

MONASTIC WISDOM SERIES: NUMBER FORTY-THREE

Thomas Merton

Medieval Cistercian History

Initiation into the Monastic Tradition 9

Edited with an Introduction by
Patrick F. O'Connell

Preface by
William R. Grimes

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BY

THOMAS MERTON

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In grateful memory
of
Patrick Hart, OCSO
(1925–2019)
final secretary of Thomas Merton
founding editor of the Monastic Wisdom Series
mentor, guide and friend
to Merton scholars and readers
throughout the world
for the past half-century.

PREFACE

I was a novice at the Cistercian Monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemani from 1962 to 1964, and Thomas Merton was my novice master. I was present for the conferences published in this book, which were given to me and my fellow novices by Merton, or Father Louis, as we knew him. Though not a monastic historian, scholar or monk, I have a particular perspective on these conferences that I would like to share.

As I read these conference notes (and Dr. O'Connell's excellent Introduction) I began to recall actually being in the conference room and listening to Fr. Louis as he animatedly and logically went over the details of the early monastic life in England and then the wonderful and interesting medieval Cistercian history. In a Preface written for a previous volume in this series, Sidney H. Griffith asked, "One wonders if Gethsemani's novices in Merton's day had any inkling of the pioneering character of the journey to the early sources of the monastic heritage which their novice master provided for them."¹ My response to Griffith would be yes and no.

Yes, because we were aware that Fr. Louis was an incredible teacher, intellect, mystic, writer, poet, spiritual director, etc., with the most eclectic knowledge base of anyone that we had ever encountered. He was extraordinarily affable and pleasantly

1. Sidney H. Griffith, "Preface," in Thomas Merton, *Pre-Benedictine Monasticism: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition 2*, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell, Monastic Wisdom [MW] 9 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2006), x.

gregarious and had a superlative sense of humor. He was a friend, spiritual guide, leader and mentor.

No, because in my opinion none of the novices had any concept of how deeply and ontologically Fr. Louis understood and was able to explain to us the many complex issues that constituted the early years of monasticism in general and Cistercian monasticism in particular. Nor were we aware at that time how lucky and blessed we were to be his students and members of this fantastic “school of charity.”²

As I read the present material, many things that Merton said came back to me, and in some ways I felt as though I was sitting in that conference room and was enchanted by his logical method of explaining the various aspects of monastic life. I could see him leaning forward in his chair holding onto his small table while he told a story or went off on a tangent and had us totally engrossed in what would otherwise be a boring history lesson (or sometimes telling us a joke or making fun of an old monastic name or silly defunct rule).

I can still remember him relating the origins of Cîteaux and the founders who came from the Abbey of Molesme to establish a monastic life that was more in compliance with the original Rule of Saint Benedict. This explanation, of course, led into the many stories about the differences between the “black monks” (Benedictines) and the “white monks” (Cistercians). Fr. Louis was very clear about the differences, citing Cluny as an example of the Benedictine life lived with a certain avoidance of or misinterpretation of the Rule.

I remember him talking about the arrival of Saint Bernard with about thirty friends and relatives, a coming that may have saved the Order and certainly added new life and sanctity to the white monks. Bernard himself became a great force in the renewal

2. For this characteristically Cistercian term, see Thomas Merton, *The Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition* 8, ed. Patrick F. O’Connell, MW 42 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2016), 68 n. 192.

of the monastic life and was an intellect, great writer and great leader. He was elected abbot of Clairvaux and founded many other monasteries.

I recall when Fr. Louis spoke about the theology of Abelard³ and his at times possibly heretical views. But what I remember most is his story about Abelard and Heloise.⁴ This story prompted me to read the book by Étienne Gilson,⁵ which was in the novitiate library. His stories about the irregularities committed by some of the early white monks were more than just accounts; he turned them into hilarious stories of antics and peccadilloes and made us understand that even as monks certainly seeking the heights of the spiritual life, they (and we) were also human and made errors.

When I started to write this preface, my question was whether or not I could see the relevance of these conferences for non-monastics in today's world. And my answer is a resounding YES. The Christian life is a journey into the very heart and essence of Jesus. We are called to become one with him and in concert with him to love and cherish all those that we come in contact with. We are called to realize the oneness that we have with all people (past, present and to come), as Merton himself stated: "[W]e are already one. But we imagine that we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are."⁶

As Christians we need to look back at those who preceded us in whatever vocation they found themselves and ask ourselves what they did wrong and what they did right. How and where

3. For Merton's discussion of Abelard, see *Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology*, xc–xciii, 166–96.

4. For Merton's discussion of Abelard and Heloise, see *Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology*, 166–72, 184–86.

5. Étienne Gilson, *Héloïse and Abélard*, trans. L. K. Shook (London: Hollis & Carter, 1953).

6. Thomas Merton, *The Asian Journal*, ed. Naomi Burton Stone, Br. Patrick Hart and James Laughlin (New York: New Directions, 1973), 308.

did they find God in their lives? How did the life and words of Jesus affect them, and how did they share his life and his goodness and mercy with others?

William R. Grimes
(Brother Alcuin)

INTRODUCTION

In the latter part of 1962, as part of his duties as master of novices at the Abbey of Gethsemani,¹ Thomas Merton was presenting concurrently the two sets of conferences on the early history of the Cistercian Order included in the present volume. On Fridays from September 7 through December 21 he gave fourteen classes to the novices on what was simply called “Cistercian History,” which included a lengthy preliminary overview of European monasticism from the time of Saint Benedict in the sixth century until the foundation of the Abbey of Cîteaux in 1098, followed by detailed consideration of the first three abbots of the “New Monastery,” as Cîteaux was originally called, and of some of the key documents of the early period of its history; the written text of this material concludes with at least one and possibly a number of other appendices on related topics. On Sunday afternoons between October 21 and December 9, eight conferences were presented under the more precise title of “The Cistercian Order from the Death of St. Bernard to the Reform of Benedict XII (1153–1335).” These talks, at close to an hour in length, twice as long as the weekday classes, were open to the

1. In specifying the responsibilities of the master of novices for instructing those under his care, the official *Usages* of the Cistercian Order in effect during Merton’s tenure in this position (1955–1965) required that along with explaining the various documents and customs that regulate life in a Trappist monastery, “he also teaches the history of our Order” (*Regulations of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance Published by the General Chapter of 1926* [Dublin: M. H. Gill & Sons, 1927], 258 [#545]).

entire Gethsemani community, though only the novices were required to attend. They covered the period when the astounding success of the Order during its “Golden Age” had made it the most influential religious group in Europe before the rise of the mendicants in the early thirteenth century but also gave rise to various problems and conflicts within the Order itself and with political, economic, ecclesial and intellectual currents in the broader society, leading to efforts at renewal and reform that, as Merton tried to show, had rather mixed results and to some extent changed the focus and direction of both the institutional and spiritual dimensions of medieval Cistercianism.²

The reasons for this rather unusual procedure of presenting two series of conferences on successive periods of Cistercian history simultaneously rather than sequentially cannot be definitively ascertained, as Merton evidently never explained his rationale, but there are certain pieces of evidence available that provide at least a plausible hypothesis. In the initial conference for each sequence,³ Merton mentions that he had begun a similar series the previous year but had dropped it because, as he told the novices at the first Friday class, it was “scandalizing” the postulants, those prospective candidates newly arrived at the abbey. Honest history, Merton emphasized, cannot simply be an inspiring, idealized account of heroic and holy predecessors

2. The intervening period is basically covered by the set of conferences focused on the life and work of Saint Bernard: Thomas Merton, *The Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition* 8, ed. Patrick F. O’Connell, Monastic Wisdom [MW], vol. 42 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2016).

3. These comments are found not in the written texts but in the recordings of Merton’s conference presentations, which began to be taped in late April 1962; for details concerning the beginning of the recording of the conferences, so that the brothers could listen to them while at work in the abbey kitchen, see Victor A. Kramer’s interviews with Matthew Kelty, OCSO, “Looking Back to Merton: Memories and Impressions,” *The Merton Annual* 1 (1988): 69–70; and with Flavian Burns, OCSO, “Merton’s Contributions as Teacher, Writer and Community Member,” *The Merton Annual* 3 (1990): 83.

meeting all challenges with admirable and successful fidelity, but must take into account failures as well as successes, weakness as well as strength, missteps and confusion as well as progress and clarity.

In a journal entry for June 10, 1961, Merton had written, "Cistercian history: a new dimension there too. I am studying the 13th–14th centuries, about which I thought I knew at least a little and literally knew nothing. I assume I have knowledge I do not have. This for novitiate conferences on the decline of the Order."⁴ It is clear, then, that at least part if not all of the previous year's history material was focused on the period following the Golden Age of the twelfth century, and that this was presumably what the newly arrived recruits would have found somewhat disturbing and what led to Merton's decision to cut the series short. When returning to this period a year later, he decided that it was more appropriate, and more useful, to make this material available to an audience that would include more experienced monks, who presumably also "knew nothing"—or relatively little—about this period. In the first of the Sunday presentations he explicitly states that this set of conferences is intended "for the professed," adding that he was doing the "rise of the Order" with the novices. Of course the novices were present at these talks as well and might still find some of the story disconcerting, but probably less so in an environment where they could see that their more experienced confreres were taking the less-than-edifying elements of the Order's early struggles and conflicts in stride.

But these considerations still do not explain why the two history courses were being given at the same time. The other relevant aspect of the situation is the fact that a significant change in the training of new members of the Order was about to take place at Gethsemani and other Cistercian monasteries. On September 21, 1962, Merton writes in his journal, "The General Chapter

4. Thomas Merton, *Turning Toward the World: The Pivotal Years. Journals, vol. 4: 1960–1963*, ed. Victor A. Kramer (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996), 125.

has taken steps to unite the brothers and the choir monks in one canonically homogeneous group—though the brothers will continue to have a different schedule and a somewhat different life. But there is to be one novitiate, and one formation. I do not know what this will involve.”⁵ On October 7 he notes that some of the less significant changes mandated by the recent General Chapter of the Order have now been implemented, but then adds, “The really big change, the merger of the brothers and the choir, will probably not be for another six or eight months. . . . One novitiate for choir and brothers may be a difficult thing to handle. There is no indication I will necessarily be the one to handle it.”⁶ But less than a week later, on October 13, he writes in the journal, “It is possible that the two novitiates may merge in January,”⁷ and while he does not mention it here, the “indication” must have quickly become clear that he would indeed be the novice master of the combined novitiate, which was in fact instituted in January 1963.⁸

It is perhaps not coincidental, then, that the first of the Sunday history conferences was given a week later, on October 21. Merton may well have decided to make sure that he had completed all discussion of this rather controversial period of Cistercian history before the advent of the lay brother novices, and that the most expeditious way of accomplishing this goal was to use

5. *Turning Toward the World*, 248.

6. *Turning Toward the World*, 253–54.

7. *Turning Toward the World*, 256.

8. The other revision to the training process taking place simultaneously, the beginning of a new monastic formation program in which newly professed monks in simple vows continued their studies in monastic theology and spirituality rather than moving immediately to classes preparing them for priestly ordination, as had previously been the case, does not seem to have had any relevance to the issue of the timing of these history courses. For a detailed overview of these changes in the formation process, see the Introduction to Thomas Merton, *Pre-Benedictine Monasticism: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition 2*, ed. Patrick F. O’Connell, MW 9 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2006), xi–xvi.

the longer Sunday conference periods to cover this material. In fact, on November 5 he was already noting in his journal that “I hope to finish conferences on Cistercian history (the Sunday ones) by the end of November”⁹—in fact he needed the first two Sundays of December to complete this set,¹⁰ but by the end of 1962 he had ended both this and the Friday course on the earlier period of Cistercian history (before he had actually discussed all the material he had prepared, as will be seen below) and was ready to begin the new year with his new, enlarged group focused on fresh new topics in monastic and Cistercian history and spirituality.¹¹ While it is impossible to be sure to what extent, if any, this factor was directly responsible for Merton’s decision to shuttle forward and backward in history between Fridays and Sundays for some eight weeks in late 1962, awareness of this imminent change in the formation process suggests at least a plausible explanation for what otherwise might seem to be a rather peculiar, if not inexplicable, arrangement.

* * * * *

The copy text for the material on the rise of the Order—the Friday conferences—on which the first part of the present edition is based consists of a separate title page with the heading “CISTERCIAN HISTORY” in two lines and the identification “FR LOUIS” made by an india-rubber-eraser ink-stamp carved

9. *Turning Toward the World*, 263.

10. On December 8 he writes in his journal, “In the evening finished the Cistercian History conferences” (*Turning Toward the World*, 271), presumably a reference to writing rather than delivering the final conference, since that day was a Saturday, but since it was a feast day (the Immaculate Conception) it is possible that he was following the Sunday schedule and did indeed give this final conference on December 8.

11. Friday classes would be devoted to the life and work of Saint Bernard and Sunday sessions to conferences on Pre-Benedictine, largely eastern Christian, monasticism. For this material see *Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology* and *Pre-Benedictine Monasticism*, respectively.

CISTERCIAN HISTORY

Early Monasticism in England

While Roman monks settled in {the} south, Celtic monks settled in {the} north. St. Columba {founded} *Iona*.¹ Lindisfarne {was the see of} St. Cuthbert.² (Whitby {is associated with} St. Hilda {and} Caedmon.³) St. Benedict's influence penetrates to {the} north through *St. Wilfrid*, {associated with} Lindisfarne and Ripon,⁴ who went to Rome and brought back {the} *Rule of*

1. For the foundation in 565 of the monastery of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland, by the Irish abbot Columba (d. 597), see Bede, *A History of the English Church and People*, trans. Leo Sherley-Price (New York: Penguin, 1955; rev. ed. 1968), 146–47 (bk. 3, chap. 4); Iona became the great center of missionary activity by Celtic monks in northern Britain.

2. The monastery of Lindisfarne, off the coast of Northumberland, was founded from Iona in 635 by Aidan (d. 651) (see Bede, *History*, 144–45, 148–49 [bk. 3, chaps. 3, 5]); the great hermit and contemplative Cuthbert became Bishop of Lindisfarne in 685, serving for two years before returning to solitude and dying soon afterward (see Bede, *History*, 259–69 [bk. 4, chaps. 27–32]).

3. Hilda (d. 680), of royal blood, was the founding abbess of the double monastery of Whitby, site of the famous synod in 664 to settle the controversy between the Celtic and Roman dating of Easter and other disputed matters (for the life of Hilda, see Bede, *History*, 245–50 [bk. 4, chap. 23]; for the synod, see 185–92 [bk. 3, chap. 25]). Caedmon was a retainer at Whitby who became the first known vernacular poet in English; his brief hymn on creation is still extant (see Bede, *History*, 250–53 [bk. 4, chap. 24]).

4. Wilfrid (d. 709), an influential proponent of Roman customs at the Synod of Whitby and eventually archbishop of York, began his monastic life at Lindisfarne and was founding abbot of the monastery of Ripon (for his life see Bede, *History*, 305–13 [bk. 5, chap. 19]).

St. Benedict.⁵ *St. Benedict Biscop* accompanied Wilfrid to Rome; {he} stayed two years at Lérins, returned and was {for} two years abbot at Canterbury. Then {he} took {the} *Rule* and Roman customs to the north: {the} *Rule* {was the main} spiritual influence; {to introduce the} Roman liturgy, Benedict Biscop brings John, archcantor of St. Peter's.⁶ *Glastonbury*, {in} Somerset, {was} originally Celtic, {but} became Benedictine. *Wearmouth and Jarrow* {were} founded by St. Benedict Biscop {in} 674 {and} 685, {respectively}. Bede entered at Jarrow. {The} life {there was} very close to {that lived at the} original Monte Cassino. The *Rule* here {was} a directory and inspiration; {the} houses {were ordered} with {their} own customs. {At the} end of {the} eighth century, an Anglo-Saxon, *Willibald*, *helps revive Monte Cassino*. {The} *Danish invasions*⁷ wreak havoc on Anglo-Saxon monasteries—{there is a} *complete collapse*: monasteries practically disappear, except {the} community of Lindisfarne, which migrates to Durham ({a} stronghold).

{A} *monastic revival* {takes place} under Dunstan and King Edgar {in the} tenth century.⁸ {In} 934,⁹ St. Dunstan becomes Abbot

5. See David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: A History of its Development from the Times of St Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council—940–1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940; 2nd ed. 1963), 21–22; Knowles actually writes that Wilfrid had brought the Rule from Gaul rather than from Rome. Subsequent details in this paragraph are taken from Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 22–23, 32.

6. For Benedict Biscop and John the Archcantor, see Bede, *History*, 236–38 (bk. 4, chap. 18).

7. The Viking raids began with an attack on the (Celtic) monastery of Lindisfarne in 793 and led to large-scale Danish settlements in extensive areas of east-central England throughout the following century, with continuing conflict until Alfred of Wessex (d. 899) defeated the Danes and established peace.

8. Merton relies in this paragraph on Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 31–38.

9. This is the approximate date of his reception of the monastic habit from his kinsman Aelfheah, rather than of his becoming abbot (see below); it is perhaps the result of a quick scan of Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 38, which mentions that around this date Aelfheah, who urged him to become a monk, was consecrated Bishop of Winchester. For the correct date of ca. 940, see below.

of Glastonbury. He had grown up at Glastonbury—it was still a famous shrine but {had} no monks (?); probably clerics served {at the} shrine; a library existed there. Dunstan {was} educated by {the} Irish {and} became {a} monk by private vow, then {a} priest. King Edmund took Dunstan as {a} counselor, then revived {the} Abbey of Glastonbury with Dunstan as abbot in gratitude for the fact that his life was saved in Cheddar Gorge.¹⁰ {In} 956, Dunstan {is} in Flanders, especially {at} Ghent; {he} returns {in} 961¹¹ {to} Worcester and {subsequently becomes} Archbishop of Canterbury. Monasteries {are} restored, {and} monks replace (decadent) clerics in big churches. Monastic bishops reform {the} Church.

{In} 970, the *Regularis Concordia* {is} drawn up at {a} meeting of bishops and abbots at Winchester. {This document} concerns {the} monastic liturgy—{the} ceremonial, {the} prayers for {the} dead. {It is a} compendium of customs then in force in England (read D. Knowles, p. 44, bottom¹²); {it was} influenced by FLEURY

10. Shortly after deciding to send Dunstan, who had many detractors because of his piety, into exile, Edmund almost died on this crag while hunting; repenting his decision, he brought Dunstan to Glastonbury and seated him in the abbot's chair (see Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 38).

11. This date is also erroneous: Dunstan was recalled from exile and became bishop of Worcester in 957 and archbishop of Canterbury two or three years later (see Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 39).

12. "But though the *Concordia* differs little from other European customs of the epoch there are a few provisions in which allusion is made to English practice. Thus a fire is allowed in a special room in winter, and the monks may work in shelter instead of in the cloister when the weather is cold; the pealing of bells is to be prolonged in the national fashion on Christmas and certain other feasts; processions are assumed as taking place not in the monastic buildings only, as came to be the custom abroad, but in the streets that lay between the monastic church and one of the town churches, and (a practice still more peculiar to England) it is assumed that the people will assist at the chief Mass on Sundays and feasts. Equally peculiar to the *Concordia* is the exhortation to daily Communion; it is difficult to say whether this was inspired by English custom or was directly due to the initiative of Dunstan and Ethelwold, perhaps recollecting the celebrated letter of Bede the Venerable."

also (Abbo of Fleury {was} exiled at Ramsey¹³)—{there was also} Cluniac influence. The monastery, with {a strong} social orientation, stabilizes {the} kingdom. Missionaries go out to Scandinavia. Monastic centers of art {develop}; chant (also {the} organ and {the} beginning {of} polyphony) {is nurtured} (read D. K. 60¹⁴). {The} great monastic centers {of} Abingdon, Winchester, Ely, Peterbor-

13. Knowles notes (*Monastic Order*, 46, n. 3) that this exile occurred later, in 986–988, at which point Abbo was elected abbot of Fleury, but that he had been in England ca. 970 and may have been present at the Winchester council.

14. "From the first the leaders of the revival, in full agreement with the monastic tradition of recent centuries, had set the solemn performance of the liturgy in the forefront of their design. One of the chief motives for the expulsion of the secular clerks from the Old and New Minsters was that the offices might be more worthily accomplished. There is clear evidence that at the two great centres, Winchester and Ramsey, the elaborate rendering of ceremony and chant was a feature of the life at least during the generation of Aelfric and Byrhtferth. From Winchester, besides the service books that have survived, we have the two 'trovers' which show that in addition to the full body of plain chant the English monasteries made use not only of the elaborate additional modulations which interpolated and prolonged the important parts of the chant of the Mass and Office, but also a system of *organa* or polyphony which indeed shows a greater development in England than anywhere abroad. In addition, the English monasteries, as is clear from several indications, made much of organ music and of the treble voices of the children of the cloister, both in contrast to the voices of the monks and in polyphonic combination. In all this, it must be remembered, there was nothing uncouth or embryonic; the plain chant was a developed art-form of extreme flexibility, subtlety and beauty, and the music of Winchester in the days of Aelfric was in all essentials identical with that of the Vatican gradual and antiphoner of the present day. From the descriptions in which the Ramsey monk, the anonymous author of the life of Oswald, takes especial pleasure we can see that equal richness of liturgical life prevailed in the houses which derived from Fleury. English treble voices have ever been celebrated for their purity and sweetness of tone, and all who took part in the choral service had been trained from their earliest years in the Gregorian chant. The Mass and Office on high festivals must have provided a musical feast of great richness, and we can readily understand the admiration with which Cnut, in the well-known story, heard across the water the singing of the monks of Ely" (Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 60–61).

ough {and} Ramsey {flourish}. (Read D. K. p. 54 {for a} portrait of Dunstan;¹⁵ the death of Dunstan {occurs in} 988.) {The} *Danish conquest* {takes place} after Dunstan's death, {in} 1015, {leading to the} reign of Canute¹⁶ {and the} reign of St. Edward.¹⁷

The Regularis Concordia (Dunstan—Ethelwold—Oswald¹⁸) and the Benedictine revival of the tenth century ((the) reign of Edgar: 959–975).¹⁹

15. "Dunstan died . . . in 988. His last years had been given almost wholly to the pastoral care of his diocese and to the direct service of God. From the many living touches of his earliest biographer a very real portrait of this great and eminently holy man emerges, though the traits are so many and so minute that a reader can scarcely analyse the whole for himself, still less transmit the impression to others. The sympathetic, receptive nature which in his early manhood made him the friend and guide of so many varied characters, the unshakable strength of his later years which made him to the end the master even of Ethelwold, the wisdom and statesmanship which enabled him to be the counsellor and friend of successive kings and one of the creators of a united England, the gift of artistic creation of the highest order which is perhaps the most remarkable of all his gifts, and, finally, the mature sanctity which in his later years transcended and superseded his other activities and characteristics—all these, revealed to us in this way or that, make of Dunstan a figure of singular attractiveness, whose final and lasting impression is one, not of brilliance and fire, but of a calm and mellow light."

16. The Danish King Canute (Cnut) (ca. 995–1035) became king of England in 1016 and ruled until his death.

17. Edward the Confessor (b. 1003) ruled England from 1042 until his death in 1066.

18. The three great monastic reformers and ecclesial leaders of tenth-century England who presumably were largely responsible for drawing up the *Regularis Concordia*: Dunstan (d. 988) was abbot of Glastonbury, bishop of Worcester, and archbishop of Canterbury; Ethelwold (Aethelwold) (d. 984) was abbot of Abingdon and bishop of Winchester; Oswald (d. 992) was reformer of the Abbey of Ramsey, bishop of Worcester, and archbishop of York.

19. The material in this section is based on "The English Monastic Revival of the Tenth Century," the first section of the Introduction to *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque / The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation*, ed. and trans. Thomas Symons, OSB (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), ix–xxviii.

{This} revival {came} after {the} Viking raids, {with the} new unity built by Alfred (ninth century):

1) {the} necessity of education: few were left who could read Latin;

2) {the} need to rebuild monasteries: monasticism {was} almost wiped out by {the} Danish raids; St. Augustine's Canterbury had survived, {but} other monasteries remained without regular life; Alfred built new monasteries rather than try to reform the old ones—especially Winchester ({founded} by his successor Edward {the} Elder [899–924]); {the} growth of great monasteries of {the} tenth century {included} Milton Abbas, Crediton, Worcester, Bath, Abingdon, etc.;

3) *St. Dunstan*, born {in} 909 in Glastonbury, entered {there} about 923 to study {but} retained contact with {the} court; {he} received {the} monastic habit {in} 934 (about), {was} ordained about 939 {and became} abbot about 940 (appointed by King Edmund);

4) {the} reorganization of Glastonbury {took place} under Dunstan, {who} also {had} influence at court;

5) Ethelwold, {a} disciple of Dunstan, takes over Abingdon {in} 954 {and} reorganizes {it} on Glastonbury principles, and with monks from Corbie (to teach chant);

6) {in} 955, Dunstan has to flee to Ghent, then being reformed by Gerard of Brogne; {he was} recalled to be Bishop of Worcester, {and in} 960, Archbishop of Canterbury—{the} most active and general reform {was} now undertaken;

7) Oswald left Winchester to be {a} monk at Fleury {but was subsequently} recalled as Bishop of Worcester {and} took part in {the} monastic movement, especially {in relation to} Ramsey, {in} Huntingdonshire, as {a} center of reform, founded by him; later {he became} Archbishop of York;

8) {the} Council of Winchester, {in} 970 (?), unifies monastic observance: {the} *Regularis Concordia* {is} drawn up, mainly to organize reform, as against irresponsible innovations—{it was} inspired from abroad, {introducing} new devotions, etc.

9) {in} 988, Dunstan dies after years of retirement and semi-disgrace, on {the} nineteenth {of} May, {the} Saturday after {the}

Ascension; {he had} consecrated {Ethelwold's new church at} Ely in 983 (?).

{The} *Regularis Concordia* {provides a} picture of tenth-century monasticism.²⁰ {The} *officers* {included: the} *abbot*, elected among the members of {the} community (usually), with {the} consent of the king; {he is} aided by {the} provost and one dean, generally—or {the} dean (= {the} prior) (or {the} prior = any superior or officer); {the} cellarer ({who is} not mentioned in {the} *Regularis Concordia*); {the} sacristan or *secretarius*; {the} *magister* or *custos*—in charge of the children; {the} cantor; {the} *circa*—in charge of claustral discipline (cf. {the} subprior).

Regular life: in addition to {the} canonical office (these directions {were} not innovations {but the} customary practice of the day), {this included the} little office of all saints (lauds—vespers); {the} office of the dead (omitted from Palm Sunday to {the} octave of Pentecost); {the} *trina oratio* (three times a day); psalms etc. for {the} king after each office, except prime; gradual and penitential psalms; litanies (one after prime, one before {the} major Mass); two conventual Masses daily, {with} DAILY communion ({which was} unusual {for the time}): tierce, {followed by} {the} morrow Mass,²¹ {then} chapter, *work*, sext, {the} major Mass, {then} none; {there were also} private Masses; {a} *daily mandatum*²² of {the} poor ({a} special devotion of *St. Oswald*)—special care of poor guests {was} emphasized—and three {of the} regular poor got maundy and food from {the} monks' table; {there was a} *Saturday maundy of monks*. {The} result of this {was that} the *lectio*²³ after matins

20. The material in this section is based on "Organisation and Life," part II of Symons' Introduction (xxxi–xl).

21. I.e. the matutinal or morning Mass, celebrated each day at an earlier time than the principal conventual Mass.

22. I.e. footwashing ("maundy").

23. "[Spiritual] reading"; for an extensive discussion of this essential part of Benedictine monastic life, see Thomas Merton, *Monastic Observances: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition* 5, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell, Monastic Wisdom [MW], vol. 25 (Collegetown, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2010), 149–58, 166–84.

{was} taken up with prayers for {the} king, etc.; other *lectio*, and work, {were} affected by extra prayers and observances; intellectual work—copying manuscripts—{was this done} in *lectio* time? more probably {during} work time. {With regard to} work—had manual labor become non-existent? Certainly {there was} necessary work around {the} house, including cooking and baking, etc. Did {the} monks build? {At} Abingdon, they helped. {According to the} *Vita Oswaldi*,²⁴ at Westbury {the} building {was} done by *contemptibiles personae*²⁵ while the brethren prayed. {As for} *meals*, {there were} two outside {of the periods of} monastic fast, and on all Sundays and Feasts of Twelve Lessons; {there was} one after none in winter, after vespers in Lent. {Was there} meat?—eaten by the children? *Silence* {was} *absolute* during {the} great silence and times of *lectio*. Probably {there was} no regular recreation. Confession {took place} *weekly* or {was} *more frequent*.

Sources of {the} Regularis Concordia: {it was} “substantially a mosaic,”²⁶ yet {its} sources {are} hard to account for, apart from St. Benedict, St. Ambrose (*De Sacramentis*),²⁷ {the synodal} Council of Winchester,²⁸ the *Ordo Qualiter*,²⁹ {the} *Ordo Romanus*:³⁰

24. *Vita Oswaldi Auctore Anonymo, Historians of the Church of York*, ed. James Raine, Rolls Series 71, 3 vols. (London: Longman, 1879–1894), 1.424, cited by Symons (xxxv).

25. “insignificant persons.”

26. Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, xlv; the material in this section is based on “Sources of the Regularis Concordia,” part III of Symons’ Introduction (xlv–lii).

27. *De Sacramentis* 5.4.25 is quoted in #23 (*Regularis Concordia*, 19).

28. The decisions of the council, at which the *Regularis Concordia* was drawn up, are incorporated into the document’s Proem, ##8–12 (*Regularis Concordia*, 5–9).

29. Symons identifies this document as “a Benedictine writing of the eighth century” (xvi) and “the only document which we can affirm to have been extensively used in the Concordia” (xlviii).

30. According to Symons, “the principal services of Holy Week and Easter are based on, and some half dozen rubrical directions are cited verbally from, *Ordo Romanus Primus* . . . or some form of that document” (xlix).

1) *Anglo-Saxon customs*, especially prayers for {the} Royal House,³¹ daily communion,³² ringing all bells (see p. 30³³);

1a) *Early Benedictine customs: biberes post nonam*;³⁴ psalmody at labor;³⁵

1b) *Reform of Benedict of Aniane: trina oratio*;³⁶ gradual psalms before nocturns;³⁷

2) *Cluny reforms*, from Fleury, reformed by St. Odo in 930: offices of all saints, office of {the} dead,³⁸ silence on feast days;³⁹

3) *Lorraine reform* ({from} Ghent, restored by Gerard of Brogne in 937): Holy Week rites (substantially Roman, not monastic—see #50;⁴⁰ v.g. the *Easter Trope*: #51⁴¹).

31. #18 (*Regularis Concordia*, 13–14).

32. #23 (*Regularis Concordia*, 19).

33. “On these days between the feast of the Innocents and the Octave of Christmas, since the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* is said at Mass on account of the solemnity of such a feast, all the bells shall ring at Nocturns and Vespers as at Mass, as is the custom among the people of this country” (#32 [*Regularis Concordia*, 29–30]).

34. “Drink after None” (*Regularis Concordia*, xlvi) (#30 [*Regularis Concordia*, 13–14]).

35. #25 (*Regularis Concordia*, 21).

36. #16 (*Regularis Concordia*, 12). “The psalms and collects given here went by the name of *Trina oratio*, a form of threefold prayer (in honour of the Blessed Trinity: 27, 12). It was performed three times daily: before Nocturns . . . before Tierce . . . or Prime . . . and after Compline” (*Regularis Concordia*, 12, n. 3).

37. #17 (*Regularis Concordia*, 13).

38. ##19, 25, 29, 31, 56, 59, 60, 66–68 (*Regularis Concordia*, 15, 22, 26, 29, 55, 58, 59, 65–67).

39. #24 (*Regularis Concordia*, 20).

40. *Regularis Concordia*, 49: “On the holy day of Easter the seven canonical hours are to be celebrated by monks in the Church of God after the manner of Canons, out of regard for the authority of the blessed Gregory, Pope of the Apostolic See, as set forth in his Antiphonar” (“the Antiphonar in question being that of the Office, that is, the Roman or Secular as distinct from the Monastic” [49, n. 3]).

41. *Regularis Concordia*, 49–50: “While the third lesson is being read, four of the brethren shall vest, one of whom, wearing an alb as though for

{In the} *Regularis Concordia*, special points relevant to monastic spirituality {include the following}:

I. *Blessing*; II. {The} *Night Office*: #14: “All things {are} to begin with a blessing” (p. 11⁴²)—*omnia sive corporalia sive spiritualia*;⁴³ *maximi muniminis mos pernecessarius, tam in modicis rebus quam magnis*.⁴⁴ Warnefrid says⁴⁵ {the} custom was to begin all things with {saying} three times {the} *Deus in adiutorium*⁴⁶ (cf. Cassian:

some different purpose, shall enter and go stealthily to the place of the ‘sepulchre’ and sit there quietly, holding a palm in his hand. Then, while the third respond is being sung, the other three brethren, vested in copes and holding thuribles in their hands, shall enter in their turn and go to the place of the ‘sepulchre’, step by step, as though searching for something. Now these things are done in imitation of the angel seated on the tomb and of the women coming with perfumes to anoint the body of Jesus. When, therefore, he that is seated shall see these three draw nigh, wandering about as it were and seeking something, he shall begin to sing softly and sweetly, *Quem quaeritis*. As soon as this has been sung right through, the three shall answer together, *Ihesum Nazarenum*. Then he that is seated shall say *Non est hic. Surrexit sicut praedixerat. Ite, nuntiate quia surrexit a mortuis*. At this command the three shall turn to the choir saying *Alleluia. Resurrexit Dominus*. When this has been sung he that is seated, as though calling them back, shall say the antiphon *Venite et videte locum*, and then, rising and lifting up the veil, he shall show them the place void of the Cross and with only the linen in which the Cross had been wrapped. Seeing this the three shall lay down their thuribles in that same ‘sepulchre’ and, taking the linen, shall hold it up before the clergy; and, as though showing that the Lord was risen and was no longer wrapped in it, they shall sing this antiphon: *Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro*. They shall then lay the linen on the altar.”

42. Text reads: “every action . . . should be begun with a blessing.”

43. *Regularis Concordia*, 11, which reads: “*omnia . . . spiritualia siue corporalia*” (“every action, spiritual or temporal”).

44. *Regularis Concordia*, 11 (“This is a most necessary custom and a very great safeguard in small things as in great”).

45. *Pauli Warnefridi, Diaconi Casinensis, In Sanctam Regulam Commentarium* (Monte Cassino: Typis Abbatiae Montis Casini, 1880), 335, cited by Symons (11, n. 4).

46. “God, [come to] my assistance” (Ps 69 [70]:2).

Conferences⁴⁷). “*Legitime a cunctis iugo regulae deditis iugi teneatur custodia.*”⁴⁸ “For nothing can stand firm and strong which lacks the blessing of Christ Who created all things and Who rules justly that which He has created.”⁴⁹

#15: What is done and said on arising: {the} sign of {the} cross and three *Domine labia mea*,⁵⁰ then {the} whole {of} Psalm 69 (*Deus in adiutorium*—read⁵¹)—a short psalm {of} special beauty (comment); after {taking care of the} needs of nature etc. {they process} to {the} oratory saying Psalm 24. {Upon} *entering church*, etc., *cum summa reverentia et cautela* { . . . } *ut alios orantes non impediatur* { . . . } *flexis genibus in loco congruo ac consueto*”;⁵² praying in his heart with compunction, and {each} *begins the trina oratio* privately (see p. 12)—and again for {the} king and {the} royal family after

47. John Cassian, *Collationes*, 10.10 (J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* [PL], 221 vols. [Paris: Garnier, 1844–1865], 49:832B); for a discussion (which includes mention of both Warnefrid and the *Regularis Concordia*), see Thomas Merton, *Cassian and the Fathers: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition*, ed. Patrick F. O’Connell, MW 1 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2005), 53–54.

48. *Regularis Concordia*, 11 (“wherefore it should ever be kept as law by all those who live under the yoke of the Rule”).

49. *Regularis Concordia*, 11, which reads: “For it is beyond doubt that nothing.”

50. “Lord [open] my lips” (Ps 50 [51]:17) (*Regularis Concordia*, 11).

51. “Unto the end, a psalm for David, to bring to remembrance that the Lord saved him. O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my soul: Let them be turned backward, and blush for shame that desire evils to me: Let them be presently turned away blushing for shame that say to me: Tis well, tis well. Let all that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee; and let such as love thy salvation say always: The Lord be magnified. But I am needy and poor; O God, help me. Thou art my helper and my deliverer: O Lord, make no delay.”

52. *Regularis Concordia*, 12, which reads, “*cautela intrans ut . . . impediatur at tunc flexis . . . congruo et consueto*” (“entering with the most profound reverence and taking the greatest care lest he disturb others at their prayers. Then, kneeling down in his proper and accustomed place”).

nocturns; *trina oratio* {consists in} groups of psalms with orations: note the second⁵³ is *pro devotis amicis* in our missal;⁵⁴ the third⁵⁵ {is} a postcommunion in {the} Mass *pro defuncto*;⁵⁶ then the gradual psalms (presumably the *pueri*⁵⁷ are saying their *trina oratio* at this time); {then} *nocturns*,⁵⁸ {followed by} *prayers for {the} king*,⁵⁹ {then a} brief interval (given to prayers usually); *lauds* {and} after {the} *Miserere*⁶⁰ two psalms for {the} royal family (Ps. 31; Ps. 85), {then} antiphons,⁶¹ lauds of all saints and of {the} dead; *prime* (p. 15)—

53. “*Deus qui caritatis dona per gratiam Sancti Spiritus tuorum cordibus fidelium infudisti; da famulis et famulabus tuis, pro quibus tuam deprecamur clementiam, salutem mentis et corporis ut te tota uirtute diligent et quae tibi placita sunt tota dilectione perficiant. Per Dominum*” (“O God Who hast poured forth the gifts of love into the hearts of Thy faithful through the grace of the Holy Ghost, grant to Thy servants, for whom we beseech Thy clemency, health of mind and body that they may love Thee with all their strength, and with all their love do those things which are pleasing to Thee. Through our Lord”) (#16 [Regularis Concordia, 12]).

54. “for faithful friends” (*Missale Cisterciense: Reformatum iuxta Decretum Sacrorum Rituum Congregationis Diei 3 Julii 1869* [Westmalle: Ex Typographia Ordinis Cist. Strict. Obs., 1951], 78*).

55. “*Inueniant quaesumus Domine animae famulorum famularumque tuarum lucis aeternae consortium, qui in hac luce positi tuum consecuti sunt sacramentum. Per Dominum*” (“We beseech Thee O Lord that the souls of Thy servants may attain to the fellowship of eternal light who in the light of this life have followed after holiness. Through our Lord”) (#16 [Regularis Concordia, 13]).

56. See *Regularis Concordia*, 13, n. 1, which notes the use of this prayer as a postcommunion for the “*Missa in agenda mortuorum plurimorum*” (“Mass offered for more than one deceased”) in the Gelasian, Gregorian and Leofric sacramentaries (with the addition of the words “*omnium in Christo quiescentium*” [“all resting in Christ”] following “*famulorum famularumque tuorum*”); it is not found in the *Missale Cisterciense*.

57. I.e. the children (students and oblates) of the monastery, who arise somewhat later than the monks.

58. #17 (*Regularis Concordia*, 13).

59. #18 (*Regularis Concordia*, 13–14).

60. Ps 50 [51].

61. Specified as “of the Cross, of St Mary and of the saint whose name is honoured in that church or, if there be none such, of the dedication of that church” (*Regularis Concordia*, 14).

note {the} quantity of extra psalms and finally {the} litany, {said} prostrate on {the} ground.⁶²

#21 {discusses the daily} chapter: *versa facie ad orientem salutent cruce*;⁶³ *se vultu inclinato humilient*;⁶⁴ {the} prayers {were} exactly as today; {there was the} reading of {the} *Rule, or of {the} gospel on a feast day*; {the} chapter of faults {responded to the} “need to be judged in {the} present life” etc.;⁶⁵ {this} “*spiritualis pergaminis negotium*”⁶⁶ {was} connected also with *confessionis salubre remedium*,⁶⁷ which replaces {the} chapter of faults on Sundays and feasts, {and with the} evening “*Confiteor*” to neighbors (#27 [p. 23]),⁶⁸ everybody {recites the} *Confiteor* in chapter {on} Holy Thursday (p. 29).⁶⁹ After chapter *five* psalms {were said}.

#23,⁷⁰ re: communion, {notes that} in {the} Lord’s Prayer we ask for our daily bread, not our annual bread. {In} #24,⁷¹ note {the} major Mass on Friday {was the} votive of {the} Holy Cross, {and on} Saturday {the} votive of {the} Blessed Virgin Mary; {the}

62. #19 (*Regularis Concordia*, 14–15).

63. “Turning to the east they shall salute the Cross” (*Regularis Concordia*, 17).

64. “With bared heads abase themselves [before one another]” (*Regularis Concordia*, 17).

65. “For it is meet that in all our negligences, whether of thought, word or deed, we should be judged in this present life by sincere confession and humble penance lest, when this life is over, our sins declare us guilty before the judgment-seat of Christ” (*Regularis Concordia*, 18).

66. “duty of spiritual purgation” (*Regularis Concordia*, 18, which reads: “*negotio*”).

67. “the healing remedy of confession” (#22 [*Regularis Concordia*, 18]).

68. The use of this same phrase here is identified “as meaning the *Confiteor* at Compline” on the basis of a reference to a life of Dunstan (*Regularis Concordia*, 13, n. 5).

69. “the brethren shall all, with lowly devotion, beg pardon of the abbot, who takes the place of Christ, and ask forgiveness of their many failings, saying the *Confiteor*” (#31 [*Regularis Concordia*, 29]).

70. *Regularis Concordia*, 19.

71. *Regularis Concordia*, 20.

minor Mass on Sundays {was that} of {the} Trinity.⁷² #27⁷³ {calls for the} *trina oratio in {the} evening*, {after which, when} retiring, holy water {was} given {the brethren} by {the} hebdomadary,⁷⁴ “*et sic pergant ad requiem suam cum summae tranquillitatis reverentia*”;⁷⁵ one can stay in church for private prayer until a first bell is rung by the sacristan; sprinkling of {the} dormitory {takes place} after all are in bed. #29⁷⁶ {is a} beautiful chapter on {the} calefactory, etc. #34⁷⁷ {discusses} Lent: *pinguedo* (cooking in lard—*adepts, sagina*⁷⁸) {is} dropped from Septuagesima {onward}; milk and eggs {are} dropped after Quinquagesima—also {the} fast {continues} until vespers, according to {the} *Rule*,⁷⁹ {a} procession *as on Ash Wednesday* {is held} on all Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent, after none, before Mass—from one church to another—then Mass and vespers {follow}.⁸⁰ #37⁸¹ {considers} Holy Week: “*Tenebrae*” (see pp. 36–37, with explanation and excuse⁸²); the candle in the mouth of the

72. “the Morrow Mass . . . on Sundays, if no feast day falls thereon, should be of the Trinity” (#23 [*Regularis Concordia*, 19]).

73. *Regularis Concordia*, 23–24.

74. I.e. the monk assigned to particular liturgical duties for that week.

75. “[they] shall then go to their rest with reverence and the utmost quiet” (*Regularis Concordia*, 24).

76. *Regularis Concordia*, 25–26.

77. *Regularis Concordia*, 32–33.

78. These are the corresponding terms in the Cluniac customs (*Regularis Concordia*, 27, n. 3).

79. *The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English*, ed. and trans. Justin McCann, OSB (London: Burns, Oates, 1952), 98/99 (chap. 41).

80. #35 (*Regularis Concordia*, 33).

81. *Regularis Concordia*, 36–37.

82. “On Thursday, which is called *Cena Domini*, the night Office shall be performed according as is set down in the Antiphonar. We have also heard that, in churches of certain religious men, a practice has grown up whereby compunction of soul is aroused by means of the outward representation of that which is spiritual, namely, that when the singing for the night is over, the antiphon of the gospel finished and all the lights put out, two children should be appointed who shall stand on the right hand side of the choir and

serpent;⁸³ maundy;⁸⁴ {the} abbot serving in {the} refectory.⁸⁵ #44.⁸⁶

shall sing *Kyrie eleison* with clear voice; two more on the left hand side who shall answer *Christe eleison*; and, to the west of the choir, another two who shall say *Domine miserere nobis*; after which the whole choir shall respond together *Christus Dominus factus est oboediens usque ad mortem*. The children of the right-hand choir shall then repeat what they sang above exactly as before and, the choir having finished their response, they shall repeat the same thing once again in the same way. When this has been sung the third time the brethren shall say the *preces* on their knees and in silence as usual. The same order of singing shall be observed for three nights by the brethren. This manner of arousing religious compunction was, I think, devised by Catholic men for the purpose of setting forth clearly both the terror of that darkness which, at our Lord's Passion, struck the tripartite world with unwonted fear, and the consolation of that apostolic preaching which revealed to the whole world Christ obedient to His Father even unto death for the salvation of the human race. Therefore it seemed good to us to insert these things so that if there be any to whose devotion they are pleasing, they may find therein the means of instructing those who are ignorant of this matter; no one, however, shall be forced to carry out this practice against his will."

83. #41 (*Regularis Concordia*, 39) ("this was a candlestick shaped like a serpent and attached to the end of a pole or staff" [39, n. 5]).

84. "Afterwards, when these [poor men] have been gathered together in a suitable place, the brethren shall proceed to carry out the Maundy at which, singing the antiphons proper to this ceremony, they shall wash, dry and kiss the feet of the poor men. And when water has been offered for their hands, food also shall be given to the poor men and money, according to the abbot's discretion, distributed among them" (#40 [*Regularis Concordia*, 39]).

85. "When the ministers of the week, preceding the abbot as is their wont, come to the Maundy, they shall perform their part in it, and after them the abbot shall wash the feet of all in his own basin, drying and kissing them, being assisted by those whom he has chosen for this service. When he has done this, the abbot shall sit in his own place and the seniors shall minister to him in like manner, then, rising, he shall offer water for the hands of the brethren and again the like service shall be rendered to him. . . . Meanwhile the abbot shall go round among the brethren drinking the health and kissing the hand of each. Having ministered to all, the abbot shall sit down and *Tu autem Domine* shall be said" (#42 [*Regularis Concordia*, 40–41]).

86. "When these prayers have all been said, the Cross shall straightway be set up before the altar, a space being left between it and the altar; and it

Good Friday [is arranged] like our Ritual.⁸⁷ [#45⁸⁸] [provides texts of the] *prayers for [the] adoration of [the] Holy Cross*—another *trina oratio*. [In] #46, note the “sepulchre” where the cross is laid away until Easter Sunday—with [an] explanation “for the unlearned”⁸⁹

shall be held up by two deacons, one on either side. Then the deacons shall sing *Popule meus*, two subdeacons standing before the Cross and responding in Greek, *Agios o Theos, Agios Yschiros, Agios Athanatos eleison ymas*, and the *schola* repeating the same in Latin, *Sanctus Deus*. The Cross shall then be borne before the altar by the two deacons, an acolyte following with a cushion upon which the holy Cross shall be laid. When that antiphon is finished which the *schola* has sung in Latin, the deacons shall sing *Quia eduxi vos per desertum*, the subdeacons responding *Agios* in Greek and the *schola Sanctus Deus* in Latin as before. Again the deacons, raising up the Cross, sing *Quid ultra* as before, the subdeacons responding *Agios* and the *schola Sanctus Deus* as before. Then, unveiling the Cross and turning towards the clergy, the deacons shall sing the antiphons *Ecce lignum crucis, Crucem tuam adoramus Domine, Dum Fabricator mundi* and the verses of Fortunatus, *Pange lingua*. As soon as it has been unveiled, the abbot shall come before the holy Cross and shall prostrate himself thrice with all the brethren of the right hand side of the choir, that is, seniors and juniors; and with deep and heartfelt sighs shall say the seven Penitential psalms and the prayers in honour of the holy Cross” (*Regularis Concordia*, 42–43).

87. *Rituale Cisterciense ex Libro Usuum Definitionibus Ordinis et Caeremoniali Episcoporum Collectum* (Westmalle, Belgium: Ex Typographia Ordinis, 1948), 135–42 [III.xxii].

88. *Regularis Concordia*, 43–44 (text reads: #47).

89. “Now since on that day we solemnize the burial of the Body of our Saviour, if anyone should care or think fit to follow in a becoming manner certain religious men in a practice worthy to be imitated for the strengthening of the faith of unlearned common persons and neophytes, we have decreed this only: on that part of the altar where there is space for it there shall be a representation as it were of a sepulchre, hung about with a curtain, in which the holy Cross, when it has been venerated, shall be placed in the following manner: the deacons who carried the Cross before shall come forward and, having wrapped the Cross in a napkin there where it was venerated, they shall bear it thence, singing the antiphons *In pace in idipsum, Habitabit* and *Caro mea requiescat in spe*, to the place of the sepulchre. When they have laid the cross therein, in imitation as it were of the burial of the

etc. {In} #47,⁹⁰ note {the} general communion {on} Good Friday, {and} shaving and bathing. {With regard to} *Easter*: {on} Holy Saturday, all is done at *none*;⁹¹ {on} Easter {the} office {is} according to {the} Roman Rite;⁹² #51 {describes the} Easter trope.⁹³

On silence {see} #56.⁹⁴ *The circa* (circator) *totius claustris sub decano curam gerat*;⁹⁵ after compline {he is responsible for} picking up books and clothes in {the} cloister; during nocturns {he is} looking for sleepers with {a} lantern. {The} *daily mandatum of {the} poor* (#62⁹⁶) {is performed} according to the *Rule*, chapter 53:⁹⁷ at least three poor {had their} feet washed and shared {the} food of {the} brethren; {on} Saturday {and} Sunday the *pueri* did it; {on}

Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, they shall sing the antiphon *Sepulto Domino, signatum est monumentum, ponentes milites qui custodirent eum*. In that same place the holy Cross shall be guarded with all reverence until the night of the Lord's Resurrection. And during the night let brethren be chosen by twos and threes, if the community be large enough, who shall keep faithful watch, chanting psalms" (*Regularis Concordia*, 44–45).

90. *Regularis Concordia*, 45–46.

91. I.e. the lighting of the new fire, the blessing of the paschal candle, the lessons and litanies, the singing of the Gloria and ringing of the bells, followed by Mass (##48–49 [*Regularis Concordia*, 47–48]).

92. #50 (*Regularis Concordia*, 49) (see above, n. 40).

93. I.e. the *Quem quaeritis* trope (see above, n. 41).

94. *Regularis Concordia*, 54–55; the text enjoins "strict silence in the cloister" and during the great silence from Vespers until chapter of the following day, notes that the *auditorium* is "excepted from the rule of silence" but is not therefore to be used for tales or gossip, and explains that "while the authority of the Rule bids us keep silence at all times, we nevertheless permit talking, as also does our patron the blessed Benedict, at the proper time and touching necessary affairs: not indeed in a loud voice but softly, on account of the importance of silence."

95. "[must be appointed] to look after the entire cloister, under the direction of the dean" (#57 [*Regularis Concordia*, 56]).

96. *Regularis Concordia*, 61.

97. McCann, *The Rule*, 120/121, which directs that the feet of all guests be washed, with "special attention" to be given in receiving "poor men and pilgrims."

other days, the monks, in turn—no one {was} exempt; {the} abbot washed {the} feet of {the} poor when he was free—also {the} feet of strangers and pilgrims. #63⁹⁸ {stresses that} all should be zealous to serve in {the} guesthouse; {the} abbot especially should have zeal to serve the poor (read;⁹⁹ read also {the} epilogue on not accumulating riches, but sharing with {the} poor¹⁰⁰); when travelers leave, they are to be given supplies to take with them. #64¹⁰¹ {treats of the} *mandatum* of {the} brethren and {the} *munditiae*;¹⁰²

98. *Regularis Concordia*, 62.

99. “Moreover, when poor strangers arrive, the abbot and such of the brethren as he shall choose shall render to them the service of the Maundy in accordance with the ordinance of the Rule. Wherefore whenever he can, the father himself, no less than each of the brethren, shall be most zealous in providing every kind of service in the guesthouse; nor, seduced by boastful pride or deceived by idle thoughtlessness, shall he foolishly neglect anything commanded by the Rule in this regard. . . . All other duties, as we have said, the abbot shall fulfil most faithfully and with great gladness of heart; nor let him who is the vicar of the eternal Christ be slow and cold in the guesthouse of the monastery nor delay or neglect his ministrations to the poor while in the management of transitory affairs he shows himself swift and fervent in his desire to serve the rich.”

100. “And, with his mind set on their well-being, [the king] urged and exhorted the Fathers and Mothers of monasteries that, with deep and lasting compunction, they should lay up as treasure in heaven, through the hands of the poor, whatever remains over and above necessary use; so that while they yet live on earth in the body their hearts may dwell now, and hereafter everlastingly abide, there where they have most rightly placed their treasure. And if, on the death of an abbot, there be found any superabundance of goods, his successor, instead of sharing it with relations or worldly tyrants shall, according to the command already given, use it as the grace of the Holy Ghost inspires him, for the needs of the brethren and poor, thus, with the counsel of the brethren, wisely disposing all things” (#69 [*Regularis Concordia*, 69]).

101. *Regularis Concordia*, 63.

102. I.e. the weekly “washing” of the towels and kitchen utensils, as mandated by the Rule, chap. 35 (“*munditias faciat*” [McCann, *The Rule*, 88/89]).

all should be obedient and zealous to do chores (read¹⁰³). #65¹⁰⁴ {considers the care of} *the sick and the dying*. #66¹⁰⁵ {is concerned with a monk's} death; burial, {the} tricenary {and} the *episticula* {are discussed in #67}.¹⁰⁶

Dom T. Symons, {in} "Some Notes on English Monastic Origins" (*Downside Review*, January 1962),¹⁰⁷ {raises the question}: was {the} English Benedictine reform of {the} tenth century of totally continental origin?

1. Relations with {the} continent:¹⁰⁸ {in} 929, Bishop Cenwald heads a mission that visits German monasteries, especially St. Gall. {In} 944, monks of St. Bertin's who do not accept {the} reforms of Gerard of Brogne come to Bath. {There were} *contacts with Fleury*; Bishop Oda {may have gone there in} 936 (?); {later he} sends his nephew¹⁰⁹ there—Fleury {was} under Odo of Cluny. {The} third abbot of Einsiedeln {was} an Englishman,

103. "Let no one scorn to grease shoes or to wash garments or to minister water; but let these things be done by each, as the grace of the Lord enables him, at the proper time and in the accustomed way. Let each one according to his strength and with thanksgiving fulfil the duties of the kitchen and bakehouse as the Rule commands; lest by careless neglect of the smallest precept of the Rule he become guilty, as the apostle says, of all the commandments: which God forbid" (the references are to the Rule, chap. 35 [McCann, *The Rule*, 86, 88/87, 89] and to Jas 2:10).

104. *Regularis Concordia*, 64–65.

105. *Regularis Concordia*, 65.

106. *Regularis Concordia*, 65–66; the tricenary was the thirty-day commemoration of the recently deceased by the daily recitation of the office of the dead; the *episticula* was the brief notice (the form of which is provided) "sent to neighbouring monasteries informing them of the burial of [the dead] brother" (63).

107. Thomas Symons, OSB, "Some Notes on English Monastic Origins," *Downside Review* 80 (1962): 55–69; see also "The *Regularis Concordia* and the Council of Winchester," *Downside Review* 80 (1962): 140–56; "Notes on the Life and Work of St Dunstan," *Downside Review* 80 (1962): 250–61, 355–66.

108. "I. Ecclesiastical and Monastic Relations with the Continent" (56–60).

109. I.e. Oswald.

Gregory (964–996 {was the term of his} abbacy). {In} 956 {came the} exile of St. Dunstan in Flanders, after fifteen years as Abbot of Glastonbury; {he found refuge} in *St. Peter's, Ghent*, reformed by Gerard of Brogne. Monks {were} sent to Fleury {and} Corbie by Aethelwold, Abbot of Abingdon, who had also visited and studied abroad. {In} 962, Bishop Oswald of Worcester, {who had} trained at Fleury, founds {the} monastery of Westbury, and calls monks from Fleury to train {the community}. {In} 970 (about), monks from Fleury and Ghent assist in {the} Synod of Winchester and influence {the} *Regularis Concordia*. T. Symons' position {is that} (a) {the} early Glastonbury reform was *not* of continental inspiration, or Aethelwold etc. would not have {subsequently} gone to {the} continent to establish contact. In a word, foreign influence had *not* long been familiar at {the} time of {the} *Regularis Concordia*—it was beginning then. The *fame* of continental monasticism had long been known but details of observance were not. Before 956, no English reformer trained abroad. {The} English reform begins at Glastonbury and then, with this momentum, monks begin to look to {the} continent.

2. *Aethelwold and {the} Rule {of} Saint Benedict*.¹¹⁰ It is stated that Aethelwold got {the} *Rule* {of} Saint Benedict from Fleury, implying {that} this was a first copy for England—contra: Aethelwold had been formed under {the} *Rule* {of} Saint Benedict at Glastonbury.

3. Monasticism of *Aelfheah* (Alfeth):¹¹¹ Aelfheah {was the} Bishop of Winchester who gave {the} monastic habit to Dunstan. Malmesbury tries to state {that} Aelfheah was an earlier abbot than Dunstan.¹¹² Was Aelfheah a monk of Glastonbury? Had monasticism died out at Glastonbury? It influenced Dunstan

110. "II. St Aethelwold and the Rule of St Benedict" (61–65).

111. "III. The Monasticism of Bishop Aelfheah: Glastonbury and Dunstan" (65–68).

112. William of Malmesbury, *Vita Dunstani*, in *Memorials of St Dunstan*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series 63 (London: Longman, 1874), 260, quoted by Symons, "Notes," 66.

powerfully. Was {the} *Rule* {of} Saint Benedict unknown there in {the} time of Dunstan? T. Symons' contention is again that the first monastic inspiration for Dunstan was Benedictine life at Glastonbury. N.B. {on} pp. 68–69¹¹³ {there is} question of a *topos*¹¹⁴—St. Odo in a panegyric of St. Benedict {writes}: “*O quanti sunt in etiam remotissimis trans maria regionibus . . .*”¹¹⁵ who would rejoice to visit {the} relics of St. Benedict at Fleury—this is a *topos*, used (wrongly) as a source of scientific historical deductions by Mr. Eric John,¹¹⁶ in *Revue Bénédictine* LXX, n. 1 (1960), p. 198—attacked by Symons.

Cluny

{At the} beginning of {the} tenth century, {the} Church {was} at its lowest ebb, {with the} break-up of {the} Carolingian Empire, {the} invasion of {the} Normans in {the} north {and the} Saracens in {the} south, laymen controlling abbeys, communities homeless. In some regions, monasteries almost completely disappear. Illiterate abbots and monks cannot even read {the} *Rule* (read PS, I.138¹¹⁷). {In} 910, Cluny {was} founded by William, Duke

113. “IV. St Odo and England” (68–69).

114. I.e. a traditional thematic or rhetorical literary device.

115. Symons, “Notes,” 68 (“O how many are there, even in the remotest regions beyond the seas” [Symons, “Notes,” 69]).

116. Eric John, “Sources of the English Monastic Reformation: A Comment,” *Revue Bénédictine* 70, no. 1 (1960), 197–208.

117. “Là où un abbé laïque s’emparait d’un couvent et s’y installait avec sa femme et ses enfants, son palefrenier et sa meute de chiens, il ne pouvait plus être question de vie claustrale. Les moines imitaient leur abbé, se mariaient, vivaient avec leur famille et leur postérité sur les biens du couvent. Ainsi les monastères devinrent des maisons de famille ou des colonies de maisons familiales où régnaient le relâchement autant que les querelles et la jalousie. On allait bien encore à l’église, mais plus volontiers aux divertissements et aux exercices sportifs. Les jeunes gens s’exerçaient aux armes et à l’art de monter à cheval. Les dames soignaient leur extérieur et leur toilette. Les couvents qui passaient ainsi entre les mains des grandes étaient soumis au régime féodal. Comme tels ils devenaient héréditaires dans la famille de l’abbé laïque ou du propriétaire. Entre le propriétaire et l’abbé laïque, il y avait cette différence que le propriétaire avait, en général,

of Aquitaine, {with} *St. Berno* {as its} first abbot {and} following

un abbé sous ses ordres and le nommait. Mais, pour la communauté, souvent la différence n'était pas grande. Après que, dans l'Empire franc de l'Ouest, l'hérédité du fief de père en fils eut été reconnue suivant le capitulaire de Quiersy en 877, les abbés laïques cherchèrent à rendre héréditaires les monastères qui leur étaient confiés. Ainsi vit-on les ducs d'Aquitaine, les comtes d'Anjou, de Chartres, de Flandre conserver en héritage les abbayes qui leur avaient été autre fois données en fief par le roi, et les seigneurs transmettre les monastères à leurs femmes, à leurs enfants, à leurs brus ou à leurs gendres. La vie monastique disparaissait ainsi presque partout. Au début du x^e siècle, il était rare de trouver des moines réguliers. On se plaignait qu'il n'y eût pas dans toute la Francie un seul cloître regulier où pût entrer un moine sérieux" ("There where a lay abbot took possession of a religious house and was installed with his wife and children, his groom and his pack of dogs, there could no longer be a question of claustral life. The monks imitated their abbot, got married, lived with their family and their descendants on the goods of the house. Thus monasteries became family homes or colonies of familial homes where slackness reigned even to the point of quarrels and jealousy. Indeed, they still went to the church, but more willingly to entertainments and sporting events. The young men trained in arms and in the art of horseback-riding. The women took care of their outward appearance and their dress. Religious houses that thus passed into the hands of the great were subject to the feudal system. As such they became hereditary in the family of the lay abbot or the proprietor. Between the proprietor and the lay abbot there was this difference—that the proprietor generally had an abbot under his orders, and appointed him. But for the community, the difference often was not large. Once the inheritance of a fief passing from father to son had been recognized in the Frankish Empire of the West according to the capitulary of Quiersy in 877, the lay abbots tried to make the monasteries that had been entrusted to them hereditary. Thus one saw the Dukes of Aquitaine, the Counts of Anjou, of Chartres, of Flanders, keeping as inherited property monasteries that had been given to them at some point by the king as fiefs, and lords passing on monasteries to their wives, their children, their daughters-in-law or sons-in-law. Monastic life thus disappeared almost completely. At the beginning of the tenth century it was rare to find monks living according to the Rule. There were complaints that in all of Francia there was not a single regular cloister where a serious monk could enter") (Philibert Schmitz, OSB, *Histoire de l'Ordre de Saint Benoît*, 7 vols. [Maredsous: Éditions de Maredsous, 1948–1956]).

{the} customs and constitutions of *Aniane*; {it was named the} *Abbey of St. Peter and Paul*. Cluny {was} placed directly under {the} Holy See for temporal and spiritual things {and} hence {was} not at {the} mercy of lords or bishops ({it} can pick {its} bishop for {various} functions—and is) not subject to episcopal censure). *This independence* led to prosperity (even practically {to} independence of {the} Holy See, {which was} weak and distant). St. *Odo* (d. 942) introduces reform in many monasteries at {the} request of bishops etc.—takes them over. These houses form an “order” in practice. St. *Mayeul* (d. 994) continues {this} work of reform everywhere. St. *Odilo* (d. 1049) consolidates {the} order, initiates {the} commemoration of All Souls {on} November 2, {and} sold treasures of {the} Church to feed {the} poor, repeatedly. St. *Hugh* (d. 1109), abbot for sixty years, entered at fifteen; {he was} active in Church reform. *Peter the Venerable* {was the last in this series of remarkable abbots}.

Life at Cluny {included} little or no manual work {and a} very long liturgy {marked by} liturgical splendor. {It was} a great center of fervor and a nursery of saints (see Cousin, pp. 250–251¹¹⁸). {Its} schedule {included} 138 psalms in each day’s office—sung; {the} introduction of long lessons and *preces*;¹¹⁹ two conventual Masses daily; {the} cult of Our Lady and {the} saints ({there were} two processions daily to {the} Lady Chapel). {There were} consequent alterations in {the} matter of food and clothing. {The} great feudal power of {the} Abbot of Cluny (!) {made him a} bulwark of {the} Empire as well as {of the} Church. Intellectual activity {was} very slight ({due to the} long offices), {but there was} considerable artistic work: manuscripts, sacred vessels, reliquaries, Romanesque architecture, Romanesque sculpture. {Cluny’s was the} greatest church in Christendom until {the} Renaissance—St. Peter’s. {As} clerical monks

118. Patrice Cousin, OSB, *Précis d’Histoire Monastique* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1956): Cousin provides a list of extra psalms added to the office, as well as extended readings during vigils, along with a detailed *horarium* for the typical day of a Cluniac monk (250–52).

119. “prayers”—collects.

increase in number, priests {celebrate} private Masses; {Cluny becomes a} nursery of bishops.

Cluny: The Spirit of Cluny in the Golden Age (Leclercq, TVM, p. 447f.¹²⁰). {The} Golden Age {extended} from *St. Odo* (d. 942) to *Peter {the} Venerable* (d. 1156). In this time Cluny was the greatest cultural, religious and civilizing force in Europe. {The} basic conviction {was}: “le monachisme est la parfaite réalisation du mystère de l’Église” (448).¹²¹ Cluny {was} conscious of itself in {the} history of salvation. Penance {involved} washing out sin {and a} return to {a} paradisiacal state. {They were} *building the New Jerusalem*—{the} *Temple*—{the} *Tabernacle*—{this was the} ideal of cult. {The} monastery {was} a “church of the perfect”¹²²—*poverty* {was central} at Cluny. Thus {it was} reorienting {the} whole of society to Christ, *Who is to return*. {There were} interests in {the} crusades, to deliver {the} Holy Sepulchre (see texts on {the} *Transfiguration* {of} *Peter {the} Venerable*—in *Pierre le Vénérable*, p. 326f.¹²³). {The} Church {is considered} *an anticipation in time of the eternal Kingdom*

120. Jean Leclercq, OSB, “Le Monachisme Clunisien,” *Théologie de la Vie Monastique: Études sur la Tradition Patristique* (Paris: Aubier, 1961), chap. 22, 447–57.

121. “Monasticism is the perfect realization of the mystery of the Church.”

122. “Église des parfaits” (Leclercq, *Théologie de la Vie Monastique*, 451, quoting Odo of Cluny, from Ovidio Capitani, *Motivi di Spiritualità Cluniacense e Realismo Eucaristico in Odone di Cluny* [Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1959], 17).

123. Jean Leclercq, OSB, *Pierre le Vénérable*, chap. 17, “Mort et Transfiguration” (Paris: Éditions Fontenelle, 1946), 325–40 (cited in Leclercq, *Théologie de la Vie Monastique*, 450, n. 13); Peter instituted the Feast of the Transfiguration at Cluny three centuries before the universal Church (1457) and wrote a good part of the office for the feast, associating the Transfigured Christ with the Old Testament figure of Wisdom and focusing on the Trinitarian dimension of the feast (326–28); his sermon on the Transfiguration is a long, lyrical commentary on the readings for the feast, focusing more on the literal than the allegorical sense of the text and describing the Transfiguration as an anticipation of the glorification of Christ’s resurrected body, already united with the Divine Word (329–31).

of Heaven. Heaven will be a “vast monastery”¹²⁴ (filled with praise). {The} monastery {is the} *full realization* of {the} mystery of {the} Church—{the} *mystery of charity*. {The} *Blessed Virgin Mary* {is the} *model and protectress* of monasticism. {There was also} devotion to Sts. Peter and Paul: {the} Basilica of Cluny imitated St. Peter’s {in} Rome, *with {a} close relationship to {the} Holy See* ({a} *direct dependence* on {the} Holy See)—{Cluny} tends to be {the} second capital of Christendom. *The monastery {is seen as a} school of charity* (Leclercq, *TVM*, p. 454); St. Benedict {is the} “*caritatis notarius*”¹²⁵ (Peter {the} Venerable) (454). Peter {the} Venerable {was} open to dialogue with Jews, Mohammedans etc. (454). {There was a} *special influence of Gregory the Great* informing {the} spirit of prayer at Cluny.¹²⁶ {The} splendor of worship {involved a} spirit of adoration and sacrifice, to remind us of {the} glory of {the} heavenly kingdom; “magnificence” {characterized} liturgical art; {worship was} centered on {an} eschatological conception of {the} Eucharist.

Monasticism in {the} High Middle Ages and at Cluny (J. Leclercq, *TVM*, {cc.} *xxi*,¹²⁷ *xxii*):

1. Sources for monastic ideas in this period {were found in} *lives of saints*: saints {were} considered as ideal models (perhaps even for liturgical use); {the} signification of hagiography {was located} in *doctrine* rather than history; two main themes in hagiography {were} exile {and} paradise (p. 438).

124. “Le ciel sera un vaste monastère, lorsque l’Église aura atteint son achèvement” (“Heaven will be a vast monastery, when the Church will have reached its fulfillment”) (Leclercq, *Théologie de la Vie Monastique*, 453); see also Leclercq, *Théologie de la Vie Monastique*, 451: “L’Église est comme un vaste monastère; le monastère est un résumé de l’Église” (“The Church is like a vast monastery; the monastery is the epitome of the Church”).

125. Peter the Venerable, *Epistola* 28 (to St. Bernard): “*Sed nec indignum est sancto caritatis vocari notarium*” (“But it is not unworthy for the saint to be called the recorder of charity”) (PL 189:156C).

126. See Leclercq, *Théologie de la Vie Monastique*, 455–56.

127. “Le Monachism du Haut Moyen Age (viii^e–x^e siècles),” 437–45.

THE CISTERCIAN ORDER FROM THE DEATH OF SAINT BERNARD TO THE REFORM OF BENEDICT XII (1153–1335)

Introduction: this is a difficult and rather complex study, and a very important one, for it embraces the whole *maturity of the Order*. It has not been satisfactorily studied as a whole in English, though there are many detailed studies of some aspects of it, especially some of the theses being published by Fordham—v.g. Donnelly on the laybrothers.¹ At best we have brief and correct surveys, or even very incorrect surveys of the whole area. Much of this material is completely omitted from manuals at our disposal. The history of the Order, we remember, can be conveniently divided as follows (all such divisions have something arbitrary about them): (1) The Formation of the Order: 1098 to 1119; (2) The Growth of the Order: 1119 to 1153; (3) The Maturity of the Order: (a) apogee: 1153 to 1265 (*Parvus Fons*² of Clement IV); (b) centralization and decline: 1265–1335 (this period is what we are now studying); (4) Decadence: 1335; (5) Reform: sixteenth–twentieth centuries. A few remarks will enable us to place this study of the maturity of the Order in its perspective:

1. James S. Donnelly, *The Decline of the Medieval Cistercian Laybrotherhood* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1949).

2. *Nomasticon Cisterciense, seu Antiquiores Ordinis Cisterciensis Constitutiones A.R.P.D. Juliano Paris . . .* Editio Nova, ed. Hugo Séjalon (Solesmes: E Typographeo Sancti Petri, 1892), 367–76.

1. This period is seldom really studied, at least in our monasteries, especially in our novitiates. We tend to concentrate on the formative period, and to discuss very sketchily the basic legislation, the *Exordium Parvum*,³ the *Carta Caritatis*.⁴ We do not even take cognizance of the fact that the versions of these basic texts we study belong in reality to the period after 1153,⁵ so that even what we have studied of the earliest period is seen through the glass of this later period. We tend to study the formative period also with our own Trappist prejudices about it, in the light of the Trappist reform.

2. The maturity of the Cistercian Order is not the *ideal* Cîteaux but it is the *actual* Cîteaux of its greatest period. This actual Cîteaux, being rather different from the ideal, must nevertheless be taken into account. Here we are dealing with the two centuries of greatest spiritual and material prosperity, when the Order was fully and strongly established and flourished everywhere. It is however not the period of first fervor any more. Nor is it the period of St. Bernard and of the Cistercian writers (Guerric, Ailred, William, etc.⁶)—only minor writers. Yet it is the period of Cistercian mysticism in the Low Countries and Germany, a

3. *Nomasticon*, 53–65.

4. *Nomasticon*, 68–81.

5. This idea stems from the theories of J.-A. Lefèvre, who considered both the *Exordium Parvum* and the final version of the *Carta Caritatis* to be late-twelfth-century documents, a position no longer generally accepted. For a thorough discussion of the evidence and new editions of the relevant texts, with translations, see *Narrative and Legislative Texts from Early Cîteaux*, ed. and trans. Chrysogonus Waddell, OCSO, *Studia et Documenta*, vol. 9 (Cîteaux: *Commentarii Cistercienses*, 1999).

6. I.e. Guerric of Igny, Aelred (Ailred) of Rievaulx, William of Saint-Thierry, often described (with Saint Bernard) as the four Cistercian evangelists; for an overview of Merton's interest in and writings on these early classic Cistercian authors, see the Introduction to Thomas Merton, *The Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology: Initiation into the Monastic Tradition* 8, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell, *Monastic Wisdom [MW]* vol. 42 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2016), xliv–xlix; see also Thoms Merton, *Cistercian Fathers and Forefathers: Essays and Conferences*, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2018).

period which is more fully Cistercian perhaps than we realize. Some of the inner spirit of this great period has been preserved more authentically by our brothers of the Common Observance than by ourselves.

3. Finally we have to face the fact that we are dealing with the *actual decline* of the Order in all its complexity. This has to be treated prudently and humbly, but quite frankly and objectively.

Since there is not {a} fully satisfactory treatment of this whole subject easily available in English at the present moment, it is necessary to attempt a systematic study of the question, at least in outline. There will be inevitable gaps, errors and limitations, but perhaps this will serve as a general introduction to the question, and will prepare the way for a better understanding of the problems. Obviously these rough notes will call for many corrections.

A few preliminary remarks on the *decline of the Cistercians*:

1. The decline of the Cistercian Order was part of the general decline of the whole monastic order in the late Middle Ages. More than that, it must be seen in the context of a general upheaval of Christian society that took place throughout the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and culminated in the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, etc.

2. Once this has been said, we must beware of easy generalizations that attempt to explain these phenomena. It would be foolish to expect that any institution of men should maintain a uniformly high standard of perfection over many centuries. There must be change and decline and then renewal. Here we seek only to state historical facts, not to judge. Note the inevitable subjectivity of this kind of study. Try as we will, we cannot avoid projecting into it our own ideals and our own misgivings. But we must beware of using the history of the Order as a cloak for criticism and discontentment about our own present-day situation. Still less should we allow it to be a self-justification and a complacent glorification of our present state of prosperity, or of our hopes for the future and our pet policies. Such “history” belongs to the Communist variety—making the events mean what you want them to mean.

3. Yet nevertheless there is a fact to be taken into account. The orders that did not become inordinately large were better able to preserve their original standards. The Carthusians are a case in point. But the Carthusians were exceptional, and the mere fact that they were not a large order is no sufficient explanation. Other small orders fell apart and disappeared. Other eremitical orders declined and had to be reformed (the Camaldolese). It is true then that the Cistercian Order was "too big." Nevertheless, although this explains many of the difficulties of the Order, it does not explain everything, nor does it entitle us to say that if St. Bernard had never existed, and if the tremendous expansion of the Cistercians had not taken place, the Order would not have declined. It might not even have survived. It was the coming of St. Bernard with his thirty companions that saved Cîteaux.

4. One thing is certain. In the early period, from 1098 to about 1130, the Cistercians were *ahead of their times, full of extraordinary vitality and originality in every sphere*. Until the death of St. Stephen, the original impetus of the Holy Spirit remained most powerful, and the Order was an unusual, charismatic phenomenon in the Church. Men were so impressed with this that they credited the Order with this inspired quality long after the inspiration was gone. In the period from 1130 to 1200, the Order is full of spiritual vitality, and is fully *with* the times. It dominates the life of the age, and is fully part of it. Yet there are signs of rigidity and decline beginning to be evident. In this period the Order becomes *identified with established power and the status quo*—it is rich and strong—at the same time fervent, but no longer progressive. *In the thirteenth century, the Order represents the immediate past*. It is *regressive*, and its power is something of a *brake* on the Church.

5. It would be a mistake to say that everything that happened during the period of decline somehow contributed to that decline in a very positive way. For instance, the fact that the College of St. Bernard was founded and Cistercians were sent to study in different universities is not necessarily a "cause" of the decline of the Order. This probably had many different effects—good and bad. If we discuss the colleges in these notes, it is not to blame

the decline on them. They *may* perhaps have been symptomatic of the decline.

6. These notes will then concern themselves with how the decline actually took place, and with the various aspects of the history of the Order during the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. There will inevitably be repetitions and perhaps inconsistencies. We make no claims to perfection. Rather these notes should be taken as an encouragement to further personal studies on the part of each one in our group.

*The Cistercian Order from the Death of St. Bernard
to the Reform of Benedict XII
(1153–1335)*

Background and Outline.

1. 1147—*Before the Death of St. Bernard:*⁷

A. {There was a} crucially important meeting of the General Chapter.⁸ Pope Eugene III was present. {The Chapter decided on}:

a. {the} admission of Savigny with its twenty-seven dependencies into the Order of Cîteaux. {The} object {was} to save the family of Savigny from dissolution. The English abbots were breaking away from Savigny. Some of the English abbots resisted the move. The pope deposed the Abbot of Furness. *Serlo*, Abbot of Savigny, entered Clairvaux. St. Bernard was the guiding spirit of this incorporation of Savigny into the Order and the filiation of Clairvaux. (La Trappe was one of the Savignian houses.)

b. {the} admission of Obazine, with two filiations, headed by St. *Stephen Obazine*.⁹

7. For this material Merton closely follows Eugène Willems, *Esquisse Historique de l'Ordre de Cîteaux*, d'après le Père Grégoire Müller, 2 vols. (Aubel: Notre-Dame du Val-Dieu, 1957–1958), 1.90–99.

8. See J.-M. Canivez, ed., *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab Anno 1116 ad Annum 1786*, 8 vols. (Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, 1933–1941), 1.37–38.

9. For a brief biographical sketch, see Thomas Merton, *In the Valley of Wormwood: Cistercian Blessed and Saints of the Golden Age*, ed. Patrick Hart,

c. the request of St. Gilbert of Sempringham to have his congregation affiliated to the Order was refused, because he had double monasteries (i.e., monasteries of women united with monasteries of men).

{In} 1152,¹⁰ {the} General Chapter seeks to arrest {the} expansion of {the} Order. No new foundations {were} to be made; 349 foundations had been made in forty years. {A} *new text of {the} Carta Caritatis*¹¹ {was} approved by Eugene III in {the} bull *Sacrosancta*.¹²

1) {The} Abbot of Cîteaux is still the *one* head of the Order. Cîteaux is still not visited by anyone.

a. Several other abbots are to be present at {the} election of {the} Abbot of Cîteaux, as advisors and witnesses.

b. In case an Abbot of Cîteaux is incorrigible, he is to be *warned* by {the} Abbots of La Ferté, Pontigny and Clairvaux, then denounced to {the} Bishop of Châlons, who deposes him.

c. {The} Abbot of La Ferté is {the} administrator of Cîteaux when there is no abbot.

2) Abbots of other monasteries (than Cîteaux) {were} formerly corrected only by {their} Father Immediate and {their} bishop. Now {the} Abbot of Cîteaux can intervene. {The} bishop will depose {the} delinquent if necessary. The intervention of bishops, not yet restricted, creates problems.

3) There is as yet no statute saying Fathers Immediate must visit daughter houses every year (according to Willems¹³).

OCSO, Cistercian Studies [CS] vol. 233 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2013), 93–101.

10. Canivez, *Statuta*, 1.45 (#1).

11. N.B. the “*new text*” being described here is actually the *Carta Caritatis Prior*, dated by Lefèvre to 1152 but by most scholars today to 1119; see below, n. 22.

12. *Nomasticon*, 74–78 (1152); reissued with slight revisions by Anastasius IV in 1153 (*Nomasticon*, 79), by Adrian IV in 1156 (*Nomasticon*, 80) and by Alexander III in 1165 (*Nomasticon*, 80–81).

13. Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.98.

4) {The} first text of *Usus Conversorum*¹⁴ is approved.

2. 1153 {brought the} death of St. Bernard and of Eugene III, {who were} still both under a cloud, due to the failure of the (Second) Crusade. The failure of the crusade dashed Eugene's hopes of a reunion with the Byzantine and other Eastern Christians.¹⁵

3. In 1158, the Order of Calatrava began.¹⁶ Cistercian monks of Fitero volunteered to take over this undefended town, abandoned by the Templars. They joined with lay soldiers. A rule was formed for this military group. Later, after the death of St. Raymond¹⁷ (1163) there was a disagreement between the monks and laymen and the monks withdrew. The lay order continued under the Rule of Calatrava, affiliated to the Order of Cîteaux. In 1193, Calatrava fell to the Moors and remained in their power until 1212, when Arnold, Abbot of Cîteaux, then Bishop of Narbonne, came with troops he had been using against the Albigensians.¹⁸ *Note*: after 1150 there is a great spread of Cistercian convents of nuns in Spain: Las Huelgas (Burgos), founded in 1187, became a rich and splendid "royal monastery." The Kings of Castile wanted the abbesses of Spain to meet annually in a General Chapter at Las Huelgas. In 1191, the General Chapter *permitted* this but did not make it obligatory.¹⁹

4. 1160 to 1177 {saw the} schism of Victor IV against Alexander III.²⁰ Cistercian abbots {were} occupied in travel to advance {the} cause of Alexander. The Order {was} divided—some houses were at first for the anti-pope (especially under imperial

14. *The Customary of the Laybrothers (Nomasticon, 234–41).*

15. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.99.

16. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.110–11; copy text reads "1150"; see also below, page 209.

17. The Abbot of Fitero who initiated the Order of Calatrava; for a brief biographical sketch, see Merton, *Valley of Wormwood*, 69–72.

18. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.136.

19. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.138.

20. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.112–13.

pressure). St. Peter of Tarentaise was one of the most zealous defenders of the interests of Alexander.

5. {In} 1163 and 1165, Alexander III renews *Sacrosancta*,²¹ with significant changes: (a) There are now *four* First Fathers: Morimond is added to La Ferté, Pontigny and Clairvaux; (b) The four First Fathers *make regular visitation of Cîteaux*; (c) {the} power of {the} Abbot of Cîteaux in correcting {the} abbots of {the} Order is diminished; (d) {the} power of {the} General Chapter to inflict punishment is increased; (e) {the} election of {the} Abbot of Cîteaux becomes an affair concerning the whole Order; (f) {the} Abbot of Cîteaux {is} not deposed by {the} bishop but by {the} General Chapter; (g) exemption from episcopal control is established. *Summary*: {there is} growth of the power of the General Chapter. Is this {the} *Carta Caritatis Posterior*? Is {the} date correct, or should it be 1190?²²

6. {In} 1166, St. Thomas à Becket takes refuge at Pontigny.²³ {The} King of England²⁴ puts pressure on the Order through threats against English abbeys, and St. Thomas is forced to leave Pontigny at {the} request of the General Chapter. This year

21. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.105–6.

22. Willems dates the *Carta Caritatis Posterior* to ca. 1190 (*Esquisse Historique*, 1.125), based on the theories of Lefèvre, who considered the brief *Summa Cartae Caritatis* to be the text presented to Pope Callistus II for approval in 1119 and the *Carta Caritatis Prior* that presented to Pope Eugene III in 1152, with the *Carta Caritatis Posterior* (the standard text) actually a late, tendentious and polemical revision (see above, pages 65–68, 70–75). This theory has been generally rejected by more recent scholars, who date the *Carta Caritatis Prior* to 1119 and the *Carta Caritatis Posterior* to 1152, with minor revisions in 1153, 1156 and 1165; see Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts*, 162–66, 183–86, 261–82, 371–88, 441–50, 498–505.

23. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.114–15; for a thorough discussion of the complicated relations between Becket and the Cistercians, see Bernard McGinn, *The Golden Chain: A Study in the Theological Anthropology of Isaac of Stella*, CS 15 (Washington, DC: Cistercian Publications, 1972), 34–50.

24. Henry II (1133–1189), whose reign began in 1154.

St. Ailred died. By 1166 the great writers of the Order are all dead (Guerric {in} 1157; William {in} 1148; Isaac²⁵ probably about 1160).

7. {In} 1174, Alexander III, in gratitude for the support of the Cistercians in the schism, canonizes St. Bernard.²⁶ From this time on it is clear that the original character of the Order has been considerably modified. The rule is the same, the life in the monastery is the same, but in effect the Order of Cîteaux has become a *great active force* rather than a purely contemplative body of monks.

8. {In} 1184, Lucius III definitively confirms {the} Cistercian exemption from episcopal control.²⁷

9. {In} 1198, Berthold, Abbot of Loccum (Saxony), is killed by pagans in Livonia.²⁸ This is the period of *Cistercian missionary activities* in Prussia, Poland and the Baltic region. Some great abbeys were founded—v.g. Dargun, Eldena, Oliva, Colbaz.²⁹ {There were} many Cistercian bishops and martyrs. The monks preached, in spite of {the} unwillingness of {the} General Chapter. In 1212 the pope intervened so that the Cistercians might continue preaching.³⁰ This pope was Innocent III, elected in 1198.

Cistercians at the Beginning of the Thirteenth Century:

1. *Expansion:* the Order is at the apogee of its power and greatness. It consists of over five hundred monasteries of men. (*Note:* in the seventeenth century, there were sixteen hundred³¹ monasteries, seven hundred of men and nine hundred of women.) *Clairvaux* has 355 dependent monasteries (in 1147 Savigny and

25. For Merton's interest in and writings on Isaac of Stella, the other great Cistercian author of the "Golden Age," see the Introduction to *Cistercian Fathers and Their Monastic Theology*, xlix–l; *Cistercian Fathers and Forefathers*, 402–18.

26. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.116.

27. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.127–28; see also Jean-Berthold Mahn, *L'Ordre Cistercien et son Gouvernement des Origines au Milieu du XIII^e Siècle (1095–1265)* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1945), 138, 148–49; text reads: "Lucian."

28. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.134–35; typescript reads "Berthold."

29. Typescript reads "Darun, Elbena . . . Colonz."

30. See Willems, *Esquisse Historique*, 1.135.

31. Typescript reads "1500."

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