

## Chapter Three

### Episcopal Models of Sanctity

As explained above, episcopal sanctity during the Middle Ages was no a new occurrence, but more an established convention within Western Christendom. When needed, bishops would rise from obscurity to protect the common people, often defending them both physically and spiritually from harm. The popularity of episcopal sanctity rose and fell in the countries of Europe over the centuries, often to be finally superseded by another model of sainthood, but why did this type of saint become so popular and widespread in England during the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries? What is it that set these men apart, and what made them so holy? Are there any categories of sanctity which can be applied to the bishops in question, and what were the values associated with the perfect medieval bishop?

In his comprehensive work Vauchez categorised saints by different models of sanctity which had been documented by their biographers. For bishops in particular, holiness could be attained through three main models, namely; the administrator in the diocese and *curia regis* and the bishop becoming *viriliter*,<sup>1</sup> *in salute populi*, the pastoral father who preached and gave blessings to his local flock whilst reforming his church to make it more devout in the worship of God,<sup>2</sup> and the monk or ascetic who ‘had yearned, in his heart of hearts, to return to his monastery, if he was a monk, or to become a hermit, if he was a secular’,<sup>3</sup> and who emulated the eremitical life of the desert fathers

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<sup>1</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 292-295.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 295-300.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 300-310.

and the early church martyrs, showing his holiness by suffering and exile. However, these categorisations are ambiguous at best; many of the medieval bishops who were canonized can be identified with elements from each, and so form their own model and image of episcopal sanctity with different focusses on different models. They also incorporated different ideals, such as martyrdom in its various forms, which made their sanctity more compelling to both the local populace and the papal curia. On the other hand, these models do afford historians the luxury of simple categorisation, however flawed, in an otherwise confusing world of hagiography, superstition and miracles.

### Biblical and Theological Ideals

As one might expect, the medieval ideals of the holy bishop derive from scripture. The most commonly cited examples are from the epistles of Saint Paul, such as in 1 Timothy 3: 1-6:

If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgement as the devil.

And Titus 1: 6-10:

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless – not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, or pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

These ideals were reiterated by the papacy, especially during the early papal reforms of the sixth and seventh centuries, and most notably in Pope Gregory the Great's influential treatise on the lives and works of bishops, the *Liber regulae*

*pastoralis*.<sup>4</sup> The *Liber*, published in 590, was ‘as much a code of sacerdotal sanctity as a manual of pastoral theology for the benefit of the bishops’.<sup>5</sup> In fact, its influence continued from its first publication right through to the twelfth century, when it is clearly reflected in the *Decretum* of Gratian. These documents are among the foundations of medieval canon law, being ‘effectively a summary of the *Regula pastoralis*’.<sup>6</sup> Thus, by the twelfth century the ideal of a perfect bishop had not changed greatly, with Gratian writing that a bishop ought to be:

Irreproachable in his morals,  
sober and level headed,  
shrewd, courteous and hospitable,  
moderate in food and dress, discreet,  
neither a drinker nor a fighter but benevolent,  
an enemy of violence and quarrelling,  
neither a neophyte nor a usurer.<sup>7</sup>

The Second Lateran Council, called by Pope Innocent II in 1139, emphasised that bishops should exhibit their spirituality both outwardly and inwardly with Canon Four directly stating that:

We also enjoin that bishops as well as clergy take pains to be pleasing to God and to humans in both their interior and exterior comportment. Let them give no offence in the sight of those for whom they ought to be a model and example, by the excess, cut or colour of their clothes, nor with regard to the tonsure, but rather, as is fitting for them, let them exhibit holiness. If after a warning from the bishops they are unwilling to change their ways, let them be deprived of their ecclesiastical benefices.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 286.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 286.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 286.

<sup>7</sup> J. Rambaud-Buhot, ‘Le Décret de Gratien legs du passé, avènement de l’âge classique’, in *Etretiens sur la renaissance du XIIIe siècle*, ed. M. De Grandillac and E. Jeuneau (Paris: Mouton, 1968), p. 500, cited in Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 286.

<sup>8</sup> Papal Encyclicals Online, *Second Lateran Council – 1139 A.D.* [online]. Canon 4. Available at: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Councils/ecum10.htm> (Accessed: 28/2/2014).

These ideals were all combined in the writings and letters that St Bernard of Clairvaux sent to various correspondents throughout medieval Europe. He wrote in a letter to one bishop that:

Your generosity highly becomes a bishop, it graces your priesthood, it is a precious jewel in your crown, and it is a credit to your high position. If a man is prevented from being poor because of the position he holds, then let him prove himself a love of poverty by his actions. 'Blessed are the poor', but 'poor in spirit', not in goods.<sup>9</sup>

Thus it is clear that little was really demanded of a bishop during his life in order to be considered, to some degree, holy. The scriptures and other texts make clear that he needed only to have good morals and leadership, be a good administrator, and exhibit benevolence and moderation.<sup>10</sup> Also, to some extent he needed to exhibit monastic qualities, such as being poor at least in spirit even if his position means he cannot be poor in goods, and exhibiting his holiness outwardly through modest clothing and tonsure to accompany his own inner holiness. It is this later distinction, emphasised by the Second Lateran Council and Bernard of Clairvaux, which helped to revive episcopal sanctity; by adding elements of a more monastic model of holiness to the attributes already needed the bishops changed and adapted to follow the saintly trend that was occurring in Europe during the period.

### Models of Episcopal Holiness

As mentioned above, episcopal sanctity can be identified as three distinct and different models. After the eighth century, episcopal sanctity fell again until the model of the administrator and courtier bishops rose to prominence in the tenth and eleventh

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<sup>9</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Letters of St Bernard*, pp. 148-9.

<sup>10</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p 287.

centuries within the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>11</sup> The model then declined during the Gregorian Reform movement to be replaced by the model of the monk-ascetic, yet, by the twelfth and thirteenth century holy-bishops had re-emerged in England. Bishops in many regions became counsellors to the royal courts of the Plantagenet, Capetian, and Hohenstaufen dynasties of medieval Europe, serving as administrators and advisors to the kings and emperors. Many of the bishops who were part of these regimes were the subject of a *vita* which often showed how they balanced political duties and the precedence of the crown with the moral and spiritual activities that are central to the lives of bishops, and the primacy of the papacy.<sup>12</sup>

During this period of the *Gesta episcoporum* ‘the purpose, avowed or not, of the authors of these Lives was to show how their subjects had been able to achieve a balance between the public and political duties assumed in the context of the ‘Reichskirche’ (*cura exteriorum*) and the moral and spiritual preoccupations, strictly speaking (*cura interiorum*)’.<sup>13</sup> These biographies often showed them to be leaders of their churches and dioceses, friends and supporters of their kings or emperors, and also men of religion; praying, fasting and following ascetic practices. These were men, not only of action and government, but also of religion. Another key rite of passage for a bishop of the administrator or courtier model is conversion – usually an appointment into a position of power within the Church, often against their own will, by the king or emperor, much like that of Thomas Becket. Such conversions are an important tool to demonstrate a bishop’s religiosity in juxtaposition his ability in government.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 289.

<sup>12</sup> C. S. Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939-1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 25-28.

<sup>13</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 289.

Lastly, administrator bishops aimed to defend their rights from the heavy hands of the barons and, in some cases, attempt to expand their possessions. *Domesday Book* provides evidence that Wulfstan of Worcester managed to extend the lands that belonged to the bishopric of Worcester,<sup>14</sup> and Thomas de Cantilupe entered into many litigious disputes in order to defend his lands from the Marcher families such as the Gilberts and Clares.<sup>15</sup>

The most common model of episcopal sanctity that all bishop-saints exhibited to some degree was that of the bishop as pastor. This quality is rooted deeply within both scripture and the medieval mindset, and requires a bishop to command the respect of his flock and control his spiritual children. Many such bishops were portrayed, albeit in an idealised manner, by authors such as Bede. For example, in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* he describes Bishop Chad thus:

So Chad was consecrated bishop and immediately devoted himself to the task of keeping the Church in truth and purity to the practice of humility and temperance, and to study. He visited cities and country districts, towns, houses, and strongholds, preaching the gospel, travelling not on horseback, but on foot after the apostolic example.<sup>16</sup>

This clearly suggests that Bede also prized humility as a virtue in a holy bishop. Another later example can be found in William of Malmesbury's *Vita S. Wulfstani*, written around 1120. William of Malmesbury writes that Wulfstan was always

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<sup>14</sup> Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England, *Domesday* [online]. Available at: <http://www.pase.ac.uk/index.html> (Accessed: 28/2/2014). For example, the lands of Holt and Whittington were held by Æthelric in 1066, and in 1086 they were held by Wulfstan as tenant-in-chief; another example is Cotheridge which was held by Richard in 1066, and in 1086 it was held by Wulfstan as tenant-in-chief ([http://domesday.pase.ac.uk/?tab=mhb&pag=1&Text\\_1=Wulfstan&qr=1&TenantType\\_1=1086+tenant-in-chief&col=c4](http://domesday.pase.ac.uk/?tab=mhb&pag=1&Text_1=Wulfstan&qr=1&TenantType_1=1086+tenant-in-chief&col=c4)); see also *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin (London: Penguin Group, 2003), pp. 475-481; S. Baxter, *Domesday*, DVD (London: BBC Worldwide Ltd., 2010), first shown BBC2 (10 August 2010), 20:00-21:00.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas de Cantilupe, *The Register of Thomas de Cantilupe: Bishop of Hereford (A.D. 1283-1317)*, ed. R. G. Griffiths (Hereford: Wilson and Phillips, 1906), pp. 23, 34, 36, 59-62, 84, 104-5, 227-8.

<sup>16</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People, The Greater Chronicle, Bede's Letter to Egbert*, eds. J. McClure and R. Collins, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 164.

‘assiduous in travelling through his diocese, giving infants any sacraments they lacked, and spurring the faithful onto good works’ after he had been consecrated bishop of Worcester.<sup>17</sup> This was a trait that continued through his episcopate, possibly having roots in his early life as a Benedictine monk learning about the word of God, and thus he wished to preach to his flock:

This was what he always did, from dawn to dusk, and not only in the winter but in the heat of summer too. Often in a single day, as careful witnesses prove, he confirmed at least two, often three or more, thousand: and that not only in his youth, when green age and the very delight of good works led him to work hard, but even when the shining white sprinkled his head with snow.<sup>18</sup>

The final important model is that of the monk-ascetic. Many of the English bishop-saints of the period of study exhibited this quality to some degree. Whilst many did not go as far as Becket, who was martyred for his cause, they demonstrated asceticism by suffering for their cause at the hand of the king’s royal power, and by following practices such as the wearing of a hair shirt as proof of their ‘white martyrdom’.<sup>19</sup> This form of martyrdom, found in both sources relating to the early church fathers and hagiography, showed how monks and hermits were worthy successors of the early Christian martyrs by virtue of their asceticism and suffering.<sup>20</sup> In wearing a hair shirt and retaining monastic practices the bishops replaced the exile in a physical desert with a metaphorical one. Because of this, it was a central tenet of the Gregorian Reform movement in the eleventh century, under Pope Gregory VII, that the episcopate should be monasticised in some way and these tenets were carried through to

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<sup>17</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Saints’ Lives*, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p. 87.

<sup>19</sup> J. L. O’Reilly, ‘The Double Martyrdom of Thomas Becket: Hagiography or History?’, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 7 (1985), 185-247 (p. 197).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 197.

the Second Lateran Council in 1139.<sup>21</sup> It has been noted that ‘the image of the bishop was profoundly influenced by one particularly famous text, the *Vita Martini* of Sulcius Severus, which exercised great influence to the end of the Middle Ages’.<sup>22</sup> Saint Martin of Tours was said to have been a ‘synthesis of monastic perfection and pastoral action’;<sup>23</sup> someone who prayed, fasted and exhibited ascetic practices in order to counteract his involvement in government.<sup>24</sup> Whilst Severus would later claim that once Martin became bishop of Tours his miraculous powers began to wane,<sup>25</sup> after his *Vita* of Martin was written ‘no author of a *Vita* of a saint-bishop failed to refer [...] to the Martinian model’.<sup>26</sup> The spiritual separation from the ordinary world that asceticism brought meant that the monks of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries could become closer to God, much as the early church fathers had.<sup>27</sup> Their powers would fade once they were burdened by the regal vestments of office, as they were moving away from the desert, and God, and becoming rich with possessions and power. This premise led to the sharp decline of the model of the administrator, or courtier bishop from around the late eleventh century.

For those who had been members of the monastic orders during their early lives, such as Wulfstan of Worcester, a Benedictine, and Hugh of Lincoln, a Carthusian, their

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<sup>21</sup> Papal Encyclicals Online, *Second Lateran Council – 1139 A.D.* [online]. Canons 4, 6, 7, and 9, see Appendix.

<sup>22</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 288.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 288.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 288.

<sup>25</sup> Sulcius Severus, *Letters on the Life of Martin of Tours*, trans. F. R. Hoare, in *The Western Fathers: Being the Lives of SS. Martin of Tours, Ambrose, Augustine of Hippo, Honoratus of Arles, and Germanus of Auxerre* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), no. 1, p. 106.

<sup>26</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 288.

<sup>27</sup> P. Brown, ‘The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 61 (1971), 80-101 (pp. 91-4).



white martyrdom was complete. They had exhibited, and continued to exhibit, the qualities expected of an ascetic, even when they were a bishop; both Hugh and Wulfstan even produced some *in vita* miracles – a quality strongly associated with asceticism.<sup>28</sup> Other bishops chose to exhibit their monastic qualities in other ways, such as the observance of the *lectio divina* or the wearing of a hair shirt. For example, it is noted that Thomas Becket was wearing a hair shirt when he died and it was infested with vermin,<sup>29</sup> Edmund of Canterbury ‘had possessed an especially uncomfortable one’,<sup>30</sup> and Thomas de Cantilupe had taken up the example of his uncle, Walter de Cantilupe, who bequeathed his hair shirt to his nephew when he died.<sup>31</sup> Their biographers made sure to leave no stone unturned in order to show that their bishop shared qualities with the holy monks.<sup>32</sup>

### The Models and Reform

The Gregorian Reform movement of the eleventh century was the catalyst for a change within the episcopate of medieval Europe, fundamentally changing the models of holiness expected of bishops.<sup>33</sup> The reforms aimed to secure the papacy as the ultimate

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<sup>28</sup> William of Malmesbury, *The Deeds of the Bishops of England (Gesta Pontificum Anglorum)*, trans. D. Preest (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), pp. 191-2; K. J. Leyser, ‘The Angevin Kings and the Holy Man’, in *St Hugh of Lincoln: Lectures Delivered at Oxford and Lincoln to Celebrate the Eighth Centenary of St Hugh’s Consecration as Bishop of Lincoln*, ed. H. Mayr-Harting (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 49-74.

<sup>29</sup> Anonymous I, *M.H.T.B. IV*, 79.

<sup>30</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 90.

<sup>31</sup> D. Carpenter, ‘St Thomas Cantilupe: His Political Career’, *St Thomas Cantilupe: Bishop of Hereford*, 57-72 (p. 63); ‘Acquittance to Master Thomas de Cantilupo and the other executors of W. Bishop of Worcester’. – *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1258-1266*, p. 596 [online]. Available at: <http://sdr.lib.uiowa.edu/patentrolls/h3v5/body/Henry3vol5page0596.pdf> (Accessed: 20/11/2013).

<sup>32</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 301.

<sup>33</sup> K. G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

power of the Church in the world and so, throughout the eleventh century and into the twelfth, lay investiture and simony were attacked.<sup>34</sup> Thus doubt was cast upon the legitimacy of many bishops and their lands, especially those who had been adopted into political life by kings and emperors, and this in turn led to the revival of the monk-ascetic model and a decline in the bishop-administrator.<sup>35</sup> The papacy continued its acts of reform well into the twelfth century, which led to the papal support of the rise of new distinguished monastic houses, such as the Cistercians and Carthusians.<sup>36</sup> However, in attempting to increase the influence of the new monastic orders on the episcopate, the papacy had brought about a decline in holy bishops on the continent, especially in the Germanic countries where the administrator model of bishop-saints had been so plentiful. Even the influential orators in the Middle Ages, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, placed an emphasis ‘on the virtues of chastity, charity and humility’ in his *De moribus et officiis episcoporum*.<sup>37</sup> To resolve this problem biographers sought to reconcile the monastic model with administration; by using the Martinian model they could create holiness for a bishop based on the defence of ecclesiastical rights and the affairs of the local church, whilst focussing specifically on the image of the ascetic and their holy practices. Ultimately though it became difficult for bishops to be considered as saints as

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<sup>34</sup> For example, canons 1 and 2 of the Second Lateran Council specifically condemn simony: ‘We decree that if anyone has been ordained simoniacally, he is to forfeit entirely the office which he illicitly usurped’, see appendix for canon 2, Papal Encyclicals Online, *Second Lateran Council – 1139 A.D.* [online].

<sup>35</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 290.

<sup>36</sup> See J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, third edn. (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 287.

‘the Church turned increasingly to the secular clergy for bishops and elsewhere for her saints’.<sup>38</sup>

### The Becket Model

Whilst the three models described above applied to the majority of bishop-saints canonized before the twelfth century, on 29 December 1170 four knights, acting under instructions from King Henry II,<sup>39</sup> inadvertently created ‘The Becket Model’ of episcopal sanctity. This name was first established by Josiah Cox Russell, who wrote that ‘in the person of Becket, resistance to the king had been canonised’.<sup>40</sup> But such martyrdom did not always assure sainthood or, perhaps, anything more than veneration by a local cult. For example, two Italian bishops were murdered by local lords within ten years of Becket’s canonization, but had only a local cult develop around them.<sup>41</sup> This is what makes the Becket model so peculiar, and so difficult to apply to sainthood through the centuries after his martyrdom. On the continent true martyrdom sometimes proved an insufficient qualification for sainthood, yet in England martyrdom need not even occur.

Russell and Vauchez noticed that many of the English bishops that had been canonized, apart from Becket, had no ‘halo of martyrdom’,<sup>42</sup> but instead gained their

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<sup>38</sup> C. Boucard, *Spirituality and Administration: The Role of the Bishop in Twelfth-Century Auxerre*, Speculum Anniversary Monographs (Cambridge: Medieval Academy of America, 1979), p. 144.

<sup>39</sup> Edward Grim, *Lives*, pp. 195-203; Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, p. 235. The statement that it was an order by Henry II is repeated in all the Lives; John of Salisbury recites the infamous story that: ‘the king complained exceedingly of the archbishop of Canterbury with sighs and groans: as those who were present afterwards reported, he declared with tears that the archbishop would take from him both body and soul. Finally he said they were all traitors who could not summon up the zeal and loyalty to rid him of the harassment of one man’, W. Warren, *Henry II* (Totton: Hobbs the Printers Ltd, 2000), p. 509.

<sup>40</sup> J. C. Russell, ‘The Canonization of the Opposition in Angevin England’, *Anniversary Essays in Mediaeval History*, ed. C. H. Taylor (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929), 279-290 (p. 281).

<sup>41</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 168, n. 34.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p. 169.

posthumous popularity through their prestige with the people in defence of the church and people against royal or baronial prerogatives.<sup>43</sup> In cases where a true martyrdom could not be shown royal persecution was the only worthy substitute; yet ‘it was the cause, not the suffering, which made a martyr’.<sup>44</sup> Even lay members of society in England who opposed the king at some point in their life, such as Simon de Montfort (d. 1265), were sometimes postulated for canonization and attributed as miraculous. Another, similar example, Thomas of Lancaster (d. 1322) had an office written about him in around 1330:<sup>45</sup>

*Gaude Thoma, ducum decus, lucerna Lancastriae,  
Qui per necem imitaris Thomam Canturiae;  
Cujus caput conculcatur pace ob ecclesiae,  
Atque tuum detruncatur causa pacis Angliae;  
Esto nobis pius tutor in omni discrimine.*

Rejoice, Thomas, the glory of chieftains, the light of Lancaster, who by thy death imitated Thomas of Canterbury; whose head was broken on account of the peace of the Church, and thine is cut off for the cause of the peace of England; be to us an affectionate guardian in every difficulty.<sup>46</sup>

Clearly, opposition to the crown and the struggle for independence from it, whether spiritual or temporal, was the path to holiness – in England at least – as after his canonization, Thomas Becket became a powerful figure in the minds of the Church and its clergy.

Yet the Becket model essentially served to simplify the English system of episcopal sanctity. Certainly Becket and many of the English bishops who followed him, had some private ascetic qualities, such as wearing hair shirts, and they also

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p. 169; Russell, ‘Canonization of the Opposition’, p. 280.

<sup>44</sup> M. Jensen, *Martyrdom and Identity: The Self on Trial* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010), p. 88.

<sup>45</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 170.

<sup>46</sup> *Thomas Wright’s Political Songs of England, From the Reign of John to that of Edward II*, ed. P. Coss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 268.

performed miracles after death, showing their healing and miraculous abilities and saintly credentials, but one of the reasons why the monastic model of holiness had become so widespread and popular was that these ascetic white martyrs were thaumaturges during their lifetime. Indeed, it seems that the more vigorous one's asceticism, the holier one was. Yet very few of the English bishops were true ascetics. Few demonstrated any holy power during their lives and during the thirteenth century there was a noticeable decline of *in vita* miracles performed by saints.<sup>47</sup> Vauchez attributes this to the juxtaposition of the 'image of a monk engaging secretly in the harshest penitential practices and remarkable for his humility and poverty [...] superimposed [...] on that of the religious leader and wealthy aristocrat'.<sup>48</sup> By not performing miracles during his life Becket reconciled the monastic and administrative models of sainthood for the English bishops, and thus re-established the value of temporal qualities which had waned during the twelfth century.

The scarce nature of *in vita* miracles performed by the bishops canonized in England after Becket meant that biographers made sure to grasp at any evidence which showed bishop's ascetic qualities;<sup>49</sup> whether it was pastoral care for their flock, or royal resistance and persecution endured thereafter. As such, joining Becket's *milita Christi* and, one may argue, supporting the ideals embodied within the Magna Carta for bishops after 1215 became a standard feature of English hagiography. English bishops could now use their administrative abilities and their position as an integral part of the *curia regis* to help justify their sanctity. They were encouraged to keep their feet on the ground, and to conduct their business as vassals and temporal lords whilst still engaging

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<sup>47</sup> Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 301.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p. 301.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 301-2.

in their spiritual work. The true Becket model is not just resistance to royal opposition, as Russell and Vauchez thought; it is the integration of the spiritual and the secular – the reconciliation of two models of holiness which would elsewhere be separate. And so the historically fractious relationship between Church and State, especially in England, reached a mutual agreement. Christopher Cheney writes that ‘Church and Crown recognized they had different interests: each was determined not to be over-reached; neither was prepared to proceed to extremities’ and thus they returned to a *modus vivendi*, as they had been for the previous centuries.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> C. Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government 1170-1213* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956), p. 108.