiving her long-awaited reward of eternal rest. Thomas wrote similarly of the deaths of Margaret of Ypres and Lutgard of Aywières, though it is worth noting that he was much more poetic concerning their actual deathbed sequences, the appearance of their bodies after death, and the post-mortem miracles specifically around their bodies and shrines.[102] Within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas often utilised the manner of death and, the state of the corpse as physical evidence of a greater spiritual truth. Thomas included multiple stories where corpses bled in the presence of their murderers, the body testifying on its own behalf, such as the story of the murdered abbot, Henry of Blois, whose wounds reopened in the presence of his killers, an occurrence that Platelle refers to as the "voice of blood" (*la voix du sang*).[103] In the *exemplum*, Henry was met with such resistance during his attempts to reform his monastery that he had to request papal support.[104] Eventually, twenty eight of his monks conspired together and hired three "most wicked men, ribald ones…" to assassinate the abbot, stabbing him to death.[105] Henry's body reacted when his murderers entered the church where he lay, "… as if crying out for vengeance, through the wounds which had remained dry from the place of slaughter, and

[102] VLAEng, 3.16, pp. 287–288 (the same episode is VLA, 2.16 in the *AASS*, pp. 207–208); VMYEng, 48–51, pp. 200–203, VMY, 48–51, pp. 127–128, VMYEng, 45–52, pp. 200–203, VMY, 45–52, pp. 126–128.
[103] BUA, 1.16.2, pp. 116–122; see Henri Platelle, *Présence de l'au-delà: une vision médiévale du monde*, (Paris, 2004), where Platelle discusses the "voix du sang," the "voice of blood," with the dead body serving as its own most effective witness, see especially within the volume, 'La voix du sang le cadavre qui saigne en présence de son meurtrier,' pp. 13–28 and 'Pratiques pénitentielles et mentalités religieuses au Moyen Âge: La pénitence des parricides et l'esprit de l'ordalie,' 73–93, pp. 77–81, for a discussion of the penances associated with violence against an abbot or lord. These transgressions are treated as "parricidal," despite the lack of *blood* ties, because of the spiritual bonds meant to be nurtured and upheld within the monastic community.
[104] BUA, 1.16.2, p. 116.
[105] BUA, 1.16. 2, p. 118: "Quibus illi in tantum dampnabiliter sunt abusi, ut xxviii ex eis pari malitia convenirent et tres viros sceletissimos ribaldos conducerent et eos in mortem sancti viri per pecunias animarent."

they gushed forth with a profuse rush of blood.[106] Henry's body was the main witness in revealing his murderers. Further, Thomas emphasized that, at least sixteen of the murderers, characterised as the most culpable and wicked, committed suicide, "… setting hands against themselves, hanging themselves in prisons or killing themselves by some other means."[107] Here, the story came full circle: the wounds on Henry's body exposed the murderers' sin, and the act of suicide committed by those most responsible confirms their spiritual decay. Suicide itself, usually considered to be brought on by despair of achieving salvation, was considered a mortal sin, as it precluded repentance and reconciliation or, in the case of the murderers, receiving justice for their actions by serving out their penances.[108]

La voix du sang would find another, more insidious use in the antisemitic "blood libel" myth, which Thomas played a major role in perpetuating.[109] While antisemitic accusations of ritual slaughter existed long before Thomas was active, Thomas placed his own spin on it within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, referring to the myth of Jewish male menstruation, which was a wide-spread belief at the time.[110] This theory was something he had likely encountered in Jacques de Vitry's works, and Jacques may have

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[106] BUA, 1.16.2, p. 120: "… Statim enim, ubi sequenti die ad sepulturam occisi, de locis ubi extra manebant rei criminis, ecclesiam intraverunt et ecce vor sanguinis fratris sui Abel de terra quasi vindicam clamans per vulnera, que a loco occisionis sicca remanserant, habundantissimo sanguinis impetu manaverunt."

[107] Ibid.: "Sexdecim vero ex eis, qui in scelere potissimi credebantur, homicidas manus sibimet imponentes seipsos in carceribus suspendiis, vel aliis mortis generibus occiderunt."

[108] See Moshe Barasch, 'Despair in the Medieval Imagination' in *Social Research*, lxvi, no. 2 (1999), 565–576, pp. 568–569; and Snyder, "The Left Hand of God,' pp. 34–36.

[109] See Platelle, 'La voix du sang,' in *Présence de l'au-delà* pp. 14–15 for a brief discussion of Thomas's use of blood libel, after discussing the murder of Henry of Blois and Pforzheim ritual murder; see also I.M. Resnick, 'Cruentation, Medieval Anti-Jewish Polemic, and Ritual Murder' in *Antisemitism Studies*, iii, no. 1 (2019), pp 131–195; see also Albert Ehrman, 'The Origins of the Ritual Murder Accusation and Blood Libel' in *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought*, xv, no. 4 (1976), pp 83–90.

[110] I.M. Resnick, 'Medieval Roots of the Myth of Jewish Male Menses' in *The Harvard Theological Review*, xciii, no. 3 (2000), 241–263, pp. 255–256; Resnick notes on p. 256 that this flow was treated as "mark of the Fall," implying both a deficient masculinity and divine punishment. See also Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 267, n. 33.

been its originator.[111] Regardless, Thomas added his own spin on the myth within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, not only citing the Jews' call for Christ's crucifixion, but also drawing on one of Augustine's sermons, writing:

> … It is clear from the Holy Gospel that when Pilate was washing his hands and saying, "I am cleansed from the blood of this righteous man," the most impious men cried out: "His blood be on us and our children!" Upon which the blessed Augustine, in a certain sermon which begins: "On the cross, it appears to imply, that from the curse of the parents, the vein of crime [murder] still runs into the children by the stain of blood, so that through this flow the wicked offspring might implacably be crucified, so that they might recognize their guilt in the blood of Christ, do penance, and be cured."[112]

Thomas's blood libel stories follow a similar structrure to the *exemplum* of Henry of Blois: if Henry's murderers had their inequities laid bare by the body of their victim and the manner of their deaths, then Thomas treated the spilling of Christ's blood, as well as that of purported Christian victims, as proof of Jewish wickedness, believing that Jews used Christian blood to try and cure themselves of the "ancestral curse" brought on by killing Christ.[113] In Thomas's *exempla*, the murder victim's wounds also bled, exposing their killers and usually leading to brutal reprisals against Jews in the town or city involved. For example, the story immediately preceding Thomas's theory on the Jewish need for Christian blood features the ritual murder of an orphan girl by Jews in Pforzheim.

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[111] Jacques de Vitry, *History of Jerusalem*, s 82. 159–60, as cited and translated in Resnick, 'Medieval roots,' p. 259. Resnick argues that this is the earliest instance of the myth. See also Willis Johnson, 'The myth of Jewish male menses' in *Journal of Medieval History*, xxiv (1998), 273–295, p. 288: Johnson examines earlier examples of Jewish men bleeding, noting some writers do not appear to differentiate between men suffering literal menses or a menses–*like* flow of blood, particularly in Good Friday, or the entirety of the Jewish people

[112] BUA 2.29.23, p. 580: "Constat quidem ex sancto ewangelio, quod Pylato lavante manus et dicente: Mundus ego sum a sanguine iusti huius, ludei impiissimi clamaverunt: Sanguis eius super nos et super filios nostros. Super quo beatissimus Augustinus in sermone quodam, qui incipit: In cruce, innuere videtur, quod ex maledictione parentum currat adhuc in filios vena facinoris per maculam sanguinis, ut per hanc fluidam importune proles impia inexpiabiliter crucietur, quousque se ream sanguinis Christi recognoscat penitens et sanetur."

[113] BUA, II, 29, 23, p. 580.

Her body was discovered three days later, and when the Marquis of Baden came to view it, the girl's body reacted, "… immediately sitting erect, [it] stretched its hands towards the prince, as if imploring for vengeance for blood or even just for mercy.[114] In the presence of her murderers, meanwhile, "... all of the wounds on the body ruptured and streamed forth copious amounts of blood in testimony of the wicked murder."[115] This led to violent reprisals against the Jewish community in Pforzheim, as well as the execution of the elderly Christian woman who sold the girl to them. The corpse not only pointed out her murderers, but the member of her own community who betrayed her and, by extension, compromised the united identity the Christian community represented against the wicked Jewish "other" by sacrificing one of their own for financial gain. As will be demonstrated in the story of Agnes, preserving the integrity of the Christian faith, defining it clearly against a non-believing other, whether heretic or Jew, was deeply important to Thomas.

Meanwhile, deathbeds and bodies of the wicked also served a physical proof of spiritual truth, often providing a harrowing glimpse of the afterlife for their surviving communities. In the first book of the *Bonum universale de apibus,* Thomas gave an example of 62 archdeacons in the episcopal city of Cambrai who possessed plural benefices, and how he was privy to their deaths as he had lived in the city, having grown up there for eleven years.[116] While a few of them died "common" deaths, Thomas added , "I saw few of them die a common death, but all [the others] suddenly and in the manner of the condemned."[117] Then he described the deaths of four of the canons, each death

[114] BUA, 2.29.22, p. 578: "Erat autem in vincino Marchio de Baden, qui mox, audito tanto piaculo, pervenit ad corpus, statimque erectum residens, tetendit manus ad principem quasi vindictam sanguinis vel forte misericordiam imploraret."
[115] BUA, 2.29.22, p. 578: "Adductis ad hoc spectaculum impiis Iudeis statim eruperunt omnia vulnera corporis et in testimonium nefande necis copiosum sanguinem effuderunt."
[116] BUA, 1.19.10, pp. 152–154.
[117] BUA, 1.19.10, p. 152: "Mihi testis et iudex sit sancta trinitas, unus Deus, quod paucos eorum vidi communi morte defungi, sed subito omnes et reprobe mori…"

reflecting the immorality and dereliction of duty by the individual in question: the first is thrown from his horse during an unseemly display of pomp and wealth, the second dies when attempting to take his chair in the cathedral, and the third collapses at the elevation of the Host, seemingly stricken by an act of judgement.[118] Meanwhile, the fourth died refusing the sacraments and a final chance to confess and be absolved for his sins, and is consequently buried in unhallowed ground.[119] While it is unclear in what capacity Thomas was present at the canons' deaths, the use of his personal experiences in his work would have lent the tale more credibility.

Thomas showed even less tolerance for those who violated their vows of celibacy, particularly within holy orders: another *exemplum* featured a presbyter who seduced a young nun, bringing her to his quarters while her chaperone, an older nun, slept in the next room[120] The next morning, the older nun found the couple "dead in intercourse… with their legs and arms bent disgracefully, stiffened in such a way that they could not be separated from each other by any means…"[121] The two had to be buried together, still inextricably linked, to the embarrassment of their respective communities.[122] While it is not explicitly stated whether they were buried on consecrated ground, their bodies were proof of their sin and a precursor of their fate in the afterlife; especially since they were not absolved of their sin and bore its marks in death, suggesting a more permanent spiritual stain.

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[118] BUA, 1.19.10, p. 154.
[119] Ibid.
[120] BUA, 2.30.20, pp. 624–626.
[121] BUA, 2.30.20, pp. 624–626: "Unde stupefacta thalamum sacerdotis ingreditur et ambos in coitu mortuos, presbiterum et monialem, coniunctosque pariter et cruribus brachiisque inflexis turpiter, ita ut irrigidati nulla arte separari possent ab invicem, in lecto iacentes invenit."
[122] BUA, 2.30.20, p. 626; for further discussion of the corpse as signifier in medieval writing, see Philippa Tristram, *Figures of Life and Death in Medieval English Literature*, (New York, 1976), pp. 154–161; Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, pp. 67–74; Bynum, 'Death and Resurrection in the Middle Ages: Some Modern Implications' in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, cxvii, no. 2 (1998), 589–596, pp. 589–592.

If the *inanimate* corpses of sinful individuals could serve as physical proof of the moral or spiritual points Thomas and other authors wished to demonstrate, what of their reanimated counterparts? Their unpredictability was dangerous, especially given their association with the demonic.[123] The decay and inhuman strength of these bodies were emphasised, as well as the harm they often caused their communities, whether through pestilence, violence, or calling someone to join them in death.[124] As Gordon notes: "The outcast or the unshriven became a form of sin incarnate… the state of the body was seen as a manifestation of the state of the soul. Revenants, then, are material indices of disorder and unrest."[125]

These Violent Delights Have Violent Ends: Violence, Sin, and the Returning Dead

> In this town [Berwick] a certain man, very wealthy, but…a great rogue…after his death sallied forth (by the contrivance, as it is believed, of Satan) out of his grave by night…pursued by a pack of dogs with loud barkings; thus striking great terror into the neighbours, and returning to his tomb before daylight. After this had continued for several days…no one dared to be found out of doors after dusk, —— for each dreaded an encounter with this deadly monster…[126]

Thus begins the story of the revenant of Berwick, one of three accounts concerning dangerous revenants in the *Historia rerum Anglicarum*. This above example is the typical plot of most revenant stories: a sinner died, sometimes violently, sometimes

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[123] See Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Rituals,' p. 27 on the schools of thought surrounding the demonic nature of revenants; Rider, 'Agreements to Return,' pp. 174–183.
[124] Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Rituals,' p. 29.
[125] Gordon, 'Disease, Sin, and the Walking Dead,' p. 57; Gordon cites Julia Kristeva, 'Approaching Abjection' in Leon S. Roudiez (trans.), *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, (Columbia, 1982), 1–31, particularly pp. 3–4 on the abject and the discomfort of the corpse; Rooney, *Mortality*, pp. 35–37 and Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, pp. 14, 82.
[126] HRAEng, 5.23, pp. 657–658; HRA, 5.23, pp. 184–185: "Est vicus nobilis… qui Berewic dicitur… Ibi quidam vir pecuniosus, sed pessimus… post fata sepultus, operatione, ut creditur, Sathanae, noctibus egrediebatur ex tumulo, et canum cum ingenti latratu… et multo cunctis accolis terrore incusso, ante lucem tumulo reddebatur. Cumque hoc per dies fieret plurimos, et nullus jam auderet post vesperum foris inveniri, dum omnes exitialis monstri formidarent occursum…"

unshriven or buried improperly, and returned either to ask for absolution or to violently plague its community. William's other three revenants followed this pattern as well: the first was a man in dire need of absolution, having been buried unshriven on a major feast day, the second was a dissolute priest, and the third was a violent criminal on the run.[127] Within William's stories, these revenants continued with the same inclinations to sin that they possessed in life, their movements made possible by demonic machinations.[128] As noted earlier, this played on the fears of the subversion and corruption of the familiar dead that the revenant represented, with the worst facets of these revenant's personalities in life remaining seemingly intact in death.[129] After the revenant returned, the aid of the Church, usually through an authority figure like a bishop, had to be enlisted. This did not always consistently happen and, in some cases, the aid was ineffective; if this happened, the afflicted community often had to resort to violence. In one of Map's stories, the knight, William of Laudun, asked his bishop (and Walter's benefactor) Gilbert Foliot, for assistance with a revenant who was calling the villagers to their deaths every night. Gilbert recommended the following: "... let the body be exhumed, cut through the neck with a spade, and sprinkle the body and the grave well with holy water, and replace it."[130] This failed to stop the revenant and, with only a few villagers left alive, the revenant tried to beckon William to his doom, whereupon William chased it back to the grave and "… clave his [the revenant's] head to the neck."[131]

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[127] HRAEng, 5.22–24, pp. 656–661; HRA, 5.22–24, pp. 182–190.
[128] John Blair, 'The Dangerous Dead in Early Medieval England' in Stephen Baxter, Catherine Karkov, J.L. Nelson, and David Pelteret (eds.), *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, (Burlington, 2009), 539–560, pp. 549, 555
[129] HRAEng. 5.22, pp. 656–657; HRA, 5.22, pp. 182–184.
[130] DNCEng, 2.27, p. 203; DNC, 2.27, p. 202: "…effodiatur corpus illud, et collo reciso fossorio conspergatur ipsum et fossa magna aqua benedicta, et reponatur."
[131] DNCEng, 2.27, p. 203; DNC, 2.27, p. 202: "… ibi iam in fossa recidentem percussit in caput collo tenus…" This also happens in one of William of Newburgh's stories, see HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 658–659 (HRA, 5.24. pp. 185–188) where the predatory revenant of a chaplain stalking his former mistress must be dismembered; see Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, p. 29; Ho, 'Repentant Soul,' p. 393 interprets this as Map possibly being not fully convinced by demonic

Thomas included a similar story in the *Bonum universale de apibus* where a demonically possessed revenant attacks a pious young woman praying near his funeral bier.[132] When crossing herself did not repulse the attack, she struck it over the head with the processional cross of the church (a somewhat more elegant solution than that of William of Laudun.)[133] The following morning, the local priest wished to leave the body out to inspire excitement in the people to worship Christ, at which point the understandably exhausted woman left, fearing "vainglory and shame."[134] This mirrored a later episode in the Liègeoise *corpus* , where a young Ida of Louvain was also attacked by what appeared to be a demonically possessed corpse. Fortunately Ida did not need to resort to violence or clean up the aftermath: when she called upon God, the corpse was shown to be a demonic illusion and disappeared.[135] For both women, their sanctity was reflected in their ability to fend off the revenant, whether in prayer or the inspired application of a sacred object, with Ida being far more spiritually progressed than the unnamed young woman in Thomas's *exemplum*. Others were not so fortunate, and acting without Church sanction was risky. In the case of the Berwick revenant referenced at the beginning of this section, the townsfolk decided to proceed without permission from the Church, disinterring the "horrible carcase" and cutting it into pieces before burning it.[136] This works temporarily, until a plague breaks out in as a result of their actions which "… carried off the greater portion of them."[137] William specifies the intensity of the plague, writing, "… never did it so furiously rage elsewhere, though it was at that time general

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explanations; however, see Gordon, 'Social Monster,' p. 447 for an alternative explanation of this.

[132] BUA, 2.57.8, pp. 1010–1012.

[133] BUA, 2.57.8, p. 1010.

[134] BUA, 2.57.8, p. 1012: "… vanam nimirum gloriam et erubescentiam reformidans…"

[135] VILovEng, 1.4.8a, p. 9 and VILov, 1.2.8, pp. 160–161, p. 160 for this particular episode.

[136] HRAEng, 5.23, p. 658; HRA, 5.23, p. 185: "… corpus infandum…"

[137] HRAEng, 5.23, p. 658; HRA, 5.23, p. 185: "… majorem iilius populi partem absumpsit."

throughout all the borders of England…"[138] Even if the methods had to be adjusted, it was still crucial to work within the Church to manage revenants— not doing so was a dangerous gamble. The imagery of contagion is prevalent in revenant stories, whether in the health risks surrounding a putrefying corpse wandering around, or in the ambulatory corpse either attacking others or beckoning to them to join it in death (and its presumably damned afterlife).

It can already be observed in the other stories of revenants that violent inclinations in life informed the activities of their reanimated afterlives. However, in Thomas's works, there is a dearth of violent returning dead, with the exception of the revenant in the chapel discussed earlier. Rather, the bodies and the suffering of the dead, even the sinful dead, were meant to produce pity and give a preview of the life to come; most of Thomas's dead asked for assistance or, like Henry of Blois, sought justice. Others provided moral lessons: for example, two of Thomas's returning dead were knights: one of them appeared to his servant after dying in a tournament and asked him to touch his wound and draw out the spearhead that killed him. The knight then urged his servant to bring his killer and some of the tournament attendees to see God's judgement against him.[139] When the group arrived, they saw an "infinite multitude of crows and kites" tearing the knight's corpse into pieces.[140] The knight's return in the story was almost certainly due to the violence and worldliness of his occupation.[141] Thomas's own father was a knight who had sinned greatly and does not appear to have enjoyed an immediately peaceful afterlife as a result, despite having a priest for a son.[142] If revenants were typically violent in life, it stood to

[138] Ibid: "Nusquam enim alibi tam dire desaeviit, cum in cunctis ipso tempore extiterit Anglia finibus generalis…"
[139] BUA, 2.49.6, pp. 842–844.
[140] BUA, 2.49.6, p. 844: "Et cum ventum esset ad locum, ubi venire mandaveret cum aliis occisorem, invenerunt corvorum et milvorum multitudinem infinitam, qui validis morsibus cadaver miserabile discerpserunt."
[141] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 211, 238–239; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 181–182.
[142] BUA, 2.53.32, pp. 960–962.

reason that knights might be particularly susceptible to corporeal reanimation, and Thomas followed this account by stating such things were made possible by demons temporarily stepping into the body until its corruption made it unusable.[143]

The knight within the *exemplum* is already damned and does not ask for intercession, having only been allowed (presumably by God) to be reanimated as a moral example. In the *Dialogus miraculorum,* two of the most violent revenants are knights, with the worst of the two, named Henry Nodus, guilty of rape and incest, among other crimes.[144] In the *Dialogus miraculorum,* two of the most violent revenants are knights, with the worst of the two, named Henry Nodus, guilty of rape and incest, among other crimes.[145] Nodus appeared to his daughter, who he had assaulted in life, and could not be driven away by either the sign of the cross or a sword.[146] The bishop of the diocese advised the family to, "pour water on a nail of crucifixion and to sprinkle the house and his daughter and the man himself, if he was present."[147] Here, not only the revenant required church intervention, but also his surviving victim, a young woman haunted literally and figuratively by her rapist ,with a traumatic family history revealed in the revenant's continued violence. Significantly, the revenant was not the sole source of horror, but also

[143] BUA, 2.49.6, pp. 842–844; Caciola, "Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual," pp. 31–32; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 211–212.
[144] DMEng, ii, 2.12.15, p. 303, DM, ii, 2.12.15, p. 327; for further discussion of Cistercian uses of the returning dead within their *exempla*, M. G. Newman, 'The Abbot and the Necromancer' in *Journal of Medieval History*, xlviii, no. 2 (2002), 199–217.
[145] DMEng, ii, 2.12.15, p. 303, DM, ii, 2.12.15, p. 327.
[146] DMEng, ii, 2.12.15, p. 303, DM, ii, 2.12.15, p. 327. This *exemplum* has similar undertones of sexual violence as that of the revenant who attempts to crush his wife in their marital bed in HRAEng, 5.22, pp. 656–657 (HRA, 5.22, pp. 182–184) as well as that of the revenant of the dissolute chaplain who stalks his former mistress, HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 658–659 (HRA, 5.24, pp. 185–188).
[147] DMEng, ii, 2.12.15, p. 303, DM, ii, 2.12.15, p. 327: "… ut aqua clavo Dominico superfusa, domus et filia nec non et ipse si adesset aspergerentur."

what their haunting revealed about the past or ongoing sins of an individual or their family.[148]

The Demonic and Pestilential Dead

As seen in the knights' tales above, there was a growing consensus in Thomas's era that revenants were demonically animated. Demons were also often portrayed stalking deathbeds or other places associated with death, making their association with death and dying an inextricable one.[149] This already had its roots within discussions on necromancy and the nature of the returning dead, with Augustine debating whether the Witch of Endor had actually summoned Samuel himself or simply a demonic double.[150] This can also be seen in one of Thomas's more unusual stories of a demonic body double, which posed as the corpse of a young woman. In the tale, a young couple were forbidden from marrying, resulting in the young woman appearing to fall sick and die. While her funeral was supposed to be happening, her lover encountered her wandering and lamenting in the woods; when asked what she was doing there, she responded, "Behold: a man goes before me, who leads me."[151] The young man immediately hid her in his home and went to her father, sitting by what was supposedly his daughter's body, and asked for her hand in marriage in exchange for her safe return. The father granted this, and it was discovered that her "corpse" was a "figmentum mirabile," a diabolical likeness, "... like rotten wood on the inside, covered with a light skin on the outside." [152] The girl was restored to her

[148] To clarify, this is not to imply that Henry's daughter was guilty of any sin, as Caesarius makes it very clear that she is blameless.
[149] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 208–212 and Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 188–190.
[150] CPMEng, 15.18, p. 364 and CPM, 15.18, pp. 651–652: Augustine's later treatment of the story in this work was much more accepting of the vision being Samuel himself; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 272–273 and Rampton, 'Up from the Dead,' p. 283, for further discussion on the evolution of these beliefs.
[151] BUA, 2.57.20, p. 1026: "'Ecce,' ait, 'vir ante me vadit, qui deducit me.'"
[152] BUA, 2.57.20, pp. 1026–1028: "Dicitur autem ab hiis, qui figmenta huiusmodi dyabolica inspexerunt, ea esse interius putrido ligno similia, levi exterius pellicula superducta."

community and married to her lover. Uniquely, the body double is the source of doubt and horror rather than the actual corpse of the girl, along with the implication that whatever demon led her away initially was still present, presumably leading her deeper and deeper into the woods. Thomas himself was unsure what to make of this, writing in explanation: "That such things happen, by the secret judgement of God, through the work of demons, I neither deny nor confirm… I have written down what was told and emphasised to me, and the rest I leave to be examined by others."[153] Thomas's explanation (or lack thereof) was in keeping with many of his contemporaries, who often avoided concrete stances on what animated revenants. While most of them leant towards demonic explanations, far more importance was placed on emphasising God's hand in allowing such things to happen.[154]

The boundaries surrounding how demons could and could not act were somewhat vague: some demons could preach, still others could convincingly sing divine offices, such as a cleric with an "excellent and sweet" voice in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, who was exposed as a demonically animated corpse, turning "putrid" as soon as the demon fled.[155] While intended as a warning against vanity in singing the offices, the *exempla* still presented the uncomfortable potential of praying alongside a demonically possessed corpse. Similar accounts of disingenuously devout demons can be found in the *Sermones vulgares*, such as a possessed man eloquently preaching the Gospels so that those ignoring him could not later claim ignorance of God's word.[156] Likewise, Stephen of Bourbon tells a tale about a seemingly normal demonic monastery which disappeared indignantly after

[153] BUA, 2.57.22, pp. 1028–1030: "Ego quidem talia fieri, permittente occulto Dei iudicio, per operationem demonum nec infitior nec confirmo… ista mihi narrata et inculcata conscripsi et aliis discutienda reliqui."
[154] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 194–199; Gordon, 'Monstrous Words,' p. 397; Watkins, 'Sin, Penance, and Purgatory,' pp. 23–27.
[155] DMEng, ii, 2.12.4, p. 292, DM, ii, 2.12.4, pp. 317–318: "… tam egregiam et tam dulcem vocem… cadavere… foetente."
[156] SV, 151, p. 67.

a brother lured inside, called the demonic bluff and began to preach on the orders of angels, angering the demons into disappearing.[157] However, not all demons were as disingenuous, with some appearing genuinely helpful, while still others nearly admit to yearning for heaven. We have already examined the demon Thomas exorcised who failed to gain the desired absolution in the last chapter, only able to acknowledge God in the name of the woman it was possessing rather than expressing true contrition.[158] Meanwhile, in the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius wrote of a demon who offered to serve a knight, taking the form takes of a "respectable" young man who worked "…so diligently and respectfully, so faithfully and willingly… in all things full of discretion, foresight and cheerfulness."[159] After the servant rescued the knight from his mortal enemies and healed his wife by getting her a cure of lion's milk, the knight realised he was not dealing with a mortal servant and confronted him about his true nature. The demon replied that it was his "greatest consolation" to be among men and that no harm would come to the knight by keeping the demon in his service. Before dismissing the demon, the knight asked what compensation he wanted for his work; the demon asked for five gold pieces, then returned them, saying, "I beg that with this money you will buy a bell, and hang it over the roof of that poor forsaken church, that…the faithful may be invited to the divine office each Sunday."[160] Whether the demon hoped for redemption or was trying to help humans to avoid his fate was left ambiguous. It is within this ambiguity that the *exemplum* is useful as a tale of God's ultimate mercy, even for a demon (if they

[157] TDMP2, ex. 461, 2.1.3, lines 420–449, pp. 19–20.
[158] BUA, 2.57.67, pp. 1092–1094.
[159] DMEng, i, 1.5.36, pp. 366–368, DM, i, 1.5.36, pp. 319–320: "… tam diligenter et tam timide, tam fideliter et tam iocunde… Discretum, providum et hilarem semper se exhibuit."
[160] DMEng, i, 5.36, p. 368, DM, i, 5.36, p. 321: "Peto ut ex eis nolam compares, et super tectum pauperis illius ecclesiae ac desolatae suspendas, ut per eam… Dominicis diebus fideles ad divinum convocentur officium."

repent.) This was particularly significant during a period where the Church was urging others to yearly confession and where purgatory was being solidified as a doctrine.

Similarly, even revenants could be more benevolent. In Gregory's *Dialogues*, a priest going into a bathhouse was attended by a strange and very assiduous servant.[161] This happens several times, until the priest, wishing to do something kind in return, brought two loaves of bread for the man, who replied forlornly:

> That bread is holy and I cannot eat it. If you wish to do something for me, then offer this bread to almighty God, and so make intercession for me, a sinner. When you come back and do not find me here, you will know that your prayers have been heard.[162]

The priest did so, and when he returned, the man was nowhere to be found.[163] It is particularly within the discourse on purgatory that the possibility of redemption for even the irredeemable found the most traction.[164] If a middle place could be found for those who were neither perfect nor completely evil, then stories of more benevolent demons or beings like the bathhouse ghost could model the redemption of flawed human beings.[165] Newman notes that interactions between human beings and demons occur more frequently than interactions between human beings and angels.[166] The wide range of emotional experiences, such as regret, pride, and contrition may have made demons seem more relatable, while wider opportunities for redemption could appeal to those with their

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[161] GrGrEng, 4.57, pp. 266–267; GrGr, iii, 4.57.6–, p. 186: "Iste panis sanctus est; ego hunc manducare non possum. … Si autem mihi praestare uis, omnipotenti Deo pro me offer hune panem, ut pro peccatis meis interuenias. Et tunc exauditum te esse cognosces, cum hic… ueneris et me minime inueneris."
[162] GrGrEng, 4.57, p. 267; GrGr, iii, 4.57.6, p. 186.
[163] GrGrEng, 4.57. p. 267; GrGr, iii, 4.57.7, pp. 186–188.
[164] Newman, 'The Quest for Redemption,' p. 54; see also pg. 65 on the "sympathetic" demon as a counter to perceived dualist arguments. See also Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 69.
[165] Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 749–750.
[166] Newman, 'The Quest for Redemption,' pp. 58–59, Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 733–734.

own anxieties about the afterlife.[167] Unlike Gregory's bathhouse revenant, or the demon servant of the *Dialogus miraculorum*. However, in an era of spreading heresy, demons and revenants were still needed to be handled with caution: sin and death, after all, could be catching.

Revenants and Pestilence

Depictions of the returning dead spreading disease a featured heavily in many of the tales of revenants in Thomas's time. In the works of Walter Map and William of Newburgh, revenants were destructive forces in their communities, as discussed in the case of the revenant killed by William of Laudun after decimating his village.[168] William's revenants were more consistently deadly, with the revenant of Anantis causing plague throughout his village with his "pestiferous breath."[169] The village lost most of its inhabitants, whether to death or emigration.[170] Pestilential language was used throughout, surrounding both the literal sanitary issues surrounding the decaying corpse, but also the more figurative language of sin or heresy.[171] If the revenant was depicted as bringing pestilence into their community, there was also a subtext for the figurative spread of spiritual "sicknesses" like sin or heresy. Gordon cites William of Newburgh's language surrounding heretics and the spread of unorthodoxy in England at the time: "These [people] spread the poison of their heresy, which had originated from an unknown author in Gascony, in many regions; for such numbers are said to be infected with this pestilence

[167] Newman, 'The Quest for Redemption,' pp. 67–68.
[168] DNCEng, 2.27, p. 203; DNC, 2.27, p. 202.
[169] HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 660–661; HRA, 5.24, pp. 188–190: "… haustu pestilenti…"
[170] HRAEng, 5.24, p. 661 and HRA, 5.24, p. 190; on bodily horror, Polina Ignatova, 'The Undead: Ghosts and Revenants,' in Philip Booth and Elizabeth Tingle (eds.), *A Companion to Death, Burial, and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, c. 1300–1700*, (Leiden, 2020), 418–438, p. 420; see also Rooney, *Mortality*, pp. 2–11, 103, 127–130.
[171] Gordon, "Social Monsters," 463–464.

throughout the extensive provinces of France, Spain, Italy, and Germany…"[172] This was significant especially when considering that, like many of William's revenants, the revenant of Anantis died without confession, making the demonic possession of his body possible. This also brings the relative inefficacy of the way the revenant of Berwick was handled into context when considering the repercussions for not handling the dead within the rites of the Church. Further Gordon examines the correlation between sin and decay within revenant stories, comparing the gruesome bodies of revenants and peaceful bodies of the saintly in works such as the *Dialogus miraculorum*. If the saints' incorruptible bodies signified the blissful rest of their souls after death, a reward for their devotion to God, then the appearances of revenants, after lives of sin or violence, signified they had received their own just desserts: in this sense, there lay the implication that sin, and therefore, decay (spiritually and physically) was something chosen in life.[173] This decay and the ultimate destruction of the revenant's body foreshadowed the afterlife of the damned themselves, with their spiritual bodies torn and tormented in hell.[174]

What's a Ghoul to Do? Female Revenants and Christina

Before discussing Christina and how she subverts the revenant tropes in her *vita*, it is first important to examine how female revenants were depicted within popular accounts and tropes within their stories. While often portrayed as sexually desirable, female revenants were mostly passive, largely upon by others rather than seducing sexual partners

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[172] Stephen Gordon discusses William of Newburgh and his revenant narratives in the *Historia rerum Anglicarum* in, 'Disease, Sin, and the Walking Dead,' in Disease, Sin and the Walking Dead in Medieval England, c.1100–1350: A Note on the Documentary and Archaeological Evidence' in Effie Gemi-Iordanou, Stephen Gordon, Robert Matthew, Ellen McInnes, and Rhiannon Pettitt (eds.), *Medicine, Healing and Performance*, (Oxford, 2014), 55–70, pp. 58–60.See also L. M. Ruch, 'Digression or Discourse? William of Newburgh's Ghost Stories as Urban Legends' in *The Medieval Chronicle,* viii (2013), 261–272, p. 267–269.

[173] Gordon, 'Disease Sin and the Walking Dead,' p. 60.

[174] Gordon, p. 60; see also Blair, 'The Dangerous Dead,' p. 549; Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body*, pp. 280–283.

themselves.[175] Female revenants seldom returned to their communities of their own volition; indeed, they often seemed to prefer the company of their fellow dead women, often depicted dancing together in the woods.[176] Female revenants occupied an ambiguous space, neither damned nor in paradise, where their spiritual health could not be diagnosed with a glance at their bodies or behaviours alone, unlike their rotting male counterparts.[177] The only surefire way would be in the spiritual fruits these women produced in those who saw them: would they lead others to faith or away from it?[178]

In fact, some female revenants were depicted as markedly averse to returning to the clear gender roles they occupied in life altogether: in one of Walter Map's tales, a knight stumbled upon a group of women in the woods, "desirable beyond any favourite of a king."[179] The women here are not explicitly described as the returning dead, and Map

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[175] Reilly, 'The Revenant,' p. 37. Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 244–246; Rooney, *Mortality*, pp. 60–63.

[176] *Afterlives*, pp. 244–246; as well as Reilly, 'The Revenant,' pp. 48–50.

[177] *Afterlives*, pp. 244–246. On the overlap of fairies and female revenants, see Guyénot Laurent, *La mort féerique: Anthropologie du merveilleux, XIIe–XVe siècle* (Paris, 2011), particularly pp. 296–306. Laurent notes is it often unclear whether the women are undead or actually resurrected, *La mort féerique*, pp. 227–230; for further on the overlap of fairy and/or undead lovers, see Diane Purkiss, *At the Bottom of the Garden Path: A Dark History of Fairies, Hobgoblins, and Other Troublesome Things*, (New York, 2000), pp. 94–95, 102–104; on fairy mistresses and demon lovers, see James Wade, *Fairies in Medieval Romance,* (London, 2011), pp. 14, 111–125 and R.F.Green*, Elf Queens and Holy Friars: Fairy Beliefs and the Medieval Church,* (Philadelphia, 2016), pp. 100–105; see also on the infernalisation of fairies, Green*, Elf Queens and Holy Friars*, pp. 55–63, 100–107; on defining these beings and the fraught discussions around communicating with the dead, see Catherine Rider*, Magic and Religion in Medieval England,* (London, 2012), pp. 72–87; for discussions of sexuality and the monstrous, see D. M. Oswald*, Monsters, Gender, and Sexuality in Medieval Literature,* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 8–13; on the ambiguity of dancing and its associations with fairies, see Andrea Maraschi*,* "The Tree of the Bourlémonts. Gendered Beliefs in Fairies and Their Transmission from Old to Young Women in Joan of Arc's Domrémy" in Marina Montesano (ed.)*, Cultural Exchanges: Some Cases in the Domain of Folklore, Magic, and Witchcraft,* (London, 2021), 21–32, pp. 26–27. For a general discussion of dancing women, mortal and divine, in folklore, see Elizabeth Barber*, The Dancing Goddesses: Folklore, Archaeology and the Origins of European Dance,* (New York, 2013).

[178] Barr, 'Willing to Know God,' p. 191; on how fairy beauty made them occasionally tricky to discern from the malevolent demonic, Green, *Elf Queens and Holy Friars*, pp. 55–63; on dream divination, charms, and the Church's response, see Rider, *Magic and Religion*, pp. 52–55, 62–65; Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp. 52–53; W. L. Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits*, p. 34.

[179] DNCEng, 2.12, pp. 155–159; DNC, 2.12, pp. 154–158: "… super omnes regum delicias desiderabilem."

links their roving band with, "… the nightly squadrons of devils and the deadly vision of them… the bands of Dryads… … how they inflict sudden punishment.… how they dislike those who try to surprise and detect their assemblies…"[180] The knight becomes smitten with one woman who possessed a "fairy" beauty, but when he tried to capture her, her fellow sisters attacked him ferociously with "all that the nails and teeth of women can inflict"[181] While he captures the strange woman, and she acquiesces to the marriage, her feelings about her husband are not made known, beyond her correct prediction of his doom when he later breaks a promise to her, causing her to vanish.[182] The stories of female revenants within the *De nugis curialium* and *Historia rerum Angelicarum* share most, if not all, of these commonalities: a man, usually a knight or gentleman, captures or reclaims a woman (sometimes his dead wife) from among the dancing dead or a group of walking dead women.[183] He reintegrates her into their community where they lead a relatively normal life, until she dies again.[184]

William's female revenants are also passive, whether mysterious beauties snatched from their moonlight dances by infatuated men or wives reclaimed by their widowed husband.[185] Female revenants explicitly identified as past wives were relatively

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[180] DNCEng, 2.12, p. 157 and DNC, 2.12, p. 156: "… nocturnasque phalanges demonum et mortiferas eorum uisiones… et c[o]etus Driadum… quomodo subitis… inferant penas. quam inuisos habeant qui consilia eorum deprehendere conantur ut detegant, rimantur ut reuelent…" On the link with fairies, see Wade, *Fairies in Medieval Romance*, pp. 112–113.

[181] DNCEng, 2.12, p. 157; DNC, 2.12, p. 156–158: "… quantum possint feminarum ungues et dentes, pedibus lesus et tibiis… lesus…" and, for Map's description of the woman's beauty as proof of her otherworldly nature, "… fatalitatis argumentum inuisa prius et inaudita species mulieris…"

[182] DNCEng, 2.12, p. 159; DNC, 2.12, p. 158.

[183] See DNCEng, 2.13, p. 161 (DNC, 2.12, p. 160) DNCEng, 4.8, p. 345 (DNC, 4.8, p. 344) and DNCEng, 4.10, pp. 349–351 (DNC, 4.10, pp. 348–350); on fairy alternatives to the afterlife and overlaps with purgatory within fairy tales, see Laurent, *La mort féerique*, pp. 210–219, 248–259 and Green, *Elf Queen and Holy Friars*, pp. 178–186.

[184] Swanson, 'Ghosts and GhostBusters,' p. 155; There is one exception, see, DNC, 4.12, pp. 365–369, in which a man sires a monstrous, Gorgon-like child with the corpse of a dead woman, who is not ever characterised as being necessarily conscious of or a participant in the affair.

[185] DNCEng, 4.10, p. 351 and DNC, 4.10, p. 350; see also Caciola's discussion in *Afterlives*, pp. 159–162, on superstitions surrounding hordes of "good" female dead found in works by William

unperturbed at returning to the roles that they occupied while living.[186] In Map's second female revenant story, while the husband was joyful at reclaiming his wife from the dead, there was no description of the her feelings at being plucked from her band of dead sisters back into the world of the living, even though Map described the subsequent marriage as something that lasted for years, "...as pleasant and as open to the day as the first had been…"[187] It is unclear for whom the marriage was pleasant and open for: given the resistance of the band of women to the capture of their sister in Map's first story and the ambivalence of the wife herself, it is not unreasonable to suppose the arrangement was probably more beneficial for the husband in most cases. This is not to say that the men in these stories were carrying out the purgatorial marriages discussed in the previous chapter, where widows were often depicted providing post-mortem care for their husbands; because of their liminal status, with no indication of being blessed or damned, there is no indication the women were left spiritually better or worse off than they had been.

Reilly observes that portrayals of female revenants were often based around essentialist gender norms, with male undead being far more aggressive, and women passively accepting marriage and having children, usually sons.[188] Female revenants were depicted as more passive, even capable of remaining physically desirable and fertile while returning to the roles they occupied in life.[189]

The violence of male revenants often contained a sexual component, such as William of Newburgh's revenant who attempted to crush his widow by lying on top of her in their bed or Henry Nodus, barely dressed in a sheep-skin, trying to enter the house

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of Auvergne and Stephen of Bourbon compared to the militant masculine dead; Purkiss, *Bottom of the Garden Path*, p. 145.

[186] DNCEng, 4.8, p. 345; DNC, 4.8, p. 344.

[187] DNCEng, 4.8, p. 345; DNC, 4.8, p. 344: "… tam iocunde, tam celebriter ut priori…"

[188] Reilly, 'The Revenant,' p. 53.

[189] Reilly, 'The Revenant,' pp. 36, 48–51.

of the daughter he raped in life.[190] Reilly cites the case of William's revenant of Anantis: in life, a criminal with a brutal reputation for violence, he died after falling from the ceiling while spying on his wife and her lover.[191] His revenant is the most angry and violent out of all of William's revenants, described as, "… issuing, by the handiwork of Satan, from his grave at night-time, and pursued by a pack of dogs… while all men made fast their doors, and did not dare to go abroad on any errand... from the beginning of the night until the sunrise, for fear of… being beaten black and blue."[192] The anger and humiliation of the man upon seeing his wife's infidelity caused him to become a revenant of extreme brute force.[193] Conversely, the female dead are usually not as volatile in behaviour compared to their male counterparts, and Caciola notes that this probably had something to do with the fact that women were typically unconnected with violence, and would not have had the opportunity to die the kinds of deaths associated with male revenants.[194] Female revenants were rarely, if ever, portrayed as dangerous creatures who must be destroyed for the safety of their communities.

Explicitly wicked reanimated dead women are also rare within the *exempla* collections: only one story within the *Dialogus miraculorum* features a creature which could be interpreted as a malevolent female revenant, a woman in "a white dress with a pallid face" spotted gazing intently at the children of a knight, who then proceed to sicken and die, along with the members of another family in the area.[195] The other women, the

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[190] HRAEng, 5.22, pp. 656–657 (HRA, 5.22, pp. 182–184); DMEng, II, 12.15, p. 303, DM, II, 12.15, p. 327; Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 150.
[191] HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 660–661; HRA, 5.24, pp. 185–188.
[192] HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 660; HRA, 5.24, p. 189: "Noctibus enim operatione Sathanae de sepulchro egrediens, prosequente eum cum latratu horribili canum… nec exire praesumeutibus ad aliquod negotium ab incipientibus tenebris usque ad ortum solis, ne quis forte oberranti monstro sugillandus occurreret."
[193]HRAEng, 5.24, pp. 660; HRA, 5.24, p. 189. : Reilly, 'The Revenant,' p. 44. Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death*, p. 29.
[194] Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 245–246; Reilly, 'The Revenant,' p. 48.
[195] DMEng, ii, 2.11.63, p. 287, DM, ii, 2.11.63, pp. 313–314: "… in veste nivea et facie pallida…"

mistress of a priest, asks to be buried with a good pair of shoes, but when she is later seen being chased by a demon, it is not clear whether she is corporeal or an apparition.[196]

Within the *Bonum universale de apibus*, women who died in sin typically remained dead, with perhaps the odd apparition, reburial, or destruction of their inanimate bodies after being buried inappropriately in holy ground.[197] Meanwhile, only one story within Thomas's *exempla* collection features a dead woman returning to her husband after being portrayed as explicitly having died: the wife, described as a bullying drunk, was found dead, and it was assumed her husband murdered her.[198] The prayers of one Brother Peter restored her to life, and she testified on her husband's behalf: "By the prayers of Brother Peter, I came back to life in order to prove my husband's innocence."[199] Then her husband took her by the hand and led her home. This is the only explicitly dead woman in Thomas's stories to returned by her husband to a relatively normal domestic life, and placed within a compliant and submissive role she did not occupy in her first life. In this way, Thomas depicts Peter, a fellow Dominican, as providing pastoral care, not only by exonerating an innocent man, but restoring a once-troubled marriage.

This section has demonstrated how these authors typically portrayed their female revenants: beautiful, passive, seldom resurrected because of any particular sinfulness, and capable of marrying and having families seemingly unimpeded by their post-mortem state; however shocking their reappearance might have been, they usually lived normal lives before dying a second, final time. It is here where I wish to return to Christina: Christina's lack of femininity, her violent behaviour, and the often solitary nature of her life after her first death set her apart from other female revenants. A man did not facilitate

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[196] DMEng, ii, 2.12.20, pp. 306–307, DM, ii, 2.12.20, p. 330.
[197] See BUA, 2.30.5, p. 610, for an *exemplum* concerning a dissolute nun whose body is dug up from her burial ground and torn apart by a demonic sow.
[198] BUA, 2.1.11. pp. 234–236.
[199] BUA, 2.1.11, p. 234: "Orante fratre Petro ad vitam reversa sum, ut viri mei innocentiam demonstrarem."

her resurrection debut, even her beloved patron, Louis of Looz. Likewise, despite her expressed reverence for them, her self-baptism in Wellen meant that not even a priest was responsible for reintegrating her into the community.[200] While this could be a commentary on her masculinization—certainly, as explored in the first chapter, her penitential labours and those of the other holy women often echoed those of Cistercian lay brothers—it is more compelling to regard Thomas's portrayal of Christina as subverting these tropes in order to promote her purgatorial ministry. As discussed earlier, the liberties God permitted to Christina in her life operate in the service of promoting Church authority and orthodox belief, and Thomas was clear about her orthodoxy and benevolence, even as he examined the more shocking or frightening elements of her *vita*.[201]

Christina: The Revenant as Healer

Thus far, this chapter has discussed how the returning dead were not the only ambiguous beings sometimes capable of benevolence: there were also accounts of demons sincerely helping the living and appearing to regret defecting from God. All of these complicated matters deeply, begging the question: how to safely interact with these strange beings? The concern over orthodox and safe interactions with the personal dead would likely have been relevant to Christina and discussion of purgatory itself. Certainly, within the stories of the revenant or the more ambiguously behaving demons, it meant that her outward benevolence could still mask something unpredictable, even potentially diabolical.[202]

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[200] VCM, 2.21, p. 654.

[201] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 358; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 48–50, 57–58, 67–71.

[202] There is perhaps one exception from an anonymous Breton account explored in Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, p. 173: the baker who returns to help his family, but he is much more concerned with practical/business matters than the salvation of his family. See, Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants, and Rituals,' p. 20.

Indeed, this anxiety over interacting properly and safely with the dead could even extend to the holy dead themselves. Christina also adjusted *herself* to better meet the needs of the living: when the devout within her community worried that the spectacle of her ministry could distract from devotion to God, she baptised herself in response.[203] This act served as both an example of the efficacy of Church rituals in recontextualising the dead and Christina's sensitivity towards protecting the spiritual peace of the town by not distracting from devotion to God.

The overlap between revenants and saints was not necessarily new: one could make the argument that relics of martyred bodies, in their lively and miraculous intercessions, could be categorised as a type of revenant.[204] Caciola notes the parallels between the afterlives of relics and beliefs surrounding the returning dead are manifold:

> In both cases, the local community's evaluation of the individual's manner of life and death is central to the definition of their bodies as powerful after death. Saints, like revenants, were likely to die before their time, through persecution or simple austerity, thus leaving energy still unexpended in their physical remains.[205]

The difference between a saint and revenant boiled down to their interpretation by their community, as well as the impact they were seen to have: what spiritual fruits did they bear?[206] Lauro discusses St. Denis smartly picking up his severed head after his martyrdom and walking to where he wanted it buried, the future site of the basilica that bears his name, comparing these holy walking corpses to the phenomena of zombies, writing:

> Like a zombie, the body of a saint will also do the opposite of what a normal cadaver does, though to much different ends: the saint's corpse

[203] VCM, 2.20, p. 654.
[204]Caciola-, Afterlives, pp. 243–244.
[205] Ibid., p. 243.
[206] Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, p. 286; Voaden, *God's Words*, pp. 48–50; Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 188–192.

> emits a fragrant odour, it resists decay, and most often it cures rather than causes illness.[207]

Citing the conversion of both those who witnessed the martyrdom of St. Denis and those who witnessed his headless body walk to its preferred burial site, Lauro compares the acts of conversion following a martyrdom to later zombie narratives surrounding religious proselytization and the "infection" of colonisation: "… martyrs are depicted as infected or possessed by Christ's powers, and the witnesses of the execution are likewise affected: conversion spreads like contagion, fervour like fever…"[208] Hence, if other revenants were characterised by their spread of pestilence sinfulness, then Christina was presented as doing the exact opposite. While Christina's purgatorial body and the penances she enacted within it could be frightening, especially given the specificity of the punishments themselves, she did not cause harm: she attended funerals, but she was never the cause of them. Her purgatorial body provided an illustration of purgatory and its punishments, but her exhortations to love God and her more mundane works of compassion were imitable.[209] Thomas emphasised Christina's holiness, with her body providing physical proof confirming purgatory's existence, and her actions then demonstrating how the reader could help those there and avoid it themselves.

This is significant when considering the very real presence of the reanimated dead in Thomas's works, and those of his other contemporaries. While most of Thomas's

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[207] S.J Lauro, "The Zombie Saints: The Contagious Spirit of Christian Conversion Narratives: The Zombie Martyr," *Literature and Theology*, xxvi, 2 (2012), 160–178, p. 163; Caciola, *Afterlives*, pp. 19–20, 243–244; Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, p. 251; on the presence of the saints and their roles within the fragmentation/wholeness of their remains, see Bynum, 'Material Continuity,' pp. 74–76, 80–81.

[208] Lauro, 'The Zombie Saints,' p. 165.

[209] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 71–74: Smith notes that, despite this, fear was the primary reaction to Christina rather than charity or renunciation; Sweetman, 'Christine of Saint-Trond's Preaching,' pp. 72, 78–80; on the ability to edify through example alone, see Bynum, *Docere et verbo*, pp. 15–16, 77–87 on the meaning of "example."

audience were likely clergy and those in religious orders within the Church who understood these tropes and his purgatorial message, his role as a Dominican preacher meant that he a needed to make the illustration of purgatorial piety within Christina's *vita* comprehensible and vivid to a non-ecclesiastical audience, leaving no room for misinterpretation. Having established Thomas's utilisation of the dead (whether holy, personal, or macabre) within the earlier chapters in the thesis, we can now examine how Thomas drew on and subverted revenant tropes in Christina's *vita*, particularly within the context of his contemporaries' portrayals of the returning dead.

With all the connotations of violence, sinfulness, and pestilence that accompanied revenants, the initial response from Christina's community to her resurrection is not surprising. Her re-entrance into the world would not have been out of place in a revenant tale:

> And while the Requiem Mass was being offered on her behalf, suddenly stirring, her body rose in the coffin, and at once she ascended like a bird to the rafters of the temple… Christina remained immovable until after Mass… the subtlety of her spirit shrank, as some say, from the stench of human bodies.[210]

As we have seen in earlier sections, the first task of the revenant in most portrayals is returning to their families and communities. In some cases, this is to ask for help, but more often it was to harass or attack them, reflecting the anxieties of a potential threat masked by a familiar or well-loved face, the dead person in question becoming not only alien but an active threat. Christina's prompt return aligns with the timely appearances of revenants after their deaths: not only does it reflect the mechanics of a specifically *fleshly*

[210] VCM, 1.5, p. 651: "Cumque pro depositione ejus Missarum oblatio fieret, subito commotum corpus exsurrexit in feretro, statimque instar avis evecta templi trabes ascendit. [Ubi] usque post Missam immobilis perseverans a presbytero ecclesiae sacramento constricta, est coacta descendere: horrebat enim, ut quidam autumant, subtilitas ejus spiritus, odorem corporum humanorum." VCMEng, 5, p. 130.

revenant, but also the need for a face and body still recognizable to surviving loved ones, as well as the hope of a remaining that emotional connection after death.[211] Nonetheless, Christina's first spoken interaction with her loved ones after her funeral was one of reassurance and explanation. Besides the dialogue between her body and soul, the episode with her family is one of the longest dialogues in Christina's *vita* as she describes her experiences in the afterlife. This not only establishes Christina as a holy figure, but demonstrates Christina's compassion for her understandably shaken family and establishes a picture of both the afterlife and of God's mercy for the reader.

Her family remained unconvinced: while the misunderstood saint was a common hagiographical trope, given the ability of demons to imitate pious, even benevolent, behaviour discussed earlier, Christina's stated mission and miraculous abilities may not have been entirely reassuring to her community as proof that she was not possessed.[212] Whether her friends and family absolutely believed her account from the beginning is unclear, but Thomas describes them as embarrassed by her behaviour, worried that Christina could look and sound possessed to others in their community. Whatever their motives, her sisters' shame served as a barrier to their understanding of God's working through Christina, and their lack of spiritual receptivity and virtue relative to Christina, who had already passed judgement in Heaven, meant that they could not correctly discern or interpret the signs in front of them.[213] In only being able to interpret Christina in relation to the role she had once occupied, they could not see the instrument for purgatorial redemption that she had become.

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[211] See Schmitt on the deceased still being "warm" in the memories of their loved ones, presumably even well within the mourning period. *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, pp. 171–172; Carozzi, *Le voyage,* pp. 180–184; Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants,' pp. 31–32.
[212] VCM, 2.17, p. 653 and VCM, 3.35, p. 656; Newman, 'Possessed by the Spirit,' pp. 738, 749.
[213] Barr, *Willing to Know God*, pp. 234–235.

Christina did not help her case, mirroring another common trope of revenant behaviour with particularly demonic connotations by lingering in places associated with the dead, such as cemeteries or the wilderness, even going so far as to break herself on the same wheel or hang herself from the gallows used on criminals.[214] When Christina was "seized by the spirit" there was no way of containing her physically, and she only calmed around the sacraments.[215] In one instance, she rose in the middle of the night:

> … provoking all of the dogs of the city of St. Trond into barking, as if a fleeing beast before them, and the dogs followed her, even through the forest thick with thorns… so that no part of her body remained free from wounds…[216]

This pursuit mirrors the description of two of the revenant stories we have already examined within the *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, those of the revenants of Berwick and Anantis, respectively; while Chrisina's purgatorial body lacked the decomposing horror of the revenants of Anantis and Berwick, the gory injuries from her penances more than made up for it. When Christina emerged from the woods after this episode and others where she tormented herself with the same thorns and brambles she was chased into, her community marvelled that "so much blood could be in a single body" as it poured from wounds that disappeared the second she wiped off the blood.[217] This echoes the earlier

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[214] VCM, 1.13, p. 652; see also Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' p. 363.
[215] VCM, 2.20–21, p. 654.
[216] VCM, 2.14, p. 653: "… et canes totius civitatis S. Trudonis provocans ad latratus, quasi bestia fugiens praecurrebat, insequebanturque eam canes, et per silvas atque condensa spinarum… ita ut nulla pars corporis ejus a plaga remaneret immunis..." VCMEng, 14, pp. 135–136. This episode is mirrored in the story of the most violent revenant in William of Newburgh's HRAEng*,* 5.24, pp. 660–661: "A Christian burial, indeed, he received, though unworthy of it; but it did not much benefit him: for issuing, by the handiwork of Satan, from his grave at night–time, and pursued by a pack of dogs with horrible barkings, he wandered through the courts and around the houses; while all men made fast their doors, and did not dare to go abroad on any errand…"
[217] VCM, 2.14, p. 653: "… tantus sanguis in uno corpore abundabat." VCMEng, 14, p. 136.This is not to say that the revenant was literally a vampire or blood-sucker: see Livermore, *When the Dead Rise*, p. 50, n. 39; Caciola, *Afterlives*, 238–239; Barber discusses the effects of blood seepage and coagulation in the dead body in *Vampires, Death, and Burial*, pp. 104–105, 114–116.

story of the bloated corpse of the revenant of Anantis which, when pierced, "flowed such a stream of blood, that it might have been taken for a leech filled with the blood of many persons."[218]

This signified the gory violence of the revenant, as a creature that had already caused widespread death in its community; it possessed a horrifying and unnatural body, figuratively and literally bursting at the seams with pestilence and gory decay. Meanwhile, as Spencer-Hall has noted, Christina's horror is her endless purgatorial capacity to suffer: she can bleed, freeze, burn, and hang endlessly without dying or being scarred, her injuries gone the second she wiped the blood away, with only her wails and tears left to indicate her agony.[219]Unlike the violence of other revenants we have discussed, Christina's violence was only ever directed at herself as part of her purgatorial penances with God promising her that, "… all of those souls, who are in that place of purgatory… will be rescued through your torments… I will use your suffering as an example for living men, and your life will convert them to me…"[220]

Before her self-baptism, Christina's explanation may not have immediately reassured her community: after all, as we have discussed in earlier sections, multiple theological authorities at this time, including Thomas himself, argued that God could allow demonically possessed revenants to occur to demonstrate a greater eschatological point. Nothing about her appearance or self-mortification would have been reassuring either: the white tunic she wore, accessorized with odds and ends from her community,

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[218] HRAEng, 5.24, p. 661; HRA, 5.24, p. 190: "… ex quo tantus continuo sanguis effluxit ut intelligeretur sanguisuga fuisse multorum."
[219] Spencer-Hall, 'Horror of Orthodoxy,' pp. 362–364; Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 97–98; Fanger, 'Extreme Sanctity,' pp. 24–27; Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 290–295; Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, 171–175; Mills, 'God's Time?' pp. 477–498.
[220] VCM, 1.7, p. 652: "… aut ad corpus reverti, ibique agere poenas immortalis animae per mortale corpus sine detrimento sui, omnesque illas animas, quas in illo purgatorii loco miserata es, ipsis tuis poenis eripere homines vero viventes exemplo poenae et vitae tuae converti ad me…" VCMEng, 7, p. 131.

may have brought burial clothing to mind, despite Thomas's pains to emphasise otherwise.[221] Her punishments are not only visibly painful and graphic, but potentially revealing. Vanlangendonck notes the similarities between Christina's self-inflicted punishments and later depictions of purgatorial punishments for specific sins in a later work, the *Visio Lazari*, observing that Thomas may have used extant ideas of correlating purgatorial punishments to illustrate her knowledge of specific individuals' sins. Vanlangendonck compares the *Visio Lazari* and the much later *Divine Comedy* in their portrayals of specific punishments for specific sins, suggesting that some of the stories and details about purgatorial punishments may have been circulating for quite a while before these works, including the period in which Thomas was active.[222]

For example, in the *Visio Lazari*, jealousy and envy are punished by submergence in ice water, something Christina acts out in her *vita*: "... for a long time she was afflicted thus remarkably by the Lord; that sometimes in winter, she was submerged in ice water for long periods of time."[223] Conversely, Christina also jumped into pots of boiling water, "up to her breast, or even up to her kidneys," a punishment reserved for the greedy and miserly in the poem: "I saw great brazen cauldrons full of boiling oil, or molten lead, or iron. In it, the misers were dipped up to their necks."[224] As discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, the punishments for gluttony and lust, respectively, are mirrored in Christina's diet of the "most vile" alms and her proclivity to burn herself in ovens.[225] This infernal diet is echoed within another revenant story within the *Dialogus miraculorum,*

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[221] VCM, 3.25, p. 655: Thomas avoids the word for shroud, "tunica" vs. "sudario." VCMEng, 25, p. 141.
[222] Van Mechelen and Vanlangendonck, 'Christine der Wonderbare,' p. 203; King, Introduction, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, p. 35.
[223] VCM, prol.1, p. 650: "Unde longo tempore ita mirabiliter a Domino afflicta est; ut quandoque in hyeme, in aqua glaciali diu morraretur…"; VCMEng, prol.1, p. 127; for a similar episode, see VCM, 1.12, p. 652; see discussion of this episode in VCMEng, 12, p. 134, n. 16.
[224] VCM, 1.11, p. 652: "… usque ad ubera, vel usque ad renes…" VCMEng, 11, p. 134. See also Van Mechelen and Vanlangendonck, 'Christine der Wonderbare,' p. 214
[225] VCM, 1.11, p. 652.

where a knight hangs snakes and toads on his son's door to illustrate the "sulphurous" food of hell for his past usury.[226] While Christina's *inedia* was not unique to her, the way that stolen food affected her physically, tasting like a purgatorial entrée of reptile innards and causing her to cry out in agony, may have been utilised by Thomas to demonstrate both her redemptive suffering and those in purgatory whose relief stolen alms would delay rather than help.[227] Further, King notes that Christina's copious bleeding after being chased by dogs into a thorny thicket, correlates to the punishment of the wrathful in found within the *Visio Lazari* who were depicted as "through-pierced with trenching knives and sharp glaves and with long spears [that] pierced their bodies…"[228]

Within this framework, the suffering Christina underwent on behalf of her patron, Louis of Looz, becomes more specific, whether based on eyewitness accounts or Thomas's own understanding of the Count. For example, after his death, Christina was tormented with "flaming vapours" or "deathly cold" according to what Louis was enduring in purgatory.[229] While Thomas never specified the sins committed by the count, the punishments correspond with extant ideas of purgatorial punishments for lust and envy, respectively, within the *Visio Lazari*: the "deathly cold" echoes the torments of the envious in ice water, while fornicators were tormented in hot, stinking pits where they are described burning with lust while stinking of sin.[230] This is not to say that Thomas's works inspired the *Visio Lazari,* but rather that one of Christina's penances may have been based on existing associations with certain purgatorial punishments to specific

[226] DMEng, ii, 12.18, p. 305, DM, ii, 12.18, p. 328.
[227] VCMEng, p. 141, n. 34; Van Mechelen and Vanlangendonck, 'Christine der Wonderbare,' p. 216; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, 71–72. Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 115–122.
[228] Newman, Introduction, in *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 135–136, n. 20; for the significance of the dogs in revenant literatures, see Caciola, *Afterlives*, p. 222.
[229] VCM, 4.45, p. 658: "His ita gestis, videres Christinam multo post tempore nocturnis horis flammeis vaporibus [interdum vero frigorum algoribus] cruciari; et certum, secundum quod anima comitis altaernatis cruciatibus torquebatur." VCMEng, 45, p. 150.
[230] Van Mechelen and Vanlangendonck, 'Christine der Wonderbare,' p. 218; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 233, n. 100.

sins.[231] Rather, it is possible that the audience of Christina's *vita* would have drawn these parallels between her penances and popular ideas about purgatorial punishments. Considering this, what made Christina so disturbing may have been her ability to mirror and expose the inner lives of the souls around her, rather than what she inflicted on them. However, Christina did not cause death within her community but made them aware of the sin in their midst, while providing ways for them to combat it effectively through acts of purgatorial piety.

The parallels between revenants, often viewed as potential omens of death, and Christina's own strange appearance would have been unavoidable. This may have contributed to Thomas's depiction of her as simultaneously profoundly compassionate and unapproachable. Given Thomas's own theories on the returning dead, and the disastrous stories of encounters with revenants without the rites of the Church, Thomas may have wanted to emphasise caution around the dead rather than familiarity, even as he strenuously emphasised Christina's sanctity. We have seen the revenant as a signifier with multiple meanings: whether the paradox of the familiar face of a dead loved one masking a demonically animated monster, or the rotting body and violent behaviour indicating both sinful past life and a damned afterlife. A subversion of this "decay as a signifier of the soul" can be seen in Christina's "subtle" and often ghost-like purgatorial body, with her appearance both illustrating purgatory and mirroring the purity of her own soul and her unity with God.[232] Thomas drew his reader in with the macabre lure of the revenant story, only to then use the narrative to affirm faith and orthodoxy rather than pestilence and doubt.

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[231] See King, 'Sacramental Witness,' p. 147.

[232] VCM, 1.5, p. 651 and VCM, 4.46, p. 658; particularly where she is described as a "spirit hovering over the earth" even when standing; on the discussion of her subtlety and the attributes of purgatorial bodies, see Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, p. 88. Newman, Introduction, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 36–37. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body*, pp. 100, 131–132.

So far, this chapter has explored interactions with revenants as a group of the dead often requiring caution and strict adherence to the rites of the Church; their bodies were used to signify their damnation or, in Christina's case, the realities of purgatory. This chapter has also looked at benevolent demons and their use as a rhetorical tool to urge the reader or listener, no matter how sinful, to confess and achieve the redemption that lay forever beyond the demons' prideful grasps. But why include these creatures at all? It is here where understanding another revenant within the *Bonum universale de apibus* might be helpful: in the story of Agnes, a nun with a tragic past who is murdered and revived after proselytising to her Jewish mistress, Sarah (later known as Gertrude.) Thomas includes her story and that of Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames, among other Jewish conversion narratives in a chapter on Mary's virgin motherhood. Thomas utilises Agnes's resurrected body as a confirmation of God's power and the truth of the Church, something she shared with Christina. More significantly, however, he utilised the ambiguous signs of violence on Agnes's body to demonstrate where the effectivity of physical proof ended and where faith needed to begin: something she also shared with Christina.

When Seeing Isn't Believing: Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames, Agnes, and Sarah-Gertrude

As noted earlier in this thesis, Thomas portrayed Christina's care towards Jewish communities without conflict, something remarkable given the vitriolic antisemitism found in his later *exempla*. Christina is not shown having any negative interactions with the Jewish community in St. Trond. Indeed, Christina (or a character based on her) makes a cameo in a significant Jewish text, the *Sefer Hasidim* by Rabbi Judah the Pious, where a "Gentile matron" dies and returns, explaining that she saw a Jewish woman while in

heaven whose glove was stained because she had used tallow candles on the Sabbath.[233] Piron argues that this lack of hostility could potentially be a rare glimpse of the historical Christina, peering out from under Thomas's hagiographical depiction of her.[234] While not disagreeing with this interpretation, particularly given that Christina does not appear to have alienated her Jewish neighbours and, if the character in the *Sefer Hasidim* is her, she seems to have been depicted, if not fondly, then as a harmless local oddity by R. Judah.[235] That her access to the deathbeds of Jews was not portrayed by Thomas as encountering any resistance or hostility is remarkable, especially given that she is not shown converting them.[236] There are no episodes in her *vita* of Jews specifically being divinely punished or locally harmed for not converting, and the Jewish community is not depicted as undermining or resenting her pastoral work. Thomas comments on the "marvellous concern and compassion" that she showed them, and Christina was never depicted reproaching them, something she regularly did with the Christian members of her community.[237] It is not impossible that aspects of Christina's purgatorial care may have been compelling to Jewish, as well as Christian, audiences given the discussion of care

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[233] *Sefer Hasidim*, as translated in Elisheva Baumgarten, "A Tale of a Christian Matron and Sabbath Candles" pp. 84–85; Baumgarten utilises a facsimile of the text, *Sefer Hasidim Parma H 3280*, introduction by I. G. Marcus (Jerusalem,1985) examples 272 and 619, which I was unfortunately unable to access, and the earlier published version, *Das Buch des Frommen*, ed. J. Wistinetzki, introduction by J. Freimann (Frankfurt,1924), example 272 and example619; owing to the lack of a critical edition of the text in English or in Hebrew, I have utilised Baumgarten's translation, as well as the Princeton University's Sefer Hasidim Database for the Hebrew text of examples 272 and 619 as found within *Sefer Hasidim Parma H 3280*. For example 272, see Princeton University, Sefer Hasidim Database, '*Sefer Hasidim Parma H 3280*, pp. 1–370,' n.d. (https://etc.princeton.edu/sefer_hasidim/index.php?a=manuscripts) (30 Jun. 2025) and for 619, see the same database, '*Sefer Hasidim Parma H 3280*, pp. 371–816,' n.d. (https://etc.princeton.edu/sefer_hasidim/index.php?a=manuscripts) (30 Jun. 2025).

[234] Piron and le Huërou, *Christine L'Admirable*, pp. 41–42.

[235] Baumgarten, 'A Tale of a Christian Matron,' pp. 94–96. Baumgarten notes that Christina was not the only Christian woman utilised in these examples, potentially a more credible witness since a Christian woman had no reason to claim seeing a Jewish woman in heaven otherwise, 'A Tale of a Christian Matron,' pp. 96–97.

[236] VCM, 3.27, p. 655. Piron and le Huërou, *Christine L'Admirable*, p. 103.

[237] VCM, 3.27, p. 655: "… mirabili compassione solicita faciebat." VCMEng, 27, p. 142.

for the dead at the time.[238] However, it could equally indicate tension between Thomas's own distrust of the Jewish community and the Dominican mission for universal conversion, and his concern about Christians catching Jewish "disbelief" in key areas of theology.[239]

It is here where examining two of his other female converts, Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames and Sarah-Gertrude, will be most helpful in understanding his approach to these tensions. Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames appears in both Thomas's collection in the chapter on the virginity of Mary and in the section on remorse in the *Dialogus miraculorum*.[240] While Caesarius's account was more concerned with the custody battle that ensued, Thomas knew Catherine personally, and his depiction of her story bears closer resemblance to a hagiographical account.[241] He depicted Catherine as naturally and precociously inclined to the Christian faith, even before any active proselytization had been attempted: "… her heart was more gladdened to hear a Christian rather than a Jewish

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[238] S.C.Reif, 'A Response to Professor Paxton's Paper' in S.C.Reif, Andreas Lehnardt and Avriel Bar-Levav, (Eds.), *Death in Jewish Life: Burial and Mourning Customs Among Jews of Europe and Nearby Communities*, (Berlin, 2014), 43–50, pp. 45–46. For some discussions of Jewish attitudes towards prayer for the dead, see: Elliott Horowitz, 'Speaking to the Dead: Cemetery Prayer in Medieval and Early Modern Jewry' in *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, *viii,* no.2 (1999), 303–317, pp. 305–306, 311–312; Avriel Bar-Levav, 'Jewish Attitudes towards Death: A Society between Time, Space and Texts' in S.C.Reif, Andreas Lehnardt and Avriel Bar-Levav (eds.), *Death in Jewish Life: Burial and Mourning Customs Among Jews of Europe and Nearby Communities*, (Boston. 2014), 3–16, pp. 11–12; for concerns on burial, Avriel Bar-Levav, 'We are Where We are Not: The Cemetery in Jewish Culture' in *Jewish Studies*, xli (2002), 15–46, pp. 21–25; on post-mortem existence, see Y.Y.Schur, "When the Grave was Searched, the Bones of the Deceased were not Found': Corporeal Revenants in Medieval Ashkenaz' in S.C.Reif, Andreas Lehnardt and Avriel Bar-Levav (eds.), *Death in Jewish Life: Burial and Mourning Customs Among Jews of Europe and Nearby Communities*, (Boston. 2014), 171–186, pp. 176–179.

[239] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 191.

[240] BUA, 2.29.20, pp. 564–570; DM, i, 1.2.25, pp. 95–98. Michael Goodich, 'The Jews: From Tolerated Minority to Persecuted Foe' in *Other Middle Ages: Witnesses at the Margins of Medieval Society*, (Philadelphia, 1998), 19–60, pp. 26–28; See also Henri Platelle, 'L'image des Juifs chez Thomas de Cantimpré: de l'attrait a la repulsion' in *Melanges a la memoire de Marcel-Henri Prevost*, (Paris, 1982), pp. 293–301.

[241] A.M. Kleinberg, 'A thirteenth-century struggle over custody: The case of Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames' in *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law*, xx, (1990), 51–68, p. 55; unlike Thomas's more direct relationship with Catherine, Caesarius likely heard of the case from Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne; Platelle, "L'image des Juifs," pp. 295–296.

name… especially the name of the blessed Mary, when the Christians were in the habit of asking each other for something or swearing an oath."[242] Catherine, then known as Rachel, became deeply devoted to the Virgin Mary, even stealing bread from her parents to give to beggars so that they would thank her in Mary's name.[243]

The young girl converted to Christianity at the encouragement of an illustrious priest, Reiner, who taught her the tenets of the faith in secret at his home.[244] However, Reiner's instruction, while critical, was almost superfluous in Thomas's account, as the six year old girl understood "through the discernment of the spirit, such that she rarely had to repeat any of the priest's reasonings."[245] Upon hearing of their daughter's conversion, Catherine's parents decided to send her to the family of her intended bridegroom, at which Catherine planned her escape with Reiner. Due to her extreme youth, Catherine fell asleep, nearly forgetting her plans on the night she planned to flee, until the Virgin Mary appeared to her, offering her a "glittering sceptre" and saying, "Rise, Catherine, and take the journey, for there is a great road ahead of you."[246] At this vision, Catherine left, was baptized, and entered the Cistercian monastery at Parc-aux-Dames.

This began a lengthy custody battle over Catherine, who was still a minor: Thomas recounts that her parents appealed to the Duke of Brabant, the bishop of Liège, and the

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[242] BUA, 2.29.20, p. 564: "Inherebat tamen, ut mihi postmodum retulit, avidius audienti, cordi eius magis Christianum quam ludaicum nomen et specialiter beate Marie nomen laetabatur audire, cum Christiani aliquid invicem petere el iurare solebant."
[243] BUA, 2. 29.20, p. 564.
[244] BUA, 2.29.20, pp. 564–566.
[245] BUA, 2.29.20, p. 566: "Quarum expositiones, ut mihi ipsamet dixit, ita integro sensu in illa etate sex annorum tunc et dimidii, discretione spiritus intellexit, ut raro oporteret presbiterum rationem aliquam iterare."
[246] BUA, 2.29.20, p. 566: "lacente ergo puellula usque ad mane et obliviscente penitus, quod presbitero precedenti nocte promiserat, astitit illi gloriosissima mater Christi, Maria, in habitu candido super nivem et offerens illi virgam splendidam, quam gestabat, dixit: Surge, Katherina, et iter arripe, grandis enim tibi restat via."

Pope, respectively, "with great sums of money."[247] Subsequently, these leaders all argued that Catherine should be returned to her parents until the age of twelve and complete her conversion as a legal adult. [248] Thomas indicates that Catherine's parents did so thinking that Catherine's "infantile" mind could be then diverted back to the faith of her parents.[249] Catherine's parents underestimated their daughter's precocity, as Catherine successfully and eloquently served as her own advocate during the trial, and won her freedom from her family. She similarly flummoxed her family's attempts to reclaim her from the convent through the power of her discernment, even at a young age.[250]

Although Catherine's superior Christian discernment ultimately carried the day, Thomas treats the other Jews as dangerous in their persistent disbelief, constantly trying to reconvert her back into their community, whether through legal or more underhanded dealings, such as her family sending a handsome young man to her convent, who pretended to convert in order to seduce her.[251] Thomas expressed his contempt for this stubborn error, and described the young man giving up his attempts and returning to his community as "returning to his own vomit."[252] Smith argues that Thomas perceived a potential for Jewish people to undermine Christian communities by assimilating without truly embracing Christianity, echoing anxieties about heretics who, at least outwardly, could mimic orthodox Christian belief.[253] Nor was Thomas alone in these concerns: the

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[247] BUA, 2.29.20, p. 568: "Nec mora, ut audivit pater et amici eius, quod gestum est, consternati sunt et per ducem dominum terre et per episcopum Leodiensem tandemque per papam Honorium datis maximis pecunis laborarunt, ut infra etatem legitimam filia ablata parentibus redderetur."
[248] Kleinberg, 'A thirteenth-century struggle,' pp. 56–57.
[249] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 568: "Que si in domum parentum usque ad duodenam etatem perseveraret in fide suscepta, tunc iuste Christiano nomini reddi posset, cogitates nequissime medio tempore infantilem animum faciliter posse deflectere, ut ad nativa parentum vota rediret."
[250] Ibid.
[251] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 570.
[252] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 570: "Hec ut viderunt ludei, cessaverunt ab illa, iuvenis autem ad vomitum est reversus."
[253] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 190; for example of this ambiguity in the ritual murder of Adam of Bristol, see Adrienne Boyarin, 'Desire for religion: Mary, a murder libel, a Jewish friar, and

Fourth Lateran Council sought to distinguish Jews and Muslims by dress in order to differentiate their communities from those of Christians and discourage intermarriage.[254] Smith notes that Thomas was likely less concerned with Christians being literally seduced by Jews or other non-believers than being spiritually seduced by "… the intercourse of evangelization and conversion, practices which, like sex, create new families and genealogies."[255] In short, if unbelievers could infiltrate pious communities, they could potentially spread their disbelief, with those they "seduced" away from Christianity doing the same to others, a negative mirror of the spiritual motherhood discussed in the second chapter.[256] These concerns about infiltration and corruption are echoed in other antisemitic *exempla*, such as Thomas's account of the orphan girl betrayed by a Christian woman the Jews had paid her to deliver to them. Boyarin cites an example of this infiltration from an early fourteenth-century example concerning the ritual crucifixion of Adam of Bristol, which involved a Jewish patriarch posing as a Christian in order to fool Adam into entering his home.[257] Nor is Adam the only one deceived, with the Jewish man also fooling a corrupt Irish priest within the story, who only learns the truth through angelic revelation.[258]

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me' in *Religion and literature*, xlii (2010) 23–48, pp. 30–32; this ambiguity also presented itself along gendered lines in art, as well as literature, see Sarah Lipton, 'Where Are The Gothic Jewish Women? On The Non-Iconography of the Jewess in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*' in *Jewish History*, xxii, no. 1/2, 139–177, pp. 145–148, 151–153; this echoes some of the anxieties surrounding heretics passing as Christians discussed in the first chapter of this thesis.

[254] Ibid, p. 190; Canon 68, Tanner, *Decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council*, p. 266.

[255] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 191; similar complaint of synagogues found in Anglo-Norman Christian communities made by Dominic, prior of Evesham (c.1125–1130) translated in Kati Ihnat, *Mother of Mercy, Bane of the Jews: Devotion to the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Norman England*, (Princeton, 2016), p. 151.

[256] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 191–192.

[257] Boyarin, 'Desire for Religion,' pp. 31–32; for dating and potential authorship of the text, see R.C. Stacy, "Adam of Bristol' and Tales of Ritual Crucifixion in Medieval England', in Bjorn Weiler, Janet Burton, and Philipp Schofield (eds.), *Thirteenth-Century England XI: Proceedings of the Gregynog Conference 2005*, (Martlesham, 2007), 1–15, pp. 8–10.

[258] Boyarin, 'Desire for Religion,' pp. 32, 37.

For Thomas, countering lapses in belief on critical theological points, whether transubstantiation or the virgin birth of Christ, was critical in preserving the integrity of Christian identity and faith. Therefore, returning to the seeming ambiguity of Christina's interactions with Jews or how Thomas depicts Jewish conversion, it important to remember that Thomas was more concerned with addressing spiritually shaky *Christian* readers, utilising Jews as a negative example, an inversion of correct practice to be avoided or converted.[259] Smith notes the longstanding belief that Jews, however punitively they were treated by Christian legal and spiritual institutions, were to be preserved as a lasting juxtaposition to the victorious Christian faith. In the early Church, Jewish communities were often accused of being wilfully blind, with Paul writing of Jews who refused to accept Christ as the Messiah: "… the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God.[260] Limor notes that this blindness was treated as both a core spiritual failing and its consequent punishment, something which could only be relieved by confessing and embracing the truth of the Christian faith.[261] Paul argued that his ministry was "by the spirit" in contrast to Moses's rigid adherence to the old law—something that Paul argued was spiritually bereft in its legalism and literalism in contrast to the Christian faith.[262] This dichotomy between spirit and sight would be used to contrast Christianity against Judaism well into Thomas's time, with Jews often portrayed converting only after witnessing a substantial miracle, whether a bleeding Host or a Marian apparition. The imagery of yearning for a deeper seeing and believing in place of

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[259] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 190–192; Ihnat, *Mother of Mercy*, pp. 144–145; Sweetman, 'Dominican preaching,' pp. 184–185.
[260] 2 Cor. 4:4; Ora Limor, 'Mary and the Jews: Story, Controversy, and Testimony,' in *Historein*, vi (2006), 55–71, p. 213; see also D. L. Despres, 'Immaculate Flesh and Social Body: Mary and the Jews,' in *Jewish History*, xii, no. 1 (1998), 47–69, pp. 55–56.
[261] Limor, 'Mary and the Jews,' p. 213.
[262] Lisa Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference: From Shakespeare to Paul*, (Philadelphia, 2004), pp. 38–39, 47; Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 184–185.

waiting on just a literal truth was prevalent in conversion narratives. For example, in the twelfth-century account of his conversion to Christianity from Judaism, Hermann of Cologne returns consistently to the theme of reading more deeply in the spirit than simply debating the letter of law, and described the approach as feeling "refreshed by a spiritual understanding, like unto the most sweet kernel within the chaff."[263] By the end of his conversion to Christianity, throughout which he becomes miraculously adept in Latin and in his understanding of Scripture, Hermann describes himself as "illiterate" in comparison to his previously been a "lettered" Jewish man as a reflection of rejecting his old identity.[264]

Augustine seconded Paul's sentiment in his *Doctrina Christiana*, arguing for the superiority of reading and understanding spiritually, transcending the letter, out of love of God rather than for the sake of the text or sign itself.[265] Nonetheless, Augustine viewed Jewish people as a necessary "witness people" who needed to survive and practice specifically as Jews, writing, "… the continued preservation of the Jews will be proof to believing Christians of the subjection merited by those who, in the pride of their kingdom, put the Lord to death."[266] Synagogues were displaced by the Church and in preserving Jewish scripture, the prophecies hailing Christ's coming were kept "by his greatest enemies."[267] This emphatic differentiation by Christians was often demonstrated in the

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[263] Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages,* pp. 154–155; here Kruger translates from Hermann of Cologne's *Opusculum de sua conversione*, cap. 2 as found with in PL 170, col. 808 C: "… spirituali intelligentia velut dulcissima palee medulla reficerentur."
[264] Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp. 155–156, p. 159.
[265] Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, 3.6.10, as cited and translated in Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, p. 39.
[266] Augustine, "Reply to Faustus, The Manichaean" in Marcus Dods (ed.), *The Works of Aurelius Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, a New Translation*, *Writings in Connection with the Manichaean Heresy*, (9 vols, Edinburgh, 1872), v, 12.12, p. 213; for the Latin, see Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, 12.12, PL 42, cols 259–261: "… ut hoc toto tempore quod septenario dierum numero volvitur, quia non interit gens Judæa, satis appareat fidelibus Christianis, quam subjectionem meruerint, qui superbo regno Dominum interfecerunt." Smith cites this passage in this translation in, *Excessive Saints*, pp 190–191.
[267] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 191.

different depictions of the allegorical figures, *Ecclesia* and *Sinagoga* in sacred art, where the figure of *Sinagoga* was often shown as blindfolded, with her crown at her feet and her face downcast in comparison to her triumphant Christian counterpart.[268] Mary and Eve also serve this comparison, with Mary providing the means by which the world would be redeemed from Eve's original sin.[269]

It is here where we can return, at last, to Thomas's use of female converts, such as Rachel-Catherine and Sarah-Gertrude. While both Lampert and Smith have pointed out that women and Jews both occupied a spiritually "handicapped" space, with one needing to overcome sex and the other a spiritual blindness, respectively, Smith observes that Thomas specifically emphasized the porous and affective femininity of his female saints as spiritual advantages.[270] However, Thomas often relied heavily upon literal proof within his *exempla*, particularly in the first book of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, where the physical proofs of his topics' spiritual truths poured forth in flowing stigmata or rapturously burst hearts.[271] A stabbed Host was often portrayed bleeding, turning into a small, beautiful Christ-child or making the would-be blasphemer physically ill until they repented.[272] Meanwhile, reinforcing the faith around a theological concept as intangible as Mary's perpetual virginity was difficult, if not impossible. Thomas may have selected Jewish examples for this because, aside from common tropes about Jewish blindness, Anti-Marian polemic from Jewish theologians was not wildly dissimilar to

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[268] Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary*, (New Haven, 2009), p. 228. Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, pp. 40–41.
[269] Rubin, *Mother of God*, pp. 311–312; Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, pp. 35–36; Boyarin, "Desire for Religion," pp. 26–27.
[270] Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, pp. 29–32, pp. 35–36, p. 42–43; Smith, *Excessive Saints,* p. 187; Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 135–138.
[271] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 187–190.
[272] For a discussions of host desecration stories as a genre, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews*, (Philadelphia, 1999), pp. 1–13, 24–29; see also, Bynum, *Holy Feast*, pp. 48–50, pp. 63–64.

dualist thoughts on the nature of the body; a line of thought that may also have echoed that of a doubtful Christian reader.[273]

For the purposes of this thesis, I am less concerned with discussing wider Christian awareness of or engagement with these polemics, but rather in pointing out that they co-existed alongside Christian debates on the boundaries of Mary's body. The physical realities of Mary's sex perturbed even her Christian defenders at times, let alone non-Christian or heretical detractors.[274] The claustrophobic discomfort of God in a mortal body, carried by yet another mortal, female body, was not lost on either Jewish or Christian commentators.[275] Within his section on Mary's virginity, Thomas avoided relying on physical proofs in favour of examples that moved away from literal proofs to an emphasis on spiritual receptivity and embrace. While Smith has identified this as both a call to faith and the limitations of the effectivity of *exempla* in planting the seed of the Holy Spirit in their readers, it can also be read as a challenge to cultivate a distinct spiritual identity from the "literalism" of the Jews or heretical deniers of orthodox belief.[276] This spiritual receptivity is present in both Catherine's story and that of Agnes and Sarah-Gertrude as they leave their old identities behind, showing a willingness to do so long before any miracle is involved, and embrace a newfound faith. By the end of Catherine's story, Mary becomes her adoptive mother, with Catherine choosing her and rejecting her

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[273] Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, p. 50; Ihnati, *Mother of Mercy*, p. 51.
[274] Ibid.; on some of the discussions surrounding Mary's body, see C. T. Wood, 'The Doctor's Dilemma: Sin, Salvation and the Menstrual Cycle in Medieval Thought' in *Speculum*, lvi, no. 4 (1981), 710–727, pp. 717–721.
[275] Rubin, *Mother of God*, pp. 225–227. For an example of this scepticism, see Joseph Kimhi, *The Book of the Covenant*, Frank Talmage (trans.), (Toronto, 1972), pp. 36–37, quoted in Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, p. 50: "[H]ow shall I believe that this great inaccessible *Deus absconditus* needlessly entered the womb of a woman, the filthy, foul bowels of a female, compelling the living God to be born of a woman, a child without knowledge or understanding, senseless, unable to distinguish between his right hand and his left, defecating and urinating, sucking his mother's breasts from hunger and thirst, crying when he is thirsty so that his mother will have compassion on him."
[276] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 197.

Jewish family's attempts to reclaim her. Sitting alone at the feet of Mary's statue, as the other nuns receive visits from their loved ones, Catherine prays to Mary:

> Our other sister nuns have solace and joy from mothers and friends. But I am a poor orphan and unworthy I approach you, my lady, confidently as my kindred. You alone before everyone will be refuge and a source of comfort to me.[277]

Catherine could be said to have effectively renounced the world more fully than her sisters: in completely renouncing her previous family and community, Mary and, by extension, Christ, become her new family. In this, Catherine is a closer imitation of Mary's conversion example, with her education from Reiner serving to nurture a spiritual inclination that was already present.[278] The message to the reader is plain: if Catherine can overcome the Jewish "blindness" of her past community and come to intimacy with God, long before her vision of Mary so can the reader. In Catherine's capacity, and by extension that of the audience, to see more deeply and to convert, Mary, the Christ-bearer, can rise "like a rose from thorns," similar to the incarnation of Christ found in the bodies of the holy women of Liège discussed in the previous chapters of the thesis.

Meanwhile, the former nun Agnes is the one who becomes a spiritual mother to Sarah-Gertrude and her children. Agnes's strange case is found in the second book of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, immediately preceding the *exemplum* concerning the ritual murder at Pforzheim. Agnes was an unlikely heroine: a beautiful young nun whose convent was destroyed during a war, Agnes was forced to return home where she was raped by her father.[279] When she became pregnant, a distraught Agnes was convinced by

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[277] BUA, 2.29.20: "Alie sorores nostre moniales a matribus et amicis solatium habent et gaudium. Ego autem paupercula pupilla et indigna ad te, domina, ut cognatam meam fidenter accedo. Tu sola pro omnibus esto mihi refugium et solamen."
[278] Boyarin, 'Desire For Religion,' pp. 27.
[279] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 572.

a demon in the form of a monk to drown her child. The demon then revealed himself, saying to her:

> O, most wretched of all women! What now remains? It is better, without causing scandal to you and yours, and [risking] the graver danger of capital punishment, you make your confession to me and drown yourself in the water with your son![280]

A frightened Agnes invoked the Virgin Mary, escaped the demon, and, "pouring out praise for the mother of Christ," found the comfort and strength to carry on.[281] From here, Agnes was employed by a Jewish woman named Sarah as a wet-nurse to her child; this was another fraught aspect of her story, particularly given that it was not considered appropriate for a Christian woman to serve as a nursemaid to a Jewish woman.[282] Nevertheless, an unlikely friendship formed between Agnes and her mistress.

While it is unclear to what extent Thomas was familiar with any Jewish cultural norms, let alone those around breast-feeding, the imagery of breast-feeding alone would have been significant. Breast-feeding was often linked with the spiritual and moral development of the child, in both Christian and Jewish households alike.[283] While the Church did not consider it mandatory for a Christian mother feed all her children herself, breastfeeding was still linked to the spiritual and physical nurturance of the child.[284]

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[280] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 572: "O, inquit, omnium feminarum misserima, quid nunc restat? Melius est, ut sine scandalo tuorum et tui et graviori mortis periculo, facta mihi confessione, in aquam cum filio tuo te submergas."
[281] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 572: "Et mox effusa in laudem matris Christi ad spem meliorem in prece et lacrimis confortatur."
[282] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 190, 193: Smith notes that Thomas did not comment on this restriction.
[283] R.L. Winer, 'Conscripting the Breast: Lactation, Slavery, and Salvation in the Realms of Aragon and Kingdom of Majorca, c. 1250–1300' in *Journal of Medieval History*, xxxiv, no. 2 (2008), 164–184, pp. 174–175; Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children: Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe*, (Princeton, 2004) p. 125.
[284] Winer, 'Conscripting the Breast,' p. 175, notes that Bernard of Clairvaux and Catherine Siena's hagiographers positively mention their having been breast-fed. On the link between milk, blood, and spiritual and physical nourishment, see also, Bynum, *Fragmentation*, pp. 214–

Breast-feeding was typically continued in medieval Jewish households until the child reached an age where they were weaned and their spiritual education could begin, a period of time that could range from two to five years.[285] It is not mentioned whether Sarah or her husband hired Agnes because Sarah could not nurse her own children, or because she was busy tending to other family or household duties. If Sarah hired her, this could potentially be an indication of Sarah's unconscious distancing of herself from her role within her Jewish family and faith in the early stages of her spiritual awakening, similar to young Catherine being innately drawn towards Christians.[286] Nonetheless, Agnes became the physical and spiritual nurturer for the children and their mother, nourishing Sarah's children with her breastmilk, while proselytising to Sarah.[287] Eventually, Agnes went on pilgrimage to Rome and received an absolution from the Pope for her act of infanticide; when she returned to her mistress, she encountered Sarah's husband who, angry with her for leading his wife into "error," murdered her while she slept: ".... drawing a short knife, he entered the room of the sleeping woman, and struck her three times, giving her three wounds around, even within, her heart."[288] Sarah was horrified upon learning of this, but while her husband went out to the synagogue she fell asleep and saw Agnes in a dream where she saw, "… a most glorious lady with two handmaidens who approached the murdered woman and, from three caskets which they had been carrying,

215; Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children*, p. 122 on the significance of breastfeeding for a wife in medieval Jewish culture.

[285] Ibid., pp. 126–127; Baumgarten notes that this is not a strictly adhered-to time period.

[286] Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, p. 99 on Christian accusations of Jewish fears of "spiritual cross-contamination"; Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children*, pp. 124–125: Baumgarten notes that there were no hard laws against Jewish families (like Sarah's) hiring non-Jewish wet nurses, but that Jewish women were not to give sustenance to non-Jewish children.

[287] BUA, 2.29.21, pp. 572–574.

[288] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 574: "Et mox extracto canipulo invadit dormientem et tria dedi illi vulnera circa vel intra cor."

each produced a restorative ointment, restoring [Agnes] from her state of mortal injury."[289]

When Sarah woke up and her husband returned home, Agnes's dead body had disappeared, and both believed that the other had disposed of the body—until a female pilgrim reappeared at their door sometime later with Agnes's greeting. Sarah's husband, shocked, asked his wife, "What is this, that she lives? Did I not kill her?" to which his wife, restrengthened in her faith, replied, "Christ, her Lord, is able to awaken the dead."[290] That Sarah still refers to Christ as *Agnes's* Lord and not her own was indicative that, Sarah still had not yet fully embraced the faith, something also indicated by her inability to fully understand her earlier vision of Mary. After being imprisoned for two years by her husband after this remark, a now pregnant Sarah escaped with her two other children, completed her conversion, and was baptized to the joy of the congregation at her wealth and honour. Her children would also later adopt Christian faith.[291] Sarah changed her name to Gertrude and moved to Cologne, where, to her joy and astonishment, she reencountered Agnes. Mystified, she asked Agnes how she managed to survive her murder, to which Agnes replied, "… only in my dreams did I see and feel myself being killed. In the morning… having been harmed by your husband, knowing that it would be unsafe for all if I remained, I hastened to leave."[292] When Gertrude lifted her friend's clothing, she found the scars from her husband's attack, seemingly clear proof that, despite the merciful intervention that allowed Agnes to experience the attack painlessly

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[289] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 574: "Iudea autem post luctum obdormiens, in sompnis vidit gloriosissimam dominam cum duabus puellis ad mulierem occisam intrantem et ex tribus pixidibus, quas ferebant, unamquamque unguine salutari in redivivum statum mortis vulnera reducentem."
[290] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 576: "Tunc Iudeus uxori: 'Quid est, quod illa vivit? Numquid occidi eam?' Cui uxor: 'Potens est,' inquit, 'Christus dominus eius mortuam suscitare.'"
[291] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 576.
[292] BUA, 2.29.21, p. 576: "Noverit Christus omnipotens, quod in sompnis tantum me vidisse et sensisse videbar occidi. Mane vero offensam viri tui, si mansissem, precogitans omnibus insalutatis recedere festinavi."

as a dream, Agnes experienced the violence directly in her own body. Due to the nature of the wounds, this also greatly implies that, like Christina, Agnes did in fact die.

Agnes and Christina encounter death and the afterlife differently: while Agnes seems to have experienced the process of dying itself, she did not experience any visions of the afterlife as Christina did. This is possibly due to Agnes still needing to expiate her own sins, while Christina had already passed the judgement of God. Likewise, Agnes's return went relatively unnoticed in her community and, except for needing to seek absolution from the Pope for committing infanticide, the only real hostility that she encountered was from her mistress' husband. Her resurrected body had a mundane appearance, except for the scars that proved her story, and her life afterwards was unremarkable, with Agnes dying peacefully for a final time in "great penitence and fervour of spirit."[293] It is important to recall that the purpose of the *exemplum* itself was to confirm Mary's virginity, a conversation that was often equally as fraught as that of transubstantiation in terms of reconciling material markers with faith itself.[294] While Agnes does not *claim* to have died, the marks on her body, as well as the husband's shock at her still being alive, indicate that she had been killed. Sarah-Gertrude's vision of her possibly reflected Agnes's protection and healing by the Virgin Mary, which may have spared her the pain of her murder, as well as restoring her to life.[295] Similarly, Agnes not experiencing pain during her martyrdom at the hands of a Jewish man could be interpreted

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[293] Ibid.: "Mortua est enim in maxima pentitentia et fervore spiritus."
[294] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 196–197.
[295] Heffernan, *Sacred Biography*, p. 197; Carole Straw, 'Settling Straws: Eschatology in the Church of the Martyrs,' in C. W. Bynum and Paul Freedman (eds.), *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia, 1999), 21–40, pp. 23–25, 33–35.; L.S. Cobb, 'Divine Analgesia: Painlessness in a Pain-Filled World' in *Divine Deliverance: Pain and Painlessness in Early Christian Martyr Texts*, (Oakland, 2016), 63–92, pp. 69–70. On p. 69, Cobb observes that Perpetua does not feel the pain of being thrown into the arena, as she was rapt in spiritual ecstasy: "It was only when she saw the bodily marks that she was convinced that trauma had occurred; she could see, but not feel, the results of events that we think of as painful."

as divine act, depriving him of the satisfaction of causing her harm, something also found in early martyrdom texts.[296]

Certainly, for a Dominican author interested in avoiding a dualistic approach to the body as a place purely of sickness and sin, focusing less on the agonies of Agnes's martyrdom to focus instead on Mary's intervention and Sarah-Gertrude's resulting conversion would not have been unusual. Rubin notes that while more moderate dualists conceded that Christ was born in a mortal body, but without a human soul, still more absolutist dualists were accused of denying the human elements of Christ altogether.[297] Moreover, the *exemplum* appears to be far more focused on how the physical proof of Agnes's resuscitation comes long *after* Sarah-Gertrude fled her home and converted. Women, whether Jewish or Christian, were largely treated as being more "permeable" spiritually by theological thinkers at the time. Smith cites Copeland in noting that both Jews and women were regarded as "spiritually handicapped" in their "carnal" interpretations of faith: Jewish people in their literalism and women in their very gender, both needing to "transcend" to spiritual adulthood.[298] Yet, Thomas does not treat femininity as necessarily being a bad thing of itself, likely due to what was considered the spiritually permeable nature of women themselves.[299] Lackner notes that the

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[296] Ibid., pp. 69–70.

[297] Rubin, *Mother of God*, pp. 225–226: on p. 226, Rubin provides examples of Marian hymns written specifically in answer to heretics, such as this Cistercian hymn written against the dualist heresy: "May the heretic be confounded, let the mad and all misguided ones, come to their senses. The infidel will blush with shame, but the faithful one will be joyful at its deathly suffering."

[298] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 186–187; for a detailed discussion, see Rita Copeland, 'Why Women Can't Read: Medieval Hermeneutics, Statutory Law, and Lollard Heresy Trials' in S.S. Heinzelman and Z.B. Wiseman (eds.), *Representing Women: Law, Literature, and Feminism*, 253–286, pp. 254–257; Bynum, *Fragmentation*, p. 109; Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Politics*, (Madison, 1989) pp. 19–20, 204–205.

[299] Lipton, 'Where Are The Gothic Jewish Women,' pp. 156–157; on how this permeability, both spiritual and physical, is reflected in rules for enclosed religious women, see also Jocelyn Wogan-Browne "Chaste Bodies: Frames and Experiences," in Sarah Kay and Miri Rubin (eds.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester, 1994) 24–49; this portrayal of Jewish women and conversion continued well after the Middle Ages, see Nadia Valman, 'Bad Jew/Good Jewess:

comparatively sympathetic roles of Jewish women within Christian *exempla* indicated changing attitudes towards women's spirituality, influenced by devotional practices such as those of the holy women in Liège. Conversely, Jewish men were often depicted as violent or stubbornly clinging to their faith until faced with miraculous proof.[300] Agnes's *exemplum* subverted this: after her murder and disappearance, she did not appear to either Sarah-Gertrude or her husband in a miracle that resulted in both their conversions, implying that only Sarah-Gertrude was truly spiritually receptive and that Sarah's husband was irredeemable.[301]

Yet, Agnes's body and experience are deeply ambiguous. If Agnes did not actually die, and a phantasm of her was murdered, then why is her body scarred ?[302] Smith notes this was likely deliberate on Thomas's part: in structuring the story in this way, Agnes provided physical proof, however ambiguous, of Mary's intercession only *after* Sarah-Gertrude had already acted on faith, based on a dream of Mary that she could not initially interpret and the pilgrim who brought Agnes's greetings. In any case, Thomas depicted a Jewish woman converting based on far less tangible proofs, long before Agnes arrived with the literal evidence of her living, marked body.[303] In doing so, Thomas asks the reader to believe something, like Mary's virginity, that cannot be definitively confirmed—even Mary's ability to work miracles and intercede for others might not be sufficient proofs of her actual virginity— but which must be embrace on faith alone. Thus, the *exemplum* is centred on about Sarah-Gertrude's journey to faith, embracing an entirely

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Gender and Semitic Discourse in Nineteenth-Century England' in Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe (eds.), *Philosemitism in History*, (Cambridge, 2011), 149–169, p. 154

[300] Lackner, 'Violent Men,' pp. 27–28; for comparisons of the depictions of Jewish men and women in host desecration tales, see Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, pp. 71–77.

[301] Lackner, 'Violent Men,' pp. 27–28.

[302] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 194–195.

[303] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 195–196; Lipton, 'Where are the Gothic Jewish Women?' pp. 155–157.

new identity in doing so.[304] Her transformation from Jewish wife to Christian mirrors the reader's own journey to discerning and believing an intangible spiritual truth without first demanding proof.

Meanwhile, Agnes's resurrection after her death and her reintroduction into her faith community after her murder confirm the spiritual fruit borne through her earlier proselytization of Sarah-Gertrude and her family. Where Agnes was once manipulated by the devil into killing her child, she becomes a spiritual mother to four new souls by bringing Sarah and her children to the Christian faith.

"Through A Mirror Darkly": Christina and Purgatorial Visions

If Agnes's resuscitated body is left ambiguous in the text to encourage a faith in the reader not based on empirical proof, what then of Christina? Despite the focus on saving souls from purgatory in her *vita*, Christina is not shown speaking at length about the specific "who's who" in purgatory or corresponding salvific timelines for those she suffers for. In fact, Thomas often resists placing direct answers in her mouth concerning the outcomes of purgatorial care. This can be seen within Christina's response to a woman who continually pestered Christina to gain answers and surety for the fate of her husband, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land: Christina undertook "many prayers, works, and religious undertakings" on his behalf.[305] When the man returned safely, his wife thanked Christina, but Christina responded furiously, "Behold! Through your relentless pleading, your husband has returned safely; but know this now, because you will not be happy for longer than today."[306] The man died shortly thereafter. Despite her prophecies,

[304] See Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 197–198; Mary herself serves as an example of this, see Boyarin, 'Desire for Religion,' p. 28 and Lampert, *Gender and Jewish Difference*, pp. 35–36.
[305] VCM, 3.31, p. 655: "Cujus adjurationem gravem ducens Christina, multas tamen preces, labores et vota pro milite."
[306] VCM, 3.31, p. 655: "Ecce per importunitatem adjurationis tuae sanum reduxi virum tum; sed scito nunc, quod non diu tamen ejus praesentia laetaberis."

the one time she is seen pressed for a specific outcome concerning the specific life or death of a person, Christina became vague, even hostile. Thomas does not even divulge the final question Beatrice asks her at her deathbed. While this could be construed as either demonstrating her obedience in returning at Beatrice's (and therefore the reader's) call or avoiding placing any potential sermons in Christina's mouth, it is a significant departure from Thomas's other works.[307] Thomas consistently demonstrated results in his later *Bonum universale de apibus*, whether for his grandmother or the Good Duke in his adaptation of the Cluniac poem. He even confirms the end of Louis of Looz's purgatorial suffering, having the count appear to Christina to confirm his salvation in an *exemplum*: something that is not present in Christina's original *vita.* This could be attributed to a variety of factors: within the collection, one would not have had the benefit of reading this episode within the full context of the rest of Christina's *vita*, for instance. Likewise, Thomas may have wished to show an efficacious intercession from a saint like Christina, in juxtaposition to more unsuccessful endeavours, such as that of Bruno the Elder and Bruno the Younger.

However, when considering Thomas's handling of Rachel and Sarah-Gertrude's conversions, his earlier resistance to putting markers on something as hard to define as the efficacy of suffrages and their interactions with purgatorial time within Christina's *vita* can be contextualised. Unlike other holy women within the Liégeoise *corpus*, Christina's purgatorial suffering is rarely depicted as relieving a specific person within a specific timeframe, nor does anyone appear to her within her *vita* to confirm their

[307] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 104–105; on the discouragement of female preaching and its overlap with heresy, see Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 'Satirical Views,' pp. 239–245, Kienzle, 'The Prostitute-Preacher,' pp. 99–104; on how women navigated these restrictions, see J. A. McNamara, 'The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy,' pp. 10 –21;on bodies of the *mulieres religiosae* serving as sermons in their own right, see Carolyn Muessig, 'Prophecy and Song: Teaching and Preaching by Medieval Women' in B. M. Kienzle and Pamela Walker (eds.), *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millenia of Christianity*, (Berkeley, 1998), 146–158, pp. 150–153, and Robert Sweetman, 'Christine of Saint-Trond's Preaching,' pp. 75–77, 81–82.

salvation.[308] In stark contrast, Thomas describes Lutgard of Aywières hosting a practical waiting room of prestigious souls looking for purgatorial intercession or affirming their status to her, such as Pope Innocent III and Jordan of Saxony, the Master General of the Dominicans, among others.[309] Simon, the abbot of Foligny, appears to her, claiming that he would have spent forty years in purgatory without her aid.[310] In yet another vision, Lutgard learns that her purgatorial intercession for a nun named Yolendis was successful when "not thirty days had elapsed."[311] Christina receives no such visions, despite the number of deathbeds she attends or the souls in purgatory who she suffers for, nor is it made clear who the souls she first encounters in purgatory after her first death are, other than that she knew them in life.[312] The one exception is found her relationship with her patron, Louis of Looz, where she agreed to suffer half of his penances for him after his ghost appears to her, saying, "Come now, and hurry from here, and according to divine judgement pay the penalties for your sins… I will relieve you of half your torments about to be weighed out in purgatory, and pay the difference with my body."[313] After this episode in the *vita*, Christina receives no confirmation from Louis of her successful intercession on his behalf: the episode ends with her weeping in the places where he used

[308] For some examples of these interactions within the broader Liégeoise *corpus*, see VASEng, 2.19.20–2.20.20, pp. 18–19, VAS, 2.20, p. 475; VILovEng, 2.13.26b, p. 59, VILov, 2.5.26, p. 178; VILEng, 55c–56a, pp. 58–59, VIL, 6.55–56, p. 123; VJMCEng, 2.6.37, p. 279, VJMC, 2.7.37, p. 470 ; VINEng, 5a, p. 39, VIN, 5, pp. 212–214; VMOEng, 2.6.52–53, pp. 87–89, VMO, 2.6.52–53, p. 557; VMOEng, 2.12.104, p. 123, VMO, 2.12.104, pp. 570–571.
[309] For the vision of Pope Innocent III, see VLAEng, 2.7, p. 244 and VLA, 2.1.7, p. 197; for the vision of Jordan of Saxony, see VLAEng, 3.2–3, pp. 274–276 and VLA, 3.1.2–3, pp. 204–205; for the vision of Jacques de Vitry, see VLAEng, 3.5, pp. 277–278 and VLA. 3.1.5, p. 205.
[310] VLAEng, 2.4. pp. 241–242, VLA. 2.1.4, p. 197.
[311] VLAEng, 2.12, p. 249, VLA, 2.1.12, p. 198: "… nec triginta dierum tempus excessit…"; see also VLAEng, 2.13, p. 250, VLA, 2.1.13, p. 198 for a similar episode where Lutgard's own sister visits her from purgatory.
[312] VCM, 1.6, p. 651.
[313] VCM, 4.45, p. 658: "Age nunc, et vade hinc, et secundum divinum judicium poenas ro peccatis exolve; ego vero in meo corpore exactura tormenta dimidiam purgatorii tui partem excipio." VCMEng, 45, p. 150.

to sin.[314] This ambiguity may have been uncomfortable, particularly for any readers who had purgatorial concerns.

It is here where we can return to Christina's interactions with the Jewish community: unlike many of Thomas's narratives concerning Jewish people explored in this thesis, Christina is not shown reproaching the Jews, nor does Thomas depict Jews experiencing the joys of conversion or the hellish pains of refusing it. Why do this in a text meant to draw the reader's attention to effective, practicable care for someone suffering in purgatory? Where did the limits of the physical proof that Christina could provide lie? Much of the tension surrounding discussions of the post-mortem existence of loved ones within Christian or dualist circles can also be seen in Jewish discussions.[315] It is doubtful how much Thomas was familiar with Jewish texts or thinkers, or to what extent, nor is it clear how much Christina knew, though she may have been marginally acquainted with their beliefs and customs through her interactions with Jewish neighbours.[316] Regardless, Thomas was more concerned with bolstering faith for Christians, utilising Jews as either positive or negative examples depending on whether they converted.[317] In leaving this interaction between Christina and the Jews open-ended, the doubtful reader is offered an invitation to belief, with the outcome contingent on what they, personally, choose to do. Like the vision of Mary, Christina confirms that the afterlife as taught by the Church exists: Spencer-Hall has discussed Christina's penances

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[314] VCM, 4.45, p. 658.
[315] A non-comprehensive list, but for some areas where overlap in discourse concerning the dead can be observed, see Avriel Bar-Levav, 'Jewish Attitudes towards Death,' pp. 11–12; Bar-Levav, 'We Are Where We Are Not,' pp. 34–35; Horowitz, 'Speaking to the Dead'; Schur, 'When the Grave was Searched,' pp. 178–179.
[316] Thomas recounts the mass burnings of the Talmud in Paris and discusses it briefly in BUA, 1.3.6, pp. 36–38; the Trial of the Talmud occurred in 1240, just after Thomas had finished his studies in Paris and was returning to Louvain. Smith, *Excessive Saints*, p. 29; Platelle, 'L'image des juifs,' pp. 290–293, notes that Thomas's critiques echo the accusations listed in the bull of Gregory XI rather than indicative of Thomas having engaged with the text of the Talmud.
[317] Smith, *Excessive Saints*, pp. 196, 201–202.

as an illustration of purgatorial time, with Christina taking on the punishments that would kill a regular person on earth, lasting for days on the gallows to echo the disparity between the earthly and purgatorial passage of time for those there.[318]

However, this is where the proofs stop and faith must begin. This disparity not only impacted those in purgatory, but those on earth carrying out suffrages for their loved ones. Despite the later miraculous purgatorial visions in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, most people would not have experienced that kind of direct closure; their suffrages for their dead would continue, on and on. Just as the ambiguity concerning Agnes's murder and resuscitation was utilised as a commentary on the need for faith in Mary's virginity, the lack of distinct, proven timelines for getting specific souls out of purgatory in exchange for certain suffrages, echoed what most bereaved would experience themselves, most of whom could not expect know the full effect of their suffrages for their dead until judgement day.

While Christina demonstrates the nature of suffering in Purgatory through her physical punishments, while she weeps for the damned, and rejoices for the saved, she does not share specific details from those who are relieved by her sufferings.[319] Throughout a *vita* where her body illustrates the realities of purgatory and judgement, Christina continuously redirects her community's gaze to God, exhorting her community recognise their Creator, saying: "If you would look on His goodness… gainsaying the world, you would not be able to turn away, in fact you would love Him."[320] In an interaction with Louis, she exclaims at how beautiful her "Lord" is; when Louis correctly ascertains that she is speaking about God, not him, she responds, "So why is it that you

[318] Spencer-Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 96–97.
[319] VCM, 3.26, p. 655.
[320] VCM, 3.37, p. 656: "Bonitatem ejus si videres… contradicente mundo, averti non posses, quin eum diligeres." VCMEng, 37, pp. 146–147. On the beatific vision and purgatory, see Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body,* pp. 280–282.

do not love Him?"[321] Christina is at her most specific and loquacious as she comforts her body, thanking it for its pains, and promising rest while assuring it of its resurrection and reward:

> Now endure patiently, O my bravest and sweetest body. Now your work is coming to an end; now resting in dust, you will sleep for a little while, and then finally, the trumpet singing, you will lay aside all corruptible things, you will rise, and you will unite with your soul in perpetual joy, who you have as a companion in your present sadness.[322]

In including this episode towards the end of a *vita* devoid of visions confirming Christina effectively getting people out of purgatory, even after the episode of her suffrages for Louis, Thomas may have been looking to redirect the focus of his reader, like his grandmother refocusing her own grief in the *Bonum universale de apibus*. The challenge to accept the uncertain duration of purgatorial care and to offer it anyway, turning the audience's focus back to God, could be framed as a challenge to a uniquely Christian act of faith in Christina's *vita.* Without first redirecting grief towards a contemplation of God, any vision, even a consoling one, could not be interpreted correctly to begin with.

Barr discusses the issue of heavenly revelations being diverted by earthly signs in her analysis of the fourteenth-century poem, "Pearl."[323] Within the relationship between

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[321] VCM, 4.42, p. 657: "Tum illa: 'Verum, inquit,' dixisti. 'Tu ergo cur istum non diligis?'"
[322] VCM, 5.49, pp. 658–659: "Nunc patienter sustine, o meum optimum et dulcissimum corpus. Jam finis instat laboris tui; jam quiescens in pulvere, paululum dormitabis, et tunc demum, canente tuba, deposita omni corruptibilitate, resurges, et sociaberis animae in perpetuo gaudio, quam in praesenti trisstitiae sociam habuisti."
[323] Barr, 'Worldly Attachment and Visionary Resistance in Pearl' in *Willing to Know God*, 122–151, pp. 147–151. See also J.A. Mitchell, 'The Middle English *Pearl*: Figuring the Unfigurable' in *The Chaucer Review*, xxxv, no. 1 (2000), 86–111, pp. 90–91: Mitchell frames this inability to relinquish the Maiden from the role she held in the life of the Jeweler as a form of idolatry, a "misplaced" allegiance, p. 91. On the difficulty of sustaining belief in the resurrection of the body and soul and the Jeweller's desire for proof, as reflected in "Pearl," see also Cynthia Kraman, 'Body and Soul: Pearl and Apocalyptic Literature' in *Time and eternity. The medieval discourse*, (Turnhout, 2003), 355–362, pp. 359–362.

the Jeweller and the Maiden, possibly a father and daughter, Barr examines the Jeweller's resistance to finding consolation in the vision of heaven he is shown, still clinging to his daughter as he knew her in life and longing for her physical presence.[324] Barr cites Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*, noting that the Jeweller only interprets the vision while "'enslaved under signs,' unwilling to move beyond the literal signification of the words that she [the Maiden] utters."[325] For example, when the Maiden notes her queenship (something which all the blessed share), the Jeweller cannot understand it outside of the role's earthly context: first he protests that Mary must be the sole queen in heaven, then protests the Maiden's youth at the time of her passing, saying:

> … you raise yourself over-high in heaven, to make yourself, who were so young, a queen. You lived not two years in our land; you never knew how either to please or to pray to God, nor [did you] ever [know] either Paternoster or Creed – and made a queen on the first day!"[326]

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[324] Barr, 'Worldly Attachment,' pp. 133–134, on the disparity between the Maiden's understanding of queenship in heaven and the Jeweler's inability to parse the role outside of earthly terms; David Aers, 'The Self Mourning: Reflections on Pearl' in *Speculum*, lxviii, no. 1 (1993), 54–73, pp. 59, 70–72; some other key studies on the text include: A.C. Spearing, *The Gawain-Poet*, (Cambridge, 1970) and A.C. Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity: The Encoding of Subjectivity in Medieval Narratives and Lyrics*, (Oxford, 2005); M.D. Cherniss, 'Pearl' in *Boethian Apocalypse: Studies in Middle English Vision Poetry*, (Norman, 1987), 151–168, and Theodore Bogdanos, *Pearl: Image of the Ineffable*: *A Study in Medieval Poetic Symbolism*, (Philadelphia, 1983).

[325] Here Barr cites: Augustine, *Teaching Christianity (De doctrina Christiana)*, in Edmund Hill (trans.), *The Works of Saint Augistine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, (11 vols, Hyde Park, NY, 1996), i, 3.9.13, p. 208; for the Latin text, see, *De doctrina Christiana libri quatuor et Enchiridion ad Laurentium*, C.H. Bruder (ed.) (Leipzig, 1838) 3.9, pp. 85–86.

[326] Anonymous, *Pearl*, in Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron (eds.), *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript: Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, (Berkeley, 1979), 52–110, stanzas 469–481, p. 11; for the original Middle English, see William Vantuono (ed.) *The Pearl Poems: An Omnibus Edition, Pearl and Cleanness*, (New York: 1984), i, 8–77, stanzas 469–481, pp. 34–36: "… Þyself in heuen ouer hyȝ þou heue,/To make þe quen þat watȝ so ȝonge./That cortaysé is to fre of dede,/ȝyf hyt be soth þat þou coneȝ saye./Þou lyfed not two ȝer in oure þede;/Þou cowþeȝ neuer God nauþer plese ne pray,/Ne neuer nawþer Pater ne Crede;/And quen mad on þe fyrst day!" See also Barr, 'Visionary Resistance,' pp. 132–133, 142–143; Mitchell, 'Figuring the Unfigurable,' pp. 93–95; Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp. 129, 135.

Barr again returns to Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*, where Augustine argues that the objective of earthly love, rather than the pursuit of the individual, is to ultimately love God:

> Now it seems to me that they are to be loved for the sake of something else, because if a thing is to be loved for its own sake, it means that it constitutes the life of bliss, which consoles us in this present time with the hope of it, even though not yet in its reality.[327]

Just as in we have seen in the story of Agnes and Gertrude, Thomas wished the "enslavement of signs" that could either not be provided (as in literal proofs of Mary's virginity) or that would be misinterpreted by those unable to discern them fully; the point was to guide the audience's eyes to God. While glimpses of purgatory and the beloved purgatorial dead could be seen through Christina's contorted limbs or ghostly "subtle" body, it was ultimately God that Christina emphatically attempted to redirect her community's gaze towards—not just their departed loved ones, or their own post-mortem fates.

By not seeing the faces or hearing the voices of those she saves, purgatorial suffrages become the act of a Christian identity, based in faith, that Thomas helped to promote. The suffrages are given, not in the expectation of receiving proof or a final glimpse of the dead as they were known in life, but as an act of faith, a perpetually self-renewing act of love for those in purgatory. Just as Christina describes the future of her body, at rest and, one day, ultimately resurrected, so too can the reader see, not just themselves at rest, but their loved ones as well, as both are drawn closer and closer to God through the purgatorial devotions offered by the living. As Mitchell notes in his own

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[327] Augustine, *Teaching Christianity*, 1.22.20, p. 114, as cited in Barr, 'Willing to know God,' pp. 143–144; for the Latin, see *De doctrina Christiana*, 1.22, p. 17–: "Videtur autem mihi propter aliud diligendus. Quod enim propter se diligendum est, in eo constituitur vita beata; cuius etiamsi nondum res, tamen spes cius nos hoc tempore consolatur."

analysis of "Pearl": The test of authentic faith is thus a willingness to live in uncertainties and darkness, which is but a natural consequence of acknowledging with St. Paul that 'We see now through a glass in a dark manner.'"[328] Christina, for all the horror of her body, challenged the reader to look towards eternity, even in their present loss.

Conclusion

The first chapter of this thesis established that Thomas regarded the holy women of Liège as uniquely in touch with the divine. The second chapter explored the expanding intercessory roles that purgatorial devotion provided for women, whether still in the world or not. This chapter examined how Christina subverted tropes about the wicked returning dead often found in revenant stories, and how Thomas utilised the lack of visions in her original *vita* to illustrate purgatorial time. Likewise, in positioning some of Christina's behaviour alongside tropes of female revenants, Thomas could utilise a compelling story and then move forward with introducing a new category of revenant that subverted heretical tendencies or grief and doubt, relying on faith instead of proof. Within this framework, the purgatorial acts of Christina within her initial *vita*, done with no confirmation of their efficacy, are transformed into lifelong acts of love, motivated by the hope of eventual reunion. This thesis has examined the holy, personal, and dangerous dead, and has shown how Christina stood at the crossroads of these, for all of her contradictions: holy and macabre, loving and unknowable, and most importantly, a mirror for the sins in her community, *and* a reminder of redemption.

[328] Mitchell, 'Figuring the Unfigurable,' p. 91.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored Christina within Thomas's hagiographical and educational corpus: particularly on why Thomas, who was so concerned with reinforcing orthodoxy, would choose someone as strange and unorthodox as Christina, someone who could potentially be perceived as *too* unorthodox and whose life carried potential connotations of the demonic and the revenant within it. This project concludes not only that Christina was a perfect choice for Thomas, but that her ministry was one of the earliest and most enduring influences on his career; in learning and writing about her life, Thomas was able to explore multiple types of interactions with the dead, specifically because Christina existed at a crossroads of different kinds of dead. Thomas crafted Christina's *vita* to incorporate aspects of different accounts and examples of interactions with the holy, personal, and dangerous dead, engaging with and providing intercession for each through Church ritual and adherence to orthodox practices and beliefs. Christina was shown providing care, not just for the "good" dead, who appeared to have already obtain salvation, but also possessed a profound capacity for compassion towards those who often existed outside the remit of salvation, whether it was an often tumultuous political leader such as Louis of Looz or, as Piron points out, her mostly-friendly relationship with the Jewish community in St. Trond, where she was regarded as a harmless but sympathetic eccentric by the Jews in the community.[1]

In examining Christina within this light, it is possible to better understand how Thomas of Cantimpré utilised Christina's ministry to advocate for a reciprocal relationship with the dead and how he then centred them in discussions on reciprocal care and affirmation of orthodox: Christina's status as a once-dead woman who had already "passed" God's judgement

[1] Piron, *Christine l'Admirable*, p. 43.

enabled her to stand at an intersection of pastoral care that was unique to her. The first chapter centred on Christina's already-attained spiritual perfection through analysing the lack of the "bridal ascent" language found in Thomas' other hagiographical works. Thomas subverted the tropes of the demonically reanimated revenant and instead portrayed a woman who was already destined to go to Heaven returning in a resurrected, ghostly body, there to provide care to her surviving loved ones and community rather than to seek it from them. Christina drew her community together, not just through her remarkable physical penances, which would have been largely inimitable, but rather through her acts of fasting, almsgiving, and mourning. These accessible and imitable acts would also appear in Thomas's other hagiographical works, especially in the *supplementum* to Marie of Oignies and Lutgard of Aywières where Thomas pairs engagement with the dead with acts of pious remembrance and reflection on the ministry and life of the saint in question. Christina exemplified this interaction between the dead and their living community, essentially serving as a living relic who sought out her community to care for them, as opposed to being sought out through acts of veneration.

However, as the second chapter argues, these methods of care for the dead would find their most mature culmination in the *Bonum universale de apibus*, fully realised as an accessible and comprehensive means of care for the dead by the laity in conjunction with pre-existing Church ritual. This thesis has argued that the holy women of Liège, especially Christina, were significant in shaping Thomas' ideals concerning purgatorial care, with a majority of his recommended penances being carried out by women. Even though the most significant act of care for the dead was having Masses said for their souls, Thomas still placed women at the heart of his section on purgatorial care, something that could not be said for his fellow Dominicans writing about similar topics. Women already held a significant role as intercessors for the dead, and Thomas' examples of purgatorial care focused particularly on the roles of widows and mothers, with their tears, fasting, and vigils working in tandem with clergy,

such as the example of the mother in Brabant who cares for her dissolute son with the aid of a priest who is willing to hear his confession. As a woman who carried out many of these salvific works in her own body (and even heard confession herself!) Christina mirrored much in her own life. While physical penances such as fasting or weeping are also present in the *vitae* of the other holy women of Liège, such as Marie of Oignies or Lutgard of Aywières, Christina is unique in the extreme nature of the penances she inflicts on herself. Likewise, while many of the *mulieres religiosae* were depicted as spiritual mothers to others, Thomas depicted Christina as wailing as if she were in labour during her purgatorial travails—an image similar to the "labouring" of Dominicans to bring souls to God. The influence of Christina is clear in Thomas's suffrages for purgatory. Both she and the other Liégeoises adapted the existing post-mortem care within monastic communities and made them practicable for those "in the world" who still needed a way to mourn and provide care for their dead, adhering more closely to Church rituals in the hope of finding comfort and eventually reuniting with their loved ones after death.

Christina's abilities to revive the faith of her community and bring souls from purgatory into new life with God also serve to differentiate her from the third category of the dead: revenants. The third chapter examined how Christina subverted the standard revenant tropes of spreading pestilence. Building from previous arguments made by Lauro and Gordon concerning the pestilential or dangerous dead, I have argued that Christina turned the traditional revenant narrative on its head. Her violence is only ever directed at herself, unlike the aggressive male revenant found in Thomas' *exemplum* collection, or those found in the accounts of William of Newburgh or Walter Map. There is also a method to her madness, with her self-inflicted penances serving a concrete purpose: unlike other revenant stories, she is not there to ask for help, nor is she demonically animated and looking to cause trouble, but rather to deliver people from purgatory and to turn them away from sin. Gregory notes that in William

of Newburgh's work, the revenant returning to their community is often indicative of that community being implicitly sinful, in a spiritual space where they would be vulnerable to a demonic attack, whether spiritually or physically. Christina knows the spiritual statuses of those around her, and it follows that she would know of their sins as a result. However, she exposes these vulnerabilities only to then provide a means of salvation and encourage community care and compassion. Rather than her return from the dead being destructive, indicative of turmoil and potential future damnation, her return is restorative and loving, with Christina's bargain indicating a compassionate and merciful God drawing a community closer to heaven. Likewise, in comparing her story to that of Agnes and discussing the dichotomy of blind literalism and "seeing" faith, this thesis has built off Smith's work, examining how Thomas utilised proofs, and when he challenged the reader to faith. Christina's lack of purgatorial visions from those she delivers reflects the same lack of proofs that most carrying out these suffrages would have experienced. Christina could confirm purgatory existed, but the rest had to be taken on faith and the hope of resurrection. Throughout her ministry, Christina spreads renewed faith and community in conjunction with Church rites and orthodox belief. Christina also does this in conjunction with the Church, with Thomas balancing her at times borderline-unorthodox acts with acts of devotion and reverence to the clergy.

My research for this project has largely focused on Thomas's hagiographical and educational works, specifically his *exempla* collection rather than his encyclopaedic work, the *Liber de natura rerum*. While other scholars, such as Sweetman and Grzebien, have utilised the *Liber de natura rerum* in understanding Thomas's spirituality, this research has focused on examining Thomas' narratives concerning purgatory and the dead: most specifically by comparing his *exempla* with those of his contemporaries, particularly those who influenced him or belonged to religious orders that did, such as the Dominicans, the Cistercians or, as seen within his final recommended purgatorial suffrage, the Cluniacs. By looking at popular

exempla by authors such as Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius of Heisterbach, and also analysing Thomas' use of the work of William of St-Thierry, it was possible to better contextualise Thomas' writings. Jacques de Vitry influenced so much of Thomas' career, introducing him to the holy women of Liège to begin with; meanwhile William's writings on the progression of the soul show up repeatedly in Thomas's works. Caesarius's popular collection of stories also served as one of the most in-depth discussions on dying and death, with two chapters dedicated extensively to the topic, providing much material to compare to Thomas's own visions of post-mortem care. This thesis also utilised works such as the *Historia rerum Anglicarum* and the *De nugis curialium* in the hopes of exploring just how often revenants were simultaneously gripping, entertaining narratives, while also being used to edify or to pass political or theological commentary. Thomas absolutely relied upon these horror tropes in Christina's *vita*, and subverted them to effectively illustrate her ministry and the far-reaching scope of her compassion and spiritual attainment.

This thesis does not deny the argument of other scholars that Christina was unique compared to the other saints because of her resurrected status but offers an alternative interpretation of her life that expands on certain elements other studies have touched on. For example, both Elliott and Folkerts have noted the lack of bridal imagery in Christina's life, with Elliott attributing it to her overall strangeness and Folkerts focusing on Christina as a proactive and maternal religious leader rather than a passive enjoyer of union with Christ.[2] Folkerts's analysis is particularly compelling, exploring other Cistercian depictions of women's spirituality through motherhood and how Christina's life could serve as a potential example for clerical leadership in her energetic initiative to save. However, given that Thomas clearly treated death as a form of consummation within his works and the way he centred care for the dead in his first female *vita*, I have argued that it is her already assured union with God

[2] Elliott, *The Bride of Christ*, p. 193; Folkerts, "Een vrome vrouw." 18–21

that makes her unique and adds to her sacrifice, something that falls more into line with Fanger's interpretation of her *vita*. Fanger argues that Christina's innocence was not in doubt, and that she had already received confirmation from God Himself that she was going to pass into paradise; this fact makes Christina's sacrifice all the more meaningful *and* all the more painful.[3]

When taking all of these factors in Christina's life—from the full weight of her sacrifice in returning to earth from heaven or the painful suffrages she carried out in her resurrected body—into account with the other kinds of dead people encountered in Thomas' works, whether saints or family members or revenants, it becomes clear that Thomas introduced Christina as a new type of the dead one that would have been compelling during a period of reform and discussion around where the dead were in the afterlife and what could be done for them. Christina's purgatorial suffrages would have been particularly resonant during a period where spiritual movements, whether the beguines or the new Mendicant orders, encouraged a revitalised and active devotion and pastoral care. Christina was a once-dead person who chose to return to her community over remaining in heaven; someone who was neither threatening nor fully knowable or domesticated, not seeking help or waiting to be approached for help through acts of veneration, but rather proactively seeking out her community. Thomas utilised her to encourage a new care for the dead to go alongside the new approach to purgatory, emphasising acts of community care in almsgiving alongside private expressions of grief and remembrance, all while encouraging a more proactive approach to remembering and caring for the dead. The Church and orthodox faith was always placed at the core of these interactions, something that was important in a time of threats to orthodoxy; it also cemented the personal dead as being still implicitly undomesticated and unknowable, needing to be curated through orthodox belief and Church authority.

[3] Fanger, "Extreme sanctity," pp. 24–27, 37.

Finally, Christina continuously urged those around her to open their eyes to ability to a God who so deeply and passionately wanted to save souls and bring them to Himself. In her *vita*, and throughout his entire *corpus*, Thomas presented a vision of an emotionally involved, reciprocally caring community of the dead, longing for their loved ones to join them in heaven and confident in a loving God making that reunion possible is one that, for Thomas, clearly resonated deeply.

This thesis covered preaching narratives and materials and attempted to focus on contemporaries Thomas almost certainly would have interacted with. However, there are many other sermons and *exempla* collections that could be examined more fully: for example, the first volume of Jean Longère's critical edition of Jacques de Vitry's *Sermones vulgares* presented one of Jacques' *exempla* used in this thesis, the tale of the student returning from the dead to warn his master against studying "vanities," in its original context. An examination of the full body of his sermons based on the manuscripts could provide the context for the other stories presented by Jacques de Vitry on the roles of women in purgatorial care, and it would provide a great deal of insight into the development of Thomas' own understanding of purgatory to see how Jacques presented post-mortem care for the dead. It would also help answer other compelling questions: who was Jacques' intended audience for many of these stories, especially those about wives caring for their deceased husbands or sons? Given that Thomas very clearly followed Jacques' career and works, how much of this influenced Thomas's approach to his own audience? How did their views on purgatorial approaches vary based on their audiences or the genders of those audiences? Were they directed at men who Jacques hoped to convince of the virtues of these practices? If at women, were they unaffiliated with a religious order, either laity or within the beguines, or were they religious sisters?

With the new critical edition of the *Bonum universale de apibus*, it is also possible to expand greatly on Thomas's career and discussions of his evolution as a preacher in a new and

flourishing order. Given that the work was commissioned by Humbert de Romans, it would be fascinating to compare one of Thomas's most mature works, completed well into his career, with other early Dominican *exempla* collections. In particular, it would be fruitful to compare Thomas's collection with that of Humbert de Romans, the *Liber de eruditione praedicatorum*, as well as that Stephen of Bourbon in his *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*; not just in purgatorial suffrages, but in other aspects, such as the depiction of women, of interpersonal relationships, and other facets of providing care. It would serve as a fascinating way to explore how Thomas's *exempla* collection fit into those being produced by his colleagues. In the research for this thesis it became apparent that there is a distinct lack of women in both Stephen and Humbert's writings on purgatorial care. For example, in his section on purgatory, Stephen of Bourbon briefly refers to Marie of Oignies and, much more offhandedly, to Christina, not naming her and citing only the reference made to her in Jacques de Vitry's *vita* of Marie. Throughout his section on suffrages, there are virtually no women involved in purgatorial care, with most of the care being carried out by priests or male friends or loved ones. Humbert de Romans essentially reiterates Stephen's suffrages, though he streamlines them more tightly. Thomas, on the other hand, while not having quite as many suffrages as Stephen outlined, streamlines the process yet further: while still focusing on almsgiving, prayers for the dead, Thomas also emphasises the role of crying and keeping vigil.

These elements are ones that he very possibly picked up from Jacques de Vitry's sermon on the dead, as found in the *Sermons vulgares*—but much more significantly, these acts of weeping and remembrance featured heavily in the women's lives, particularly that of Christina. Certainly, the language of "avoiding immoderate tears" is present in Thomas's work as it is in the sermon, which means Thomas may well have had access to Jacques's sermons on the topic. However, even if Jacques de Vitry had a much more direct hand in Thomas's approach to purgatorial suffrages, as he did in so much else in Thomas's body of work, both

men had worked closely enough with the holy women of Liège to see the value of their mourning and the sanctity it brought to their communities, nor are the influences necessarily mutually exclusive.

The room for expansion here is exciting. Jacques le Goff has already compared some of these visions of purgatory, focusing more on the nature of purgatory itself in his seminal work *The Birth of Purgatory*, but there does not appear to be much written on Thomas's suffrages, or, more specifically, the role of women within them when compared to his contemporaries. There is ample space to compare and contrast Thomas's recommendations concerning purgatory, his intended audience, and those who he assigned or most associated to the work, to those of other Dominican authors like Stephen of Bourbon or Humbert of Romans, or even other Cistercian *exempla* authors such as Caesarius of Heisterbach or Conrad of Everbach. Of course, with the recent critical edition of the *Bonum universale de apibus* and with the second volume of the *Sermones vulgares* still forthcoming, there is also much room to explore how Thomas's work interacted with that of Jacques de Vitry, and to discuss the influence of the holy women of Liège on what Thomas chose to emphasise compared to his much loved colleague. Likewise, it would be greatly insightful to explore how Dominicans, among other religious orders in this period, utilised "horror" within their *exempla* to illustrate anxieties about death and the afterlife, while also providing a means of hope and redemption that would have been considered quite revolutionary. Comparing their respective intended audiences would also be helpful: while many of the *exempla* used would likely have been for religious communities, the *Sermones vulgares* and *Bonum universale de apibus* alike were works written by dynamic authors, influenced by a new piety, who loved to educate and to travel, and so the odds for a diverse audience were excellent.

This thesis has demonstrated that Christina occupied a unique space within Thomas's *corpus* of work, and stood both as a gateway to his career changing trajectory towards the holy

women of Liège and purgatorial piety, while also still remaining deeply present in his mind when engaging with his later works concerning the care of the dead. While her cult may have had only a relatively modest success, Christina introduced Thomas to new and accessible means of care for the dead, and introduced a concept of the dead; rather than the saintly or beloved dead being far removed and distant, only appearing when help was needed or a bargain struck, the dead were emotionally invested in their loved ones, their longing for a reunion in heaven mirroring God's desire for eternal union with His creation. Christina's decision to return not only mirrored Christ's sacrificial love but mirrored the love of the community of saints in heaven for their living counterparts on earth. For Thomas, a man whose life had been shaped and haunted already by the ghost of a beloved father who desperately needed his help, it is tempting to think that what may have been most compelling about Christina was not just her capacity to help those in purgatory and her example as such; rather, seeing that the love expended on the dead was not one-sided, a lonely endeavour, but a partnership, mutually enduring and loving, well into eternity, beyond what death could sever on earth.

Appendix A: Chronology[1]

c. 1180	Augustinian house of Cantimpré founded near Cambrai
c. 1181–1182	Walter Map (c. 1130–1210) composes the *De nugis curialium*
c. 1190–1198	William of Newburgh (c. 1136–c.1198) composes the *Historia rerum Anglicarum*
c. 1200	Thomas of Cantimpré born at Bellingen near Brussels
1206–17	Thomas educated in Cambrai
1215	Jacques de Vitry (1180–1240) composes the *vita* of Marie of Oignies (c. 1177–1213)
1215/16	Thomas first encounters Jacques de Vitry as a crusade preacher
1215/16	Jacques de Vitry's Life of Marie of Oignies (1177–1213) composed
1216–27	Jacques de Vitry in Holy Land as Bishop of Acre
1217	Thomas enters Augustinian house of Cantimpré
c. 1219–1223	Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–c.1240) composes the *Dialogus miraculorum*
1223–28	The Life of Abbot John of Cantimpré (c. 1155–c. 1205/09) composed
1224	First Dominican house in region founded at Lille
c. 1226–1229	Jacques de Vitry composes the *Sermones vulgares*
1228	Dominican house established at Leuven
1228	Thomas becomes confessor at cathedral of Cambrai
c. 1228–30	Thomas meets Lutgard of Aywières
1229	Jacques de Vitry becomes Cardinal of Tusculum
c. 1229–32	Thomas composes the *Supplementum* to the *vita* of Marie of Oignies

[1] For Thomas's dates and activity, I am particularly indebted to the chronology found in Newman, *The Collected Saints' Lives*, pp. 1–2; similarly, I am indebted to the tables in Spencer–Hall, *Medieval Saints*, pp. 22–23, for the dates of the Liégeoise *corpus*.

c. 1231	Goswin of Bossut composes the *vita* of Ida of Nivelles (1199–1231)
1232	Thomas moves to Dominican community at Leuven
1232	Thomas composes the *vita* of Christina of St. Trond (c. 1150–1224)
c. 1237–40	Thomas at Dominican *studium generale* in Paris
c. 1230–40	Thomas composes the *Liber de natura rerum*
1240	Death of Jacques de Vitry
1240	Thomas returns to Louvain
c. 1240–43	Thomas composes the *vita* of Margaret of Ypres (1216–37)
1240–46	Thomas travels widely on preaching circuit
1246	Thomas acting as lector and subprior at Louvain
1246–48	Thomas composes the *vita* of Lutgard of Aywières (1182–1246)
1250–51	Thomas studying at Cologne with Albertus Magnus
c. 1250–1260	Stephen of Bourbon (1180–1261) composes the *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*
c. 1254–1263	Humbert de Romans (1200–1277) composes the *De dono timoris*
c. 1256–63	Thomas composes the *Bonum universale de apibus*
1260	Arnulf of Ghistelles (?) composes the *vita* of Alice of Schaerbeek (c. 1220–1250)
c. 1260–1280	Composition of the *vita* of Ida of Léau (c. 1260–c.1280)
c. 1261–1264	Composition of the *vita* of Juliana of Mont–Cornillon (c. 1192–1258)
c. 1265–70	Death of Thomas of Cantimpré
c. 1268	Composition of the *vita* of Beatrice of Nazareth (1200–1268)
c. 1268–1272	Philip of Clairvaux composes the *vita* of Elisabeth of Spalbeek (c. 1246–after 1278)
End of 13th century	Composition of the *vita* of Ida of Louvain (c. 1212–c. 1261)

Appendix B: Exempla Appendices

All references within the appendices to the Latin and English editions of these texts refer to those utilised within this thesis.

Table 1: *Augustine: De cura pro mortuis gerenda (CPM/CPMEng)*

Exempla number (Book/ Chapter/ Section)	Summary	Latin edition pgs.	English edition pgs.
12.15	A man named Curma dies and travels through the afterlife; returns to life, having been mistaken for a different Curma, who dies upon his return.	pp. 644–647	pp. 359–361

Table 2: *Caesarius of Heisterbach: Dialogus miraculorum (DM/DMEng)*

Exempla number (Volume/ Distinction/ Chapter)	Summary	Latin edition pgs.	English edition pgs.
1.1.17	Caesarius's conversion and the founding of the Cistercians	pp. 24–25	pp. 25–26
1.1.38	On the conversion of Abbot Phillip	p. 46	pp. 49–50
1.2.21	A monk who gains the gift of tears for Walter, abbot of Villers.	pp. 90–91	pp. 100–101
1.2.31	Angels and demons battle for the soul of a usurer on his deathbed	pp. 103–105	pp. 116–118
1.3.26	A demon confesses but is unwilling to do penance.	pp. 143–144	pp. 161–162
1.4.79	The discourse of an illiterate monk to Henry of Alba on food and resisting delicacies.	pp. 281–282	pp. 246–248

1.5.15	How demons come to possess humans	pp. 293–294	pp. 334–336
1.5.18	Two heretics come to Bensaçon and deceive others with fake miracles; they are exposed and burned.	pp. 338–341	pp. 296–298
1.5.21	On the Albigensian heretics	pp. 300–303	pp. 343–347
1.5.22	Of the heretics burned in Paris; some discussions of heretical belief; one dead heretic appears to a recluse after his death to confirm his damnation.	pp. 304–307	pp. 347–351
1.5.36	A demon serves as a loyal servant to a knight.	pp. 319–321	pp. 366–368
2.9.50	A demon in disguise causes a priest's maid to lose her senses; the Host restores them	p. 205	pp. 154–155
2.10.11	A knight thwarts the devil possessing a young girl; after outsmarting Satan and saving the girl, he goes on Crusade	pp. 224–226	pp. 180–182
2.10.44	Caesarius discusses how he has benefitted from baptism.	pp. 248–249	pp. 208–209
2.10.62	Water turning into blood	p. 259	pp. 221–222
2.11.1	The different kinds of death	pp. 266–267	pp. 231–233
2.11.6	A dying lay brother hears celestial music	pp. 274–275	pp. 240–241
2.11.8	The soul of a dead monk is seen in the form of a beautiful boy, carried to heaven by four Cistercians	p. 276	pp. 242–243.
2.11.11	Death of Mengoz, who is summoned back to life by his abbot before dying again	pp. 278–279	pp. 245–246

2.11.33	A monk is summoned to his death by a dead brother; he refuses, and the dead monk calls to another brother instead	pp. 296–297	pp. 265–266
2.11.37	A man's soul returns to his body	p. 299	pp. 269
2.11.41	A woman usurer's soul is ripped out of her by demons in the form of crows.	p. 301	p. 272
2.11.63	A monster in the shape of a woman destroys two families	pp. 313–314	p. 287
2.12.4	A demonically animated corpse sings in church	pp. 317–318	p. 292
2.12.7	A man is sent into Stromboli (possible location of purgatory) after his death	pp. 322–323	p. 298
2.12.13	The duke of Zahringen is sent into Mt. Etna after his death (another possible location of purgatory)	pp. 325–326	pp. 301–302
2.2.14	A dead knight appears to a man named Erkinbert	pp. 326–327	pp. 302–303.
2.12.15	The violent revenant of the knight, Henry Nodus	p. 327	p. 303
2.12.18	A dead usurer knight hangs snakes and fish on his son's door	pp. 328–329	p. 305
2.12.20	A priest's mistress is seen hunted by the devil after her death	p. 330	pp. 306–307
2.12.26	The apparition of a woman from purgatory seeks the aid of an abbot	pp. 337–338	pp. 315–316
2.12.33	A dead man appears to a lay brother and asks for three Masses to be said on his behalf by the Cistercians	pp. 342–343	pp. 321–322
2.12.37	On the purgatory of the monk William	pp. 346–347	pp. 325–326

2.12.42	A priest is punished after a dying pilgrim bequeaths his cloak to him for almsgiving and he neglects to do so	pp. 350–351	pp. 330–331
2.12.51	A dying lay brother feels as if he is being pressed by a stone in his death agonies	p. 356	pp. 337–338
2.12.53	A dead lay–brother appears to confirm that the Cistercian Order has the greatest glory in heaven.	pp. 357–358	p. 339

Table 3: *Gregory the Great: Dialogues (GrGr/GrGrEng)*

Exempla number (Book/ Chapter/ Section)* **Section only applicable in Latin editions*	Summary	Latin edition pgs.	English edition pgs.
2.23.1–5	Two excommunicated nuns rise from their graves and are only at rest when St. Benedict makes an oblation on their behalf	pp. 204–208	pp. 92–93
2.24.1–2	A young monk's body keeps leaving his grave until St. Benedict buries him with a consecrated host	pp. 210–212	p. 94
4.3.1–3	Explanation of three kinds of spirits	pp. 22–26	pp. 192–193
4.6.1–3	Discussion of the continued life of the soul after death	pp. 38–40	pp. 199–200
4.11.1–4	The visions and graces of a blind abbot, particularly towards the end of his life	pp. 44–48	pp. 201–203
4.13.1–4	A young boy at the deathbed of a bishop sees a vision of two martyrs	pp. 52–54	pp. 204–205
4.27.1–8	The dying and the dead experiencing increased visions	pp. 86–92	pp. 220–221

4.27.9–14	Within the same section: a servant boy returns from dead, able to speak multiple languages; dies badly after predicting the deaths of his master's family	pp. 92–94	pp. 222–223
4.37.1–16	Like Curma, a case of mistaken identity: Stephen the blacksmith dies after being mixed up with someone else, journeys through the afterlife, sees purgatory	pp. 124–134	pp. 237–241
4.54.1–2	A bishop dies after wrongfully burying a sinful wealthy man	pp. 178–180	p. 264
4.55.1–4	Demons drag the corpse of a sinful man out of his wrongful grave in a church	pp. 180–182	pp. 264–265
4.57.1–17	Intercessions for the dead	pp. 184–194	pp. 266–270
4.57.3–7	Relevant to this thesis: the story of the bath–house ghost, seeking intercessions.	pp. 184–188	pp. 266–267

Table 4: *Jacques de Vitry: Sermones vulgares (SV)*

Exempla number	Summary	Latin edition pgs.
31	A student of sophistries appears to his master, Sella, from purgatory	pp. 12–13
117	A monk tells his brother that he is dead to the world in the monastery	p. 54
118	An abbot sends a novice to curse and bless the bones of the dead	p. 54
132	A pilgrim's soul refuses to leave his body until David plays for him on his harp	p. 59
151	A demoniac preacher	p. 67

182	A man refuses to give alms for the soul of his wife	p. 77
197	A priest is kicked by the body of the woman he refuses to bury	p. 82
272	A "proud and garrulous" nun is found burned by demons from the waist up.	pp. 113–114

Table 5: *Stephen of Bourbon: Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilis: De dono timoris* (TDMP1)

Exempla number *(Volume/ Book/ Chapter)*	Summary	Latin edition pgs.
ex. 157: 1.5.6, lines 714–733	St. Margaret has a vision of demons.	pp. 163–164
ex. 159: 1.5.6, lines 756–758	St. Dominic's vision of demons.	pp. 165–166
No *exempla* number: 1.5.7, lines 827–830	List of recommended suffrages for those in purgatory by Stephen of Bourbon.	p. 168
ex. 174: 1.5.8, lines 1037–1047	Marie of Oignies has a vision of hands stretching from purgatory.	p. 175
ex. 175: 1.5.8, lines. 1047–1055	Brief mention of Christina of St. Trond.	p. 175
ex. 176: 1.5.8, lines, 1059–1077	A man dies before he can complete his penance and his friend offers to complete it. The dying man agrees to return a year later. The dead friend returns, with a third of his body white as snow, the rest black, showing the efficacy of his friend's suffrage.	p. 176
ex. 177: 1.5.8, lines 1081–1091	A son joins the Albigensian crusade as a suffrage for his late father.	pp. 176–177
No *exempla* number: 1.5.8, lines 1092–1099	On priestly suffrages for the dead.	p. 177

No *exempla* number: 1.5.8, lines 1232–1252	On the importance of the intercession of the saints	p. 182

Table 6: *Stephen of Bourbon: Tractatus de diversis materii praedicabilis: De dono pietatis* (TDMP2)

Exempla number *(Volume/ Book/ Chapter)*	Summary	Latin edition pgs.
ex. 461, 2.1.3, lines 420–449	A preacher encounters demons in the guise of monks; they disappear when he begins preaching on the order of the angels.	pp. 19–20

Table 7: *Thomas of Cantimpré, the Bonum universale de apibus (BUA)*

Exempla number (Volume/ Book/ Chapter)	Summary	Latin edition pgs.
1.3.4	On Conrad, the bishop of Hildesheim, witnessing a damned bishop being judged and dragged away to hell in a dream.	pp. 32–34
1.3.6	An official is bribed by the Jewish community to save copies of the Talmud after the Trial of the Talmud: he is stricken down with a mortal illness soon after.	pp. 36–38
1.16.2	The abbot Henry of Blois is murdered by his own monks: his wounds bleed in the presence of his murderers.	pp. 116–122
1.17.4	A young man raised in a monastery dies; his ghost returns to the prior to thank him for his upbringing.	p. 126

1.19.3	The story of the dead Bruno the Elder appearing to Bruno the Younger to chastise him for not caring for him in purgatory	pp. 140–144
1.19.10	Thomas discusses 62 canons of Cambrai who he met as a young man, their crimes, and how their deaths fit their morals.	pp. 152–154
2.1.11	The Dominican Brother Peter absolves a man accused of murdering his wife by revivifying her so she can testify.	pp. 234–236
2.10.17	Mary as patron to the Dominican Order, shielding two young members under her mantle	p. 333
2.10.21	A certain pope (Innocent IV) dies after limiting the privileges of the Mendicant Orders; he is stricken paralyzed and mute, and dies; he is later seen by a holy man being judged by St. Francis and St. Dominic.	p. 338
2.29.20	The story of Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames, a Jewish convert.	pp. 564–570
2.29.21	The story of Agnes and Sarah-Gertrude: Agnes, employed by a Jewish woman, is murdered by her husband. Her mistress Sarah has a vision of Mary healing Agnes's wounds; she escapes and converts, changing her name to Gertrude. Agnes reappears to her years later, bearing the scars of the attack.	pp. 572–578
2.29.22	The ritual murder of a young Christian girl at Pforzheim; her wounds bleed in the presence of her murderers	pp. 578–580
2.29.23	Thomas's theory on Jewish male blood flow and why Jews require Christian blood.	pp. 580=582
2.30.5	A dissolute nun dies and her body is torn up by a demonic sow.	p. 610.
2.30.20	A presbyter seduces a young nun; their bodies are found *in flagrante* the next morning and are unable to be parted.	pp. 624–626

2.49.6	A dead knight reappears to his servant after being killed in a tournament; he directs him to his body, which is being torn apart by crows and kites	pp. 842–844
2.49.7	Thomas's theory on the demonic reanimation of a corpse.	p. 844
2.51.12	Beguines are beset by divine fire, which scorches the parts of their bodies most prone to sin.	pp. 900–902
2.53.1	Thomas's introduction to his section on purgatory.	p. 916
2.53.6	A discussion of the four cathedral churches and their foundational relics (Jerusalem, Rome, Trier, and Cologne.)	p. 928
2.53.15	Thomas's list of purgatorial suffrages.	p. 938
2.53.16	On the efficacy and benefits of tears for the dead.	pp. 938–940
2.53.17	Thomas's grandmother's tears weigh her son down in purgatory.	pp. 940–942
2.53.19	Emperor Otto IV appears to a female relative after his death to ask for purgatorial suffrages.	pp. 942–944
2.53.21	A mother asks the priest Lambert to hear her dying son's confession and then fasted and wept for his soul in purgatory.	pp. 944–946
2.53.22	On holding vigils for the dead: the Biblical story of Rizpah guarding her sons' bodies.	p. 946
2.53.23	Christina of St. Trond and her purgatorial suffrages for Louis of Looz.	pp. 946–948
2.53.25	An example of failed purgatorial suffrages: a man fails to sell his deceased relative's horse for alms. His relative appears to him to tell him he will take his place in purgatory when he dies.	pp. 950–952
2.53.27	A dead man appears to his wife from purgatory holding flaming horse irons due to his outstanding debts to a blacksmith; his wife repaid the debt. Her	pp. 952–954

	husband later appears again, seemingly tied up with ropes and she unbinds him.	
2.53.30	The tale of the two dukes and the army of souls delivered from purgatory.	pp. 954–960
2.53.32	Thomas recounts his father appearing to him from purgatory, covered in bloody wounds.	pp. 960–962
2.57.8	A demonically reanimated corpse attacks a young woman.	pp. 1010–1012
2.57.20	A tale of a demonic body–double	pp. 1026–1028
2.57.22	Thomas offers a theory of how these demonic body possessions can happen.	pp. 1028–1030
2.57.23	A demonic illusion of Mary and Christ is thwarted by the presence of the host.	pp. 1030–1032
2.57.67	Thomas offers a demon possessing his friend Margaret the chance to confess and be absolved; the demon is unable to truly confess.	pp. 1092–1094

Table 8: *Walter Map: De Nugis Curalium (DNC/DNCEng)*

Exempla number (*Distinctio*/ Chapter)	Summary	Latin edition pgs.	English edition pgs.
1.4	Map compares the struggles of courtiers to Sisyphus.	p. 8	p. 9
1.11	King Herla and his court.	pp. 26–30	pp. 27–31
2.12	A man captures a strange and beautiful woman from among a troop of dancing women; he breaks a promise to her and she vanishes.	pp. 154–158	pp. 155–159
2.13	A knight reclaims his dead wife from among a troop of dancing women.	p. 160	p. 161

2.27	A revenant calls others in his village to death and is killed by William of Laudun.	pp. 202–204	pp. 203–205
4.8	Another knight reclaims his wife from the dead, finding her wandering in a desert in a group of women.	p. 344	p. 345
4.10	William the Bastard captures a beautiful woman from a strange troop of dancing women at night.	pp. 348–350	pp. 349–351
4.12	A man sires a monstrous child with a corpse.	pp. 364–368	pp. 365–369

Table 9: *William of Newburgh, Historia rerum Anglicarum (HRA/HRAEng)*

Exempla number (Book/Chapter)	Summary	Latin edition pgs.	English edition pgs.
5.20	The conspiracy and uprising of William FitzOsbert and his execution.	pp. 174–179	pp. 652–655
5.21	The attempted martyr's cult around William FitzOsbert.	pp. 179–182	pp. 655–656
5.22	A revenant in Buckingham tries to crush his wife in bed and is not stopped until a writ of absolution is buried with him.	pp. 182–184	pp. 656–657
5.23	A revenant in Berwick is dismembered and burned without Church authorization, bringing plague to the village.	pp. 184–185	pp. 657–658
5.24	Multiple stories of revenants. The first: A womanising priest returns to stalk the lady who employed him as chaplain.	pp. 185–188	pp. 658–659
5.24	The revenant of Anantis: a man dies while spying on his wife with her lover and returns as a violent, pestilential revenant. When his body is destroyed, it is noted that is swollen with blood.	pp. 188–190	pp. 660–661

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