INTRODUCTION

Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* was the most important literary version of the life of Christ in English before modern times. In fact, to judge by the number of surviving manuscripts and early prints, it was one of the most well-read books in late-medieval England. Only the Wycliffite Bible translation, the *Prick of Conscience* (a discursive poem of moral instruction and exhortation, some 9,600 lines in length) and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* survive in greater numbers of manuscripts; and before the Reformation, none of these was printed as often as Love’s *Mirror*. On the other hand, the *Mirror* identified itself so well with pre-Reformation religious values that since that time, it has nearly disappeared from sight.

It is important to note that *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* is not a translation of the gospels, nor even a simple retelling of the life of Christ as such: it is a translation of a Latin book of meditations on the narrative of the life of Christ. Poetic versions of biblical material had, indeed, existed from relatively early in the Christian period. The mid-fourth-century woman poet Proba composed a “canto”, a pastiche of lines and half-lines from Virgil, on subjects drawn from both the Old and the New Testament; in 329-30, the Spanish priest Juvenecus wrote a Virgilian epic, *Evangeliorum Libri IV*, based on the Gospel of Matthew, with additional episodes drawn from the other evangelists; Alcimus Avitus (ca. 450-518), Bishop of Vienne, retold five great episodes from the books of Genesis and Exodus (the Creation, the sin of Adam and Eve, the Judgement of God, the Deluge, and the Crossing of the Red Sea) in five books of his epic *Poematum de Mosaicae Historiae Gestis*. This poem may, in fact, have served as a source of the Anglo-Saxon poems of *Genesis* and *Exodus* in the Junius Manuscript. A third

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1 The Wycliffite Bible survives in over 200 manuscripts, the *Prick of Conscience* in 123, of which 115 were originally, or were intended originally to be, complete copies, and eight are extracts; the *Canterbury Tales* survives in 82 manuscripts, of which 55 were originally complete and 27 extracts; Love’s *Mirror* survives in 64 manuscripts, of which 60 were originally complete, three contain extracts, and one further extract was used in a composite text with *The Life of the Virgin Mary and the Christ*. The Wycliffite Bible and the *Prick of Conscience* were not printed until modern times; the *Canterbury Tales* was printed six times before 1535, and Love’s *Mirror* nine times.
poem in the same manuscript tells the story of Daniel; the fourth, Christ and Satan, is episodic — even fragmentary — in form, dealing with the Fall of the Angels, the Redemption, Resurrection and Ascension, and, in its climactic episode, with the Temptation of Jesus in the Desert. One other Anglo-Saxon poem, the sapphistic tale of Judith in the Beowulf manuscript, is likewise based on an apocryphal Old Testament text.

Scholastic retellings of the gospel narrative, on the other hand, such as Clement of Llachy’s twelfth-century Unam ex Quatuor and the Historia Scholastica of Peter Comestor (d. 1179), took as their primary purpose the reduction of the disparate accounts of the events of the life of Jesus in the gospels to a single narrative line — incorporated, in the latter case, into a textbook of world history. The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ, however, and the pseudo-Bonaventuran Meditationes Vitae Christi on which it is based, derive from a later medieval tendency, made popular particularly by the Franciscan order of friars — the imaginative picturing of the events of the life of Christ as a meditative exercise.

As Jean Leclercq has pointed out, the early medieval, monastic contemplative technique of reading, meditation and prayer laid primary emphasis upon the pondering — the rumination, to use the common metaphor — of the Latin words of the scriptures, and the verba association of texts in a memory reinforced by the daily chanting of the divine offices, the repetition of the psalter at least once a week in choir, and a major part of the Bible at least once a year. This technique reached its flowering in the monastic renaissance of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries: its most systematic form may be found in the Victorine school of biblical exposition, and its most florid use generally among the reforming religious houses and orders of the time. For writers in this tradition, as can be seen in St. Bernard of Clairvaux’s Sermon on the Song of Songs, in the Letter to the Brothers of Mont-Dieu, written by the Victorine William of St.-Thierry to an early Cistercian community, and long attributed to St. Bernard, and in the Rule of Life for a Reculce, written by the English Cistercian Aedred of Revaux for his sister, meditation on the life of the incarnate Christ was advisable primarily for the physically minded, who were unable to think of spiritual things — for carnal men, for novices, and for women.

The basic exercise of Franciscan meditation was thus already in existence before the birth, late in the twelfth century, of the founder of the order. In the life of St. Francis of Assisi (d. 1226), however, and in the spirituality of his followers, what had been an exercise for spiritual beginners was raised to a level where it took on meaning and became an end in itself. This is due in part — even primarily — to the extra-claustral nature of the Franciscan vocation: the liturgical devotions of the monastic tradition could play no part in the life of radical poverty embraced by Francis himself and those who followed him most strictly; and the public, versacular mission embraced even by those under whom the Franciscans became a conventual

order still took its tone from the personal spirituality of the *poverello* of Assisi. In this devotional tradition, as in so many other aspects of Franciscan spirituality, the personal example and inspiration of Francis himself took on a definitive form under the influence of St. Bonaventure (ca. 1217-74). For Bonaventure, as Ephrem Longpré has pointed out, "the adorable humanity of Christ is the royal road which leads to contemplation." The high value that Bonaventure placed on the contemplation of the events of the life of Christ, and most of all of the Passion, is evident particularly in the collections of devotional meditations which make up such works as the *Lignum Vitae* or the *Vitis Mystica,* and in two other works that circulated widely throughout western Europe, in both the original Latin and vernacular translations, under Bonaventure's name: the *Stimulus Amoris* and the *Meditationes Vitae Christi.*

The *Meditationes Vitae Christi,* which was probably written early in the fourteenth century by Johannes de Caulibus, a Franciscan friar of San Gemigniano in Tuscany, comprises a series of devotions arranged according to the gospel narrative of the life of Christ, including as well a few completely apocryphal episodes, such as the "Debate of the Four Daughters of God" to decide the appropriateness of the Incarnation and death of the second person of the Trinity as the means of the redemption of human kind, or those of the occupation of Mary and the Apostles on the eve of the Resurrection, and of Christ's appearance to his mother first on Easter morning, before any of the appearances recorded in scripture. The purpose of these episodes, as of the imaginative presentation of the events of the gospel narrative, is not to supplant the words of scripture, but rather to increase the devotion of the reader or hearer of the book by presenting not merely the story of Christ's life, but even the basic doctrines of Christianity in such a way that they can be held in the mind's eye and recalled at will. One of the most often cited examples of this devotional emphasis is the dual presentation of the nailing of Christ to the cross: after describing Christ's ascent of a ladder to be nailed to an upright cross, the author alternatively describes his lying down to be nailed to a prostrate cross which must then be raised. The reader is told to choose whichever he finds most effective in her own meditations.

The *Meditationes* was originally written in Latin, and survives in three primary versions, in more than a hundred manuscripts. The long version of the text comprises

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4 Longpré, "La Théologie mystique de Saint Bonaventure", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 14 (1921), 96-108; the citation is from p. 92, quoted in Moorman's translation, *History,* p. 260.


approximately ninety-five chapters besides the prologue, varying according to the inclusion or exclusion of a tract on active and contemplative life immediately following the meditation of Martha and Mary, and the usual scribal variation in division of the material. A short chapter at the end notes that the sequence of meditations can be read over the course of the feasts of the ecclesiastical year, from Advent through Pentecost, or over the course of a week: the “Debate of the Four Daughters of God”, the Annunciation and the Visitation on Monday; the Nativity through the Purification on Tuesday; the Flight into Egypt through the Baptism of Christ and the Temptation in the Desert on Wednesday; the public ministry, culminating with the Last Supper, on Thursday; the Passion on Friday; the Harrowing of Hell on Saturday; and the Resurrection through Pentecost on Sunday. The text in manuscripts of the long version tends, in fact, to be divided into sections according to this scheme. A shorter version contains only forty chapters, lacking all specifically Franciscan passages and certain legends and special revelations, the meditation of Martha and Mary with the succeeding tract on the active and contemplative lives, and the closing meditation on the descent of the Holy Spirit. The third form of the text, known as the *Meditationes de Passione Domini*, comprises only the material from the Last Supper through the Descent into Hell, with no prologue. The long version of the text was the original, and the various shorter forms, including the *Meditationes de Passione*, which originated in England in the mid-fourteenth century, all derive from it. Another hundred manuscripts preserve various translations made into the western European vernaculars: Italian (several translations: more than 60 manuscripts), French and Provençal (several translations: approximately 30 manuscripts) German and Dutch (at least 7 separate translations: 11 manuscripts), as well as Gaelic, Swedish, Spanish, Catalan, and Bulgarian. The *Meditationes Vitae Christi* enjoyed an immense popularity and influence in the later Middle Ages: it has indeed been described by various scholars as:

... a life of Christ, a biography of the Blessed Virgin, the fifth gospel, the last of the apocrypha, one of the masterpieces of Franciscan literature, a summary of medieval spirituality, a religious handbook of contemplation, a manual of Christian iconography, one of the chief sources of the mystery plays.

In her studies of Nicholas Love’s *Mirror* and the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, Elizabeth Salter identified no fewer than ten separate Middle English translations, particularly of the *Meditationes de Passione*. Probably the best-known of these is the *Meditations of the*
Supper of our Lord (incorrectly attributed to Robert Maunyng of Brunne), which survives in nine manuscripts. The second is the prose free translation known as The Privity of the Passion, which survives in four manuscripts. A third translation, which Salter and Jason Reakes designated "The Middle English Meditations de Passione Christi", is extant in nine manuscripts, in three of which it is conflated with Love's Mirror. In fact, it is probable that Nicholas Love originally used this passion meditation in his Mirror, perhaps to bring his work more quickly to completion, but that he eventually replaced this with his own translation of the same material. The only complete translation of the Meditations Vitae Christi into English in the medieval period, however, was The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ, written, probably in the first decade of the fifteenth century, by Nicholas Love, the prior of the Carthusian house of the Assumption of Our Lady in Mount Grace, in Yorkshire.

The Carthusian vocation, we should note, is in many ways the direct opposite of the Franciscan, where the Franciscan movement brought the life of contemplative devotion out of the monastic or collegiate community and into the roadways and hospitals of the common world, the Carthusian movement retreated further into the solitude of the desert. The Grande-Chartreuse, the mother house of the order, was founded in the last decades of the eleventh century by St. Bruno of Cologne on a virtually uninhabitable tract of land in a valley of the Chartreuse massif above Grenoble. The community that evolved there took a shape that would hereafter be recognizable as distinctively Carthusian: twelve hermit-monks dwelling in separate houses (cells), each with its own garden, around a central cloister. Vowed to silence, they met only in the chapel for the night hours of the liturgy and conventual mass (the day hours were sung separately, but in unison, in the individual cells); they ate together only at noon on Sundays and major feasts and spoke only, of serious subjects, during the communal exercise walk following that meal. Besides the regular monastic practice of fasting, they ate no meat, and fish and cheese only when these were given to them. Once having made his profession, the Carthusian monk was to be considered dead to the world, living in solitude and prayer, and never again seeing or speaking to anyone from outside his community. The only exceptions to this were the prior and the procurator, whose responsibilities required them to deal with the outside world. Such was—and is—the ascetic strictness of the order that its numbers have never been great; but its small numbers have ensured that the strictness of its vocation has not


As the unofficial motto of the order states, it has never been reformed, because never deformed: Nunquam reformata, quia nunquam deformata.

The foundation of Mount Grace was begun in 1397 by Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey, the nephew of King Richard II. Surrey’s affairs were disrupted, however, by the events of the times. Together with his uncle, John Holland, Duke of Exeter, he sided with the king against Bolingbroke in 1399, and died in a rebellion against the latter, now crowned Henry IV, in January, 1400. The newly founded charterhouse of Mount Grace was thus left in a precarious position: its patron was dead, and his lands and titles had been awarded to others. Mount Grace was maintained for a number of years by annual royal subsidy, and by the patronage of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, and of Thomas Beaufort, one of the king’s brothers, whom he raised to the title of Duke of Exeter in succession to Holland. Arundel and Beaufort were, in fact, prominent benefactors of the Carthusian Order generally: their munificence is recorded annually in the cartae of the General Chapter, and they were granted trentals throughout the Order on their deaths, in 1415 and 1427, respectively. Although Mount Grace Charterhouse did not flourish in its early years, it did not languish, either, and it was formally incorporated into the Order in 1410. This act of incorporation normally takes place when a new “plantation” reaches sufficiency in numbers to carry out the full cycle of the divine office, the monks are appropriately housed and at least an adequate chapel exists for services. At this point, the rector, or head of the community, is named prior, or is succeeded by another nominated as prior by the General Chapter of the Order or the provincial visitors. The rector-become-prior named in the incorporation of the foundation at Mount Grace into the Carthusian Order is “Dom Nicholas Love”.

We know nothing of Love’s career before that time. Presumably, he was a Carthusian monk of some maturity in some other house, in order for him to be named prior of a new foundation, but there is no record of his origins or earlier vocation. Love is named as prior of Mount Grace in three documents, one of which is dated 1415, but it is not known when his priorate ended. His obituary, which occurs in the cartae of the General Chapter of 1424, records only that he was a former prior of Mount Grace. We do not know, either, when Love first came to know Archbishop Arundel. A document in the archbishop’s register records that on 15 January, 1509/10, the prior and convent of Mount Grace, “mindful
of the magnificent benefits [or "benefices"] that he had conferred and would confer upon us and our house especially," granted him participation in all of the masses, services, prayers and penitential practices performed in the house as if he were himself a choir monk there — that is, confraternity — and perpetual anniversary services on the day of his death, "according to the custom of the Order for founders and dearest friends". What the "magnifica beneficia" were that the archbishop bestowed upon them was unspecified — in fact, it would have been inappropriate to specify them — but in medieval monasticism, grants of confraternity were a common form of spiritual repayment for material support, and we are probably correct in seeing in this document the final transfer of Mount Grace Charterhouse from Ricardian to Lancastrian patronage and allegiance. It may equally probably be taken as evidence of the achievement of the degree of financial solvency that allowed the incorporation of Mount Grace into the Order at the General Chapter that took place in mid-April of the same year.

The primary evidence, for our purposes, of a relationship between Love and Arundel comes in a Latin memorandum that came to be attached to copies of The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ which records:  

Memorandum: that around the year 1410, the original copy of this book, that is, The Mirror of the Life of Christ in English, was presented in London by its compiler, N, to the Most Reverend Father and Lord in Christ, Lord Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, for inspection and due examination before it was freely communicated. Who after examining it for several days, returning it to the above-mentioned author, commended and approved it personally, and further decreed and commanded by his metropolitan authority that it rather be published universally for the edification of the faithful and the confutation of heretics or lollards.

Nicholas Love's intention in composing The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ was thus not merely to supply a set of devout meditations in the vernacular: his work also played a major role in Archbishop Arundel's campaign against the Wycliffite heresy. Wycliffism was a complex movement, with intellectual roots in the "hermeneutics of doubt" implicit in scholastic treatment of the auctoritas of authoritative documents, and social roots in the dissatisfaction of many with the corruption of the medieval church — or at least with the tendency to bureaucratic expansion and clerical aggrandizement, to the detriment — to the exclusion, some critics would have said — of the works of Christian charity. Particular targets of criticism were the giving of alms to representatives of the

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11 For the original Latin text, see below, p. 7.

church hierarchy in the name of the poor, rather than to the poor themselves; the accumulation of property by the religious orders; the arrogation of all rights to teach or preach to members of the clergy; the expansion of the papal court, in particular by the creation of a higher level of bishops — the cardinals — whose duties lay not in the oversight of any particular Christian community, but in general ecclesiastical administration; the requirement that penitence for sins be shown in auricular confession (confession "in the ear" of a priest), rather than simply between the sinner and God; the worship of images — statues, crucifixes, paintings and windows — in churches; the cult of saints, including particularly pilgrimages and gift-offerings; and the cult of the Eucharist — a criticism that ranged from rejection of the practices of Eucharistic devotion that most resembled the objectionable aspects of the cult of the saints (e.g. processions, benedictional services, hours of adoration) to disagreement with the philosophical language used — especially the Thomistic terminology of transubstantiation — to describe the manner of the presence of Christ in the sacrament.

The Wycliffite objection to these aspects of the institutional church was not only to the corruption, or the possibility of corruption, that they manifested, but also to what they saw as their lack of support in the text of the gospels. As reform movements within Christianity have done historically, they sought a return to the life of the original apostolic community — as they read it in the text of scripture. Yet the Wycliffite reading of scripture was separated from that of the ecclesiastical hierarchy by the heuristic revolution implicit in the scholastic method. Where the earlier medieval reading of the text may be characterized by an exuberant multiplication of layers of meaning — literal, historical, allegorical, analogical — scholasticism was marked by a positivist tendency to interrogate the text to discover what it "really" meant. Inevitably, this led to a privileging of literal and historical reading, stripped, in the case of scripture, of a centuries-long accretion of interpretive tradition. As Kantik Ghosh has pointed out, Wycliffite argument from scripture tended to base itself upon what it referred to as its "open" meaning, and its "reasonable" interpretation. Further, this kind of reading and interpretation did not depend on the use of the Vulgate Latin text of scripture: for those without Latin, an English translation, and a mind guided by the Holy Spirit (as were, of course, the minds of the evangelists), no great

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13 A problem exacerbated by the fact that, at the end of the fourteenth century, there were in fact two papal courts, one at Rome, and one at Avignon, each claiming authority over, and alms from, the entire western Christian church.

14 I have tried here to give a general list of what many — even most — of the followers of John Wyclif would have found objectionable in the church of their day. Obviously, not all Wycliffites, nor Wyclif himself, would always have found all of them equally objectionable.

scholars themselves), were perfectly sufficient. As Ghosh demonstrates, Nicholas Love adopted the hermeneutic terminology of Wyclifite reading of scripture in a quite problematic way, describing as “open” and “reasonable” whatever agreed with traditional theological positions, and embedding the authoritative interpretation of the text in the narrative itself.

Wyclif’s theological positions seem first to have come to the attention of authorities outside of Oxford in the late 1370s, when they became useful to royalty and the aristocracy in supporting their rights against the claims of the church; condemnations of his theological positions began in 1377. His name was associated with the Peasants’ Revolt of 1381, although evidence of direct involvement is far from clear. The final condemnation of his teachings came at the Blackfriars’ Council of 1382; in the letter from William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, which is prefixed to the council’s list of errors, these doctrines are described as being preached “in churches as much as in the fields and other public places”. With the Lancastrian accession, Wyclifite criticism of the hierarchy became more dangerous politically, for the security of Lancastrian rule depended largely on an ideology of stability according to which the thought of (further) usurpation — in church or state — had to be considered unthinkable. Thomas Arundel, who succeeded Courtenay as archbishop in 1397, had, after all, been deposed, although by politics, not by heretics. In 1401, the danger of Wyclifism to the state was considered great enough to justify the Parliamentary statute De Hereticis comburendo; in the same year, its penalty fell upon the Norfolk priest William Sawtry, and in 1410, on the Evesham tailor John Badby.

In 1407, as part of his campaign against Lollardy (the popular name by which Wyclifism became known), Archbishop Arundel called a convocation at Oxford that was to lead to the promulgation of the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409. These constitutions stipulated the terms for licensing of preachers in the vernacular and in Latin, and the examination of their orthodoxy; they required further that any chaplain celebrating mass in the Canterbury province also be licensed; they demanded that preachers keep their comments appropriate to their audience (clerical vices were not to be criticized before the laity, and vice versa); they forbade preachers to discuss the sacraments beyond the simple presentation of the determinations of the church on them, and forbade anyone teaching others to deal with theological material; they regulated university debate on theological questions, and required the monthly examination of the theological views of all students in the Oxford halls. The Lambeth Constitutions also specified that no books or tracts written by Wyclif, nor any written since his time, be read in the schools or elsewhere before they had been examined for orthodoxy, and:

16 In 1397, when Richard II avenged himself on the Lords Appellant of 1388, Arundel’s brother Richard, Earl of Arundel, was executed, and the archbishop exiled to France. He was returned to his see upon the accession of Henry IV, whom he served as chancellor.

... that no one from now on should translate any text of holy scripture on his own authority into the English language or any other, by way of book, pamphlet or tract, nor should anyone read such a book, pamphlet or tract newly composed since the time of John Wyclif, or in the future to be composed, in part or in whole, publicly or privately, under pain of excommunication, until that translation be approved by the local diocesan, or, if need be, by provincial council.

As Anne Hudson has pointed out, the force of the stipulation "by way of book, pamphlet or tract" appears to have been — and indeed was taken at the time to be — that not only were direct translations of the scriptures to be examined and licensed for publication, but that all theological literature of the type that would have been written in Latin heretofore was to be so examined and licensed.

It was presumably to meet this requirement that Nicholas Love submitted his translation of the Meditations Vitae Christi to Arundel himself, according to the “Memorandum of Approbation”. Yet this submission was not performed out of fear that his work would not be approved, for Love had altered the text substantially, turning it into a weapon for the archbishop’s campaign. The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ may have begun as a simple translation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran Meditations Vitae Christi, but it became an anti-Lollard polemic as well: Nicholas Love’s Mirror and Archbishop Arundel’s anti-Wycliffite programme were a perfect match. What the Lollards required were the words of scripture themselves, without the — as they would have thought it — self-serving superstructure of interpretation that they had come to bear. What Love produced, and the archbishop not merely licensed, but commanded to be published, was a set of meditations on the entire story of the life of Christ with the interpretations embedded in the narrative itself — and more, specifically anti-Lollard, arguments added to that.

The earlier chapters of the Mirror contain relatively few alterations, and most of these do not seem overtly polemical, although even they do refer to the Lollards. The greatest alteration in the chapter on the Annunciation, for example, is the addition of a meditation on the Ave Maria, but the chapter also contains a brief discussion from Bernard in which Love notes that the true members of Christ’s people are those who give due allegiance to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The chapter on the Sermon on the Mount is transformed into a discussion of the Pater noster and a defence of the ordained prayers of the church. A number of short chapters on the life and ministry of Christ in the earlier and middle sections of the Meditations are also omitted. The major alterations, however, all lie in the “Thursday” section of the text: the long discussion of the active and contemplative lives is truncated and referred to Walter Hilton; the chapters on the Conversion of Mary Magdalen and the Raising of Lazarus are rewritten completely into defences of auricular confession; the chapter on Christ’s discussion of his Last Supper and death is replaced with a treatment of the sin of scandal, which includes a reference to obedience even to “pharisaic” ecclesiastical leaders; and the chapter on the Last Supper is expanded into a defence of the sacrament of the Eucharist. Except for the minor displacement of the “Meditation of the Passion in General”, the later chapters of the Mirror, like those at the beginning, are substantially unaltered. At the end of The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ, Love returns to the theme of the defence of the doctrine of the
real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist in the "Treatise on the Sacrament". It is impossible to say how much the intention to write "for the comfort of the faithful and the confusion of heretics and Lollards" lay in Nicholas Love's original decision to translate the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*; but it certainly underlies his entire work as it came to be, and probably explains a good deal of the influence it was to have in the last century and a quarter before the Reformation in England.

Nicholas Watson has recently argued that Arundel's Lambeth Constitutions 'worked (as was, no doubt, the hope) not by being wielded in public, but by creating an atmosphere in which self-censorship was assumed to be both for the common good and (for one's own safety) prudent,' and that Love's *Mirror*, "which was the first work to take advantage of the protection offered by the Constitutions, seems to embody their ideology so well that it is tempting to speculate (with Jonathan Hughes) that it was written in part to order". The effect of the Constitutions, as Watson sees it, was to end the creative growth of theological writing in the vernacular that had occurred throughout the fourteenth century, reducing its flow to a dribble of works that he characterizes as "derivative", "pragmatic", "less intellectually challenging" than their "original", "distinctive", "daring", "difficult", "theologically complex" predecessors and Reforma- tion-era successors.

There was plenty of vernacular theological writing available in the fifteenth century for professional religious and laypeople of rank: intellectually challenging texts, which were no doubt eagerly studied by readers who had become used to having a constantly expanding array of choice in almost every other field of literary endeavour. But to a remarkable extent these texts dated from what had clearly been canonized as a theological golden age, an age of vernacular *auctores*, not from the age of brass in which fifteenth-century readers were actually living. It was evidently an inadvertent side effect of the Constitutions to help precipitate this creation of a canon of theological writing by simply sealing it up, making it so hard for later writers to contribute further to this literature that it is fair to say that original theological writing in English was, for a century, almost extinct.

It would be more accurate to say that vernacular theological writing in England in the period between Wyclif and the Reformation was profoundly changed. In fact, just as Anne Hudson has perceptively described the Wycliffite movement as "The Premature Reformation", we may see the movement that Arundel and Love led and exemplified as, in effect, a "Premature Counter-Reformation". Vernacular theological writing in England in this period was characterized by a polarization that involved both the continued spread of Wycliffite literature on the one side, and, on the other, by a closing of ranks around precisely those kinds of literature to which the Wycliffites most objected. If the primary

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18 Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409", *Speculum* 70 (1995), pp. 822-64; quotations in the present discussion are from pp. 831, 852-53.

19 Watson, p. 835.
The aim of the Lambeth Constitutions concerning vernacular theology was to put an end to Wycliffite translation of the Bible, then it was precisely in this aim that they failed: not only did the Wycliffite Bible become the most popular single text in Middle English, so far as we can measure by manuscript survival, but probably the most prominent orthodox form of religious writing in English in the fifteenth century, as Watson notes, was the production of translations and didactic compilations of earlier Latin theological writing, as well as sermon collections, saints' lives and religious drama. The modern critic may not think of this kind of literature as "daring" or "theologically complex", but this is what existed – and flourished – throughout the fifteenth century, and, particularly under the influence of the Briggittine house of Syon, played a remarkably large part in the print publication of vernacular theological literature in England until the very eve of the Reformation.\(^{30}\)

In arguing against the Lutheran Bible translator William Tyndale in 1532, Thomas More suggested that uneducated people ought not to spend their time attempting to learn how to argue against heretics, but rather:\(^{31}\)

...to occupy them selues beside thyer other busynesse in prayr, good medytacyon, and redyng of suche englyshe bookses as moste may nouryse and encreasen devociyon.

Of whiche kynde is Bonaventure of the lyfe of Cryste, Gerson of the folowyng of Cryste, and the devoute contemplacyon books of Scala perfectionis with suche other lyke.

The books More names, as Roger Lovatt has pointed out, were all readily available in print: Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* was in fact printed as Bonaventure's *Speculum Vitae Christi*; the attribution to Gerson ought to identify the translation of the *Imitation of Christ* as that produced by William Atkynson and Lady Margaret Beaufort, or the succeeding revision by Richard Whitford, the prolific self-styled "wretch" of Syon; the third book, whose author is not named, is assuredly Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*. These works had thus become a major part of the ecclesiastical rear-guard action of Roman Catholicism in England; and Nicholas Love's *Mirror* was still being invoked, more


Introduction

than a century after its composition, “for the edification of the faithful, and the confutation of heretics or Lollards” — or Lutherans — and their translations of the Bible.

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Here bigynneþ þe proheme of þe boke þat is clepid þe Mirroure of þe blissed lyffe of oure lorde Jesu cryste.

Quecumque scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt vt per paciencia & consolationem scripturar[um] spem habeamus, ad Romanos xvº capitulo. 

Dese ben þe wordes of þe gret doctour & holy apostle Powde consideryre þat the gostly leuyng of all trewe crysten Powle. creatures in þis worlde stant specialy in hope of þe blysse & the lyfe þat is to come in another worlde.

¶ Ande for also mich as twyne þinges principaly noryschen & strengþen þis hope in man þat is paciency in herie & ensample of vertues & gude liuyng of holy men writen in bokes. Ande souereynly þe wordes & þe dedis writen of oure lorde Jesu criste verrei god & man for þe tyme of his bodily lyuyng here in erthe. þerfore to strengþ þvs & confort þvs in þis hope spekeþ þe Apostle þe wordes aforseid to this entent seying þat al thynges þat ben writen generaly in holi chirche ande specialy of oure lorde Jesu cryste þei bene wryten to oure lore that by paciency & confore of holi scriptures we haue hope that is to say of the Life & Blysse that is to come in anothere worlde. Here to acordynge spekeþ Seynt Austyn þus, Goddes son toke man & in hym he soffred that longeþ to man & was made medycyne of man, & this medycyne is so mykell þat it may nouþt be þouþt. For þer is no pryde bot [bat] it may be heled þrouȝe [be] mekenes of goddis soue. Per is no Conetyse bot þat it maye be heled thorgþ is pouerte. [No] Wrath bot [bat] it maye be heled throw his paciency. [No] Malice bot þat it maye be heled þrouȝe his charite.

¶ Ande more ouer þer is no symne or wikkednesse, bot that schal want it & be kept fro [it] þe whiche byholdeþ inwardly & louþ & foloweþ þe wordes & the dedis of that man in whome
The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

goddes some yaff himself to vs in to ensample of gode leuyng.
Wherfore nowe bope men & women & every Age & every dignite
of this world is stirid to hope of everly leuyng lyfe. Ande for his
hope & to his entent with holi write also bene wryten diverse
bokes & tretes of devote men not onelich to clerkes in latynye, \( f. 3^a \)
but also in Englyshe to lewde men & women & hem that bene of
symple vndirstondyng. Amonge pe where bepe wryten devote
meditacions of cristes lyfe more pleyne in certeyne parlyes that is
expressed in the gospel of pe foure evangellistes. Ande as it is
seide pe devote men & worthy clerkes Bonaventura wrot hem in A
religiose woman in latynye pe whiche scripture ande wrytyng for
pe fructuous matere hrof stirryng specialy to be loue of Jesu
ande also for pe pleynt sentence to comun vndirstondyng [s]eme:
amonges obere souereynly edifiyng to symple creatures pe whiche
as childryn hauen nede to be fedde with mylke of lyste doctryne
& not with sadde mete of grete clargye & of h[y]e contemplacion.
Wherfore at pe instance & the prayer of some devote soules to
edification of suche men or women is his drawynge oute of pe
foreside boke of cristes lyfe wryten in englysche with more putte
to in certeyn partes & [also] wip drawynge of divers anctoritis
[and] maters as it semeth to pe wryten hereof moste spedefull &
edifiyng to hem that bene of symple vndirstondyng to pe which
symple soules as seint Bernerde seye contemplacion of pe monyde of
cryste is more likyng more spedefull & more sykere
that is hyse contemplacion of pe godthyd ande perfore to hem is
pryncipally to be scete in mynde pe ymage of crystes Incarnacion
passion & Resurreccion so that a symple soule that kan not penke
bot bodys or bodly binges mowe haue somewhat accordyng wyne
is affecion where with he maye fede & stire his devotion
wherefore it is to vndirstonde at pe bygynynge as for [a] pryncipal
& general rewle of divers ymagynacions that folowen after in his
boke that pe descriyng or speches or dedis of god in heuen &
angels or ophere gostly substances bene only wryten in his manere,
& to his entent that is to saye as devote ymagynacions &
likeneness stirryng symple soules to be loue of god & desire of
heueyly binges for as Seint Gregory seip, that perfore is pe
kyndgome of heuenhe likenet to erbly binges. that by bo binges that
bene visible & that man kyndly knowe: he be stired & rauyshe
to loue & desire gostly invisibyl binges, that he kyndly knowe not.
Also seynt Jon seip that alle bo binges that Jesus dide, bene not
written in pe Gospelle Wherfore we mowen to stirryng of devotion
ymagine & penk diverse wordes & dedes of him & ooper, that we
fynde not writen, so þat it be not aȝeyns þe byleue, as seynt Gregory & oper doctours seyn, þat holw wríte may be expownet & vnndurstande in diverse maneres, & to diverse purposes, so þat it be not aȝeyns þe byleue or gude maneres.

† And so what tyme or in what place in þis boke is writen pat þus dude or þus spake oure lorde Jesus or oper þat bene spoken of, & it moveth not be preuet by holw writ or grondet in expresse seying of holy doctours: it sal be taken none operwyces þan as a deuoute meditacion, þat it mȝȝ be so spoken or done. And so for als micha as in þis boke bene contynede diverse ymymagnacions of cristes life, þe which life fro þe bygynnynge in to þe endyng noþe besseded & without synne, passyng alle þe lìves of alle oper seyntes, as for a singulerer prerogatife, may worshiply be clepede þe besseded life of Jesu cист, þe which also because it may not be fully discryued as þe lìves of oper seyntes, but in a maner of liknes as þe ymage of maþs face is shewed in þe mirrour: perfere as for a pertynent name to þis boke, it may skilfully be clepede, þe Mirror of þe besseded life of Jesu cист. Forpermore fort spoke of þe profitable mateure of þis boke: þe forseide clerke

Bonaventura spekyng to þe woman forseide in his prohernes bygynnynge in þis manere sentence.

† Bonaventura incipit.

Amonge oper vertuose commendynghes of þe holy virgine Cecile it is writen þat she bare alwey þe gospel of criste hidde in her breste, þat may be undirstand þat of þe besseded lìf of oure lord Jesu císt written in þe gospele, she chace certayne parties most deuoute. In þe which she set her meditacion & her þouht niȝt & day with a clene & hole herte. And when she hede so fully alle þe manere of his life over gon, she began aȝayne. And þo so with a likyng & swete taste gostly cheshyng in þat manere þe gospele of crist: she set & bare it cuer in þe priuyte of her breste. In þe same manere I conseil þat þou do. For among alle gostly exercyses I leuc þat þis is most necessary & most profitable, & þat may bringe to þe hyest degree of gude liyng þat stant specialy in perfite despyng of þe worlde, in pacience, suffryng of aduersite, & in encresce & getynge of vertues. For sopely þou shalt neuer finde, where man may so perfytely be taght, first for to stable his herte aȝeyns vanitees & deceuyable likynges of þe worlde, also to strengh him amongis tribulacions & aduersite, & forpermore to
be kept fro vices & to getyng of vertues: as in þe blessed life of 
oure lorde Jesu, þe which was euere withoute defaut most perfyte.

† First I say þatbusy meditacion & customable of þe 
blessede life of Jesu, stabileþ þe saule & þe herte aȝeyns vaniteþs 
& deceyuable liluynges of þe worlde. þis is openly shewed in þe 
blessed virgine Cecile before nemeþe, when she filleþe so fully 
her herte of þe life of críst. þat vanitieþs of þe worlde müþt not 
entre in to her. For in alle þe grete pore of weddyingis, where so 
many vaniteþs bene usede, where þe organes blewene & songene, 
she set hir herte stably in god, seying & praying, Lord be my herhe 
& my body clene, & not defilide: so þat I be not confonjed.

† Also as to þe second: whereof hauen martires herc 
strenþe, aȝeyns diuers tormentees: bot as seyn bernarde seip, in 
þat þei setten alle herc herte & deuocien in þe passione & þe 
wondeþ of críst.

† For what tymne þe Martire stant with alle þe body to rest, 
& neuer þe lese þe is iotful & glade in alle his peyne, where 
sowest is þan his soule & his herte: soþeþ in þe wondeþ of Jesu, 
þee þe wondeþ not closed, bot opun & wide to entrie inne, & elles 
he shuld fele þe harde yryn, & not mowen bere þe peyne & þe 
sowor, bot some faile & denye god. And not onlich Martires: bot 
also Confessours, Virgynes, & alle þat liuen müþt wisely despyng 
þe þerld: in many tribulacions infirmytes & dedes of penance. 
† boþe kep[en] pacience, & also more ouere þerwþ bene ioyful & 
glade in soule as we mowen se alday. And whiþo, bot for hire 
hertes bene more properly in cristes body by deuoute meditacion 
of his blessed lif. þan in hir owne boþies.

† And as to þe þridde poynt, þat hit keþ þro vices, & 
disposeþ souereynly to getyng of vertues: preueþ wele in þat þe 
perfection of alle vertues is fonden in cristes lif. [For] where sal 
þou fynde so opun ensample & doctrine, of souereyn charite, of 
perlite pouerte, of profonde mekenes of pacience & óþer vertues, 
as in þe blessed lif of Jesu críst.

† Herefore seip scynt Bernard, þat he travaileþ in vayn 
aboute þe getyng of vertues: who so hopeþ to fynde hem owhere 
bot in þe lord of vertues, whose lif is þe mirour of temperance & 
alle óþer vertues.

† Lo here grete confort & gestly profite in deuoute 
contemplacion of cristes blessed lif.

† Wherefore þou þat coueytest to fele treuly þe fruyt of þis 
bok: þou most with all þi þought & alle þin entent, in þat manere 
make þo in þi soule present to þoo þinges þat benc herc wrien
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Proem

scheid or done of oure lord Jesu, & that bisly, likingly & abydynge, as be ouer herdest hem with hit body, eyres, or sey pain with hit
eyes don't puttynge awae for hit tymce, & leyynge alle oper
occupacions & busynesses.

And that hit so be that be bigynnyng of be matere of hit bok, hit is be blessefed lif of Jesus Crist, be at his Incarnation;
neuerles we mowen first devoutly rymage & penk some pinges
done before, toochynge god & his angesles in heucne, & also as
anemes be blesseved virgin ocean lady seyn Marie in erpe, of hit
which is to bygynne. And for alle mich as hit bok is dyuydet &
departit in vii parties, after vii dayes of hit wike, every day on
partie or sume beroof to be hade in contemplacion of hem hit
hauen certo desire & deuotion. Therefor at hit Monday as hit first
werke day of hit wike, bygynnyng hit gostly werke, tellynge first of
be deoute instance & desire of hit holy angesles in heuen for mans

f. 5° restoryng, | and his saucion, to stire man amongis ober bok day
specialy to wyshyp hem, as holy chyrch hit same day make
speciale mynde of hem. Also not onelych be matere of hit bok is
pertynent & profitable to be hade in contemplacion hit forseide
dayes, to hem hit wolen & mowen. But also as it longe be hit
tymes of hit seere, as in aduent to rede & deuoutly haue in mynde
fro hit bighynynge in to hit Natiuite of oure lord Jesu, & ceter of
after in hit holy feste of Cristenmesse, & so forb of oper matere
as holy chyrch make be mynde of hem in tymce of hit seere.

§ And amongs obere who so redi be here his bok feyng
any gostly swetnes or grace peereprorth, pray he for charite spacialy
for hit auctour, & hit drawere oute peerepr, as it is witten here in
english, to hit profyte of symfye & deuoute soules as it was seide
before. And that endi be proheme, & after folowe hit pe
contemplacion for Monday in hit first partic, & hit first chapitre.
known by hire tonge. Schc was continuely dwellying in prayere & in his love of goddes lawe, & algate bisy aboute hire felaghnes pat none of hem shold trespasse or synne in any worde, & pat none shold lawn dissolutly. & also pat none of hem shold offend other. torh pride or any wronge, & ever withouten faiyng, she blessed God, & test perchance by any gretyng or preyszyng she shuld be letted fro be louung[s] of god. what tymne any man gret hire, she answered ayeyn, Deo gratias. pat is to sey, þonked he god. Wherefore of hir sprynge first, þat what tymne hool men bene gret, þei ayeyn ayeyn, Deo gratias, as she [dide].

† Schc was fedde of þe mete þat she toke of þe angeles hande, & þat mete þat she toke of þe bishope of þe temple, she 3af to pore men. Every day goddes angele spake with hire & als he shuld to his derworþ sister or modere. so he served & was obeschant to hire. Bus mich selp seyni Jerome of hire life.

† Forthermore in hire xiii þere þat blessed maiden marie was weddet to Joseph by þe reunion of god, & þen went she home ayeyn into Nazareth als it is written by process in þe story of hir Natuute. Bot þus mich at his tymne sufficce to haue in mynde & in contemplacioun of þo binges þat befollen before þe Incarnation, þe whch whose wole wele þenke & haue deoultly in mynde & folowe vertuoesly in dede. he shal fynd hem full of gostly fruyt.

† Now come we to speke of þe Incarnation of our lord Jesu.

Of þe Incarnation of Jesu, & þe feste of þe Annunciacion, & of þe gretyng Aue Maria. Capitulum tercium.

When þe plente of tymne of grace was come in þe which þe hie Trinite ordynet to saue mankynd þat was dampnet þor þe sync of Adam, for þe grete charite þat he hade to mankynd, sp[roving him his grete mercy, & also þe pryer & þe instance of alle þe blessed spirites of heuen, after þat þe blessed maiden Marie weddet to Joseph was gone home to Nazareth, þe fadere of heuen called to him þe archangel Gabriel & seid to him in þis manere:

† Go to oure dere domger Marie þe spouse of Joseph þe which is most chere to vs of alle creatures in crbe, & sey to hire
The text appears to be a portion of a sermon or other religious text in Middle English. It discusses the Incarnation and the role of the Virgin Mary in this event. The text is filled with religious language and references to biblical events.

For example, it mentions the Incarnation and the Virgin Mary, referring to the moment when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, as described in the Gospel of John.

The text also mentions the bread and wine of the Eucharist, suggesting a connection to the Last Supper and the sacrifice of Christ, as described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The writing style is formal and structured, typical of religious texts of the time. It uses Latin words and phrases, and the grammar and syntax are consistent with the conventions of Middle English prose.

Overall, the text is rich in religious content and provides insight into the theological and liturgical practices of the time.
verray man & 3 it was he neuer departed fro pe fader | or pe holi 5

gost in his godshed, bot ever was dwellyng stille with hem on;
verray god in heuen.

† But now for to oure purpose of pe incarnation before
seide: take hede & hate in mynde as þou were present in þe pryve
chaunbour of our lady where þe holi trinitye is present with his
angele Gabriel.

A lord what house is þat, where sech gestes bene & sech
þinges ben don. For þou þat þe holi trinitye is every where by
presence of his godhed, neverese þou maie benk & vndurstand
þat he is þere in a more specciale manere by reson of þis hie werke,
of þe Incarnation.

† Gabriel þan entred in to Maries chaunbour þat was
stoken fro mcn bot not fro angeles as seynt Bernerde seip, knelyng
with reverence beginne his message in þees wordes & seid, Heile
ful of grace, Oure lord is with þe. Blessed be þou in women or
above al women.

† Marie þan heryng his message, & þis new gretyng, þa:
she neuer herd before: was astoned & abashed & noȝt answered,
bot þouhi what þis gretyng myȝt be. Soc he was not abashed or
disturblet by any viçious or synful disturbling nor agast of his
presence, for she was wont to angeles presence & to þe sȝt of
hem: bot as þe gospel seip, She was astoned in þis wordes, þat was
a new gretyng. For he was neuer wont before to grete hire in þat
maner. And for als mich as in þat gretyng she saye her self
comend & praised specially [of] þre grete þinges, in þat she was
perfitely meke: she most nede be abashed in þat hye gretyng. For
she was comend þat she was ful of grace, & þat oure lord was
with hire, & þat she was blessed above al women. And for als
mich as þe perfit meke may not here his praisyng without
abaschement & shamfastnes: þerfore she was abashed &
astonede with a honest shamfastnes, & also with drede, for þouh
she trowed wele þat þe angele seid sop: neverles she dres his
worde, for as mich as þei þat been perfitly meke, han þat propreté
þat þei reward not hire awne vertues, bot raper taken hede to hir
awne defautes, whereþorn þei mowen algate profite vertuely
haldyng in himself a grete vertue litel & a litel defaut grete. And
so as wise & warre as shamfast & dreful she held hire þees &
answered not.

† Here þan maȝt þou take ensample of Marie, first to
loue solitary praiere & departyng fro men þat þou mowe be worpi
angeles prescute, & furthermore, lore of wisdome to here or þou
spoke, & for kepe silence & loue litil spech, for that is a ful greet & profitable vertue. For Marie herde frist be angele twis spoke or she wold answere ones azeyn. And perfore it is abhominable pringe, & greet reprowe to a maiden or virgyn to be a greet iuangleare & namely a religious.

I Forbermore after he gospel, he angele biiholodyng hire semblande & knowing he cause of hire abasment & drede: answered to hire bounht & speke more homelich, callyng hire hire name & seide, Drede pou nost Marie, & be pou nost abashed or ashamet of he praisyng[es] bat I haue greet he wil, for so is he treup, & not only pou art ful of grace in hi self, bot also pou hast fonden special grace of god & rekeuerde grace to alle mankynde. Forwhe, Lo pou shalt conceyue & bere a childre, & pou shalt calle his name Jesus, pat betokenep sauioure, for he sal saue fro synne & fro dampancion alle his peple bat treuly hopen in him.

II Here seip sent Bernard, God graunt pat my lord Jesus vouch saue to noombre me among his peple, so pat he saue me fro my synnes. For sohly I drede pat many shewen hem as he were of his peple, he which he knowep not ne hap not as his peple. And as I drede he may sey to many pat semen in his peple more religous & more holi than othre: his peple wirchiphe me with lippes, but sofily hire herte is ferre fro me. Bot wolde pou know wheter pou be of his peple or wifl pou be of his peple: do pat he oure lord Jesus bidde in he gospel & he lawe & be prophete, & also pat he bidde by his ministres, & be buxum to hes vikere, pat bene in holy chyrch pi soucreyns, not only gude & wele lyuing: bot also schewes & yuel lyuing, & so lerne of Jesu to be meke in herte & buxom & pen shalt pou be of his blessed peple.

III Bot here now forbermore what he angel, spekep in praisyng of his child Jesus, *He shal be grete, nost in temporele lordshipe & worldly dignite, for pat he shal forsake, bot he shal be grete god & man, grete prophete in miracles worching, grete doctour in sofost prechyng, & grete conquerour in mistrye he deuel overcomyng, & so worhiply He sal be cleped, he son of he f. 11r alber hiest | lord god, he whech sal giue him he sete of David his fadere, for he sal take mankynde & be born in flesh by desent of his ansetrye. And he sal regne in he house of Jacob euermore & of his kingdom sal be none ende. His hous of Jacob is gestly holychirch, in he which Jesus sal regine in trew soules, first overcomyng synnes & he deuel here in erp by grace, & after in heuen in blisse whithout ende.

IV Here maist pou sey with seyn Bernard, desiryng in he pe Bernardus.
kyngdom of Jesu: būs:

¶ Come my lord Jesu & put away alle sklandres of synne
fro þi reume, þat is my soule, so þat þou may regne þerin as þe
oveþ to do. For coneytise comeþ & chaulegenþ his reume in me.
Presumption couteþ to be my lord. Pride wolde be my qwene. 5
Lechery seþ I wole regne. Detraction, Envy, Wrath & Glotony
struyen which of hem sal principaly regne in me, & in als mych
as I may aȝeyn stand hem. Bot þou my lord Jesu destruye hem in
þi vertue, & take þou þi reume & þi kyngdom in me, for I haue no
trew kyng but þe my lord Jesu.

¶ And when þe angel hade tolde þes conditiones & þe
worþines of þis blessed child Jesus to þat meke maiden Marie þat
was chosen to his moder: þan she spake first to þe angelo 15
dreþyd of his wordes or of hire coneyuyng nor krawecomyn nor
forsakyn þe préysynges before seide of his gretyng; but willyng
to be certifie more pleynly of þat she dreþde most: þat was þat
she shuld not lese hire maidenhede, asked of þe angelo þe manere
of hire coneyuyng in þes wordes: How & [in] what namer sal
þis be done, sìphen I know no man fleshy, & I haue made a vowe
to kepe me chast to my lord god, without faile, & I sal neuer dele
with man fleshy. And þen þe angel answered & seid to hire, It sal
be done be þe worcynge of þe holi gost, þat sal lyten in to þe in
a singule manere, & þorh his vertue þat is alperhiest. þou shalt
coneyuyng þi maidenhede & þerfore þat holi þinge þat sal
be born of þe, sal be named godðus son. And in confort 25
forþermore heresof, Lo, Elizabeth þi cosyn þat is olde & was baren
hþþ coneyued a child nowe sex moneþes apasshed, for þer sal no
þinge be impossible to god.

¶ Now take here gude hede & haue in mynde, how first al
þe holy trinete is þere abyng a finałe answere & assent of his
blessed douhtere Marie takynge hede & beholdynge lícynge hire
shamefaste smelband hir sad maneræ & hir wise wordes. And
forþermore how alle þe blessed spirites of heuæ, & alle þe
ríȝtwislywyng men in er þe & alle þe chosen soules þat wæren þat
tyme in helle as Adam Abraham Davíd & alle oþer desierden here
asent in þe which stode þe saucion of alle mankynde. And also
how þe angele Gabriel standynge wip reuerence before his lady
enclynde & with mylde smelbande abideþ þe answere of his
message. And on þat oþere side take hede how marie stant saddely
with drede & meknes in grete aúysment haungyn no pride nor vcyn
glorye for alle þe hye praising before seide. Bot þo souèreyn
3íftes of grace þat she þap herd þiuen to hire þat neuer were þiuen
to creature before; all she act onely to be grace of God.

¶ Lerne thou ben by ensample of hire to be shamefast
tyually & meke, for without pees twice verteues maidentede or
virginite is litle wort.
5 ¶ For as seyn Bernard seip, virginite is a faire vertue, but
mekenes is more necessary. For thou maipst be saue without pe first
bot without pat ober pat is mekenes Iou maist not. In so much pat
I dar herdly sey, pat without mekenes pe virginite of Marie had
no3t be plesyng to god. For bot Marie had been meke, pe hoti gost
10 hade not rested vp on hire, seip seyn Bernard.
¶ At the last os pe ende of pe gospel seip, pe myld maiden
Marie when she hade herd & wisely vndirstand pe angeles words
by gude auysement. 3af hire asent in his manere, as it is written in
hire revelaciones, she kneled downe with souereyn deuocion &
haldyng vp bope hire handes & lifyng vp hire eyen to heuen seid
pees wordes, Lo here pe hande maiden & pe servant of my lord be
15 it done to me & fulfilled after bi worde. And so in pees meke &
lowe wordes of Marie at the ende the last ensample of grete
mekenes, as thou haddest in hire silence at pe byggynyng.
20 ¶ Lo she is chosen goddes modere & of pe angele cleped
ful of grace. & she nome vp hiresef his hande maiden. And no
wondere, for as seyn Bernard seip, mekenes is euere wont to be
felawe with pe grace of god. But his mekenes was not litle, for as
he seip, it is not much to praise mekenes in auctiouni, but it is a
f. 12' grete vertue & seldom seen mekenes in wirchipe.
26 ¶ Also some pe as she hade 3iue here answere [and
assente in pe wordes forseide, anone wipoute dwellynge], goddes
son entred in to hire wombe, & borh wirching of pe holost
gost was made man in verrey flesh & blode taken of hire body & not as
30 ober children conceyued & boren by kynde ben shapen membre
after membre & after pe soule shedde in to pe body. bot anone
at pe first instance, he was ful shapen in alle members & alle hole
man in body & soule, bot neuerles ful litle in quantite. For aferre
he waxed more & more kyndly as ober children done. So peat at pe
35 first he was ful perfite god & man als wise & als mi3ty as he is
now.
¶ And when his was done Gabriel knelyng done wiþ ooure
lady & some after wiþ here risyng vp: toke curtseys his leve of
hire with a deouet & lowe bowyng to pe erpe, & so vanished
40 awey fro hire wiþ a swift fligt & toke his wey to heuen seeyn
tellyng & certifeyng pe holy court of heuen his message fulfilled,
& pat pat was done in erpe, & pen was peere a new ioy & a new
fest & ful miche mirp & solemnnyte.

† Afterwardoure lady fulfilled & enflaunede with bre holi
gost, & in bre loie of god more brennyng ben she was before:
felyng beth she han conceyued': knelde don & honked god of beth
grete gife, mekelich beskyng him & deuoutich prayyng beth he 5
wold send hire grace & tech hire so. beth alle beth were after to
come & to be done about his blessed son beth she mid fullfille him
& do hem without defaute.

† And þus mich touchyng þe gospel & þe processe of þe
incarnacion of Iesu Criste.

Of þe feste of þe Annunciation and of þo plages þat
befel þat day.

Nowe take gode hede & vndurstande how worþ þis feste: &
þis solemnnyte is, & haue þerfore a gostly mirp & make a speçiale
feste in þi soule, ponnkyng god inwardly, for sech was neuer herde
before. For þis is þe solemnnyte of alle þe holi trinite fader & son
& holi gost by whom þis soureyn dede of þe Incarnacion was
wroþ & fulfilled as it is seide before. þis also is a speçiale feste: of
oure lady seynte Marie þe which as þis day was chosen of þe fader of
heuen in to his dere douhter & of þe son in to his mylde
modere, & of þe holi gost in to his speçiale spouse. þis day is also
a speçial solemnnyte of alle þe blessed spírites of heuen for þis
day was begunne þe restoryng of hire company & felaschip þat felle
done by symne of Lucifere. Bot soureynlych þis day is a hye feste
& a speçial solemnnyte of al mankynde. For þis day was mankynd
soureynly wirchipped in þat [it] was oned & knyt to þe godhede in
crist without deþartyng. And þis day began þe hele & þe
redemption of mankynd & þe reconcilyng to þe fader of heuen, for
in to þis tyme god was wroþ to mankynd for þe synne & þe
trespace of oure forme faderes, bot fro þis tyme forth, he may no
lengire be wroþ seyng his dere son bycome man. And þerfore is
þis day skilfully called þe plente of tyne to man.

† And so þis day owe þuuer to be hade in mynde of man &
woman, for þis day was man made to þe liknes & þe ymage of god
& set in þat joyful place of Paradise & forþ haue lyued euer 35
without deþ. And þis day þe first man Adam by þe frute of þe tre
forbidden, deformede in him þat ymage of god, & lost þat joyful
place, & was damnet to deþ without endyng.

† Bot þis day þe seconde Adam crist god & man reformed
Die Lane [Monday]

pis ymage in his Incarnation, & after by vertue of his blessed fruit
of his body, hangynge on the tree of his crosses, restorede man to
blisse & life everlaystyng.

Also his day be first woman Eve born pride essestynge
to be serpent be dely of helle was cause of manans damynacyon.
& his day be blessed maiden Marie born mekenes trowyng to be
angelys. Gabriel was cause of manans saucyon.

And so his day hys man mater of grete joy & of grete
sorow. First of grete joy for he souereyn gudenes, wirchipe &
grace of god done to him. And also of grete sorow, for his grete
synne & vnkyndnes done to god aseylyward.

And his mai3t bous haue bi contemplacion of his day &
of his blessed fest of cristes Incarnacion & oure ladies
Annunciation.

And for als miche as that blessed gretyng of his angele
Gabriel where wi3 we honouren & greten our lady every day is
grondon in his gospel as bous hast herde before. Perfore I sal telle
he sumwhat more hereof as me pechke to stire bi deuociun of his
gretyng. Aue maria &c.

As I conceyue his gretyng in maner as holi chirch hys
ordeynet it to be seide, hab fuyce parties in he which bowen be
vndurstand specialy he fuyce ioyes of oure lady, & in he fuyce
ioyes: fuyce vertues bous she haide in hem souereynly abouve alle
creatywre, he whech ben, Meknes | Chastite, Feip, Hope &
Charite.

In he first part of his gretyng that stant in these twoyn
wordes, Heil Marie. How mai3t vndirston he first ioy that she
haide in hire Annunciation of Jesu gracious conceuyng, of he
which: mekenes was he grounde as bous hast herde before. And as
30 hees wordes Heil Marie, bene he first & he bygymnyng of his
gretyng; so his fest was he bygymnyng & he gronde of al obery.
And as it was he bygymnyng of Maries ioye & al mankynde; so is
mehen pe bygymnyng & gronde of al vertues. And perfore hethese
first wordes Heil Marie, skilly bous mai3t vndurstande he first
ioye that she haide in hire Annunciation, of he conceuyng of hire
blessed son Jesu, & that specialy born he vertue of Mekenes.

In he seconde party that stant in these wordes, Ful of
grace, may be vndurstande he seconde ioy that Marie hade in Jesu
Natiyte & hire ioyuful beryngye. In he which she hade souercynly
he vertue of Chastite & of clemensse. & perfore ben was she
specialy ful of grace, in hat hat sohe cleene maiden & modire bare
without sorrowe that never dide woman but she alone.

In the pridde parte that is in these wordes, Our Lord is with he may be vndurstonde the pridde ioy that sche hade in hire son Jesus. Glorious vpriesing speciali be the vertye of stedfast feith and trewe by leue. For fro his depe into that time he dwelled al only with hire by stedfast byleue the sche had [in him as god when] that alle his apostles & disciplis weren departed fro him by mystyleue & despere, that he was god. And therefore be feith of holy church his daies stod al only in hire so [that] in that tyne it myst specialy the seide in hire Our Lord is with he that is to sey by trew feith & byleue. And after at his vprisynge more specialy his bodily presence first to hire aperying was fulfilled. Our Lord is with he.

In the fyrthe parte that is in these wordes, blessed be thou in women or elles aboue al women may be vndurstonde be feith that she had, in that sight of hire sone Jesus mysetli to heuen up and steyng. In that which steth that hope that sche hadde in his godhed be fullich strengedhe & confermede seyng that ober women never dide that was that part that he take of hire in fleisch & blode bodyly por the neith of his godned boren vp to heuen & so hoping without die the she sholde folowe after. Wale that misit it be seide that tyne & now may to hire, Blessed be thou souereynly in women, seing his son Jesus mittly to heuen vpsteyng.

In the fift part, that is Blessed be thy fruit of thy wome Jesus, may be vndurstonde the last ioy that she had in hire blessed sone Jesus when he take hire vp with him to his, & þere with his fullicho coronary hire quene of heuen euerelastynge, þan was hire desire [of] love fullclosed, when she was endlesly þother pleinte of Charite knyt to hire blessed son Jesus & he to hire, & so fede with þat blessed fruit that she coueted nomore, for she was þereþorth filled of al gudenes, blisse & ioy without ende.

And þus shortly in þe fyue parties of þis gretyng Ave maria mowen be vndurstonde þe fyue ioyes of blessed Marie with fyue vertues that sche hade souereynly in hem, as I haue now seide, þe which gretyng after þe commune vndurstanding may be þus seide in english tonge, Heyl Marie, Ful of grace, Our Lord is with he, Blessed be thou souereynly in women, & þe fruit of þi wome Jesus euer blessed be.

And if þe lust in þis gretyng specific þe fyue ioyes with þe fyue vertues before seide: þow maist sey þus in short wordes:

Heil Marie, maiden mekest.

Gret of þe angel Gabriel in Jesu gracious conceuyng.
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Dier Lune [Monday]

Ful of grace, as moderate chaste
without sorrow or peyne þi son, Jesu blessed beryng,
Oure lord is & was with þe
by trew feip [& byleue] at Jesu joyful vprysyng
Blessed be þou sovereynymly in women,
by saddle hope scying þi sone Jesu to heuen mihtily
vpsteyng.
And blessed be þe fruyt of þi wombe Jesus,
in euerlastyng bliss þorn perfite charite þe quene of
heuen gloriously crowyng.
Be þou oure help in al oure nede, & socour at our last
endyng. Amen.

†
Siþen þen þe proccesse of þe blessed Incarnation of Jesu,
& þe bygynynynge & mynde of þe ioyes of his blessed moder
Marie, & þe gronde of sauacion of mankynd is contened in þis
gospel, Missus est, as it is seide, & þou hast herd before: wip gret
deuotion & gostly desire owest þou & euer cristien creature here
þis gospel & wirchip þerin Jesu pat so bycame man for oure
sake, & his blessed moder Marie to whose wirchip & profite of
þi soule & mynd þis short tretyse be wryten. Amen.

f. 14v

How oure lady went to Elizabeth & mekely grett
hire. Capitolium iiiim

After þe proccesse of þe Incarnation of Jesu before scide:
þe blessed maiden Marie haunynge in mynde þe wordes of þe angele
touching hire cosyn Elizabeth: she purposed to viset hire fort
þonke god with hire & also to ministre & to scru hire. And so
with hire spouse Joseph, she went fro Nazareth to hire house
beside Jerusalem, þat þe space of sixty Mile & fourtene þere
aboute. Sche taried not & lettid not for þe lose & dissey wey: bot
anoine with hast she went, for she wold not longe be seene in open
among folk. And so she was not heuyed or charged by þe
conceyyng of hire sone as comuly beþ oper women, for our
lorde Jesus was not chargent to his moder.
Now take hede how þis blessed lady qwene of heuen &
of erþe goþ alone with hire spouse & þat not vp on hors bot on
fote. She ledþe not with hire many knytyes & barones nor þe grete
companye of bourue maydenes & damyselles, bot soþcly þere goþ
of so longe
in satisfaction or
we his trewe in
we him specially
per, & graciously
the, sumwhat we
only recusse in his
grace & not oure
that we bene not
& sette as in a his
memous arwes of
of pat bitter se
lute & foly.
is litle worde or
fore pou pat art
wilt be with Jesu
with amenstish
child borh perfite
not spekyng bot in
pou be born, pat
or by opinion of
epes, pat is, while
sweryng of goddes
ments, tokenep
is lasse: tokenep
his kyndly tymne is
de by worde or by
fritlely grown &
stant as a man in
refte of oper & of
oure powere al
tis: bisy we vs to
at for oure sake
modere Marie.
35
stant with Jesu
isidore & have in
he first tymne of his
ly & principaty for
def souercynly: so
mawmery &
to he soules made
to his ymage so wrecchedly & for he most parte damper: his was
to him more payne, pan his bodily passion & dep. Forwhi: to put
away misbylue & destroye his dampanacion, he suffret pat dep &
pat passion.
5
And so shold every trewe bonere of Jesu haue compassion
& be inwardly sory not onely for he misbylue of Iues &
saracen & here dampanacion: bot alse & mich more for he
wilked lyuyng of vntrew cristien men. In so mich pat it sulde be to
him more passion & gostly dise, when he knowe or sawhe a soule
perishe, borh derly sympe: pan be losse of any worlde cestel or ben
his owne bodily dep, for pat wolde perfite chartes.

And so in his forsid processe we haue profitable
doctrine & gude ensample first in oure blessed lord Jesu of
penance suffyringe of perfite Chartes: & trewe compassion. Also in
his moder Marie: of profonde mekenes & pacience in
tribulacion, & in hir hosbande Joseph: of vertuese riutwisnes
azeynus fals suspcion.

And if we wolt witte whi & wherto oure lady was weddet,
to Joseph, syen he hade not to do with hir bodily, bot she was
cuer cleene maiden: hereto answerying bone bre skylles. First: for
she shold haue confort & solace of man, to hir bodily servyce &
winnes of hir cleene chastite. De seconde is: pat he meruelouse
birpe of goddes son shold be heled & priuey fro he deuel. And he
pride: pat she shold not be defamed of avoutre, & so as worhi he
dep after he lawe: be stoned of he Iues.

And pus endip he first party of his boke, pat stant in
contemplacion for he Monday, & for he tymne of Advent in to he
Natuiue of oure lord Jesu. Whose name with his moder Marie:
be euere blessed wipout ende. Amen.

30 Of he natuiue of oure lorde Jesu. Capitulun vj

What tymne pat ix monepes fro he conception of blessed
Jesu drowen to ende: Cesar Auguste he emperour of Rome send
oue a mandrment or an heste, pat alle he world suget to him shold
be desoryvet, so pat he miȝt knowe he nombrue of Regiones, of
Cites & of he heades longyng to hem, pat weren subdite to he
Empire of Rome. And herfore he ordeynet & badde pat al men
where so euere hei duelleden, shold go to he Cites of hir first
birpe & propre lynam. Wherefore Joseph pat was of he lynam of
David, whose citee was Bethleem, toke with him his spouse blessed Marie. Pat was pat tymne gret with child, & wente fro Nazareth vnto pat Citee Bethleem, here to be numbret among opere als suger to pe Emperour. And so leyng with hen an Ox & an Asse, pei westen al pat longe wey to gedis, als pore folk.  

hauyn no more worldly gude bot bo tweyn bestes. And what tymne pei comen to Bethleem: for pe gret multitud pe pat was perinne pe[e] same tymne for pe self cause. pei migt geve none herbere in nones hous, bot in a comun place by twix tweyn houses, pat was hiled above, men fort stand pei for pe reynce, & was cleepe a 10 Diuersorici. pei were nedet to rest inne, & abide al pat tymne. In pe which place Joseph pat was a carpentary made hem a closerie & a crach for hire bestes.

Now take here gude heve & have inwardly compassion of pat blessed ladie & maiden Marie, how she so Yonge & of so tendire age, pat is to sey of xv 3ere & gret with child as neh he birpe travailep pat longe wey of lx Mile and x or more, in so gret pouerete, & 3it when she came to pe Cite forseide here she sho[d] rest & asked herburgh in diuerse places shamefastly [as] among vnkep folk. alle pei werned hem & let hem go. And so for nede at pe last pei toke as for herburgh, pat comun place forseide.

Bot now forthermore [10] speke of pe blessed birpe of Jesus & of pat clene & holy deluyrance of his dere moder Marie, as it is written in party by reuellacion of oure lady made herco to a devout man, when tymne of pat blessed birpe was come, pat is to sey pe soneday at midni3t, goddus son of heuen as he was conceyued in his moder wombe by pe holi gost, without sede of man, so goynge oute of pat wombe without travaile or sorrowe. sodeynly was vpon he at his moder feet, & anone she deuously enclinende with souereyn ioy toke him in hire armes, & sweily clippynge & kissyng, leide him in hire barme, & with a fulle pap, as she was taught of pe holi gost, weshes him alle aboute with hire swete milke, & so wrapped him in pe kerchief of her hede, & leide him in pe crach, & anone pe Ox & pe Asse kneyling done leiden hir mouhes on pe crach, brethyn at hire noses vpon pe child, at pei knewen by reson pei in pat colde tymne pei child so simply hidede hade nede to be hatte in pat manere. And han his moder kneyling done wirchipe & lousd god, inwardly bondyng & seying in his manere, Lord god holi fader of heuen, I bonke pe with al my mi3t, pe hast jiu me pei dere sone, & I honour pe almi3ty god 40 godus son & myn. Joseph also honoureng & wirchipyng pei child god & man, toke pe sadel of pe Asse, & made pei of a qwsclayn
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Our lady to sitte on & a suppoyle to leyn to. And so sat her lady of al se worldes in se simple arraye byside se crack, hauyng hir mild mode & hir lounyly eyene, with her inward affection, upon hir swete derworth child.

But in his pure & symple worldly array what gostly riches & inward comfort & ioy she hade: may no tongue telle. Wherfore we wole fele his trew ioy & comfort of Jesu. we most wiþ hir & wiþ his moderke loue: pouerte, mekenes & bodily penance os os he gaf vs ensample of alle these here in his birpe & first comynge in to his world.

For of his first pat is pouerte seynt Bernard in a sermon of he Nativite of our lord tellyng how he was born to comfort of mankynd, seip in his manere:

Godusson confortep his peple. Wolt thou knawe his peple? pat is of whom spokþ Dauid in se sautre & seip, Lord to he is belaþ pe pore peple, and he him selþ seip in se gospel, Wo to how rich men pat hauen your comfort here. [For] how suld he confort hem, pat haunen here his avwe confort. Wherfore cristes innocens & childhode: confortep not maigeres & grek spakers, 20 cristes wepyng & terses: confortep not dissolute lagheres. His simple clopyng: confortep not hem pat gone in proude clopyng, & his stable & crache: confortep not hem pat luyen first setes & worldly wirchipes. And also pe anges in cristes Nativite apperyng to pe wakyng shepherdes: conforten none opere bote pe pore travaileres, & to hem tellen pei pe ioy of newe li31 & not to pe rich men, pat haue hir confort here.

Also as to he seconde, we mowen se at his birpe bohe in crist & in his moderke perfite mekenes. For pei were not sqweymes of pe stable, nor of pe beestes nor of hey, & seche oþer abiecte symplenes. Bot his vertue of mekenes bohe oure lord & oure lady kepþ perfitey in alle hir dedes & commende it souereynly to vs. Wherfore be we aboute with alle oure miþ to gete his vertue, knawyng pat without it is non sauaucion. For pei is no werke or dede of vs pat may plys god with pride.

Also as to pe pridde we may se in hem bohe, & namelich in pe child Jesu noþt a litel bodily penance. Of pe whiche seynt bernarde seip þus:

Godus son when he wold be born þat hade in his owne fre wille to chese what tympe he wold take þerto. he chese pe tympe þat was most noyus & hard, as þe cold wyntour, namelich to a 3onge childle & a pore womens son, þat kyndly hade clopþ to wrappe him inne, & a cracche as for a credite to lay him inne, &
The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

igitur hie er was so mich nede. I synde se mynde of fureres or pitches. And sypen crist pat is not bygesete chase pat is most harse to be flesh. sobely pat is best, most profite. He table & naper to be f. 19, chosen, & whose teches or bidde of hire. He is as a fals deceuere, to be fledde & forsaken.

† Al his seyf sent Bernard and pus miche of hire vertues at hire tyme.

† Go we now forbermore to speake of hire forseid blessed Nativite of crist. What tyme pat our e lord was so born, he get oompany of angelos pat here weren honourenyng & wirchipyng hire lord god. wenten anone to be shepherdes, pat weren here bystic aboute a myle fro bethlehem, tellynyng hem hire birpe of hire sanctoure, & also he place perof by one of hem aperyng wiþ gret liti, persuaurence Gabriel pat was special messager of hire werke. And berwip all hire multitude of angelos token vp pat neve joyfull songe, sayng as be gospel tellin in pees worde, Joy withoute ende be aboue in alherhiest heuen to god, & in orpe pees to al men pat bene of gude wiele. And so with pat joyful songe & miche mirpe he wenten vp in to heuen, tellynyng hire ophere felynhes pese neve joyful tipinges of hire lordes blessed birpe. Wherof pat he court of heuen joyful & glade more pat tonge may telle or hert beak. makynge a solempe fest & deoultly pokynge be faderete almiyte god, as we mowen deooulytly beak & ymagine. comene alle after by ordre atere ordre to se pat louely face of goddes son hire lord, with gret recuurence wirchipyng hire & hire blessed modere.

† Hereto acording specke he apostle seynt Poule in his pistele de hebreos [-i-] sayeing pat when he faderete of heuen brought his first gotten [son] in to his world. he badde pat alle hire angeles of god shold wirchipe hire.

† Also he herdmen afur hire angeles weren passed fro hire, comen & wirchipede hire child tellynge openely what hire herden of hire angeles, & hire dere moder, as she pat was soureyne wiss & witty, tok gude hed of alle pat was done, & kept priuely in hire herte al hire worde pat weren spoken of hire blessed son.

† Pus miche & in hire maner, we mowen hauue in contemplacion touchynge hire processe of hire blessed Nativite of our e lord Jesus.

† And forbermore touchynge hire solemnnyte & hire worshipynesse of hire feste & hire hie day, we sholen hauue in mynde pat hit [day] is born hire kyng of blysse, & hire son of almiyte god, lord of al lordes & makere & gouernere of alle hire world, whose name is cleped dieal specialy Prynce of Pees, for by hym was made pat f. 19.
Of \textit{pe Circumcision of oure lord Jesu. Capitulum vii\ prescriptum.}

In \textit{pe viij\ day \textit{pe} child was born.} he was Circumcised after \textit{pe} byd\yng of \textit{pe} lawe. And so in \textit{pe} day \textit{twey} gret \textit{hinges} were done \textit{pe} owen to haue deuoutly in mynde.

\textit{pe} first is \textit{pe} blessed name \textit{Jesus} \textit{pat} was | euere \textit{wil} out bygynnynge \textit{seuen} to him of \textit{pe} fadere of heuen, \textit{and also of \textit{pe}}
angele cleped & tolde or he were conceyued: his day was openly declared & namede, & he berwip specially clepe Jesus, pat is als mich to se as sanoure, & his name resonably is aboue all names, for as he apostle Petur seip, per is none opere name vndur heaven in pe which we owen to be saucde.

† Of pe whiche name & [he] gret worpines & vertue be[o], seynt Bernard spekep devoutly by processe pat sai be seid aftur.

† The seconde pinge pat was done his day, worpi to be hade in mynde is: pat his day oure lord Jesus began to shede his precious bole for oure sake. He began betyme to suffre for vs, & he pat neuer dide synne: began his day to bere paynce in his swete tendere body for oure synne.

† Miche owht we to haue compassion & wepe with him, for he wept his day full sore, & so in pees gret fester & solemnites, we shold make miche mirpe, & be jovful for oure hele, & also haue inwarde compassion & sorowe for pe peynes & anguyshe pat he suffret for vs. For as it is seid before, his day he shedde his bole, when pat aftur pe rite of pe lawe, his tendere flesh was kut, with a sharp stonen kniife, & so pat 3onge child Jesus kyndly wept for pe sorow pat he felt perporh in his flesh. For without doubt he hade verrey flesh & kyndly suffrable as hawe opere children. Shold we par not hauve compassion of hym? pis sophely, & also of his dere modere. For wele movwe we wit, pat when she sey hir louely sone wepe: she mišt not withhold wepyng, & par movwe we ymagine & penk how pat litel bate in his modere barme seynge hir wepe, put his litel bande to hire face, als he wold pat she shold not wepe, & she aȝeynward inwardly stired & hauying compassion of pe sorowe & pe wepyng o[h] dere son, with kissyng & spekyng, comforted him as she miʒt, for she vndurstode wele by pe inspiracion of pe holi gost pat was in hire pe wille of hir son, pouh he speke not to hir, & perfore she seid, Dere soke if pou wolt pat I sees of wepyng, sese pou also of pe wepyng. For I may not bot I wepe. what tymne pat I se pe wepe, & so pouh pe compassion of pe modere, pe child sesed of sobbyng & wepyng. And par his modere wipying his face, & kyssyng him f. 20* & puttynge he pappe in his mouthe: conforted him in al: pe maneres pat she miʒt, & so she dede als oft os he wept. For as we moven suppose he wept oft sipes as opere children done. to shew pe wrechednes of mankyn pat he verreyly toke, & also to hide him fro pe deuel, pat he shold not knawe him as for god.

† And peus mich suſſicε pe seide at his tympe of pe Circumcision of oure Lord Jesu.
his day was openly xed. Jesus, that is al\n is aboue al names, name vnder heuen
nes & vertue perof, 5
at sal be seld after.
y, worbi to be hade
egan to shede his
me to suffre for vs, 10
bere Payne in his
& wepe with him,
es gret festes &
; be ioyful for oure 15
we for be peynes &
before, his day he
lawe, his tenderes
so fat yonge child
orh in his flesh. For

y suffrable as haue
assion of hym? 3is
mowe we wit, fat
miȝt not withhold
sw fat lifel babe in
hande to hire face,
3eynward inwardly
& be wepyng of hir
him as she miȝt, for
holi gost fat was in
hir, & perfore she
ag. sese pou also of
ne fat l se pe wepe,
lit sed of sobbyng
ce, & kysyng him 30
sed him in alle pe
the wept. For as we
dren done, to shew
oke, & also to hide
as for god. 40

† Bot now in tyme of grace ceseb his circumcision of he
olde lawe, & we hauen in fat stede baptisme ordynet by criste,
fat is he sacrament of more grace, & lease peyn. Bot for fat bodily
circumcision, we sholen haue gostly circumcision, fat is kuttyng
away fro vs al superflue piages fat dispozen to syane, & haldyng
with vs as in affection onelich fat is nedful to vertues lytuyng. For
he fat is treuty pore. is verteuely circumcised, he whiche
circumcision he apostle teccheb in hees wordes, when he seip fat
we hauyng mete & drinke & clo[ing], we shold hold vs paid.

† Pis also gostly circumcision nedeb to be in alle oure
bodily writes, as in seyng beryng, touching & ofer fat is to sey,
fat we in alle hees escuite superfluities & kepe skarlyte & namelich
in spekyng, for miche spech without fraye is a grete vice, &
displeyng to god & to gude man, & a token of an vnstable & a
15

iolute herte, as a3eynwarde silence is a grete vertue, & for gret
cause of gudenes ordynet in religione, of he which vertue diverse
clerkes speken fat we shole passe ouer at his tyme, & pis oude
pis chapitre.

Of he Epiphany fat is he opune shewyng of oure
lorde [Jesu]. Capitulum viii

20
First touchyng his solemnpe day & worbi feste we shole
vndurstande fat here is none feste fat hap so miche diuerse
serve in holy chirch longyng pertu, as his fest hap, not for it is
more worbi pan ofer. bot for many gret piages beffele & were
25
done in his day spesalby touchyng he stat of holi chirch.

† As first vndurstandyng fat holi chirch here in erhe stant
in twayne maner of peple, fat one is of hem fat comen of he Jues
fat hadden mowyes lawe & weren circumcisued, fat ofer is of he
remenat fat weren not circumcisued & were clesed Jentiles. his
30
day, fat is to sey, he xiiij day fro he Natuuite acontyng fat self day.

f. 20r
he blessed child Jesus shewed him as god & man spesalby to
he kynges fat weren of he Gentiles. And in here persone holi chirche
nowe cristened fat is principaly gederet of he multitude of
Jentiles. was his day receyued & acceptede of god to trew byleue.
35
For his day of his Natuuite, he aperede & shewed him spesalby to
he Jewes, in he persone of he herdmen, he which Jues for he
36
m[ere] part receyued not goddis worde & byleue, bot his day he
shewed him to he Jentiles of whom we comen fat beno now his
chosen churc. Wherfore þis feste is specialy & proprely þe feste of holie churc of trewe cristen men.

2° faction. ¶ Be seconde þinge þat was done þis day touchyng holie churc, is, þat she was þis day gostly weddet to crist & truly knyt to him, by þe baptism þat he toke þis day xxix þere after 5 compleate. For in þe baptism be sole soules weddet to crist, & þe congregacion of cristen soules is cloped holie churc, þat by baptism be washen & made cleene of þe filhe of synne, & cloped new in vertues.

3° faction. ¶ Be prïde þinge is þat, þat same day a twelfsmone, þat 10 is to sey, a þere afer þe baptism þe of crist, he wrouht þat first Miracle at þe brydale, turnyng wateres in to wyne, þe þe whiche is vnustronde also þe gostly brydale of holie churc.

4° faction. ¶ Be fërpe þinge þat befel in þat day, is, as bede seip, þat 15 in þat same day a þere afer, oure lord Jesus wrouht þat gret myracle, feydyn þe gret multitude of peple with a fewe louses & a fewe fishes. Bot þe first þre bene rehearsed þis day in holie churc, & not þe fërpe.

Contemplatio. ¶ Lo how worshipful þis day is, þe which oure lord god chees specialy to wirch þereinþe so many gret & wonderful þinges. Wherfore holie churc consideryng so many gret beneficis done to hir þis day of hir gostly spouse Jesu crist: by wey of dewe kyndnes, makeþ gret mirpe & solemnitie in þis day.

¶ Bot for als mich as principlaly & most specialy be solemnitie of þis day, stant in þe mynde of þe first þat is þe 25 wircheþynge of þe kynges, & hir offringe to Jesu: þerfore speke we forþermore of þe contemplacion hirself, leyng þe remnant at þis tymc.

And so ymage we & sct we oure mynde & our þouht as we were present in þe place [h]ere þis was done at Betheleem. 30 beholding how þeþ þre kynges comen with gret multitude & a worshipful company of lordeþ & oper servantes, & so by token of þe Sterre þirste [ledyn & after restynge vp on þat place, þat þe child Jesus was inne: þere þei listet done of þe romedaries þat þei rydene vpon: byfore þat simple house & maner of stable in þe which oure lord Jesus was born. And þan oure lady heryng gret noys, & stirynge of peple: anone toke hire swete child in to hir barme, & þei comynge in to þat house, als so soon as þei seene þe child: þei knelde done & reuerently & deuoutly honoure him as kyng, & wirchiped him as god. Lord god how gret & how sacel 40 was here feip & byleue, þat sich a litel child so simple cloped, fonden with so pore a moder in so abiecte a place withore
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

properly he feste
ay touchyng holi
rist & treuly knayt
xxix yer after 5
i christ, & he
i chyrch, hat by
'synne, & cloped
twelfmonep, hat 10
wroght hat first e, by ye which is sh.
as bede seip, hat
wroght hat gret 15
a fewe loues & a lay in holi chyrch,
ch our lord god
ret & wondrful
my gret benefices:
by wey of dewe
day.
nost specially he
we first.' hat is he 25
perfore speke we
pec remnant at his
he & our bouht as
ne at Bethleem.'
set multitude & a,
so by token of
pat place, hat he.
f. 21'
dromedaries pat
ner of stable in he
lady beryng gret
es child in to hir
mas he seene he
honoured him as
gret & how sadde
o simple cloped,
a place without
cumpanye, without mayn & without al worldly aray shold be
verrey god & kyng & lord of al he world.' & napeles he
byleued soefastly bope two. his was a gret guenies of oure lord
ordeynyg sech forleders & sech bygynmers of oure byleue, & so
it behoved to be.

¶ Forbermore touched he processe we moowe speke how he
tynges after he first honouryng of he child spoken with his
modere reverently askyng of he condiciones of him, in what
maner he was conceyved & born, & so of opere pat he
desired
10
tokwe, & oure lady mildly anwereng told hem of alle as it
nedet, & he 3[auet] ful crecende & byleue, to al pat she seide.
And for als miche as he weryn clerkes & men of gret wisdome,
perfore we moowe suppose pat he kowpen he langage of hebrewe,
& speken in pat tonge pat was he modere tonge of our lady & alle
Jues.

¶ Now take we here gude entent to he manere of speckyng
in bope partes, first how reverently & how curteysly he speken,
& asken hir questiones, & on pat opere side, how oure lady with
a maner of honest shamefastnes, holtyng done hir eyene toward
20
he erhe spekep & anwerelp sadly & shortly to hir askynges, for
she hap no likyngte to speke mekyl or [elles] to be scene. Neuerles
oure lord 3af hir strenhe & special confort to speke more homely
to hem, because pat he representeden holi chyrch, pat was san to
come of pe Jentiles as it is seid before.

¶ Behald also he child Jesus. how he spekeb not, but stant
with a maner of sad semblant & glad chere & als he vndurstode
hem louely lokyng upon hem, & he haue gret likyng in he sith of
him, no3 only gostly in soule of his godhed, as illumynet & tautb
f. 22'
of him. bot also in his bodily sijt, withoute jorph, for as Dauud
30
witnessep, He was faire & louely in body before al menne sonsnes.

¶ And so when he were gretly conforted by him, he
maden here ofiryng to him in his manere as we moowne suppose,
he opumen hir cofres with hir tresoure, & spredyng a tapet or
a clope before he childes feett oure lord Jesu, he leyden yer upon
35
& ofircen ich on of hem, golde, encense & myrre, & hat in gret
quantite, namelych of golde, for elles as for a litel ofiryng it hade
not nedet hem, fort haue oponede here tresour cofres, as he
gospel seip, but her awolmeres or here tresoureres miȝt lytly haue hade
it in hande & taken it hem, but perfore he sijtes & he quantites
were gret, by reson as it is scide. And when he haide þus ofred
& leide here sijtes before him: pen reverently & demourly fallyng
done he kissed his feet, & he ran over the child full of wisdom for comfort him more & strengthen him in his love. 'If he had more to kyse, & after blessed him perwill, & so he reverently enclining & also taking here leave at his moder & Joseph, with great joy & costly mithe as he gospel seith, turned he straight in to his owne destre by an opere wy.

What he has the gifts offered of these kynges by token costly & many opere pinges he gave gospel more ouere telie on it is expowen by holy doctours. is sufiiciently & fully written in many opere places, wherefore we passen ouer alle he here. 10

† But what hope we was done with he gold of so great prise? Whether oure lady reserved it & put it in tresory or elles bouht perwill londes & rentes? Nay nay god forbide! For she he was a perfite louere of pouerte, toke none heede of sech worldly gods. But what? She louyng pouerte & vnystondyng also hir blessed somes wille, not onlich for his inspiration teching hir in soule withinne forp. bot also by signe shewyng his wille, without forp, he loved not sech riches, peruentere turning away oft sipes his face fro he gold, or spittynge hir vpon.' withinne a fewe dayes & short tyme, she 3af it al to pore men. For he kepyng perof he litel tyme, was to hir bot a grete burpen, & heuy charge, & he smet hee wele: for she made hem so bare of money, he when she sold go to the temple forto be [purified]: she hede not wherwil to bigge a lombc for ofte for hir sone, but only bouht turtures or dowues of litel prys, he was he offrying of pore folk aftur he lawe. And so we mowen resonably byfule, he he offrying of he kynges was grete & rich, & he oure lady louyng pouert & ful of charite 3af it in haste to pore men, as it is seide. So he here is shewen a grete preconye & woripi ensample of poucte.

† Also if we take here gode heede: we mowe se opyn ensample of perfite mekenes. For here bere many he hoalden hem self lowe & abieete in her owne herte, & bene not elucate be pride as in her owne sti, bot neuerles he wold not be [seen] seyck: in ope men susht, nor mowen not sufte to be despised or skorned of opeere, & also he wold not he hir vnworbynes & he defaules weren knowen of ope pat he reproued of hem. Bot this did not his day pat child Jesus lord of alle ope, for he wold pat his lowenes & abieection was known, & see to hese & to ope & pat not to simple & fewe: bot to grete & many he is to sey, to kynges & lordes, & her meyne many & sey. And also he is more to wondur in sich a case & tyme, in he wheeck by reson it was mich to dreed, pat is to sey, lest he comyng fro so ferr &
Off the purification of our Lady saynt Marie.

Capitulum nonum.

f. 23r

Aftere the kynges hadden performede hir offeringe & werene gone home semyne in to hir owne cyntre as it is seide. 3it stode pat worp lady of al the worlde in hir simple herber with hir blessed sone Jesu, & hir husband pat holi oldman Joseph, at the crache paciently abidyng vnto the x day ordeyned by the lawe to hire Purificacion, as she were another woman of the peple defoylet for hir synne, & as the caitde Jesus were a pure man & not god, nedy to kepe theobservance of the lawe. Bot whi hope we pat the diden bus? Softely for ensampl to vs, shcowyng the trewe wey of obedience, & for the wolde none singulare prerogatif. the kepten the comune lawe as oper.

Bot thes done not many pat luyen in comune congregacion, which desire to have speciale prerogatifis, & therby wole be seen more wurchiful ban oper, & singulare aboue oper, bot his suffreth not trew mekenes.

When the x day was comen of hir Purificacion aftur the lawe, ban went oure lady out with hirc sone Jesus, & Joseph & toke the wey fro Bethleem in to Jerusalem, pat is aboute v or vj myle there to present the child & offer him to god in the temple, after pat it is written in the lawe of god.
Die Martis [Tuesday]

Lo þus is þe child Jesus brought [home] out of Egypte, & ban as we mowen þenk, þeistres of our lady & oþer kyynes folk & frenes comen to hem, welcomyng hem home & visityng hem with presentes & giftes as it was native to hem, þat fonden of hir owne bare housetshe.

Also among oþer we mowe specially haue in mynde, þat John Evangelist came with his moder of ooure lady sistere to viset & se Jesus, þe which John was þat tyne aboute fyue þere olde. For as it is written of him, he dieþ þere fro þe passion of our lord lx & viij, þat was þe 3ere of his age xc & viij. So þat at þe passion of cryst he hade in elde xxxi þere & crist himself xxxiiij, or litel more. And so at þis aþeyn coming of Jesus þat þat was þe viij þere olde. John was fyue þere olde. And as he was after among oþer chosen apostles & disciples, especiaþly byouch oure lord Jesus: so it is likly þat in þis tyne of hir child hode, he was more chere þan oþer, & as most special pleifer to Jesus.

Fro þis tyne [vn]to þe xij þere of oure age: þe gospel makeþ none mynde of þe child Jesus, neuerles it is written & seid þat þere is sit in þat place a welle, whereof þe child Jesus set oft sipes watter to his moder. For þat meke lorde refused not to do sech lowe servyces to his moder. And also she hade none oþer servant. Alle hir lyuing was in mekenes & pouert to oure ensaumple fort folowe hem. Amen.

25 How þe child Jesus laft alone in Jerusalem. Capitulum xij

When þe child Jesus was xij þere olde: & his moder with Joseph þe xijede vnto Jerusalem, for þe feste day þat lastede & continuëde viij dayes after þe biddynge & þe custome of þe lawe. he went also with hem in þat tendire age traualing [left] al þat f. 28" longe waye before seide, to honour & wirchipynge his fader of heuen in hese feste dayes as reson wolde, for þer is souereyn loue by twix þe fader & þe sone.

Neuerles þer was more inwarde sorow of herte & compassion to þe sone, of þe vnwirchipynge of his fader þat he sawh in doyg of many manere synnes: þan was any toy withoutforþ þat þe pompe & solemnity of þat feste. Bot so stode he with his pares in þe tyne of þat feste kepyn þe lawe mekely
as a nother of pe pore peple til what tymes pe feste dayes weren fulfilled & endet. And law after pat hees parens weren gon homewards: he duelled stille pere in Ierusalem hem vnwiting.

† Now take we here gode entent as we were present in alle pat is here spoken of for pis is a fulle detoute mature & a profitable 5 to vs.

As it is seide before be Cite of Nazarea where oure lord duelled, was from Jerusalem he space of x xiij or pere aboute, & so befelle pat his moder oure lady & Joseph token diverse wyues hauuewaerde & what tymes pei comen to gedire at 10 euen, where pei hadden set to be hercored. Our lady seynge Joseph without pe child pat she supposed had gone with him: asked of him where was pe child? And he seid pat he wiste neuer, for he wende as he seid pat she had ladde him with hir. And perweip she brast on wepyng, & with gret sorrow seid, Alas where is my dere child? For now I se pat I have not wele kept him. And enonde she began to go aboute in pat euentype as she misst honestly fro house to house asking of Sey 3e ouht of my sone? Sey 3e ouht of my sone? Vanepe misst she fele hirself for sorrow & care of hir sone. And pe selly old man Joseph folowed hir aligate wepyng. And what tymes pei hadden longe souht & fondne hir not: what rest hopen we pei hadden in pat misst, & namely pe moder pei lound him most tendurly? Sopenly no wondur pouh pei had none confort, al pouh hir frendes conforted hem as pei miugten. For t was not a letel losse to lesse Jesu. 15

† Wherfore here we mowen have resonably gret compassion of pei gret anguyse pat our ladis soulis is now inne for hir sone. She was neuer in so gret fro pei tymes pat she was born.

† And also here mowe we lern, what tymes tribulacion & anguysh fallen to vs: not to be to heuy or miche disturbent perby, sijen god spared he not his owne moder as in pat party. For he suftered generalyy tribulaciones to falle to hem pat bene hese chosen, & so pei bep token of his loye, & to vs it is expedient to haue hem, for many skilles. 31

† Paun our lady as it is seide sory for she miht no: fynde hir sone: pat night closed hir in hir chaumber, & toke hir to praier as to pe best remedie in pat case: seying in pis manere:

† Almyhty god fadere of heuen, ful of mercy & of pite, it liked 30w & was your wille to giue me your owme dere sone, bot 40 to now fadere I haue lost hym, & I wote note where he is, bot pe pat known alle pinge, telleb pe & shewe pe where my swete
sone is, & 3if him to me aseyne. Gode fadere takep hede & 
beholdspe pe sorrow of my herte. & not my grete negligence, for I 
knowlech wele pat I have offended in his case. Neverles for it is 
falle me by ignorance. se for your grete guideness seue him me 
aseyne, for I may not lyce without him. And pou my swete sone 
Jews where art pou now or how is it with pe? & where art pou now 
herbordene? Lord weper pou be gone vp in to heuen aseyne to pe 
fader? For I wote wele pat pat art verrey god & goddes sone. Bot 
why pat woldest pou not telle me before? Also I wote wele pat 
pou art verrey man of me born, & here before I kept pe & bare pe 
in to Egipte fro pe malice of Heroude, pat souht pe to ste. Bot now 
wherby any wicked man hap aspired pe? Bi faderes of heuen 
almighty he kepe pe, & shilde pe fro alle perilte & malice. Dere 
sone telle me where pat pou art pat I may come to pe or elles pou 
come to me, & forsiue me his negligence at pe tyne & I belaste 
pat it sal neuer oft befalle me, for how his is befalle I wote neuer 
bot pou knowest pat art my hope, my life & alle my gude. & 
without pe I may not liue.

¶ In his manere & by sech wordes as we movwe devoutly 
supposc: alle pat niȝt pe modere kared & praiad for here dere 
sone.

¶ Aftur upon pe morow ereley Marie & Joseph souhten him 
by ope diverser wayses pat ladd to Jerusalem & forpenmore 
souhten him bisily among pat frendes & kynnesmen, bot pei 
mighty not here of him, wherefore his modere was so sorry pat she 
miht in no maner be comfortede. Bot pei brid daie aftar, when pei 
comen in to Jerusalem & souhten him at pe temple: here pei 
fonden him sittynge among pe doctours of lawe heryng hem 
entently, & askyng hem questions wisly. And anone as oure lady 
had pe siȝht of him: she was as glad as she had been tume deo 
to lyfe, & berwip knelyng done bonked god inwardly with wepyng 
joy. And also sone as pe child Jesus sawh his modere, he went to 
hir, & she with vansekeable joy clippynge him in hir armes & 
kissynge him oft sipes, & haldyng him in hir barme, rested a while 
with him for tendernesse, t[ill] she had take spirtue, & þan she 
spake to him & seide, Dere son, what has pou done to vs in his 
maner? For to þi fadere & I with grete sorrow have souht pe alle 
þese pre daies. And þen he answeryng aseyne: seide, And what 
cyled 30w to secke me, know 3e not wele þat it behawep me to be 
occupied in þo finges þat longen to þe wirchipe of my faderes? But 
þe wordes þei vnystode not in þat tyne. And þan seid his 
modere, Sone, wolt þou not go home aseyne with vs? And he
mokely answerynge seide, I wolde do as ye wil at I do, & as it is
plesyng to sow. And so was he suged to hem, & went home aȝeyn
with hem īnto hir Cisse Nazareth.

In his seconde processe what hope we þat he dide or
where & in what maners lyued he þo þre dayes? We moove 5
suppose þat he went to some hostipals of pere men, & þere he
shamfastly praidée & asked herborgh, & ðer cte & lay with pere
men as a pere child. And some doctours seyn þat he begot in þo
þre dayes. Bot þereof litel forse, so þat we folowe him in perfite
mekenes & oþer вернes. For beggyng withoutforþe bot þere be a 10
make herte withynnesforþe. is litel worþ als to perfection.

Perþermore in þe seconde processe we moowe note & lerne
pre [proffitable] binges to vs.

First is þat he þat wole perfitely serue god shal not duelle
among hec fleshly frendes & kynnesmen, bot he most leue hem 15
& go fro hem. In token whereof þe child Jesus laft his owne cere
modere what þyme he wolde þrie entent to þe gystly werkes of f. 30
his fader. And also when he was soweþ among hec frendes, &
kynnesmen. he was not fonden þere in þat þyme.

De seconde is; þat he þat ledeþ gystly life. wondere not 20
miche ne be not disconforted] ouere heuyly, þous he be sume
tyme so dre in soule & als voide of deucucion. as he were forseke
of god. For þis maner biffelle to goddes modere as it is seid before,
wherefore he ne not in desierþ þerby; bot bisely seche he Jesu in
holi meditaciones & gude werkes, & specialy in devout praiers, & 25
he sal fynde him at þe last in dewe þyme.

De þrid is; þat a man folowe not to miche his owne witte
or his owne wille. For oure lord Jesus, aftar he seide þat him] 30
behonede to be occupiede in þo binges þat longen to his fader
wirchipe. aftar he laft; þat propre wille, & folowed his parens
wille, goyng forþ with hem fro þe temple home in to Nazareth, &
was suged to hem. And þis is specialy nedeful to religiousse folke
to folowe by trewe obedience to hir souereyns.

And also here we have gret ensemple of mekenes in oure
lorde Jesu, whereof we shole trette more pleyndly in þe chapitre þat 35
nekest foloweb.
What manere of lyuyng oure lorde Jesus hadde & what he dide fro his xij 3ere vanto he beginnyng of his xxx 3ere. Capitulum xiiij

Fró he tyme pat oure lorde Jesus was gone home to Nazareth with hees parens, when he was xij 3ere side, as it is seide before, vanto his xxx 3ere, we fynde noȝht expressed in scripture autentike, what he dide or how he lyued, & pat semely ful wonderful. What sal we þan suppose of him in alle þis tyme, wherſen he was in su worthy ydul? Pat he dide semely as wauht þinges pat were worði to be written & spoken of? God shilde. And on þat ober side, if he dide & wrouht, whi is it not written as ober dedes of him bene? Solely it semely merueilouse & wonderful. Bot neuerles, if we wole here take gude entent, we sholle movye se þat as in noȝht doyng: he dide gret þinges & wonderful. For þer is no þinge of hees dedes or tyme of þis lyuyng without misterye & edificacion, bot as he spake & wrouht vertuusely in tyme: so he hifelde his þeces & restede & wijdrowe him vertuusely in tyme. Wherefore he þat was souereyn maistere & came to teche vertues & shewe þe trewe wey of everly lastyng life: he began fro his 30þe to do wonderful dedes, & þat in a wonderful maner & vknoven, & þat was neuer ere herde before, þat is to sey, shewyng himself in þat tyme as ydul & vnkonynge & abicete in þe siht of men in maner as we sal say aftur, not fully affermyng in þis or ober þat we movye not opynly preue by holi writ or doctours apruced: bot deoutel ymagingyn to edificacion & stiryng of deucion, as it was seid in þe prohem of his boke at þe beginnyng. And so we suppose þat oure lorde Jesus in þat tyme wijdrowe him fro þe cumyanye & þe felishe of men, & went oft sipes to þe sinagoge, as to chirche, & þere was he mich occupiede in praier, bot not in þe hyest & most worchiful place, bot in þe lowest & pryuest place, & aftur in tyme when he came home, halp his moder & also peraentur his supposed fiadere Joseph in his craft, comyng & goyng among men: as he knew not men. Alle þat knewen him, of þe common peple þat he duedel among, & seene so faire & semely 3ong man doyng no þinge þat was in to presisyng or magnifyng of his name: wonderet gretly of him. Namely for as þe gospel seip of him, when he was 3ong & of xij 3ere age, Jesus profitede in age, [&] in wisdome & in grace to fore god & men, þat is to sey as in þe sijth & [þe] opinion of men. Bot now when he was of more age in to þe tyme of his xxx 3ere: he shewed no dedes of comendacion outewarde, wherefore men
skorned him & hold him as an ydiot & an ydul man & a foie, & so it was his withe to be hold as vnworpi & abiete to be worlde for oure saucion, as we prophetic speke in his persone pus, I am a worme & not a man reprowe of men & abiecione of pe peple. Bot here movwe we see ȝat he in ȝat abiecione as it were noȝth, 5 doyng, dide a ful gret vertues dode of worpi comendyng, & what was ȝat? Soley ȝat he made hym self foule & abiet in ȝe siȝht: f. 31v of obere, & herof hade he none nede: but we hade ȝis nede. For 10 solely as I trowe in alle oure dedes, þer is no pinge grettere or hardere to fulfille þan is ȝis, wherefore as me þinke þat man is come to þe hiest & þe hardest dege of perfeccon, þe which of fu, herte & trewe wille, without feynynge, haþ so oucroome himself, & maistred þe proude striyng of þe flesh: ȝat he wilþ not to be in reputacion of men, bot coustyeþ fully to be despised, & hald as foule, vnworpi & abiete. For þis is more worpi & more to comende, þan a man [to] be passyngly stronge & a conquerour of Citecs & londes as salomon witnessep.

Wherefore til we come to þis dege of perfeccon we sal halde oure self as ful imperfite, & at ȝat we done as nounht to account. For siben in sopcnesse alle we bene bot as vnworpi 20 seruanates what tymne ȝat we done þe gode ȝat we oweþ to do, as god him self witnessep. til þe tymne ȝat we come to þis dege of abiecionne, & perfite reprowe of oure selfe, we bene not set sadly in trewþþe, bot raper in vanite, as þe apostle opynly sheweþ, in þeþ wordes, Who so halt himself in his owne reputacione as ouht worþi, siben in sopnes, he is as nouht: he begileþ & deceweþ himself.

And so as we seide before oure lorde Jesus lyued in þis manere, & made himself abiete & as vnworpi to þe world: not for his owne nede, bot fort tecche vs þe trew wery of perfeccon, 30 wherefore if we lerne it not: we move not be excused. For it is abhymnable þinge to se him ȝat is bot [as] a worme, & wormes mete to come: fort hye him self by presupson, & lift vp him self as ouht: when þat hie lord of maistre so mcked him self by abiecione, & lowed him self as nouht, & þat dide he not by 35 feynynge, bot as he was solely meke & mylde in heric: so also without [eny] symulacione he lowed him self in alle maner of mekenes & abiecione in þe shite of obere fulfylling first in dede, þat hie tought aþer by worde when he bade hees disciples to lern of him fort be meke & mylde in heric. And in so mych he lowed 40 & anentyschede himself, þat also aþer he began to preche & to speke, so hic þinges of þe godhede as þe gospel telleþ, & to f. 31v
The Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Die Martis [Tuesday]

wirche miracles & wondres: 3it pe Jhesu set no3hi by hym bot despisde him & skorne him, seying, What is ho pis? Is not he pat wrightes nome Joseph? & also. In pe doules name he castep out doules, & many sech oper despites & reproves he suffret paciently lyke most, making so peere borne a swerde of mekenes, perwip to se pe proudes adversary pe denuel of helte. And if we wole se how mightily he gire him with pis swerd of mekenes allur pe biddynge of pe prophete: let vs take gode hede to aile his dedes & we sal se in hem aigate shewed gret mekenes, as we know se if we hane in mynde alle pe processe pat is seide 3it hidere to. And also here after shall be shewed more & more in to his hard ded. And more ever after his resurreccion & at his vp steyng to heuen, & 3it hereto more over at pe last day of dome, when he sal sitte in his maiestye kynghe & domesman of al pe world. 3it sal he shewe his soureyn mekenes [clepynghe] hee creatours hees breurene by pees wordes, Als longe as pe diden almeades to pees myest breurene 3e diden to me.

And whi hope we pat he shewed so mich & loued principaly pis vertue of mekenes? Sopele for he kneuwe peat as pe bygynnyng of alle syme is pride: so pe fundament of alle gude & of saucion is mekenes, without pe which fondament pe bldynge of al oper vertues is in veyn. And perfore if we triste of maydenhe of pouerte or of any oper vertue or dede without mekenes: we ben deceuyede. And for als mich as he tawth & shewed vs in what maner pis vertue of mekenes sal be goten, pat is to sey by despysing & abiciunc of a man him self in his owne & also in oper mensus 3rth, & by continuell doyng of lowe & abiciue dedes, perforec us behouche to lose & vnc peces menes, if we wole perfite come to pat hie vertue, as seuynt Bernarde seip in diverse places, God 3rif vs grace to gete it perfitey as hit is seide. For sopele I pat write pis: knowlech me ful ferre peere fro. And bus mich of pat tyme suffice spoken of pis soureyn vertue.

Bot now to go azeyn to oure | principale mater of pe mirour of pe blessed life of oure lord Jesu: beholde we here pe maner of luyng of pat blessed cumpanye in pouerte & simplices to gedere, & how pat olde man Joseph wrouhte as he mist in his craft of Carpentry, oure lady also with pe distaffe & nele, & perwip makynge hir mete, & oper office[s] doyng pat longen to housholde as we mowe ponte in diuere manere, & how oure lord

Jesus mekely holpe hem bope at hir nede & also in leyng pe borde, makynge pe beddes & sech operu choorees gladly & lowely ministryng, & so fullyng in dede pat he seip of him self in pe

Bernardus

in epistola
ad sancti
omnium
regiarum,

&

Note
medum
vivendi
domini

Jesu
cum

parentibus.

Notas

The document contains a passage from the work of Blessed John of the Cross, a Spanish mystic, spiritual writer, and poet who was canonized by the Catholic Church in 1929. The text is in Middle English and appears to be a religious text discussing the life and deeds of Jesus Christ. The passage includes references to miracles, the power of faith, and the importance of humility and simplicity in one's life. The text is arranged in a way that is typical of medieval manuscripts, with columns of text and a focus on religious themes and moral instruction.
gospel, that, Mancus gone came not to be servet, but to serve. Also we move bekes how hei pre sten to godere every day at one latel borde, not precious & delicate metes, but symple & sobre as was usely nedful to sustinance of he kynde. And after mete how hei spoken to godere, & also paresers operwhile in hir mete, not veyn wordes or dissolute: but wordes of edificacions, fill of wisdom & of he holi goste, & so as hei weren fed in body, hei were miche better fed in soute. And heu after sicht manere recreacions in comun. hei wenten to praising by hemsel in hir closets. For as we move yeuaghe hei hede no grete houset but a litel, in he which hei hede pre deverenyes as it were pre smale chaumbres, were specially to pray & to slepe. And so move we beken how oure lord Jesus Crist, every night after praising goth to his bedde lowely & mekely, shewing in he & al oher nedes of mankynde he was verrey man, & hidyng his godhede fro he fende.

A lord Jesus weie maisthe how be cleped hidde god hebat woldest in alle his longe tyme his travaile & put to penance hebat most innocent body for oure sake, when be travaile of on night hade sufficede to redemption of alle he worlde. Bot he grete loue to man made he to do grete dedes of penance for him. And so hebat bene kyng of kynges & almighty god without end, hebat helpen alle men in hir nede & giuen youre goddes to al oher plentyously as every condicion & state askp. 3e chase & resenue to youre owne persone so gret pouere, abstecion & penance in wakyng in slepyng, abstaying, etynge & in alle youre opere dedes doing, & hebat in so longe tyme, for oure loue.

Lord god where bene now hebat loun so miche he bat lust & he luyng & he ese of he flesh, he bat seen so birily precious & curious & diverse ornamentes & vanytes of he worlde? Sopely we hebat loun & desiren sech pinges. He ferne not hebat in he scule of his maistre. For he tawth vs bope by wordes & by dede, mekenes, pouerete & penance, & chastisynge of he body. And siben we be not wisere han he, if we wole not erre, late vs folowe him hebat souereyn Maystere, hebat wole not begile & he may not be bygilede. And also after he doctrine of his apostle haung lyuelode & cloping in bees be we apaisde, & hebat in nede couenable, & not in superfuye. And also in alle oher vertues lyuyng & exercises before seide, folowe we to oure powere cure lorde Jesus, hebat we move after his wrechede life in penance come to his bliss, & he life everlastyng in loy. Amen.
be left unto it drawe to be passion, be which with be grace of Jesus shall be more pleyvely contynuede, as be matres pat is most nedeful & most edifying. And before onely be matres pat semen | most fructouse & be chapiteres of hem, shulen be written as god wole 35e grace.

Wherefore as be same Bonaventure bidde | pl wolt fele | be sweetesse & be fruyt of becs meditaciones take hede algate, & in alle places deuotely in be mynde beholdyng be persone of oure lorde Jesus in alle hese dedes, as when he stant with becs discipules, & when with ober sinfulmen. And when he 10 precheb to be peple, & how he spekeb to hem, [& also when he cteb or takeb oberc bodily sustaunce] & also when he worne myracles, & so forp takynge hede of alle hese dedes & becs maneres, & principaly beholdyng his blessed face, if poynne yimagin it, pat semen to me most harde of alle opere, bot as I 15 towre it is most lkyng, to him pat lisyng of to. And so what tymes pat singulere meditaciones bene not specifisde. his generale shale suffice. Amen.

DE Aperitione libri in sinaga. nota in capitulo sequenti.

How oure lord Jesus began to teche & gedire 20 disciples. Capitulum xvij

Afture pat oure lorde Jesus was come home a3eyn to Nazareb, fro his baptisme & his temptation as it is seide' he began litel & litel to shewe himself, & to teche priuely & in party. For as opynly & fully we rede not pat he toke vpon him be office 25 of prechynge, alle pat 3ere folowyng, pat is to sey vnto pat tymne pat he wroth be first miracle at be weddyng, pat was pat self day twelf moneb pat he was baptized. And pouh he or his disciples precheden in be mene tymne ojerwhile.' neuerles it was not so fully nor so customably done before pat Jon baptist was taken & 30 enprisoned.' as aftur.' And in pat he 3af vs ensaumle of a wonderful meknes, when touching be office of prechynge he 3af stede to Jon, pat was michie lasse, & without comparision more vnworbi pen he. And so we move se pat he began not with boste & blowynge as many done.' bot with meknes litel & litel softly. 35 Wherfore vpon a sabbate day when he was come in to be sinagoge as he was wont to do with opere as in be chirch of.'ues.'
In the grace of Jesus Christ, the Paschal lamb, made perfect in our behalf, be written as good. f. 39

Idee the pope, that wold action take hede of beholding, he, as when he stand new. And when he 10 new, [ & also when he when he worship see dedes & hees face, if the kynne isle opere, but as 15 serof. And so what if iese: pis generale

1 capitulo sequenti.

The Mercurij [Wednesday]

He rose vp fort rede in maner of a minister or a clerke, & when per was take him pe boke of pe prophete ysaie: he turnede to that place where it is written, & so he radde in his manere, pe spirit of our lorde hym restrde vp on me. Wherefore he had annoymed me, 5 & fort preche to be pore: he had send me &c. And ban when he hade closeade pe boke & taken it to pe servant: he sai done, & ban he spake forshemore & seide, pis day is pis scripture fulfilled in yowre eres.

Now take hede of him how mekely at pe bygynnyng he 10 take vp on him pe office of a rede as it were a symple clerke, first with a benign & lovely chere redyng, & after expownyng it mekely of him self, & 3it not openly expressyng or semyng him self, when he seip pis day is fulfilled pis scripture, as who sey, I pat rede pis, pis day: am he of whom it spake p.

And be ceycne of alle pat were in pe synagogue were set bisiely in him. And alle beis wondered of pe wordes of grace pat 15 gen out of his moues. And no wondres. For he was souvereinely faire & also most eloquente. As David seip to him of bope, paut art faire in shape passyng pe children of men, & grace is shedde in pi lippes.

De que vacatioe habetur Johannis primo capitulo.

Speciosius formas pro filiis hom-num, &c.

Forpermore also oure lord Jesus bisyng him about oure saucion: began to clepe & gedire to him disciples & so he ceped Peture & Andréwe þe tymes.

First tymne when he was about pe watere of Jordan, as it 25 was seid before, & þen þei comen sumwhat in to his knowlech, bot þei folowed not him.

Be seconde tymne he cepede hem fro þe shippe, when þei weren about to take fishe, as Luke tellep. Bot þen þou þei herden his doctrine & folowede him. Neuerles þei þouhten at þat tymne to 30 turne aȝeyn to hir propre gudes.

Be þridde tymne as Mathew e tellep, he ceped hem fro þe shippe, when he seid to hem, Come þafur me for I sal make 30 fisheres of men. And þen laft þei hir nettes & ship & faders & folowed him.

Also in þo tymes last tymes, he ceped James & John, as in 35 þe same place is made mynde of hem with Petur & Andrewe.

Also he ceped specially John fro þe bridale as seynt Jerome seip, þat þat is not expressed in þe text of þe gospel.

Also he ceped specially Philippe, & also in a noþere place

40 Mathew þe publicane. Bot [of] þe maner of cleyng of þe remnant: it is not expressly wrytten saue þat luke make þyre mynde of þe xi þe apostles chosen & nameþ hem alle.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.

Luce v' capitulo.
Nowe take we here entent to be maner of hym in his serleyng & goederung of these discipkes, & of his conversacion with hym, how lonely he spekes to hym, & how homely he shewe hym self to hym, drewyng hym to his love, withinsphere by grace & without forpe by dede, familiarely ledyng hym to his moder house, & also goynge with hym oft to hir duellynge, techyng & enfourmyng hym, & so in alle oper manere beyage als bisy aboute hym, & with als gret cure, as he moder is of his owne sone. In so miche pat as it is written eynt Petar tode, pat what tyme he sleept with hym in any place, it was his custome in tyse vp in he mirt hem slepyng, & if he founde any of hem whylede: priuely & softly hit him ageyn. For he loued hym ful tendurly knowyng what he wolde make of hym. As pouh it so were pat pei were men of rude & bystes condicioines, & of symple lynage: neuerles he pouht to make hem princes of pe worlde & cheuctynes of alle cristian men in gostly bataile, & domesmen of oper. Here also lat vs take hede of what maner peple began pe feiþ & pe gronde of holi chyrch, as of seche symple fisheires, pore men & vnlearn. For oure lord wolde not chose hereto grex clerkes & wise men or milty men of pe worlde, lest pe grece dodes pat sholde aftur be done by hym, miht be arcted to hir worbinesse. Bot his he reserued & kept to him self as it was reson, shewyng pat onely in his owne gudnes & miht & wisdome, he bouht vs & saued vs.
Blessed be he without ende Jesus. Amen.

Of pe miracle done at pe bridale of water turnede in to wyne. Capitulum xvij

Befelle pat day twelf moneþ hat oure lorde Jesus was baptizede as it is seide, þere was made a bridale in þe contre of Galile, in a place þat was cleped þe Cane. Of þe which bridale þer is doute whos bridale it was. Bot we at his tyme sholen suppose aftur þe comune opinion, þat it was of John þe Euangelist as seyn Jerôme also telles, in þe prologue of þe Gospel of John. At þe which bridale oure lady Jesu moder was, as she þat was þe eldest & most worbi of þe þre sisters. And þerfore she was not byden [&] cleped þidere as opere strangeres were. þat þe þere in hir sisters house homely as in hir owne house, ordeynynge, & ministringe as maistresse þerof, & þat we mcwe
Of þe conversyon of Marie Maugdelyn. Capitulum xxij".

Oure curneise lord Jesus was priised [or bidden] of Symonde þe leprose on a day to eate with hym, & þerto þe grauntedede gladly, & came to mete as he was went to do of sipes, hope of his owne curtysie, & also for þe love & þe zele þat he hade to þe saucion of manns soules, for þe whiche he was made man. For so etyngh with hem & benyngly commynge with [men] he drew[h]e hem unto þe love of hym. Also for als much as he made him self so perfitely pore, þat he take none possession of worldly goodes for hym self or for heez. þerfore þat loue of poorete þat was þe mirour of mekenes, what tymhe he was prayede or bided to mete, þoke it for þe tymhe & þe place. mekely [ & with curtysye þonkyng, & gode wilte. And þan benelec þat Marie Mawdeleyn, þat parantere oft tymhe before hade herde him preche & þer touching of his grace was grety stircd to compuncion & to þe fervent loue of hym, þow it were 3it priuely hidde in hir herte: when she herde & knewe þat he was at þe mete in þe house of þe forseid symonde. she was so fervently touchede with sorrow of herte withinforpe for hir synnes, & also with þe brennyng fire of his loue. þat she miht no lengir abide, but anone she went to þat forseid house where Jesus satte at þe mete, considering þat without him she miht not be saue nor haue forgiuences of hir synnes, & so she went bo[ld]ly in to þe house, & as she hade forȝete þir self takyng no rewarde to þe gestes þat þere were at þe mete, haldynge done þir face & þir eyene to þe erpe, she letted rot til she came to þat she souhte & inwardly louede oure lord Jesu. And anone þen she felle done to þe gronde prostrate at heez fete, & with grete inwarde sorrowe & shame for hir synnes spake in hir herte to him, þonkyng as it were in þis manere:

My swete lorde I wote wel[e] & treuly knoweleþ þat 3e ben my god & my lorde, & þat I haue offended þour hye maieste in many gret offens & trespasses, in so michþe þat I knoweleþ sopeley þat my synnes bene without noumbre as þe grauel[e] of þe see. Bot for als michþe as I byleue þat þour mercy passeþ al þinge. þerfore wreechede & sinful come to 3owe & fæ to þour grete mercy forpenkyng inwardly of þat I haue offended, & askyng mercy & forgiuences. And I belethe with al my herte amendment of my synnes & þat I shal neuer to my powere forsake þour obedience. Gode lord put me not fro 3owe, & forsake not my repentance for ofere refete I wote wel[e] þat I may no[t] haue, &
Die Mercourij [Wednesday]
also I wole not have, for I love 3ow souerely aboue al othere. Wherefore guide lord forsake 3e not me, bot punesh 3e me at 3our will, neuerles I aske alegate mercy.
And herwip with grete trist of his mercy & inwarde affection of his love: she kissed his fete off & sadly wepyng & shedyng teeres so biikke þat she weshe hese fete with hem. And so it semel [herby], pat our lord Jesus went barefoot.
After when she hade wele wept wip grete drede of hir unworpesse þat her teeres shold touche oure lordes fete, she wiped hem with hir her, deftynily, for she brought no pinge with hir so precious to wipe hem wip. And also she wiped hem with her her, in amendement of þat she hade before trespassed with hir her, þat is to say: as she hade before vised it in pride & vanite: þan she wolde put it to þe use of mekenes & deuotion. And also for þe ferdun loue & deuotion þat she hade to him, she wold not be letted þero, by þe fecchynge of any clope to wipe hem wip, but so wipynge hees fete with hir her, & after defently kysyng hem oth fetes: after she aynoynt hem with a precious oynement þat she brought with hir, supposyng perantere þat oure lordes feet were harde of þe wey, & also for inwarde deuotion bygynnynge with drede at his fete, as she dide after with more boldenes of loue aynoynt[yng] his hede.

Lord god whoso wolde inwarde þenk & take hede to þis dede of his woman, & al þe circumstance[s] þero: miche gostly fruite sholde he fynde þerinne, styring to inwarde repentance of synne, & to trewe loue of Jesu, & grete deuotion.

Bot now forþ as to þe processe, take we hede also of þe manere of oure lordes Jesu in þis tyme, how benyngly & paciently he suffrep hir do al hir wille, for it liked hem ful wele, knowyng þe inwarde affeccion & þe trewe loue of hir herte. And so al þat tyme he cese of cyng, & also with him alle þe gestes, wondrying of þe woman, & of þat vnkedede dede, & of þe pacience of oure lorde Jesu & his suffrance of hir.

And spacially þe maistere of þe house Symonde, demede him gretely in his herte, þat he wolde sufter sicke a comune sinfull woman touche him so homely, & in þat he pouht þat he was no profete supposyng þat he knewe hir nouht. But oure lorde þat passynge alle oþer prophetes, knew þe leste pouht of mannes herte, answerede opynly to his priuete bouthes, showyng herby him self a verrey prophete & more þan a profete. And by an ensampl of twyn detours: he concludet him justifying þe woman þat he held so sinfull & pruyng þat she louede him more, & shewed him
more token of love by hir dede: | fan he with aile his feste, & so f. 46'
shewyng, pat not onely be perfection of alle vertues, bot also be justyfing of be sinfull, stant principally in trewe love of god: he seide to Symonde as for a conclusion þus, Many sinnes bene forjuene hir, for she loved miche.

And þen he turnede him to Mauclideyn, & seide to hir as for a fulle ende of þat she askede, fit feip hæf sanede þe, go now in pees.

A lorde Jesu how sweete & likyng was þis word to hir, & with how grete joy þat she went swayl! Sopely it was so likyng: | þat as I trowe it went neuer after out of hir mynde. And so was she perfictly converte to Jesu, leuyng hir sinne fully, & liuyng ever after in al honeste holily & drawyng algate to him & to his moder without deparing perseuerantly.

In þe forside processe & þe sentence of þis gospel bene 15
many grete notabilites to oure edificacione of þe whiche we stole touch sume in partye. First as to a souercyn confort of alle sinful folke we haue here opynly shewed in oure lorde Jesu þe abundance of his endles mercy, þat so sone & so gladly forsaþe so many grete sinnes & trespasses of þis sinful woman, & so doþe he to alle þat trewely desiren & asken his mercy, but here behoweþ charite & trewe loue, pat was so specialy conuced of him in þis woman, þe which onely reformeþ pes by twix god & þe sinful man, as þe apostle seïp, þat charite couereþ þe multitudine of sinnes, & without þe whiche it is impossible to pleys god. 20

For as seïnt bernarde seïp, þe quantite of every manne soule shal be taken & estimeþ after þe mesure of charite þat is þemynne, þat is to sey, þat soule þat hæf miche of charite: is gret, & þat hæf litel: is litel, & þat hæf noght: is nowht, as seïnt poule seïp aftur þe rehearsyng of many grete vertues: concluding þus, If 30 I have not charite: sopely I am nowht. And þerfore seïd oure lord of þis woman, þat for she louede miche: þerfore she haide miche forjuene as it was seide before.

Forpermore also here haue we enasample of trewe repentance & penance þat is nedeful to forjuenes of synne, shewed in þis woman Mauclideyn, as we haue herde, þe whiche penance as alle holy chyrch techeþ, stant in sorowe of herte in shirft of mouþe & in satisfaccion of dede. 35

Bot here perantere sume þenken aftur þe fals opinyon of lollardes þat shirft of mouþe is not nedeful, bot þat it suffisce onely in herte to be shriuen to god, as þ[is] forside woman was, for þe gospel telleþ not þat she spake any wordes by mouþe, & 3it
was his word to his, & 
openly it was so likynges, & 10 
unynde. And so was she 
full, & liynguer 
to him & to his moderne 
ence of his gospel bene 
e of þe whiche we shole 
yn confort of alle sinful 
in our lorde Jesus þe 
and so dope 
mercy, but here behouþ 
comendeth him in his 
y twix god & þe sinful 
werep þe multitude of 
le to pleys god. 
anitye of every mannes 
mesure of charite þat is 
ichie of charitie. is grete, 
is nowht, as seynt poule 
us. concluding þus, 1f 30 
d perfore seid oure lord 
perfore she hade miche 
example of trewe 
orþjutnes of synne: 35 
haue herde, þe whiche 
it in sorowe of herte in 
æfter þe fals opinion 
ful, but þat it sufficep 
s] forside woman was, 
worde by mouþ, & 3it
knewe fully his herte oure lord Jesu here beynyng in his bodily presence as it is seide. Nevertheless she shewed the effectes of his confession parfitly in deede. in hat hat she wolde not shewe hir to him in private as sinfull, & askyng mercy, as she myght have done by twyx him & hir, or elles onely before these disciples: but sparyng for no shame, hat is a gret part of penance in confession, she shewe pese place & pese tyme where it myght be to hir as opune reproue & shame, hat was in pese house of pese pharise, pe which she knewe wele haunge indignation & despise of pese sinful, & als at pese meate when it sholde be most wondring to hir & al hir gernes upon hir for pese reproue & pese shame hat she hade of hir sinne was so gret wipinforp, hat she forgyate al shame & reproue withoutforp, & so in pese dede she knoweblech[fed] opunly hir synne in generalle, & also by wille in speciale, not refusynge fort haue herde it rehersed & opunly tolde of hir hat she came to, oure lord Jesu, pe which as she wist wele knewe in speciale pe lest part perof, & pe myght resonably haue reprehended hir opunly of it, or he hade forgiue it. But oure curteise lord ful of grace & of mercy, sawh pe verrey contrecion in hir herte, & pese gude wylle groxnet in trewe bylue pe he was verrey god, & pe myght fully forgiue hir synne as him likede, & pereuy pe she hade ful hope to hauve his grace & forgiuencys, & als pe feresent loue pe she hade to hym, pe whech pe vertues bene nedeful to everye man pe wole hauve forgiuences of synne. And so without any more penance he fully forsaue | al hir sinne, & bade hir go in pes, pe was pes of f. 48° conscience fully made by twixe hir & god & manne. For hir trewe feip & bylue pe whiche were groxnet perfitely hope & charite, as it is seide: had made hir safe. And so shal it pe most sinful man pe is or euer shal be, if he haue it trewly groxnet in hir herte by verrey contrecion as she hadde, for pean without doute he wole not spare for any shame to knoweblech hir sinne by wordes opunly to man in goodde stede: as she dide by wille to him pe was bope god & man as it is seide.

Bot here perantere semep to symne men hat as pe sinful man shal folowe his woman by trewe forbinckyn of his sinne: so sholde pe preste folowe oure lord in lyst forgiunyn shewed pe forof, enimynyng no more penance pan he dide perfore.

Bot here answeren holi doctours hat seyne, hat pe contrecion & forbinckyn gynyn of synne may be so grete & so parfit, hat it sufisep without any more penance to ful forgiuences perof, pe which herde as it is, if pe preste myhte se & fully knowe: he shold 3iue no more penance. Bot for als mich as man seep not pe herte
as our Lord Jesus God & man did, & so his may not know it, but
in party as he tokenes without forf: perfore as for his siker part he
shall enjoyne penance for sinne, more or lasse as holi chiche hæp
ordayne. And wold god hat alle sinfull peple wold folowe his
woman in trewe forpenkyng, & pen without doute pei shuld have
of god ful forziuyng, were pei penance more or lasse of pei prestes
enjoyng.

Forpermore in þe forside processe of þe gospel, oure
lorde Jesus ȝæfe enseamplu to þe perycheres of goddes worde þat
þei shold not spare in tymc to sey þe sope, for displyeslyng of hem
þat feden hem, or giuen hem oper bodily sustinance. In þat not
wipstanding þat þe pharise fed him as he dide oft, he reprehendeth
him opynly in his owne house of his mystelieue & of his fals
boult in þe whiche he hade indignacion of þe sinful woman, & as
it wolde seme to stiriynge of his grete mawgrep: he spared not to
justifie þat woman þat he demed so sinful, shewynge him more
louynge god þan he, & þat she was saued by him trewe blynghe,
before him þat failed þerof.

Bot not wipstanding þis, on þat opere side þe pharise laft
not after to fede him, & do him | humanye, as many men now
done, þe wech what tymc þat a sope is seide, þat is contrarie to
hir will or opinion: þei withdrawn hir hirunye & affecion
fro him þat selip it, be he neuer so gude or vertuese in lyuyng. And
soaley in þat condicion, þei shewen hem self what so euer þei
ben alouung to Jesus þat is verrey sopefastnes, & more vnkynde
þen was þis pharise, & so worpi more reproue of him & more
peace. Nuerles þe prechour, or an opere gostly man þat
representeþ criest persoane, shal not spare to sey þe sope in tymc:
for drede [f] mawgrep, or wipdrawynge of fauour or any temperel
profile, if he wole be þe trow membre of criste. And souereyny be
he warr of glyoung or fauour: eror for þat is most
abominable.

Also in þis forsaid processe of þe gospel, in þat þat oure
lord Jesus rehersede to þe pharise þe gude dedis of þe woman, in
þe wech he faile, as þat she woshe hese fete with hir teres, þat
he dide not with waterc, & so forþ of opere, & þerip he tolde not
what he dide to him, þat she dide not. we haue ensamplu &
technyng what tymc we bene temptede to juvifying of oure self &
reproue of oper: þen to þenk & haue in mynde þe gude dedes &
vertues þat ben or mowe in þat opere man, forjetyng oure owne
gude dedes or vertues, & bryngeþe to mynde oure defautes, &
trespasses, & so shole we vertuesely deme oure self & excusc
Opere, & so profite in pe verter of trewe mekenes, pat he grant
vs. mirour of mekenes blisse de Jesus. Amen.

*Hic pretermittitur duo Capitula de Johanne Baptistae*

*Of pe spekyng of ovre lord Jesus wyth pe woman
samaritane at pe pyt [of watere. Capitulum 5
x|xii].*

*Effelie vpon a tyme pat as our lorde Jesus shuld go fro pe
cuntre of Juda in to Galile, he most make his wesy by pe cuntre of
Samarye, where was a drawe welc pat pe clepeden pe welle of
Jacob pat was a pitte of watere, vpon pe which pitte he restede
him as wery of goyng. 10

Lord Jesu what is his, pat pou pat art pe sopfast wesy &
maker of alle erply wesy, so art wery of pe wesy, pe which port
pi soucreyn miht berest vp & confortest al opere in hir wesy. Bot
jus woldest pou in pi manhede shewe alle pe kyndly infinmite of man
as in hungere & prist & weniness eft sipes & sech opere fort | 15
shewe pe verrey kynde of man pat pou take for oure sake, & so was
alle pi bodily lyuyng in pis worde peynful & trauaileous to
oure ensaumple, blessed be pou euere.

In pe mene tyme as he sat so on pe welle, & hees disciples
weren gone in to pe nekst Cite fort bigge mete: pere came a
woman of pat cuntry to fette watere [of] pat welle, pe which
was cleped *Lucye*. And oure lord Jesus willyng shewe to hir, & by
hir to ofer his godhede spake with hir longe tyme of gret pinge[s]
& hie in gostly endurstandyng, pe which spekyng bope of him &
hir & how his disciples comen a3ayn, & how at pe womanus
worde pe peple of pe cite comen out to hir, & held him with hem a
certayn tyme & after how he went fro hem: we passen ouer at
his tyme, for als miche as it is opun & pleynly written in pe gospel
of Jon.

Bot in pis processe we movwe note in oure lord Jesu fiirst a
token of gret mekenes, in pat he wolde be alone, what tyme he
sent hese disciples in to pe Cite fort bigge mete, & in pat biggyng,
ensaumple pat it is lieufull to goddus seruantes fort haue money &
reserve it to hir nede.

Also in pat he spake so homely with pat simple woman al
one, & of so grete pinges, as pouh it hade be with many gret wis
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Die Mercurij [Wednesday]

men: be pride & be presumption of many clerkes & preachers is confoundet & reproued: be which if be shold shewe, hir wisdome or hir komnyng not only to one man, bot also to fewe men be shold helde al as lose, & siche a simple audience selle unwrped, to take hir proud speach.

5  Forzmore in pat, be disciples brouthen hir mecte to him: & bode myn estere at be welle: we haue ensample of pouerete & bolicy penance, in his maner of fedyng after his trauaille so pere without be cite, & as we mowe suppose dinkying of be watere, & pat not onely in his tyme, bot as we suppose oft stipes, when he went by be cuntrey he ete in pat maner without be townes & be ducelyng of men at some ryuerc or welle were he never so wery or traualled in body, shewing penitent be gret love pat he hade in pouerete & mekenes, he vsede not curioze | dinkting of dierse metes rosted & sodene, not preciouse vessile of siluere or pewtere, nor diletate wynes white & rede: bot onely be clene watere of be welle or be ryuerc, etynyng brede pergib as a pore man mekely vpon be erpe.

Also in pat he answerede to his disciples first when he bode myn go to mete, & seide to hem bus, I have mete to ete pat be knowe not, for my mete is pat I do & worche be will of him pat send me. And so he abode be comyng of men of be cite to preche to hem firste: we move se how bisy he was about gostly fedyng, firste fulynting in dede pat longebe to be soule & gostly sustynance: pan pat longebe to be bolicy sustynance, pouhe be hade perto gretede nede, & so yade he ensample to prehours & curates fort do.

Miche more gostly fruyt is contenende in pis gospell, be which whose desirib to knowe more fully: he sal fynde it in be boke of seyne Austyn vpon be gospell of Jon, where he make of be processe of pis gospell a longe processe & clergiale ful of gostly fruite.

Bot for als michie as here is made mynde of be pouerete of oure lord Jesus as it is oft before, & also of his abstynence: perfoure of bees twyn vertues perfite lytely tought vs by ensample bope of him self & his disciples, it sal folowe after more plenerly in be nekst

Chapitre. Amen.

[Hic pretermittuntur plura Capitulæ, & transitur ad Capitulum xxxviiæ in Bonaventura, pro eo quod materia illius Capitulî videtur convenientius sequi istud Capitulum pretacum. Sed postea sequuntur de ipsis: quinque Capitula pertinentia ad contemplationem pro die Jovis.]
& curates & other men of holy churche, & specially we religious the best
bene sette in goddes temple fort some him continuously in devout
praise, & other costly exercises: if we liste va to couseitise &
vanities, & medle va ouere meede with worldly occupationes &
chaffarynges, as he did we moowe: we move skillfully drede pe f. 60'
indignacion of Jesu, & his castygng out fro grace in his life, & after 6
departying fro his blisse eueryasting.

Wherefore pou pat wolt not drede pe indignacion of Jesu: 10
loke pat in no manere pou patke he wilfully nor medle he to bi
powere with worldly occupation

Bot for his matiere is fully & plentifully tretede in pe
exposition of his gospel in many places: perchere we passen ouere
bus shortly at his tyme.

Post istum capitulum sequitur in Bonaventura, Quando
discipuli velletbant spicas &c. quod capitulum supra translationem 15
est parte tercia, capitulo xxiiij.

Of pe recceuyng of oure lord Jesu by pe tweyn
sisteres Martha & Marie, and of pe tweyn
manere of lyuynghe pat bene actife &
contemplative in holy churche. Capitulum 20
xxxij™.

BEfelle vpon a tyme pat oure lorde Jesus went with hese
disciples in to Bethanie pat was clepe pe Castel of Marthe &
Marie, & came in to pe house of hem. And be pat louded Him
with alle hir hertes, weren gladde & joyful of his comynge. And 25
Martha pe elder sistere pat hade pe cure of pe housholde anone
byside hir & went fast aboute to ordelyne for pe mete couenancable
to him & hees disciples. Bot hir sistere Marie forteyng alle bodily
mete & desirynge souereynly to be fedde gostly of oure lord Jesu:
set hir done on pe gronde at hees fete, & kastynge hir eyene & hir
30 herte & hir eres in to him onely, with more ioy & likyng peen may
be spoken was fed gostly & conforted in pe blessede wordes of
oure lord Jesu. For he wolde not be ydulde: bot as his comune
manere was, occupiede him with spekyng of edificacion & wordes
of eueryasting life. Marthe pat was so bisily occupiede aboute pe 35
ministracion & pe servuite of oure lord Jesu & hees disciples,
Die Jouris [Thursday]

...sayng his sire Marie so sittynge it were in ydolnes. Toke his heavly, & compleynted his tooure lord es he bade take no rewarde berto, & prayede him bat he wolde hidde his syster ris & help his to serve, & hen was Marie aferde lest she shold have be taken fro

5 bat swete rest & gosly lykyng bat she was inne. And nouht she seide, but hente don hir hede, abydyng what oure lord wolde sey. And hen oure lord answerynge for hir, seide to Martha bat bouth she f. 60* was bisy & turbulet about many hinges, neuertheles one hinge was necessarie, & bat was the best parte bat Mayde chace, he which

10 shold never be take fro hir. And hen was Marie greatly conforted & sette more sikurly in hir purpose, & Martha without exyse held hir paeide & serued forp with gude wylle.

† In his processe of the gospel forseide so shortly touchede after the letter: we move note & vndurstande many faire hinges
gostly tooure edification. And first the gret gudenes of oure lord Jesu in his homely comynge to bat porc house of thys twyn systers Martha & Marie, takyn gostly sykes with gude wylle & likyng siche simple refecccion & bodilly fode as the hadden. For as it seme welce by thys seying of Martha, bat hir sistr lete hir sere alone.

15 the was no multitude of servantes, & so folowe that the was no gret aray in diverse mesess or many delicate metes & drinkes, & 3i came oure lord ofre casumabuly unbeden to pat place, Jan he dide to any opere to take his bodilly fode, & bat specially as I trowe, for the gret love & affection he hade to Marie after hir

20 conversiones, as he kneve welce bat she louede him souereynly euere after, as it is seide before.

† And so it [is to blyeue] bat oure lord Jesus, wole loue specially & oft visite by grace & duelle gostly with pat soule, bat by trewe repentance & penance forsakep hir sinne, &

30 peruserantly kepep hir in the loue of him.

Lord how gladde & inuyful were thys twyn sisters forseide [Martha & Marie] of the comynge at this tyme of his blessed gest Jesus to hir house, & principally Marie. For as it seme after the processe of the gospel, thys was the first tyme bat he came to pat house, & bat sone after the conversion of Marie forseide, & in so miche it was more joyful, for for she hade pat she souereynly louede & onely desiered. And perfore hir systers not knowynge how it stode with hir withinforp in hir herte, & seyng his maner ges chage, pat was wont before to be occupie in

35 bizinesse of bodilly ministracion with hir, & now as takynyng no rewarda berto, bat sittynge & tentyng onely to be swete contemplacion of Jesu as it is seide before: merueilede gretly...
The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Ch:

beseof, & perfore compleyned to our lord as it is seide, not reproving his sister after he comune condicion of women. In tokene & ensaumple bat he bat is occupied vertuyly in actif life. f. 61' shall not reprove him bat is in rest of contemplatif life, pouh it seme to him bat he be as ydol.

Of actif life and contemplatif life.

By þesc tweyu sisteres [bec]for[s]cide, Martha & Marie, as holy men & doctours written, ben vndurstande twey maner
lifes of cristen men, þat is to sey actif lif & contemplatif lyfe. Of þe whech þere beþ many tretes, & gret processe made of diuerse 10
doctours. And specialy þe forside Bonaventure in þis boke of
cristes life makeþ a longe processe aclymgyn many auctorizes of
seynt Bernard, þe whiche processe þouh it so be þat it is fu' gude
& fructuouse as to many gostly lyueres. neuerles for it semeþ as
inpertynent in gret party to many comune persones & ssembly 15
soules, þat þis boke in english is wriuen to, as it is seid ofte before,
þerefore we passen ouere shortly taking þereof þat semeþ profyable & edificatife to oure purpose at þis tyme.

B.

1. And first it is to vndurstande, þat þe processe of þe
forseid Bonaventure of þesc twey manere of lyfes Actif & 20
contemplatif longeþ specially to spiritual persones as bene
prelates, prechours & religioues. And so he seþ ai þe bygianyn,
þat actif life þat is vndurstunde by Martha, haþ tweyn parties.

Prima pars
vite actime.

2° pars.

And þe first part is þat manere of lyuing by þe whiche a
mannus bisinesse stant principaly in þat exercise, þat longeþ to his 25
owne gostly profyte, þat is to sey in amendyng of þim self as
wridawayng fro vices & profetyng in vertues. First as to profyte of
him self, & afterwarde as to his neighboyr by werkes of rihtwisnes
& pite, & dedes of charite as it sal be seide after more pleyn[er]ly.

† And seconde part of actif life is, when a mannus 30
occupacion & bizinesse, stant in þat exercise þat longeþ to þe
profyte of ober men principaly, þouh it be also perwip to his owne
mede þe more perfy. As it is in gouvrynyn of ober men & tehcing,
& helping to þe hele of soule, as done prelates & prechours &
ober þat hauen cure of soule.

† And bytwix þesc tweyn partys of actif lif befor seide:
stant contemplatif life. So þat in þis ordre: first a man travaile &
35 zif him to gude exercisc in praier, & in study of holi scripturys
& ober gude werkynge in comune contesuacion. | Amendyng his f. 61'
Die Jouis [Thursday]

life & wipdwaryng fro vices & profythyng in getyng of vertues. And 2° after þen secondly restyng in contemplacioun þat is to sey in solitute at þe lest of herte, forsakyng alle worlides businesse: with alle his might be about, continually to peen on god, & beavenly 5 þinges, onely tentyng to please god. And þen here after when he is perfytly in þis wey of seynt foreseid exercises than & stabylte in verye wisdom & vertues, & lythned borh grace desyring þe gostly profyte of opermen: þen may he sikerly take upon him þe care & þe gouverne of oper.

And so after þe foreseid processese, first it behoeph þat in þe first part of actyl life manne sould be purget of vices & strenghten & conforted in vertues. After þat it be entourmede taut & lihtede in contemplatife life, & þan in þe pridde degre may he sikerly go out to gouvernate & profyte of oper, as it is seide.

Vpon þis foreseid processese of Bonaventure, so shortly touchede: he aleggep after many auctoritie of seynt Bernard fort preue alle þe partes þeowef, þat is to sey, þe first of actyl, þe seconde [of] contemplatif, & þe pridde þat is þe seconde of Actyl life, þe which we passe euere with gret processse of contemplacion & many auctoritie of seynt Bernard. For fewe þere bene þe more harme is awpre in state of contemplatif life touchyng þe seconde poyn departe, in þe state of perfyte actyl life, touching þe pridde poyn: þat comen to hir astate by þe tewe wþ þat is declarede before. And þat is to cause þat in þis tyme many þer bene boþe men & women in þe state of contemplatif life, as speckyly ankeres & recluses or hermytes þat witen litel as in effecte trewly what contemplatif life is by defaut of exercises in actyl lif as it is before seide. And þerfore it is ful perilous & ful dreadeful to be in astate of perfection & have a name of holynes.

35 as hauen specialty þeese Recluses, bot þe lyuynge & þe gostly exercise of hem be acordynge þerto.

For seynt Gregory scip, þat þere bene many þat fleen occupation of þe worlde & taken hem to rest, bot perwip þei bene not occupiede with vertues, & þerfore ofte sipes it falleþ, þat þe 35 more sikerly þat þei esse fro outwadre occupation, þe more largely þei gederen in to hem by ydulnesse þei noyse of vnclene bouthes. And so of euyry siche soule þat spendep hir tyme in ydulnes & sloupe, spekeþ þe prophete Jeremye in his lamentacion in þis manere, videreunt illam hostes & deriserunt sabbata eius, þat is to sey, þe wikked spirites enemys of mankynde, seyng & takynge hede of þe lyuynge of siche an ydul soule: laghen to scorn hir dizes of rest. For in þat she is ferre fro
outwärde occupacion & beryb is trowed to serve god in holiness: in so miçhe she serueb pe trinity of pe wikked spirites in ychines.

Also pe same holi Clerc Gregory in pe same boke after spekyng of pees tweyn lifes, actif & contemplatif, seib, pei 5 manuec soyle shold first [be] wiped & made clene of pe desyer of temperetey ijoy & vyn glorye, & of al delectaciot or likynge of fleshly lust & desire. & pei may he be lift vp to pe sit & degue of contemplacion. In figure & token hereof, when god yaf Moyses pe lawe: pe commune peple was forboden to neike pe hille. In tokene pei pei pei bene of weike will & desirec erply pinges: shold not presume to clymbe vp to yxe pinges of contemplacio.

And forþemore declaryng how pei shal serve hem self able pei wolde go to contemplatif lyfe seib, pei first it behouepe pei pei pei serve hem self by exercice of vertues in pe feeld of worching, pei is to sey, pei pei knowe hem self bisly, if pei done none harme to hur neibor & if pei bene paciently harmes [or] wronges done to hem of oper men. Also if pei haue no gladnesse in herte or likyng when temperetey godcs fallen to hem, & aseynwarde if pei be not to heuy or sorry, when pei beac wiþdrawen. Also if pei felene in hur mynde pe loue of spirituel pinges so mihy, pat it overcompe & putte out of hur herte[s] pe affecion & ymagnacion of erply pinges, & so in pei pei courcetene to come to pat pinge pei is aboue hur kynde: pei overcomen pei pei bene by kynde. Al bis seiþ gregory.

Hereto acording seynt bernarde & alle oper doctours generally: seynt pat who so wolde go dewly to contemplatif lyfe: it behouepe pei be first preuned in exercise of actif lyfe. In figure whereof is alleged comunely pe storye of pe tweyn doutheres of Laban pe whiche Jacob toke to pees wifes, pei weren cleped, 'pe elder Lya, pei was sore eyede, bot plenteuous in beryng children, by whom is tokened actif lyfe. De 3onger was Rachel, faire & louelich bot bareyn, & by her is tokened contemplatif lyfe. And þowe þat Jacob loued better Rachel þen Lya & couzine first to haue hade hier to wifte for his vij zere seruice. neuer lese he was made to take first þe elder Lya. In token þat actif lyfe shold be before contemplatif lyfe as it is seid, & þis storye is pleynely treted in many places to þis purpose, & þerefore we passe ouere so shortly.
De vita activa & contemplativa

Bot fort spoke of pe manner of lyuyng in these twyna lifys actif & contemplatif in special, & nombrelich of actif [life] pat stant in so many degrees, as of seculares & religiouse & leuvede, it were hard & wolde ask longe processe, & also as it semep it nede not.

For be generate exercise of actif life, as it longe first to a man him self, pat is in filhryng azeynus vices, & bisy in getyng of vertues. And also after as it longe to hose cunc cristion, pat is in fulllying of pe dedes of mercy, & almesdedes doyng of hem pat haue abundance of temperely godys: in everydegre, is written sufficiently as I hope, & perfore I leve to speke more of his matere at his tymc.

Sane to make an ende acording to be bygynyng of pe mater before seid in pe gospel of these twyn sisteres Martha & Marie by pe whech bene venturystond pees twyn lifys actif & contemplatif as it is seide.

First pei pat bene in actif life, hauen enstample in Martha of pat vertue pat is sourely nedeful to hem in alle hyr dedes pat is charite, & first as to hem self pat pei be without dedely sinne, for clycs Jesus wole not duelle in hyr house, nor accepte hyr seruyce. Also as to oper, pat pei dene not nor despise oper pe whech perauentre done not so many vertues dedes as to manys siht as pei done. For pei mowe not knowe pe prye dome of oure lord 25 Jesu, pat accepted more pleynly & preferede pe pryue contemplacion of Marie, pat sate at hese fete in silence, as she hade be ydul: before alle pe gret bisy seruyce of Martha, pat was for pe feruent loue pat she hade in contemplacion of him, and zyt was pe seruice & pe bisyness of Martha ful plesyng to Jesu & medeful to hyr, as actif life is gude, bot contemplatif bettcr.

f. 63r

And so farthmore it is to note, pat not wipstandyng pe grete commendacion of oure lord Jesu touching Marie & pe preferyng of hir part, Martha gruchched not of hir part, but continued forpe in hir mane ryuyng, seruyng customeably to Jesu & hese disciples, as John witnesse after in his gospel. In token pat he pat is called to god & stant in pe state of actif life, hald him pained & gruch not, bouh contemplatif life be commendet before his astate. For how so euer it stonde of these twyn astates & degrees of lyuyng: god wote al only who shal be before oper in be bliss of hauen, of pe persones in bees astates.

And bus Michele be seide as touching pe part of Martha, &
of actif life tokened by hir.

Forbermore touching contemplativ life, he pat is in pat
[n]state, he\[b] ensample in Marie of pre pinges pat nedep
soeveronly in pat astate, pat bene mekenes, paciency & silence.

First mekenes is tokened in pre love sittynge of Marie, at he 5
fete of oure lord Jesu: & bot his grade be trewly sette in he herte
of him pat is in his degree of contemplacion, pat is to say pat he
presume not of his owne holynesse, bot pat he despire him self
trewly in his owne sigh as it is seide before in diverse places, wha:
longe to mekenes' sofully rilles alle his byldynge of contemplacion
be hit never so hye wole not stande stedefast but sonde at a lyte
wyynge of aduersite falle to nouhth.

Pe seconde vertue accordyng hcreto is paciency, in suffyring
fals demynge, skor[m] & reprou[m] of pe world pat he shal
suffre pat fully forsake[p] & despise[p] pe world as it nedep to pe:
15 trewe contemplatif, committynge alwycy by paciency in herte, his
cause to his aduoket Jesu, without answeere reprouying aseyne as
Marie dide, when pe pharisec demede & reproued hir. Also hr
sistere pleyned vpon hir. & pe disciple hade indignacion &
gruched aseynus hir. Bot in alle pese she kept silence, pat is pe
20 hridre vertue nedful to pe contemplatif, & so ferforp she 3ate
cnsample of silence pat we finde not in alle pe gospel pat she
spake before pe resurrectione of oure lorde saue ones, by a short
word at pe reising of hir brother Lazare, not wipstanding pe grete
loue pat oure lord Jesu shewed to hir, & pe grete lykynge pat she 25
hade in pe wordes & pe holy doctrine of him, pat shold styr hir by f. 63'
reson pe more boldly to speke.

¶ And whoso coueitep to knowe pe fruyte of vertuose
silence, if he haue affeccion & wille to trewe contemplatif lynug,'
without doute he shal be bettur tautit by experience, ben by
30 wriying or teching of man, & neuerles seynt bernard, & many
opere holy faders & doctours comendem hyely [pis] vertuose
silence as it is worbi.

Whereof & ober vertuose exercise pat longep to
contemplatif lynug, & specialy to a reclus, & also of medelet
35 life, pat is to sey sumtyme actife & sumtyme contemplatif, as it
longep to diverse persones pat in worldly astate hauen grace of
gostly loue: who so woole more pleyne [be] enfourmed & tautit in
english lynge: lete him loke pe tretees pat pe worpi clerk & holi
lyuere Maister Walter Hilton pe Chanon of Thurgarton wrote in
40 english by grete grace & yte discretion: & he shal fynde here as
I leue a sufficient scole & a trew of alle pese. Whos saule rest in
5 Of his resing of Lazare & opere twyna dede bodies.

Capitulm xxxiiiij.

Among alle his myracles his oure lord Jesus Crist wrouht here in orpe, his resyng of Lazare principaly is comendet & souerely is to be consideret, not onely for his souereyn miracle itself, but also for many notable pinges beselhe in his myracle & diuers misteries, he which seynt Austyn clerigial treteb, by longe processe vpon seif gospell. Of his which sumwhat I shal tuchew in paye, & more ouer as he grace of oure lord Jesu wele sende wit perttyng to his purpose.

"And forsas miche as he gospell makep mynde of pre dede bodies resaid by oure lord Jesu fro depe to life: of his which twynyn he first, bene not spoken of specially in his trete before: perefore it semep convenient to his purpose sumwhat [to] tuchew of hem now in his place as he forsaid seynt Austyn deon.

"And first we shole vndurstande & hawe in mynde, his dedes of oure lord Jesu after his manethede bene ensample to vs fort folowe him, as in mekenes, pouertc, pacience: & opere vertues: so in hese miracles done by vertue of his godheade we shole not desire to folowe him fort do as he did; bot we shole wirchpec him as amuzty god in pat paye, & more ouere couet fort vndurstande he gostly meyngyn of hem, how his miracles done on buodly & in bodiemes, bene now done of sipes gostly in menmys soules. And so as seynt Austyn seip, by his bodies he which oure lord Jesus resaid fro depe to life bodily: ben vndurstande he prep maner of dede soules, he which both his speciale grace he reisch every day to veverlastynig lif gostly. For as he gospell makep mynde, he reid he douther of his maister of his temple, pat lay dede in his house, by whom is vndurstande dedely sinne onely in assent, without he fulfillynge herof in dede. Also he reid he widowes some born dede on his bere without his 3ates of his cite, by whom is vndurstande dedely sinne withoutforp parfouretm in dede. And his dede dede body he reid pat was Lazare bryed & foure daires dede, by whom is tokenet dedely sinne in custome. For if we take
hede & vndurstande hat simne is dehp of pe soule; we move fynde
hat pe soule is depe gosly & slayn þorn simne in þeþ þe
manerese. First by full assent of wille to do þat is forþeden of god,
onely within forþ in þe soule, without þe dede þeþor of withoutþorp
As by en السنalpe of lecherie hat is forþeden, what þyme as oure
lord seip in þe gospel, þat a man seip a woman lustily to þat exes
fort hauce to do with his fleshy, & fully assentep þerto in his wille.
Pouh þe dede folowe not after; he is ascente as a lechour in his
herte, & so is þis soule slayn gosly þorn þat assent, & ded is
goddus sibh.

† And þis maner of gosly dehp is vndurstande by þat first
dede bodye þat oure lorde Jesus reisid in þe house, þat was þe
doughter of þe prince of þe sinagoge or þe maister of þe temple as
it is seid before.

† Of whom þe gospel tellep, þat he came to oure lord Jesu
preying him þat he wold come to his house & hele his dohter þat
lay seeke þerinne. And as oure lord þat of his gret grace & endles
biddenes was euþ redy to help & hele al þoo þat asked him
trewely, was goynge with him toward his house. þere came words
to þe forsied prince þat his dohter was dede, & þerfore þeþ bedeþ
him, he shold not make þe maister þat is Jesus traualde in
veyne, for þe trewede wele þat he was of mitht to hele þe seke,
but noþ to reise þe dede. Neuerles oure lord Jesus letted not for hir
mysbylyeue nor for hir scornyng to do his grace, bot bade þe fader
dhat he shuld not dede bot onely bylyeue. And when he came to his
house, & fonde þere, after þir custome manþ wepyng & mourneful
minstralsy, & ober aray, for þo execuques. he seid to hem, weþep
not, for þe wench is not dede bot sleipþ, & þan þei scorned him,
for þei vndurstode not what he mened. For pouh she was dede as
to hem. neuerles to him þat was of mitht to reise hir & make hir to
lyue: she dide bot slept. And þan puttyng out al þat were in þe
house saue þe faderes & þe moderes, & þeþ þe apostles, Petur [&]
James & John, oure lord Jesus bad þe wench rise, & anone she
rose vp fro dehp to life, & after ete & was al hole.

Pis is þe processe of þe gospel, after þe vndurstandyng of
þe letter. In þe which we move gosly vndurstonde first þat as
oure lord god þan reisid bodui þe dohter at þe praiere & by þe
feip of þe faderes. so he reisep nowe ofþ slipes gosly dede soules
by simne to life of grace, þorþ þe preching & preyinge of holi men,
& þe feip of holi chirch. And as oure lord Jesus spared not for
mysbylyeue & scornyng of ober, to help him þat asked his grace;
so shold not men spare to profite to ober soules & namely men of
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we move lythe
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r of be temple as

to our lord Jesu
15 le his doubter pat
te grace & endles
o pat asked him
here came worde
f. 64
perfore bei beden
Jesus tranual in
it to hele be seke,
is letted not for hir
bot bade be fader
hen he came to his
pyng & mourneful
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h she was dede as
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30 aile pat were in be
apostles, Petur [&]
rise, & anone she
be.
vndurstandyng of
35 rstone first pat as
be priarie & by be
ostly dede soules
reyinge of holi men,
esus spared not for
40 pat asked his grace:
es & namely men of

holie churche spere to preche goddes wordes whan it longep to hir
office, in to reisyng of dede soules to gostly life, pous some men
scorn hem or reproue hem perchore. For as seyn Austin seip it
fallep al day, pat a man, pat is gostly dede by ful assent in his herte
to dedely sinne, by be preching of goddes wordes, is compunace
in his herte here of hir grace, as be he hard ourde forde bidde him
rise. And so is he reised in his soule by repentance fro dep to life,
at it were in be house, or pat he be born without by be dede more
ouere of pat sinne. And his is be first manere of dedely sinne, &
45 litest forto rise out here of hir grace, pat is betokenet by be first
f. 65 dede bodie reised of Jesu in be house as it is seide.

Bot neuerles his manere of dedely smythe pat is onely in
assent, is mости perilouse if it longe abide, & specialy if it be
gostly, as hye pride or enuy. For as seyn Gregory seip, pat
sumtyme it is more greauus sinne in goddes sith, pride by
deliberacion in herte: 'ten is be dede of lecherie, & 3it alday pat
one is gretly charget, pat is to sey lecherie, pat opere seldem
or litel, & perfore bene men here deceyct. Bot now passe
we here ouere.

Of be reisyng of be seconde dede body, is writen in be
gospel, of seyn Luke, how what tyne our lord Jesus came to a
Cite pat was elpeped Naym & hese disciples with him & mikel
peple. He mette at be gate of [at] Cite a dede body born on a
here, pat was be al one son of a wydowe pat came with be corse
25 & mikel folk of be cite with hir. And pan oure lord hauyng pite,
of be grete sorow of be widowe, & meunede borh his endles mercy.
bade hir pat she shold not wepe, & pan ne[3]hyng & touching be
bere, & berwip be pat benene it standing stills. He spake to be
dede body in pese wordes, 'how songe man I say to be arise vp, &
30 anone he rose fro dep to lyfe, & went on hees fete, & bygan to
speke, & so he betoke him to his moder alyfe. Fis is be processe
of be sorsend gospel.

A lord Jesu mikel is bi mercy shewed to sinfull men, [borh]
be which as bou recisdest pat dede body born out toward biringy
without priarie made to be before, onely stirying be byne endele
fudnesse & pite: so bou reisest alday gostly hem pat ben dede in
soule, by gret sinnes perfourmede in dede, as by be dede of
lecherie, glottenye & opere gret sinnes fleshy & gostly, 3uyng bi
grace ofri sipes before or bou be prateled or souht by any desert,
40 borh be which sinfull men bene striede to repentance & forskaying
of sinne, & so by shrift & penance doyng after be lawes of holy
chirche, be ben riased gostly to lif of grace, pat first were dede by
since perfourmede in dede. And if it so be pat pis sinne be openly knownen, in to yuel ensample of opere & sklaudre. \(\text{\textit{pent}}\) in it nede of opene enurance as holi chyrch hsp ordeynet, after pat oun lord Jesus 3af ensample in \(\text{\textit{ip}}\) openes raising of \(\text{\textit{ip}}\) fersaid dede body, pat was openly born dede. \(\text{\textit{in}}\) \(\text{\textit{jr}}\) pe bere wip out forth in shi of \(\text{\textit{ip}}\) f. 55° pepole.

Bot now as to oun principal purpose fort spake of \(\text{\textit{ip}}\) raising of \(\text{\textit{ip}}\) fersaid dede body, pat is to sey Lazare fourre daies dede. For als miche as in pis processe ben cominede many faire & gret notable pinges. perfore we shole here more specially godere in oun enent, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) make vs by ymaginacion, as \(\text{\textit{st}}\) we were present in bodly conversacion not onely with oun lord Jesu & bees disciples. bot also with pat blesesed & deuot meyne, pat is to sey, Martha, Marie & Lazare, \(\text{\textit{of}}\) where specially belouede of oun lord Jesu, as \(\text{\textit{be}}\) gospel witnesse. And first we shole vnusirstande \(\text{\textit{&}}\) haue in mynde, \(\text{\textit{be}}\) processe of \(\text{\textit{be}}\) nekst chapitre before \(\text{\textit{be}}\) pyn upon a tymve when oun lord Jesus walked in \(\text{\textit{be}}\) temple, pat is to sey in \(\text{\textit{be}}\) place pat was ciepde salomone porche, in \(\text{\textit{be}}\) feste of \(\text{\textit{be}}\) dedication of \(\text{\textit{be}}\) temple. \(\text{\textit{be}}\) Jesu comen about him, as raushyng wolffes or wode dogges, with grete ire greynyng vp on him \(\text{\textit{&}}\) seying in bees maner wordes, \(\text{\textit{how}}\) longe woll you make vs \(\text{\textit{in}}\) suspynse \(\text{\textit{&}}\) in dwere in ooure hertes what you art. If you be crist telle vs openly. Pis \(\text{\textit{be}}\) seyden by fals \(\text{\textit{&}}\) malicious enent to \(\text{\textit{be}}\) ende pat if he hade openly knowlechede pat he was crist, \(\text{\textit{be}}\) is to sey anonynted kyunge. \(\text{\textit{be}}\) fort haue take him \(\text{\textit{&}}\) accuses him as traitour to Cesar \(\text{\textit{be}}\) emperour of Rome. Bot berfore oun lord Jesus knowyng hir fals ymaginacion, temperede wisely his answere, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) as an innocent lambe among so many trecherouse wolffes, soburlly \(\text{\textit{&}}\) mekely seid to hem aseyn, \(\text{\textit{I spoke to sawe \& \textit{ge leve me not, bot \textit{be werkes pat I do in \textit{be name of my fader.}}} \textit{po 30 beren witnesse of me what I am. And after more ouer when he seide, I \& \textit{my fader arne alone, hei token vp stones fort haue stonede him as blasfeme, malkyng him self god.}}\)

And moreover when oun lord hade concluedet hem in \(\text{\textit{pat}}\) party by reson \(\text{\textit{&}}\) auctorite of holi write, pat hei mihnt not aseyn seye, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) hei not withstandyng his resonable \(\text{\textit{&}}\) meke answere, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) so guidely wordes, contynuuden \(\text{\textit{&}}\) encresedden in hir malice. For als miche as \(\text{\textit{be}}\) tymve of his passion was not 3it comene \(\text{\textit{&}}\) fort 3iue ensample of pacience, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) of siuyng stede to | rennyng wodenesse. f. 66° he wipdrowe him out of hir handes, \(\text{\textit{&}}\) went wip hese disciples by 40


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is since be ouply
idre; þen is it neede
after þat oure lord
forseid dede body,
þe for in shr of þe f. 65

Þe fort speke of þe
þe fourt daires dede.
þe many faire & gret
specialy gedore in 10
þe we were present
lord Jesu & hees
at myyne, þat is to
ty belowede of oure
þe shole vndestande 15
ître before þis, how
þe temple, þat is to
þærhe, in þe feste of
þen about him, as
þe grennyng vp on 20
þe wold þou make vs
þou art. If þou be
malicious entent
þat he was crist, þat
þam & accusede him
þe þerforo oure lord
þnerede wisely his
þe many trecherous
u, I spake to 30we &
me of my fader. 'po 30
more oure when he
þp stoncs forte haue
conclueth hem in þat
þei miht no æye
meke answere, & so
hir malice. For als
comene & fort þiue
rennyng wodennesse.' f. 66
þip hees disciplis by

30nde Jordâne, in to þat place where John baptist first baptizede,
aboute xviiij Mile fro Jerusalem, & þere he dwelled awhile with
hees disciplis.

And in þat tymne sone after as þe gospel telleth nowe to oure
5 purpose. Lazare þe brother of Martha & Marie before seide waxed
sone seke, & anon þe tweyne sisters senden worde to Jesu where
he was in þat forseide place by 30nde Jordâne seying to him in þis
manere Lo lord he þat þou loвест þat is lazare, is sone seke. And
þei seiden no more. For als micha as hem þougð þat þat sufficced
10 to him þat lovest & wist what þei seiden. And also peraventure,
for þei knowyng þe malice of þe Jues æyeus him in to his dep,
& how a titel before þei wolde haue stended him: þei dyrst not
clupe him to hem, bot committede alle to his wille. And þan Jesus
anweredde & seide to hem þis infrimite is not to dep.' bot for þe
15 losing of god þat goddus son be glorified perþy. þe gospel telleth
þat he seide þe hees worde to hem, bot it specifiþ not to whame,
for þe sisters þat senden to him were not þat tymne present, bot a
grete wey fro him as it is seide.

Neuerles we mover vndestande as by þe processe, þat he
20 answered to hem in þeþe worde to þe messagere, or elles seid so
to hees disciplis, or to boþe, as it is most lykly.

A lorde what conforte was þis to þe sisters, when þei
hardene of þe messagere þese worde, þat Jesus seide, þis
infrimite is not to dep, vndestandynge perandere by hem, þat hir
25 broþer shold not dye bodily þat infrimite. But what disconfort
was it to hem aftur when he was dede & biriede, not
vndestandynge þat oure lord menede of þat gloriosse reysyn þat
folowede aftur, nor trowyng þan þat it sholdhe haue falle. Neuerles
þat disconfort for þe tyme: was after turnede in to more confort
30 þen þei desride first by þat þei wolde haue hade him presuruede
fro þe dep, & heledde of his infrimite by oure lord Jesus.

Pus it falleþ oft sipes with hem þat god louþe & ben in
f. 66' tribulacion or disese, oure lord graunte þem not þat confort þat
þei asken & desirene' bot súﬃeþ hem as for þe tyme to be in
35 despeire of hir desire. And after when his wille is, he fulliþeþ hir
desire better þen þei wolde first, & turneþ hir disconfort in to
more confort þen þei wolde haue ymagined or þouht.

Forbermore as to þe processe of þe gospel, after oure lord
Jesus was certifide of þe seke lazare, & hade anwerede as it is
40 seide, he dwelled stille in þe forseide place tweym days, & after
he seide to hees disciplis, Go we æyeþe in to þe Jewery, & þei
aferde of þis worde seiden to him, Maister riht nowe þe Jues
wolden have steneed be here, & now wolt thou go pidere aseyne? & ben Jesus answered, Be here not xij hours of be day? As who seip, whi be 3e afferd supposing bat be Jesus cumst, be his malice? Wit 3e not well bat as oft sipes, as be houres chandern on be day. So oft manus herte & purpose varieth & changeh? Bot be 3e gosly menyng of be words as seynt Austin expowne bat is bis. Oure lord vndurstanding him self as be day, & hees xij disciples, as be xij hours of be day, rephrendet hir misbylyue, & hir varesonable drede of his dep bat was in his ylue, & be dep vndur 3iue conseil to hym, as men to god, disciples to be maister. 

10 Seruantes to hir lorde, & beij feble & seke to hir bat was souereyn leeche. Wherefore in manere blamyng hem, oure lord seid to hem in his maner sentence, Are here not xij hours of be day, who so walketh in be day. He offende bat not, or erre bat not. Folowe me if 3e wol not erre, & wolte 3e not 3iue conseil to me, siven it is neede to 3ow to take conseil of me. And perfore sipen it so is bat I am be day, & 3e be hours ym & by kyndly reson be hours folowen be day, & not be day be hours. Folowe me & bat if 3e wol not offende or erre.

And after bis oure lord Jesus knowyng in spirite bat lazare was dede seid to hem, Lazare oure frende slepe bat I wolte go fort wake him & reise him fro slepe. And ben be disciples vndurstandingy fleshly be words of kyndly slepe seiden, Sir if he slepe, hit is a token bat he shal be hole & safe of his sekenes. For commonly by wey of kynde, slepe of sekenes is token of slepe. f. 67r aftur folowyn. Bot Jesus meneede of his dep. And so here we 26 mowe se be gret homelynes of oure lord with hees disciples pat as in maner of bouredyng spake with hem here. Bot after declaring to hem opunly, pat he spake first mistily seide, Lazare is dede, & I am glad for 3owe, pat hereby 3oure bylyue may be encreased & strengheide, knowyng pat I was not bere in tyne of his deth, & so be rader bylyuyng pat I am goddus sone.

¶ Forthermore leyung many wordes of be gospel, & takyng pat semep most notable to oure edification after when oure lorde Jesus with hese disciples turnede aseyne toward bethanye, & be tweyn sistres hadden worde of his comyng. Martha ane went aseyne him, bot Marie satte stille at home til after pat she was cleped forby be biddynge of Jesus. And so it semep be hees wordes, so specially after be letter tellyng howe hese tweyn sistres Martha & Maria, diuersely hadden hem as anentes Iesu. Pat be 30 holi evangelyste John meneede gostly here as he dep in opere places, be diuerse condicione pat longen to hem, bat bove in hese tweyn
e Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Die Jesus [Thursday]

asates, pat is to sey of ecele life & contemplatif life. For it is no doute bot pat Marie louede Jesus als mikol as his sistere Martha or more, & was als gled of his comypg & sis soply was of his broper deth & als frequentye desirede his life. Whi pen went she not

5 anowe with his sistre out aczynus Jesus? Bot in figure & for esample, pat bei pat ben in be state of contemplatif life, shote not take upon hem bodily exercise of be dedes of mercy, as fort go out to visite be seke, or hem pat bene in prison, or to fede be hungry or clep be naked, & so forp of oper, or elles fort preche or

tche, or to minystre sacramentes of holy chirok. bot it so be, pat bei bene cleped outPerseto, by be biddying & be auctorite of holi chirch in Jesu name gostly as Marie was bodily.

¶ Sittynge ben Marie at home as it is seide & Martha goyng oute what tyne she met with Jesu. She felle done at hese fete & seide, Lord if pou haddest ben here, my broser hode not be dede, neverles & nove I vote wele pat what so ever pou askeste of god.'

f. 67'

God wole 3if pe, she dorst not | saye vttly pat she deseide inwardly, seying as pus, now reise my brospere fro deth to life: for she wist not whebibre it were expedient pat hir brospere shuld be

reised, or whember it were Jesus wil, and perfore she sette hir wordses discretly in hir maner of menyng, Lord I vote wele [bat] pou maist reise him, & perfore if pou wol. it sal be done, bot whopeber pou wolt o nought. I comitte it to p deome, & not to my presumpfione.

Pan seide Jesus to hire, pat hir broper shold ryse fro deth to life, so in generale worde, pat mhte be taken in tweyn maneres, fort preue hir byleue of pe finale resurrextion, not specifeyng whember he wolde reise him at pat tyme or none. And perfore Martha takyng pat part pat she was siker of after pe byleue, seide,

pat she wist wele pat he shold rise in [be] generale resurrextion, at pe last day of done. And for perfemore at pe askyng of oure lorde, whember se byleue, pat he seide of hinhimself, pat he was resurrextion & life, & of eerlyngstiff of alle hem, pat [trowed or] byleue soperfastly in him. she answerede finaly pus. I byleued pat pou art creste goddess son pat art come in to his world for mammus savacion. And pan at pe biddying of Jesus, she went home & clepede Marie hir sistere in silence, pat is to sey in soft spekyng, seying to hir, Oure maistres is komen & clepe be to hym, & anone she rose vp & went to hym. Lo how expressly here also

is tokened gostly what longe in pe contemplatif, pat is to sey, first in pees & rest silence & soft spekynge, & not loude criyng or gret noyse as pe world vsep. And for perfemore what tyne pat
oure lord cleped him out by obedience to oure & gossmale of 
operas in his office of prelacie. pat pen by ensample of Marie 
anone he rise by applying of his will to goddess will, love he 
never so mykyl rest, or beuc he never so mykyl lyking in swete 
contemplacion. is to vndurstande, what tyme pat he is cleped 
so vthurly, pat if he withstode [it], he shold syne dedely by 
inobedienc.

Forpermore we movwe se by pen process of pen gospel, pen 
speciale lour & homelynes, pat oure lord Jesus hade souvenally to 
Marie in [hat he shode stille pen as Martha first mette with him. 10 
& wolde not do as to be reysing of Lazare in to tymes pat Marie. 1. 68' 
was comen. And pen when she was comne & fallyng done at Jesus 
feete & with sore wepyng teres, hadde seide as hir sistere dide 
before, pat if he had be here hir brothere hade not ben dede. oure 
lorde Jesus seynge hir wepe, pat he loued so speciauly, & also pen 15 
Jues wepyng pat here were at pat tymes, & were comen to confort 
Marie. he wept also, & pat for pre causes, first for pen love pat he 
hade to Marie specially & to hir sistere & to Lazare. Also to 
shewe pen greuoustye of sinne in custome, & of pen costly deth 
thereforth, pat is tokene in Lazare foure dayes dede & biriede, & 20 
pen pride for pen misbytue of hem pat here were, pen wheel 
belued pat he micht haue kept him fro depe, but non pat he micht 
pen reise him to life ascyne.

Who so wolde pen here inwardly take hede & behode how 
oure lord Jesus wepe, pen sistres wepen, pen Jues wepen, 3e & as 25 
reson telleth pen disciples wepen: skilfully he may be stred to 
compassion & wepyng, at pen leste inwardly in hert namely for 
synne in custome, pat is so harde to overcame, & to rise out of, as 
oure lord Jesus shewed in costly vndurstandyng, by pen gret 
difficulte pat he made as in wepyng & in maner of turblyng 
30 himself, wrope & grucching in spirite, & pen twyne tymes before 
pat he reisad Lazare, by whom he is vndurstand sinne in custome, 
as it is oft seide, syuying ensample as seynt Austyn serpe, pat pwu 
pat art ouerelycde with pen heuy stone of dedely sinne. be wrope & 35 
gilty, & penkyn how oft pwu hast sinned, worthye euere lastyng 
dep, & god of his endles mercy hap spared pe & suffrede pen. How 
oft pwu hast herde pen gospel forbedyng sinne, & pwu hast taken 
one rewarde, bot art continuely contrarie & fals to [hi] first 
baptisme, & pen so penkyn with compunccion for [hi] sinne, & as 40 
go? In what maner sal I eskae [bis] grete sinne & dредful pettie of
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

De Jesus [Thursday]

f. 68

euerlasting death? When thou seyst, "bus in ti here, tan cristi

5

of, he gospel, he
de soveently to
mete with him, 10

| tymen, "bus, f. 68"
gone done at, Jesus
hir syster s were
t ben dede. oure
eely, & also be 15
comen to confort
for he loue bat he 20

of the, gostly doth
in te & bi riede, &
were, he wechth
not bat he mihte

be & beholde how
as wepe, be & as 25
may be stired to
hert namely for
& to rise out of, as
dying, by he get
maner of turblynge
veyn tymes before
sinne in custome,

5

orby euere turblynge

suffred he. How

& thou hast taken

fals to bi first

n for bi sinne, & as 40
do? Whydere sal I

& dreadful peril of

15

20

25

30

35

40

Bot now go we to be [briels or] graue of lazar, folowyng
oure lord Jhesu with alle bat meyne, bat is to sey, 
be twyyn sistres Martha & Marie & he apostles, & be Jues many bat weren 
here bat tymes, to confort be systers, & as oure lord wolde [fort] se &
bere witnessse of bat solempne & worji myracle & so we mowre se

by d emotion how oure lord Jhesu g0p before bytwix be 
twyen sistres, talkyng homely with hem & be with him, shewyng
to him be grete disconfort & sorow bat be hadde of hir broper 
dep, & specially for als mykel, as be durst not bidde him come to

helpe hem & kepe him fro dep for drede of be malice of be Jues,

pat be knewen hade conspired in to his dep, & how be were
hiely confortede [an] of his blessed presence. Bot neuerles herewip be
hadden gret drede of him by cause of be Jues, & ben how oure
lore benangly confortede hem a3eyn, & badde hem not drede of
him, for alle shold be for be best, & at be fadere wille. And so
talkyng to gerd. be come to be graue [or be briels], bat was 
keuere de with a grete stone aboune, be badde oure lord Jesus
pat be should take awoy be stone, & be abashedde for be grete
tendur loue bat be hade to him, drenyng be horriblete & be stinke
of pat cawone pat it shold out offende him, seiden, Lord now he

for he is fourre dais dade, shewyng berby pat be hade
none hope of his lyuyng a3eyn. Bot oure lord a3eynwarde, 
confortyng hir byleue, & makyng be stone taken awoy. 
afterwade lyflying vp hese eyene to heuen seide, Faderde I thonke
be, for be hast herde me, & solpy I wote wele bat be herest me
euer, bot I sey bi, for be peple bat here stant pat be beleue pat 
be hast sende me. And when he hadde seide bus, he cryede with
a grete voice, Lazare come out of bi graue.
A lord Jesu, what ease was he to cry? Sobely as seynt Austin seith, w show in gostly vnndustandyng, how hard it is to him for let ris to life of soule, but is overthe of this stone of dedely sinne in custome.

How many benc heere seith seynt Austin, in bis peple, he 5 which benc overleide with bis benv breathene of wikkede custome, perasure nune heren me, benc benc overcomen with Lecherie, o: Glazenye bat he apostle forbede benc where he seith Ius, Willke 3e nol be drukken with wyne in pe which is lecherie. And bei seya nyn, We wow not, & go forp of opere gret mischiefes & 10 wikkednesses bat god forbede & holi chiroc. When it is seide to hem, dop none of thise lest 3e perish; bei answeren & seyn, we move not leuse oure custome.

A lord Jesu reise thise folk as poi reised Lazare, for this art sobely as poi seyst resurrection or wprising & life. 15

How heurly his stone of wikked custome overleip men in alle degrees, not onely lered & lewedec secelures, but also religious nyneby in alle astates: who so wole speke ageynus his wikked custumes, he sai knowe sobely by experience, & bat þere is no remedye bot onely Jesu.

A lord Jesu crye to alle þese menne with a grett voice, þat is to sey, shewe þi [gret] mith & reise hem to life of grace, putting away þat heuy stone of wikked custome, as poi reised Lazare, for after þi crye & at þi biddynge he rose vp & went out of his graue, bot 3it bonden handes & feet til he was lesed & 25 vnbonden by þi disciples at þi biddynge.

Dis is a gret wounder as seynt Austin seith, to many men hou he miht go out of þis Graue with hesse fete | bonden, but it is mere f. 69e more wounder how he rose fro deþ to life þat was fourde dayes byriede & with þat body of a stynkyng karyne. Bot what tokenþ alle þis seip seynt Austin? Sobely bis it tokenþ. When þou doyst a gret sinne by contempte: þou art gostly dede, & if þou contynuest customably berninne, þan art þou dede & byriede. And when þou forpenkest withinforþ, & shryuest þe & knowlechest þi sinne withoutforþ, þen risest þou & geste out of þis graue, for it is 35 nouht elles to sey, go forþ out, bot shewe & make knownen outwarde, þat is priue withinforþ. And þis knowleching & shewing of sinne, makeþ onelich god, crying with a gret voice, þat is to sey with his gret grace clepyng.

Bot 3it þowhe þat was dede be reised & gone out of his 40 graue, neverelkes he ducel þis bonden, þat is to sey gilly, in to tyme þat he be lesed & vnbonden by goddes ministres, to whom onely
Die Jovis [Thursday]

he 3at pat powere, seying tus to hem, Alle pat 3e vphynede in erth, sol be vphond in heuen. Alle pis seip seynl Austin in sentence.

In pe which we mueve se openly a sufficient actorie agaynus hem pat represe a confession ordeyneyt by holli chirch, & also pe asoylyng of curates, seying falsly pat it is ynowh generally to every man, fort shynge him onely in his herte, to godde. And pat prestes or curates of holli chirch haue no more powere to assolute of synnes, pan anycuer comene man, bot pat god alonely asoyled, & none opere in his name.

Pat nowe keuyng hees feis opiniouns, & gowyng to be ende of oure forseyd processe: what tyne pat Lazare was reised to lify by oure lorde Jesus: as it is seide & aﬅur vphond by hees discipkes. he & hese sistres wip gret joy lowely þonkeden Jesus of þat souereyn benfete & laddem him with hem home to hit house makyng mykel mirth. And þen þe Jewes þære woren wonderyng hyely of þat grete myracle: sune turnede in bylyeue to Jesus, & sune ȝeden & tolde þe pharisees þat Jesus hadde done, & so was it publyshed & openly knowen. In so michæ þat gret multiteude of Jerusalem & þe cuntrey þære aboute, commen to se Lazar þat was reised, & þan were þe princes of þe Jewes & þe pharisees | alle confusede, & þouthen & kastene forte sle Lazar, by cause þat þorph him many weren conuertede to Jesu.

Now þen fort make a conclusion of alle þe processe before seide of þe þre dede bodies reised by oure lorde Jesu: seynl Austin in þis sentence, Alle þese forseyd pinges we haue herde brethren to þat ende: þat þei þat lyuen gostly kepe hem in lyfe of grace, & þei þat bene dede: rise vp þis manere. First þat hæp sinace dedely by ascens in herte, & is not gone out by performyng þerox in dede: amende him of þat þouth by repentance, & so rise he vp, þat was dede withynne þe house of his conscience. Also þat hæp performede in dede, þat he coneyuued dedely in þouth: be he not in despeire, bot þouth he rose not withoutforþ: rise he withoutforþ, þat he be not biriede & ouerleide with þe heuy stone of wikked custome.

Bot forbymer, persaunter I spok to him þe which is ouerleide with þat harde stone of hecs wikked maner & kombrede with þe heynnesse of custome, & so is as foure daies dede & stinkeþ. 3it despeire he not, for þouth he be depe dede & biriede: crist Jesus is hye of mith, & can breke alle erfly birthene[s], cryng porh his gret grace, & makynge him to liffe, first by hym self withinforþ, & after takynge him to hecs discipkes fort vnbynede him, & so fully restore him to gostly life, so þat þere sal

N.

Conclusio
Augustini.

B.

N.

133
Hec pretermitutur duo Capitula Bonaventura.

How pe Jues [token hit] counsel & conspired azeynus Jesu in to his death. Capitulum xxxv. 5

N.B.

Aftere pe reisynge of Lazare before seide, when pe tyne neyytbede, in pe which oure lorde Jesus disposede to wrik our redemption, porh pe shedynge of his precious blode: pe deule fader of ennuye, arnede bees knygtes & mynstres & whettecl hir herites azeynus oure lord Jesu, finaly in to his deh. And specially by 10 occasion of these gude & vertuose wyrkynge, bot sourelynly for pe reisynge of lazare, ennuye kyndelet in hir herites more & more, in so mykyl pat pei miht no longere | bere hir wodenes without f. 70a execution þerof azeynus Jesu. Wherefore pe princes & [pe] pharisees gederet a conseil azeynus him, in pe which consele 15 Caiphas byshope of þat zere, al þouh he menede wickedly: propheciede solply þat Jesus shuld dye for saucion of mankynde

And so haue we here opun ensample þat wikked men & reprovede of god: hauen sumtyme þe ȝift of prophedge.

And so by commune assent þoo fals princes & pharisees in 20 þat consele ordynet viturly to sly þat innocent lambe Jesu, & to þat ende, lestt alle þe peple shuld beleue & trowe in [to] him, & ben þe Romaynes as settyng hir lawe at nouht: shuld concle & destreye boþe hir temple & peple.

A fooles & foly consele, [hþp not of ȝou þe wisman 25 wryten], þat þere is no wisdom nor consele azeynus god? And þerfore it sal [be]falle in contrarye manere to þoure wikend enten, as it is nowe performede in dede. For þere as 3e slewen Jesu, lest þe Romaynes shold destreye þour place & þour peple: after befele azeynwarde, þat for 3e slewen Jesu: þour place & peple was 30 destreyede by þe Romanes, as þe story telleþ of destruction of Jerusalem by Tit & Vespasian.

In þe same manere it falleþ oft sipes in worlds wisdum, þat is contrarie to þe wisdom of god. For oft sipes oure lord god turnep in to be best: þat þe worldes domeþ as worst & to be worst: 45 [þat þe worlde domeþ as best]. And specialty þere as ennuye is
Of the crucifying of our lord Jesus at the sixte hour. Capitulum xlix.9

Now forsmore magnet pro se when our lord Jesus was come to that stinking hill at Calvarie. Now wickedly to cryede workes meane begonne to worche on all sides that cruide workes. 5

Take hede now diligentely with alle j herte, alle þe hinges þat be now to come, & make þe þere present in þe mysde, beholde þat shalde be done agaynus þe lord Jesus & þat bene spoken or done of him. And so wol þe innere eie of þe soule beholde þat same, settyng & ficching þe crosse fast in to þe erpe. 99

Sume makynge redye þe nailes & þe hammeres to dryue hem wip. 11

Opere makynge redye & settyng vp laddres, & ordeynynge oþer instrumentis þat hem pouht needful, & oþer faste aboute to spoile him, & drawe of hees clopes. And so is he now þe priddym tyrme spoilede & standeb nakede in sith of alle þat peple, & so bene nowe þe priddym tyrme revynche þe brisours of þe wondres in his soueryng by þe cleuyng of þe clopes to his flesh.

Now also first this modere seeþ how he is so takene & ordynede to þe deth. Wherefore she sorowful out of mesure, & hauynge shame to se þim so standinge alle nakede. For þei laft þem not so mich of þese dryue clopes. She went in haste to hir dere sone, & clipped him & girde him aboute þe leenedes with þe kercchefe of hir head. 20

Aþ lorde in what sorowe is hir soule nouwe? Soþeþ I trauwe þat she myht not speke one word to þem for sorowe. But she myht do no more to þem nor help þem. For if she myht without doute she wolde.

Panne was hir sone anone taken oute of hir handes in wode manere, & ladde to þe fote of þe crosse.

Now take hede diligentely to þe maner of crucifying. Dere bene sette vp twyn laddres, one behynde & a noper before at þe lift armes of þe crosse, vpon þe whech þoo wikked ministres gone vp with nailes & hammeres. Also a noper short laddre is sette before þe crosse þat lasteþ vp to þe place where hees feete shold be nailed. 35

Now take gude hede to alle þat folowyþ. Oure lorde þanje was compellede & boden fort go vp one þat laddre to þe crosse, & he mekely doþe alle þat þei bedene him. And when he came vp to þe ourest ende of þat short laddre 35 he tynede his bakke to þe crosse, & strec习t out on brede þoo kynges armes, & þese fairest handes þafe vp to hem þat crucifiede him. And þan liftynge vp hees
Die Veneris [Friday]

10 Jesus was so glad to have his sacrifice nailed on the cross, and so was his body and soul. 

f. 90r

15 And the body and soul of Christ be reckoned to be together, as the Gospel saith, 

10 Helie.

And the body and soul of Christ be reckoned to be together, as the Gospel saith, 

15 Helie.

And the body and soul of Christ be reckoned to be together, as the Gospel saith, 

20 As is the maner of his crucifying after his opinion of

25 Some men.

Obere pere bene that Irowen not that he was crucifried in this maner: Bot pat first ligging pe crosse on pe gronde: 

25 Nailed on the body, and after with him so hangyng pe lissen vp on pe crosse & festen it done in [to] pe erpe.

30 And if it were done in this maner: han maist pone se, howe vileynsly heu taken him as a ribbanke & kasten him done vp on pe crosse, & han as wode befes drowned on bope sides first hees 

35 handes & after hees feete, & so nailedes him fast to pe crosse, & after with alle his hert lissen vp on pe crosse with him hangynge als bye as pe miht & pan lete it falle done in to pe morteis.

In pe which falle as pe ou may vnstaudde, alle pe senewes to breken, to his souereyn peyne. Bot wherse so it be in one maner 

35 Or in obere: sope it is pat ouere lorde Jesus was nailedes harde vp on pe crosse, hande & foote, & so streynede & drawen: But as he himself seip by pe prophete Dauid, pat pei mihten telle & nombre alle hecs bones.

Pan renne out of his blessed body pe streames of pat 

40 holiest blode, on alle sides abundantly fro bo grete wondes, & so is pe constreynde & arteide: But he may not move bot his heede.

Wherefore hangynge pe body onely by bo pe naileis: no
doute bot but he suffred so bitter sorowes & peynes. pat here may f. 91r
no herte penke, nor tonge telle.

And 3it more oure, he hangeb by twix two theves, of pe
which pat one: blasphemeb & tempte him to impaciencce. And
perwip oper blasphemene] & scormyng seyene, Vooth his is he pot 5
desruep be tempe of god, & makep it vp a 3eyn in pre daies. And
oper seiden, He made oper safe bot he may not now saue himself.
And mani opere reproves & scormynges pei seiden to him as pe
gospelle tellep.

And alle pese reproves, blasfermies & despietes ben done, 10
seyenge & horyng his most sorowful moder, whose compasion &
sorowes made him hir sone to haue pe more bitter peyne.

And on pe opere halfe she hang in soule with hir sone on
be crosse & desriere inwardly raper to haue dieue pat tymse with
him. pan to haue lyuede lengiere.

And so stode pe moderne byside be crosse of hir sone,
bytwix his crosse & be pefes crosse. she turnede neuer hir eyene
fro him, she was full of anguysh as he was also. And she preide to
be faderate at pat tymse, with alle hir herte seyng hes, Faderes & god
without ende it was pleisynge to 3ow pat my sone shold be 20
crucifiep: & it is done. It is not now tymse to akse him of 3owe
3eyn, bot se seene nowe in what anguished is his soule. I beske
3ow pat 3he wille cse his peyne, gode fader I recommende to
3ow in alle pat I may my dere sone.

And also he hir sone praiede for hir priuely in hymself 25
seyng:

Mi faderes 3he knawen how my moder is tormentede for
me. I shold be onely be crucifiep & not shee. But loo now she
hangep on be crosse with me: Mine owne crucifieynge suffese, for
I bere be synes of alle be peple. She kep not deseruet any seche
bine. Wherfore I recommende hir to 3owe, pat 3he make hir
peynes lesse.

Panne was with oure lady Jone & Maudeleyn be belouede
disciplesse & opere of his frendes by be crosse of oure lord Jesu,
be whiche alle maden grete sorowe & wepet & milth not be 35
confortede in no manere of her belouede maister, bot ever was her
sorow renvede with his sorowe, aulere in reproues or in deades, as it foloweb aftere.
How oure lorde Jesus 3alde vp be spirite at none.
Capitulum xiiij.9.

Now hangeb oure lorde Jesus on pe crese in grete peyne,
& 3it is he not yni by cause of pat peyne: bot he wrouthe alle
ways & spake pat was profitable for vs.
Wherefore so hangynge he spake vij notable wordes, pat
bene fonaden writen in pe gospelle.
Pe fist was in pe tyme pat bei crucifisde hime, when he
preade for him saying bus, Padere forgive hem, for bei wite not
what bei done. Pe which wordes, was a wordes of grete pacience, of
grete love, & of vpseourable beningneite.
Pe seconde was to his moder, saying bus, Woman loo pi
sone, & also to Jone, Loo pi moder. He clepede hir not at pat
tyme, moder, lest she sholde hirn feruent tendynge of loute hauhe
bene more sorye.
De briddse was to be bessedede thefe saying his day pou shalt
be with me in paradise, wherinne his moost larg mercy opyny
is shewed.
Pe forbe was when he scide, Helye Helye, Lamo-
zetabathune, pat is to sey, My god, My god, whi hast pou forsake
me, as bei he seide in his sentence. My god faderes of heuen, pou
hast so miche louede pe redempcion of pe worde: pat pou hast
(guen me pefore, & as it semep forsaken.
Lorde Jesu what confort was pat forseide wordes to alre
pine enemies: & what discomfort to alre pi frendes. Sopey as it
semepe her was neuer worde pat oure lorde Jesus spake pat 3afe so
miche boldenes to hees enemies, & so miche occasion to his
frendes fort despeire pat he was god, as pat worde. For [bei]
vndirstode it pat tyme but nakhely after he letter sowmen. Bot oure
lord wolde shewe in to be last ende, pat as he suffred in body
fully after pe kynde of man, so also in his spekeyng after be
infirmite of man, pat he was verrey man suspending for pe tyme
pe use of alle pe mih of pe godhede.
Be fyft worde was, Sicio, I am [aprist], he whiche worde
also was occasion to his moder & Jone & ober frendes of grete
compassione: & to hees wkken enemies of grete rejoycing 
& gladnes. For pouth it so be pat it may be vndirstande pat worde
I briste, gostely to pat entent, pat he prestede panne pe hele of
soules. Neueryles also in spenes he bristede bodily bycause of be
grete passing out of blode whereborth he was allie drye wipiaiunb
& pristy.
And þen þou wikced dawes lymes, þat ever caste now þei miht moyste nyce him: token aisel & galde & proferde him vp to drinke.

Oo cursede wodenes of hem, þat bene never fillede with malice, bot in alle tymes nayene als miche as þei kunne om mowen.

He sith wordes was when he seide: Consummanum est, it is alle endede. As þei he seide þus: Fadere þe obedience, þat þou hast siuea me. I have perfetely & fully done in dede, & þat I am redy to do what þou bidde me. Bot alle þat is writen of me: is now fulfillede. Wherfore if it be þi wilie: clope me now aȝeyn to þe.

And þanne seide þe fadere [aȝeyn to him], Come now my swete louede sone, þou hast wele done alle þinges, & I wole not þat þou be more tormentede, & þepore come nowe, for I shalpe clippe þe with myn armes & take þe in to my bosume.

And after þat tymne oure lorde began to faile in siht in maner of diynghe menne, & wax alle pale now steyng þe eygne & now oupyng, & bowde his hede now in to one side & now in to a noþer side, failelyng alle þe strenghe, & alle þe vaynes þat voide.

And so atte þat last he putte þe scuene þe wordes, with a stronge crye & wepyngteres seying þus: Fadere I commende my spirite in to þi handes, & þerwip he zelte þe spirite, [enclynyng] his hede vpon his breeste towarde þe fadere as in maner of þonkyng, þat he clepede him to him, & þiyngiung him his spirite.

Atte þis crye þan was conuerctede Centurio, þere beyng & seide, Sopely þis manne was goddes sone, by cause þat he sawþ him so crynghe dyne. For ober menne when þei dyene mowe not crie. Wherfore he belueued in him.

Sopely þis crie was so grete as holi men seyne: þat it was herde in to helle.

Oo lord god in what state was þat tymne his modere soule, when she sawh him so peynfully faile, wepe & dye? Sopely! crowe þat for þe multitude of anguishes she was alle out of her sel? & vnfeable made as halfe dede, & þat now much more. | þan what tymne she mete with him, beringe þe crosse as it is seide.

What crowe we didene þen Maudley þe trewe louede disciplesse, what John his awne derlyng, & oþer twyn sistres of oure lady? Bot what miht þei do? þei were alle fulle of sorowe & biternes, & þepore þei weptene sore without remedye.

Loo now hangeg oure lorde on þe crosse cede, & alle þat grete multitude golpe away towarde þe cite, & his sorouful moder.
Die Veneris [Friday]

with pe foure ‘forseide felawes, sette hire don by side pe crosse, & beholde piteously hire dere sope so ferd wip & abidep helpe fro god, pat she miiht have hire to hire & brye him.

\[N\] also if p[ou] beholde wele pe lorde: pei maikt have here matre Youm of hie compassion, seynge hire so tordemente, pat fro pe sole of pe fote in to pe hiest part of pe hede: pei was in him noke hole place nor membre without passion.

Bis is a pitevous sihte & a joyfull sihte. A pitevous sihte in him: for pat harde passion pat he suffrede for our saucion, bot it is a likyng sihte to vs, for pe matre & pe effecte pat we have: perbye of our redemption. Sophely bis sihte of our lorde Jesu hangyng so on pe crosse by devoute imaginacion of pe soule, is so likyng to sine creatours: pat after longe exercise of sorouful compassion. Pei felan sumtyme, so grete likyng not onely in soule but also in pe body pat pei kume not telle, & pat noman may knowe, but onely pei by experience feleç it. And pean may he wele sey with pe apostle, Betyde me neuer to be joyful bot in pe crosse of my lord Jesu criste. Amen.

Of pe binges pat befelle aftere pe dep of oure lord Jesu & aftere none. Capitulum xlvam.

What tyne pat pe wirchful modere of our lord Jesu, as it is seide next before abode & duelled beside pe crosse, with ober trewe loueres of him before nemedec, beholdyng oure lorde Jesu continuely so piteously hangyng dede on pe crosse, bytwix tweyn peces. loo pei comen many armede men out of pe cite towarde hem, pe whech were sent to breke pe leggys of hem pat were crucifícde, & so to sle hem alle out & brye hem, bycause pat hir bodyes sholde not abide hangyng | on pe crosse in pe gret sabbate daye.

Pan rose vp oure lady & alle oper with hir, & bisily lokede & seene hem come, bot what to do pei wote note. Wherfore pei fallen in to grete sorowe & drede, & namely oure lady, spekyng to hir sone in bis maner:

My dere sone what may be cause, pat alle þees armede men comen aȝeyn? What wole pei do more to pe? Haue pei not slayn pe my swete sone? I hade hope þat þei hade be fildeled with þat þei have done to þe. But as it semè to me, þei pursuene þe dede, & I wote not what I may do, for I may not help þe nomore
reprovable vykyndnes in vs. For at so grete fire of love, we shold not onely be made hole; but by reason we shold be fully brenne. But nowe leyynge pis, go we to his glorious ascension.

Of pe Ascension of oure lorde Jesu. Capitulum lxij.

Toucing pe wondurful Ascension of oure lorde Jesu, 5
pou pai herest or redest pis, if pou wolt fele be sweete poref. I
wole pai pou be wakely & quikkre in bi soule, so ferfor. But if
ever here before as it was bydene pe, pou madest pe by deuout
ymaginacion as present to hees wordes & dedes: now pou do
miche more with alle bi miht, for bi solempnity passe alle oper. 10
as I shal cleerely shewe pe withinforbi in processe. And namely his
one pinge sholde stire & herre pin entencion & quikene pinc
affection, pai iorde nowe is in passyng aweye, fro pe as by his
bodily presence pe tyme of his pilgrimage here in erbe with pe
fully complete & endet. Wherfore hees wordes & hees dedes 15
nowe bene pe more attenitly & bysaity to be considerede. For
sopeely every trewe cresten soule sholde, hir spouse, hir iorde &
hir god, in his aweyng passyng most wakely & bisly take tent to &
po pinges pai bene by him spoken & done, moste inwardly sette
in mynde, & moste deuoutly & mekely recommande here to hym, 20
& vitturlye | wijndrawe alle her mynde in his tyme fro alle opere f. 108e
pinges, & set it holtly upon hir spouse.

Fort go pen to pe processe of pe Ascension of oure lorde
Jesu, we shole hauere in mynde pai on pe x daye after his
Resurrexion oure lorde Jesu knowynge pai his tyme was conere fort 25
passe fro his worlde to pe fadere. Taking out of paradise terrestre,
pe holy fadres & alle oher blessede soules, & blessyng Enoke &
Helye pai bere abydene stille zit lyuynge he came to hees
disciples, pe whech were pai tyme to geder in Mont syon, & in pe
place where he made pai worpe oher pai niet before his passion, 30
bere beynge pai with hem his blessede moder & oher discipless.

And so apperinge to hem: he wolde ete with hem or he
passed fro hem in a speciale token & a memoriale of lobe & loute
to hem. Wherefore alle etynge to geder with grete joy & mirfe in 35
his laste feste of our lorde Jesu. pen seide he to hem:

Tyne is come nowe pai I tyme a tymyn in hem pai sende me.
Bot 3he shole duelle & abide in pe cite til 3e be newe cloypede
gostly born vertue pat shal come fro aboue. For sapyly within
efewe daies here after 3e shal be fillede with pe holy gost as I
beheiue 3owe, & after 3e shal ge & preche my gospel born alle
be worde, baptysyng hem pat wole beleue in me, & so 3e shal be
myne witnesses in to pe vitresse case of erpe.

Also be reprehendet or obreycede hem nowe specially
when he bidde hem preche of his misbylyue in pat pat pei
trouede not to hem pat seye him have vrisen, & pat were pe
angeles. As pei he seide to hem in his manere sentence to make
hem vndurstande. Michte more 3e shalde have trouede &
byleuede to pe angeles or 3e seene me. 'pen pe peple shal troue to
30[we] prechinge pe which shalle not se me.

Also be reprovede & obrycide pei hir misbylyue for pei
sholde knowe first hir owne defeute, & be here be pe more meke,
shewyng hem nowe in his departynge howe michte it pleide hem
mekenes, & beforhe he specialy recommenedit it at pe laste to hem.

Pan pei askeden him of puo binges pat were to come after
bot he wolde not telle hem, for it was not spedful to hem to knowe
pe priytes of god, pe wech pe fader hade reserved & set in his
owne powere to fulfille when hime likede.

f. 108

| Pat standen pei to gedir cyng & spekyng with grete ioy
to hem, of pe blesede presence of hir lorde, bot newerles with
grete drede & turbulance of his awey passyng, & no wondre for pei
louede him so tendirly. Pat pei miht not with esy herte bere pe
wordes of his bodily departing fro hem, & namely oure lady his
blesede moder, pat louede him passyng alle ojere. We nowe
wel suppose pat she touchede & stired soureynyly with pe
swetes of modere loue: as she satte nesxt him at pat mete, leyde
don hir heede sweetely & restede vpon his blesede breste, as seyn
30 John dide before in pat forsede moste worpi sopiri, & so with
swete teres sihynge, she spake to hime in his manere prayinge:

My dere sone if yow wolt alle weye go to pi fader. I prye
pei lede me with pe. And oure lorde confortyng hir seide, I pray pei
dere moder take not heuly my goynge fro pei, for I go to pei fader
for pi beste, & it is spedful pat yow duelle here 3it awhile, to
conferme hem pat shale treuly byleue in me, & after I shale come
& take pei with me in to eueralyng bliss. And pat she seide, My
swete sone pi wille be done. For not onely I am redy to abide at pi
wille. bot also to suffre depe for yow soules, pat yow suffrest depe
fore. Bot euer I besoke pe have mynde on me.

And pan oure lorde confortiede more ouere hir &
Maudeleyn, & ojer, seyng yow to hem, Be not your herte turboute.
& dres [3e] not. For I shalle not leue 30w desolate as saderles, for I shalle go & come & ever he with 30we. And at he lasthe he badde hem go in to be Monte of Cylyeste, for hemes he wolde stey vp, & so passede he at bat tymne awy fro hem.

And anon riste his modere & alle oper wipout tarynge 5 yeden in to be forside Monte, bat is fro Jerusalem about a myle, & bere elf sones oure lorde apperede to hem.

Loo here have we on this day twyne apperynges:

Pan clippede he & kissede his modere, taking his leue, & she egynwarde clippede & kissede him ful tendirly. And he 10 disciples & Maudeley, & alle oper fullyng done to be jornde & wepyng, kissiden hees fetes deouhtly, & he taking hem vp kissede alle hees apostles benyngly.

Now take hede inwardely of hem & of alle bat bepy nowe here done, & perwip beholde be holy fadres | bere beynges f. 109" insensible, how gladly & reuerently bei beholden, & inwardely 16 blessen hir: by whom bei hauen recysuet so grete a benefice of hir saucion, & also how bei beholde of worpi championes & lederes of goddes hoste, be which among alle oper peple, oure lorde Jesus spesially hap chosen for tc conquere alle be worlc.

At he laste when alle be misteries were complete & fulfillede, oure lorde Jesus began to be lift vp fro hem, & to stey vp by his owne vertue, & pan oure lady & alle oper felle done to be erpe, wircipyng him, & oure lady seide. My blessede sone Jesu benke on me, & perwip she miht not wip halde hir fro 25 wepyng bycause of his goyng, neuerlese she was ful lyful bat she sawe hir sone so gloriously stey[ing] vp to heuen.

Also be disciples his seyng: seiden, Lorde we have forsake alle worlde godes for be: haue myndce on vs. And so he hauynge hees handes lift vp, & blessyng hem with a brite lyful face, 30 coronede worpiyly as a kyng & gloriously arayede, steyng vp to heuen: seide, Bep stedfast & worchep manfully, for I shalle be euere with 30we.

And so oure lorde Jesus, alle glorious, white & rude, shynynge & lyfulle, ledyng with him, bat noble multitude, & 35 goyng before, & shewynge be weye to hem: in deede fulfillede bat be prophets hade seide longe before of his Ascension, & bei also with vnspekeble toy folowynge hir, songen myrly be psalems: & ympcys of his lyong, as pertenede to bat blissfulle tymne of hir deleyuance fro alle sorowe & entre in to alle blys without ende.

And in bat tymne be Archangele Michaele prouost of paradise, goyng before, tolde be blessede court of heuen bat oure
Blessed Life of Jesus Christ

Die Dominica [Sunday]

lorde Jesus was comyng & vp steyng, & another alle þe blesse
dh spyrits after hir ordes 3edene aȝeyn hir lorde, done laȝ 3eynde, 10
& metynge with him & warchypying him with alle þe reuerence þat
þei kouȝe, laȝden him with ymynes & songes of ioy þat may not
be spouyn nor boeth. And so metynge to gedir þe holy sadres & þe
blesse spyrites & singyng! Alleluia, & moste ioyfulle songes 
with reuerence before hir. Mado a grete solemnite, & a 
worshipful feste.

3e lorde who miȝt telle what feste þat was & what ioy þat 10
hade, when þei mete to gedir?

f. 110v

And when þei hade done dwbe reuerence to cure lorde &
fulfillede hir myrye songes þat perteenede to his gloriouse
Ascension. þei turnede hem to hopere hope þe blesse spyrites &
þe holy sadres reiccyng & singyng. And first þe holi spyrites in
15 ðis maner seynges:

3e princes of peples þeȝ welte come & ioyfulle we be of
þour comyng Alleluia. 3e are nowhe here gederect & wondyrfully lyft
vp with þour god, Alleluia. Therefore make mirche & singeȝ nowe
to him þat so gloriously stey vp aboue heuen & heuen Alleluia.

20 Alleluia.

And þe holy sadres ioyfully answerede, To 3owe princes
of goddes peple, Alleluia.oure keperes & helpere Alleluia, ioy
þe pees be euer Alleluia. Singeȝ þe & makeȝ mirche also to our

25 And forpermore alle to gedir songen & seiden, Now we
gone mirche in to þe houȝ of oure lorde Alleluia, & þat
warchypful Cite of godde shall receyue vs alle to gedir
Alleluia, in ymynes & songes of mirche & ioy, Alleluia Alleluia.

Loo here was miche mirche, alle þe songene &
30 soueruly ioydene as þe prophete Dauid seȝ.

God steyȝ vp in to heuen in moste wondyrfulle ioy of
Apostles þat seye him þat tyme. And in voice of Trumpe þat is in
voice of angeles þat aperede þan & speake to þe apostles. Sobely
oure lorde Jesus steyȝ vp þan openly to be confort of his moderer
35 & þe apostles, as longe as hir bodly sity wolde suffice to se him.
And after a briȝt cloude toke him fro hir eyene, & anone in a
momente þat is in an unperceyuable short tyme, he was with alle
hees angeles & þe forside holi sadres in þe hiest heuen.

A lorde what ioy was þat þan to se þat blesse lorde so
40 gloriously vp steying, Sobely I trowe who so miȝt haue seene þat
as þe apostles didene, & herwy herde þat ioyful songe of angeles
& holi soules with him vpsteying, for þat passinge ioy, his soule
sholde have done departede fro his bodye, & gone vp to heauen also 
with hem & no wonder.

N. B.

Wherefore oure lorde knowyng the infinite of mankynde 
in bodely life here, wold have shewe some of his blisse to his moder, 
& other disciple, in als miche as pat micht bene, hat was in pat 5 
blisfulle (silk) of hym vysteyng & hide fro hem, pat pat mikt 
not bene so in flesh lyuyng. And forfore also he sende to hem 
tweyn angeles in mannes likenesse, | pat pat sholde not over s. 110° 
[my31] be traveaide in pat standynge & lokyn vp after hym to 
heauen, for pat were so ravyschede by pat blisfulle silk of hym pat 10 
pat hede for3ete hem self, & also he sende þe angeles to conforte 
hem in pat þei herde þe angeles witness acordyng with hem of þe 
Ascension of oure lorde.

And when þe angeles hade byden hem pat þei sholde no 
leangir loke after Jesus bodily presence in þat forme þat þei seye 15 
him þan stay vp. in to þat tyme þat he sholde cume in þat self 
forme bodily to deme alle quikke & dede. bot þat þei sholde tume 
æwyn in to þe cite, & þere abide þe holi goste as he hede seide 
hem before. þen oure lady mekeely praiede þe angeles to 
recommendede hir to hir blisfulle sone, & þei lowely enclayng to 20 
hir. gladely toke hir bidynge, & also þe apostles & Maudeleya 
recomedet hem in þe self manere, & after þe angeles passyng 
fro hem, þei turnedæ æwyn in to þe cite as þei were byden to Mont 
syon þere abydyng þe behoste of oure lorde Jesu.

N. B.

Nowe go we vp by deuoht contemplation to oure lorde 25 
Jese beholding in ymaginacion of heucly binges by likenesse of 
crably binges, howe he with alle þat forside worpi & blisfulle 
multitude of holi soules, oponyng heauen 3ates þat were before þat 
tyme sperede æwynus mankynde, as a worpi conqueroure joyfully 
entrede, & gladely [knelyng] before þe fader, seide, Fader I ponke 30 
þat hast 3iuen me þe victorye of alle our enemies & 
adversaries, & loo fader heere I presente to þe oure frendes þat 
were halden in pralde, & for als miche as I have beheth to my 
brerperne & disciples, þe whiche I laft in þe worde, to sende to 
hem þe holi goste. I pray þe fader do fulfille my behost, & I 35 
recommende hem also to þe.

Þan þe fader takynge him vp. made him sitte on his riht 
hande & seide, My blessed sone alle powere & dome I have 
3iuen to þe, & þerfore of þat þou askedest. dispose & do as þe 
likep.

After þat alle þe holy faders & þe blessed spirites þe 
whiche hade in witchipynge of þe holi trinite falle done lowely with
Die Dominica [Sunday]

alle reverence rising vp begunne aseyne to singe his songes of mirpe & vspeckable joye, before be throne of god. For siben Moses & be children of Israel songene in bancyng & loyng of f. 111°
god, when pei were passede pei rede see & hir | enemies perin 5 drowned. And also pe selte tyne Marie Aaron sistre, with other women folowyng hir in tynpes & other melodye, dawndedene & songed to goddes loyngye.

Also Davi with his peple ledynge pe Arke of god in to Jerusalem hertde & dawndede for ioye before pe Arke, & 10 chanteres songen, & in othere dierse ministradye pei honourede & xrichedede god.

And also seyni John scib in pe Apocalypse, pat he herde a voice in heuen of an hundred & fourre & fountye thousand herpers herpyng & singyng a neewe songe before pe throne & be sete of pe 15 verrey lambe Jesu. Miche more we move resoble tyue, pat nowe in his joyful tyme, when Jesus with his cunpanye were passede alle sorowe & alle adversaries were so graciously overcome, & he pat was tokenede by pe Arke Jesus was so gloriously come in to pe cite of heuently Jerusalem: alle pat 20 blessede felawesheipe of spirites & soules, without noumbre songen & maden ioy & mirpe pat none tongs may telle nor berte penye. Sophely nowe in pat blessede cite of heuently Jerusalem is songen & herde pat souercyn songe of ioy, & after pe prophecie of Thobie, by alle pe stretes paerof is songen Alleluia, pat is als 25 miche to sey, as pe loyng of oure lorde.

Neuer fro pe bygynnyng of pe worlde was pere so sollempe & so joyful a feste, ne neuer perantre shalle be, bot at pe laste after pe day of dome, when alle pe chosen soules shole be presentepe pere wip hir bodies glorifiede. And perfore as I seide 30 at pe beginnyng of pis chapitre, pis sollemnitye alle binges consideret passeb alle opere. Taka hede of ech of hem, & se wheber it be sope pa I sey.

First pe Incarnation of our lorde Jesu is a sollempe feste Incarnacio. & worbi, for pat was pe bygynnyng of alle oure gude & oure 35 saucion. Bot pat was oure ioy & not hisene, for he was pan closede in his modere wombe.

Also pe Natuiteit of him is a sollempe & hie feste, & Natuities. worshiply mirpe to be made perin. Bot pat is also as on oure side, for as on his side we oweb to have compassioun of him pat was for vs 40 born in so grete pouert, hardenes of wedur & opere abjection.

Also as to vs his passion is a grete feste, borth pe which we Pasio. bene brouht out of pe fendede praldame, & alle oure simmes bene
forziene & done aweye. And as seyn gregour seip, Hit hadde not3y anyelyde vs to be born, but hit hade also profite de vs for bough. Neuerdes for pe grete tormentes of him & pat harsest & moste disprisc be pat he suffrene for oure redemption & byyinge: dere was [ban] no macl of toy but replec of sorowe, bope 5 to him in pat peynfulle sufiryng, & to vs for oure sinfulle deseryng.

Forpermore 3it pe Resurrectio of oure lordes Jesu is a glorieuse, sollemne & a ioyfulle feste, bope for him & for vs. For ben was his hode glorifiede & alle payne & sorowe passede: & we iustifide, & have an emsste & ensample without doubt also of oure laste vprisyn in body & soule. And perfore of his worcepful & ioyful day, spesialey singeb holi chirch, by pe wordes of pe prophete Davi, his is pe day pat oure lorde made, be we mirye heret & glade.

And as seyn Austyn seip in a sermone, his day is holiest of alle obere, bot pat may be vnderstond of alle ober before pat day. For his day of pe Ascension by resen is gretter & holiere: & pat touched of pat parties, pat is to seye, oure lorde him self, pe blessede spirites in heuen & mankynde in erpe. For as to pe first 20 pouh oure lorde hade pat gloriously in body & soule vprisen fro dep to euerlastynig life. Neuerdes he was bodily 3it as a pilgryme in erpe, fro his owne kynde heritage & rewme. Also as to pe seconde, 3it seye pat pe anges hir felawhipe encresede by seyson takyng of mankynde with hem in blisse. And as aneetes pe pride: 3it was closede & stokene pe 3ate of heuynig paradisc, & 3it were not pat holi frades & soules presentede to pe fader of heuon, pe whiche alle pre were complete & fulfillede in pis holi Ascension.

And if we take gude hede: we mowe se pat alle pat god 30 wrouth & dide: he dide fort come to pis ende. And withoute pis: alle hoes werkes, hade be as imperfite. For I00 heuen & erpe & alle pat is made in hem: is made for man, & man fort haue pe blisse of heuon, & perto miht no man come after he hadde sinnde in to pis day were he neuer so gude & rihtwise, & so we mowe se, 35 how worpi pis holi day is.

3it more ouer pe feste of pentechoest is hye & holy, & worshiply hyo chirche makep it sollemne. For ben was givne perto pe 3ift, pat hye worpieste 3ift, pat is pe holy goste. But pis is to vs & not to him.

Bot pis Ascension day is properly pe moste sollemne feste, of oure lorde Jesu. For pis day first in his manihede he begun
to sitte, on be fader, riht hande in blisse, & toke fulle rest of [alle] his pilgrimage before.

Also pis is proprely be feste of alle be blessedde spirites in heuene. For pis day be hadde a newe view of here lorde, whom be seye neuer before pere in his manhede, & also for pis day began first to be restorede be fallyng done of his feaues, & pere in so grete multitude & nombre of blessedde soules, of patriarches & prophets & alle po holy soules, that pis day first entred in to pis blessedde cite of heuenly Jerusalem her kynde heritage abonne.

Wherefore when we maken solenmpe feste of one seynt that is passe out of pis worlde to heuen. More we owe to do so many bousandes, & 3it passyngly of him, that is seynt of alle seyntes.

Also pis is specialy be feste of oure lady, for as mich as pis day she sawe hir blessedde son Iesu verrey god & man so gloriously coronede as kyng stege vp to heuen.

3it also pis is proprely oure feste, for pis day was first oure kynde exalted & lift vp abowde be heuenes, & also for bot if cripte hadde so stege vppe: pat worpi 3ift of be holi goste whereof we maken solenmpe, we mighth not haue receyued e, se he seide to heex disciples, *It is spedeful to 3owe, pat I go vp to be faderes, for bot if I go so pro 3ove. Be holy goste confortere shalle not come to 3owe.* And perfore seib seynt bernarde in a serenn of his feste of be Ascension in confirmation of my foreside sentence: pat pis glorieus feste of be Ascension of oure lorde Iesu is an ende & fulfilling of alle obere solenmpetes & feestes, & a blessed conclusion of alle pere iurneie of oure lorde Iesu after his manhede &c.

Bus nowe we opynly see pat pis day & pis feste is most hie & solenmpe of alle opere. And pat soule pat louede trulie oure lorde Iesu, sholde his day be more ravyschede to heuen, & more gostly ioy haue in here: *pan in any day of pe 3ere. For pus seide oure lorde Jesus to heex disciples, If 3e louede me, solely se f. 112 sholde be gladde & ioyfille for pat I go to be faderes. Wherfor* 35 I leve pat I seide trewly before pat was neuer in heuen a day so ioyful & so solenmpe as pis day. And so pis ioy & pis solenmpe [durede] in to pe day of Pentechoste, whereof we movewe deuoutly ymagine & have meditacion in his manere:

Be Ascension of oure lorde was at pe sexte hour. For 40 before he ece with heex disciples at tierce, *pan mowe we bus ymagine, pat poe tenne dayes fro pat hour pat he ascended in to pe hour of pe holi goste sende. Be ix ordes of angeles with pe
holy faders & soules that he toke vp with him, made him tene festes, & he aseyynwarde rewardede hem specially in some singulare confort in every day.

And so bough alle bat were ben in heuene generally were of his Ascensione inuyful & made so manye a feste bat no tonge 3 kanne telle: neveres specially be first day, fro be houre of his ascension in to sexte of be nekst day following: angeles made his feste. be seconde day in be self manere maken hir feste: archangeles. De pridde day: vertues. Be serpe day: potestates. Be fynest day: Principes. Be sexte day: Dominaciones. Be sevend 10 day: Thrones. Be eyfted day: Cherubins. Be nynghe day: Seraphins.

And so sees ix ordres of angeles contynued his fестиes in to [be] sixte houre of be vigile of Pentecost & fro benne: in to terce of be day following, bat is of be sooneday in Pentecost: be holy faders with his felowchip made his feste to Jesu blessedete 15 without ende. Amen.

Of be sendyng done & be comyng of be holy goste.  
Capitulum Ixiiij.

Afiere bat oure lorde Jesus was gone vp to his blisse, & be angeles hade byden be disciples to turne aseyyn in to be cite as it is seide neked before, be with his blessed modere warchipyng him & kisinge devoutly be steppes of his feste, where he laste touchede be erbe: as be gospelle of Luke telleth. be went aseyyn in to Jerusalem with grete ioye, & pere be abidden be comyng of be holi goste contynuely in devout prayeres, loyving god & bllysynge 25 oure lorde.

† And when be tenpe day was come fro his Ascension, ben was be fiftynpe day fro his Resurexxion | oure lorde Jesus ioyynge f. 113  & be figure of be olde testament with be newe: for als miche as be tyme of grace was in bat day come: he seide to be fadre bus: 30

My fadre hauen nowe in mynde be behoste bat I made to my breperne of be holi goste. And be fader answerede, My dere sone I am wele apaide of bat behoste, & nowe is tyme bat it be fullillede, & mor ouere he seide to be holi goste, we praye be pat pou go done to oure disciples, & pat pou fille hem of pi grace, 35 conforte hem, strenghe hem, teche hem, & giue hem abundance of vertues & ioye.

And anone be holi goste come done with a wondirfull noys