

Periculum animarum: **Bishops, Gender, and Scandal**

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Scandal was defined in the medieval church as the sin of causing another's fall by providing a bad example in word or deed. The theology of scandal was developed particularly by Peter the Chanter (*d*1197) and his early thirteenth-century followers Robert Courson, Stephen Langton, and Thomas of Chobham, and it was crystallized by Thomas Aquinas into the doctrine which survives in the Catholic Church today. Scandal was a sin against charity, since it endangered the souls of others, and most thirteenth-century writers on the subject agreed that it could be a mortal sin, depending on the kind of sin it provoked in another. It was so serious that it was to be avoided at all costs, except where the truths of life (the Christian way of living to attain eternal life), doctrine (Christian teaching), and justice (Christian law and order, and rectitude) were concerned.¹

Bishops can be seen as intermediaries between the institutional church and the community of the faithful. They passed on papal rulings in their statutes and canons, as well as issuing their own original legislation, and used those regulations in governing the behaviour of their people. Thus the central authority of the papacy was maintained and its teachings promulgated, and at the same time the local authority of the bishop was validated.² In their dealings with their flocks, bishops, some of whom participated in the development of the theology of scandal, had to interpret the concept. English bishops were on the whole well-educated men, who might be expected to have been familiar with the theology of scandal. Indeed, in their role as legislators some of them enacted diocesan statutes which suggest that they were well aware of its damaging potential. These episcopal constitutions are one way of finding out what bishops thought, but there are other means of access to bishops' views such as the records of

their visitations and court proceedings. Many visitations and some court business are recorded in their registers; the earliest records surviving (with one or two early and sketchy exceptions) are those from the second half of the thirteenth century, so these bishops and their officials were working when the theology of scandal had been well developed. What follows is based upon bishops' and archbishops' registers from Canterbury, York, Bath and Wells, Hereford, Lincoln, Salisbury, and Winchester covering the period 1266-1449.³

As part of their job, bishops carried out regular visits to all the institutions in their dioceses: hospitals, colleges, parishes, religious houses. If a bishop were conscientious and had a large diocese, this could be a very demanding and time-consuming aspect of his work. The business of visitations could, depending on the size of the diocese and the number of houses to be visited, take up many days in a month; each stop on a round of visitations might take several days.⁴ Occasionally, houses resisted visitation, which resistance in itself might be scandalous.⁵

Preparatory to the visitation of a religious house a notice was sent to the monastic foundation so that the house could make ready for the arrival of the bishop.⁶ A full record of a visitation (many records are not complete) includes a rubric and introduction, depositions (*detecta*, which became the basis for the *comperta*, which was "a finding [resting] upon his own judgment"),⁷ paragraphs listing the misdeeds of the nuns or monks, publication before the convent, charges against individuals, injunctions, and the record of inquiry into the superior's title. Given the quantity of work each visitation entailed, it is not surprising that some remote or small houses were visited infrequently, or that records might be less than complete. And given the fact that the records were kept, and the visitations carried out, by bishops, their officials, and their secretaries, all men by occupation dedicated to celibacy, we might expect a certain misogyny—or at least a wariness of women—to be reflected in the bishops' registers. And indeed this is the case. Although many of the problems bishops found in monasteries and nunneries were the same, they could be handled in different ways depending on the gender of the inhabitants.

Some religious houses were obviously more troublesome than others. Many visitation records report no infractions of rules at all, but there were many houses where bishops found examples of irreligious behaviour which caused scandal. The mostly aristocratic inhabitants of nunneries and monasteries sometimes seem to have had difficulty in adhering to their vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity. Their superiors could fail in their duties as administrators and disciplinarians, potentially

contributing to the sins of their wards. Failure to discipline erring charges was a serious fault which could cause scandal. For example, Bishop Wykeham wrote to the abbess of St Mary's in 1384, saying that this failure caused "danger to her own soul, was a pernicious example and a scandal to many."⁸ Abbots and priors might also incur such reprimands: Bishop Wykeham's words to the abbess were duplicated in a letter to the prior of Christchurch Twynam in 1386.⁹

Priors could be accused of scandalous offences involving financial mismanagement. For example, an abbot in Bishop Alnwick's diocese (Lincoln) in the fifteenth century, accused of having spent monastery money on women, found himself forced to submit to the "help" of a committee of four monks to aid him in his administrative duties.¹⁰ Even allowing buildings to fall into disrepair might be scandalous: one record from 1294 has an order for the sequestration of a church because of the neglect of its fabric, which is "a danger to souls, a pernicious example to others, and a scandal to many," according to the register.¹¹ Abbesses and prioresses could be accused of such faults as well, although, since women's houses tended to be smaller and poorer, they might have had fewer opportunities to lavish money and goods on people outside the convent. Sometimes a bishop appointed stewards to help the nuns with financial matters; this was much less often done for monks.¹² Bishops might also act to limit the permissible number of inhabitants in any given house, saying, as Bishop Martival of Salisbury did to the abbess of Shaftesbury in 1328, that the poverty caused by allowing more nuns than the house could properly support was "a serious prejudice and scandal to [her] monastery."¹³ Thus, while male and female superiors might experience similar difficulties in administration, bishops often saw women's houses as requiring more active help than men's houses, and more often that help came from outside the institution.

Amongst the rank and file in religious houses, there were many transgressions that bishops found scandalous. The convent was full of temptation. Far from being shut away from the world, it was often very much a part of it. For the most part, bishops deplored this contact with the outside world chiefly because it represented a threat to chastity. House after house of monks and nuns was enjoined to remove all seculars from the premises, although in theory houses were supposed to offer hospitality to pilgrims and other travellers, both secular and clerical, as well as sometimes to the poor. In practice, monks and nuns seem rather to have been taken advantage of, and the precincts of some houses sound as if they were almost extensions of the village or town community, with tradesmen and women coming and going, lodgers carousing, assignations being made and kept.

Bishops' registers show a concern to keep the world out of the cloisters of monks and nuns alike, but in both cases there seems to be a particular emphasis on the exclusion of worldly women, although for different reasons, depending on the gender of the inhabitants of the house. Visiting the Benedictine abbey of Muchelney in 1335, Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury and of Bath and Wells was shocked to find layfolk, including women and girls, freely and impudently entering the monastery.¹⁴ Bishop Flemyng's injunctions for Huntingdon say that even the women who wash clothes must wait at the gate for the laundry to be brought to them.¹⁵ In the case of monks, the issue was often the avoidance of sexual contact. An Austin canon of Dorchester, for example, appeared before Bishop Alnwick in 1441 accused of having had carnal knowledge of a woman in the bell-tower. At the same visitation, the abbot was accused of having committed adultery with five women, another canon of having begotten a child and of having bought off with a pension the husband of his mistress.¹⁶ The following year, at another priory of Austin canons, Newnham, the bishop heard complaints about a woman actually living in the house, "whom the canons call their sister, to whom and to her maid-servants and tirewomen the canons often have recourse, and take their ease with them to the scandal of the house; and hereby they are hindered from divine service."¹⁷ Usually we find only the punishment meted out to the men, but in the case of the abbey of Peterborough, visited by Bishop Alnwick in 1446, we learn that two of the three women with whom the abbot had been accused of committing adultery and incest, despite denying these charges when brought before the bishop for sentencing, were to be removed from the vicinity by their husbands.¹⁸ We cannot know how much of a hardship this kind of banishment was.

In Archbishop John le Romeyn's register, the canons of Bridlington were told in 1287 to exclude both nuns and secular women, with the exception of noblewomen, who might not be reasonably refused. Perhaps while allowing laundresses and serving women access to the monastery might cause scandal, *refusing* accommodation to noblewomen could also have been construed as scandalous.¹⁹ Possibly it could result in a travelling noblewoman finding herself with nowhere to stay, which could be embarrassing at least and dangerous at worst. On a pragmatic level, it might not have been politic for a house to antagonise a member of the class from which monastic patrons came. There is also no suggestion that noblewomen were seen as the sexual threat that laundresses and serving women clearly were.

Nunneries seem to have been particularly susceptible to the incursions of the outside world, if the number and forcefulness of the bishops' injunctions concerning

layfolk is anything to go by. Penelope Johnson notes that nuns in convents in northern France tended to regard their enclosures “as permeable membranes” which allowed them to pass in and out, and members of the outside world to do the same, with what might be seen as alarming ease.²⁰ English bishops found this to be the case in many monasteries and nunneries on their own rounds, or at least they were worried enough about strict enclosure to see any infraction as dangerous, particularly in women’s houses. Concern for the strict enclosure of women grew through the thirteenth century, culminating in the bull *Periculoso* of Pope Boniface VIII in 1298, which complained that nuns frequently went outside their monasteries and passed time with laypersons, as well as allowing suspect persons inside (causing scandal to many), and provided that they should stay perpetually enclosed in their cloisters and not go out without special permission.²¹ Bishops promulgated this edict vigorously, as soon as they received it. As early as 1300, Archbishop Thomas of Corbridge was reminding nuns of the recent ruling by the pope that no disreputable persons were to be allowed into their cloister.²² That *Periculoso* met with mixed success may be seen in the continued concern of bishops about this matter, right to the end of the Middle Ages.

Sexual contact with worldly women was not, apparently, the danger for nuns, but clearly secular women, or at least *some* secular women, were considered problematic nonetheless. There are many injunctions ordering nuns to evict women lodgers, but many houses were also granted licenses to allow noblewomen and their servants to lodge in the nunnery. Possibly noble lodgers could be difficult to evict; when Bishop Alnwick visited the Benedictine priory of Langley, the nuns complained to him about a boarder, Lady Audley, who brought her twelve dogs to chapel with her. The bishop instructed only that she was to remove her dogs from the church and choir.²³ Certainly it looks as if noble lodgers sometimes misbehaved with impunity and caused great disruption in the religious life of nunneries. They may well have had ties of blood and patronage with the convents, making it all the easier for them to take advantage of their position. And it is very possible that the poverty of many nunneries made them reluctant to discourage paying guests.

While bishops perceived laywomen in monasteries and nunneries alike to be a force of disorder, the nature of the disorder was quite different in the two cases. In men’s houses, the potential for disorder was sexual: the chastity of monks was seen to be threatened by serving women, although perhaps not by noblewomen, who had to be accommodated if they requested lodging. In women’s houses, there is no suggestion that nuns’ sexual virtue was in danger from laywomen of any class. Clearly

noblewomen could cause problems, but the disruption threatened social and devotional order, rather than sexual order.

Nuns faced particular dangers not experienced by monks. One of these was laymen. But where laywomen endangered monks' chastity by, presumably, their seductive presence, laymen could pose a more serious threat to nuns. Occasionally entry to nuns' houses was forced and violence was done to inmates: Bishop Flemyng's register records a mandate of excommunication for a group of men involved in an attack at Rothwell in 1421/2. The men broke into the house, attacked nuns, abducted and raped a laywoman, "in grave scandal to the whole of holy mother church, serious danger to their souls, and dreadful example to many others."²⁴ Sometimes nuns were abducted when they went outside the cloister, like Agnes of Sheen, a nun of Godstow in 1291, taken from a cart in which she was riding. She was excommunicated by Bishop Oliver Sutton when it was discovered that she had actually eloped.²⁵

Some houses were placed in particular danger by their geographical position. As early as 1284, Archbishop Pecham forbade the nuns of Godstow to talk to priests or scholars from Oxford.²⁶ 150 years later, however, Oxford scholars still boasted that they could "have all manner of recreation with" the nuns of Godstow, according to Bishop Grey's register in 1434. He ordered that nuns might not receive secular visitors in their chambers, and that "the recourse of scholars of Oxford to the monastery be altogether checked and restrained."²⁷ Despite this, the abbess of the house complained to Bishop Alnwick in 1442 that she was unable to prevent students from Oxford from having access to the monastery and even to the cloister.²⁸ Such students clearly posed a serious threat to the order and discipline of the house, as well as to the virtue of the nuns.

Before leaving the subject of outsiders in monastic houses, we should note that not all the proscribed visitors were lay, and not all penetrations necessarily coercive. In 1309, for example, Archbishop Greenfield of York admonished the canons of Worksop not to allow nuns from Wallingwells to stay overnight, since "scandal to your monastery is known most manifestly to abound" because of this. Two years later, he warned the monks of Selby not to visit the nuns of St Clement's, since "from too much conversation of monks with holy nuns, which is prohibited under grave penalty by the sacred canons, serious scandal is generated."²⁹ Over a century later Bishop Flemyng of Lincoln stipulated that monks and nuns might only meet together in the presence of a third trustworthy person.³⁰ Clergymen who visited nuns without reason (such as to hear confessions) were viewed with suspicion, but the responsibility for

excluding them fell upon the superior of the house. The prioress of Studley, for example, was admonished twice in 1294 by Bishop Sutton not to allow an undesirable clerk to hang about the nunnery because he caused scandal and damaged their reputation.³¹ But nuns were vulnerable to coercion or seduction by men who *legitimately* had access to their houses—confessors and other clerics, and there are countless such cases in the registers, although in fairness we can rarely tell how coercive or how mutual these relationships were.

There was little consistency in punishments meted out for incontinence. The bishop of Bath and Wells found in 1351 that a nun at Cannington had become pregnant, and ordered that she be incarcerated for a year, with enforced fasting.³² Likewise, Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Winchelsey's register records the 1298 case of Robert of Swaffham, a monk guilty of incontinence. His crimes were so enormous and notorious as to bring disgrace upon his fellow religious. "Because," the archbishop writes, "the evidence of such great excesses introduces no little scandal against religion and the brothers," Robert is to be imprisoned, and not to be released without the archbishop's permission.³³ Very often, though, the punishment involved purgation with a number of other monks or nuns who would testify to the person's good character, laying their own reputations on the line. The registers do not record extenuating circumstances or other reasons for such disparities.

Nuns might not be incontinent, but they could still be disobedient and otherwise troublesome. In 1308, for example, Archbishop Greenfield wrote to the prioress of Nun Appleton to instruct her to send the nun Maud of Bossall to Basedale, another Benedictine house. Maud had been disobedient, incorrigible, and rebellious to her prioress for many years, "disturbing the peace and unity of concord, to the cost of her salvation, pernicious example to the other nuns, and serious scandal to many," so for the sake of peace she was to be sent away.³⁴ Sometimes the offences are not mentioned specifically; in many cases we are told simply that a certain person transgressed against the rule. Such transgressions could cause scandal. To minimise the scandal in one such case in 1306, Archbishop Greenfield of York instructed that Henry of Belton be sent away from his own house of Selby to another of the order.³⁵ There are far more cases of nuns than of monks being sent away because they were disruptive and threatened "the peace and unity of concord." Were nuns more disorderly than monks, or did bishops merely perceive them that way, and did they think that abbesses and prioresses were less able to control their charges than were abbots and priors? Bishops were concerned about discipline in both men's and women's houses, but they do appear to

have acted quickly to take the responsibility for disruptive nuns out of the hands of their superiors, sending the offenders away to perform their penances. They were more likely to allow abbots and priors to retain control of disruptive monks at home.

All persons under vows were expected to be poor, chaste, and obedient. Most were also required to be quiet, but there is little said about silence in bishops' injunctions to monks, and much about it in their injunctions to nuns. Here again, the danger could be sexual. Archbishop Pecham admonished the nuns of Romsey Abbey thus: "If a nun breaks silence in cloister with a man, we decree that at the next meal her food be taken away from her.... And so that all suspicion be removed, we ordain that when a nun speaks to a man other than for the sake of confession, she should have two friends with her to listen, so that they might either be edified by useful words or prevent evil words, lest evil eloquence corrupt good habits."³⁶ Monks were taken to task for carrying on with women, including nuns, but it was not speech which was singled out as problematic in their case.

Nuns and monks by definition lived under a rule; its regulation made a religious house in theory an orderly bastion against a disorderly world. Any infraction of the rule, therefore, was to be deplored. Not only did transgression endanger the souls of the inhabitants of the house, but it was also, obviously, *unruly*. Bishops needed to concern themselves with scandal in religious houses, not least because of the threat that it posed to order and harmony (and any behaviour that endangered order could be construed as scandalous). Many of the same things were scandalous in either sex, but where women were concerned, bishops were more anxious about enclosure and silence, especially as they endangered chastity. Laypeople of the opposite sex coming into the monastery were a danger for monks and nuns alike, but religious people could be, too. Serving women, who had legitimate reasons to be in the neighbourhood, posed an obvious threat to the celibacy of monks; nuns were forbidden entry to monasteries for the same reason, although monks could not refuse lodging to lay noblewomen. For nuns, laymen were a danger, not simply because they might seduce nuns, but because they threatened the integrity of both their houses and their bodies. Noble laywomen disrupted the orderly life of nunneries and provided a bad example for the inhabitants. Monks were not at risk from visiting clerics, largely because they could draw from their own ranks priests to perform the sacraments, while nuns were forced to depend on clerics from outside for this. This dependence exposed them to sexual danger, about which bishops were clearly concerned. And although both monks and nuns ventured outside their houses, it was only the excursions of nuns that

provoked a papal bull in an attempt to control it. The greater concern over the entry of unauthorised people into nunneries and the unlicensed expeditions of nuns out of them reflects an overall preoccupation with the integrity of nunneries and of nuns. The house must be kept closed, the nuns unviolated. Silence was especially important for nuns because women's speech, except that of divine service, was by its very nature disorderly. Speaking to men could cause sin. Speaking to other nuns could contribute to dissension. Beyond this, to keep silence was to maintain bodily integrity. The mouth was closed, the body of the nun closed, enclosed.

The world outside the cloister offered even greater opportunity for scandalous sins. Some are similar to those found inside religious houses. We find, for example, countless examples of sexual transgressions on the part of parish priests, some of whom were undoubtedly promiscuous. Others, though, were like William Alve, vicar of the parish church of Itchenstoke in the diocese of Winchester, who in the 1370's admitted keeping Emma Ward, a "woman parishioner" and his "spiritual daughter," "openly and publicly" in incestuous and whorish embraces, and procreating children with her whom he acknowledged "openly and publicly" as his own. William admitted having resisted correction "in grave danger to his own soul and those of his parishioners, in pernicious example and scandal to many."³⁷ Cases like these seem clearly situations of clerical concubinage, where the priests in question were reluctant to abandon their "wives" and families.

We rarely learn the penances for both parties in these cases, but a case in Archbishop Wickwane's register for 1280 gives us penances for both the priest and the woman. The priest, for "such a notorious crime" was to "hear the divine office daily outside the church walls, and [to] say his canonical hours there sincerely and devoutly, publicly and duly penitent" until Ascension Day. He was to fast for this period. Nowhere might he celebrate [mass], and the penance was to be announced publicly every Sunday and feast day. The woman might not enter the church until Pentecost, and "every Sunday, in the full procession, clad only in her shift, she [was] to be beaten around the church by the parish priest." She was also to fast for this period.³⁸

Almost any sin committed by a priest could, because of his position in his community, be construed as scandalous. Not all the misdeeds of priests were sexual, of course, and there were plenty of scandalous clerics frequenting taverns, neglecting their churches, breaking the seal of confession. Such a priest cited in Hereford at the end of the fourteenth century even let two of his female servants ring the church bells

and assist at mass, which must indeed have occasioned comment.³⁹ One priest, castigated by an archbishop of York, was said to be

impudently indulging in eating and drinking night and day in taverns and other disreputable places, fornication and incontinence, plays, insolent dances, fights, and quarrels, in contempt of divine service, leading an extremely dissolute life, from which a pernicious example to the parishioners of the said church is left, dangers to body and soul are truly feared to threaten, and grave scandal is generated in the said parish and the surrounding area. Indeed, his evils are discussed publicly and are said to be so open and notorious that they may not be denied.⁴⁰

Even worse was the conduct of Richard, vicar of Bingham, who was alleged in 1283 to have frequented taverns where, as elsewhere, he divulged the secrets of his parishioners, breaking the seal of confession; he was drunk every day, neglected divine offices, was ignorant and useless, was over-familiar with women (“touching them in secret places”), and he was an adulterer. All these “and many other great sins caused danger to his own salvation, scandal to many, and a pernicious example to those whose souls he was appointed to govern.”⁴¹

Just as the misdeeds of monks and nuns were discovered in the visitation of their houses, so the shortcomings of priests came to light in episcopal visitations of parishes. But they also could figure in cases appearing in the bishops’ courts, which is where we find laypeople too, although we have already noticed how many laypeople, especially women, occur in the records of monastic visitations. Most cases that came before the bishop had to do with marriage, especially the legality of particular unions. Issues of scandal did, however, arise. Since moral behaviour was in the purview of the bishops’ courts, it should come as no surprise to learn that bishops, and indeed lesser clerics where we can find the sparse records, were extremely concerned with the sexual behaviour of their flocks outside the cloister as well as within it. Here again, there was not much consistency in the treatment of adulterers and fornicators, and it can be hard to see scandal-causing sin or its penance differentiated by gender, although there were probably many factors influencing penances which do not appear in the records, which often give us only brief entries such as “X appeared, accused of adultery with Y.” Sometimes we can infer social status (the likelihood that bishops did not often deal with the lowest ranks of society, leaving those to the courts of lower clerics such as archdeacons, may have a bearing on punishments) but this is often not possible.

The range of punishments was wide. For example, an adulterous knight was told by Archbishop Giffard of York in 1275 that he should “abjure [the lady] and suspicious places, and also go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or pay for someone else to go in his stead.”⁴² In 1299, Archbishop Romeyn issued a mandate compelling Cecily, a lady of Staunton, to do the penance assigned by his commissary for her scandalous adultery with William of Bredon, which was that she must circle the church at Staunton in the procession on six feast days and as many times through the markets of Nottingham and Bingham, being beaten as she went, walking like a penitent, with a chaplain in his alb following.⁴³ Archbishop Greenfield’s register records the case of the lady Lucy Tweng, wife of a knight, who had committed adultery with another knight. To remove as much as possible the danger and scandal to his subjects, the archbishop says, she should repair to Watton Priory to undergo her much less public penance.⁴⁴ In another case, in which an unrepentant adulterous husband was also accused of abusing his wife, he was reconciled with her “and [they] agreed to live together under pain of seven floggings in the neighbouring markets.” The adulterous lovers “were condemned by the [court] and abjured their sins, and the suspected places...and were flogged five times through Romney Market, and five times through Hythe Market, and six times round their parish churches.”⁴⁵ In yet another trial for scandal-causing adultery, the male adulterer was let off with a promise of good behaviour under penalty of a fine of £20, but the female partner was to be beaten on three days around her parish church.⁴⁶

Of course, laypeople could commit many crimes and sins other than sexual ones. Many people were accused of poaching rabbits and other animals from bishops’ property; these were almost always men.⁴⁷ Those who laid violent hands on clerics, a sin which a parish priest was not authorised to absolve and which had, therefore, to be judged by the bishop, were also men.⁴⁸ So were most people accused of defaming clerics.⁴⁹ It appears that women probably did not participate as much as men in these kinds of activities. The overwhelming majority of the scandalous cases in which women came to the attention of bishops had to do with sex and marriage. This is not surprising, given the suspicion with which medieval clerical culture viewed female sexuality and the fact that “wife” was most women’s primary role. Central to notions of order was the control of women’s sexuality; when that was unruly, it was scandalous because of the potential damage to others who might be motivated to emulate the ungovernable woman. Still, bishops were not always unsympathetic to women. For example, some beaten or abandoned wives petitioned bishops for help, and got it in the form of divorces or support payments. Bishops’ sympathy is sometimes obvious, as when

Archbishop Winchelsey wrote to the bishop of Rochester in 1282 to reprimand him for not dealing with the petition of an abused wife. This was “not seemly for pastoral solicitude,” writes Winchelsey.⁵⁰ Bishops certainly do seem to have applied unevenly rulings such as that of Pope Alexander III (1159-81), who had decreed that in ordering estranged spouses to be reunited, the bishop (or other representative of the church) “was ‘to compel’ the delinquent husband ‘to return to his wife and to treat her with marital affection.’”⁵¹ Bishops usually advised this to start with, but did not rule out the possibility that some differences were irreconcilable.

There are other cases in which bishops seem sympathetic to women. They fairly often relaxed vows which women had perhaps made rashly. Bishop Sutton, of Lincoln, for example, ordered Agnes Cross to do some other kind of good work when he found that her self-imposed penitential fast was proving detrimental to her health.⁵²

We might expect bishops to treat their flock in particular ways. They were, after all, representatives of the institutional church made up of celibate men promulgating and enforcing regulations laid down by apparently unworldly ascetics. And the misogyny that we have come to expect of the institutional church is certainly to be found, especially in bishops’ dealings with nuns, who were to be much more strictly enclosed than their brothers in religion, and much more firmly silenced. But I can find no clear evidence that bishops were so rigidly antifeminist in their pastoral work in the outside world. Obviously allowances must be made for individual personalities, but even so, it seems to me that the fact that penances for transgressions such as adultery are so inconsistent might indicate that bishops were being influenced, just as they should have been, by the circumstances of the sin and the sinner, with the result that they could treat women more sympathetically than we might perhaps expect. It is true that in positioning themselves as defenders of helpless women they were sustaining a particular stereotype, but this alliance gave some women at least some power, and demonstrates, once again, that the church was not a monolithic institution, but a community of the faithful, made up of individuals living in a real world.⁵³

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Notes

1 Gregory says: *[I]n quantum sine peccato possumus, vitare proximorum scandalum debemus. Si autem de veritate scandalum sumitur, utilius permittitur nasci scandalum*

quam veritas relinquatur “As much as we can without sin, we ought to avoid scandal to our neighbours. But if scandal is taken from truth, it is better that scandal be allowed to arise than that truth be relinquished” (*Homiliarum in Ezechielem*, lib. I, Hom. VII, PL 76, col. 842). Peter the Chanter: *Debemus ergo pro scandalo uitando abstinere ab omnibus licitis que possunt omitti salua ueritate uite uel doctrine uel iustitie* “We should, therefore, to avoid scandal, abstain from all lawful things that may be omitted save the truth of life, doctrine, or justice” (*Summa de sacramentis*, Pars 3, Cap. 45, 2a, AMN 16, pp. 375-6). This doctrine of the “threefold truth” originated with Peter the Chanter, who expanded upon the dictum of Gregory the Great that the truth ought not to be abandoned on account of scandal; see Bryan 1998.

2 C.R. Cheney, *English Synodalia*, p. 34. Elsewhere Cheney says, “The chief importance of English diocesan statutes in the thirteenth century, so it seems to me, lay in the elementary instruction they gave or prescribed for the parochial clergy in matters of theology and law”; “Some aspects of diocesan legislation,” p. 196.

3 Canterbury: Archbishop John Pecham (1279-1292), the *sede vacante* period of 1292-1294, Archbishop Robert Winchelsey (1294-1313); York: Archbishops Walter Giffard (1266-1279), William Wickwane (1279-1285), John le Romeyn (1286-1296), Thomas of Corbridge (1300-1304), William Greenfield (1306-1315); Bath and Wells: Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (1329-1363); Hereford: Bishop John Trefnant (1389-1404); Lincoln: Bishops Oliver Sutton (1280-1299), Richard Fleming (1420-1431), William Grey (1431-1436), and William Alnwick (1436-1449); Salisbury: Bishop Roger Martival (1315-1330); and Winchester: Bishops John de Pontissara (1282-1304), Henry Woodlock (1305-1316), and William Wykeham (1366-1404).

4 On visitations of monastic houses generally, see Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*.

5 Such was the case when Archbishop Wickwane tried to visit Durham in 1280. Ordering the excommunication of those responsible, the archbishop says: *...sed hii omnes...nos vituperiose repellunt, seu non admittunt, nedum hostia chori vel ecclesie, sed eciam publici cimiterii valvas nobis et nostris...in grave animarum suarum periculum, ecclesie Eboracensis prejudicium manifestum, et scandalum plurimorum* “...but all these disparagingly drive us away, or do not let us and our [people] in, not only from the door of the choir or church but even from the gates of the public cemetery...in grave danger to their souls, manifest prejudice to the church of York, and scandal to many.” In a mandate a year later calling for the excommunication of those who had supported the bishop of Durham against him, Wickwane says that they have acted “to

the detriment of their souls and scandal to many, as public fame notoriously shows all this” *...in animarum suarum detrimentum et scandalum plurimorum, sicut fama publica hec omnia notorie manifestat* (William Brown, ed. *The Register of William Wickwane*, ff. 142 and 143d). The dispute between the archbishop and Durham was long and litigious. Another example of scandalous resistance to visitation is found in the Canterbury *sede vacante* register for 1292-4, printed in C. Eveleigh Woodruff, “Some Early Visitation Rolls.”

6 Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*, pp. 3 and 55.

7 A. Hamilton Thompson, ed. *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. 1, pp. xlvi-xlvii; hereafter *Visitations of Alnwick 1*. In citing Thompson’s editions of registers, I have usually given his English translations.

8 *Vos quoque, domine prior, ad quem sub nobis immediate pertinet correccio et punicio premissorum, conniventibus oculis ipsa pertransistis, dimisistis, jam diu est, ut didicimus, incorrecta, de quo vestram prudentiam non laudamus, in anime vestre grave periculum, perniciosum exemplum, et scandalum plurimorum* “You, too, lord prior, to whom under us immediately pertains the correction and punishment of the foregoing [infractions], before conniving eyes you left these things uncorrected, for a long time now, as we declare, for which we do not praise your prudence, in grave danger to your soul, a pernicious example, and a scandal to many” T.F. Kirby, ed. *Wykeham’s Register*, p. 380, f. 222a and p. 361, f. 212a.

9 Kirby, ed., *Wykeham’s Register*, p. 380, f. 222a.

10 A. Hamilton Thompson, ed. *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. 2, pp. 293-302, ff. 123, 126-126d, 96, hereafter *Visitations of Alnwick 2*.

11 *...animarum periculum aliorum perniciosum exemplum ac scandalum plurimorum* “A danger to the souls of others, a pernicious example, and a scandal to many.” Once again, the role of “public fame” is noteworthy: *Intelleximus nuper fama publica sepius referente quod ecclesie de sancto Melano de Remeny cum capella de Peresmor...ruinose sunt* “We have lately learned by means of public fame often repeated, that the church of Saint Melanus of Remeny with the chapel of Peresmor...are in ruins” from Cambridge University Library MS Ee.5.31 (the Register of Henry of Eastry, prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, kept for the period between the tenures of Archbishops Pecham and Winchelsey, 1292-1294), f. 61v. Saint “Melanus” is Saint Melaine or Melanius, bishop of Rennes, died c530 (John Delaney and James Tobin, *Dictionary of Catholic Biography*, p. 794).

12 Bishop Giffard of York (1266-1279) did this for the nuns of Grendale and Basedale in 1267/8. William Brown, ed. *The Register of Walter Giffard* vol. 109, p. 54, f. 242 and pp 108-9, f. 482. See also *The Register of John le Romeyn*, p. xiii and William Brown, ed., *The Register of William Wickwane*, p. 269, f. 68d. For cases where administrators were appointed to help men's houses, see A.W. Goodman, ed., *Registrum Henrici Woodlock, Diocesis Wintoniensis 1305-1316*, pp. 523 and 598, ff. 152 and 175.

13 C.R. Elrington, ed., *Register of Roger Martival*, vol. 2, p. 576, f. 231.

14 Thomas Scott Holmes, ed. *The Register of Ralph of Shremsbury*, p. 195, f. 106. Much of this printed edition is really a calendar of the register, in English, with a few documents transcribed in Latin.

15 A. Hamilton Thompson, ed., *Visitations of Alnwick I*, p. 74 (Reg. Flemyng, f. 232d).

16 In fairness, we only know of these accusations, not of the truth or otherwise of the allegations; see *Visitations of Alnwick I*, pp.69, f. 111, 70-3, ff. 111-12 and xlvi-xlvii..

17 *Est quadam mulier manens in prioratu quam canonici vocant sororem suam; ad quem et eius ancillas et pedisechas canonici frequentes accessus et cum quibus habent solacia sua in scandalum domus, et per hoc retrahuntur a divinis* (*Visitations of Alnwick 2*, 235, f. 116d).

18 Testimony from various men includes: *Item dicit quod abbas notatur super gravi crimine adulterii cum Margareta uxore Willelmi Clerk commorantis ad portam exteriorem monasterii et cum Alicia uxore Willelmi Parker de Ivebury* "Likewise he says that the abbot is noted for the serious sin of adultery with Margaret, wife of William Clerk who lives at the outer gate of the monastery, and with Alice, wife of William Parker of Ivebury." The abbot's incontinence, according to another brother, is the cause of gossip: *propter quod dicit monasterium fore graviter apud omnes diffamatum* "He says that on account of this the monastery is seriously defamed abroad among everybody." The bishop ruled that *ipse mulieres procul a monasterio eliminarentur* "these women are to be sent a long way away from the monastery" and that the abbot *ab omni communicacione, [et] confabulacione...cum dictis mulieribus penitus et omnino se absteineat* "is to abstain deeply and completely from all communication and conversation with the said women." William and Margaret are to move away: *Willelmus [sic] et Margareta a loco habitacionis sue, qui locus est contiguus monasterio, et ad*

scandalum evitandum se amovere velent seu disponerent cum effectu “To avoid scandal, let William and Margaret consent or in effect arrange to remove themselves from their dwelling place, which is beside the monastery” (Thompson, *Visitations of Alnwick* 2, pp. 293-302, ff. 123, 126-126d, 96).

19 *The Register of John le Romeyn*, I:200, f. 61. Likewise, although women were forbidden to enter Cistercian monasteries, Innocent IV (1250) allowed noble women to enter, though they were still forbidden to eat meat, or spend the night, in an abbey; see David H. Williams, “Layfolk within Cistercian Precincts,” p. 111.

20 Penelope D. Johnson, “The Cloistering of Medieval Nuns,” p. 39.

21 Partial text of the bull *Periculoso* of Boniface VIII, 1298:

Periculoso et detestabili quarundum monialium statui, (quae honestatis laxatis habenis et monachali modestia sexusque verecundia impudenter abiectis extra sua monasteria nonnunquam per habitacula secularium personarum discurrunt, et frequenter infra eadem monasteria personas suspectas admittunt, in illius, cui suam integritatem voluntate spontanea devoverunt, gravamen, offensam, in religionis opprobrium et scandalum plurimorum), providere salubriter cupientes, praesenti constitutione perpetuo irrefragabiliter valitura sancimus, universas et singulas moniales, praesentes atque futuras, cuiuscunque religionis sint vel ordinis, in quibuslibet mundi partibus existentes, sub perpetua in suis monasteriis debere de cetero permanere clausura ita, quod nulli earum, religionem tacite vel expresse professae, sit vel esse valeat quacunque ratione vel causa, (nisi forte tanto et tali morbo evidenter earum aliquam laborare constaret, quod non posset cum aliis absque gravi periculo seu scandalo in simul commorari,) monasteria ipsa deinceps egrediendi facultas; nulli aliquatenus inhonestae personae nec etiam honestae, (nisi rationabilis et manifesta causa existat, ac de illius, ad quem pertinuerit speciali licencia,) ingressus vel accessus pateat ad easdem, ut sic a publicis et mundanis conspectibus separatae omnino servire Deo valeant liberius, et, lasciviendi opportunitate sublata eidem corda sua et corpora, in omni sanctimonia diligentius custodire.”

[Wishing to provide for the dangerous and abominable situation of certain nuns, who, casting off the reins of respectability and impudently abandoning nunnish modesty and the natural bashfulness of their sex, sometimes rove about outside of their monasteries to the homes of secular persons and frequently admit suspect persons into these same monasteries, to the injury of that to which by free choice they vowed their chastity, to the disgrace and dishonour of the religious life and the temptation of many, we do firmly decree by this present constitution which shall forever

remain in force, that nuns collectively and individually, both at present and in the future, of whatsoever community or order, in whatever part of the world they may be, ought henceforth to remain perpetually cloistered in their monasteries, so that none of them, tacitly or expressly professed, shall or may for whatever reason or cause (unless by chance any be found to be manifestly suffering from a disease of such a type and kind that it is not possible to remain with the others without grave danger or scandal) have permission hereafter to leave their monasteries; and that no persons, in any way disreputable, or even respectable, shall be allowed to enter or leave the same (unless a reasonable and obvious cause exists, for which the appropriate authority may grant a special license) so that [the nuns] be able to serve God more freely, wholly separated from the public and worldly gaze and, occasions for lasciviousness having been removed, may most diligently safeguard their hearts and bodies in complete chastity. (Text and translation from Elizabeth M. Makowski, *Canon Law and Cloistered Women*, pp. 133-5).]

22 William Brown, ed. *The Register of Thomas of Corbridge*, vol. 138, pp. 38-9, f. 26d.

23 Thompson, *Visitations of Alnwick 1*, p. 176, f. 108.

24 Thompson, ed., *Visitations of Alnwick 1*, p. 2; pp. 107-8, Reg. Flemyng. n. 1 points out that the attack on the nuns was sacrilege, and therefore a more grievous sin than the rape of the laywoman.

25 Rosalind Hill, *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, v. 3, pp. lxxiii and 132-3, f. 32v. As is often the case, Bishop Sutton makes reference to the scandal caused by such behaviour. Eileen Power contends that *all* such abductions are in reality elopements in her *Medieval English Nunneries*, p. 440.

26 ...*nous deffendons...ke nule nonein ne parle a escoler de Oxeneford...* “We forbid any nun from talking to scholars from Oxford” (Charles T. Martin, *Registrum Johannis Peckham, Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis: 1279-1292*, p. 851, f. 239). Note that the archbishop writes to this abbess in French (at the time the language of the nobility), indicating that the practice of addressing nuns in a vernacular began quite early (other entries are in Latin). By Bishop Alnwick’s time, it was routine for the nuns to be addressed in English, while male religious were still addressed in Latin. This is often used to demonstrate the decline of Latin literacy among nuns, which, if Pecham may be used in the same way, began long before the fifteenth century. Sally Thompson writes that:

Knowledge and understanding of Latin seems to have presented considerable difficulties. It has been pointed out that in the thirteenth century there are some references to ignorance of Latin, while in the fourteenth century nearly all episcopal injunctions to nunneries are in French. By the fifteenth century the Alnwick visitation records provide evidence of the incomplete comprehension of Latin in some houses, with even the prioress not able to understand episcopal mandates. There is no comparable evidence for such ignorance in the men's houses visited by the bishop (Thompson, *Women Religious*, p. 13).

27 *Nam scolares Oxoniensis dicunt quod possunt habere omnimoda solacia cum monialibus, prout desiderare volunt...accessus scolarium Oxoniensium ad monasterium omnino cohibeatur et refrenetur* (Thompson, *Visitations of Alnwick I*, pp. 67, 68 [Reg. Gray, foliation not given]).

28 Thompson, *Visitations of Alnwick I*, p. 114.

29 . *...monasterii vestri scandalum noscitur manifestissime redundare...cum ex nimia conversacione monachorum cum sanctis monialibus, que sacris canonibus sub penis gravibus est prohibitum, grave scandalum generatur* (Brown and Thompson, *The Register of William Greenfield*, v. 4, p. 57, f. 253 and v. 2, p. 105).

30 Thompson, *Visitations of Alnwick I*, p. 25 (Reg. Flemyng, f. 232). C.H. Lawrence in *Medieval Monasticism* notes a general increase in concern about the separation of the sexes in monastic orders, including those with double houses like the Gilbertines. He suggests that this separation had been less rigid in the past (before the late twelfth century), citing the story of the nun of Watton (pp. 223-5). For the nun of Watton, see also Giles Constable, "Aelred of Rievaulx and the Nun of Watton," pp. 205-26.

31 Hill, *The Rolls and Register of Bishop Sutton* 3:lxiii and 4:159-69, f. 92. The bishop followed this with a letter the following year, this time in French (5:107, f. 129v).

32 Thomas Scott Holmes, *Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury*, pp. 683-4, f. 398.

33 *Verum quia tam enormi excessus evidensia contra religionem et confratres non modicum scandalum introducit, volumus et mandamus firmiter injungendo quod idem frater Robertus a confratrum suorum communione totaliter sequestratus per vos carcerali custodie districcius mancipetur, a que sine nostra speciali gracia ipsum nolumus liberari* (Rose Graham, *Registrum Roberti Winchelsey Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, p. 275, f. 249v).

34 [C]omperimus quod domina Matill' de Bossale, commonialis vestra, contra religionis honestatem et regularem ordinis disciplinam...inobediens extitit, incorrigibilis et rebellis...et perturbans pacis et concordie unitatem, in sue salutis dispendium, aliarum commonialium suarum perniciosum exemplum et grave scandalum plurimorum; ob quas causas, ad majorem conventus vestri tranquillitatem et pacem, ac status sui emendacionem, ipsam ad aliam domum vestri ordinis duximus destinandam, vestris ibidem sumptibus moraturam donec aliud de ipsius statu duxerimus ordinandum (Brown and Thompson, *The Register of William Greenfield*, v. 2, p. 46). The archbishop sent an identical letter to the prioress of Swine in 1314, to tell her to send an incorrigible nun, Joan of Sutton, to Nun Appleton to undergo penance there (v. 3, p. 236, f. 153). It was not uncommon for such disturbers of peace and concord to be sent away to perform their penance. Greenfield's has another such entry, for example, almost identically worded, sending Joan de Percy from Basedale to Sinningthwaite (v. 3, pp. 23-4). When the penance had been completed, the erring nun or monk was allowed to return.

35 Brown and Thompson, *The Register of William Greenfield*, v. 2, p. 15.

36 Si quae vero monialis in claustrum cum quocunque homine silentium fregerit, in primo sequenti prandio praecipimus ut ei pitancia subtrahatur... Et ut omnis suspicio sustellatur imposterum, ordinamus ut quaecunque monialis cum quocunque homine locutura praeter casum confessionis, scuem habeat duas socias colloquium audituras ut vel aedificentur verbis utilibus se tractentur, vel verba mala impediatur ne corrumpant mala eloquia bonos mores (Martin, *Registrum Johannis Peckham*, pp. 664 and 663; see also p. 707, f. 233).

37 ...confiteor et recognosco palam et publice, quod ego quandam Ennam Warde, mulierem parochialem, et filiam meam spiritualem, in amplexibus incestuosis sive fornicariis per nonnulla tempora tenui palam et publice, ipsam infra diocesim Wyntoniensem predictam pluries carnaliter cognoscendo, et proles de eadem procreando, quas pro meis tenui et recognovi palam et publice... and ...correccionem vestram huiusmodi fugiendo pluries vexavi et fatigavi indebite nequiter et injuste in anime mee et parochianorum meorum predictorum grave periculum et perniciosum exemplum et scandalum plurimorum (Kirby, *Wykeham's Register*, pp. 222-3, f. 121a).

38 Injuncimus G., presbitero, propter fornicacionem quam commisit cum L., parochiana sua, penitenciam que subsequitur salutarem; videlicet, quod pro huiusmodi crimine notorio deinceps usque ad Ascensionem Domini singulis diebus extra muros ecclesie divina audiet suas horas canonicas ibidem dicat corditer et devote, notorio et debite penitendo; et quod nec ibi nec alibi celebret quoquo casu, et cibo quadragesimali interim tantummodo

gaudeat et vescatur.” And: *Injunximus L., filie W. Burre, pro fornicacione commissa cum Godfrido de S., presbitero, et recognita coram nobis in iudicio, quod usque Pentecosten non ingrediatur ecclesiam, et quod singulis diebus Dominicis in plena processione, in sola sua camisia, per presbiterum parochialem circa ecclesiam fustigetur; necnon et cibo quadragesimali tantummodo gaudeat et vescatur* (Brown, *Register of William Wickwane*, p. 93, ff 118d-119).

39 A.T. Bannister, “Visitations Returns,” p. 447.

40 ...*Nicholaus de Erghes, qui se gerit pro vicario ecclesie de Schirburn’, in tabernis et aliis locis inhonestis nocte dieque commessacionibus et ebrietatibus, fornicacionibus et incontineciis, ludis teatralibus, coreis insolentibus, pugnis et rixis, spretis divinis obsequiis, impudenter indulget, vitam ducens nimium dissolutam, ex quibus perniciosum exemplum parochianis dicte ecclesie relinquitur, corporum et animarum pericula iminere verisimiliter formidantur et grave scandalum in dicta parochia et locis circumjacentibus generatur. Mala siquidem que de eo publice predicantur et que dicuntur esse adeo manifesta et notoria quod nulla possunt tergiversacione celari* (Brown and Thompson, *The Register of William Greenfield* 1:68-9). Nicholas must have reformed; an entry in the register for three months later records his institution and induction to the vicarage of the church of Ledesham, and four years later he was inducted to the vicarage of Pontefract. 2:126, 5:249. It is important to distinguish between scandal and notoriety, although the two are very often linked, as they are here. A scandalous sin—one by definition committed in front of another—is not necessarily notorious. Notoriety, not scandal, is required for prosecution.

41 ...*erga mulieres in turpiloquio, ac eciam in palpando ipsas in locis secretioribus*”; “...*hec et alia plura enormia, in sue salutis periculum, scandalum plurimorum, et exemplum perniciosum eorum quorum deputatur regimini animarum, perpetrans dampnabiliter et exercens* (*Register of John le Romeyn*, p. 256, f. 71).

42 ...*ipsam et consortium ipsius, ac omnia loca suspecta...abjurando*”; *ita ut in propria persona adeat Terram Sanctam, vel suis sumptibus ibi mittat pro isto commisso ydoneum bellatorum* (Brown, *Register of Walter Giffard*, p. 282, f. 129d).

43 ...*ut senas circa ecclesiam de Stanton’ in plena processione sex diebus festivis et totidem per mercata de Notingham et Byngham fustigaciones, more penitentium incedens, reciperet, capellano in albis consequente eandem, aut partem ejusdem penitencie subire noluit hactenus, ut accepimus, licet pluries requisita, quinimmo spiritu superbie et elacionis induta, disciplinam ecclesiasticam animo irreverenti contempsit dampnabiliter et contempnit. Nos, volentes, sicut ex officio pastorali astringimur, errantem oviculam a devio ad viam*

salutis modis quibus possumus salubriter revocare, ne sanguis ipsius in districto examine de nostris manibus periculosius requiratur, vobis mandamus, firmiter injungentes quatinus apud Stanton' personaliter accedentes, predictam Ceciliam sub competenti testimonio mon-eatis et efficaciter inducatis quod, ad bonum obediencie rediens, injunctam sibi peniten-ciam, ut premititur, humiliter peragat et devote; et, ut ipsam proximis diebus festivis et fori post monicionem factam hujusmodi incipiat, majoris excommunicacionis sententia comp-el-latis eandem, quam sententiam, si necesse fuerit, cum communicantibus aggravetis, ut, sic rubore perfusa, ad gremium sancte matris ecclesie redeat vel invita (Register of John le Romeyn 2, p. 245, f. 16). The public humiliation aspect of this penance survived the Reformation, although the whipping did not. An example from 1734 is instructive, not only as evidence of the survival of this kind of ritual, but also to show the longev-ity of the formulaic wording. The guilty woman, Margaret Sherratt, was to go to a different parish church on each of three successive Sundays, and “during all the time of divine Service shall stand upon a low Stool placed before the Reading Desk in the Face of the Congregation then assembled, being cloathed in a white Sheet in her Stocken feet, with her hair about her Ears, and having a Wand in her hand, and immediately after the End of the second Lesson the said Margaret Sherratt shall (with an audible voice) make her humble Confession as follows: ‘Whereas I Marga-ret Sherratt Not having the Fear of God before mine Eyes, but being led by the Insti-gation of the Devil and my own carnal Concupiscence have committed the grievous Sin of Fornication with Thomas Booth To the dishonour of Almighty God, the breach of his most sacred Laws, The Scandal and evil example of others, and the dan-ger of my own Soul without unfeigned Repentance, I do humbly acknowledge...’” (cited in Anne Tarver, *Church Court Records*, p. 42). Tarver notes that the custom of public penance also taking place in the market place still existed in some places well into the eighteenth century (p. 45).

44 Brown and Thompson, *The Register of William Greenfield*, v. 3, pp. 49-50, f. 176d.

45 C. Eveleigh Woodruff, “Some Early Visitation Rolls,” p. 154. This case comes from the *sede vacante* period between the death of Archbishop Pecham (Dec. 1292) and the confirmation of Archbishop Winchelsey (Sept. 1294). Unfortunately, Woodruff does not provide the Latin and I have been unable to consult the original.

46 Alice, daughter of Peter of Catcliffe, is given this penance: *quod circa ecclesiam de Treton duobus diebus solempnibus fustigetur* “let her be beaten around the church of Terton on two solemn [feast] days” while Richard Bernak *qui peccatum suum cum predictis et loca suspecta in forma ecclesie abjuravit, promittens et litteratorie cavens quod, si*

contingerit ipsum vere vel presumptive cum predictis vel eorum altera iterato convinci, nobis xxli persolvat “who has abjured his sin with the above [woman] and suspect places in the church, promising and taking heed of the instruction, that, if he happens to be convicted with that woman or with the other one again, let him pay us £20” (*Registers of John le Romeyn*, pp. 271-3).

47 For example, see Kirby, *Wykeham's Register*, p. 213, f. 111a.

48 Lambeth Palace Library, *The Register of Walter Reynolds*, f. 36v.

49 Cecil Deedes, ed. *Registrum Johannis de Pontissara*, vol. 2, pp 767-8, f. 207b.

50 *quod pastoralement non decuit sollicitudinem* (Martin, *Registrum Epistolarum Fratris Johannis Peckham*, Letter 299, pp. 387-8). The couple in question were Alice Crevequeur and her husband Hamo, lord of Leeds Castle in Kent.

51 See John T. Noonan, Jr., “Marital Affection in the Canonists,” p. 501 ...*ad uxorem redeat et eam maritali affectione pertractet*” from *Decretales, Corpus juris canonici* (ed. E. Friedberg, Leipzig, 1881), X.4.1.9.

52 Hill, *The Register of Bishop Sutton*, pp. xlv-xlvi, referring to f. 175 of the bishop's *Register*.

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