

ADDITIONAL TEXTS

THE PRIEST'S PREPARATION FOR MASS

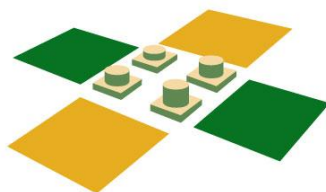
THE GOSSIPS IN CHURCH

ON RELIEVING SOULS IN PURGATORY

FROM *DIVES AND PAUPER*

I: CONTEMPLATION OF THE CRUCIFIX

II: PRAYER BEFORE IMAGES



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP

SOURCES

Illustrations

pp. 4, 10, 14: from *Missale ad usum insignis ecclesie Sarum*, 1527 (Antwerp, imprint Christoffel Ruremund, sold by Francis Byrckman), *STC* (2nd edition), no. 16027, images 131, 5 and 62 respectively.

Texts

1 (pp. 5–6): John Lydgate, ‘An Exortacion to prestys when they shall sey theyr Masse’, Cambridge, Gonville and Caius MS 174/95, pp. 453–4. Edited H. N. McCracken, *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, Early English Text Society, Extra series, 107 (London, 1910), 84–6.

2 (p. 7): ‘Tutivillus, the devyl of hell’, from London, British Library MS Douce 104, f. 112v (late 15th century), ed. Douglas Gray, *A Selection of Religious Lyrics* (Exeter, 1992), 80–81.

3 (pp. 8–9): ‘Of þe relefyng of saules in purgatory’, in London, British Library, MS Add. 37049, f. 24v; edited text in T. Matsuda, *Death and Purgatory in Middle English Didactic Poetry* (Woodbridge, 1997), 243–4.

4 (pp. 11–13): ‘On images and their use in prayer and contemplation’, from *Dives and Pauper*, ed. P. H. Barnum, Early English Text Society, Original Series, 275, 280, 323, 2 vols. in 3 (London and Oxford, 1976–2004), vol. 1 part 1, 83–7.

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John Lydgate

An Exortacion to prestys when they shall sey theyr Masse

(a modernised adaptation)

Holy priests, remember in your hearts
When you get dressed for mass,
With love and dread first give meek attention
To the dignity of virtuous noblesse,
To the spiritual treasure, to the heavenly great riches,
To good incomparable: whoever conceives correctly,
Quakes for dread, trembles with meekness,
When he receives the Lord of Lords.

Next remember on that other side
To avail his goodness for your great iniquity,
To weigh his meekness against your forward pride,
To avoid all rancour, to think on his charity,
To weigh his patience against your cruelty,
Absolved and contrite beforehand with humble intent,
Say 'Jesus Have Mercy,' kneeling on your knees,
Before you receive the Holy Sacrament.

Be wise about yourself, and take good notice
Of any arrogance or wilful hardness.
Take on your office with dread only,
And with contrite heart oppress your excesses.
Late and bitter tears wash away your wickedness.
With weeping examine your conscience,
Then receive with spiritual gladness
The most magnificent Lord of Lords.

And also, make sure that you with diligence,
With wisdom of mind and all your spiritual pain,
Pray for all, present and absent,
Unto the Lord of Lords most sovereign,
Called chief, spring and guide, certain
Of grace and virtue, as scholars have described...
And so that you may soon attain his mercy
Walk to mass while thinking of the five wounds.

Remember also, most lovingly,
His most painful passion,
How he was hurt and bleeding in every limb,
And suffered death for your redemption.
Give thanks to him with humble affection
Who for your sake was wounded in his side,
And earnestly ask the Lord of mercy and pardon
To long abide with you, in perfect charity.

Next, make sure you have a spiritual appetite,
Influenced only by his grace.
In him alone set all your delight,
With fervent love, joy and solace,
In your heart make his dwelling place
For your eternal consolation.
Let him not make you forget
The Feast of angels in the heavenly mansion.

Envoi

Ring little bell, and with all humility
Ask holy priests, who have devotion,
To sing the mass, to be scrupulously
Good-willed for this duty,
To perform it meekly, subject to correction,
Straight from the heart, to people small and great,
Of humble will without arrogance...
To priests disposed each day to sing the mass.

Gossips

(modernised version)

Tutivillus, the devil of Hell,
He writes down the names, truth be told,
Of those who chatter at mass!

Better would they be at home for ever
Than here to serve the devil and later pay,
Thus in vain do they attend!

These women who sit around the church,
They all belong to the Devil's posse,
And obstruct the divine!

If they be still, he will kill them:
With his bold deceit he draws them into hell,
And they weep much on the way to the well!

For his love which you dearly bought,
Hold your tongue and don't argue.
But turn yourself to prayer.

The bliss of heaven which you may attain
God brings us all therein.
Amen! Amen! they say.

In the original, the final line of each stanza is in Latin.

Of the relefyng of saules in purgatory

Þe saules þat to purgatory wendes
May be relefyd þorow help of frendes
Þat almos for þaim dos & prayes,
For þe holy man saynt Austyn says:
Non est negandum spem defunctorum
Pretate suorum amicorum posse releuari.
Foure maner of helps ar generall
Þat in purgatory avayles þaim alle:
Þat is to say pater noster & fasting,
Almosdede & mes syngyng.
Perfor man, when þi frendes ar past,
To help þaim hye þe fast.
Also I rede þou take gode hede
To git þe pardon þou spede,
For all þe synnes þou has done here,
And with perfite penance not made þe clere.
For so mykil pardon may a man
Purches þat he may þan
In purgatory whyte al þe dett,
Þat fro blis may drawe or lett.
For so large is holy kirk tresour
Þat it is ynoghe to pay þerefore,
And for al þe payns þat det be
Of al þe men of cristiante.
Þus pardon in purgatory avayles.
Bot sum clerke þus cownsayles,
Þat we it spare & kepe holy
To þat we cum to purgatory,
And do here penance whils we may
Þat sone fro purgatory we wyn away.
Her may 3e se pardon more worthy to gesse
Þan is al warldly rytches.

On the Relieving of Souls in Purgatory

The souls that wend their way to purgatory
May be relieved through the help of friends
Who give alms for them and pray.
For the holy man Saint Austin says:
The hope of the deceased will not be refused
If one's previous friends are able to relieve!
Four ways of general help
Will benefit them all in purgatory:
That is to say the Our Father, to fast,
To give alms and to sing mass.
Therefore man, when his friends pass away,
To help them through, he must fast.
Also I read that you must take care
To say sorry, as soon as,
For all the sins which you have done here,
And serve a fitting penance for those which remain unforgiven.
For so much pardon may a man
Purchase, that he may then
In purgatory with all his debt,
For bliss, withdraw or lend.
For so large is the holy church's treasure
That it has enough to pay,
For all the pains paid as debts by
All the men in Christianity.
Thus pardon in purgatory has its uses.
Unless some clerk were to dispute this,
Let us spare it and keep it holy,
So that we may come to purgatory,
And do here our penance while we can
So that soon from purgatory we may be away!
Here may you see pardon greater than you can imagine,
And greater than are all worldly riches.



On images and their use in prayer and contemplation

from *Dives and Pauper* (modernised version)

1. Contemplation of the crucifix

Dives: How should I read in the book of pictures and imagery?

Pauper: When you see the image of the crucifix, think on him that died on the cross for your sin and your sake, and thank him for his endless charity that he would suffer so much for you. Take notice of the image, how his head was crowned with a garland of thorns until these went into his brain and the blood burst out on every side, in order to destroy the highest sin of pride that showed itself most in the heads of men and women, and make an end to this pride. Take notice also on the image, how his arms were widely spread apart and stretched very straight upon the tree till the sinews and the veins cracked, how his hands were nailed to the cross and streamed with blood, in order to destroy the sin which Adam and Eve committed with their hands, when they took the apple against God's will and warning. Also he suffered this in order to destroy the sin of wicked deeds and wicked works which men and women do with their hands, and to make an end of their wicked works. Take notice also on the image, how his side was opened and his heart split also with the sharp spear and how he shed blood and water to show that if he had had more blood in his body, then he would have given more for men's love. He shed blood for the ransom of our souls and water for the washing of our sins. Also, he suffered this ordeal in order to destroy the sin of pride, of lust, of envy, hate, wrath and malice that reign in the hearts of men and women. Take notice and bring an end to your pride, to your false lust, to hate, envy, wrath and malice and forgive your fellow Christian for his love that forgave his death. (?) Take notice also on the image, how his feet were nailed to the tree and streamed with blood in order to destroy the sin of sloth in God's service, and in order to make an end of sloth in God's service, hasten your foot to God's house and to God's service. Take notice also on the image how his body was flayed and all torn with the sharp scourges, which from the sole of his foot to the top of his head revealed no untouched place on his body, and that was in order to destroy the sin of lust and liking of the flesh, gluttony and lechery which reign in the bodies of men and women; and so make an end to your gluttony and lechery.

Take note of how naked and poor he hung upon the tree for your sin and for your sake, and don't be ashamed to suffer poverty and mischief for his love. And as St Bernard asks of us, take note on the image of how the head is bowed down to you, ready to kiss you and come down to be with you. See how his arms and his hands were spread wide apart on the tree in token that he is ready to hold you, embrace you, kiss you and take you into his mercy. See how his side was opened and his heart cleft also, as a promise that his heart is always open to you, ready to love you and to forgive you all your trespasses if you will change and ask for mercy. Take note also of how his feet were nailed very hard to the tree in token that he will not leave you, but will abide with you and dwell with you for ever. In this manner, I pray you, read this book and fall down to the ground; thank your God that would do so much for you, and worship him above all things, not the image, nor the place, stone or tree, but him that died on the tree for your sin and for your sake; so that when you kneel, kneel before the image but not to the image. Worship before the image but not to the image. Make your prayer before the image but not to the image, for it does not see you, hear you or understand you. Make your offering, if you will, before the image but not to the image. Make your pilgrimage not to the image nor for the image, for it may not help you, but to him and for him which the image represents to you. For if you do it for the image or to the image, you commit idolatry.

2. Praying before the image of a saint

Dives: I think that when men kneel before the image and make their prayer before the image, that they do it to the image and therefore worship the image; so suppose many people, as I think. For they stare and look on the image with a weeping eye. They hold up their hands, they strike their breasts. What they do with their eyes and their countenance, I think, they do it all to the image.

Pauper: If they do it the image they sin greatly in idolatry and have no excuse, for it is a sin against all reason and against nature. But as I said first, they must do all this before the image and not to the image.

Dives: How might they do all this before the image and not worship the image?

Pauper: Often you see that the priest in church has his book before him on his desk. He kneels, he stares, he looks at the book, he holds up his hands

and for devotion he sometimes weeps and makes devout prayers. To whom, do you suppose, the priest does all this worship?

Dives: To God and not to the book.

Pauper: In the same manner should the layman use his book that has images and pictures and think that he worships not his book, imagery and pictures, but God above all things and saints in their degree, and that all the worship he does before an image he does not to the image but to him that the image represents.

Dives: This example is good, but do you know a better one?

Pauper: When the priest says his mass at the altar, usually he has an image before him and usually it is a crucifix, stone or tree, or something portrayed.

Dives: Why is a crucifix more common than any other image?

Pauper: Because every sung mass is an occasion to make a memorial of Christ's passion, and therefore he has before him a crucifix to provide him with a fresh memory in mind, which he owes to Christ's passion.

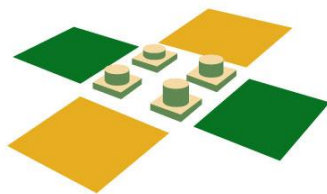
Dives: Your skill is good. Please continue.

Pauper: Before this image the priest says his mass and makes the highest prayers that the Holy Church can devise for the salvation of those who are alive and dead. He holds up his hands, he lowers down, sometimes he kneels, and all the worship he can do he does. Furthermore, he offers up the highest sacrifice and the best offering that any heart can devise, that is Christ, God's heavenly son, in the form of bread and wine. All this worship the priest does at mass before the image, and now I hope that there is no man nor woman so ignorant as to say that the priest sings his mass to the image and makes his prayer to the image or does his worship to the image or offers up God's son, Christ himself, to the image.

Dives: God forbid that any man or woman should say so or believe such a thing, for that would be the greatest of all errors.

Pauper: In the same manner should the layman do his worship before the image, making his prayer before the image but not to the image.





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