

SERVING THE GREATER CAUSE:
ASPECTS OF THE RELIGIOUS
THINKING OF
PROSPER GUÉRANGER

(1805-1875)

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines how the religious thinking of Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875) developed during the course of his life and how it was distinct from more mainstream strands in Ultramontane piety. Although influenced as a young man by the works of Félicité de Lamennais, he was particularly attracted by the latter's writing on ecclesiastical history and by his critique of the Concordat agreement of 1801 which curtailed the independence of the clergy. Ill at ease in the moral and liturgical climate of the Gallican Church, he established a monastic community at Solesmes in the Sarthe valley in 1833 and, against all odds, he pioneered liturgical reform and wrote and published prolifically from this base all his life. His early inspiration came from his reading of the Fathers of the Church and from a conviction that Christian doctrine was founded in Trinitarian theology. This led him to attribute a key role to Mary because of the part she played in the Mystery of the Incarnation. After 1850 he explored how this message had been carried forward by the saints and mystics whose writings were embedded in liturgical practice, at least until the end of the medieval period.

Although Guéranger was not a conventionally Romantic writer, his work has features in common with the more famous historiographers and history painters, who were working in the 1830s and 1850s. He shared with them a commitment to understand the past in order to improve the future and he read widely and engaged in debate with those writers concerned to discover the historical rather than the doctrinal Jesus. His monastic vocation was central to his thinking and his experiences as abbot and pastor gave him an insight into the emotional and spiritual lives of the local Catholic bourgeoisie. A lateral thinker, he failed to convince his more positivist peers but his insights into the religious mind, allied with his commitment to the idea of monastic practice as exemplary, allowed him to offer practical solutions to religious indifference and to engender commitment to faith through a better understanding of the purposes of liturgy.

Baudelaire's grave
not too far
from the tree of science.
Mine, too,
Since I sought and failed
To steal from it,
Somewhere within sight
Of the tree of poetry
That is eternity wearing
The green leaves of time.

R.S.Thomas, Prayer, *Collected Poems 1945-1990* (London, 1993).

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CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Citations from primary sources have been preserved as they appeared in the original text. No translation is provided.

Footnote policy. Lower case letters have been used in citations of sources except for proper names and place names. Arabic numerals have been used throughout.

Bibliographical citations. Archival material from Solesmes has been cited as it appears in the catalogue. In all other instances, higher case lettering has been used for significant words in the titles of books and journals. This applies to both French and English publications.

The following abbreviations have been used in citations in footnotes:

Archival material

L.S.P. *Lecture des saints pères.*

N. et M. *Notes et matériaux.*

App. *Appendices.*

Reference works

O.D.C.C. Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church

Other conventions.

María de Jesús de Agreda has been referred to as Maria in the body of the text in order to avoid confusion with the Virgin Mary. Where a bibliographical citation occurs, this has been provided as it appears in the original title.

In one or two instances I have adopted the term 'moniales' since this emphasizes the closed nature of the Order in question and the spiritual equivalence of the male and female foundations.

The titles of monastic and other clerical authors have not been used except when these appear in the titles of publications.

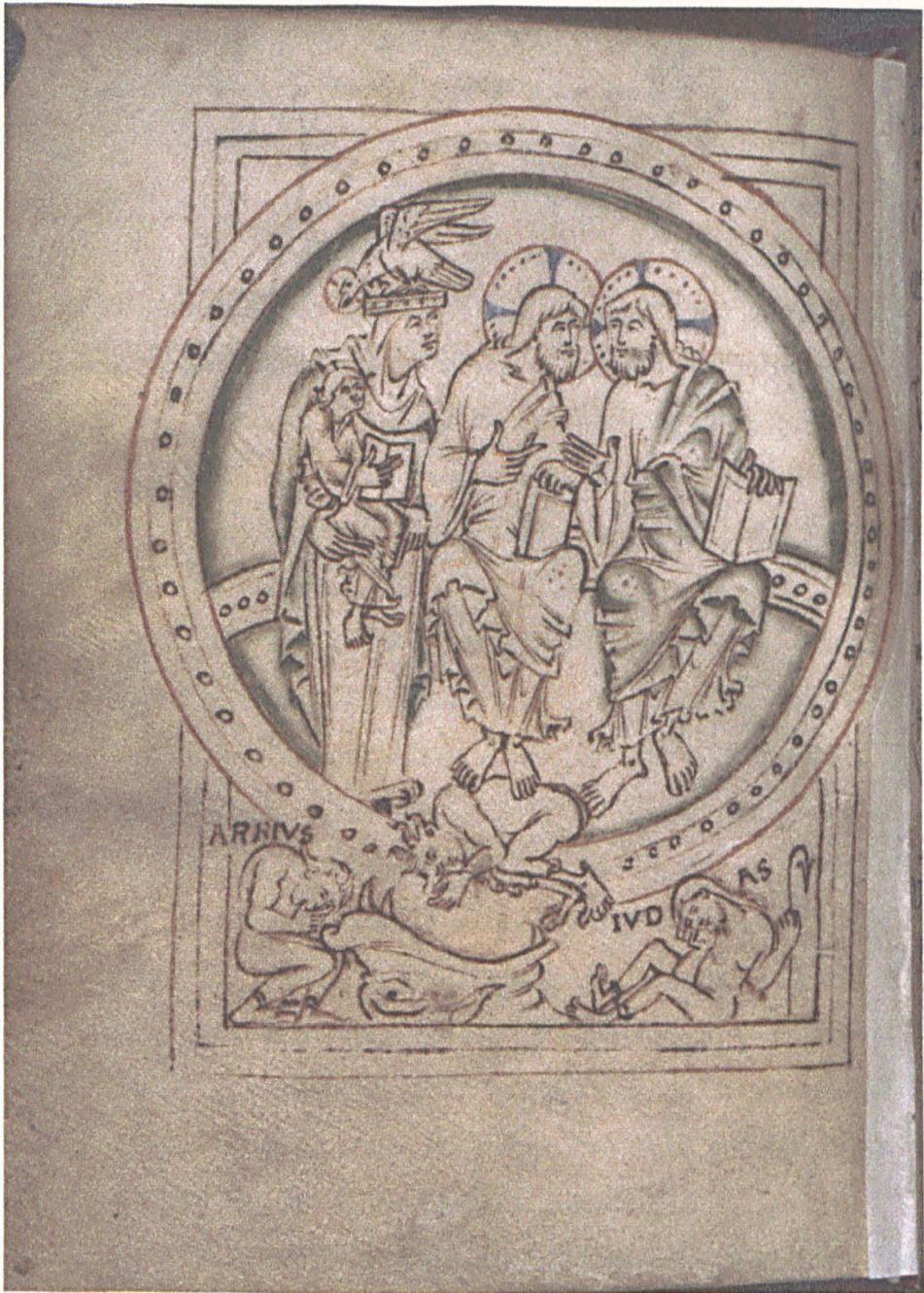
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Finally I want to thank members of the three generations of my extended

family who tolerated my absences over the years. One of the most useful lessons I have learned from undertaking this study is that there are alternatives to the pattern of time imposed by industrialised societies and I hope that they will benefit, in due course, from the society which emerges from the post-modernist period. My thanks are especially to my husband Bryan for his tolerance and, more practically, for his gifts of the latest edition of the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church and a magnifying glass, without which I would never have completed this dissertation. The final outcome is dedicated to all those teachers, from whatever discipline, whose enthusiasm over the years has motivated me to study.



Frontispiece: *Virgin present at the defeat of the Devil*, c.1010-1020.

By permission of the British Library, London, Cotton MS Titus DXXVII, fol., 75.

Introduction

Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875) was a monk and writer, best known for his work in arguing the case for the restoration of the Roman Breviary in the liturgical office and as abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Solesmes in the Sarthe valley, one of the few places where it is still possible to hear the Mass sung in Latin. Whilst this contribution was recognised by his contemporaries, they were dismissive of his other writing, which has been largely ignored by both theologians and scholars, especially in France. In this study I argue that his religious thinking was informed by his early experiences and by his reading and that he developed a theology which was both coherent and consistent and which he promoted through publication and projects, which engaged the commitment of the lay community to his particular beliefs about Christianity outside the monastery. He achieved this at a particularly turbulent period in the history of the Church in France. Although he was an ally of the Ultramontane clergy, his thinking differs in several respects from theirs and he was always insistent on the need for independence from both secular and clerical hierarchies. This study examines the development of his ideas through his writings but draws on his early reading of the Fathers of the Church. His interpretation of Marian doctrine is based on this and informs his whole approach to the study of the saints and to the role they played as keepers of the foundational message and as exemplars of a way of life. The structure of the thesis is based on the notion that his thinking evolved over time and that it is not possible to separate his personality, his ideas and his monastic way of life. For these reasons, I adopt a chronological approach to his writing, except where a thematic approach provides more insight into his thinking.

In Chapter One I outline his career, the theological and ecclesiastical climate in which he grew up and the legacy he left. Chapter Two contains a discussion of his reading of the Fathers of the Church, particularly Justin and Irenaeus, based on unpublished documents. In Chapter Three, using these documents, I consider the extent to which his thinking about Mary mirrors or challenges that of the seventeenth century French mystics. Chapter Four contains an evaluation of the objections of the Gallican bishops to the arguments of his most well known work, *Institutions liturgiques*, a topic that has had relatively little treatment. In Chapter Five the arguments which are central to the thesis are treated through a discussion of the three

women whose lives embodied, in his view, a religious tradition which was in danger of being lost; they are St Cecilia (late second century), St Gertrude (1256-1302) and Maria of Agreda (1602-1665). In Chapter Six I offer an explanation for his decision to write a third and rather different life of one of these women, St Cecilia. In the final chapter I consider the ways in which his thinking provides insights into how to address indifference to religion, a major concern of the period. It is significant that, after 1850, the focus of his writing changes from the liturgy to a treatment of themes that concern the mystical or the monastic and in Chapter Six, in particular, I show how, in the latter part of his life, the personal, the intellectual and the theological are virtually inseparable.

The archive sources that I use to underpin the arguments in Chapters Two-Six are discussed at the beginning of each chapter and they are listed and referenced in the bibliography.¹ These include unpublished notes from his time at the seminary at Le Mans and correspondence with the daughter of a local benefactor between 1831 and 1834 and with the Italian archaeologist G.B. de Rossi (1822-1894) with whom he corresponded between 1852 and 1874. The primary printed sources are eight of the sixteen published editions of Guéranger's works, which he wrote between 1831 and 1874, and the eighteen articles, which he wrote for *l'Univers* between 1858 and 1859.² I have found it particularly useful to pay attention to the prefaces of all the eight primary printed sources. Guéranger never wrote down a statement of his theological position as such and a reading of the prefaces chronologically supports the interpretation I have given to my argument. In all instances I have had access to the

¹ Bibliography, p. 208.

² P. Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vol.1 (Le Mans, Paris, 1840), vol. 2 (Le Mans, Paris, 1842), vol. 3 (Le Mans, Paris, 1851). I have used a later three volume edition which included "Lettre a Mgr. l'Archevêque de Reims sur le droit de la liturgie, 1843" in the appendix to vol. 3, pp.453-580 and a summary of the arguments from "Défenses des Institutions liturgiques", 1844-1846" in the preface to vol. 3, pp. 1-71. All further references are to this edition; P.Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vols. 1-3 (Paris, Brussels, 1878-83). The other seven printed works are: P.Guéranger, *L'année liturgique*, vol. 1 (Le Mans, 1840); P.Guéranger, *Mémoire sur la question de l'immaculée conception de la très sainte vierge* (Paris, 1850); P.Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cecile, vierge romaine et martyr* (Paris, 1850); P.Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme contemporain* (Paris, 1858); P.Guéranger, *Les exercices de sainte Gertrude*, transl. (Poitiers, 1863); P.Guéranger, *La Règle de saint Benoît*, transl. (Angers, 1868); P.Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine des deux premiers siècles* (Paris, 1874) All these items were published by the author. The places of printing are indicated for each item. The articles "Marie d'Agreda et la cité mystique de Dieu" appeared in *l'Univers*,

first or to an early edition of the French text and the precise reference is given in the listed printed sources and in the relevant chapter references. De Rossi wrote nearly perfect French and only in one instance, when he is clearly under great pressure, does he revert to Italian.

It is difficult to assign a label to Guéranger's religious thinking. This arises because of the period during which he wrote and the topics which he chose to privilege, particularly after 1850. His contemporaries could not understand his attitude to saints and mystics and modern critics have focused on his contribution to liturgical innovation, since this belongs to a recognised tradition and has had discernible outcomes. Although he writes about saints and mystics, it is important to state at the outset that this study does not attempt to portray him as a hagiographer. In a discussion about the current state of hagiographical research, John Kitchen makes a useful contrast between the approaches adopted by two twentieth century scholars, Hippolyte Delehaye (1859-1941) and the social historian Peter Brown (1935-).³ The former's writing belongs to the first half of the century and the latter's to the second half; the former is recognised for his attempts, along with other scholars in France like René Aigrain (1886- 1957) to develop hagiography as a science.⁴ Both Delehaye and Aigrain are seen as part of a tradition dating back to the Counter-Reformation and to the writing of the Counter-Reformation historian, Robert Bellarmine (1542-1612) who discouraged the production of colourful histories of saints that might evoke the ridicule of contemporary readers.⁵ Peter Brown, on the other hand, was amongst the first of modern historians to recognize the contribution made by hagiography to an understanding of the early centuries of Christianity through the cultural and anthropological insights it provides into the life of the times. Guéranger was writing in the period immediately before Delehaye and his views have to be interpreted in the

23 May, 1858 – 7 November 1859 and I consulted photocopies held in the Archives at Solesmes , *Ecrits* (III), 1858-1859.

³ J. Kitchen, *Saints' lives and the rhetoric of gender. Male and female in Merovingian hagiography* (Oxford, 1998), Introduction, pp. 3-7. J.Howard-Johnston and P.Howard (eds.), *The cult of saints in late antiquity and the Middle Ages: essays on the contribution of PeterBrown* (Oxford, 1999).

⁴ R. Aigrain, *L'hagiographie, : ses sources, ses méthodes, son histoire* (Poitiers, 1953).

⁵ Bellarmine made this comment in a letter to the originator of the Bollandist project, Heribert Roswyde (1569-1629). Kitchen, *Saints' lives*, p. 167, note 1.

context of the state of ecclesiastical history and of Roman Catholic theology in France at the time. He was writing when serious scholarship was beginning to develop a more rigorous and positivist approach to Church history, building on the archaeological and philological discoveries of the nineteenth century. The attacks his work attracted, particularly after his death, from scholars like Louis Duchesnes have to be understood in the context of a perceived need for the Church in France to preside over an intellectual renaissance after the efforts expended on redressing the impact of the Revolution and on accommodating to the Concordat arrangements.⁶ This intellectual renaissance is characterised by work in all the different area of scholarship. Pierre Battifol (1861-1929) influenced the structural approach to the liturgy, Alfred Loisy (1857-1940) developed the historical-critical study of the Bible and, rather later, Jean Daniélou (1905-1974) undertook critical work on the writing of the Fathers. Whilst no modern critic would attempt to compare Guéranger's approach with that of Peter Brown, his writing still suffers from inappropriate comparisons with that of his immediate French successors.

As this study shows, Guéranger was suspicious of what he perceived to be ill founded attempts to rely uniquely on external evidence for an interpretation of the Christian faith, if this meant denying the evidence contained in the liturgy and in the supernatural communication of saints and mystics.⁷ Fairly early on in his life he makes a plea in his best known work for the Church to renew its inner life and he makes a direct comparison between the restoration of the fabric of the buildings and the lack of attention to the religious worship which they house. Writing in the preface to his best-known work, *Institutions liturgiques*, he says:

Maintenant c'est la grande mode de se porter défenseur de toutes sortes d'antiquité; une nuée inouïe d'archéologues s'est levée sur le pays et nos

⁶ R. Rémond, "Conclusions", in *Mgr Duchesnes et son temps, Actes du Colloque organisé par L'École française de Rome*, Palais Farnese, 23-25 May 1973 (Rome, 1975), p. 496. "Car si l'Eglise de France avant la Révolution a été glorieuse par l'intelligence, les historiens de la période de la France savent bien que le XIX^e siècle est une période obscure, ingrate sous ce rapport. Pendant des décennies, l'essentiel des énergies s'est employé à reconstituer les moyens, la patrimoine, les instruments, et ce n'est que dans un second ou troisième temps qu'on a commencé à une restauration intellectuelle. Pas avant la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle et avec peu d'ouvriers."

⁷ Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme*, Préface, pp. 6-7. Writing about the state of religious life after the Revolution, he says "le sens des choses mystiques était engourdi, car la vie des saints n'était plus connue; la liturgie au lieu d'unir la France à Rome, source unique de la vie catholique, servait à l'en isoler."

monuments, religieux surtout, sont désormais à l'abri de toute mutilation, de toute réparation indiscreète.---La liturgie, n'est-elle pas l'âme de vos cathédrales, que sont-elles, sinon d'immenses cadavres dans lesquelles est éteinte la parole de vie? ⁸

Whilst contemporary writers have focused on the liturgical innovations for which Guéranger can claim credit, there has been little attempt to demonstrate the links between this and the thinking that characterised his writing in the second part of his life. Franklin, one of his most sympathetic critics, has examined liturgy as a documentary source for understanding the wider social and cultural context of the period.⁹ The Irish Benedictine, Cuthbert Johnson, emphasizes the theological significance of Guéranger's work in his English edition but he does not make links with the later writing and the French edition of his study has a different title that emphasizes Guéranger's role as liturgical innovator.¹⁰

One of Guéranger's frequent accusations against the Bollandist School was that, in order to be historically correct, the monks had left out of the *Acta Sanctorum* (a critical edition of the lives of saints based on authenticated sources) many narratives of lives which actually give an insight into the religious thinking of the time. The *Acts* of Cecilia are a case in point. In his view this was to devalue the message contained in the record, even though he himself was aware at the time of writing his first edition of her story that the earliest manuscripts were not in fact eye witness accounts of her trial but based on a narrative which dated from the fifth century.¹¹ Long excerpts about her life and death, however, had been retained in the Office for her feast day and thus provided, in his view, a reinforcement of the message she embodied. The approach he adopted was to privilege liturgy over textual purity as a means of containing and

⁸ Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vol.1, Préface, p. 76.

⁹ R. Franklin, "The people's work: anti-Jansenist prejudice in the Benedictine movement for popular participation in the nineteenth century", *Studia liturgica*, 19/1(1989), pp.60-77.

¹⁰ C.Johnson, *Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875). A liturgical theologian. An introduction to his liturgical writings and work* (Rome, 1989). The French translation is called *Dom Guéranger et le renouveau liturgique. Une introduction à son oeuvre liturgique* ; transl. A.Gillet, (Paris, 1988).

conveying the foundational message. Although he did not analyse his own methodology, he recognized the different components that constitute the way in which religious tradition is handed down. The foundational message is recorded in what the Fathers called the rule of faith; the rule includes the record of the canonical gospels, the liturgical tradition and the organisational practices that the Church developed in order to carry forward the faith.¹² It is the organisational practices that which were, in his view, most susceptible to subversion and, given this problem, there was always the danger that doctrine would be subject to pressure from interested parties. For Guéranger the most serious damage to the foundational message occurred at the time of the Reformation and this damage has persisted, particularly in the Gallican Church, through the influence of Jansenist writers and clerics who continued to exercise a subliminal influence on doctrine and practice. He was never entirely precise about how he interpreted the term Jansenism and he often referred to the pernicious influence of Luther and Calvin and the damage to the entire Christian project effected by the Reformation. More specifically, however, he insisted that the seventeenth and early eighteenth century liturgical innovators in France rewrote the breviaries and missals in order to replace traditional text with modern content and biblical references. The purpose of his first major work, *Institutions liturgiques*, is to show how this has encouraged liturgical diversity and, at the same time, betrayed the foundational message. It is not simply that these later breviaries substituted new content, nor that they underplayed the significance of Mary and the Saints, at the expense of new material; the problem was that, in changing the status and timing of certain feasts and in devaluing the central message of the Mass, they actually changed the faith. Their Jansenism, in his eyes, affected belief and the way it is acquired and was not limited to minor modifications of language and devotional practice.

For the purposes of my argument, I have considered the doctrinal implications of Jansenism rather than the perceived links between Jansenist radicalism and

¹¹ F.Cabrol et al., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1907), vol.,.2, cols. 2712-2722.

¹² R. Williams, "Does it make sense to speak of pre-Nicene orthodoxy?" in R Williams (ed.), *The making of liturgy. Essays in honour of Henry Chadwick* (Cambridge, 1989), ch.1 pp.15-16. Williams discusses the importance of liturgy in the early Church in bringing the events of the

secularism that successive monarchies viewed with apprehension during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Doctrinally, the debate around Jansenism was concerned with a rejection of the teaching of St Augustine on predestination and grace. In 1665 the pope Alexander VII issued a bull requiring the clergy to reject the five propositions deemed heretical. These were the notion that some individuals lacked the grace necessary to follow God's commandments, that since human nature was fallen, those who were chosen could not resist this state of interior grace, that it was a heresy to say that interior and prevenient grace could be either resisted or obeyed and that it was an error to say that Christ died for all men. The persistence of some of this thinking in the Roman Catholic Church in France well into the eighteenth century can be traced in the publication of the bull *Unigenitus* by Pope Clement XI, fifty years later and in the resistance to the bull's passing into French law in 1732.¹³ Much of Guéranger's effort is concentrated on reaching back beyond Augustine to the Fathers for a different model of grace and on demonstrating how this earlier model has been embodied in liturgical tradition and in the communications of saints and mystics. In this sense he can be seen as challenging the way the Counter-Reformation had been worked through in France and in the Gallican Church in particular, since at various times the Gallican clergy, in his view, acted to confirm Augustinian tendencies in doctrine and to react against those writings that promoted alternative models. The case of Maria of Agreda's massive three volume mystical treatise on the Virgin Mary that I discuss in Chapter Five is a good example.

The polemical nature of Guéranger's beliefs means that he cannot be considered as a historian of the Church in the conventional sense of the term and it is this aspect of his thinking which confused his contemporaries who were preoccupied with the struggle to gain intellectual and academic respectability in the climate of later nineteenth century positivism. On the other hand, since his theological opinions were never written down in any systematic way, he was not taken seriously as a theologian either. His writing is located somewhere between history and theology and it is probably this quality in his work that made it popular with sections of the catholic

Christian narrative into dramatic relationship with people, partly because of the ambiguous nature of the message in the canonical gospels.

¹³ W. Doyle, *Jansenism. Catholic resistance to authority from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1997), Intro. pp. 3-20.

laity, especially the bourgeoisie, since it was in tune with the wider cultural fashion for medievalism in painting and literature.

As a writer, he is much closer to the historians of the first half of the nineteenth century like Augustin Thierry and Jules Michelet who perceived history as a construction which addresses a particular problem of the times and which requires the use of metaphor and illustrative material in order to convey meaning to a contemporary audience. Lionel Gossman has argued that the historians of the first half of the nineteenth century believed that their task was to take an active part in selecting, arranging and interpreting the materials rather than in compiling or transcribing texts or documents. In this kind of history the past is a source to be mined for narratives that are meaningful for the present. Writing about Michelet, Gossman says that he saw the historian as “the intrepid Oedipus, journeying on behalf of his fellow citizens to the dangerous and chaotic realm of the Mothers but that he always aimed to translate the obscure, ill-formed, barely comprehensible things into luminous, communicable, intelligible prose”. It is not possible to do this when history is viewed as a specialist technique, divorced from the history of doctrine, and where the historian’s task is confined to textual criticism.¹⁴

Clearly there are problems when interpreting religious thinking using Gossman’s criteria since Guéranger did not see himself as interpreting doctrine but rather as pointing to the ways in which doctrine has been distorted by competing orthodoxies. However, it is important to remember the context in which he was writing and the fact that serious patristic scholarship was not yet established. It was feasible for him to think that a return to the early sources was still practicable in order to retrieve the original message and that his position as a monk and abbot allowed him the leeway to undertake a task which his peers in the ecclesiastical hierarchy would have found more difficult to square with their pastoral responsibilities in the parish or in the diocese. Gossman’s model of the historian as a “backward-looking prophet, engaged with present society rather than adopting a stand of cold impartiality” is a model that fits Guéranger quite well. In the preface to the 1874 edition of his history of St Cecilia he acknowledges his debt to this model:

Dans cette rénovation de l'histoire chrétienne de Rome, une foule de points ont été élevés au plus haut degré par notre savant maître mais lorsque l'harmonie et la vraisemblance se montrent réunies en faveur d'un fait, nous n'avons pas hésité à lui donner place dans notre narration. Tel est le droit de l'historien; il assimile tout ce qu'il rencontre d'homogène, en ayant soin cependant de signaler comme simple conjecture ce qui lui semblerait ne pas dépasser ce caractère. Nous l'avons fait à l'occasion; mais pour ce qui est de nos affirmations, nous n'en avons pas produit une seule que nous ne fussions en mesure de défendre directement contre toute attaque.

Quant à l'esprit de notre livre, il est ce qu'il devrait être, chrétien et catholique. Cette histoire pour nous est une histoire sacrée; car elle a pour but de raconter la conquête du monde romain au profit du Christ par ses apôtres et leurs successeurs, la fondation de l'Eglise chrétienne qui est notre mère, et enfin la vie d'une sainte que nous vénérons sur les autels. Ce que nous croyons, nous l'exprimons avec le ferme sentiment qu'éprouvent dès ici-bas ceux qui, ayant accepté la parole révélée, se sentent être les possesseurs de la vérité tout entière.¹⁵

This statement of intent puts Guéranger firmly in the camp of those nineteenth-century writers and historians who believed that the past had lessons for the future. This perspective clashed with competing nineteenth-century paradigms such as Darwinian models of survival, developmental models of progress in religious doctrine and the philosophies of humanism that came to dominate the secular agenda.

Finally, and in this context, few commentators on Guéranger have recognised the contribution which he made to the concept of reflection or, in more modern terms, reflective thinking. Central to his ideas about the nature of tradition is the notion that the liturgy contains the memory of the Christian message and that, although this is sometimes challenged and shifted through human interventions, the foundational message is transmitted through individuals who make it their choice in life to celebrate the liturgy. Rightly or wrongly, he perceived this to have been the contribution of the closed monastic orders to the Christian tradition and he devoted his life to demonstrating this in both his writing and practice. Today the most advanced research into the workings of memory is revealing the complexity of the human thought processes and the difficulties confronting neuroscientists who attempt to erase or revive memories, both short term and long term.¹⁶ For much of this century, too, psychologists have challenged the idea that the human mind is a "tabula rasa" on which are imposed the perceptions of the immediate senses. Preconceived categories

¹⁴ L.Gossman, *Between history and literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), ch. 5, p. 158.

¹⁵ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*, Préface, pp. 7-8.

¹⁶ S.Rose, *Forgetfulness of things past*, the Guardian, Part Two, 29 March 2004, pp.4-5.

of thinking prepare our minds to accept some ideas and to reject others. Much of Guéranger's writing is conceived as an attempt to change the categories, by encouraging the catholic laity, in particular, to reflect and act within the context of a liturgical tradition that had survived for nearly two millennia.

Summarizing the contribution of Louis Duchesnes, one of Guéranger's most ardent critics, to the intellectual revival in catholic thinking, René Rémond emphasizes the difficulties Duchesnes faced in attempting to apply historical criteria to Church history. He writes:

Son ambition, la mésaventure qu'il a souvent connue, c'est --- d'avoir voulu appliquer la méthode historique à l'histoire de l'Eglise. Tout historien qui s'applique à l'histoire de l'Eglise sait bien qu'il s'agit là d'un problème difficile. Dans quelle mesure est-il possible d'appliquer les mêmes critères à n'importe quelle autre société? Peut-on la conformer aux normes ordinaires ou doit-on, au départ, affirmer sa spécificité irréductible et sa transcendance? A l'époque où l'histoire s'identifie au positivisme, il n'est pas facile pour un historien de l'Eglise de rester fidèle jusqu'au bout aux exigences de la méthode historique sans pour autant aplatir la réalité ecclésiale.¹⁷

It is unsurprising that Duchesnes was critical of Guéranger's writing and particularly of the latter's insistence on the importance of the saints in sustaining the continuity of the Christian narrative. In no sense can it be said that Guéranger's writing and research "flatten the reality". He was prepared to harness art and archaeology to strengthen his case and to plead for the recovery of texts which had been discounted by over-zealous textual critics. His sense of moral certainty was unfashionable at the time and his marginality as a monk made him vulnerable to challenges and attacks but it is only by taking these criteria into account that his writing can be judged.

¹⁷ Rémond, "Conclusions", in *Mgr Duchesnes et son temps*, pp. 496-497.

1. Prosper Guéranger: His life and times.

Servant of God has chance of greater sin
and sorrow, than the man who serves a king.
For those who serve the greater cause may make that cause serve them,
Still doing right: and striving with political men
May make that cause political, not by what they do
But by what they are.¹

Plus que jamais, l'espoir du salut sera dans le sexe faible. Les hommes de
notre siècle deviennent des femmes; transformées par la foi, les femmes
peuvent devenir des hommes.²

The early years.

Prosper Guéranger was born in 1805 in Sablé-sur-Sarthe, a small agricultural town in the diocese of Le Mans, four years after Napoleon had signed the Concordat agreement with Pope Pius VII, an arrangement which not only placed the financing of the Gallican Church in the hands of the government but which changed the relationships between Church and State in a significant way. The arrangement recognised the fact that Catholicism was still the religion of the immense majority of French people and that the pace of life in France was still largely dictated by the Church calendar and by the rites that recognised birth, marriage and death. Modern commentators have pointed to the resilience of the catholic religion in the face of anti-clericalism and secularism, but this is to look at the changes in catholic piety over the whole period up to 1870 and to play down the benefits that the Church acquired through its support of the Orléans monarchy and the empire in its early years.³ The situation was less rosy at the beginning of the century when Guéranger was growing up and since part of my interest in studying his writing is that he chose an unusual career route to achieve his aims, I want to look at his life in this light and to make some proposals about why it is over-simplistic to categorize his thinking and writing as ultramontane. In his attitudes to papal authority he is orthodox but he does not

¹ T.S. Eliot, *Murder in the cathedral* (London, 1937), Part 1, pp. 44-45, *Beckett's soliloquy*.

² Mme. Barrar, founder of the order "Les Dames du Sacré Coeur" in Y.Turin, *Femmes et religieuses au XIXè siècle* (Paris, 1989), Frontispiece.

³ E. Anceau, *La France de 1848 à 1870. Entre ordre et mouvement* (Paris, 2002), ch.6, "Société, mentalités et cultures du milieu du siècle", pp. 172-177. Anceau reports that by the end of the Empire there were 14 priests for every 10,000 inhabitants.

participate in the revival in popular piety in the parish and his choice of the closed monastic order was unusual ⁴.

Guéranger was born, officially, on the 14th germinal, XIII; the revolutionary calendar was still the official one, despite Napoleon's efforts to re-establish the religious traditions. His father had come to the town in 1799 as principal of the small college set up in a former convent. His father's history is interesting, even if the details cannot all be verified. Pierre Guéranger was born in Le Mans and planned, according to a family tradition, to become a priest but the events of 1789 changed all this. He was enlisted into the Republican army but, also according to family tradition, escaped and went to lie low in a region in the Mayenne, called Saint-Suzanne where the chouan community was likely to protect him. He married a local woman, Françoise Jarry and the parish records confirm this; the marriage was blessed by a recusant priest, l'abbé Barrabe, who signed the register, 'prêtre non insermenté ni soumissionnaire'. In 1798 Pierre left Saint-Suzanne to become the teacher at Sablé and would have been obliged to take the oath imposed by the Directory of 'haine à la loyauté'. Pierre Guéranger, whilst not politically committed to Republicanism, seems to have decided to put his talents and education to good use amongst the poorer children of the community and to accommodate to the requirements of the State. The local departmental commissioner noted in his report that year:

L'instituteur de Sablé a environ trente écoliers; tous enfants des plus pauvres de la ville --- mais 'fruit du fanatisme', car leurs parents sont chouans.⁵

This was no doubt an exaggeration but it gives an indication of the conditions in which the family started off their new life. In 1807 the college was transformed into a secondary college and Pierre stayed there until 1821 when he was appointed 'professeur' at the college in Le Mans. The Guérangers had six children, only four of whom survived and all of whom were boys. The eldest, Frederick, became a teacher like his father, Edouard became a pharmacist and then an amateur botanist and

⁴ C.Langlois, *Le catholicisme au féminin. Les congrégations françaises à supérieures générales au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1984), p. 208. Between 1830 and 1840 there were only seventy- four foundations created for men. This compared unfavourably with the figures for women.

palaeontologist, Constantin, who was younger than Prosper became a priest and incumbent of a parish to the north of Le Mans.⁶ What is striking about the family, from the relatively few details available, is the independence of mind they demonstrate and the urge to put their talents to a useful purpose; there is a strong pedagogic streak in the family genes and, probably, an element of competitiveness deriving from the fact that they were all boys. What is interesting is that they belong to the group which Alan Spitzer has called “the generation of 1820” who had a strong sense of civic duty and who followed professional careers wherever possible.⁷

Apart from these basic facts, very little is known about Prosper’s childhood and adolescence, except what he himself wrote in his *Autobiographie*. This was only written down, in note form and for the edification of his fellow monks, in the period 1855-1860. Guéranger reports only what interests him or seems important to him. However he does record an incident that occurred when he was four. Whilst his parents were at Mass, he went into his father’s study to taste the contents of a small green bottle that he had often seen there. Unfortunately, since this was actually green ink, he was violently sick and almost died. Although this story may be apocryphal, it certainly may have accounted for the poor health that persisted for the rest of his life and one can imagine that it must have been told and re-told in the family as an account of the way he almost died as a child. This sense of having been saved for some purpose may well have stayed with him and it seems equally likely that his love of reading, which he also recounts, came from the hours he was obliged to spend quietly on account of his frail health. He records that, from the age of six, reading became a passion and, at nine, he bought a copy of the fifteen meditations of St Bridget and took to reciting them after his own prayers in the evening. In his *Autobiographie*, he lists other favourite books but he seems always to have preferred ecclesiastical history and, at the age of eight or nine, first read Chateaubriand.⁸ One has the impression of a

⁵ Archives départementales de la Sarthe, L, 242.

⁶ G.-M. Oury, *Dom Guéranger. Moine au cœur de l’Eglise* (Solesmes, 2000), pp. 11-13.

⁷ A. Spitzer, *The French generation of 1820* (Princeton, 1987), ch.5, p. 206, “I have argued that it was the experience of socialisation in the public realm rather than any transformation in child-rearing practices or family relationships that reinforced consciousness of a distinct generational identity”.

⁸ P. Guéranger, *Autobiographie*, p.8.

studious child rather than a pious child; however it is striking that his autobiography contains little information about his brothers and his mother ; rather it seems that he is concerned to underline the importance of early Church history and its attraction, even for a young person.

At the age of fifteen, in 1818, his father arranged for him to finish his education at the college in Angers. The college, which had reverted to its former title of ' Collège royal' had the reputation of being less anti-clerical than some. One of his peers, Léon Bore, writing an obituary in 1875, says of him:

Guéranger, à peu près seul parmi les élèves de la première division, communiait aux quatre grandes fêtes réservées par le Concordat de 1801; voilà surtout pourquoi nous l'appelions 'le moine' ⁹

Guéranger's other peers at Angers included Victor Pavie, poet and friend of Victor Hugo and the Comte de Falloux, with whom he remained in contact throughout his life and with whom he had a courteous, but strong disagreement over the 'historicism' of the latter's support for a history of the Church and the Roman Empire many years later.¹⁰ He mentions only two of the teachers at Angers, Jacques Pasquier, the almoner, who encouraged him to read widely and M.Gavinet whom he remembered for teaching him a writing style based on models. He writes:

M.Gavinet me portait intérêt, et il est le seul de tous mes maîtres du lycée dont j'ai gardé un souvenir affectueux---. Il lisait parfaitement la prose et les vers, et nous initiait à l'art du style sur les modèles; cet enseignement me fut d'une grande utilité, pour connaître les procédés de l'art d'écrire, sur lesquels nous avons été très négligés jusqu'à alors---. Je me sentis une vie nouvelle, et le désir de faire des vers français me vint aussitôt.¹¹

During his last year at Angers he read Chateaubriand, (*La monarchie selon la Charte*), Joseph de Maistre, (*Du Pape*), Mme. De Stael, (*Considérations sur la Révolution française*) and the two volumes of Lamennais' *Essai sur l'indifférence en*

⁹ *le Monde*, 17 February 1875.

¹⁰ A. De Broglie, *L'Eglise et l'Empire Romain au IV^e siècle* (Paris, 1856).

¹¹ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p.23. One can only be grateful to M.Gavinet! Guéranger's prose is very easy to read in spite of the length of some of his works and the speed with which he wrote. More seriously, his style also helped him reach a wider public and to write for the press as well as for publication..

matière de religion which were published in 1817 and 1820.¹² It was decided that, rather than take his baccalaureat in Angers, he would go straight to the seminary at Le Mans where all his family now lived. This decision more or less confirmed his entry to the secular clergy as a profession. What he seems to have gained from his years at Angers was a good liberal education for the times and the opportunity to read more widely than the requirements of the curriculum. This, like the lessons on style, seems to have stood him in good stead when making later decisions and to have stimulated his interest in a wide range of topics not directly the province of the secular clergy. Ironically it may have left him unprepared for the shock of the seminary curriculum, something which had unexpected outcomes.

Guéranger enrolled in the seminary in Le Mans at the beginning of the academic year 1822, began his course in philosophy and attended his first spiritual retreat. His autobiographical notes are reticent about this first period but the large number of trainee priests in the group and the conservative slant of the curriculum did not interest him. He was encouraged to read Lamennais by one of his teachers but there is no record of him participating in the discussions between the Cartesians in the class and the Lamennaisians. He received the tonsure in August 1823 and was encouraged to spend the summer reading in the seminary library, by the director, M. Bouvier, who seems to have recognised his potential for academic work. However, the overall climate does not seem to have been congenial and the level of spiritual support was negligible. He was much more influenced by his reading of the Fathers of the Church and, in December 1823 on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, he had the famous mystical experience concerning the meaning of the Incarnation which was, according to all his biographers, the turning point in his life.¹³ In his autobiographical notes he himself says:

Tout mon édifice gallicano-janséniste ne tombait que pièce par pièce Les yeux du Coeur dont parle Saint Paul ne m'étaient pas ouverts, et par un phénomène étrange ma nature plus poétique que rationnelle ne savait pas s'élever autrement que par le devoir de la foi.¹⁴

¹² *Autobiographie*, pp. 18-19.

¹³ I deal with this in more detail in Chapter Two.

¹⁴ *Autobiographie*, p. 32.

He himself dates his desire to enter the Benedictine Order from this time and there is some corroborating evidence to support this since one of his teachers, the Lamennaisian, M.Heurtbize, had been trained by a former prior of the Benedictine monastery at Evron. The immediate impact of the experience seems to have been to inspire him to carry on with his extra curricular reading at the same time as his normal studies and to sacrifice the summer holidays of 1824 to more reading in the library. His health could not stand the almost constant work and, when he returned to the seminar at the beginning of the academic year, he was forced to abandon his studies. The intervention of M.Bouvier, however, allowed him to spend the third year as a member of the teaching staff with very light duties and to continue with his reading, mainly of the Fathers. There seems to be no dispute about the facts of his illness and it seems perfectly credible that his lack of sympathy with the seminary programme and its perceived intrusion on his real interests could have brought about what would nowadays be attributed to stress. What is harder to know, since most of the details come from the autobiographical notes, was the extent to which he was influenced by the writings of Lamennais but he makes a clear distinction in his autobiographical notes between the latter's position on papal authority and his philosophy.¹⁵ The question of the relationship between the two men has become something of an issue. However his earliest published writings all deal with ecclesiastical history and topics concerning the authority of the Pope and the relationships between the Gallican Church and Rome and it is these, which he discussed in his correspondence with Lamennais in the years immediately after he left the seminary.¹⁶

In the year between completing his studies and ordination, he obtained a temporary post as secretary to Mgr de la Myre-Mory, the ageing and frail archbishop of Le Mans. This post allowed him ample time to continue his studies and to live in the archbishop's household in Paris. It is from this period of his life 1827-1833 that his correspondence with Lamennais dates. It is also the period about which there is

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p.84.

¹⁶ P. Guéranger, *Considérations sur la liturgie catholique* (1830); *De la prière pour le roi* (1830); *De l'élection et de la nomination des évêques* (1831).

still some controversy over the closeness of his relations with Lamennais. This arises partly because of the decision of his biographer, Dom Delatte, abbé of Solesmes from 1890-1921, to suppress some of the correspondence between Guéranger and Montalembert. This shows the former in an unfavourable light at the time of the famous visit of Lamennais, Lacordaire and Montalembert to the pope in Rome in 1832 that provoked the encyclical *Mirari Vos*.¹⁷ The failure of the three men to persuade Grégoire XVI of the need for the French clergy to recognize the authority of the pope over that of the French bishops had consequences for the lives of all three men and was the occasion for Guéranger to seize the opportunity which presented itself to set up his own community at Solesmes.

After the death of Mgr. de la Myre-Mory in September 1829 and a brief period as priest for the parish in Paris where the *Missions Etrangères* was located, he returned to Le Mans to spend a year continuing his studies and to write and publish, at his own expense, *De l'élection et de la nomination des évêques*. The period from 1830 until the re-establishment of monastic life at Solesmes in 1833 is one of the most difficult to unravel, not least because his biographers have disputed the extent to which he was influenced by Lamennaisian doctrines. Unsympathetic writers like Sévrin have questioned his loyalty to the cause, however this is defined. This is the period when he corresponded with both Lamennais and Montalembert, when he met for the first time both Madame Swetchine and Lacordaire and when he made many of the contacts who were to be amongst the initial sponsors for purchasing the former abbey of St Pierre at Solesmes. He was clearly unhappy in Paris; he refused Lamennais' offer of going to study at La Chênaie and when he returned to Le Mans, there was no possibility of a post, which would have suited his talents. It is also important to consider the political background to the decisions he had to take. His correspondence with Montalembert at this time shows that he had little confidence that the government of Louis-Philippe would act to change the Concordat arrangements or that the climate would become more favourable to reform of the

¹⁷ E.Sévrin, *Dom Guéranger et La Mennais, Essai de critique historique sur la jeunesse de Dom Guéranger* (Paris, 1933) Ch.10, *Le projet de Solesmes ajourné. La Mennais à Rome*. pp. 201-231. Sévrin's life of the young Guéranger includes previously unpublished correspondence between him and Montalembert, suggesting both a closer link with Lamennais than his earlier biographers had suggested and pleas to Montalembert to press his case with the Gregory XVI, irrespective of the outcome of the latter's decision about the doctrines promoted in *L'Avenir*.

Church, especially over the question of papal authority for the clergy.¹⁸ It is important to remember that he was only twenty seven, had no direct experience of Vatican politics or of the foreign policy involved in the exchanges between France, Italy and Russia. He certainly treated the issue of papal authority as one of ecclesiastical and doctrinal principle and one which, in hindsight, was bound to fail at this point in time. The question of the extent of his adherence to Lamennaisian theology overall does not seem proved or disproved by the stance he took but his disillusion with the new government helps explain his action in pushing ahead with plans to found the abbey and his concern, throughout his long life, to assure the independence of the monastic orders in France. He set out his reasons quite clearly in a letter to Montalembert in June 1832, while the latter was still in Rome;

Il est temps et grand temps de créer cette opposition sainte et canonique que Rome a déposée dans les privilèges des réguliers; ce sont les réguliers qui, disséminés dans toute l'Eglise, sont les voltigeurs du Saint-Siège, les sentinelles attentives et désintéressés, toujours prêts à élever la voix pour les droits du père commun, sans rien diminuer de ceux de l'épiscopat. Il sera peut-être bon d'appuyer là-dessus à Rome, et de signaler les dangers du Gallicanisme qui dort bien plus qu'il n'est mort et que le juste milieu reconnaît hautement pour son frère.¹⁹

However idealistic this scenario seems, Guéranger was to be consistent in his views on the separation of the regular clergy from the ecclesiastical hierarchy and to maintain this position throughout his life, sometimes at a cost to Solesmes itself. His position has been summarized by Louis Soltner as a stand against the collusion of Church and State to deny the specifically canonical nature of the monastic orders, not just for the sake of the foundation at Solesmes but for all the monastic orders, a fact which Lacordaire, not always sympathetic to Guéranger, acknowledged in 1838.²⁰

¹⁸ Writing to Montalembert in Rome in February 1832, Guéranger says: "On dit en France que le consistoire qui doit se tenir aujourd'hui, le 27 février, doit décider de la grande question de la nomination des évêques; je ne sais trop qu'en penser, mais les débats qui ont eu lieu lors de la discussion du budget seraient seuls capables de former l'opinion de Rome sur la manière dont le juste milieu compte traiter les affaires de l'Eglise de France. Ils ont aussi, à ma connaissance, servi à faire faire quelques tardifs aveux relativement à notre opinion sur le budget du clergé considéré comme la plaie principale de l'Eglise". Quoted in Sévrin, *La jeunesse clericale*, p.204.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 210.

²⁰ Lacordaire to Guéranger, 1 September 1838, "Ah! Les évêques n'aiment pas l'exemption et, pourtant, l'on n'a pas d'ordres religieux sans exemption" quoted by L.Soltner, "Dom

The years at Solesmes (1833 – 1875) .

Guéranger started monastic life at Solesmes with five monks and in fairly stark conditions – the buildings had not been used since the Revolution. He himself had never lived in a monastic community and had not taken vows and, legally, the community was in an ambiguous position, although the support of the catholic laity nationally and locally provided him with some protection and Louis Philippe's government seems, in Guéranger's words, to have turned a blind eye.²¹ It is interesting that the liturgical day was considerably modified to include only four offices, except on certain feast days and there was no night office. Although this may have been partly due to the conditions in which the community started, it was always Guéranger's belief that the practices of western monasticism were preferable to the extreme asceticism of the Eastern Church.²² It was also his original intention that Solesmes should become a centre for historical study as well as for the restoration of liturgical practice and that this was one of the ways in which the community would earn money. From the very first he was able to obtain a commission from Guizot, minister in the new government, to take up the editing of the *Gallia christiana* which had been discontinued since the Revolution²³. It is probably no coincidence that the sister in law of Guizot, Pauline Melun, was a member of the circle that met in Madame Swetchine's Paris apartment. This was, of course, the period when Guizot was setting up systems to restore both the physical and written patrimony in France. During this period, too, Guéranger was gradually to attract able men to the community, for example the archaeologist Jean Baptiste Pitra in 1843 and, later, the musical scholar Joseph Pothier in 1860. During this period, too, he negotiated

Guéranger et la liberté monastique" in G.Bedouelle, *Lacordaire son pays, ses amis et la liberté des ordres religieux en France* (Paris, 1991), p. 214.

²¹ *Autobiographie*, p. 243, "Le ministère de Louis-Philippe ferma les yeux".

²² LSoltner, " Recherches sur la pensée monastique de Dom Guéranger", *Collectanea Cisterciensia*, 37 (1975), pp. 209- 226.

commissions with J.P.Migne to edit, in collaboration with Pitra, several volumes of the *Patrologiae* ²⁴. However the pressure to obtain funds for the enlargement of the community was constant and the editing work interfered with the other commitments of both men but was not finally discontinued until 1862. It was not until 1837 that the pope approved the Constitutions for the community so that St Pierre became an abbey and, at the same time, the head of the Benedictine community in France.²⁵ Throughout all this time Guéranger carried on what might be described as a running battle with the bishop of Le Mans, Mgr Bouvier, over his right to say the pontifical mass in Solesmes and elsewhere and the disagreement of the two men over the precise nature of the relationships of the abbey and the diocese were only resolved by the death of the archbishop in 1850. He was also, by now, committed to a major project on the history of the liturgy, which he had had in mind since at least 1832 ²⁶. The first volume of *Institutions liturgiques* appeared in 1840, the second in 1842 and the first volume of *L'année liturgique* was published in 1845. It is seldom remarked on by his biographers but Guéranger clearly perceived his argument for a return to the Roman Breviary of 1568 as the next step in his mission to challenge the canonical legitimacy of the Gallican Church and its right to change liturgical practice. Having unsuccessfully challenged, through the *L'Avenir* saga, its right to appoint bishops, he had secured a large measure of independence for his own house, but little which could be said to have changed attitudes and practice in the Gallican Church. The three volume liturgical work and the subsequent controversy to which he had to respond took a great deal of time and energy and his other interests and concerns were put on hold. His writing on monasticism had to wait until the 1860s, as did his concerns

²³ D.Poulot, "The birth of heritage; le moment Guizot", *Oxford Art Journal*, 11, (1988), pp.40-56

²⁴ L .Soltner, " Migne, Dom Guéranger et Dom Pitra. "La collaboration solesmienne aux entreprises de Migne" in *Migne et le renouveau des études patristiques*. Actes du colloque de Saint-Fleur, 7-8 juillet, 1975 (Paris, 1985), pp.193 -209. The letters from Guéranger to Migne were lost in a fire in 1868 but Solesmes retains twenty letters from Migne to Guéranger written between 1854 and 1862. The deadlines imposed for publication by Migne proved impossible to meet and both Pitra and Guéranger were unhappy with Migne's lackadaisical approach to editing. It is interesting that the first phase of the collaboration was ended by a vote of the monastic community!

²⁵ This came about as a result of Guéranger's first visit to Rome in 1837 and before the death of Gregory XVI in 1846. It was during this visit that he first went to the basilica of St Cecilia in Trastevere.

²⁶ A.Roussel, *Lamennais et ses correspondants inconnus*, (Paris, 1912), p.196.

about the decline of the medieval mystical tradition. One outcome of this focus on the history and on the restoration of the Roman Breviary was to give an impression that his interest was in the medieval period as a whole. It disguised the fact that his thinking was influenced by his reading from the very early period of the Church which he had undertaken during his time at the seminary. He was too easily dismissed as being obsessed with everything medieval; as his fellow monastic restorer Lacordaire put it:

L'abbé est un homme à théories raides qui, pour un coup de canon d'il y a six cents ans, perdrait un empire²⁷

The proposals in *Institutions liturgiques* for greater unity of practice were supported by many of the ultramontane and moderate bishops.²⁸ Those practices in the Church, which he perceived to be tainted by Jansenism were less well understood by the Gallican archbishops who challenged him. His insistence on the fact that the demotion of Mary and the saints in the seventeenth and eighteenth century liturgies was a deliberate attempt to change the foundational message was largely misinterpreted and the success of the project to introduce the Roman Breviary was more political than theological. It is, however, the theological aspect of his writing that distinguishes him from the strain of popular piety which was to sweep France in the second half of the century.²⁹ He could not take this up again until the debates aroused by the publication of *Institutions liturgiques* subsided. The first edition of *Histoire de Sainte Cécile, vierge romaine et martyre* appeared in 1849 and it is clear from the preface to this edition that his emphasis has shifted in several ways. First he argues for a return to the earliest centuries of Christianity, then to show how the message of the Fathers has been transmitted through the voice of Mary and the saints

²⁷ op.cit, "Lamennais et l'Abbe Gueranger, 1829-1832", p. 216.

²⁸ A. Gough, *Paris and Rome; the Gallican church and the Ultramontane campaign, 1843-1853* (Oxford, 1986), p. 58, 'Table 1, The French episcopate in 1850'. In this table Gough identifies thirty-two archbishops and bishops as Gallicans thirty as moderates and only eighteen as Ultramontanes. In contrast, only thirty-one members of the episcopate did not vote for papal infallibility on 13 July 1870.

²⁹ P. Boutry, *Prêtres et paroisses au pays du curé d'Ars* (Paris, 1986), passim. Boutry attributes the surge in popular piety to the fact that ordinary people felt that, for the first time, the Church was concerned about their problems and was turning to them for support.

and finally to find ways of popularising these topics for the catholic laity.³⁰ *Institutions liturgiques* belongs to the period of revival that characterised the Church in France during the 1830s and 1840s and has a parallel in the preaching of Lacordaire and in Montalembert's historical writings when there was a growing interest in all things medieval. This has often masked the fact that Guéranger's concern was a return to the first two centuries. The political climate for the Ultramontanes was changed by the failure of the second Republic and by the rise of Louis Napoleon. This was to give an unexpected boost to the Church establishment but from 1850 Guéranger's energies were concentrated on leading the monastic community and on developing those beliefs that still seem threatened by what he persisted in calling Jansenism.

The last third of Guéranger's life was characterised by a return to themes in his writing that were overshadowed by the literary success of *Institutions liturgiques*. Although it was this work which made his reputation and gave him credibility with the Ultramontane wing of the Church, his subsequent writings remained largely ignored or discredited by the more positivist scholars who later took on the task of moving Christian scholarship forward.³¹ By 1850 the support which Louis-Napoleon gave to the Church contributed to the development of a popular piety which emphasized nation and community, which was frequently associated with visions and miracles and which modern historians have attributed partly to the unstable nature of the political climate and partly to the Church's attempts to accommodate religious excess.³² Guéranger's concern, as he shows in the preface to *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, is

³⁰ After 1848, Guéranger consistently wrote for an educated catholic laity; he had been pleasantly surprised at the interest created by the publication of *Institutions liturgiques*. His decision to write for a bourgeois audience rather than exclusively for the clergy dates from this time. See Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, Préface, pp. viii, "Revenons donc sur les siècles écoulés, et pour savoir ce que nous devons être, voyons un peu ce qu'ont été nos ancêtres".

³¹ H.-I. Marrou considers that the hostility which Guéranger attracted later in the century arose from the fact that he belonged to a different generation of catholic writers. *Monseigneur Duchesnes et son temps*, p.12.

³² T.Kselman, *Miracles and prophecies in nineteenth century France* (New Brunswick, 1983), Ch. 5, "Miracles and dogma", pp.84-94. Kselman emphasizes the former point of view. Guéranger's reluctance to support the cult of visions and miracles can be explained by his fear of a return to the figurism which featured in later Jansenist revivals, for example in the

equally strong. His response is, interestingly, an appeal to the educated catholic middle classes to provide exemplars of moderate behaviour with regular attendance at the Mass and who, he feels, are the best equipped to be apostles for the Christian faith.

By 1851 he had already made two journeys to Rome, in 1843 to obtain an affirmation of the rights of the regular clergy from Gregory XVI and in 1851 when he was nominated by Pius IX as consultant to the Congregation of the Index and to the Congregation of Rites³³. In 1850 he had been asked by Pius IX to write a memorandum on behalf of the French clergy on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and in 1856 he made his third and last visit to Rome to obtain Pius IX's agreement to an amendment to the Office at Solesmes. He had, in a sense, arrived although he never seems to have been happy in the atmosphere at the Vatican and, although there seem to have been moves amongst his supporters to have him made a cardinal, these came to nothing. Another attempt was made by local supporters to appoint him to the newly created diocese of Mayenne in 1855; his letters suggest that he would have been very reluctant to accept the cardinal's hat and that he would have certainly refused the bishopric; there is no reason to suggest that this was through false modesty.³⁴ Not surprisingly, in view of the investment, which he had already made in the monastic life, he seems to have been happiest when in that community or when popularising his beliefs about the way forward for the catholic faith. He persisted with the marathon task of *L'annee liturgique*, begun in 1841, almost up to his death but, apart from this, his published writing is confined to two more editions of his *Histoire de Sainte Cecile*, (1853 and 1874), a series of articles published in *L'Univers* in 1857 and containing a critical analysis of de Broglie's *L'Eglise et l'empire romain au I^{er} siècle*. In the same year he embarked on a series of eighteen articles about the Spanish mystic Maria of Agreda and her work *The mystical city of God* and he completed a translation of *Les exercices de Sainte Gertrude* in 1863 and a translation of the Benedictine rule, *La Règle du bienheureux père S.Benoît*, in 1868.

opposition to the moves to introduce the provisions of the bull *Unigenitus* into French legislation in 1730. W.Doyle, *Jansenism*, Ch. 5, "Unigenitus, 1713-1732", pp.55-59.

³³ L.Soltner, *Pie IX et Solesmes* (Solesmes, 2000). This short pamphlet includes accounts of all three audiences which Guéranger had with Pius IX in 1851-1852 and in 1856.

³⁴ Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, p.561.

In other words his writing from this period onwards has moved away from canonical issues and is concerned much more with spirituality and mysticism and the way in which different people, usually saints or monastics, have carried the foundational message forward.

The other major influence on his thinking during this period was the relationship he developed with G.B.de Rossi (1822-94), the Italian archaeologist who excavated and dated the Christian catacombs in Rome. The two men corresponded from 1852-1874 and their letters document the progress of the work and the concern and admiration the older man felt for the young scriptor and archaeologist. Guéranger's letters are always focussed on the discovery and dating of a tomb, with the inscription *Caecilii*, and he was to see this as the proof that Cecilia had indeed lived and that, hence, the record of her life was not apocryphal but based on a real person.³⁵ The letters, however, show the mutual respect each man felt for the other, the pastoral role which Guéranger took on, at a distance of hundreds of miles, and a deep sense of gratitude which he was to repay with the publication of *Histoire de Sainte Cécile et la société romaine aux deux premiers siècles* in 1874³⁶. I describe the work later as a portable 'itinéraire' which survives as a testimony to the writer's commitment to Rome, to his belief in the significance of the first centuries in establishing the foundational message and to his insistence on the importance of saints as exemplars and messengers. His only other significant publication from this period was *De la monarchie pontificale* (1870), his response to those members of the Church ('les inopportunistes') who could not bring themselves to support the doctrine of papal infallibility and was, perhaps, a final tribute to the tradition that he had espoused as a young man. In his funeral oration, Monseigneur Pie, bishop of Poitiers, said of Guéranger:

There are men, who, in order to bring good about, form a scheme of what they call creating common ground between truth and error, on which they may side a little with both, with the intention of gaining your point. He marched straight on to his object

³⁵ I deal with this topic in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

³⁶ There are fifty-two letters from Guéranger and fifty-three from de Rossi. They are unpublished to date and help explain, in my view, the reasons for the emphasis in the former's thinking from 1850 onwards, away from the canonical issues to a focus on the lost spirituality of the monastic tradition.

through the direct path of pure truth: --- he acted thus in all subjects regarding the Liturgy, the doctrine of the supernatural, the question of the Church and the Pope; --- such was his plan and he was successful in what he undertook; he did it and he prospered.³⁷

Pie was a good friend to Guéranger, although the two did not always agree.³⁸ The qualities he applauds did not make it easy for Guéranger's contemporaries to understand his arguments; this was at least in part because he saw the dangers of a positivist philosophy of religion and of the consequences of the contemporary fashion for retrieving what Pelikan has called 'the Jesus of history' ³⁹. In an attempt to understand his thinking, I have traced what I have called his theology; by putting aside the ecclesiastical politics of the arguments between Gallican and Ultramontane protagonists I have tried to account for his particular antagonism towards the seventeenth and eighteenth century Church in France. In order to demonstrate this, it is necessary to look at the state of theology in France in the period shortly after the Restoration.

Catholic thinking at the time of Guéranger

Looking back on his early theological training at Saint-Sulpice, Ernest Renan (1823-1892) made the following comment:

La théologie se divise en dogmatique et morale.--- A la base est le traité de la vraie religion où l'on essaie de démontrer le caractère surnaturel de la religion chrétienne, c'est à dire des Ecritures révélées et de l'Eglise. Puis, tous les dogmes se prouvent par l'Ecriture, par les conciles des pères, par les théologiens. Il ne faut pas nier qu'un rationalisme très poussée ne soit au fond de tout cela. Si la scolastique est fille de saint Thomas, elle est petite fille d'Abélard. Dans un tel système, la raison est toutes choses: la raison prouve la Révélation, la divinité de l'Ecriture,

³⁷ *The funeral oration of Dom Prosper Guéranger delivered by Mgr Pie, Bishop of Poitiers in the abbatial church of St Peter at Solesmes, March 4 1875 (Dublin, 1875), pp. 18-19.*

³⁸ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p.335. Oury reports that Pie advised him against writing the articles on Maria of Agreda.

³⁹ J. Pelikan, "Voices of the Church", *Proceedings of the thirty-third annual convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America, 7-10 June 1978 (Wisconsin, 1978)*, pp. 1-12.

l'autorité de l'Eglise. Cela étant, la porte est ouverte à toutes les déductions.⁴⁰

If this was true for many of the seminarians in the middle of the nineteenth century, the influence of their training on the experience of religion for the congregation was equally arid. In a recent study on the eighteenth century Church in France, John McManners has characterised the dissatisfaction of ordinary Catholics with the clergy as arising from the attempt to oppose its own austerities on a laity battling to preserve their traditional observances.⁴¹ At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the emphasis on catechising persisted and Elisabeth Germain has demonstrated the austere and inhibiting nature of catechisms in Restoration France in her analysis of catechising practice.⁴² This persistent 'rigorism' which may largely be accounted for by the education of the clergy was also seen to be in contrast to the perceived laxist tendencies of the Jesuits and had been earlier challenged by writers like Alphonse de Ligouri, whose early work was translated by Guéranger.⁴³ It was this climate which was criticized by Lamennais in *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion*.⁴⁴ It is not often noted but the most famous members of the religious revival, associated with the 1820s and 1830s were more or less contemporaries. Chateaubriand, de Maistre, and Lamennais were all born within twenty years of each other before the Revolution and were brought up in the shadow of the eighteenth-century Church. They all seem to have shared a belief that it was in the renewal of the institutions of the Church that the hope for the future resided, even

⁴⁰ J.E..Renan, *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse* (Paris, 1883), ch.5, pp. 265-324.

⁴¹ J. McManners, *Church and society in eighteenth century France, vol.2. The religion of the people and the politics of religion* (Oxford, 1992), vol.2. 4, "The clergy and morals", pp. 241-312. There is a useful overview of the intellectual climate at this period in N.Aston, "The golden autumn of Gallicanism? Religious history and its place in current writing on eighteenth-century France", *French History*, 13/2, 1999, pp.187-222.

⁴² E. Germain., *Parler du salut, Aux origines d'une mentalité religieuse. La catachèse du salut dans la France de la Restauration* (Paris, 1968), seconde partie, " Transcendance de Dieu et Nature de l'homme", pp. 364-385. Germain sees attitudes to morality deriving from attitudes to theology.

⁴³ G.Humbert, " Jalons chroniques. Pour une histoire de la pénétration en pays francophones de la pensée et des oeuvres d'Alphonse de Ligouri" in *Alphonse de Ligouri, Pasteur et docteur*, Liminaire de Jean Delumeau, (Paris, 1987), p. 391.

⁴⁴ F.Lamennais, *Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion* (Paris, 1817-23). This section draws on Reardon's account of Lamennais' theories. See B.Reardon, *Religious thought in the nineteenth century*, (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 184-18.

though Lamennais goes further than this in his thinking about the 'sens commun'. Lamennais was educated in philosophy and history and it was only as a young man that he became convinced of the necessity of faith and of the importance of the social function of religion. He is best known for his arguments for a greater role for the clergy in society and for his beliefs that this could only be brought about in the contemporary climate by a separation of State and Church and by the clergy's referring to the authority of the pope in religious affairs. Although it is less well known, he also published a translation of *Speculum Monarchorum* by Louis de Blois, a work admired by Guéranger which suggests an early interest in mysticism which was not developed in any of Lamennais' other works⁴⁵. His well-known ideas are that since individual reasoning always ends in speculation and scepticism, the ultimate need is for authority, built on common experience and consent. Religion has always provided this sense of social cohesion and, in his view, the western Christian tradition has developed collective reason to a higher level than in any other society. The need is, therefore, for a return to those institutions and to those thinkers whose writing embodies these ideas and to those forms of authority, which have consistently stood the test over time. The authority which best meets these criteria is that of papal authority. Lamennais identified the problems in nineteenth-century France as deriving from an excess of tolerance and liberalism, the outcome of which is either atheism and political anarchy in the state or apathy in religious matters. Writing about his belief in the existence of a 'sens commun', he says:

Il ya une voix qui fait taire toutes celles qui osent s'élever contre le fait éclatant d'une révélation primitive, et c'est la voix du genre humain. Peuples de l'univers, vous qui avez reçu, de siècle en siècle, les traditions qui remontent à l'origine des temps; nations à qui fut confié ce sacre dépôt, je vous adjure toutes venez et dites si jamais vous avez pensé que la religion fut l'ouvrage de l'homme, une production de son esprit ou un sentiment de son Coeur précédant toute instruction; et si, au contraire, vous ne crûtes pas toujours que, primitivement révélée de Dieu, elle se perpétuait dans la société par un enseignement extérieur, le père redisant à ses enfants, et leur transmettant la vérité comme il leur avait transmis la vie? Dites si vos idées de justice, d'obligation morale et de devoirs ne reposaient pas sur celle d'un suprême législateur, qui avait originairement manifesté son existence et promulgué ses commandements; et s'il ne vous semblait pas, en écoutant la tradition, entendre encore la voix de Dieu, parlant à nos premiers parents et instruisant en eux tous les âges.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Reardon, op.cit., ch. 9, "Lamennais", p. 184. Lamennais published the translation of this early work under the title *Le guide spirituel* in 1809.

⁴⁶ R.Bréhet, *Lamennais, Pages choisies* (Paris, 1945), p. 17, "Le sens commun".

It is difficult, at this distance in time, to measure the impact his writing had on a generation of French Catholics who had lived through the excesses of the Revolution and the period of the diminished status of the Gallican Church after 1801.⁴⁷ The notion of faith as the precursor of all human institutions and as belonging to the social body, rather than to the individual, was a powerful one at that particular time. The appeal was also to the felt need for a faith which over-rode different interpretations and was not subject to the constraints of temporal authorities. It was utopian in the extreme and, for the clergy who became taken up with the notion of an authority higher than that of kings or bishops, it led to inevitable opposition from the Gallican wing of the Church in France. Perhaps more seriously it set the tone for much of the subsequent theology which became backward looking and conservative and which failed to develop a convincing challenge in France to the new secular philosophies, which gradually gained ground. It did not, of course, help that Lamennais himself was to leave the Church after his failure to persuade Gregory XVI of the need to shift the allegiance of the French clergy. For a period his name was to become synonymous with heresy and it is still difficult to assess the extent to which writers like Guéranger were criticised by association.

In a study of catholic thought in the nineteenth century, Foucher isolates the principal characteristics of catholic thinking at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴⁸ First is the weakness due to the destruction of the former religious institutions and the pressure from the State, second is the influence of the early Romantic Movement and its defence of traditional religion and the third is the impact of Lamennais' philosophy. This encouraged a historical approach to the study of the Church and emphasized the communitarian in human society. In some ways this was a rather different version of Rousseau's emphasis on the importance of social constraints on the development of the individual and the virtue of collective action, although there is no evidence that Lamennais admired Rousseau. Both Lamennais and Rousseau shared doubts about the

⁴⁷ J-R. Derré, *Le renouvellement de la pensée religieuse en France de 1824 a 1840; essai sur les origines et la signification du mennaisisme*, (Paris, 1962), *passim*. Derré traces Lamennais' influence on a whole generation of theologians, writers and artists.

⁴⁸ L.Foucher, *La philosophie catholique en France au XIX^e siècle avant la renaissance Thomiste et ses relations avec elle, 1800-1880* (Paris, 1962), *passim*. Foucher sees neo-Thomism as a cultural phenomenon, evinced by the interest in medievalism and in architecture and literature after 1830.

limits of human reason in assuring the progress of society and the former had experienced the outcomes of the Revolution. Foucher has argued that the reason versus faith debate in the second half of the century crossed the Gallican-Ultramontane divides and that both sides were similarly reluctant to abandon philosophy to the positivists and the Darwinians. To do so would have been a betrayal of the Cartesian principle of the supremacy of individual reason which had underpinned theological arguments since the seventeenth century. He further argues that the neo-Thomism which became fashionable enabled writers to keep hold of two apparently contradictory positions, a belief in the revealed nature of religion and a belief in the power of individual reason to discover the true nature of God.

Reardon, however, has pointed to other structural weaknesses in nineteenth century religious thought that it inherited from the previous century. Although philosophy was becoming intellectually separated from theology, in part as a result of the eighteenth century focus on the natural sciences, the two were held to be inseparable by both Gallican and Ultramontane wings of the Church; a second factor was that the philosophical/theological debates continued to emphasize the need for proofs of the existence of God rather than for fresh thinking about the Christian narrative. This focus on the need for a scientific explanation of God not only hampered the development of philosophy in the universities but also discouraged serious study about the meaning of the Christian narrative. It was Guéranger's view that this could be found in a return to the study of Church tradition rather than in an attempt to adopt the methods of the scientists to the study of revealed religion. The difference between his approach and that of many of his contemporaries is highlighted in a snapshot of the theologian Alphonse Gratry (1805-1872), whom Guéranger was to challenge over the historical accuracy of the former's arguments against papal infallibility. Gratry's most serious work concerned an attempt to prove, mathematically, the existence of God. In an account of the events leading up to and during the first Vatican Council a late nineteenth century apologist writes:

Dom Guéranger, le restaurateur en France de l'Ordre des Bénédictins, était un docte en la loi divine dans la plus complète acception que saint Benoît donne à ce mot, sachant où puiser les choses anciennes et nouvelles. Il avait appris beaucoup et bien, et il exprimait ce qu'il savait avec force, dans une langue précise, ferme dont la seule recherche était de s'adapter à la la pensée et ne la dépassait en aucun sens. Tandis que le

P.Gatry méditait dans un cabinet de travail, inondé de lumière, le visage levé vers la voûte céleste, Dom Guéranger, dans le recueillement d'une cellule, la tête penchée sur le livres des docteurs consacrés, creusait dans le temps et demandait a un labour opiniâtre ce que le père Gratry cherchait dans les étoiles ⁴⁹.

Foucher's very negative view of religious thinking at this time has been challenged and, in some recent research, Bruno Neveu has shown that, whilst the higher education arrangements in the century aggravated the tendencies which Reardon and others refer to, there were members of the University faculties who contributed useful scholarly research to the debates about reason and faith; however, the reluctance of the government of the time to allow the Roman Catholic Church to create its own institutions made it difficult for even such a respected intellectual as Victor Cousin to free the study of philosophy from the study of theology by creating separate faculties.⁵⁰ In this context it is difficult to see how Guéranger, as a Christian activist, could have acted differently; his reaction is always to take up positions, which were not popular, and to publish his views in controversial articles in the press. He did not speculate on the nature of belief, rather he investigated the tradition of the Church in order to identify the way in which the tradition of the Christian narrative had been carried forward or impeded; his focus was on the core liturgical practices of the Church and on the way in which individuals acting historically had transmitted the message. In more sociological terms Guéranger does not reify tradition; he identifies people (popes, mystics and theologians) who have embodied tradition. In this sense he is interested in what Pelikan has called the Jesus of doctrine as opposed to the Jesus of history but also in the way in which key individuals have exemplified doctrine.⁵¹

It is for these reasons that I do not think Guéranger was ever a wholehearted Lamennaisian, since Lamennais was always a Christian philosopher rather than a Christian activist, although he later became a social activist. As I suggest below, Guéranger is stimulated by the latter's arguments that the Church must re-examine its

⁴⁹ E.Ollivier, *L'Eglise et l'Etat au Concile de Vatican* (Paris, 1887) vol.2, ch. 43, "Le premier concile du Vatican", pp. 419-420.

⁵⁰ B.Neuveu, *L'Eglise, L'Etat et l'Université: les Facultés de Théologie catholique en France au XIX^e siècle*, in N.Aston (ed.), *J.McManners, Religious change in Europe, 1650-1914; essays for John McManners*, (Oxford 1997) pp. 329- 344.

⁵¹ J.Pelikan, "Voices of the Church", p. 4.

institutional development, which has been damaged by too close a link between State and Church and by a neglect of liturgical practices. However, almost all his theological statements are imbued with his belief that it is the foundational message of Christianity that human nature is not pre-determined, that the message of the Incarnation is that Christ is man and God, that Mary guarantees the human nature of Christ and that the individual is redeemed by his or her own action, rather than a member of some predetermined elite. All who are baptised can understand this better by participating in the Office and by learning from the example of the saints and martyrs who have gone before and who, in a quite modern notion, actually constitute the Church as 'ute sacramente'⁵². Whilst this belief system is accessible to everyone, it is not acquired by reason on its own but through prayer and through accepting evidence based on the supernatural as well as on that available to the immediate senses. Guéranger accepts Pascal's notion of the leap into the unknown, although he has very precise ideas about the way in which this can be achieved.

The problem for Lamennais was, in part, that his notions of religion as an essentially communal expression rather than a matter of individual choice mean that, in the end, religion is conditioned by societal and political constraints and that, ultimately, man is left with a deity who is everywhere and nowhere – in the sense that He can be anywhere. He is a universal phenomenon and there is always the risk of the faith dissolving into pantheism.⁵³ George Sand's *Spiridion* which appeared in 1838 and which was dedicated to Pierre Leroux, a follower of Saint Simon, interestingly portrayed Lamennais' dilemma in a contemporary novella.⁵⁴ The hero of the work experiments with different forms of religion - Judaism, Catholicism and Protestantism, but finds none of them satisfactory because of the corruptness of the institutions in which they are embedded. At the end of the story, his disciple Alexis is left in the Italian monastery, which is vandalised by the French troops liberating Italy, with only the narrator for company. His dying words are:

⁵² R.Jensen, "The church and the sacraments", in C.Gunton (ed.), *Christian doctrine* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 207-225.

⁵³ For example Lamennais' much later work, published posthumously, *Essai d'un système de philosophie catholique*, ed, Y.Le Hir (Rennes, 1954).

O Christ! On peut briser tes autels, et traîner ton image dans la poussière. Ce n'est pas à toi, fils de Dieu, que s'adressent ces outrages. Du sein de ton père, tu vois sans colère et sans douleur. Tu sais que c'est l'étendard de Rome, l'insigne de l'imposture et de la cupidité, que l'on renverse et l'on déchire au nom de cette liberté que tu eusses proclamée aujourd'hui le premier, si la volonté celeste t'eût rappelé sur la terre.⁵⁵

This kind of mysticism, which transcends religious institutions but retains God and Christ, runs the risk of dissolving into a form of relativism or historicism, once the voice of tradition has been lost. One can understand Sand's impatience with the Church, which had put all her early novels on the Index, but she too was to abandon the utopianism of the earlier novels and the theme of the power of the individual to transform herself. The heroes and heroines of her later novels are almost always affected by the dehumanising influences of modern society and she describes, for the edification of her readers, the values of a traditional French pastoral society which was seen to be dying but which could still transmit useful knowledge.⁵⁶

Developments in nineteenth century theology also seem to have been hampered by the emphasis many able scholars placed on biblical exegesis and on historical research. Writers such as Renan were to pioneer these methods, but in many cases the outcome was a loss of faith. There is no comparable figure in France to Newman in England or Hans Urs von Balthazar in Germany. The fact that the Institutions Catholiques were not approved as higher education establishments until after Guéranger's death meant that historical scholarship of an academic kind was slow to establish itself. Although Duchesnes and others were to progress the study of ecclesiastical history through a more rigorous approach to archaeology and inscriptions, it was not really until the publication of the work of Jean Daniélou, at the end of the Second World War that patristic studies in France acquired academic respectability and a European reputation. Guéranger foresaw the pitfalls of adopting a modernist approach to biblical scholarship with the risks it

⁵⁴ G.Sand, "Spiridion", *Revue des deux mondes*, vol. 16 (1838), pp.193-233, pp. 298-334, pp.437-475, vol.17 (1839), pp.35-62, pp.204-240.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, vol. 17, p. 240.

⁵⁶ In the preface to *La petite Fadette*, the first of the pastoral novels that appeared in 1851, she refers to the mood of despair which followed the end of the Second Republic in somewhat the same terms that Guéranger uses in the preface to *Histoire de Sainte Cecile*, published in 1849. They are writing from opposite ends of the political and religious spectrum but both writers retire

entailed of humanistic interpretations of what he saw as supernatural events.⁵⁷ His failure to find a home either with the Thomists or the historicists and his marginal position outside the Church hierarchy made it inevitable that his writing would be misunderstood by serious critics at the time and his polemical style of writing and apparently idiosyncratic choice of subject matter did not endear him to those writers whom he challenged.

I have referred above to Pelikan's distinction between efforts to find the Jesus of doctrine and the Jesus of history. This seems to be a helpful way of considering Guéranger's writing.⁵⁸ However, Pelikan also uses the notion of "voices" and suggests that the voices of the Church can also be divided into voices of doctrine and voices of devotion; his point is that doctrine can develop from devotion just as devotion can develop from doctrine and that the former has not always been privileged in the Roman Catholic Church. Whilst this is a helpful way of thinking about differences and debates within the Church, it does assume some kind of will to consensus. In much the same way, Hilda Graef has written about a spectrum of different kinds of spirituality using the metaphor of the light and the rainbow.⁵⁹ Whilst these are useful twentieth century ways of looking at diversity of opinion, they were not available to Guéranger in the context of the politics of the nineteenth-century Gallican Church. I refer in this thesis to his view of both liturgy and mysticism as sites of contest and ones, which he was committed to defend.⁶⁰ It is partly this, which accounts for the acerbity of some of his writing and for the perceived rigidity of his views which most of his contemporaries found difficult to handle. It is also, I think, the reason why much of his writing has been neglected by both theologians and historians. The topic of the liturgy and liturgical innovation has been a

to their respective sanctuaries in Solesmes and in Nohant and to the resources of the past as a means of consolation.

⁵⁷ Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme*, Préface, pp. 1-47.

⁵⁸ J. Pelikan, "Voices of the Past", p. 4. This is because, Pelikan argues, doctrine is concerned with myths or ideologies whereas history is concerned with evidence of a different kind.

⁵⁹ H. Graef, *The Light and the rainbow: A study in Christian spirituality from its roots in the Old Testament and its development through the New Testament and the Fathers to recent times* (London, 1959).

⁶⁰ I use the term site of contest in the way in which it is used by sociologists, that is as an area of human activity, which groups with different values or varying amounts of power seek to monopolise. In this sense the liturgy and the precise form and content it takes can be seen as an area where, for example, Reformers and Counter-Reformers focus their debate.

more obvious one for treatment, the question of the supernatural in religious affairs is less easy to handle.

Another useful distinction that Pelikan makes in his paper is the distinction between doctrine and devotion. By doctrine he means the various articles of faith, as approved by the appropriate institutional arrangements and by devotion he means the acts of worship, which embody this faith. He points out that some doctrine can be seen to depend more than other on biblical exegesis whereas some doctrine, notably Mariology, does not depend on the canonical gospels, since the material concerning her is very sparse. His argument is that, Marian doctrine has its origins in the devotion, which grew up around her person from around the fourth century. I return to this issue in Chapter Three but, for the moment, the notion of doctrine springing from devotion is a useful one in considering the specific case of popular piety in the nineteenth century. One of the distinguishing features of this was the fact that ordinary people, especially women, usually experienced the miracles and visions, which accompanied the surge in popular devotion. A case in point is the frequency of the Marian visions that occurred around the time that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was promulgated in 1850. The most famous examples are the apparition to Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes in 1858 and the one to the shepherd boy and girl in La Salette in 1846. Reflecting later in the century on the range and variety of the devotional practices which followed from these visions, which are all related to the same figure, the novelist J.K. Huysman, a late convert to Roman Catholicism writes:

La Vierge respecte, autant que possible, le tempérament, la complexion personnelle de l'être qu'elle aborde. Elle se met à la portée de son intelligence, s'incarne sous la seule forme matérielle qu'il puisse comprendre. Elle se manifeste sous la pauvre image que ces humbles aiment; Elle accepte les robes blanches et bleues, les couronnes et les guirlandes de roses, les bijoux et les chapelets, les affutiaux de première communion, les plus laids atours.---Il n'y a pas d'exemples, en somme, que les bergers qui la virent l'aient autrement décrite que sous les traits d'une Vierge d'autel de village, d'une Madonne du quartier Saint-Sulpice, d'une Reine de coin de rue.⁶¹

Huysman's comments are useful in illustrating the way in which visions and miracles reflect contemporary representations in popular culture and were harnessed, as it

⁶¹ J-K. Huysman, *Le roman de Durtal*, new edn. (Paris, 1999), "La cathédrale", pp. 667- 668.

were, by the Church to provide suitable sites for pilgrimage. Equally it can be argued that the style of devotional practice and representation practised by the clergy contributed to the form and content of the vision.⁶² Although Guéranger was aware of the visions and mystical communications experienced by Catherine Emmerich, it is interesting that he does not write about her nor about other contemporary women visionaries like Soeur Nativité, Marie Lataste and Catherine Labouré. All these women's writing is concerned with doctrinal messages that he himself was concerned to reiterate. There are two possible explanations, as I see it; one is that their promoters and editors have subjected their messages to a kind of filtering process; the other is that none of their communications are particularly influenced by liturgical practice. A third possibility exists, that is that their authenticity had not been confirmed by the Church in any formal way. I am inclined to think the first of these explanations is the correct one. Edward de Cazales, founder of *le Correspondant*, had translated Catherine Emmerich's writing into French from German. Cazales' translation was subsequently criticized by Guéranger in an article which appeared in *le Monde* in 1860.⁶³ His almost deliberate avoidance of contemporary visionaries is in line with his arguments for the support of those who belong to a particular tradition and who have not been subjected to the influence of Protestantism and Jansenism.⁶⁴

There is another way in which Guéranger's concerns and writings distinguish him from his contemporaries. He does not seem ever to have supported the fashion for pilgrimages in support of political or national purposes, even when these were organised by his friend the Bishop of Poitiers. Brennan has analysed the promotion of the cult of St Radegunde in the diocese and argued that Mgr. Pie used this in order to stake a claim for cultural space against the supporters of Louis-Napoleon in the 1860s.⁶⁵ Nor

⁶² A good example of this is Bernadette's insistence that the vision she received of Mary resembled very precisely the statue in the churchyard at Lourdes. It is an interesting case since Mary is portrayed in the statue as prophetess, with hands outstretched in the position of an 'orante'. V.Cronin, *Mary portrayed* (London, 1968), p. 155.

⁶³ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p.270.

⁶⁴ C.Maunders, *Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in modern European Roman Catholicism*, Ph.D thesis, University of Leeds, 1990, vol. 1, pp. 43-44. Maunders points out that certain themes carry through from one generation of Marian visions to another. In the case of Catherine Labouré, for example, the backs of the medal contain imagery of Mary with the Cross and the two hearts of Jesus and Mary which recall sixteenth and seventeenth century apocalyptic themes.

does Guéranger seem to have been involved at all in the movement initiated in Nantes by Mgr. Fournier, Bishop of Nantes, to support the legitimist cause in the Franco-Prussian war or, again, to give any support to Bishop Pie in his part in the Government of Moral Order.⁶⁶ Although it is true that he was by this time in failing health and had other priorities, it is in line with his refusal to ally himself to political causes and to maintain what he perceived to be his independence from both ecclesiastical hierarchy and from secular ideology. His comments in his letters to de Rossi on the various European wars always remained at the most general level and he restricted himself to complaints, for example, about the interruptions to the postal system.⁶⁷

In a recent paper Caroline Ford has argued that the violence of religious conflict associated with the sixteenth century wars of religion in France survived the Revolution and, in the nineteenth century, took on forms, which were anti-clerical rather than inter-confessional.⁶⁸ In this sense it is possible to interpret the Church-led manifestations, particularly in the west of France, which Jonas describes, as the response of the Church hierarchy to potential anti-clerical acts of revolt. Guéranger was more concerned about the threat from within the Church and always distanced himself from association with political conflict. This contrasted with the stance which he invariably took over Jansenist issues and which his contemporaries found so difficult to understand. Katherine Bergeron describes how, in a sense, the wheel came full circle.⁶⁹ The Laws of Association (1901) deemed the religious orders 'incompatible with social order' and recommended their extermination. Already, five years after Guéranger's death in 1875,

⁶⁵ B.Brennan, "Piety and politics in nineteenth century Poitiers: the cult of St Radegund", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 47/1 (January 1996), pp. 65- 81.

⁶⁶ R.Jonas, "Anxiety, identity, and the displacement of violence during the Année Terrible: The sacred heart and the Diocese of Nantes, 1870-1871", *French Historical Studies*, 21(1), 1998, pp.55-76 and "Monument as Ex-Voto, monument as historiosophy. The basilica of Sacré-Coeur", *French Historical Studies*, 13/2 (1993), pp.482-502.

⁶⁷ *Oury, Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, pp .422-432. Solesmes did suffer considerable deprivation in the Franco-Prussian war, especially from a shortage of food and those who were not choir monks and who were under forty had to serve in the army or in the national guard.

⁶⁸ C.Ford, "Violence and the sacred in nineteenth century France", *French Historical Studies* 21/1, (1998), pp. 106- 110. Ford notes that "while there was little religious violence associated with the conflicts between the ecclesiastical establishment and the Jansenists. Jansenism served as a lightning rod for religious and political dissension of all kinds, which found expression in the Revolution".

the revived anticlericalism that characterised the Third Republic had forced the monks to leave the monastery, albeit temporarily, and the political climate remained hostile for the rest of the century.⁷⁰ Twenty years later, in September 1901, the monks of Solesmes were forced to abandon the abbey and settle in England, on the Isle of Wight. They were not to return for twenty years. Guéranger's attempts to distance himself from the French State had not succeeded in preserving the status of the monastery during the Third Republic and appeals to the pope were no longer an option. He was fortunate to escape these misfortunes, dying peacefully in his own bed, surrounded by his monks, on 30 January 1875.

Guéranger, the legacy.

In his recent study, Oury lists three published biographies of Guéranger.⁷¹ These works are all by Benedictine monks from the foundation at Solesmes and Oury was also a member of the community until his death in 2001. In contrast, he cites thirty- six manuscript studies which are conserved in the Archives at Solesmes and which have never been published, although there is a project to edit a collection of these under the title *Mélanges*. Many of the items were written by members of the community themselves although there are papers presented at a conference held in Solesmes in 1975, some of which have been published elsewhere.⁷² Oury's earlier published biography of

⁶⁹ K.Bergeron, *Decadent enchantments. The revival of Gregorian chant at Solesmes* (London, 1998,) pp. 124- 125.

⁷⁰ R.Franklin, *Nineteenth century churches; the history of a new Catholicism in Würtemberg, England and France*, (New York, 1987), pp.468-469. There is evidence of a minor episode of resistance when members of the village supported the monks in 1881. Ten young men stood guard at the gates and other residents supported individual monks on the walls and in the tower. The women of Solesmes sat in the choir of the abbey church and the Marquis de Juigné formed a guard of honour at the altar. There were minor scuffles before the monks and the women left.

⁷¹ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p. 472.

⁷² *Colloque Dom Guéranger* (Solesmes, 1975). All the papers presented at this seminar are by Benedictine monks. Other papers have been published in the quarterly journal, *Lettre aux amis de Solesmes*.

the first abbess of St Cecilia at Solesmes, Mère Cécile Bruyère, is also a testimony to the way in which his ideas were carried on in a female enclosed monastery and which was influential in contributing to a particular form of spirituality which is still associated with the Benedictines.⁷³ This is described in a collection of extracts from the writings of three of Solesmes' spiritual leaders, including Guéranger.⁷⁴ The topics covered in the manuscript collections are various but deal with specific aspects of Guéranger's activity or with his relationships with a particular individual or institution. It is not difficult to understand why much of the material remains unpublished since the time available for writing is constrained by the seven sung offices and by the innumerable tasks that constitute the monastic day. This was a problem for the abbey from the time of its foundation in 1833 and even though the original intention was that historical research should be a focus along with liturgical practice, this seems to have been a continuous struggle. The ecclesiastical politics of publishing commentary and analysis on Guéranger from within the community must also operate as a deterrent and it is interesting that only one doctoral thesis is held in the archive and it concerns the role of the foundation in re-establishing the monastic orders in France.⁷⁵

It is not an exaggeration, then, to say that Guéranger's religious thinking has failed to attract scholarly interest in France. A recent dictionary of French theology refers to him only in the context of liturgical reform in France overall and neither he nor Solesmes appear in the item index.⁷⁶ It is a curious feature of his career that he often appears as a person who corresponded with or is associated with a more famous contemporary such as Lamennais.⁷⁷ It is perhaps because his biographers are Benedictine monks that

⁷³ G-M. Oury, *Lumière et force. Mère Cécile Bruyère, première abbesse de Sainte- Cécile, 1845-1909* (Solesmes, 1997).

⁷⁴ M.Total, *The spirit of Solesmes, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-75), Abbess Cécile Bruyère (1845-1900), Dom Paul Delatte (1848-1937)* (Tunbridge Wells, 1997).

⁷⁵ J-P.Vergne, *Le rôle de la fondation de la Congrégation Bénédictine de France par Dom Guéranger dans le rétablissement des ordres religieux au sein du renouveau catholique en France au XIXe siècle, 1830-1848*, Thèse de doctorat du 3e cycle (Paris-X, Nanterre, 1974).

⁷⁶ J.Y.Lacoste, *Dictionnaire critique de théologie* (Paris, 1998)

references to the wider cultural society of the time are not followed up, although an honourable exception to this is Oury's, paper challenging the notion that Guéranger's writing belongs to the Romantic movement.⁷⁸ The outcome is that Guéranger remains somewhat elusive as a person and as a thinker, since his career is described in relation to the great men of the time and as if his choices were entirely dictated by events. The state of theology in France that I have described above is partly responsible for this and these factors contribute to the failure of any writer to take his writing on saints and mystics seriously; in his own day the topic was considered unfashionable and his immediate successors in the modernist movement viewed it as positively cranky.⁷⁹ The neglect of his writing by contemporary French theologians and historians can be explained by the difficulty of locating him in a recognisable tradition but also by the anti-clerical bias of much nineteenth-century French historiography.

Finally, it is worth noting that in the last thirty years English and American historians have begun to take more interest in Guéranger than have their French colleagues. Until the early sixties he was still viewed with some hostility by historians sympathetic to Lamennais because of his perceived betrayal during the period leading up to the promulgation of *Mirari Vos*.⁸⁰ Alternatively he was treated as a minor player in the politics of the Ultramontane movement or as the eccentric founder of a Benedictine monastery.⁸¹ In the 1980s the American liturgical historian R.W. Franklin usefully

⁷⁷ Roussel, *Lamennais et ses correspondants inconnus*, pp.189-231.

⁷⁸ G-M. Oury, "Le romantisme de Dom Guéranger, un faux problème?", *Collectanea Cisterciensia*, 48 (1986), pp. 311-323. Oury makes comparisons between Guéranger's ideas and the literary attitudes associated with the Romantic movement but he does not discuss the historiography of the period.

⁷⁹ Louis Duchesnes, writing about Guéranger and female monasticism said, "Quand je rencontre de ces âmes, je souhaite toujours qu'elles acceptent être mères de famille. Saint Jérôme n'est pas pour moi le type du directeur spirituel. Il a été, du reste, un directeur fort égoïste", quoted by Marrou, *Mgr Duchesne et son temps*, p.17.

⁸⁰ A.Vidler, *Prophecy and papacy. A study of Lamennais, the Church and the Revolution* (London, 1954).

⁸¹ O. Chadwick, *History of the popes (1830-1914)* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 493-494. Chadwick continues in the same vein as Duchesnes and is dismissive of the Solesmes project. Writing about Guéranger, he says: "He had no previous Benedictine experience except from books and his customs were odd. The monks wore brown. There were four hours of worship in the day, seven or eight on feast-days and it was soon splendid both liturgically and musically; at other times the house was filled with silence". Chadwick shared the attitudes of his generation and was dismissive of what he saw as nineteenth century anti-intellectualism. See also O. Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman* (Cambridge, 1957), p. 70.

considered his liturgical innovations at Solesmes alongside similar movements in England and Germany in the 1830s.⁸² This approach, by comparing Catholic and Protestant revivals and by identifying their common features, has stimulated an attempt to rescue Guéranger from the morass of ultramontane politics and from labelling him as either ‘intransigent’ or ‘inopportuniste’. In short there has been a small step in widening the debate to include the cultural and social context in which he lived in order to understand better the significance of his writing.

This more recent Anglo-Saxon interest in Guéranger’s liturgical writing has its origins in the relationships established between Solesmes and English Roman Catholic establishments during the 1860s. Guéranger visited England in 1860. The links with the English monastic communities dated from the time of the Revolution when two Benedictine monasteries (Douai and Dieulouaerd) settled in Downside and Ampleforth respectively. In 1859 Laurence Shepherd, the director of the novitiates at Ampleforth opened a new house at Belmont, near Hereford , the first since the Reformation to be founded in England. Shepherd visited Solesmes several times and consulted Guéranger on different aspects of setting up a new order.⁸³ Shepherd translated the first volumes of *L’annee liturgique* in 1866.⁸⁴ He was the instigator of Guéranger’s visit to London in 1860 and raised the necessary funds for this project. As well as visiting Belmont, Guéranger stayed at Stanbrook, Downside, Ampleforth and Rugely and then went to the Oratory at Birmingham where he met Newman. The two men did not get on; Oury reports that Newman did not speak French and Guéranger certainly had no English. He was much more happy about his visit to the London Oratory where he met Frederick Faber who impressed him (“un gros anglais franc, ouvert, gai, doué de l’esprit de saint Philippe Neri”) he wrote in his diary). The obituary for Faber that he wrote in *le Monde* reflects his views on the qualities of a good abbot.

⁸² Franklin, *Nineteenth century churches*, passim.

⁸³ F.Sandeman, “ Laurence Shepherd, 1825-85: Apostle of Guéranger”, *Ampleforth Journal*, 80/3 (1975), pp. 38-47.

⁸⁴ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l’Eglise*, pp. 341-342.

Le P. Faber a réuni en grand nombre les qualités qui font les véritables auteurs spirituels: la sainteté de la vie, la science des choses divines et l'expérience des opérations de la grâce en lui-même et dans les autres. ⁸⁵.

Frederick Faber had an interesting career. Born at Calverley, near Leeds, he was brought up by strict Calvinists but converted to Roman Catholicism shortly after Newman in 1845. It is reported that Newman did not always approve of his devotional practices and ultramontane attitudes, particularly after he became head of the London Oratory, where Guéranger met him. The rapport with Faber rather than with Newman is interesting because of the history of Calvinism in Faber's upbringing and because of the attitudes to spirituality and mysticism, which Guéranger admired and to which he referred in the obituary that he wrote for Faber. It is the establishment of these relationships, many of which are ongoing, which seem to have attracted Anglo-Saxon researchers and which may partly account for their continuing interest in Guéranger's life and writing. It is also a measure of the way in which his religious thinking influenced devotional practices well beyond France.

⁸⁵ *le Monde* 19 January 1864.

II The influence of the Fathers of the Church on Guéranger's thinking.

Christian faith has its beginnings in an experience of profound contradictoriness, an experience that so questioned the religious categories of its time that the resulting reorganisation of religious language was a centuries-long task. At one level it is a task, which every generation has to undertake again. And if spirituality can be given any coherent meaning, perhaps it is to be understood in terms of this task, each believer making his or her own that engagement with the questioning at the heart of faith which is so obvious in the classical documents of Christian belief.¹

Introduction

Guéranger completed his secondary education at the college in Angers in 1822 and entered the seminary at Le Mans in the same year. The four years he spent at Angers seem to have been productive; the college, like several institutions of its kind had an eventful history, losing its royal status during the Revolutionary period, becoming one of Napoleon's new national lycées and reverting to its former title during the Restoration. All Guéranger's biographers rely mainly on the autobiography, which he wrote for the novice monks at Solesmes between 1860-1864 and which was never published. They all report that the curriculum in the seminary at Le Mans was narrow and lacking in stimulation in comparison with the humanist curriculum at Angers. Although Guéranger is not critical of his tutors, the seminary curriculum does not seem to have provided much of interest to him and he was fortunate in that the superior, Jean-Baptiste Bouvier, recognising the intellectual aptitude of the young seminarian, encouraged him to make use of the seminary library once he had completed the first year of the course and received the tonsure. Guéranger seems to have remained at Le Mans during the summer holiday and read widely, if unsystematically, paying particular attention to a critique of Fleury's *Histoire ecclésiastique*, which had been published in 1818.² He describes this period in these terms:

¹ R. Williams, *The wound of knowledge: Christian spirituality from the New Testament to St John of the Cross* (London, 1979), p.1

² Claude Fleury (1640-1723) was an ecclesiastical historian who was involved in the Quietist controversy and whose orthodoxy was questioned, although Bossuet vouched for his orthodoxy in this debate. His major work was a twenty-volume history of the Church, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, published between 1691 and 1720. Guéranger had access to a thirty six-volume edition in the seminar library at Le Mans but was advised by his tutor to read a critique of *Histoire*

J'y venais chaque jour et je commençai à étudier enfin les in-folio. Ces éditions des Pères de l'Eglise me ravissaient; jamais je ne les avais palpées. Mais les analyses de Fleury m'en avaient donné un avant-goût. Les historiens, les hagiographes, surtout les Bollandistes, tout cela me fit une impression profonde; je me sentais vivre dans une vie beaucoup plus intense, car je savais désormais ce que c'était des livres.³

At the beginning of the second year of his training, profiting from his access to the seminary library, he again read widely. The outcome of this period of intense reading and reflection was to have a profound effect on his future career and all his biographers quote his account of his mystical experience in December of his second year at Le Mans:

Le 8 décembre 1823, je faisais le matin ma méditation avec la communauté et j'avais abordé mon sujet (le mystère du jour) avec mes vues rationalistes comme à l'ordinaire; mais je vois qu'insensiblement je me sens entraîné à croire Marie immaculée dans sa conception; la spéculation et le sentiment s'unissent sans effort sur ce mystère, dans mon acquiescement; aucun transport, mais une douce paix avec une conviction sincère. Marie avait daigné me transformer de ses mains bénies, sans secousse, sans enthousiasme; c'était une nature qui disparaissait pour faire place à une autre. Je n'en dis rien à personne, d'autant que j'étais loin alors de sentir la portée qu'avait pour moi cette révolution intérieure.⁴

Although Guéranger's biographers refer to this event in December 1823 as a key to his spiritual development, none of them analyses its context. The Gallican Church celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary on 8 December but the Roman Catholic Church had not promulgated the belief as doctrine and this was not to occur until 1850. The celebration of the feast had a long history and was most consistently supported by the Franciscans and by the Spanish Church in the Counter-Reformation period. Its popularity is associated with periods in the history of the Roman Catholic Church when devotion to Mary was at a high point.⁵ However, apart from increasing the status of Mary, the celebration of the feast does not appear to have any specifically biblical justification. It is not immediately obvious why Mary has to be

ecclesiastique by Mgr Marchetti, archbishop of Besançon, published in 1818. See Oury, *Moine au cœur de l'Eglise*, p.29.

³ *Autobiographie*, p. 29

⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

virgin from the time of her own conception which inevitably brings into the argument debate about her parents, Anna and Joachim. As I argue below, Guéranger is actually linking the origins of this doctrine to Irenaeus' arguments about Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve'. This is the best way to interpret the links he makes between his reading of Justin and Irenaeus and the textual basis of this doctrine which, read together, make a kind of sense. Bearing in mind his age at the time of his experience, his limited opportunity for studying doctrinal development and the impact on him of his recent reading of the early Fathers, it is quite understandable that he should have experienced this insight as a mystical experience. The model of Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve' was to inform all his later writing and is a key to understanding his definition of tradition. In all the texts which are the sources for this thesis, key individuals – popes, saints, mystics, monks and researchers – retrieve those core beliefs of the Christian faith which persistently get lost or buried in the cause of ecclesiastical politics or misguided reforms. It is not quite 'semper eadem' in the sense of Bossuet or even Newman, both of whom in different ways supported a process of doctrinal development rather than sudden revelations.⁶ Guéranger's view of revealed truth is literally that – an insight awarded to individuals at particular crisis moments in the history of the Christian faith. His own experience, as a young man of nineteen, convinced him of the significance of Mary's place in the Incarnation and of the importance of delivering that message to others.

It is from this period that he begins to think about a monastic vocation, even discussing the options with a sympathetic tutor, M.Heurtebize, who had been taught by the last prior of the Benedictine Order at Evron. He seems more interested, initially, in the Benedictines because of their commitment to study and to ecclesiastical history. For the rest of his second year he continued with his formal study and informal reading until the effort of trying to combine both led to a complete breakdown in his physical health, which made it impossible for him to start the third year of his training. M. Bouvier who agreed that he should take a sabbatical from the strict régime of the

⁵ For examples of the iconography of the Immaculate Conception, see S.Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge, 1994), especially pp 88 ff.

⁶ J.-B. Bossuet, *Exposition de la doctrine catholique sur les matières de controverse* (Paris, 1671). J.Newman, *An essay on the development of Christian doctrine*, eleventh ed. (London, 1900). I discuss Newman's position on the development of Marian doctrine in Chapter Three. The theory of doctrinal development is argued in O.Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman.The idea of doctrinal development* (Cambridge, 1957), passim.

seminary saved him from his predicament. He was allowed to live outside the seminary reading in the library; he was allotted some light duties supervising younger students and taking catechism classes. He was therefore able to spend the period up to November 1825 reading and making notes on the Fathers. He entered the fourth year of the seminary and completed his training one year later, without loss of time but still too young for completion of his vows. It is a measure of his intellectual ability that he was deemed to have completed the course satisfactorily but, also, of his ability to live on the margins of a community and to remain critical of the ecclesiastical establishment of the time. Although interested in and stimulated by the ideas of Lamennais which were debated in the seminary, he seems never to have adopted a truly Mennaisian position. His later correspondence shows that his empathy with Lamennais was linked to his obsession with Church history and that all his early projects relate to this, although he never took up Lamennais' offer to join the community at La Chênaie.⁷ As his correspondence with Montalembert shows, he was prepared to press for the establishment of the monastic community at Solesmes, whatever the outcome of the negotiations with the pope over the allegiance of the French clergy.⁸ It was this marginality which frequently got him into trouble – not least with Mgr. Bouvier who had supported him as a young seminarian – when, later, he refused to accept the latter's authority, as archbishop of Le Mans, over the newly founded monastery at Solesmes. However, as Louis Soltner has shown, his belief in the need for the monastic community to be independent of both State and ecclesiastic hierarchy was fundamental.⁹

⁷ Guéranger to Lamennais, 3 March 1827: "Sans doute, Monsieur ce serait pour moi le comble de bonheur de travailler sous vos yeux,---mais des obstacles invincibles m'empêchent de suivre le vœu de mon cœur. Je ne suis pas libre" in Roussel, "Lamennais et ses correspondants inconnus", p. 197.

⁸ Guéranger to Montalembert, 27 February 1832: "Il s'agit de faire reconnaître la maison comme établissement régulier, d'approuver les statuts, de stipuler certaines exemptions. Pas d'autre moyen de réussir que par des amis puissants". Sévrin, *La jeunesse de Guéranger*, p. 223.

⁹ Guéranger to Montalembert, 27 December 1837: "Notre existence est un fait aussi anti-gallican que la résistance de ce digne prélat", a reference to the imprisonment of the archbishop of Cologne, Droste zu Vischering, for supporting the Church against the State quoted in Soltner, "Guéranger et la liberté monastique", p. 215, n. 21.

In summary it can be said that as a young man with a strong religious vocation Guéranger encountered a sterile and outmoded religious culture against which he reacted by reading avidly, once he gained access to the seminary library. It seems likely that the effect of his intensive reading, the requirements of the formal curriculum and the completely new light which some of his reading threw on his religious vocation contributed to his breakdown and, possibly, to his mystical experience with its focus on the need for a more christological focus for doctrine and practice. It is not unusual for mystical experience to be accompanied by or to follow from periods of ill health and breakdown, although, unsurprisingly, this is often associated with female saints and mystics.¹⁰ The significance of the experience of 8 December 1823 is that it gave Guéranger a focus for his future activity and for his future monastic vocation and the conditions of training for the priesthood in the 1820s were such that only an individual prepared to become self-taught would be able to break out of the cul-de-sac of French catholic thought.

Interpretations of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyon.

Guéranger's notebook is entitled *Lecture des Saints Pères*, vol.1 and is dated November 1825– January 1827. The book is a hardbacked notebook, A5 in size and with lined pages. It contains 265 pages of handwritten transcripts from the translations of the Fathers to which he had access in the library at the seminary, although he makes no references to specific sources he consulted, other than to the relevant books and chapters of the author he is transcribing. Although this notebook is entitled Volume One, there is no evidence that he ever started Volume Two; this is supported by the fact that in November 1826 he started writing in a similar notebook but on different topics including some relating specifically to Mary, rather than continuing with a second volume on the Fathers.¹¹ A likely explanation of his change of direction lies in

¹⁰ St Teresa of Avila is a classic instance. See R.Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (Gilford,1991), "Introduction", pp.1-10 as is Mary Margaret Alacoque, see R.Jonas, *France and the cult of the Sacred Heart*, Ch.1, pp.16-23. Maria of Agreda, whose case Guéranger was to take up later in his life, also had a long period of nervous illness as a young woman. See C.Colahan, *The visions of Sor Maria de Agreda, Writing, knowledge and power* (Tucson,1994).

the pattern of his study. The sequence of events is as follows; initial reading of Fleury's *Histoire ecclesiastique*, Summer 1823; mystical experience, December, 1823; continuation of informal reading of in-folio editions of the Fathers and formal curriculum up to Summer 1824; physical breakdown Summer 1824 and sabbatical year November 1824 to Summer 1825. This sequence suggests that he did not actually begin to transcribe his chosen excerpts until August 1825, by which time he was already embarking on the final year of his training as a priest. The demands of his formal study must have left him with little time to write up the results of his reading and this probably accounts for the fact that he copies down sections which are important for him and only writes short notes at the end of each section. The only exception to this is a short overview at the end of the notebook. He was to leave the seminary and take up his work as secretary to Mgr. de la Myre – Mory, Bishop of Le Mans, shortly before completing the first volume of *Lecture des Saints Pères* in January 1827 and it is possible that the overview was written then. We know that he had started reading Clement of Alexandria before returning to the seminary but he never produced any notes on Clement which have survived, although it is possible to see many of Clement's ideas reflected indirectly in his later works.¹² The writers he actually covers in Volume One are St Barnabas, Heras, St Ignatius, St Polycarp, St Clement of Rome, St Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, St Theophilus of Antioch, Hermias and St Irenaeus. By far the largest sections are devoted to Justin and Irenaeus (one hundred pages and eighty-three pages respectively) and this indicates that these writers were central to his thinking. In the notebook index he makes a distinction between those writers he calls "les pères apostoliques" and those he calls 'les pères apologistes'. The former were those born in the period up to c. A.D.96 and who were alive before the last of the apostles died. They can be seen as reporting oral tradition. The writers in the second group were fulfilling a different role – that of relating scripture and emerging Church tradition to the philosophical debates of the period in order to justify and establish the basis of the faith.

¹¹ Trésor de S.Pierre de Solesmes, *Lecture des Saints Peres, Recueil autographe*, 12 August 1825-31 January 1827; *Notes et materiaux, recueil autographe*, 23 November, 1826, Archives at Solesmes.

¹² Oury, *Moine au Coeur de l'Eglise*, p. 31. ' Pour le reste, il travaillait par lui-même, sauf pour le cours de morale dans l'après-midi. En fait d'études personnelles, il put seulement achever Saint Irenée et commencer Clément d'Alexandrie; mais sa vocation était dès lors nettement tracée; l'étude des premiers siècles'.

Justin and Irenaeus belong to this group and I suggest that it is their accounts of the foundational narrative which particularly struck Guéranger. The emphasis that he always, throughout his career, places on Mary can also be explained by the way in which the description of her role shifts between Justin's and Irenaeus' versions of the virgin birth. The mystical experience of 1823, occurring as it did on the feast of the Immaculate Conception and providing an insight into the place of Mary in the Incarnation no doubt led Guéranger to revisit those sections of the texts which provided a way of reaffirming the christological focus of his faith which he saw as missing from the seminary curriculum.

Justin Martyr (c.100 –165) wrote three major works that have survived, *Dialogue with Trypho* (c.155) and the *First and Second Apologies* (c.155 and 1600).¹³ Justin's parents were Greek settlers who had set up their home in Flavia Neapolis in Samaria. He probably had a Greek education but developed a strong religious sense early in his life, leaving home to seek out philosophies and teachers who would satisfy his quest for knowledge. Intellectually he was attracted to Christianity but it was not until he witnessed the bravery of Christians going to martyrdom for their faith that he became a convert and apologist. Moving to Rome, he set up a small school and, inevitably, became involved in debates with various sects, notably Marcionism. The first and second Apologies are appeals to the emperor, Marcus Aurelius, to allow Christians to practise their faith since they are in all senses good citizens, apart from their refusal to worship the pagan Gods of the Roman religion. Denounced by his rivals, he was tried by prefect in Rome, refused to sacrifice to the Gods and was martyred in 165 AD. From the evidence in his notebook, Guéranger seems to have been most interested in the *Dialogue with Trypho*. The work is in the form of a conversation or debate with a Jewish believer, is written in a philosophical style and the author attempts to demonstrate to his potential convert how the Christian faith is a logical development from the Jewish faith and the fulfilment of the Jewish prophecies of the Old Testament. The shattering break with this older tradition is the actual appearance on earth of Christ

¹³ Throughout this section I have drawn on the following modern commentaries on the writing of the Fathers: H.von Campenhausen, *Les pères grecs*, transl. O.Marbach (Paris,1963); H.Chadwick, *The early Church*, revised edn. (London, 1967); J.Daniélou and H.-I. Marrou, (transl. V.Cronin), *The Christian centuries*, vol. 1, *The first six hundred years* (Paris, 1964); W. Friend, *The rise of Christianity*, (London, 1984).

, the Word incarnate, foreseen by the prophets, but which was to have a radical impact on the beliefs of the old faith and on the lives of all who chose to follow the new faith. Guéranger's commentary on Justin is mostly confined to the latter's writing about the Incarnation, his references to the virgin birth and his observations on the emerging liturgical practices of the fledgling Church .

Central to Justin's writing is the idea of Christ as the Word. For Justin, all previous philosophies have done no more than give brief insights into the possibility of the redemption of humanity through Christ . The whole history of the human mind and its capacity to think is recapitulated in the birth of Christ, in his life and work and in his death. Christ is the Word, the divine reason itself which God caused to be born from himself, without any diminution of his own being – Justin uses the metaphor of a fire born from fire which does not diminish the initial flame. His explanation of the Incarnation is metaphorical; he is attempting to explain the idea that Christ and God are of the same nature but are separate natures – a fundamental difference between Christianity and the various Gnostic sects which were challenging the faith at the time. Christ's appearance on earth demonstrates the truth of this assertion (the possibility of one and separate natures) and is the demonstration of the fact that it is Christ, rather than any other prophet who is the fulfilment of all the earlier prophecies. The miracles Christ accomplished and the sublime nature of his message prove all this – he is the 'new legislator who triumphs over demons and brings the promise of salvation to the world; his suffering and death should not trouble us, no more than the actual persecutions suffered by Christians at the present time. It is clear, and Guéranger comments on this, that there is a strong millenarian strand in Justin's writing. However beliefs in the imminent arrival of the new order were a persistent theme in patristic writing in the first two centuries and modern scholars now think that there is evidence to suppose that the early communities believed that the new order had already arrived.¹⁴ Guéranger is cautious about Justin's emphasis on the redemption and the actual fulfilment of the prophecy, perhaps noting the audience for whom Justin was writing. He is, however, impressed by his metaphor for the Incarnation and by his arguments about the continuity between the Hebrew bible and the new tradition. His gloss on

¹⁴ For a recent statement about this see ,C.Hill, "Justin and the New Testament writings", *Studia Patristica*, 30. Papers presented at the 12th international conference of patristic studies, Oxford, 1995, ed. E.Livingstone (Leuven, 1997), pp.42-48..

Justin's metaphor for the two natures of Christ and on the continuity that this presents with Old Testament writing is:

Il dit que le fils de Dieu est engendré de Dieu de la même manière qu'un feu est allumé à un autre feu sans que le premier en souffre aucune diminution; il invoque le témoignage du verbe de sagesse qui dans les proverbes dit qu'il a été formé par le Seigneur avant les siècles ---. Salomon nous apprend que la Sagesse était avec le père et conversait avec lui.¹⁵

Although Guéranger was convinced of Justin's support for the dual nature of Christ and for his arguments with the Jewish community about the continuity of Christian belief and Jewish prophecy, he is unable to find a satisfactory reference to Mary's place in the economy of the Trinity. Justin does make reference to the virgin birth but Guéranger does not include this in his commentary, perhaps because of the way in which Justin deals with this issue. A modern commentator, Boslooper, points out that Justin makes eight references throughout his writing to the virgin birth but that none of these refer to the New Testament. Justin uses Isaiah 7,14 to support his arguments and also makes analogies with Greek mythology.¹⁶ This supports the thesis that Justin probably did not have access to the canonical gospels (something which Guéranger could not have theorised at that time). However it is likely he understood the reason for Justin's analogy with Greek mythology which also utilised the concept of the virgin birth (parthenogenesis) for its own heroes and heroines, notably Venus. Although he does not comment on this, the notion supports the arguments about recapitulation and Guéranger was to remain interested all his life in the idea that both Greek legend and the Hebrew bible provided ample evidence of earlier insights into the act of creation.¹⁷ Boslooper accounts for Justin's introduction of the idea of the virgin birth as supporting the miraculous aspects of Christ's work and the notion of atonement. The latter would have been familiar to Jewish believers but possibly more difficult for Greek converts. Justin's emphasis on the miraculous nature of the

¹⁵ L.S.P., p. 97

¹⁶ T. Boslooper, *The virgin birth* (London, 1962), p.31, "Justin was concerned with the mission of Jesus as the Son of God. For him that mission had as its ultimate basis a birth that was unique in character and that was foreshadowed by prophecy".

¹⁷ See below Chapter Six, pp.183-187.

atonement rather than on the Incarnation meant that Guéranger had to seek out other evidence concerning the place of Mary in the Christian narrative.

Before pursuing that aspect of the argument, however, I want to turn to Justin's comments on two other features of the early Church – his emphasis on the way in which the early Christians conducted themselves (these sections are in the books he addressed to Antoninus Pius) and on the picture he draws of the liturgical practice of the time. Guéranger paraphrases Justin's appeal in this way:

Les chrétiens ne diffèrent du reste des hommes; ils obéissent aux lois, mais leur manière de vivre est bien supérieure aux lois; ils aiment tout le monde, tout le monde les persécute; ils manquent de tout et sont dans l'abondance, on les met à mort et ils vivent. En un mot, ils sont dans le monde ce que l'âme est dans le corps. Elle est par tout le corps et les chrétiens sont par tout le monde. Elle est dans le corps sans être du corps, les chrétiens sont dans le monde et ne sont pas du monde. Le chair hait l'âme; pour la même raison le monde hait les chrétiens. L'âme aime le corps et le conserve, les chrétiens aiment le monde et le conservent. Il dit ensuite que les chrétiens n'ont pas reçu leur doctrine des hommes, mais de Dieu qui leur a envoyé non un ange mais son fils par qui il a tout fait et qui a manifesté enfin le grand mystère qu'il préparait avec le Père.¹⁸

This gloss is important from several points of view. First it contains the arguments that Tertullian (c.160-225) uses in his defence of the Christians in Rome and with which Guéranger would have been familiar.¹⁹ The fact that Christians obey the law of the land signifies that they accept the conditions of the society in which they live– with the single exception of refusing to pray to the pagan Gods. This does not mean that they do not proselytise their faith but it implies that Christians work within the condition of the world as it is and not as it might be, ideally. I deal with this argument in greater detail when discussing the case of Cecilia but it is central to much of Guéranger's later thinking; he is noting here that Justin (in spite of the eschatological aspects of some his arguments) is actually stressing the historical fact of Christ's birth and death and counteracting Gnostic arguments about the significance of another better, more spiritual life away from this world. Guéranger also focuses in this extract on Justin's metaphor of the soul and the

¹⁸ L. S. P., p.97.

¹⁹ *The apology of Tertullian*, transl. W.M.Reeve (London, 1893), ch. 2, pp. 7- 8."For Pliny the second, in his proconsulship of Asia --- could find nothing more in our religion, but obstinacy against sacrificing to the Gods, and that we assembled before day to sing hymns to God and Christ, and to confirm one another in that way of worship; prohibiting homicide, adultery, fraud, perfidiousness and all other sorts of wickedness'.

body, arguing that just as it is impossible to separate soul from body, so it is impossible to separate the Christian from the world. Just as the world hates Christians so the flesh, which is weak, is impatient with the soul. However, Christians love their enemies and save them just as the soul loves the body and saves it. You can see Justin and Guéranger grappling with a way of interpreting the ambiguity of the Christian message and, at the end of the passage, introducing the notion that it is the central mystery of the Word made flesh, which alone can explain this paradox. Guéranger's later criticisms of what he sees as the persistence of Jansenist beliefs about predestination and grace are rooted in his conviction that the movement undervalued the human and over-valued the spiritual in much the same way that the competing Gnostic heresies had threatened the Christian belief in the dual nature of Christ.²⁰ The fact that the earliest apologists recognised the difficulty of transmitting this message was clearly a confirmation of his own fears concerning the direction of his own training and the fact that the message of the Incarnation was in danger of being buried.

Finally Guéranger refers to a passage, much quoted by modern commentators, which appears in Justin's *First Apology to Antonius*.²¹ This passage describes the ceremonies, which the early Church in Rome was developing around the mysteries of Baptism and Eucharist.²² The passage suggests that the ceremony of the breaking of bread was originally carried out at the same time as the rite which confirmed Baptism. A key part of the rite of Baptism was the washing away of sins with water which was called 'illumination'; this refers to the fact that the newly baptised person was washed in the name of Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets foretold everything about Christ. The passage then goes on to describe how, after the Baptism rite is concluded, the illuminand is led to the rest of the community; there are prayers for the new member and for the community, there is a greeting with a kiss and it is at this point that bread and a cup of water are brought to the presiding member. The president receives them, praises the

Christ, and to confirm one another in that way of worship; prohibiting homicide, adultery, fraud, perfidiousness and all other sorts of wickedness'.

²⁰ This is the significance of Cecilia's reply to Tibertius which was preserved in the *Passio* and in the Office for her feast day. See below, Chapter Five, p. 138.

²¹ Frend, *The rise of Christianity*, p. 233.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit and offers thanks for these gifts. At the end of his prayers, the community assents “saying Amen, Amen” and, after this, the deacons distribute a portion of the consecrated bread and wine and water to each of those present and, then, take it to the absent. This is the food which is called Eucharist and only those who have been baptised and who live “as Christ has handed down to us” can receive the Eucharist.

In spite of the discrepancies in this passage, it seems clear that a liturgical practice was developing which linked Baptism and a commitment to the core beliefs of the faith; although Justin does not specify this, it presumably includes belief in the Incarnation and in the Trinitarian nature of God – the reference to the Holy Spirit comes twice in the passage. Bearing in mind that Justin does not make any references to scriptural sources but is clearly describing practice at that time as he had experienced it in Rome, Guéranger would see this as additional evidence that tradition played an important part in the transmission of the foundational story and interpret this as the way of communicating the central mystery of the Incarnation. At no point does Justin refer to the presence of Christ in the broken bread and he makes no attempt to link this with the account of the last supper. What his account does do, however, is to stress the key place of affirmation of belief as a learned process (the catechumens were those brethren who were preparing for baptism), the importance of ritual (the blessing and distribution of bread and water) in affirming the belief of the whole community and the evidence that the bread was already taking on a special significance for the early Church.

Guéranger summarizes his reading at the end of the notebook in a passage that gives a clear indication of his own evaluation of the significance of the writings of the Fathers, including Justin, as textual evidence of the nature of the foundational message and the practices deriving from this:

Et voila qu'en passant ils [les pères] nous apprennent que le fils de Dieu a la même nature que son père, qu'il faut confesser en Jésus Christ deux natures, que l'eucharistie est véritablement sa chair. Ils nous enseignent que c'est à l'Eglise de Rome de surveiller les églises particulières, que l'unité doit être gardée et qu'elle consiste dans la communion avec les pasteurs, que le ministère des apôtres se perpetue dans l'Eglise, que l'Evêque tient la place de Dieu, le prêtre celle des apôtres, que le diacre est ministère des mystères.²³

²² *L. S. P.* p. 96.

²³ *ibid.*, p.259.

Modern scholars would be much more reticent about making such large claims.²⁴ Nevertheless Justin's description of the emergence of ritual in sustaining the faith, the way in which he uses the flame metaphor to explain the mystery of the Incarnation and his emphasis on this event as the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Hebrew bible all support Guéranger's conviction that he had identified the foundational message. Many of Justin's arguments are carried further and systemized by St Irenaeus, whose writing draws on his and who wrote shortly after him.²⁵

Irenaeus (130-200) was one generation younger than Justin and his writing reflects both his own position in the Church (he was Bishop of Lyons) and also certain changes, which had taken place as Christianity spread through the Roman Empire. Whereas Justin was writing in order to convert Jews and pagans, Irenaeus was writing for the new Christian communities in a climate of intense pressure from the competing Gnostic heresies of the time. Irenaeus was born in Smyrna, was influenced by the example of the early Christian martyr, Polycarp, and probably moved to Rome. It is possible that he studied under Justin since his own writing demonstrates a familiarity with Justin's work. Moving to Lyons, he was eventually chosen by the survivors of the holocaust of 177 A.D. to succeed the martyred bishop, Eleutherus. He came into conflict with the Valentinian Gnostic movement and completed five volumes entitled *Against the heresies* (c.180–185). In his writings Irenaeus is not concerned with accommodating Christianity with contemporary philosophy. His aim is firstly to refute the Gnostic arguments and then to provide an explanation of the Christian faith, basing his arguments on the evidence of the canonical gospels, the writings of the Hebrew prophets and on the tradition which had become established in the practices of the Church since the time of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. He places great emphasis on the written canon which he considers has been interpreted by the early fathers but is based firmly on

²⁴ P. Bradshaw, "Continuity and change in early eucharistic practice: shifting scholarly perspectives" in R. Swanson (ed.), *Continuity and change in Christian worship* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 11–17. Bradshaw summarizes recent liturgical research that suggests that there was variety rather than uniformity of practice during this period.

²⁵ The end of the second century was a particularly contentious period for the early Church, especially in Rome; all the different groups had teachers there and it was in this climate that Justin founded his school about 150. See Daniélou and Marrou, *The first six hundred years*, pp. 107–108.

apostolic tradition and guarded by the succession of elders in the Church. He emphasizes that the Christian tradition is open to every believer to see and hear; unlike the competing Gnostic doctrines Christianity holds no hidden mysteries to which an élite had special access. It is clear that Irenaeus was writing at a time when the canon was more established than it had been at the time of Justin; he is the first of the Fathers to talk about the rule of faith and his situation as a bishop gives his writing a strong pastoral flavour. Colin Gunton considers him to be a model systematic theologian since his arguments are concerned to demonstrate the internal consistency of the faith and the way in which everything derives from the narrative of Christ's Incarnation and is encapsulated in the different forms of tradition which have emerged in written sources, liturgical practices, organisational forms and saintly lives.²⁶ Although Guéranger is impatient with the amount of time Irenaeus spends on demolishing the arguments of the Platonist, Valentinus of Rome, he especially appreciates the former's objectives in insisting on the notion of tradition as a means of integrating different practices or, as he puts it, "Le monde renferme différentes langues, mais la tradition est une".²⁷ Guéranger chooses to comment on three linked topics, which Irenaeus writes about – the doctrine of recapitulation, the centrality of the Incarnation and the way in which he extends and emphasizes Mary's role in this.

The doctrine of recapitulation: its centrality in Guéranger's thinking.

Irenaeus draws on Justin and other earlier writers in arguing, against Marcion and Valentinus, for the authenticity of the Christian version of event. He stresses the unity of what we would now call Old and New Testaments in showing that the Incarnation is the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy and he especially remarks on the parallelism between Adam and Christ to which St Paul also refers.²⁸ He argues that the divine plan for the new covenant that replaces the old covenant, which God made with Moses, was a recapitulation of original creation. In Christ the divine Word is made

²⁶ C.Gunton, "Historical and systematic theology, in C.Gunton (ed.), *Christian doctrine*, ch.1, pp.27-41.

²⁷ *L.S.P.*, p. 210.

²⁸ Chadwick, *The early Church*, pp. 80 –81

human in a form that Adam possessed before the Fall. Although sin caused Adam to lose his likeness to God he retains the same image he possessed before the Fall. Through the fact of the Incarnation, humanity may recover the lost likeness. Adam's fall comes about through pride but this situation is not irrevocable and he is potentially able to recover his likeness through discipline and experience. God has brought humanity forward in a process which culminates in the Incarnation, Christ is the divine Word made manifest and his life and death as described in the gospel provide humanity with the possibility of salvation. The belief in recapitulation, as expounded by Irenaeus has important consequences for subsequent development of doctrine. In the first place it assumes a world that was initially good, in the second place it calls into question the nature of Adam's sin and in the third place it emphasizes the perfectibility of human nature. At the same time it locates perfectibility firmly in the experience of the everyday world and through the mastery of difficulties and temptations. It seems clear to a modern reader that Irenaeus' model of recapitulation is intended to refute the question posed by his Gnostic opponents; how is it that a world which is the perfect work of a perfect creator can have gone so wrong – in other words how does one account for evil in the world? I want to argue that the recapitulation narrative became central to Guéranger's understanding of the Christian faith but that whereas Justin had not provided him with any very satisfactory account of the virgin birth, relying as it did on the miraculous nature of the event and linking it with the miracle of the Resurrection, Irenaeus, probably because he had access to the canonical gospels, is able to provide Guéranger with an insight into the larger role played by Mary, by extending the metaphor of the new Adam to include Mary as the new Eve. He notes that Irenaeus makes reference to Justin's comments on the virgin birth but goes on:

Fils de Dieu, Verbe du Père, il a été fait fils de l'homme par la génération humaine, naissant de Marie qui était de la race humaine. C'est alors que le Seigneur nous a fait voir ce signe – ce signe que l'homme n'avait point demandé ne pouvant espérer qu'une vierge pût enfanter en restant vierge, et que son fils fût Dieu avec nous.²⁹

This emphasis on the humanity of Mary, he suggests, is critical to an understanding of the Incarnation, together with two other important points – that man had not asked

²⁹ L.S.P., p. 211.

for this sign and that Mary's son was actually God, living with us. In a modern commentary on Irenaeus Rowan Williams has stressed this particular aspect of the latter's theology – that his arguments are set out at a particularly critical moment for Christianity when the Gnostic sects rejected the essential goodness of fleshly existence.³⁰ Irenaeus was reiterating the principle of the historical basis of God's intervention in human history and the principle that man can only work out his salvation, returning to the image of God, which he has lost through actual acts based in everyday life. Although I do not wish to suggest that Guéranger as a young man could have developed a similar argument, I think that his interest in and emphasis on Mary from this point in time is a way of saying somewhat the same thing. Mary is a historical person and the gospels narrate the Annunciation, for example, as a historical fact. Guéranger comments on Irenaeus' references to the fact that the four evangelists and Paul stress that Mary had conceived before she had intercourse with Joseph, that it was specifically the Holy Spirit which effected this miracle and that, unlike Justin, he does not use the virgin birth as a metaphor to explain the miracle of the Resurrection but only as a fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies. He concludes this section of his notes with Irenaeus' reference to Christ as the new Adam and, by analogy, Mary as the new Eve.³¹

Eve par sa désobéissance a été la cause de la mort de tout le genre humain, Marie par son obéissance (ecce ancilla) a été la cause du salut de tout le genre humain. Ce qu'Eve avait lié par son incrédulité, Marie l'a délié par sa foi.³²

Guéranger repeats this theme in a later commentary on the parallels, which underlie Irenaeus' description of Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve'. Whilst the notion of a fulfilment of the Hebrew prophecy is still present, he places much more emphasis on the positive

³⁰ R.Williams, *The wound of knowledge*, p.26, "The only history to be taken seriously is bodily history: and so the redemption of mankind must be located in bodily history" and p.28 "Again and again we return to this theme of the visible Word, the tangible and historical God, the figure in whom life and incorruption are shown; and they are shown in the development and conflict of an earthly life, a point made absolutely clear in Irenaeus' much-discussed doctrine of recapitulation".

³¹ Irenaeus, *Against heresies*, Book 3, Ch. 22.

³² *L.S.P.*, p.247-248.

actions of Mary herself in claiming this new role and, by implication, redeeming all womankind.

L'une Eve, a été séduite par les discours de l'ange et s'est rendue coupable de prévarication, l'autre a reçu aussi les paroles de l'ange qui lui annonçait qu'elle concevrait en Dieu et a obéi à la volonté du Seigneur.³³ L'une avait désobéi à Dieu, l'autre lui a obéi, c'est ainsi que la Vierge Marie est devenue l'avocat de la vierge. Une vierge avait précipité le genre humain dans la mort, une Vierge l'a sauvé. Le péché du premier a été pardonné au moyen du châiment du premier né; la simplicité de la colombe a triomphé de la prudence du serpent, les liens qui nous enchaînent à la mort ont été rompus.³⁴

The other interesting point here is Guéranger's reference to Irenaeus' use of the word 'avocat' in comparing the two women (Eve and Mary). Mary becomes Eve's advocate; she argues on Eve's behalf, that she, Eve, is now saved as Adam has been saved by Christ's birth and life on earth. This more affirmative role that Mary plays in events is one that Guéranger returns to later in his writing about Mary and it is linked to the notion of sin and free will implied in the notion of recapitulation.³⁵ It is these two features of Guéranger's thinking – his focus on the historical fact of Mary's life and her active participation in and assent to Christ's birth and life – which give a particular slant to Guéranger's incarnational theology and to his position on other issues such as continence and notions of sin and morality. It is interesting that although modern theologians from the Reformed position have recognized Irenaeus' contribution to the anti-dualist debate in the early Church, none has chosen to focus on Mary as an exemplar of the way in which the life of the body is the site of Christ's saving work.³⁶ This is unsurprising, given the suspicion with which Mariology is still

³³ This refers to a passage in *Against heresies*, Book 5, Chapter 19.

³⁴ *L.S.P.*, p. 247– 248 .

³⁵ This is clearest in the sections devoted to Marian feasts in *L'année liturgique* but it is also a feature of his support for the writing of Maria of Agreda which was attacked in the seventeenth century by what he perceived as a Jansenist faction. For this second point see Chapter Five.

³⁶ Gunton , “ Historical and systematic theology”, p.14. “He [Irenaeus] was anti-dualistic in that he affirmed the common createdness of all being, whether spiritual or material, and is therefore one of the earliest proponents of the view that God created everything out of nothing ---. Irenaeus accused his opponents of adopting contradictory attitudes to life in the body, because they tended variously towards asceticism and license, yet both for the same reason that they despised the body. For him, because we shall be judged for what we do in the body, our life in it is of positive import”.

viewed by writers in this tradition. What is also important to note is that for Guéranger, in the climate of the Roman Catholic church in the first quarter of the nineteenth century in France, this was an unusual position since Mariology was very much based in a devotional rather than a doctrinal tradition. It is also a position, not appreciated by his later critics who saw his Mariology as another aspect of his conservatism and of his neglect of the rational rather than as articulating a specifically theological position.³⁷ As a young seminarian, Guéranger was in no position to compete with the contemporary writers on theology but in November 1826, after completing his training and three months before completing the first volume *Lecture des Saints Pères* he opened a new notebook which he entitled *Notes et matériaux* but which, in fact, contains a large number of reflexions on different aspects of Mary's narrative.³⁸ It is at this point that he seems to have decided that this exercise, rather than the production of a second volume of *Lecture des Saints Pères*, was a priority for him. From this I conclude that Guéranger's later position on Mary is primarily based in the writings of Justin and Irenaeus and that this early reading coloured almost all of his later works. At the same time it seems likely that it also coloured his reading of all subsequent ecclesiastical history.

When he completed his training Guéranger was still too young to be ordained and was obliged to consider ways of spending the year before this was possible. Finally a position was found for him as secretary to the Bishop of Le Mans, Mgr de la Myre-Mory. The Bishop had had a serious stroke in June 1826 that he had survived but which had left him weak and paralysed. The position meant that Guéranger had to leave the seminary and its library and to envisage a curtailment of his patristic studies. He was to spend the next three years in the Bishop's household and although this had some advantages from the point of view of making contacts with the ecclesiastical hierarchy and of spending some time in Paris it does not seem to have

³⁷ Guéranger himself was always clear that his objection to what he calls "L'esprit protestant lâchement caché sous des dehors catholiques que nous voulons démasquer" was caused by the actions taken by eighteenth-century Gallican liturgical reformers to devalue the cult of the Virgin Mary and shorten the references in the Breviary to saints and their lives. He was also incensed by the Jansenist notion that devotion is ineffective unless one is already in a state of grace. Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vol.2, p. 540.

³⁸ See below, Chapter Three, pp. 69-98.

been a happy period for him. Fortunately his actual duties were not too onerous and he had access to books in the episcopal palace at Le Mans. In his autobiographical notes he says:

Cette nouvelle vie me fut avantageuse à plusieurs titres. D'abord, j'avais beaucoup de temps à moi, et des livres en abondance. En second lieu, comme jusqu'à alors je n'avais eu de rapports qu'avec les livres, il était temps que je connusse un peu la société humaine.³⁹

The notebook which he opened in November 1826 is similar to the one in which he was to complete *Lecture des Saints Pères*, a hardbacked, lined book but with more pages (three hundred and seventy four). However, only rather more than a third of the pages are used and, in some instances, there is simply a heading on the page with nothing further added. Apart from the indication of the date when he started writing in the book, the entries are not dated and there is no obvious logic to the way in which entries follow each other. It is possible to identify certain themes on which he wanted to reflect and it might be possible, with further research, to link the entries to particular feast days when his mind turned to certain topics. However, it would be difficult to be sure of this. What is more certain, is that a set of papers which have been catalogued and shelved with the notebook and which quite specifically relate to certain days in the liturgical calendar do relate in this way but these papers, too, are undated and I deal with them separately in Chapter Three.

The only sure information, then, is that the notebook itself was set up in November 1826, that it treats various themes which interested Guéranger at some time after that date, that it is uncompleted but that of the headings which occur (there is no index) a high proportion relate to Mary. I deal with these in the order in which they appear and I have adopted the page numbers allotted by Guéranger himself. None of the sections have been transcribed by later archivists so, in this case unlike in the case of *Lecture des Saints Pères*, one is reading only Guéranger's own handwriting, with no back-up transcript.⁴⁰ Fortunately, although this is small, he wrote in black ink and it is generally

³⁹ Guéranger, *Autobiographie*, p. 48.

⁴⁰ I have consulted the first volume of the notebooks, *Lecture des Saints Pères*, in Guéranger's own handwriting but have also used the written, word-processed transcript which is undated and is held in the Archives at Solesmes in the same folder as the notebook. There is no written transcript of *Notes et matériaux* and this may be significant. Without placing undue emphasis on

clear. There are references in Latin but since these are usually to biblical sources that I suspect he held in his head, I have translated the content by using a modern Anglican version of the Bible.⁴¹ Where Guéranger inserts his own cross-reference to a page in *Lecture des Saints Pères*, I have noted this. The internal evidence from the text is that he was still trying to reconcile the mystical experience of 1823, his reading of Justin and Irenaeus and his own reflections on Mary and her place in the incarnational narrative. His first reference to Mary comes in the longest section of the notes in this volume, devoted to any single theme and the heading to the section is “Les grandeurs de Marie”.⁴² He inserts his own cross-reference to page 57 of *Lecture des Saints Pères* where he first wrote notes about the Incarnation.

Guéranger’s first argument is that Mary is special because, although like the rest of humanity she is redeemed by Christ’s blood, this blood is also her own blood. Although Christ offers himself as a sacrifice for her salvation as well as for everyone’s salvation he has, in fact, received his life blood from her in the first place. Although this shedding of blood redeems her, she is also its source. This is the closest Guéranger comes to suggesting a special place for Mary in the economy of the Trinity. If she shares her blood with Christ, then this blood must be special and unique to her; this is a tricky argument since it could lead to the conclusion that Mary was not human and, in consequence, that Christ was not man.

His second argument is that Mary is special because she has been blessed above everyone else (see the Annunciation topos that she has been specially chosen)and because she is promised redemption before everyone else. This is very close to Irenaeus’ topos of ‘la nouvelle Eve’; if she redeems Eve then she must be the first to be redeemed. Only she can claim the title of co-redemptrice, that is only she can claim this title alongside Christ, in somewhat the same way in which only she can claim, along with God, to have the saviour as a son. Guéranger, following Irenaeus, uses evidence from the gospels to support these arguments, underlining the significance of the

this point, Guéranger’s writing about Mary has been largely ignored by his biographers. The exception to this is the commentaries that accompany the Marian feast days in *L’année liturgique* and to which I refer below.

⁴¹ *The Holy Bible , containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized edition (Oxford ,1995).

⁴² *N. et M.*, p. 15.

Annunciation narrative. Mary has been chosen as the woman who will give birth to Christ. However God did not intend her to be a simple channel through which Christ becomes God on earth. She contributes to the Incarnation in two ways, first of all by the kind of person she is (“par ses dispositions”) and secondly by a demonstration of her will in agreeing to conceive and give birth to Christ. Nothing can be accomplished until she has agreed to the arrangement (“ tout demeure en suspens jusqu’à ce qu’elle a consenti “). It is necessary that Mary wanted mankind to be saved and as soon as she gives her consent “les cieux sont ouverts, le Verbe est fait l’homme, les hommes ont un sauveur”.⁴³ Mary’s consent to the conception and birth of Christ not only ensures the Incarnation but also ensures the principle of redemption for everyone. In this way human nature is uplifted and made perfectible by her action, an idea very close to Irenaeus’ doctrine of the perfectibility of man. Guéranger’s gloss on this is:

Ayant reçu par elle une fois le principe de la grâce, nous en recevons encore les applications.---. Les sentiments de la nature sont relevés et perfectionnés, mais non éteints dans la gloire; quelle doit être la puissance de Marie près de son fils.⁴⁴

The difference between Guéranger’s gloss on the Mary narrative and that of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors is that it is Mary’s humanity which is critical to the dual nature of Christ and, secondly, that her qualities as a person are a factor in her selection as the person who fulfils the prophecy. The event would not have happened without her consent and she would not have given this consent, had she been a different kind of person. It is possible to interpret Guéranger’s reference to “la puissance de Marie près de son fils “ as belonging to the tradition which portrays her as a powerful intermediary between the individual and Christ. In the context of Mary as exemplar rather than as intermediary, it is more appropriate to interpret this as a comment on Mary’s qualities in the eyes of Christ. Guéranger is questioning the notion of Mary as mediator, a model which had a particularly strong tradition in France and

⁴³ An interesting comparison is with Bossuet’s version of Mary where she is portrayed as submissive to the angel and acquiescent in the process of conception , rather than as giving her positive assent. See M.Dreano, *Bossuet,, Elévations sur les mystères. Etude critique avec introduction, texte et variants* (Paris , 1962), pp. 268-272.

⁴⁴ *N. et M.*, p. 06

which was revived in the nineteenth century, partly as a means of providing support to the promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.⁴⁵ This more than human Mary is the one which is associated, in the view of some contemporary critics, as providing an impossible ideal for women to follow and is a male construction, particularly powerful at certain periods in history.⁴⁶

The idea of Mary as exemplar of human rather than of superhuman qualities is supported in the next three paragraphs of this section of *Notes et matériaux* which deal with the visit of Mary to her cousin, Elizabeth. These include three specific biblical references, the first from Luke 1, 41 and 43–45 (“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb”) and her response to Mary (“For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy”). This is the section of the narrative which is followed immediately by the verses which are known as the *Magnificat* and, by implication, Elizabeth’s words provide a confirmation of Mary’s own experience which, up to then, she has not shared with anyone. Guéranger notes that this is the moment of the sanctification of John the Baptist and the first example of a miraculous event performed by Christ in his lifetime. He then notes, but does not quote, two references, one to Luke 1, 27 which is a reference to the angel’s message to Mary at the beginning of the Annunciation narrative and a second reference to John 7 (with no verse reference). The link appears to be that some people hear the message of God through the words of Christ whilst others do not and that John is the first of these converts. Luke is clear that the messages in all instances are the work of the Holy Spirit and it is clear that the metaphor of transmitting and hearing the word is very important for Guéranger as he explains in a gloss on the mystery of the Incarnation which follows immediately:

⁴⁵ Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716) wrote two treatises on Mary, the second of which, *Traité de la vraie dévotion à la Sainte Vierge*, was lost for three centuries and only recovered in 1842.

⁴⁶ M. Warner, *Alone of all her sex*, ch.16, “The Immaculate Conception”, p.236. ‘Pius’ bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, now declared this to be dogma, a mandatory belief for all those who acknowledged the spiritual authority of Rome. Pius also thereby made impossible any interpretation of Christ’s Incarnation as the full embrace of the ordinary condition of man. Not only he, Christ, was exceptional; but so was his mother, his only human parent”.

La voix de Marie s'y servit d'instrument. C'est un grand motif de confiance que de trouver une application des mérites de J.C. depuis son Incarnation, et dans la sanctification du plus saint des hommes.⁴⁷

What follows is the most difficult section of his notes to interpret and suggests that at this point he had not completely worked out for himself the notion of Mary which he draws from his own mystical experience, from Irenaeus' notion of 'la nouvelle Eve' and from the biblical texts which he cites. He attempts to reconcile three ideas that he has already introduced; first that Mary is the source of Christ's life on earth and that she shares the same blood with him, second that because she chooses to receive grace, then all mankind has the potential to be saved and third that she is she is involved in the sanctification of John the Baptist, by the transmission of the message from the child in her womb to the child in Elizabeth's womb. He refers to an earlier attempt by Heyrdias to reconcile the idea that Christ is the son of God and the equal of God: this is clearly an attempt by the writer who was patriarch of Jerusalem to offer an early explanation of the economy of the Trinity. Heyrdias had argued that Mary is the human 'complementum' to God and gives him those attributes which allow him to act as a son to his own father. Guéranger does not accept this interpretation (which actually separates the human and the divine aspects of Christ's nature). Instead he uses a metaphor to explain what is, after all, an essential mystery; the metaphor is contained in the word 'parole' which can have two meanings. The first meaning denotes an underlying structure that permits communication to take place (a speech) and the second denotes an intelligible sound uttered by an individual and heard by other people (a word). Although there is no direct evidence in the notes, the fact that he positions this argument so close to his gloss on the Visitation with references back to the Annunciation suggests that it was a key idea for him. The more familiar biblical trope of the "Word made flesh" echoes this idea - that God's message to the world cannot be heard without an externalisation of this message in the person of Christ and through the active will of Mary in making the hidden word visible to mankind. Guéranger says in summary:

C'est Marie qui lui donne ce corps qui le rend visible et sensible. Il a reçu d'elle cet accomplissement que peut avoir une parole, qui est d'être proferée.

⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *N.et M.*, p. 66

Without Mary, he says, God's word would have remained unspoken. The message would have remained untransmitted ("cette fécondité serait restée éternellement oisive"). The use of "oisive" is interesting, suggesting as it does a contrast between action and passivity, much as fertility suggests life as opposed to death. Guéranger concludes this section by discussing the various contributions to the notion of the redemption that this has for the Christian faith:

La rédemption se trouve dans le concert de trois volontés, Dieu qui est l'autura, J.C. qui est le prix, Marie l'instrument. La mort du Messie le père l'ordonne comme souverain, le J.C. l'accepte comme sujet, Marie l'offre comme mère.⁴⁹

It is significant that Guéranger's interpretation of the redemption includes all three participants whom he sees as taking part in the Incarnation, the notion being that the Incarnation and the Atonement are inextricable and are part of one message. He uses 'autura' when referring to God, the word 'prix' when referring to Christ and which I interpret here as 'price' and the word 'offer' which suggests a voluntary act by Mary at the time of the Crucifixion.

As I have already indicated, one of the problems in interpreting Guéranger's thinking at this time of his life is that the different sections of his notebook are not dated. I have treated his own headings as chronologically consecutive but there is no way of knowing whether, for example, they are linked to a liturgical order of events.⁵⁰ There is some repetition in the comments he makes on topics he has already treated and this suggests that they were composed without reference to what he had written before. The section headed "Coeur de Marie" draws primarily on Luke 1, 26-29 and focuses on Mary's reaction to the angel Gabriel's news⁵¹. He notes that, while the angel is there she only speaks when it is absolutely necessary ("Here am I, the servant of the Lord;

⁴⁸ *ibid.* p. 67

⁴⁹ *ibid.* p. 67.

⁵⁰ It is probably significant that Guéranger dates the start of both of these unpublished notebooks, in his own handwriting, November 1825 and November 1826. This is the beginning of the liturgical year, the first day of Advent falling on the Sunday nearest to the feast of St Andrew which is on 30 November. See Chapter Three for a discussion of his methods.

⁵¹ *ibid.* p. 92.

let it be with me according to your word”). Immediately after the angel has left, she sets out to visit Elizabeth, the miraculous event occurs when Christ sanctifies John in the womb and only then does she speak the words, commonly known as the *Magnificat*. He then repeats the gloss that occurred in the section “Grandeurs de Marie” which emphasizes the idea that mankind can share in the same grace as Mary (“ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation”). He concludes with a comment that it is her heart which is purer than any other human heart and it is from this heart that the heart of Christ has been formed – a repetition of the same idea that it is from her blood that Christ’s blood has been formed.⁵² The repetition of the topos that Mary shares Christ’s body and spirit is another piece of evidence linking Mary as ‘la nouvelle Eve’ and Christ as ‘le nouvel Adam’ and refers back to Guéranger’s preoccupation with recapitulation.

The last significant section containing notes on Mary is one which is headed “Sur la chasteté”⁵³ It contains references to the *Magnificat* , to the *Sermon on the Mount* , Mathew 5, 8 which contains the invocation “Blessed are the pure in heart” and to Matthew 19, 10-12 where Christ discusses the question of adultery with the disciples. In response to their specific question, He says that, if a wife has been unchaste, then divorce is permissible, but nowhere in the passage does he make a recommendation of perpetual chastity for everyone. In fact the opposite is the case. When the disciples suggest that it is better not to marry at all, Christ disagrees and says:

For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth and there are eunuchs who have been made so by others and there are eunuchs who have made themselves so for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.⁵⁴

Guéranger, at this point in time, finds no evidence in the canonical gospels that the notion of perpetual chastity is linked to the notion of Mary’s virginity. Similarly he finds no link in either Justin or Irenaeus. In fact it seems likely that Irenaeus specifically rejects celibacy for Christians as part of his challenge to the extreme asceticism

⁵² This may be a deliberate or subconscious reference to the Sacred Heart of Jesus topos which has a long history in the medieval Church. The Mass and Office were only authorized by Clement XIII in 1765 after the famous visions of the Visitandine nun Margaret Mary Aloccoque.

⁵³ *N. et M.*, p.193. It is my impression that this section was written down much later, perhaps for a sermon Guéranger was preparing.

advocated by some of his Gnostic opponents since denial of the flesh is contrary to his notion of the Christian message of the perfectibility of humans. Since Guéranger is writing, in this section, about Mary's heart, he is more concerned to suggest that it is assimilated with her body (see the metaphor he uses from Justin when describing the soul and the body) and that it is her attitudes that are to be copied, rather than her immaculate nature. Since she alone has conceived Christ, she alone is 'la nouvelle Eve'. It is, therefore, important to try to disentangle notions about Mary's place in the economy of the Trinity and notions about virginity which was not an issue for the first two centuries of the Church where priests (but not bishops) were allowed to marry .

It has been frequently pointed out that the notion of priestly celibacy only became an issue for the Church in the fourth century, notably amongst monastic writers and ascetics and those who supported them.⁵⁵ Men like Basil of Caesarea (c. 330 – 379) and Gregory of Nyssa (330 – 395) established a tradition which has survived in the Eastern Orthodox tradition and which challenged a more urbanized version of Christianity which was seen as diminishing the core message. Clement of Alexandria (c.150 - 215) does not recommend celibacy as a Christian virtue but rather self-discipline over a wide range of behaviours – an idea that Guéranger was to develop specifically in his texts about Saint Cecilia.⁵⁶ At this point in his life (1826) it is important to emphasize the grounds for his later support for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception that was founded in the doctrine of recapitulation and in the significance of Mary's humanity in the economy of the Trinity. This is a tricky line to take but it can be supported by reference to Mary's attitudes and behaviour throughout her life. If it is permissible to adopt Christ as an exemplar for behaviour, then it is permissible to adopt a similar attitude to Mary.⁵⁷ This is not spelled out very clearly in

⁵⁴ *Revised Standard Version*, "The gospel according to St Matthew" 19,10.

⁵⁵ R. Williams, *The wound of knowledge*, p. 98, "The great contribution of monasticism to Christianity --- is the acknowledgement that the believing community as a whole can sanctify itself from seduction and deceit only if it allows for some who are prepared to undertake drastic surgery upon the fantasising and dominating self and so remind the whole body of its vulnerability, its liability to live at a level of unseriousness ". See also Chadwick, *The early Church*, pp. 148-151; von Campenhausen, *Les Pères grecques*, pp. 115-135. The last two writers emphasize Basil's opposition to the Arian heresy that presented a serious challenge to the core Trinitarian doctrine.

⁵⁶ See below, Chapter Five.

these unpublished notes but the later and more coherent notes which he or his archivists attached to the *Notes et Matériaux* are strong supporting evidence of the idea that it is Mary as exemplar that draws Guéranger and that it is Mary as commemorated in the liturgy who continues to demonstrate ways in which and individual can come to live a Christian life .

This chapter has focussed on Guéranger's reading of the Fathers that he undertook as a young man at the seminary in Le Mans and on the notes he made about topics which were of particular interest to him. The significance of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, inspired by the mystical experience he underwent in 1823, led him to concentrate much of his attention on the role of Mary in the Incarnation and on the place she occupies in the economy of the Trinity. In this chapter I have suggested that his interpretation was radical for his time, in that it proposes a notion of Mary which pre-dated the first official title she was awarded by the Council of Ephesus in 431. This title Mary as 'theotokos' was promoted by Cyril of Alexandria in the context of the Arian heresy. It was subsequently adopted by all the Western Orthodox churches although, interestingly, in its Latin version as 'Mother of God', rather than as 'The one who gave birth to God' which is a closer translation of the original Greek.⁵⁷ If, as Guéranger suggests in his notes, Mary has a more active role in freeing humanity from sin, not only must she herself be sinless but her actions and attitudes must be of particular importance for Christians in pursuance of a Christian way of life. The idea of Mary as exemplar is much more developed in the additional notes which have been attached to the *Notes et matériaux* and which I discuss in Chapter Three.

⁵⁷ The fourteenth century work *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis is the best known example of this kind of manual of devotion but Guéranger in his later works refers to the writings of Luis of Grenada and of Louis de Blois, both of whom wrote similar manuals in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-centuries respectively.

⁵⁸ O.D.C.C., pp. 1607-08.

III Seventeenth century French mystics and Guéranger's thinking about Mary.

There is no God and Mary is his mother.¹

Introduction.

Santayana's comment illustrates the difficulty of undertaking any research that tries to account for a writer's approach to the Virgin Mary. It is as if for every period in the Church's history irrespective of the strength of the Christian faith and of belief in God for the culture at the time, there is an unbroken record of devotion to her, at least from the fifth century onwards. Even the Reformation's persistent attempts to deny her special place in Catholic piety is evidence of the power of her perceived influence on ordinary Catholics. It is also hard to identify a writer's theological position from the way in which he or she approaches the question of Mary's role in the Christian narrative, except in the most general sense of their being either for or against Marian devotion. Of all catholic icons she is the most influenced by historical context and, at the same time, the one whose portrayal is inevitably embedded in contemporary attitudes towards women. The fact that the biblical record is parsimonious in references to Mary does not help the situation but all the evidence, textual and iconographical, shows that from a very early period in the Church's history there was a tradition of assigning her a significant place in Christian devotional practice and that, as a result, the need for papal intervention in clarifying this. The most important of these interventions was that of Cyril of Alexandria who supported the title 'theotokos' which had been agreed at the Council of Ephesus in 431.² This title which is normally translated as 'Dei Genetrix' in the Western Church, that is 'Mother of God', is accepted by both Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches today,

¹ G.Santayana quoted in W. Davies, *Inwardness and existence: Subjectivity in Hegel, Heidegger, Mark and Freud* (Wisconsin, 1989), ch.1, 'Hegel, The contemporary future', p. 8.

² A more faithful translation of the original Greek would be 'Deipara', the one who gave birth to God, O.D.C.C. p.1607. This translation underplays the maternal role of Mary and distances her from Christ. This is important in the discussion below on seventeenth-century attitudes in France.

as is the doctrine of the Virgin birth.³ That said, Catholic and Reformed Churches have diverged widely in the way in which doctrine and cultic practice have developed and the Eastern Church, too, has adopted its own view, notably concerning the doctrine of the Assumption. The reasons for the persistent attraction of Marian devotion to Catholics in the West and the hostility, which it still provokes amongst many members of the Reformed Churches, continue to interest historians.⁴ Modern approaches, however, tend to account for these shifts and counter-shifts in anthropological rather than theological terms.⁵ Any writer, like Guéranger, who takes a theological standpoint, is unavoidably encumbered with a great deal of doctrinal baggage from previous centuries that makes it difficult for the researcher to unravel the core message.

In recent times Pelikan has argued that doctrine can develop from devotion, as well as the other way round and that the case of Mariology is a particularly good example of this.⁶ Newman's hypothesis was that, in the case of Mary, theory followed practice because the very paucity of evidence in the biblical record, together with the relatively few references to the virgin birth in the works of the very earliest writers, meant that doctrine could not be based on textual evidence. According to Newman Marian doctrine could only be explained in relation to the economy of the Trinity, once the question of Christ's dual nature had been resolved by decisions reached at Ephesus and confirmed in the Nicene Creed.⁷ Newman argued that after

³ There is early evidence of the continuing ambiguity around the position of Mary in the economy of the Trinity up to at least the eleventh century where she is depicted as one of the 'Quinity'; that is to say Christ appears twice in the manuscript illustration, once on the Virgin's knee and once alongside God. She herself is placed alongside both Christ and God. Frontispiece, *Virgin present at the Defeat of the Devil*, c.1010-1020. London, British Museum, Cotton MS. Titus D 27, fol. 75, 5.

⁴ See T. Kselman, *Miracles and prophecies in nineteenth century France* (Brunswick, 1983), ch. 4, pp. 84-95; M. Warner, *Alone of all her sex. The myth and cult of the Virgin Mary* (London, 1976); J. Kristeva, "Stabat Mater" in T. Mori, *French feminist thought; a reader* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 160-185.

⁵ For an interesting theological approach from the Reformed Lutheran position see, R. Jensen, "An attempt to think about Mary", *Dialog* 31,4 (1992) pp. 259-263. From a Roman Catholic viewpoint I have made extensive use of R. Ruether, *Mary, the feminine face of the Church* (London, 1979).

⁶ J. Pelikan, *Voices of the Church*, pp. 1-12.

⁷ J. Newman *An essay on the development of Christian doctrine, eleventh edn.* (London, 1900), pp.

the affirmation confirmed in the Creed, it was no longer possible to view Christ as first amongst men, since his dual nature made him more than human; this opened up the way for Mary to become the first of humankind and, as she remained for most of the medieval period, 'higher than all the angels'. Newman, however, only briefly mentions Irenaeus' position and it is on this issue that his arguments are very different from those of Guéranger. The context in which both men were arguing is important, since they were close contemporaries. Newman's early writing on Mary is focussed on demonstrating that devotion to Mary and her special position had not originally diminished the status of Christ and come between Christ and men. Guéranger is arguing, using evidence from Justin and Irenaeus, that Mary assures the dual nature of Christ and, at the same time, is a model for humans to follow. This model of Mary as an independent and active participant in Christ's narrative had remained throughout the Middle Ages but in the seventeenth century in France, it was overtaken by a model which was to remain influential up to the end of the nineteenth century.⁸ Although Guéranger does not confront these writers specifically, his notes and writing from the late 1820s onwards develop a Marian model which challenges that of the best known writers of the seventeenth-century 'Ecole française', Bérulle, Olier, Eudes, Contestan and Grignon de Montfort.

Guéranger's biographers are reticent about his interest in Mary; in fact Oury has no reference to her at all in his index. They all refer to his mystical experience as a young man at the seminary in 1823 and to his support for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which was promulgated by Pius IX in 1854⁹. They do not explore why he was supportive of the position. Louis Soltner has published a collection of all the commentaries written by Guéranger for *L'année liturgique* which accompany the feasts associated with Mary in the liturgical year but his own introduction is limited to three pages and mainly concerns the process which Guéranger adopted and the provenance of the later commentaries which were

415- 418 and 428- 421. The first edition of this work appeared in 1845 shortly before his conversion to Roman Catholicism.

⁸ See Frontispiece, *Virgin at the defeat of the Devil* for an image of Mary, which emphasizes her full participation in the events after the Fall.

⁹ Guéranger, *Mémoire sur la question de l'immaculée conception*.

written after his death¹⁰. Yet we know from the evidence in the *Lecture des Saints Pères* and in the *Notes et Matériaux* that, as a young man, Guéranger was particularly interested in early attitudes to Mary and to the way in which Irenaeus, in particular, had focussed on her role in the economy of the Trinity. As I have shown in Chapter Two, this idea of the parallel between Christ as the new Adam and Mary as the new Eve is a powerful one because it emphasizes her active part in the Incarnation, her role as fulfiller of the Hebrew prophecy and her independence as a human person. Although Guéranger did not go on to publish any specific text about Mary, he did leave behind the series of notes already described and which give a very interesting picture of Mary, drawing on both tradition and on biblical sources, through the prism of the idea of the new Eve. I argue that in adopting this approach, he was actually arguing for a return to the very early sources of the Christian narrative on Mary which had become obscured by later doctrinal developments and by the influence which St Augustine had on attitudes to sin and to grace which were powerful in the writings of the seventeenth century French mystics.

Commenting on Guéranger's early experiences at the seminary at Le Mans Oury writes:

L'oraison méthodique n'inspire guère le jeune clerc, et les Examens de Tronson ne lui sont pas d'un grand secours, sinon, et cela n'est pas négligeable, pour centrer sa vie intérieure sur la personne du Christ, conformément à la tendance christologique de l'Ecole française, qui sera aussi la grâce propre de Dom Guéranger.¹¹

I take as a starting point this remark of Oury's (and it is not developed further in his biography) since it is true that in many ways Guéranger's situation and interests make him closer to the writers of this seventeenth century school than to his immediate eighteenth century predecessors. He is concerned with the renewal of the Church after a period of disorder, he emphasizes prayer and meditation and his thinking is centered on the Eucharistic narrative.¹² I intend, therefore, to look more closely at the way in which the spirituality of the seventeenth century 'Ecole française' affected ways of

¹⁰ L.Soltner (ed.), *Notre-Dame dans l'année liturgique*, (Solesmes, 1997).

¹¹ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, pp.25- 26.

¹² C.Williams, *The French Oratorians and absolutism*, (New York, 1988), pp.108-109. The ambiguous status of the Oratorian priests and their chain of authority was one of the causes of the controversy surrounding the foundation of the Order in 1611.

viewing the Virgin Mary in order to contrast this with Guéranger's approach. It is not possible to understand the attitudes of these writers without looking at the political and ecclesiastical context within which they were writing and, for Bérulle, who is their spiritual father, the context of the founding of the The French Oratory in 1611.¹³

Bérullian Marys and metaphors of servitude.

As a young man from an aristocratic family Bérulle (1579-1629) was closely associated with the Acarie group. The wife of Pierre Acarie was his aunt by marriage and, after her husband was banished by Henry IV, she was allowed to live in the Bérulle household where she seems to have influenced her nephew's spirituality. The Acarie group had become a major centre of Counter-Reformation activity in the period leading up to Henry's accession, although perhaps surprisingly they had practised a form of spirituality associated with the Carthusians and Capuchins and with their supporters in the Netherlands and Brussels, as well as with the catholic recusants in England. The spiritual model was heavily focused on self-abnegation and on a method that relied on a hierarchical model of the route to godliness. This model drew on the writings of Dyonisius the Aeropagite, a sixth-century mystic with a strong Neoplatonic worldview. He wrote books on the celestial hierarchy, the sacraments and the orders of clergy and laity and on the way in which the soul may ascend to union with God. The emphasis in the Acarie model of spirituality was on passivity and on achieving a state of mind where God could manifest his wishes, obliterating the wishes of the individual supplicant in the process. The model implied mortification and, in some cases, the achievement of ecstatic states but it was offered as a route to individual perfection for the clergy, rather than as a means of conveying the Christian message to ordinary catholics. It was attractive to Bérulle, at a personal level, but he could also see in it the potential for increasing the sanctity of the priesthood and, in this way, accomplishing his aims of raising the status and religious

¹³ There is a comprehensive summary of these writers' thinking about Mary in H.Graef, *Mary, a history of dogma and devotion*, vol. 2, (London, 1965) pp.31-63.

authority of the secular clergy.¹⁴ Graef interprets Bérulle's thinking as influenced by what she calls "an exaggerated Augustinian pessimism" which came from the fact that French Catholicism was exposed to the influence of Jansenism.¹⁵

The contemplative methods that Bérulle' advocated for the clergy in the Congregation which he founded in Paris in 1611 and which became known as the French Oratory were what he called meditations on the internal states of Christ at different stages in his life. This leads him inevitably to meditate on the internal state of the Virgin at the time of the Annunciation and during the time Christ spent in the womb. It is a curious feature of Bérulle's Christology that he almost always thinks about Mary and Christ together. He recognizes her assent to give birth to Christ but likens it to God's assent to the creation of the world. He describes her constant growth in grace before the Annunciation and how, while the angel Gabriel was on his way to Nazareth, God himself prepared Mary's soul, when she was sighing for the sins of the universe and longing for the coming of the Messiah. When he spoke to her she entered into another state; the permanent state of mother of God. In the later chapters of his work *Vie de Jésus*, Bérulle describes the relation of Mary to Jesus in her womb and his complete dependence on her; however this period also allowed her to know Him intimately and, through Him, she acquired intimate knowledge about God. It is this special knowledge which gives her her maternal authority over him and, in turn, her special right to the devotions of humankind. Bérulle pushes the metaphor so far as to say that she has a right of property in Jesus and, because of this, a special power to give Jesus to souls. This particular line of argument is the one which ends up by saying that souls can only approach Christ through Mary, the model of Mary as mediator which was developed by Grignon de Montfort and which was to become the dominant model in nineteenth- century France.¹⁶

¹⁴ The Acarie model, as I have called it, differed from that of a close contemporary, St Ignatius of Loyola. See Graef, *The light and the rainbow*, p.562: "The founder of the Jesuits would guide men to God through all the vicissitudes of the apostolic life ---in which the capacity to distinguish between actual divine inspiration and its diabolic and psychological counterfeits is of great importance".

¹⁵ Graef, *Mary a history*, p. 31. It is interesting that Graef makes a distinction between Spanish and French models of spirituality in the seventeenth century. It is important in accounting for the fact that Guéranger finds the former closer to his own thinking, especially in view of Bérulle's attitudes to Mary.

¹⁶ Kselman, *Miracles and prophecies*, p. 90.

Since Bérulle exercised such a strong influence on his immediate followers, it is worth thinking about the topoi that characterize their writing. It has been argued, by Brémond, for example, that the effect was to spiritualise thinking about Mary and to free it from some of the superstition that had built up around her in the previous century and which had been the target of the Reformers' attacks.¹⁷ The problem is that it is essentially a priestly model and one not easily accessible to lay congregations. The recurring topoi are rights and duties, the notion of property and, most famously, the idea of the vow of servitude to Mary, which was to cause so much trouble for Bérulle amongst the Carmelite nuns and within the University of Paris. In the version proposed by Bérulle, this read:

To the peretual honour of the Mother and the Son I wish to be in the state and quality of the Mother of my God --- and I give myself to her in the quality of a slave ---. I renounce the power and liberty I have of disposing of myself and my actions and place myself entirely in her hands¹⁸

Although the Holy Office, at the time, did not promote the vow as doctrine, it was still allowed as a private devotion and is a good example of the determinism which underlies the thinking of the writers of the School. It also shifts the emphasis away from the notion of Mary as active participant in Christ's with a life of her own, independent of Christ.

Olier (1608-1657) was to take these ideas further and to exaggerate the submissive qualities of Bérulle's meditations on Mary and his mystical experiences are similarly expressed as meditations on her inner life and mental states rather than on the part she plays in the life of Christ¹⁹. He represents the Incarnation through the image of Mary as spouse of God and he considers the relation between God and Mary as a real marriage in which the person and possessions of the husband belong to the wife. According to Olier she has no active share at all in the formation of Christ's human body and she was

¹⁷ H.Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France* (Paris, 1921) vol.3, pp.88-89.

¹⁸ A.Molien, *Le Cardinal de Bérulle* (Paris, 1947), vol. 2, pp.54-61, transl. C.Williams, *The French Oratorians*, p. 121.

¹⁹ H.Graef, op.cit., p. 35, n. 1. Graef discusses the difficulty of accessing the first edition of Olier's principal work on Mary, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte vierge* (Rome, 1866). Subsequent versions were heavily edited so that his more extreme descriptions were omitted. I depend on Graef for this summary of his thinking.

completely passive in the process of the Incarnation. This topos is taken to extremes since Olier denies that Mary conceives a child at all but that Christ was conceived as a perfect man. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Olier considers that the time Christ spent in the womb was the most important part of his life; he has a somewhat surprising rationale for this, arguing that because the liturgical calendar allows six months between the Visitation and Christmas, there is longer than at every other festival to honour the time spent in the womb. This is to turn upside down the notion that the liturgical year begins with Advent, the announcement of the birth of Christ, and that the period between the feast of the Annunciation and the Nativity actually represents the gestation period for a human infant. Olier uses a liturgical feature to support an argument, which he finds attractive, rather than to think about the liturgical year as a representation of the birth, life and death of Christ. As I show below it is this second way of thinking about the liturgical year that Gueranger adopts.

Jean Eudes (1601 –1680) was to carry this imagery one step further. Eudes was an Oratorian before he founded his own Congregation of Jesus and Mary in 1643 and his devotion to Christ and Mary centered on the contemplation of their two hearts. He took Olier's notion of Mary as the spouse not only of God but of the priest to extremes, going so far as to draw up a formal contract of marriage with her and wearing a ring for the rest of his life which symbolized this marriage. He also extends the idea of servitude to Mary but, as he notes, it is not to Mary alone that the priest is enslaved but to Jesus who is all in her:

We must adore him in her and make ourselves dependent on her as our mother and our sovereign, to whom we should subject ourselves as slaves; we must make this gift to her every day and more especially once a week or at least once a month.²⁰

Some of Eudes' other prescriptions such as the notion that Jesus should never be considered without his mother and that she was the source rather than the recipient of grace were to become even more exaggerated in the writing of other mystics like the Dominican Vincent Contenson (d.1674) who says that Mary is the principal instrument of predestination and that, as mother of God, she is the complement of the Trinity :

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.42

Because, through her the Trinity, who was unknown before, was made manifest. For as the Mother of God she proceeds in some way from the Trinity; the works of the Trinity "ad extra" being completed by her²¹.

Contensan's conclusions are particularly interesting since the thrust of the mysticism of the 'Ecole française', especially in its Mariology, is to de-emphasize the dual nature of Christ and the mystery of the Incarnation. By envisaging conventional familial and property relationships, the outcome is to portray a God who is more Unitarian than Trinitarian and to create a protective circle around Christ through the emphasis on the closeness of Christ and his mother. At its most extreme, this model is privileged in the writing of Grignon de Montfort (1673- 1716) who argued that it was only possible to approach Christ through Mary.²² Graef 's conclusions are that Grignon's thought is eschatological and that his prescriptions concerning devotion to Mary are based on the notion that this is the shortest way to achieve sanctity. The interest which Grignon's writing aroused in nineteenth- century France can be explained, in part, by a similar belief that the end of the world was near and that this would be preceded by a period of Marian devotion.²³ These seventeenth- century models of Mary are very different from Guéranger's model. For example, there is the bond between Mary and Christ which actually undermines her independence as a person, the close connections between spiritual meditation and devotions to Mary and her elevation above other human beings which makes it impossible for her human virtues to be celebrated without reference to her superhuman characteristics. It is interesting that this model was challenged as early as the beginning of the seventeenth- century in France and that the challenge came from women monastics and from Spain.

Early on in his career Bérulle , after spending time in Spain, had persuaded four Spanish Carmelite nuns who had been close companions of Teresa of Avila to come to France to set up a French women's order of reformed Carmelites. Anne of St Bartholomew and Anne of Jesus Lobera, to whom St John of the Cross dedicated his

²¹ *ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 57-63.

Spiritual Canticle, came to the new Order in Paris, the idea being that the experience of the Spanish nuns would help their French co-religionists, who were mainly aristocratic women formerly members of the Acarie group, in the task of establishing convents. The Spanish nuns were profoundly shocked by the practices of their new sisters. Anne of Jesus wrote in her diary:

Dès le moment de leur prise d'habit, leur esprit se trouve comme renouvelé en un manière d'oraison différente. J'ai soin qu'elles considèrent et imitent Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ, car ici on se souvient peu de lui. Tout se passe en une simple vue de Dieu: je ne sais comment cela se peut faire. Depuis le séjour du glorieux saint Denis, qui écrivit la théologie mystique, tout le monde a continué de s'appliquer à Dieu par suspension, plutôt que par imitation. C'est là une étrange manière de procéder; en vérité, je ne l'entends point, non plus que leur façon de parler; on ne peut pas même la lire²⁴.

Anne de Jesus' model of spirituality is clearly Teresian in its focus, involving a more active contemplation style and a more practical application of the principles of Christ's life to everyday life in the convent – something which may not have been congenial to the aristocratic members of the Acarie group. The Teresian approach to mysticism implied not merely meditation but an approach to Christ in his humanity, not as an end in itself but as a means of achieving a life of active obedience²⁵. Bérulle's Christology, whilst it was helpful in providing a means whereby the individual could come to experience the significance of the Incarnation, was seen as a means of sanctifying the priests who came to adopt this approach and, at the same time, a means of increasing the status of the members of his new Order who would then be better able to fulfil their priestly functions in the troubled climate of early post-Reformation France. It is not

²³ Kselman, *Miracles and prophecies*, pp.93-94. Kselman writes that in the period following the apparitions at Lourdes, the theme of the Marian age became popular in pious literature but it seems likely that this was a continuing undercurrent rather than a revival.

²⁴ Bremond, *Histoire du sentiment religieux en France*, vol. 2, "L'invasion mystique (1590-1620)", p.310-311. Bremond, writing about Anne of Jesus' attitude to the methods of the Acarie group says: "Comme elle a saisi ce danger qu'a souvent fait courir à la spiritualité française, et plus encore à la germanique et à la flamande une dévotion trop littérale aux écrits du pseudo-Denys. Elle oppose la mystique latine et thérésienne, la nécessité des actes et d'un retour constant au Verbe Incarné, elle l'oppose, dis-je à ce mysticisme --- qui garde, sous l'obscurité redoutable de ses formules, je ne sais quels ferments de panthéisme et d'indifférence morale".

²⁵ R. Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London, 1991). Williams argues that Teresa's mission was at least in part a criticism of the overemphasis in 16th Century Spanish society on the notion of 'honour'. The Carmelite reform was intended to model an alternative way of life based on devotion to Christ who offers an example of true humility.

insignificant that whereas the Teresian model was worked out for the purposes of female monastic reform, Bérulle's model was designed for a reform of the male secular clergy²⁶ Whatever the precise reasons for the Carmelite revolt, there was clearly a deeper division in understanding about spirituality between the Spanish nuns and their French colleagues than could be accounted for by differences in language, diet and the fact that the former were a long way from home. These differences were to surface in a more overt and conflictual form in the debate about the vows of servitude.

One of Bérulle's repeated claims was that, in order to improve the status and effectiveness of the clergy at that time it was necessary to return to the principles of the early Christian Church. Although he does occasionally refer to the Early Fathers his most obvious point of reference was Dionysius the Aeropogite who wrote in the early 500s and, after the early ascetics and, perhaps more significantly, after St Augustine. Modern commentators including Brémond remark on the underlying quietistic trends and on the Augustinian pessimism that pervade all the key seventeenth century French spiritual writers. Whilst this may be partly explicable in terms of the society in which they lived, it seems to have affected profoundly the way in which they interpret the path to spiritual enlightenment and, more specifically, the way in which they approached Jesus himself and Mary, his mother. A persistent theme in their writing is the pre-eminent part played by God in the endowment of grace on an individual and on the fact that, whilst individuals are free to withdraw from being subject to God they have no control over God's actions. This is well expressed in a much later meditation on independence composed by Mère Agnès, sister of the famous Mère Angélique of Port-Royal ;

So that Jesus himself may act as first cause, without subjection to the ends which are given by him to himself, so that while yet this Sacrament be a sign of love, he may draw from it, if he wishes, an effect of justice; so that he may have no regard at all for what souls deserve, but that he may make everything according to himself, and that souls may renounce the power they have of being subjected to God, in as much as while being in grace, they have the promise that he will give himself to them; so that they may not base their

²⁶ There is an interesting comparison to be made between Bérulle and Guéranger. Although both men were dedicated to Catholic reform, the former chose to achieve this by setting up a new congregation, which was precisely not monastic. I argue below that Guéranger's choice of the monastic route has implications for his theological position as well as for his reforming tradition.

hopes on that at all, but remain in a blessed incertitude which honours the independence of God.²⁷

This passage goes much further than Bérulle himself would have allowed, since it comes close to denying to the individual any way of earning grace and to suggesting that the state of incertitude is actually a permanent state for the Catholic, at least in this world. It comes close to a predestinarian position and encourages an attitude of passive submission and it helps explain why all the seventeenth mystics could be seen as tainted in some way by ‘Jansenism’.

Bérulle’s proposals to introduce a vow of servitude for his seminarians provoked antagonism not only amongst the Gallican Church and the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne but, more seriously, from the Carmelite houses, which he had established in France and which were still under his jurisdiction²⁸. He was clearly surprised at the reaction which his proposals provoked since one of his aims had been to imitate the spiritual humility which he perceived amongst the Spanish nuns. Whilst there were other factors were involved such as the attempt by several of the houses to put themselves under the jurisdiction of the Carmelite friars, there does seem to have been a serious concern from the nuns’ point of view about the imposition of extra, specific vows, which they saw as redundant and running counter to their own definition of the appropriate way to approach both Mary and Jesus. It is tempting to account for their opposition to the vows in gender terms ; the concept of servitude may have different connotations for women than for men, especially where their relationship with Christ could more easily accommodate psychologically to a model of Christ as spouse or Mary as mother of Christ, for which they had perfectly good doctrinal precedents. Bérulle was obliged to retract his proposals and, where the Oratory itself was concerned, to make the vows optional and to redefine them as a renewal of baptismal vows. In 1620 Mother Anne of St Bartholemew wrote letters from Flanders encouraging the rebellious Carmelite nuns who were refusing to take the vows of servitude and who saw themselves as the bearers of Teresean spirituality. The most extreme example of the

²⁶ C.Seguenot, *Elevation a Jesus-Christ Nostre Seigneur au Tres-sainct Sacrement:contenaatndivers usages de Grace sur ses perfections divine s* (Paris, 1635) pp.40-41, transl. C.Williams, see below n..28.

²⁸ C.Williams, *The French Oratorians*, ch. 4. “The Oratorian vows of servitude and the Carmelite revolt” , pp. 99- 173.

rebellion seems to have taken place at Saintes where the nuns locked the doors of the convent and chained themselves to the chairs in the refectory from where they had to be dragged on the orders of the Archbishop of Bordeaux!²⁹

Guéranger's writing about Mary and the Bérullian legacy.

I want to suggest that Guéranger's writing about Mary is influenced partly by a reaction to the Bérullian models and that in both cases it is their underlying pessimism and their Mariology, which he is challenging. In this sense he cannot be said to be an inheritor of the mystical tradition of the 'Ecole française', as Oury has suggested. The evidence discussed below suggests that he was concerned to revive a tradition of spirituality much closer to that of the Carmelite nuns than to that of his French predecessors. His later writing about Mary is confined to three sources ; the unpublished notes about Mary which are attached as undated, individual pieces to *Notes et matériaux*, the commentaries which accompany the Marian feastsdays in *L'année liturgique*, the first volume of which was published in 1841 and the memorandum which he wrote at the request of Pius IX summarizing the historical evidence for the promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception which he completed in 1850³⁰. This last item contains very little about his own thinking about Mary or about his reasons for supporting the move to declare Mary immaculate from the time of her conception. The unpublished notes, I suggest, were written some time after the *Notes et matériaux* and before 1841., the date of the publication of the first volume of *L'année liturgique*.

There are twenty-three different topics covered in the appendices to *Notes et matériaux* and they deal with different aspects of devotion to Mary³¹. The appendices

²⁹ S-M..Morgan, *Pierre de Bérulle et les Carmélites de France. La querelle du gouvernement, 1583-1629*(Paris, 1995,) pp. 450- 453.

³⁰ *Notes et matériaux*, "Appendices"; Soltner, *L'année liturgique*; Guéranger, *Mémoire sur l'Immaculée Conception*.

³¹ The titles of the notes attached as appendices are: " Mort de Marie-Assomption"; "Dévotion à Marie"; "Virgo virginum"; "Stella matutina"; "Nom de Marie"; "Marie Reine de France"; "Marie nous aime"; "Marie est toute puissante"; "Marie pleine de Grace"; "Auxilium chrisitanorum";

comprise about 12,000 words in total but the topics are treated unevenly. The notes are not dated but they seem to have been written at different times. One suggestion is that they reflect Guéranger's thinking when he was preparing for a sermon for a particular feast day³². Since no written record of his sermons survives it is impossible to verify this. My hypothesis is that, for whatever purposes they were prepared, they probably date from the period after 1830 when he was still fairly close to his reading of the Fathers and to his mystical experience concerning the Immaculate Conception and when he was planning *L'année liturgique*.³³ During the period after the establishment of the Benedictine community at Solesmes in 1833 and before the publication of the first volume of *Institutions Liturgiques* in 1840, he was reflecting on the need for liturgical revival and, as the evidence suggests, was also thinking about ways of making the liturgy more accessible to individual Catholics and devotion to Mary more a matter of individual commitment to a way of life, rather than a matter of unthinking adherence to external practices. It is possible to classify the topics in various ways, but since I am exploring Guéranger's attitude to Mary, it seems most useful to take a thematic approach and to focus on the way in which he expounds the different reasons for Catholics to adopt Mary as the prime exemplar of the Christian way of life. In his notes on devotion to Mary, he writes:

Dévotion. non seulement extérieure, mais intérieure; non seulement de vénération mais d'imitation. Prenons-la pour modèle; sa vie est un miroir parfait, On veut ressembler à ce qu'on aime. Prouvons-nous ainsi ses serviteurs et ses enfants. Si elle a pratiqué les vertus d'une manière sublime, elle leur a conservé un caractère de simplicité qui les rapproche de nous. Ses vertus même nous conviennent mieux à nous pécheurs, qu'à elle, voir l'humilité, patience, obéissance, pénitence. Elle n'a rien écrit, elle ne dit pas, suivez mes conseils, mais faites ce que j'ai fait. Détails. Toutes les situations y trouvent à profiter. Voilà le point où souvent notre dévotion se refroidit.³⁴

"Amour de Marie pour Dieu"; "Annonciation"; "Foederis arca"; "Nativité de Marie"; "Compassion"; "Douleur de Marie"; "Visitation"; "Présentation"; "Mariage de la Ste Vierge"; "Materntié divine"; "Humilité, simplicité de M"; "Refuge des pécheurs"; "Ave Marie"; "Purification"; "Virgo potens". Since the notes are undated it is not possible to know the order and they are often written in note format, with shortened spellings and little punctuation.

³² Information from L.Soltner, archivist at Solesmes at the time when the notes were transcribed.

³³ In the period before establishing the community at Solesmes, Guéranger was still considering a historical approach to the question of Mary and the saints. See Roussel, "Lamennais et ses correspondants inconnus", p. 195-196 and p. 214. He accomplishes this in *Institutions liturgiques* but the notion of a manual of devotion to accompany the historical work seems to come later.

³⁴ App. "Dévotion à Marie", p.1.

This passage contains a very clear statement about Guéranger's attitude to the position that Mary holds in relation to devotional practices. Mary is exemplar rather than either mediator or simply a channel through which Christ was born. He has argued in the earlier notes that it is as the representative of humanity that she has played her most significant role, by giving her consent to the conception of Christ. This emphasis on her free choice is a recurring theme in his writing and links with his idea of Mary as the advocate of humanity, a role that she enjoys through her part in the redemption of sin. Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve' is also the Mary who parallels the role of Christ as 'le nouvel Adam'. She has overcome sin by crushing the serpent's head and by offering the possibility of redemption to humanity. She is the representative of that portion of every individual that is redeemable, that portion which allows the individual to regain his or her original likeness to God. Critical to this interpretation is, of course, the definition of original sin adopted. It seems clear that Guéranger is going back beyond the Augustinian notion of concupiscence to a notion of sin based on man's overweening desire to know and to control his environment (the apple of knowledge metaphor). This interpretation is supported by the virtues which Guéranger attributes to Mary and by the emphasis he places on her humility – not a subservient humility but a principled humility which pervades her actions throughout Christ's life and, especially, in the time immediately after the Annunciation and during his childhood. Free consent and humility are key characteristics of Mary's nature, as in fact they are key characteristics of Christ in his human nature, (one thinks of the Garden of Gethsemane) and Mary, too, time and again makes a choice and then submits herself to a situation which she may not necessarily enjoy but which she knows is necessary.³⁵

These ideas are illustrated in Guéranger's gloss on the Visit to Elizabeth, which is the first event after the angel Gabriel has given her the message and after she has given her consent. In his notes on the Visit to Elizabeth he says that Mary's first thoughts on

³⁵ The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in late- medieval theology was closely associated with Nominalism. The Nominalists held that the image of God was still intact in every human being and that it was this which allowed persons to bring their souls to that state of repentance and goodness which God will reward with the gift of divine grace, won by Christ's death. This idea underlines much of Guéranger's writing about Mary and is helpful in understanding his polemics against seventeenth-century 'Jansenism'. R.Ruether, *Mary, The feminine face of the Church*, p.56, explains the Nominalist position.

hearing the message of the angel Gabriel are that she should visit her cousin who is pregnant; she sets off, with the help of Joseph, on a fairly arduous journey, to give her the good news. This, Guéranger says, is evidence of her thoughtfulness in thinking first about her cousin who, as a woman at that time, was not expected to make any demands on her.

Dans son humilité elle prévient sa cousine. De servante du Seigneur, elle se met aux ordres d'une femme. Charité humble, vrai caractère. Comme elle partage simplement le bonheur d'Elisabeth; quelle complaisance aussi! Comme tout condamne la conduite envieuse et froide du monde.³⁶

The outcome of this decision is the sanctification of John the Baptist and, in Guéranger's gloss, it is this action that confirms Mary as a participant in the dispensation of grace. Another example of her ability to take difficult decisions can also be clearly seen, he argues, in the story of the Purification (Luke 2, 21-39). After the birth of Christ, Mary, like any other Jewish woman of her time, goes to the Temple to present Jesus to God while she herself stays away for forty days. The gloss here is that this is a day of sacrifice for Mary who knows that her Son will ultimately be taken away from her completely but who does not shrink from this.

On lui rend son fils pour le lui redemander . C'est une victime qu'il faut qu'elle engraisse. Déjà le glaive est enfoncé, il ne sortira plus---. Elle éprouve la douleur, mais elle ne succombe pas. Elle voit dans la mort de son fils Dieu glorifié---. Marie, en offrant J.C., s'offre elle-même, et nous apprend ainsi à recueillir les fruits de la rédemption en ne faisant qu'une victime de lui et de nous---. Cette fête est toute particulière; dans les autres, Marie reçoit, dans celle-ci elle donne. Ailleurs les lois cèdent pour elle, ici elle a la mérite de la soumission . Marie cède un Dieu entre ses bras, sous ces ordres, est-il plus parfait hommage? Comparer toutes les scènes dont le temple fut témoin, avec celle de ce grand jour.³⁷

This is an interesting comment on Mary's situation. Her status as a virgin and mother does not save her from an obligation to obey the law; nor does it save her from the suffering felt by any woman whose child is removed from her. Guéranger suggests that, through Mary, the ordinary Catholic can come to understand the sorrow and

³⁶ *App.* "Visitation", p.1.

³⁷ *ibid.*, "Purification", pp.1-2. The reference to "fête" in this extract shows that the notes are linked to the liturgical year.

conflicts at the heart of the Christian faith. Whilst her status as queen of heaven and 'virgin potens' may mask her humanity, a close study of the events of her life reveals her to be subject to all the normal human constraints. The ambiguity of her place in the Christian tradition is well demonstrated in the narrative of the Purification. The ceremony identifies her publicly as the mother of the Redeemer; her sacrifice demonstrates her power to hand over her son and, at the same time, her suffering demonstrates her humanity.

There is another reason why the Purification is significant for Guéranger. It is direct evidence of the continuity between Old and New Testament and demonstrates very specifically the fulfilment of the prophecy. The story is accompanied by references to Simeon, who had been warned that he would not die before seeing the Messiah and to Anna, the prophetess, who speaks about Christ as the Redeemer³⁸. In all the commentaries, which Guéranger writes in these appendices, there are frequent references linking Old Testament stories and Hebrew law to the liturgical feasts of the Church. One of the points Guéranger will emphasize in *Institutions liturgiques* is the way in which the significance of different feasts has increased and declined at different periods in time. There is an interesting example of this in the notes he writes under the heading "Foederis Arca" (the ark of the covenant).³⁹ These notes are about Mary as the link between Jewish and Christian tradition and include a reference to the Litany of Loreto, which celebrates Mary in all the different manifestations, through which she has been venerated by the Church since earliest times⁴⁰. It includes the notion of her conceiving and carrying Christ in her body in the same way in which the ark enclosed the ancient Law of the Jews. The 'ark of the covenant' metaphor includes the notion that the sacred law was untouchable and was enclosed in a special case, much as Christ was enclosed in the womb of Mary. The metaphor also recognizes her speciality along

³⁸ The history of the feast of the Purification is interesting. The Anglican Book of Common Prayer has always called it the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. The Roman Catholic Church adopted this title in 1969 but up to that date it was celebrated as Candlemas on 2 February.

³⁹ *App.*, "Foederis arca", pp. 1 - 2.

⁴⁰ A simplified version of the older *Litanies of Our Lady* which was approved and granted the privileges of indulgence by Sixtus V in 1587 and by Clement VIII in 1601. It is recited every day after Vespers by the Carmelites. See O.D.C.C. p. 985.

with that of her mother Anne and this was a popular way of representing her in late medieval iconography.⁴¹

These extracts from themes in the life of Mary, with Guéranger's glosses on their significance, are reinforced by ideas which recur throughout his notes. First is the notion of Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve', the woman who redeems the sin of the first woman, secondly as the woman who fulfils the Old Testament prophecy as the woman who gives birth to Christ, thirdly as the human person who participated in the mystery of the Incarnation and who, by her life and conduct, can show the way to ordinary Catholics. At the time he was writing these notes, Guéranger does not seem completely clear about how these messages can be conveyed to a wider audience. By the late 1830s, however, he had devised a strategy which was to help bring Mary back centre stage and to integrate her firmly within the liturgical life of the Church.

The first volume of *L'année liturgique* was published in 1841, in the same year as the second volume of *Institutions liturgiques*. His biographers are reticent about when he might have planned the project but it was a massive one, comprising as it did commentaries and prayers to accompany every feast day of the Roman Catholic calendar. The concept was not entirely new. A French Jesuit had already published something similar at the beginning of the seventeenth century and, in 1640, another popular work was written in France and translated into Italian and German.⁴² Other devotional manuals were to appear during the course of the century but Guéranger did not envisage a collection of meditations or pious thoughts about the feast days but a handbook that would actually help readers follow the liturgy and to understand the reasons for its central place in the catholic faith.⁴³ The volume devoted to Advent was

⁴¹ *Anne with Virgin and Christ in her womb, surrounded by symbols from Litanies*. Hours of Simon Vostre for the use of Angers, 1510, reproduced in M. Levi d'Ancona, *The iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance* (New York, 1957), p.86.

⁴² Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p.199. Oury notes that the first devotional manual of this kind was written by a French Jesuit, Julien Hayeneuve which appeared at the beginning of the 17th Century and which was entitled "*Méditations sur la vie de Jésus-Christ pour tous les jours de l'année et pour les fêtes des Saints*."

⁴³ *L'année liturgique* does seem to have been unusual in that it is not a conventional manual of devotion and its popularity was surprising at a time when histories of saints' lives were replacing the devotional handbook. Savart reports that between 1851 and 1870 there were one hundred and thirty reviews of the latter, as opposed to over one thousand of the former. Savart, *Les mentalités religieuses au 19^e siècle. Le témoignage du livre religieux* (Paris, 1985) p. 651-654.

completed in 1841 but the project was to take Guéranger all his life and was, in fact, completed by another monk from Solesmes after his death in 1875. Guéranger was to write all the sections from the beginning of Advent up to 31 May, which accounts for two thirds of the liturgical year.⁴⁴ He was able to complete nine volumes in all – Advent, Christmas I and Christmas II, Septuagesima, Lent, The Passion and Holy Week and three volumes on the period after Easter up to and including Pentecost. The structure of each volume is similar. He starts with three chapters introducing the cycle which is about to begin, one on the history of the cycle, one on its particular spiritual significance and one on practical devotion. The historical and theological significance of the cycle takes precedence over advice about how to pray. Guéranger then gives a translation of the prayers in the ‘Ordinary of the Mass’ – that is to say those parts which are invariable as distinguished from those parts which vary with the ecclesiastical calendar which are called the ‘Proper’. The ‘Ordinary’ includes the ‘Canon of the Mass’ comprising the Eucharistic prayers, which was not allowed to be translated and for which Guéranger included a paraphrase.⁴⁵ His purpose is more than pedagogic, in that he is providing not simply a handbook which will allow ordinary Catholics to follow the Office of the day but a work which will allow people to experience themselves the sequence of the Christian year and, in this way, the sequence of Christ’s birth, life, death and resurrection.

I have already noted above that, as a young seminarian, he made a point of starting his notebooks at the beginning of the liturgical year in Advent. He seems to have continued this practice in writing the notes in the appendices with which I have just dealt which is why I think it likely that the notes date from a period after 1827 and before the publication of the first volume of *L'Année Liturgique* in 1841. There is an interesting insight into how he worked on the project. Once the monastery was established in 1833, his time was very restricted and he did not have the space required for the reference works he would have needed. Oury reports that he kept a small table in his office specially reserved for the project where he kept the materials he needed for

⁴⁴ Information provided by L.Soltner.

⁴⁵ It is only since 1965 that the whole of the Office of the Mass has been said in the vernacular in the Roman Catholic Church. The Mass and all the Offices are still sung in Latin at Solesmes but since 1965 a French translation is available for the congregation.

any particular cycle so that he could work on them at any spare moment.⁴⁶ It is quite likely that this was a habit he had acquired as a young seminarian, working in the library during the day and in the evening keeping a particular space in his room or on his desk for ideas which came to him about how he might best communicate the message of the Incarnation through commentaries on the life of Mary and on the lives of saints.

A key text in understanding his purposes in launching the project, *L'Année liturgique*, is the general preface to the series that was published in 1841. This was revised several times to take account of changes in the Church calendar but the aims he describes certainly did not change.⁴⁷ Part of this general preface must be read as an apology for the centrality of liturgy in the life of the Church. The argument for an accompanying liturgical text written specifically for individuals is based on the fact that, according to Guéranger, over the last two hundred years there has been an emphasis on individual devotions that has led to Catholics becoming distanced from public prayer and forgetful of the crucial message of the Eucharist. This has led, he thinks, to the production of manuals of devotion, which while useful in some instances, do nothing to help ordinary Catholics understand the meaning of the liturgy and the purposes of the liturgical calendar. Another way of expressing this might be to say that devotion has become routine and divorced from anything that relates it either to liturgical practice or to the day-to-day experience of the individual. In a critique of methods of prayer which have been advocated by the Church in recent times he says:

Assez longtemps, pour remédier à un malaise vaguement senti, on a cherché l'esprit de prière et la prière elle-même dans des méthodes, dans des livres qui renferment, il est vrai, des pensées louables, pieuses même, mais des pensées humaines. Cette nourriture est vide; car elle n'initie pas à la prière de l'Eglise: elle isole au lieu d'unir. Tels sont tant de recueils de formules et de considérations, publiés sous divers titres depuis deux siècles, et dans lesquels on s'est proposé d'édifier les fidèles, et de leur suggérer, soit pour l'assistance à la sainte Messe, soit pour la réception des Sacrements, soit pour la célébration des Fêtes de l'Eglise, certaines affections plus ou moins banales, et toujours puisées dans l'ordre d'idées et de sentiments le plus familier à l'auteur du livre. De là encore la couleur si diverse de ces sortes d'écrits qui servent, il est vrai, faute de mieux, aux personnes déjà pieuses, mais demeurent sans influence quand il s'agit d'inspirer le goût et l'esprit de la prière à ceux qui ne l'ont pas encore.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, p. 202.

⁴⁷ Guéranger, *L'année liturgique*, "Préface Générale", pp. 5-26.

⁴⁸ op.cit., "Préface Générale", p. 11.

Guéranger goes on to argue that it was the daily use of the liturgy which enabled writers like St Bernard and Thomas à Kempis to produce inspired texts and that, for the contemplatives as much as for the ordinary Catholic, liturgical prayer is the source of the inspiration they receive from God. The liturgical calendar is not simply a means of binding Catholics together and establishing doctrinal conformity, it is the way in which every individual experiences the mysteries and lives the Christian life; the fact that it is repeated cyclically and annually is also a means of enabling Catholics to experience the events of Christ's birth, life and death, not through generalised devotions but through bringing back the actual events and recording what it was like for the participants to live through these events. It is on these grounds that the Mary which Guéranger offers in the "Appendices" is very clearly embedded in scriptural history; she is Jewish, born in a society which afforded little opportunity for women, participates in the establishment of the early Church and has been continuously revered in the tradition of the Church. Her story is more closely linked to the Eucharistic story than any other human person's and, Guéranger argues implicitly, her story should be told alongside the sequence of events that are celebrated in the public act of the liturgy. There is a curious ambivalence in his arguments since, while the purpose of much of his writing was to trace the doctrinal evidence for the significance of Mary's role in the Incarnation, at the same time he adopts metaphors like the ark of the covenant and in situations like the Presentation of Christ in the Temple which actually place her in a presumed historical context.⁴⁹ This notion of a historical Mary as part of the Christian narrative is linked later in the general preface to the idea of exemplarity in perhaps the most specific statement that Guéranger makes about the role and purposes of Mary and the saints in catholic practice. Having explained how he intends to set out the different volumes, each of which covers a particular cycle, he repeats his arguments about the restorative power of the liturgical calendar and the significance of its structure. He concludes with an interesting argument:

⁴⁹ Modern interpretations of the doctrinal Mary suggest that she was introduced as a conventional, maternal role model in the later Christian tradition, perhaps to counteract the threat to kinship ties implied in the narrative of Christ's life. Ruether, *The feminine face of the Church*, p. 35. Guéranger's position is more closely linked to notions of spiritual equality, best represented by Clement of Alexandria who saw the image of God as gender-neutral and present in all humans. R. Ruether, *Gender and the redemption; a historical theology* (Philadelphia, 1998), p. 60. This is how I interpret the reference to Galatians 4, 19. See below, n. 50.

La formation de Christ en nous n'est-elle pas le résultat de la communion à ses divers mystères, joyeux, douloureux et glorieux? Or, ces mystères passent en nous, s'incorporent à nous chaque année, par l'effet de la grâce spéciale qu'apporte leur communication dans la Liturgie, et l'homme nouveau s'établit insensiblement sur les ruines de l'ancien. S'il est besoin que l'impression du type divin en nous soit favorisé par un rapprochement avec les membres de la famille humaine qui l'ont le mieux réalisé, l'enseignement pratique et l'encouragement ne nous arrivent-ils pas par nos chers Saints dont le Cycle est comme étoile? En les contemplant nous arrivons à connaître la voie qui mène au Christ, comme le Christ nous offre en lui-même la Voie qui conduit au Père. Mais au-dessus de tous les Saints, Marie resplendit plus éclatante que tous, offrant en elle-même le Miroir de Justice, ou se reflète toute la sainteté possible dans une pure créature. ⁵⁰.

This notion of saints as exemplars and Mary as the prime exemplar is central to Guéranger's thinking. It contains three elements; that Mary is the first of humans, that spirituality is available to women and to men and that it is gender neutral; that Mary's special role is as the person who repaired the damage done by her predecessor Eve and who also is the link between the Old and New Testaments. In all three instances Guéranger's Mariology is person-centred and she retains her separateness from Christ and is the first of the saints, with whom she shares her humanity but with whom she also shares a gift of spirituality. Jensen has described this situation rather differently as "an expression of the Church as the community in which the distinction between prophets and other faithful persons is overcome, to be a community defined as a prophesying community with Mary as the arch-prophet". ⁵¹ Both Mary as an individual with a life of her own and Mary as the leader of a prophesying community are both constructions which diverge significantly from the seventeenth century Bérullian models described at the beginning of the chapter and Guéranger's model seems closer to Jensen than to Bérulle.

The commentaries which Guéranger wrote for the first volume *L'année liturgique* reflect the themes he tackled in the "Appendices" to *Notes et Matériaux*. I have used the collection of commentaries published by Louis Soltner which brings together all

⁵⁰ "Préface Générale", p. 24. Guéranger inserts a reference to Galatians 4,19 after the first sentence in this extract. "My little children for whom again I am in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you", *Revised Standard Version*, p. 187. The writer is St Paul and the implication is that, in spiritual matters, men and women experience the same physical and emotional sensations.

⁵¹ Jensen, "An attempt to think about Mary", p.261.

the feast-days dedicated to Mary ⁵². I have selected from the first cycle, Advent, because it is this cycle which is closest in time to his reflections as a seminarian and because this cycle includes commentaries on the Annunciation and the Visitation which are topics he was particularly concerned with as a young man, even though the two feasts do not occur until later in the Roman calendar. It is part of his technique to introduce material from other parts of the calendar to reinforce the ideas he is trying to gloss in his commentary on a particular feast. My method was to make a comparison between the notes in the appendices and the relevant commentary in *L'année liturgique*. In the section devoted to Mary in the Advent cycle, Guéranger emphasizes the prophetic nature of Mary's conception, making conventional links between the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon, 2, 3-7) and her feelings at the time of the Annunciation.⁵³ In a gloss entitled 'Les sentiments des fidèles pendant l'avent' he invites his readers to reflect on the prophecy that a virgin will conceive and give birth. He suggests that these words imply that Mary participates in the redemption of the world and that, through her, Eve's misdoing is repaired ("la prévarication d'Eve est écrasé"). He makes reference to Eve's crushing the head of the snake and suggests that Mary's assent to the birth of Christ wipes out any misdemeanour of Eve's ⁵⁴. In this section he says "le consentement de Marie obtient une part immense dans le salut du monde" and "Dieu lui-même est plus glorifié de cette seconde Vierge, qu'il avait été outragé par l'infidélité de la première".

It is interesting that in this gloss Guéranger uses two different nouns to describe Eve's action in tempting Adam, "prévarication" and "infidélité", rather than "péché". Prevarication and infidelity suggest human frailty rather than mortal sin and he concludes this section by emphasizing Mary's humility and humanity (she is a real person who actually lived in time).

⁵² Soltner, *Notre-Dame dans l'année liturgique* (Solesmes, 1997).

⁵³ *ibid.*, cit.p. 13. This is an example of his technique. For example the feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin is on 25 March, not during Advent.

⁵⁴ *ibid.* pp.14-15. The topos of Eve crushing the snake's head is a favourite of Guéranger's. I discuss this below in Chapter Seven when I deal with the iconography of the catacombs.

O Marie, c'est par votre humilité que vous avez attiré les regards de votre Créateur Si du haut du ciel où il habite, il eût aperçu une vierge plus humble, il l'eût choisie de préférence à vous⁵⁵.

The third section in the Advent cycle is called 'La venue mystérieuse du Messie'. This starts off with a reference to the ultimate mystery of the Incarnation:

Il y a trois nuages, dit Pierre de Blois: l'obscurité des prophéties, la profondeur des divins conseils, la merveilleuse fécondité de la Vierge. En effet, il est de l'essence de toute prophétie d'être enveloppée d'une certaine obscurité, afin que la liberté des hommes demeure intacte; mais le Seigneur arrive sous le nuage et le jour de l'accomplissement révèle toutes choses ---Mais le troisième nuage est la Vierge Marie; nuage léger, car, dit Saint Jérôme, 'ni la concupiscence, ni le fardeau du mariage terrestre ne l'appentissent'; nuage féconde en rosée rafraichissante, puisqu'il contient le Juste qui doit pleuvoir sur nous pour éteindre nos ardeurs sensuelles, et fertiliser le champ de notre vie. Qu'il est doux l'éclat de la majesté de notre divin Roi, quand nous le contemplons à travers le nuage de Marie. O Vierge incomparable! Toute l'Eglise vous reconnaît dans ce nuage mystérieux que, des sommets du Carmel, le prophète Elie aperçut s'élevant de la mer, petite d'abord comme le pas d'un homme, mais bientôt montant à l'horizon et envoyant sur la terre une pluie si abondante qu'elle suffit à désalterer tout Israel. Donnez-nous bientôt cette rosée divine qui est en vous : nos péchés ont rendu le ciel d'arain sur notre tête; vous seule êtes juste et pure O Marie! Priez le Seigneur dont vous êtes le trône miséricordieux, de venir bientôt terrasser nos ennemis et nous apporter la paix.⁵⁶

I have quoted this passage at length since it explains some of the ambiguities, pervading Guéranger's Mariology. First it is necessary to emphasize his comments on the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Annunciation. Leaving aside the metaphors which link dew, cloud, rain and fertility, he is bringing out the contradictions inherent in the event which have exercised the minds of writers like St Jerome for many centuries. The central contradiction is that Mary is Virgin and Mother of Christ that Christ is Man and God that she alone is just and pure, apart of course from the one she bears, who is "Le Juste". If we link these ideas with those which he has proposed in the previous section, it is possible to retain the notion that sin equates with the desire to dominate, to know all rather than with physical desire ("Jerome's concupiscence") and that it is Mary's humility, rather than her virginity per se which should be honoured and imitated. Another way of expressing this might be to say that he is trying to resolve contradictory

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 17-18. I think that Guéranger is actually referring to Louis de Blois, whose mysticism he admired and who he cites as the person who closes the tradition of medieval mysticism Louis de Blois died in 1545; see below, Chapter Five, p.

notions, one that Mary is human and can be imitated, the other that she is special, because of her role in crushing evil and assuring hope for everyone ⁵⁷.

The next section, which is one of the longest in the cycle and which accompanies the Office for the celebration of the Immaculate Conception on 8 December, supports this interpretation. ⁵⁸. Guéranger's explanation goes well beyond the memorandum that he wrote at the request of Pius IX in 1850 and seems to represent a more evolved position. He starts by recording the circumstances of Mary's birth to Joachim and Anne, describing how she was preserved from sin by the fact that she was born unexpectedly to elderly parents but he also refers to the quality that made her exceptional as a child and young woman – her humility. This is immediately followed by a reference to her status as 'la nouvelle Eve and to the fact that it was Eve's action in crushing the head of the snake which gave mankind victory over Satan The implied message is that if Mary who is human can turn back the sin, then every human being has the potential to earn redemption. As he writes:

"J 'établirai moi-même, disait Dieu, une inimitié entre toi et la femme, entre ta race et son fruit: et elle t'écrasera la tête". Ainsi le salut était annoncé à la famille humaine sous la forme d'une victoire contre Satan; et cette victoire, c'est la Femme qui la devait remporter pour nous tous. Et que l'on ne dise pas que ce sera le fils de la femme qui la remportera seule, cette victoire; le Seigneur nous dit que l'inimitié de la femme contre le serpent sera personnelle, et que, de son pied vainqueur, elle brisera la tête de l'odieux reptile; en un mot que la nouvelle Eve sera digne du nouvel Adam, triomphante comme lui; que la race humaine un jour sera vengée, non seulement par le Dieu fait homme, mais aussi par la Femme miraculeusement soustraite à toute atteinte du péché; en sorte que la création primitive "dans la sainteté et la justice" (Ep.4, 24) réparaitra en elle, comme si la faute n'avait pas été commise. Saluez donc ce jour fortuné où la pureté première de votre sang est renouvelée; la vôtre moins le péché, elle va vous donner, sous peu d'heures, le Dieu-Homme qui procède d'elle selon la chair, comme il sort de son Père par une génération éternelle.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Guéranger is clearly concerned with the idea of exemplarity linked to virginity since at the period he is writing he cannot advocate literal virginity as a virtue for ordinary Catholics. He deals with the issue specifically in the preface to *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, which I discuss in Chapter Five. He was, of course, trying to deal with centuries of Augustinian notions of the evils of the flesh; how to disentangle Mary's virginity from the human qualities which made her chosen by God and which can be imitated by everyone was a continuing issue for him.

⁵⁸ This section was added to the work much later since the feast was only approved in 1854 and it probably represents a more developed line of thinking than the one he had reached in 1841. The reference to Ephesians, 4, 24 is significant: " You were taught to clothe yourself with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness ". *Revised Standard Version*, p. 191.

⁵⁹ Soltner, op.cit. pp. 24-25.

This passage is certainly written after 1854 and inserted in a later edition of *L'annee liturgique : Avent*. Theologically, however, it is imbued with the ideas which Guéranger puzzled over and wrote about as a young man. Adam and Eve sinned, this sin was partially redeemed by Eve's action in crushing the serpent; Mary, 'la nouvelle Eve', repeats this assertive action by consenting to the conception and birth of Christ but, precisely because she is human and not divine, she provides the potential for every person to achieve grace and at the same time, through the example of her life, she offers a pattern for others to follow. Ecclesiastically there has been a nineteenth-century move towards an idea of Mary as co-redemptress, although this was never accepted by the Church and clearly was a step too far, not least because the biblical evidence is so weak⁶⁰. More important for Guéranger, I think, was the link with the doctrine of natural goodness and the way in which the topos challenges what he calls the Jansenist and Calvinist pessimism which still, in his view, undermined any revival of liturgy and religious commitment, particularly amongst the catholic laity.⁶¹

Before discussing the extent to which Berulle and his followers did leave a lasting impression on nineteenth-century attitudes to Mary I want to look very closely at the issue discussed above- that is the appropriate way of venerating Mary. Whilst modern commentators have recognised the service which Bérulle overall gave to the re-establishment of a spiritual dimension in the life and practice of the secular clergy after the re-establishment of religious life which followed the Edict of Nantes, it is clear that the more Christocentric approach which he advocated was at the expense of the neglect of Mary as a person apart from Christ. The pervasive topoi of property and marriage and the practice of always considering her in relationship to Christ seem to have prevented any development of a theology of Mary in the seventeenth century, other than in relation to Christ. Although the trend was to emphasize her significance as mediator and, in this sense, to isolate Christ as well, the outcome was to inhibit a

⁶⁰ G.Miegge, *The Virgin Mary. The Roman Catholic Marian Doctrine*, translated by W.Smith with a forward by N.Micjlem (London, 1955), Chapter 8, "The Co-Redemptress", pp 155-177.

⁶¹ R.Ruether, *Mary*, pp. 56-57 points out that the Nominalists had argued that a part of God's nature remained in every human being and that this natural state is the image of God in every person and is the ground of redeeming grace. Mary, who never lost this state of created goodness, is the

discussion of her place in the economy of the Trinity and certainly to de-emphasize her human virtues other than those of motherhood and the potential for people, especially women, to imitate her human qualities.. She becomes sentimentalised and even de-humanised. In eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century France this had two contradictory outcomes. One was for popular piety to continue with the naturalistic models of Mary as daughter and mother which had served for centuries and which it was easy for people to empathise with.⁶² The other was, in the second half of the nineteenth century, for the Ultramontane Church to encourage the model of a superhuman Mary, who combined the contradictory qualities of virginity and maternity and who manifested herself to ordinary people through visions and miracles.⁶³ There does not seem to have been any serious theological writing about Mary or any attempt in France to carry out an analysis such as that of Newman.⁶⁴ Guéranger's writings, largely ignored as a theological source, show that he was attempting to grapple with the problem. Partly because he was not a theologian and partly because of his monastic commitment, he chose to develop his ideas through the medium of a liturgical handbook and through an argument which emphasized the lost monastic tradition which had been seriously eroded, first by the Reformation and the Enlightenment and then by the Revolution.⁶⁵ His frequent diatribes against Jansenism are a kind of shorthand for the persistent pessimism and the selective reading of Augustine, which characterized much French catholic doctrine and practice from the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is worth mentioning in passing that the French Church remained fiercely independent from Rome for most of the period and, during the latter part of the seventeenth century, highly dependent on royal patronage. The persistent hostility to

representative of pure nature, the capacity within created nature for perfection. In the language of catholic piety she is "our tainted nature's solitary boast".

⁶² For examples of the iconography of Mary as obedient daughter and loving mother see M. Ménard, *Une histoire des mentalités religieuses au 17^e et 18^e siècles: Mille retables de l'Ancien diocèse du Man* (Paris, 1980). The sentimentalism was exaggerated in some late nineteenth-century images, often produced for commercial reasons. See A. Vircondelet, *Le monde merveilleux des images pieuses* (Paris, 1988), "La victoire de la religion kitsch" pp. 76-83.

⁶³ Kselman *Miracles and prophecies in nineteenth century France*, pp. 84-112.

⁶⁴ Newman, *The development of Catholic doctrine*, passim.

⁶⁵ I have discussed Guéranger's definition of Jansenism in Chapter One. He is concerned with the concept of predestination, which underlies the five propositions. Mary's act in assenting to the birth of Christ provides evidence that humanity can be saved; she is not the means of redemption.

the 'laxism' of the Jesuits also inhibited the development of a more flexible attitude amongst the French secular clergy who seem to have felt themselves surrounded by a sea of disorderly behaviour and low morals.⁶⁶ None of this helped the development of a serious theology of Mary, which might have moved the doctrine of grace in a way that challenged the more predestinarian notions of the Reformers. In a sense Guéranger had very little to go on other than devotion to Mary which had been sustained by liturgical practice in the medieval monasteries and by the mystical tradition epitomised by saints like Gertrude of Helfta. It is unsurprising that he focussed his effort on the revival of the earlier traditions rather than on a theoretically developed Mariology.

In an assessment of the mysticism of the 'Ecole française', John Saward has weighed up the strengths and weaknesses of the writers' legacy to modern Catholicism⁶⁷. He refers to the grim pessimism about human nature of some of the writings of Bérulle or Condren and its almost inhuman sternness:

The constant emphasis on abnegation, annihilation, adherence, dependence in the spiritual life makes it hard for us to see sometimes what place there is for free and full human cooperation with grace. Our authors, in their understanding of sin and grace remain firmly within orthodoxy and never manifest that open contempt for human nature and that excessive passivity which are the hallmarks of those other schools of spirituality in the seventeenth century, Jansenism and Quietism. Nevertheless there are certain unfortunate resemblances between the French school and these other traditions, and it is not surprising that certain tenets of Bérulle were exaggerated and exploited by the Jansenists, for example, the 'particular participation by individual souls in the various states of Christ' which was interpreted literally by the Jansenists⁶⁸

Saward is writing about the Christocentric approach in general and the practice which has become known as the Sulpician method in which the emphasis is on the different stages of adoration, communion and cooperation with Jesus. He does not address the specifically Marian aspects of the School which seem to have brought about some of

⁶⁶ R. Briggs, *Communities of belief. Cultural and social tension in early modern France* (Oxford, 1989), Ch. 8, The catholic puritans. Jansenists and rigorists in France, pp. 278-338.

⁶⁷ J. Saward, "Bérulle and the French School" in O. Davies (ed.), *God within: the mystical tradition of northern Europe* (London, 1988), G, "The Catholic Reformation", 2, pp. 386-404.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 394-395.

the extreme devotional practices like the wearing of badges and rings which disassociate Mary from the liturgy and which can become an end in themselves.⁶⁹

The Carmelite nuns' refusal to adopt vows of servitude to Mary or to Christ, which led to the disputes with Bérulle can be interpreted in this light. The women from the reformed order established by Teresa brought with them a very different tradition which drew on the writings of St John of the Cross and of an earlier writer, Louis of Granada. In the pre-Reformation period Spain had experience of a form of Quietism, represented by the 'Alumbradas' ('the enlightened ones) which the authorities had suppressed. Teresa, and later Maria of Agreda, were both very careful to negotiate a line, both in their writing and in their practice, which did not compromise their communities in the eyes of the Inquisition.⁷⁰ Hourlier and Schmitt, in the introduction to a modern translation, suggest that the Carmelites who came to France at the beginning of the seventeenth century probably brought the writings of Gertrude of Helfta "in their luggage" and, as I discuss in Chapter Five, it is clear that Gertrude's writing which was lost for two centuries, represents a very different tradition of mysticism and one to which Guéranger was much more sympathetic⁷¹.

The earlier tradition represented by Gertrude's writing describes the relationship between the individual and Christ and Mary in terms of accessibility and not of distance and there is always a clear distinction between Christ and Mary. The methodology for acquiring this closeness is participation in the liturgy. Guéranger's objective in writing *L'année liturgique* was to make the prayer of the Church more accessible to his readers. The work was very popular in his lifetime and ran to several editions that were only partly necessary because of the changes in the Church calendar. The fact that the first volume appeared at almost the same time as *Institutions liturgiques* suggests that, in his mind, the two projects are linked. Whilst it is not possible to agree with Oury that Guéranger belongs to the tradition of the French school, like Bérulle and his followers he was concerned to retrieve a spirituality, which he felt the Church had lost. However, although all these seventeenth-century writers claimed to return to the early

⁶⁹ Graef, *A history of dogma and devotion*, p. 34.

⁷⁰ A. Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the rhetoric of humility*, (Princeton, 1990).

⁷¹ J. Hourlier and A. Schmitt, *Gertrude d'Helfta. Oeuvres spirituelles* (Paris, 1967), vol.1. 'Les exercices', pp. 26-27.

Fathers for their inspiration, Guéranger proposes a model which is much less Augustinian and which is more closely associated with a monastic rather than a secular tradition. The notions of recapitulation, consent, natural goodness, humility and imitation are central to his arguments; these notions do not develop over time, so far as he is concerned. Rather they are contested or sidelined by people acting historically for particular purposes; he was to argue the case for liturgy as a contested site in *Institutions liturgiques*, which is the subject of the next chapter.

IV The liturgical thinking of Prosper Guéranger.

Si je valais la peine d'être résumé, ma vie n'a été autre chose qu'une réaction contre la tendance jansénienne, qui est la plus grande ennemie de toute l'économie des relations de la créature avec Dieu.¹

La règle de croire déroule de la règle de prier²

Introduction.

Guéranger's own summary of his contribution to the Roman Catholic faith was written at the very end of his life in a letter to a close friend and colleague, the abbot of the sister foundation of Ligugé, near Poitiers. Because he was never very precise about the Jansenist tendency he detected in current religious practice and because he never wrote a theological treatise on the subject this was not treated seriously by his colleagues in the Gallican Church and early twentieth century religious and ecclesiastical historians in their evaluation of his work thought his support of devotion to Mary and the saints was outmoded. The fact that he was so critical of the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth- century attempts at liturgical renewal led writers like Brémond to accuse him of undervaluing the extent to which the asceticism and emphasis on contemplation of the Ecole Française actually enriched liturgical life.³ It is important to try to disentangle those aspects of the thinking associated with the writer Cornelius Jansen (1585 – 1638) and Jean Duvergier de Haurenne (1581 – 1643), the abbot of Saint Cyran, which he found particularly damaging. The latter was influential since his ideas were taken up by his followers in France grouped around the Cistercian women's abbey at Port-Royal. The nub of Guéranger's opposition to the beliefs and practices epitomised by Port Royal was certainly the Jansenist notion of grace, the proposition that without a special grace from God, an individual is unable to perform His commandments. As I have shown in the previous chapter, the spiritual tradition of the Acarie group and the persistence of Augustinian beliefs about grace and sin underplayed the importance of individual effort in achieving union of the soul with

¹ Letter from Dom Guéranger to Dom Guépin, 27 March 1874, (Archives at Solesmes).

² "Guéranger à Rheims", p. 459.

God and led to an over-emphasis on passivity and abnegation which even affected the spirituality of writers such as Bérulle. This attitude, it is argued, had disastrous effects in the long term on the pastoral life of the Church, leading to a very rigid moralism and a focus on catechism and confession, at the expense of communal prayer and celebration.⁴ Rightly or wrongly Guéranger attributed these changes to the effects of the Protestant Reformation and the criticisms that Luther and others had levelled against the institutional Church. He interpreted the reactions of the Gallican Church in the following centuries as motivated by defensiveness and an eagerness to play down the spiritual life of the Church as expressed in ritual and devotional practices. In summary, he is criticising the elitism of doctrines of predestination, the idea of an unforgiving God, the essential fallen state of human nature and original sin defined as concupiscence.

He was not alone in attempting to reverse these broad trends; in Italy in the eighteenth century St Alphonsus Ligouri (1696-1787) had preached a model of a more loving and approachable God.⁵ Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France the criticism of the Jesuits was that they held a morally lax interpretation of God's law and the disputes between Jesuits and Jansenists can be viewed in the light of these differences in theology.⁶ However, it does seem that Guéranger was the first serious writer to link the state of pastoral practice to a shift in the way in which liturgical practice had developed in the Gallican Church. His aims in writing both *Institutions liturgiques* and *L'année liturgique* were to challenge eighteenth-century innovations, which reflected a certain theological position, rather than simply to argue for unity in liturgical practice and for the historical evidence concerning the liturgical tradition.

³ Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux*, vol. 9, p. 170 and vol. 10, p. 63.

⁴ See, for example, Doyle, *Jansenism*, Ch.8, pp. 86- 90; ; E.Dubois, "Jansenism" in O.Davies, *God within*, pp. 396- 405; Briggs, *Communities of belief*, Ch.8, pp.345-349. For the persistence of these attitudes into the nineteenth century see Germain, *Parler du salut*, pp.70ff. Germain discusses the tendency in catechisms to establish a basis of fear rather than love and a recurring theme of biological death later in the century.

⁵ G.Humbert, *Alphonse de Ligouri. Pasteur et docteur. Jalons chronologiques. Pour une histoire de la pénétration en pays francophones de la pensée et des oeuvres d'Alphonse de Ligouri*, pp.392-393. Guéranger translated the first volume of a French edition of his complete works at the request of the publisher Parents-Debarre but was unable to continue because of the deadlines imposed.

⁶ Doyle, *Jansenism*, pp. 9-13. The writing of the Spanish Jesuit, Luis of Molina (1535-1600) was an important contribution to the debates over Grace and Predestination.

Nineteenth-century critiques of Institutions liturgiques.

The first two volumes of *Institutions liturgiques* were published in 1840 and 1841. Guéranger's responsibilities as abbot of the community at Solesmes and other writing commitments meant that the third volume was not published until 1851 and he was able to publish his correspondence with his contemporaries in the appendices to this third volume. His nineteenth and early twentieth century critics were not particularly kind to Guéranger and there is still disagreement about the significance and value of his contribution to liturgical reform. One of the problems was the scale of the project – three volumes, each nearly a thousand pages long and covering the history of the liturgy from the earliest times to the beginning of the nineteenth century. A second problem was that Guéranger chose to write the history in terms of the contribution of different popes in establishing unity, in the face of a frequently divided Church. Thirdly the project was inevitably interpreted in terms of ecclesiastical politics and the ultramontane aims of returning the French clergy to the authority of Rome. Fourthly Brémond and others saw his polemical stance as a devaluation of the contribution made by the spiritualist movement in the seventeenth century. Fifthly his pleas for a renewed emphasis on Mary and the Saints were seen as a reactionary response to more scientific approaches to liturgical scholarship.⁷

More recent critics have taken an anthropological approach to the work, recognising Guéranger's early appreciation of the value of shared ritual in counteracting the impact of industrialisation and secularisation on religious communities.⁸ As far as I am aware, only Cuthbert Johnson has suggested that it is necessary to take a theological approach to the work and to consider the nature and forms of Guéranger's own spirituality. Johnson argues that it was the mystery of the Incarnation which was central to

⁷ J. Acton, "Ultramontanism", *Home and foreign review*, July 1863, pp.162 ff.

⁸ Raedts, "The struggle for liturgical unity" pp. 341-344; Franklin, "The people's work" pp. 69-70. Franklin is defending the Benedictines' retention of Latin in the face of demands for the introduction of the vernacular in the liturgy in the late nineteenth century.

Guéranger's thinking and, in his words, "enabled him to see the Church as a visible divinely constituted society which is the sacramental manifestation of God's saving mercy"⁹. Whilst I agree with Johnson that Guéranger is, indeed, seeking a redefinition of the Church as something other than a set of institutional arrangements, the problem is that the quasi-historical approach which he took in writing *Institutions liturgiques*, lent itself to an over-emphasis on the strictly ecclesiastical aspects of the problem and on a rather forced argument about the authority of the popes in establishing unity of practice which does not really stand up to scrutiny and which laid him open to criticisms of historical accuracy. At the same time his insistence on the notion of tradition was open to challenge since his contemporaries defined this in terms of unbroken, doctrinal development rather than as a return to the principles and practices of the early Church.¹⁰

The hostility that the work provoked when it was first published was largely based on the attitudes of the French bishops towards papal authority and it was certainly interpreted as an argument for a return to papal rather than diocesan authority. More interesting and more significant is the evidence that suggests that the bishops did not understand at all his arguments about the centrality of prayer, as manifested in liturgy, as the essence of the Christian message. The reactions of his contemporaries to the work are summarised in his correspondence with three of the senior Gallican Churchmen, the Archbishops of Rheims and Toulouse and the Bishop of Orleans, which Guéranger included in later editions of *Institutions liturgiques*. There were five lengthy letters in all and his decision to publish them show the importance of the arguments he was putting forward, arguments which went well beyond the need for unity of liturgical practice in the French Church.¹¹

⁹ Johnson, *Prosper Guéranger: a liturgical theologian*, p. 21 " His deep awareness of the relationship between the mystery of the Incarnation and the mystery of the Church enabled him to see the Church as a visible, divinely constituted society which is the sacramental manifestation of God's saving mercy. This insight enabled him to develop his understanding of the dogmatic character of the liturgy which led him to see the importance of the Liturgy as a witness to tradition and as the living voice of tradition".

¹⁰ I have suggested in Chapter One that Guéranger sees the liturgy as a site of contest for the playing out of arguments about what constitutes the core of Christian belief. This sociological tool is useful in examining other examples of his writing, for example on what constitutes spirituality, the practice of mysticism, definitions of grace and the nature of the Triune God. It presupposes a view of discontinuous development, Hegelian rather than Comtean, and it is unsurprising that his contemporaries found it difficult to follow, let alone accept his ideas.

¹¹ Guéranger, "Lettre à Mgr. l'Archevêque de Reims sur le droit de la liturgie" (1843);" *Défense des Institutions liturgiques*"; " Lettre à Mgr. l'Archevêque de Toulouse" (1844);" *Nouvelle*

The first exchange of letters with the Archbishop of Rheims contains Guéranger's response to the question posed by the former as to what should be an appropriate course of action for those bishops whose dioceses had already adopted breviaries and missals which had been written after the publication of Pius V's instructions to all the Roman clergy in 1570 to adopt a single missal. Pius V was following up the brief given to him by the Council of Trent to resolve the existing confusion of practice and to answer the criticisms of the Reformers, notably Luther, concerning the custom of private masses and the primacy of scripture over ritual. Pius' response was to recommend the adoption of the missal used by the Roman Curia at that time, with minor alterations, insisting that it was obligatory for all churches except for those dioceses and religious orders still using a form of liturgy at least two hundred years old. Various other clauses stated that the new missal could not be changed in any way, that it could only be printed by authorised printers, that only Latin should be used and that the new breviary should be introduced as quickly as possible, within three months in Italy and within six months elsewhere.¹² The papal bull mentioned specific sanctions, including excommunication, for anyone disobeying the decision and a recommendation that the change should be in place in perpetuity. These draconian measures are understandable in the context of the Counter-Reformation response to the threats posed by the Reformist churches but it is probably unsurprising that they had been frequently ignored or contravened in the political context of late seventeenth- and eighteenth- century France. Guéranger's answer is contained in a long article where he sets out the principles of the centrality of liturgy in sustaining religion and the importance of unity in combating challenges to the Church; he refers to the proviso concerning the two- hundred year rule which he sees as recognising the right of congregations to continue with a rite which is embedded in local custom but enlarges on his reasons for supporting Pius' rigidity concerning subsequent changes. His arguments on this last point are interesting; he asks how it is possible for any individual author to have his work authenticated if it is not subject to papal approval and on what authority an individual is able to make changes to the Roman rite, even if he is a bishop or an archbishop. He writes;

défense des *Institutions liturgiques*. Première, puis deuxième lettre à Mgr. l' Evêque d'Orléans" (1846).

¹² Pius V issued the *Brevarium Romanum* in 1568 and the accompanying missal, together with instructions for its use, was promulgated in 1570.

Encore une fois, le progrès liturgique, pour être réel et sans danger, a besoin de s'opérer par la voie de l'autorité; et c'est ce qui n'a pas eu lieu lorsque l'antique fonds de la Liturgie universelle est livré à l'arbitraire d'un pouvoir purement diocésain; lorsque de simples clercs se permettent de publier des utopias liturgiques à l'usage d'une Eglise de dix-sept siècles, qu'ils ont l'audace de mettre la main à l'oeuvre, de fabriquer dans leur cabinet des corps entiers d'office en faveur des Eglises; et qu'enfin, au lieu de châtier une pareille témérité, les chefs des églises l'encouragent de leur adhésion, ainsi que l'histoire du siècle dernier nous le montre en tant d'endroits.¹³

One can understand the hostility of the Gallican bishops to Guéranger's thesis; the Archbishop of Rheims, Thomas Gousset, had also written to Pope Gregory XVI asking the same questions he had put to Guéranger.¹⁴ He received a diplomatic reply from the former which supported Guéranger's arguments concerning the intentions of Pius V but which recognised the difficulties of implementing the unified breviary and missal such a long time afterwards. Gregory nevertheless refers the Archbishop to the action taken by an unnamed colleague in the Gallican Church who has successfully changed the practice in his diocese and expresses the hope that Gousset will follow his example.¹⁵

Guéranger's reply to the Archbishop of Rheims was evaluated in a pamphlet published by the Archbishop of Toulouse in 1846. This is interesting, not because it extends the debate but because it contains a summary of the views of members of the Gallican establishment at the time. The archbishop published the findings of a survey he undertook amongst the bishops where he asked for their opinions on Guéranger's response to Thomas Gousset. The pamphlet contains a summary of their answers and he adds some comments of his own.¹⁶ His criticisms are mainly that Guéranger unfairly accuses the French bishops of Jansenism and heresy but that he does not specify in any detail how this might be proved. He points to some minor inaccuracies in Guéranger's

¹³ "Guéranger à Reims", p.496.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.570. The three questions were: "Quelle est l'autorité d'un évêque particulier en matière de Liturgie, dans un diocèse où la Liturgie Romaine se trouve actuellement en usage?"; "Quelle est l'autorité d'un évêque particulier, en matière de Liturgie, dans un diocèse où la Liturgie Romaine n'est pas actuellement en usage?"; "Quelle conduite doit garder un évêque, dans un diocèse où la Liturgie Romaine a été abolie depuis la réception de la bulle de saint Pie V dans ce même diocèse?"

¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 574-577.

¹⁶ Mgr. l'Archevêque de Toulouse. *Examen de la défense de Dom Guéranger et courte réfutation de sa lettre à Mgr l'Archevêque de Reims*, (Toulouse, Paris, Lyon, 1846).

record of historical events and considers he is unfair in his assessment of the impact of removing the offices of certain saints from the Roman Breviary. He takes up Guéranger's criticism that the Paris Breviary, in particular, diminished the cult of the Virgin and he argues that this was done between the feast of the Circumcision and Septuagesima by inserting a feast celebrating Mary's divine maternity in order to emphasize the birth of Christ. This is an interesting point since it meant that Mary's role in the Epiphany, in the Purification and in the feast celebrating the foretelling of her own birth had been excluded to make way for the new feast. In this way her significance as the person who would give birth to Christ and whose apparition on earth the prophets had foretold, was underplayed, and her more conventional, maternal qualities privileged. This is precisely the focus of Guéranger's concern¹⁷.

Toulouse's letter had been sent to seventy-eight bishops, of whom fifty-eight replied. Of the fifty-eight replies, fifty-four were critical of Guéranger and four were sympathetic to his thesis. Twenty bishops did not reply – presumably those who were already using the Roman breviary, although there is no information on the identities of the respondents. Toulouse notes that of the eighty-one dioceses which had emerged from the reorganisation of the Gallican Church, following the Concordat, one third had adopted the Paris liturgy, one third still followed their own liturgy which pre-dated Pius V and the remainder, just under a third, followed the Roman liturgy. A breakdown of the fifty-four replies, which I have constructed from the summary of each letter provided by Toulouse, shows that the respondents interpreted the proposals as an attack on the authority of the French bishops in general, rather than as a liturgical issue. Most give a nodding recognition to the desirability of unity of practice but point to the impossibility of achieving this in the nineteenth century when so much change has occurred. Some even mention the resource implications of changing the missals and breviaries and most mention the Pope's reply to Thomas Gousset, which recognized the difficulties of change. One or two go so far as to challenge the view that the Popes have always legislated on liturgical matters. Virtually no respondent challenges Guéranger on doctrinal, let alone theological grounds. I find this interesting and it tends to support the

¹⁷ Guéranger is critical of the revised prayers and commentaries on these feasts. See below, pp 111-115. See also M.Kwatera, *Marian feasts in the Roman, Troyes and Paris missals and breviaries and the critique of Dom Prosper Guéranger*, Unpublished PhD thesis, Notre Dame, 1993.

argument that the Gallican Church had become politicized and, in some sense, secularised by its association with the state on whom it depended for its survival. One response refers to Lamennais and expresses concern that this new polemic will reactivate the old arguments about the allegiance of the clergy to the Pope.¹⁸ Again this emphasizes the sensitivity of this group of French bishops to threats to their current status.

In the section following the summaries of the responses, the Archbishop of Toulouse adds his own comments on Guéranger's response to Thomas Gousset concerning the primacy of liturgy. He notes the principle from which, Guéranger argues, everything else flows – “la règle de croire déroule de la règle de prier” and which Gousset had challenged. Guéranger had gone on to argue that the liturgy is not only the prayer of the Church but also “the most solemn and the most popular method of teaching (“ le plus solennel et le plus populaire”). Toulouse's reaction to this proposition is one of horror. He writes:

L'enseignement le plus populaire! Est-ce que le peuple s'instruit mieux de vérités chrétiennes quand il entend chanter des psaumes, que quand on lui explique le catéchisme?¹⁹

This reaction demonstrates perfectly the gulf in understanding between Guéranger and his critics. The Counter-Reformation emphasis on instruction and an increased role for the clergy in delivering this seems to have become particularly embedded in the psyche of the Gallican Church; possibly this trait was exaggerated by its isolation from other n developments in Roman Catholic practice.²⁰ The increasing secularisation of the clergy since the Concordat of 1801 and the hostility aroused by the monastic orders and even the Congregations, notably the Jesuits, seems to have discouraged theological debate and reflexion on theological issues. The Archbishop of Toulouse, in a telling sentence, accuses Guéranger of confusing the form of prayer, the liturgy, with prayer itself. He

¹⁸ Toulouse, “Examen de la defense”, p. 69.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 86.

²⁰ Marianne Elliott sees the process at work in Ireland where the Tridentine reforms had a similar effect on the clergy in Southern Ireland but not in Ulster where more popular forms of worship and practice persisted long after the Counter-Reformation. M.Elliott, *The catholics of Ulster. A history* (London, 2000), pp. 70-72 .

completely misses the point of the latter's argument, that the liturgy is the Church at prayer and that it is a conveyor of the foundational message of Christianity, as important as biblical text and institutional organisation. The Archbishop goes on:

Ne confond-il pas encore les vraies notions de la Liturgie et de la prière, lorsqu'il avance que la Liturgie est la prière même, tandis qu'elle en est seulement la forme? La prière est l'élévation de notre âme vers Dieu. Dom Guéranger prend ici le moyen pour la fin.²¹

Whilst the Archbishop of Toulouse had at least challenged Guéranger on this point, none of his other correspondents raises this. The third of the senior Churchmen to debate with him, the Bishop of Orleans bases his argument on precisely this issue – that Guéranger is confusing ritual, in Orleans' view an institutionalised form of prayer, with prayer as a process of elevating the soul towards God which is, in contrast, an individual act.

Guéranger wrote three letters to Mgr. Fayet, Bishop of Orleans, the first two in 1846 and the third in 1847. In addition he published a rebuttal of Fayet's criticisms in the preface to the third volume of *Institutions liturgiques*, which did not appear until 1851. The bishop had died in 1850 and Guéranger goes out of his way to stress that he is returning to these arguments because Fayet's arguments are central to his own thesis that the changes to the liturgy in France in the eighteenth century were due to differences in theology rather than to a challenge to episcopal authority. The dates of the different debates with the senior Churchmen are important, as I argue below.²² In the ten years that elapsed between the publication of the first and third volume of *Institutions liturgiques*, his own thinking had developed whilst more of the dioceses had adopted the Roman rite. In the rebuttal to Mgr Fayet, published in the preface to the third volume of *Institutions liturgiques* in 1851, he is going back over his reasons for taking a historical approach to the liturgical question from the earliest times up to and since the Council of Trent's decision to press for liturgical unity. However, his main concern, he says, is to

²¹ Toulouse, *Examen de la défense* p. 89

²² Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vol. .3, "Préface" pp. 12-13. Earlier in this preface Guéranger points out that he has already developed his arguments in the letter to the Archbishop of Reims and, more interestingly, in *Histoire de Sainte Cécile* which had been published in 1848.

show how the eighteenth-century innovations went beyond small changes to practice but were actually threatening core beliefs. In this third preface he writes:

Dans ce travail, nous avons dû faire appel à un grand nombre de principes puisés aux sources même de la Théologie, qui a un rapport immédiat avec la Liturgie. Nous n'avions point à prouver ces principes; nous les supposions admis sans contestation par tout le monde, et c'est en cela que que nous nous sommes trompé.²³

Fayet's criticisms had gone to the heart of the argument which his episcopal colleagues had either not recognised or had preferred to ignore. In his letter to Guéranger he wrote:

La Religion est une vertu morale qui ne produit par elle-même que des actes intérieurs d'adoration, de louange, de sacrifice etc. Et qui n'a, par conséquent, rien à démêler avec la Liturgie ; que la Liturgie proprement dite n'a aucun rapport nécessaire avec la vertu de Religion; qu'il faut laisser la Liturgie dans son domaine, et le Culte divin dans le sien; enfin que par l'exercice public de la Liturgie, l'Eglise se met plutôt en communication avec les hommes qu'avec Dieu.²⁴

These arguments were precisely those which Guéranger had previously called Jansenist and even heretical; in this reply he is presumably moderating his language in view of the bishop's deace and his own increasing confidence. First, he argues, that the catholic religion is not simply a set of prescriptions about how to live a virtuous life; second that communication with God is not a purely private act and that private acts of worship are problematic if separated from the communal act of worship contained in the liturgy; third that the practice of the liturgy is a pre-condition of any moral precepts ; fourth that the liturgy is not primarily the means by which the Church communicates with men but the means by which she communicates with God. It is his contention that the innovations in the liturgy which took place in the eighteenth century were the work of the 'antiliturgistes', a term rather less contentious than Jansenist and certainly more precise in focus; the climate of the time had tended to decrease the importance of liturgy at the expense of catechism and preaching and, arguably, led both laity and clergy to neglect both prayer and ritual. In this sense, too, the influence of the

²³ *ibid.*, pp.13- 24.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.14, note 1.

Reformers could be seen at work since in all the churches of the Reformed movement preaching and private prayer had become more important than ritual and external devotions to saints.²⁵

In this rebuttal to Fayet, Guéranger is using sweeping arguments to demonstrate what he perceives to be a persisting tendency in the development of Christian belief for concerns about morality to displace concerns about ritual and for the purposes of ritual to become clouded and ambiguous. In the second volume of *Institutions liturgiques*, writing about the eighteenth-century innovations, Guéranger was quite specific about the ways in which there had been attempts to change the ways in which the Gallican Church had despised or neglected liturgical practice. The list includes attempts to downgrade the cult of the Virgin Mary, to exclude accounts of miracles and the mystical experiences of saints in the Office for feast days and to curtail details of their lives and replace these with biblical quotations. There had been a positive war, he contends, against images, processions and pilgrimages and the view had been encouraged that acts of devotion to saints by individuals were ineffectual unless the person offering these acts were already in a state of grace.²⁶ He gives specific examples from his own diocese of Le Mans where altars had been stripped of ornaments and where the host had become hidden from view instead of being displayed in an 'ostensoir'.²⁷

In the preface to the third volume, Guéranger explains that he had dealt in a superficial way in the second volume of *Institutions liturgiques* with the theological purposes of the liturgy, which he sees as threatened by the eighteenth century innovations. It was his intention, he says, to write a fourth volume devoted to "Théologie liturgique"; this project never materialised and, as a result, the section on the eighteenth century in the second volume remains the best summary of his

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 19, "Or, le système que nous avons appelé antiliturgique, nous l'avons défini, l'hérésie qui se porte l'ennemie des formes du service divin.---dans laquelle se sont réunis de siècle en siècle les Gnostiques, Vigilance, les diverses branches du Manichéisme occidental ---, Wicief, Jean Hus, Luther et Calvin".

²⁶ *Institutions liturgiques*, vol. 2 pp. 540-544 .

²⁷ It is not the purpose of this thesis to compare his criticisms with contemporary evidence. However, in his own diocese, a modern study on the imagery of eighteenth century reredos has shown that the iconography of the Virgin Mary changed during the eighteenth century and that she was frequently depicted in a very naturalistic manner and with an emphasis on her

understanding of how a persistent strand of Jansenism had continued to influence Gallican practice in France.²⁸ As he says in that section of volume two:

Auparavant, si le temps et l'espace nous le permettait, nous aimerions à montrer en détail toute la portée des embûches qu'ils ("ces perfides pharisiens") ont tendues à la foi des peuples, dans ce qui touche le culte de la glorieuse Vierge Marie et des saints. Nous dirions comment ils les ont livrés, ces peuples sans défense, au souffle glacé du rationalisme, en expulsant de la Liturgie, et, partant, de la mémoire des fidèles, la plupart des miracles et des dons merveilleux accordés aux saints, sous le vain prétexte des droits de la critique; comme s'il suffisait de la volonté d'un pédant pour faire reconnaître comme incontestables les stupides affirmations du pyrrhonisme historique. Nous dirions comment ils ont retranché du bréviaire, et bientôt des Vies même des saints, le récit des actes de vertu extraordinaire inspirés par L'Esprit de Dieu à ses membres, sous la futile apparence que ces faits ne seraient pas imitables; comme si l'Esprit de Dieu, dans les livres qu'il a dictés lui-même, n'avait pas pas accumulé pour sa gloire les actes les plus extraordinaires, aussi bien que que les actes les plus vulgaires en apparence.²⁹

In summary, the correspondence with the three churchmen illustrates the problems that Guéranger had in persuading his contemporaries that the theological position he had taken in *Institutions liturgiques* was tenable. His original intention does seem to have been to write an account of the way in which the liturgy of the Church had developed historically and the way in which different popes had been effective in counteracting shifts in the central message. His thesis, as outlined in the response to the criticisms of the Archbishop of Reims, was that since the Counter-Reformation reforms of Pius V, the Gallican Church had moved systematically to marginalize the importance of the liturgy and to emphasize preaching and catechism. His critics, however, challenged him, mainly on his historical accuracy where he was vulnerable but seem not to have grasped his main arguments. It was these theological issues, which are at the heart of his major work, but because it was not planned as a theological treatise the two sets of arguments become confused. If one adds to this the fact that, as Toulouse's survey shows, most of the Gallican bishops read the first and second volumes as an attack on the authority of the French Church and its

daughterly obedience, especially when learning from her mother. Ménard, *Une histoire des mentalités religieuses*, passim.

²⁸ *Institutions liturgiques*, vol. 2, pp. 545-559

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 542.

independence in ecclesiastical matters, then the theological underpinning is opaque. It is necessary to look more carefully at the spirit in which the work was planned and, particularly, at the relationship between *Institutions liturgiques* and *L'année liturgique*.

A single devotional project?

In discussing the development of Guéranger's thinking, I have argued that this must be studied in the context of his reading of the Fathers. His theology depends critically on ideas drawn from both St Justin and St Irenaeus concerning recapitulation, the notion of the virgin birth and Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve. In particular he owes to St Irenaeus the notion of the rule of faith and the idea that catholic tradition is contained not only in the canonical texts, but also in ritual and in episcopal organisation. It is important to remember that at the time of the publication of *Institutions liturgiques*, Guéranger was still a very young man, especially when he is compared with men like Gousset and Fayet. He was also, as I have shown, largely self-taught; this was partly to do with his own interests and his spirituality, which was often at odds with the thinking of his time. In addition his methods of working were constrained by his administrative commitments as abbot of Solesmes and also by the nature of the monastic timetable. This was crucial since the whole purpose of the community at Solesmes was the restoration of the liturgy and the performance of the Offices, five times during the day. This pattern of life does not lend itself to the pursuit of academic rigour and the development of carefully worked out arguments, even had the literary practices of the day encouraged this. In embarking on *Institutions liturgiques*, he seems to have envisaged a largely straightforward account of the way in which liturgical unity had been subject to attack and of the way in which key players amongst the popes of the day had nudged things back towards shared practice. The problem of course was that, by his own definition –“ la règle de croire déroule de la règle de prier “– the arguments about liturgy are primarily theological. These arguments are also to do with definitions of prayer and, in this area, Guéranger's views were out of sympathy with those of his contemporaries. In looking more closely at *L'année liturgique* it is possible to see how he was advocating not a return to more popular and traditional ways of worship, often

expressed in external devotions to Mary and the saints, but to a revival in spirituality which would be available to the whole of the catholic laity and not simply to the clergy. Central to the argument was confusion over what it is that actually constitutes prayer.

Social historians writing about the early modern period in religious history seem agreed that the impact of the Counter Reformation strategy for religious revival was to focus on the teaching of faith through an upgrading of the quality of the clergy and through an emphasis on catechism and on the early education of the young.³⁰ This is what modern management writers would call a cascade model of change! The habit of private prayer was not discouraged and from the seventeenth century onwards it was customary to produce manuals of devotion to assist this practice. At the same time there was a persistent fear of the dangers of private prayer without spiritual guidance from a priestly mentor and of the practices of meditation and asceticism associated with the movements loosely grouped under the label Quietist. Why this should have come about is clearly a highly complex matter but modern theologians see the links between the Renaissance and Reformation movements as a key to this change in thinking and point to the greater reliance on the evidence of the senses as the basis of judgement and decision making.³¹ The whole question of non-naturalistic experience, therefore, became problematic, including all kinds of mystical experience and private communications with God, which were not subject to scrutiny by the Church. In turn this led to a reassessment of much of the traditional literature of the Church, at least as represented in the lives of saints and the devotions associated with their lives. Ironically this modern emphasis on the rational increased the power of the institutional Church to authenticate spiritual experiences and, at the same time, increased the power of the clergy to influence the religious life of the individual through catechism and the confessional. It is therefore possible to see the decline in religious belief during the nineteenth century as at least partially related to the intrusiveness of the clergy in people's lives, as much as to scepticism about the supernatural as such.

Guéranger's response to the gap which he perceived between private prayer and public ritual is to latch the former firmly in to the latter by making private prayer conform to the same time patterns as that of public ritual and by imposing a cycle of

³⁰ J. Bossy, "The Counter-Reformation and the people of catholic Europe", *Past and Present* 47 (May, 1970), pp. 51-70.

commentaries and prayer which ties the individual into the yearly calendar celebrating the conception, birth, life and death of Christ. This calendar offers a recurring sequence of events which renews the faith of the individual and which places the emphasis on a spiritual timescale rather than one constrained by working practices or by conventional career patterns. The essence of this cycle is that it remains the same so that it offers a cycle shared by all members of the Church throughout the Roman Catholic community, irrespective of locality or nationality and sustained by the authority of Rome. At the same time it locks the individual into the membership of a historical community as well as a contemporary community and provides the opportunity for individuals to follow the lives of the saints through hearing their stories on a regular basis and to adopt their lives as models for their own behaviour. The model is interesting in that it offers the constraint of repeated practice with the latitude to choose from among a set of lives, including the life of Christ and of Mary, which can help the individual construct a way of leading a Christian life and at the same time be reminded of the core, incarnational message.

Both the Archbishop of Rheims and the Archbishop of Toulouse had specifically responded to Guéranger's criticisms of the Paris breviary, published in 1680, because it changed the emphasis of the Offices between the feast of the Circumcision and the start of Septuagesima (literally the Sunday occurring seventy days before Easter).³² Gousset had even given a justification for this, saying that it was done in order not to diminish the importance of Christ Himself and to place the emphasis on the maternal aspects of Mary's divinity. In order to understand Guéranger's objections to these omissions, it is necessary to go back to the late 1830s when he was writing the first and second volumes of *Institutions liturgiques*, rather than rely simply on his rebuttal contained in the letters. Looking at the chronology more closely, the sequence of publication dates for the two liturgical projects is as follows:

³¹ Williams, *The wound of knowledge* pp. 139-142.

³² In the calendar Septuagesima is celebrated on the third Sunday before Lent and the ninth before Easter. Traditionally the feast marked a stage towards the Lenten fast; purple vestments were worn and the word 'Alleluia' was not used again in the Offices or at Mass until the end of Lent. It was dropped from the Roman Catholic calendar in 1969 but had passed into the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* where it still remains. Currently in the Roman Catholic calendar 2 and 11 February are celebrated as, respectively, the Presentation of Jesus in the temple (formerly the Purification) and Notre-Dame of Lourdes. It can be argued that today the

- 1840 *Institutions liturgiques* vol. 1
 1841 *Institutions liturgiques* vol.2
 1841 *L'annee liturgique: Avent*
 1845 *L'année liturgique: Temps de Noel, 1*
 1847 *L'année liturgique: Temps de Noel, 2*

There is considerable slippage between the period when Guéranger was reflecting on the place of Mary in the economy of the Trinity and the publication of his first major works.³³ This does not mean that his thinking when he was writing *Institutions liturgiques* was not already fairly advanced but that it was not possible to extend his arguments in that work – precisely because of the historical approach he had adopted in making the case for the Roman Breviary and the accompanying missal. The fact that the debate then became so closely associated with the issue of ecclesiastical authority in the Gallican Church means, I suggest, that the theological issues did not become a focus for discussion and that this aspect of his thinking has to be either deduced from the text or sought elsewhere. I have argued in Chapter Two that it is highly likely that the appendices to *Notes et Materiux* probably belong to the 1830s and that it was Guéranger's intention to publish the two works, the one devoted to public liturgy and the other to private prayer, in tandem.³⁴ It was only pressure of time that prevented this from happening. The appendices do contain quite detailed notes about the particular feast days which he sees as neglected and it is useful to analyse the particular points he is emphasizing and then compare them with the much later entries which appear in *L'annee liturgique: Temps de Noel, 2*

emphasis has shifted back to a Mary as mother and from the Virgin of the early Church to a nineteenth century Mary, as represented in the miracle at Lourdes.

³³ In Chapter Two I have argued that this period begins in 1824 with his own mystical experience about the meaning of the Immaculate Conception, is reinforced by his reading of Justin and Irenaeus in and that he continues to keep notes which he subsequently uses as the basis for his commentaries on the Marian feasts in *L'année liturgique*.

³⁴ Guéranger, *L'année liturgique*, vol. 1, "Préface générale" p. 16. Guéranger argues that the renovative power of the liturgical year is a mystery of the Holy Ghost and that it is through public and private prayer that the "theological sensus" is formed and that "prayer leads him [the individual] to science".

The specific ways in which the Paris Breviary, according to Guéranger, reduced the emphasis on the cult of the Virgin Mary were to change the focus of the feast which had been previously called 'The Purification of the Virgin Mary' by re-naming it the 'The Presentation of the Lord and the Purification of the Virgin Mary' and to diminish the importance of the feast formerly called 'The Conception of the Virgin Mary' in comparison with the feast of 'The Annunciation'.³⁵ Guéranger is particularly critical of Harley's breviary not simply because of the content but because, in his view, it set a precedent for later breviaries in France.³⁶ He has two major concerns, one that the changes were written by authors who had no spiritual qualifications nor papal authority to undertake the work and that they specifically moved sections which had been there for hundreds of years and replaced them with biblical quotations. In the process his assessment is that forty accounts of saints' lives had disappeared and that this, amongst other effects, reduced considerably the devotions to the Virgin Mary. Specifically, Harley's authors omitted the benedictions from the office 'De Beata' and in the same office they omitted the passages from the 'Book of Wisdom' which referred to Mary as divine wisdom, a tradition which the Church had attributed to her for centuries. The changes also meant that two of the most ancient antiphons were left out of the office ("Gaude, Maria Virgo, cunctas hoereses sola interemisti in universo mundo" and "Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sancta; da mihi virutem contra hostes tuos"). He also suggests that by leaving out the words of St John of Damascus from the sixth reading of the feast celebrating the Assumption, the importance of the actual physical assumption of the Virgin is underplayed.³⁷ He argues that by omitting the office for the Visitation, the breviary further reduced Mary's significance and that by changing the name of the feast which was celebrated on 25 March from 'The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary' to 'Annuntiatio Dominica', the part Mary played in the Incarnation in giving her consent to the birth of Christ, is underplayed. By changing the name of the feast of 'The Purification' to 'The Presentation of the Lord in the Temple', the outcome, he feels, is a serious shift in the interpretation of the birth and life of Christ and an over-emphasis on

³⁵ *Institutions liturgiques* vol. 2, pp.63-65.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45

³⁷ St John of Damascus (c. 655 – c.750) wrote extensively on the hypostatic union; a corollary of his Christology was his teaching about the divine maternity of Mary, her exemption from all stain of sin and her assumption into heaven., O.D.C.C., p.891.

the maternal role of Mary at the expense of her role in the Incarnation. This shift is away from the tradition that goes back to the early Church and is a potential attack on the grounds on which the Christian faith stands.

It is not my intention to make comparisons between the content of different breviaries, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, if one looks at the actual calendar of feasts accorded to Mary, it is quite clear that, at the time that Guéranger was writing the second volume of *Institutions liturgiques*, (c1836- 40) the calendar sequence would have looked like this:

8 September	Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
21 November	Presentation of the BVM in the Temple
8 December	Conception of the BVM not “Immaculate “until 1854)
2 February	Purification of BVM, title changed to The Presentation of the Lord in the Temple
25 March	Annunciation of BVM changed to Annunciation of the Lord.
2 July	Visitation (of BVM omitted from title).
15 August	Assumption of BVM less sections from John of Damascus.

The impact of these changes is to emphasize the christological significance of the different feasts, whilst de-emphasizing the role of Mary, other than as the mother of Christ. If one accepts Guéranger’s argument that the Paris breviary had an important influence on other Gallican breviaries and, his other central criticism, that these changes were made without papal authority, there is a case for arguing that that they were made at least in part in reaction to Reformist objections to Marian devotion and did result in a shift in the central message of the Incarnation – the dual nature of Christ.

For Guéranger, however, the changes also had a important effect on the way in which the life of Mary could exemplify core values of the faith – values which were in his view particularly brought out in the narrative of ‘The Purification of Mary in the Temple’. The notes on the feast of the Purification contained in the appendices to *Notes et Matériaux* are the longest section in the collection and run to nearly a thousand words.³⁸ They are, in effect, a commentary in note form on the celebration of the day

when Mary, forty days after the birth of Christ returns to the temple after an enforced absence, which the Jewish law imposed on women after childbirth. The emphasis is therefore on Mary herself, as a Jewish woman constrained by the customs of her time but the festival also underlines the continuity between the Old and New Testament and the fact that Mary is actually the one chosen from the beginning to be centrally involved in the fulfilment of the prophecies that God would redeem the world through Christ. Guéranger notes that the event is important for her as a woman in her own right, as the chosen means through which the physical world is redeemed and specifically for mankind since she buys back our Saviour (“ elle rachète notre Sauveur”). This is a curious phrase but I take it to mean that she takes Christ back from God for the period of his life on earth, certainly for his childhood, thereby emphasizing his humanity as well as his divinity.

The ambivalent status of Mary as mother is underlined in this feast, Guéranger argues. As divine mother she is not obliged to obey the law of the priests but she does this in a manner which emphasizes her humility and her restraint. For her it is a day of giving up, as well as of receiving back, in the same way in which Abraham was prepared to sacrifice Isaac but was reprieved by God. Mary, too, knows that she will have to give up Jesus at some point but understands the significance of this- “ elle pleure la victime and adore le sacrificateur “. Guéranger goes on to suggest that in doing this she offers herself along with Him – “elle s’unit à son fils” – and in this way is an exemplar for the model of a Christian life:

Marie en offrant J.C. s’offre elle-meme, et nous apprend ainsi à recueillir les fruits de la rédemption en ne faisant qu’une victime de lui et de nous. Pour glorifier Dieu elle s’unit à son fils. C’est là l’essence du christianisme. ---. Elle fait fortement la volonté de Dieu, s’élève dans sa purification en dessus du prétexte et des préjugés ; opposition du respect humain.” Non spiritus hujus mundi accepimus, sed spiritum qui ex Deo est. Le chrétien vit de la vie de J.C.”.³⁹

Although these are only notes the arguments reflect the key ideas that Guéranger has taken from Justin and Irenaeus; the fact that the Christian lives in the world but outside

³⁸ *App.*, “ Purification” pp. 1-3.

³⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

it, obeys the laws of the society in so far as they do not oblige him to worship pagan Gods, accepts the need for personal sacrifice and cares little for what the world thinks of him. Mary personifies these attitudes and in the feast of 'The Purification' they are better demonstrated than in the feast of 'The Annunciation'. Mary has moved on, as it were, in an understanding of the meaning of the Christian message and has wanted more witnesses to the narrative of Christ's life and its consequences for those who choose to follow this. At 'The Annunciation' she was alone, at 'The Visitation' Elizabeth understands the message; at 'The Purification' there is a public statement of the fulfilment of the prophecies which is confirmed in the vision of Anna and in the words of the dying Simeon. The feast is, Guéranger suggests, critical in the process by which the early Church received the message of Christ's birth and cannot be repositioned in the liturgy without altering the foundational message:

Marie se confondant avec les autres femmes, au dépens de sa virginité et de sa maternité si sainte, nous apprend ce que nous devons à la loi de Dieu et quelle est notre crime de l'enfreindre. Cette fête est toute particulière; dans les autres Marie reçoit, dans celle-ci elle donne. Ailleurs les loi cèdent pour elle, ici elle a le mérite de la soumission. Marie cède un Dieu entre ses bras, sous ces ordres, est-il plus parfait hommage? Comparer toutes les scènes dont le temple fut témoin, avec celle de ce grand jour.⁴⁰

The notes on the Purification emphasize the humanity of Mary but as a woman rather than as a mother, as an exemplar for Christians of either sex. This is not to ignore her special status, Guéranger argues, but it is to emphasize the potential for every individual to lead a Christian life, rather than to restrict this to those who have been elected or who have attempted to achieve union with God through uniquely private ways.⁴¹

The devotions to Mary contained in *L'année liturgique* are clearly designed to redress the balance of attention towards Mary and I now analyse two of these feasts, 'La Purification de la Très Sainte Vierge' (2 February) and 'L'Annonciation de la Sainte

⁴⁰ ibid., p. 2.

⁴¹ It is interesting to compare this model with the Mary of the Immaculate Conception who has proved problematic for modern writers such as Marina Warner. There is no emphasis in Guéranger's notes on the Purification on the virginity of Mary but on her qualities as an individual, worthy of exemplification. It is significant that the eighteenth-century liturgists in the way shifted the emphasis of the feast described above and that it has subsequently disappeared from the modern calendar.

Vierge' (25 March). As Guéranger explains in the General Preface, he begins the project at the beginning of Advent that for Christians, he argues, is the start of the liturgical year.⁴² As Louis Soltner has shown he was not able to complete the work, especially since it was very popular and required frequent new editions in order to keep up-to-date with changes in the calendar.⁴³ The first volume devoted to Advent appeared in 1841, the last for which he was responsible, Easter, vol.3, in 1866. After 1866 he only worked on revised editions until his death in 1875, when his successor, Lucien Fromage, completed the work. It is therefore extremely difficult to know exactly which version one is consulting and to what extent he himself has changed earlier versions but I have used the versions in Soltner's collections and avoided any feast which occurs after 31 May which is the liturgical point at which Fromage took over. Bearing in mind that my intention in this chapter is to demonstrate some of the ways in which Guéranger responded to the criticisms of the three archbishops and to his own concerns about the Paris breviary and its imitators, I have looked carefully at the two feasts which particularly interested Guéranger. This methodology has the disadvantage of only allowing analysis of two of the old Marian feasts, those which fall between the beginning of Advent and 31 May but it has the advantage of allowing me to consider the two feasts about which Guéranger was particularly concerned ' La Purification de la Très Sainte Vierge' (2 February) and 'L' Annonciation de la Sainte Vierge' (25 March). The other Marian feast which falls within this period is, of course 'L'Immaculée conception de Notre-Dame (8 December) but this was only added after 1854 and was not, therefore, the subject of his debate with the archbishops. Before discussing the two feasts which I have selected, I need to make some general points about the Marian commentaries that Guéranger incorporates into *L'année liturgique*.

First of all, there are fifty- three entries written by Guéranger and they include commentaries and meditations on Mary on festivals other than those specifically devoted to her. Secondly, the reader is invited to meditate on Mary's feelings and reactions to all the events that occur from the conception up to the death of Christ and beyond this to Pentecost. Thirdly, Guéranger takes the opportunity to propose the octave of any of the feasts (the eight days after the feast and formerly celebrated in the calendar) as days

⁴² Guéranger, " Préface générale ", p. 15- 16.

for devotion and reflection on the Incarnation and also to introduce antiphons which include references to Mary. Fourthly, he introduces commentaries and meditations on the feelings of Mary on certain days when there is no feast accorded to her but where it can be argued that she had a significant input; these are the period of Epiphany and during Pentecost. Fifthly, he introduces two specific feasts not included in the Roman calendar, 'L'Expectation de l'enfantement de Notre-Dame' on 18 December and 'Fête de Notre-Dame Auxiliatrice' on 24 May. The first of these, he argues, has been celebrated in Spain, Belgium, Italy and by certain religious orders since the Council of Toledo in 656. The second has never been an official festival; after a long section on the reasons why Mary has been relatively neglected during Pentecost, he suggests that it is appropriate to dedicate a special day to her when the Church celebrates her role as 'Secours des Chrétiens'; the commentary for this suggests that it is her effectiveness in ensuring the continuity of the faith in its earliest days at a time when the apostles were still disorientated by the death of Christ and before they were endowed with the gift of tongues.⁴⁴ The effect is to emphasize the centrality of Mary's contribution to the life of Christ, as celebrated in the liturgical year.

The two festivals that I cover in more detail demonstrate different aspects of his concerns. The key to the commentary on the first of these is to change the name of the feast back to its earlier title, 'La Purification de la Très Sainte Vierge' in order to emphasize that this was an event crucial to Mary- her purification in the Temple forty days after the birth of Christ⁴⁵. The emphasis, as in the earlier appendices is on the continuity with Jewish tradition, the fact that she offers and buys back her son and that she fully understands the pattern that his life will follow. The sacrificial aspect of the feast is celebrated but the commentary suggests that her sacrifice mirrors Christ's sacrifice and that she consents to this willingly. The ambiguous nature of the event is stressed. Mary, as mother of the Saviour does not need to perform this essentially humble act. As a poor family, she and Joseph are only required to offer a dove, instead

⁴³ Soltner, *L'année liturgique*, "Avant-Propos", pp. 9-11.

⁴⁴ This period of relative inactivity by the apostles, according to the canonical gospels, is one which is covered in detail by Maria of Agreda in her account of the mystical version relayed to her by the Virgin Mary. I deal with this in Chapter Five, below, pp. 147-148.

⁴⁵ Soltner, pp. 86-92.

of the traditional lamb. Conventionally a celebratory festival, the event is made sombre for her by the prophecy of Anna and by the “Nunc Dimitis” of Simeon.

Elle obéit à la loi, parce que les apparences la déclaraient sujette à la loi. Son Dieu et son Fils se soumettait au rachat comme le dernier des hommes; il avait obéi à l'édit d'Auguste pour le dénombrement universel; il devait être obeissant jusqu'à la mort, et à la mort de la croix; la mère et l'enfant s'humilièrent ensemble; et l'orgueil de l'homme recût en ce jour une des plus grandes leçons qui lui aient jamais été données.⁴⁶

Guéranger's commentary on the event goes beyond this and suggests that not only does the Purification demonstrate the significance of Mary as 'la nouvelle Eve', it also shows, perhaps more than any other feast, the way in which her actions are exemplary, that is they can be taken as a model of human behaviour. This notion – that Mary is both human but special underlines the mystery of the Incarnation, at the same time as suggesting that her actions can be imitated by everyone. He ends the section with the following prayer:

Faites, ô Marie, que nous ne quittions plus cet Enfant qui bientôt sera un homme; que nous soyons dociles à ce Docteur de nos âmes, attachés comme de vrais disciples, à ce Maître si plein d'amour, fidèles à le suivre partout comme vous, jusqu'au pied de cette croix qui vous apparaît aujourd'hui.⁴⁷

In short, his focus remains Christological while his arguments for Mary's cooperation in the whole of the narrative of Christ's life remain consistent with the notes he made as a young man.

The increased focus on Mary is also well illustrated in the section concerning the feast 'L'Annonciation de la très sainte vierge'.⁴⁸ Guéranger devotes around 2,500 words to the feast and the whole section is composed of commentary rather than prayers. The timing of the feast is significant – nine months before the feast of the Nativity- but it is also, he points out, celebrated close to the feast that falls on the Friday of Holy Week, when the focus of attention has been on the suffering of Christ. The feast also falls shortly after Septuagesima when the emphasis has been on the sin of Adam and the

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p.89

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p.93

consequences for mankind. However, the prophecy has also shown that mankind will be saved by the appearance of Christ and, Guéranger suggests, it is important to associate Mary with the fulfilment of the prophecy, not only at the time of Christ's conception and birth but throughout his life and especially at the time of his death which the Church is contemplating at this time. He makes a quite specific comparison between the words that the devil spoke to Eve at the time of the temptation and the words that the angel spoke to her at the time of the Annunciation:

Dans les deux rencontres, c'est l'ange qui prend le premier la parole."Pourquoi, dit l'esprit maudit à la première femme, pourquoi Dieu vous a-t-il commandé de ne pas manger du fruit de tous les arbres de ce jardin? " On sent déjà dans cette demande le mépris, la haine envers la faible créature dans laquelle Satan poursuit l'image de Dieu. Voyez, au contraire, l'ange de lumière: avec quelle douceur, avec quelle paix, il approche de la nouvelle Eve; avec quel respect il s'incline devant cette fille des hommes. " Salut, o pleine de grâce! Le Seigneur est avec vous; vous êtes bénie entre les femmes."⁴⁹

Guéranger returns in the next few pages to the idea that the consent of Mary was necessary for the birth of Christ, precisely because Eve was involved in the event that resulted in the Fall; by agreeing to the birth and sacrifice of her son she allows the redemption of mankind to take place. He concludes the section with what is in effect a litany:

Nouvelle Eve, fille de l'ancienne, mais sans le péché! Par votre obéissance aux décrets divins, vous sauvez votre mère et toute sa race; vous rétablissez dans l'innocence primitive votre père et toute sa famille qui est la vôtre. Le Sauveur que vous portez nous assure tous ses biens; et c'est par vous qu'il vient à nous; sans lui nous demeurerions dans la mort; sans vous, il ne pouvait nous racheter. Il puise dans votre sein virginal ce sang précieux qui sera notre rançon, ce sang dont sa puissance a protégé la pureté au moment de votre conception immaculée, et qui devient le sang d'un Dieu par l'union qui se consomme en vous de la nature divine avec la nature humaine.⁵⁰

This section reflects the ideas he was grappling with as a young man in the notes preserved in *Lecture des Saints Pères* and in *Notes et Matériaux*; the idea that because Christ shares Mary's blood this allows the fulfilment of the prophecy that Christ is man

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 113-123.

⁴⁹ *ibid.* p.115.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* p.123

and God, the idea that Mary cooperates in mankind's redemption because she redresses the sin of the first woman, the idea that she has a choice in the matter and is, in fact, a human person who makes choices but is, at the same time special, because she is chosen to fulfil the prophecy at a certain moment in historical time. In summary, it is important to think of Mary shortly before Easter because it is only by contemplating the mystery of the Incarnation that the Christian narrative makes sense.

Conclusions.

In this chapter I have attempted to show how the arguments that Guéranger takes up in his exchanges with the three senior clergy are founded in his earliest thinking. This has involved selecting from the material that relates most closely to the key notion "la règle de croire déroule de la règle de prier" which the three men, but especially Fayet, found difficult to accept.⁵¹ The new breviaries and missals published in Paris and Troyes had, Guéranger considered, undervalued the role and significance of Mary. In his view the authors of these texts had shifted the focus of the liturgical cycle away from Mary and the saints and this had occurred because of their desire for a more scriptural basis for the Offices and for a more Christological emphasis. He attributes these intentions as containing an undercurrent of Jansenist thinking, especially in the way in which the message of the liturgy becomes divorced from the practice of prayer. I want to consider briefly three aspects of this objection of his ; first the extent to which the importance and naming of feasts was affected, second the extent to which the newer breviaries had actually changed the content of the Offices and third the way in which the authors had failed to recognize the need to engage the congregation in the process itself

In his analysis of the texts Kwaterna notes that the Paris and Troy missals use the titles, 'The Presentation of the Lord', 'The Annunciation of the Lord' and 'The Visitation' (they omit "of the Virgin Mary"). Whereas each of the three feasts was formerly treated as a Double, the later breviaries assigned them either a semi-double or

⁵¹ Guéranger attributes this axiom to Pope Célestine I (d.432) in a letter which the latter wrote to the bishops in Gaul, warning them against the Pelagian heresy. See "Guéranger a Reims", p.459.

simple status.⁵² This had complicated consequences for the length of the Office and its structure.⁵³ As I have shown above perhaps the most seriously affected was the feast of 'The Purification of the Virgin Mary', which virtually disappears from the calendar although it is in effect replaced by the 'Presentation of the Lord'. I have been very struck by the fact that the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, published in 1549, retains all the earlier titles, that is to say 'The Purification', 'The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary' and 'The Visitation of the Virgin Mary' and the first of these retains its association with the feast of Candlemass.⁵⁴

Kwaterna in his summary concludes that the French diocesan liturgies did indeed revise what they inherited and did, as Guéranger had argued, prefer scriptural rather than non-scriptural text and a very wide range of Marian images, less dependent on medieval models. His assessment is that these changes reflect "an attempt to convey the meaning of the worship of the day, whether it be Office, Mass or other rite, more clearly and that the aim was "the incorporation of these insights through the Church's liturgy and sacramental life into the lives of ordinary Catholics, to educate them into an adult faith".⁵⁵ This attempt was carried through into the eighteenth century and can be seen in the Jansenist endeavours to introduce the vernacular into the Mass and other Offices.⁵⁶ In a sense, then, it was a very clergy-led project and in keeping with other French Counter-Reformation attitudes to piety.

Guéranger's educational strategy is quite different and depends, I suggest, on methods for engaging Catholics with the liturgy, through immersion in the liturgical calendar and through a handbook that allows people to participate in this every day. Although his strategy seems backward- looking in that he argued for a return to the

⁵² Kwaterna, *Marian feasts*, ch. 3, "Breviary and missal texts for Marian feasts", pp.163-509.

⁵³ For an explanation of how this works see John, Marques of Bute, *The Roman Breviary, reformed by order of the Holy Oecumenical Council of Trent; published by order of Pope Pius V and revised by Clement VIII, Urban VIII and Leo XIII* (Edinburgh and London, 1908), Preface, "The Pie" pp.19-41.

⁵⁴ The Book of Common Prayer, revised edn., 1969. pp. 14-20.

⁵⁵ Kwaterna, op.cit. p. 581. Kwaterna is quoting from J.Pierce, "A study of the ecclesiology of the Missal of Troyes (1736)", *Ecclesia Orans* 6/1 (1989), p.34.

⁵⁶ The points about the Jansenist contribution to the introduction of the vernacular in the liturgy are underlined in Franklin, "The people's work", passim.

Roman Breviary of 1599, his methodology is quite modern in recognizing the efficacy of a process which immerses people in devotion and which is inseparable from the liturgy. At the same time the vernacular commentaries in *L'année liturgique* provide a theological underpinning for the process and allow his the readers the opportunity to reflect on the messages. His audience was clearly the emerging French bourgeoisie, since reading *L'annee liturgique* required a high level of literacy and a taste for metaphor and biblical referencing. He recognized, I believe, the pressures of the industrialisation of French life on those professionals and entrepreneurs who came to Sablé-sur-Sarthe and offered them an alternative pattern of time, more in tune with the spiritual life. The monastic community at Solesmes provided them with a model of the Christian life and worship from which they could draw lessons and *L'annee liturgique* provided them with a handbook to help them along the way!

V Three holy women: Sanctity, prayer and liturgy in the mystical tradition.

Après avoir payé ce tribut, si faible qu'il soit, à la situation commune, nous sommes prêt à reprendre avec une nouvelle ardeur nos labours ordinaires; mais en attendant, nous nous flattons qu'on verra aussi dans ce livre un nouveau mémoire en faveur de la Liturgie Romaine, un incident favorable à la thèse générale dont nous avons embrassé la défense.¹

A framework for thinking about Christian heroines.

Guéranger is writing in the preface to the history of St Cecilia which he published in 1849; not only does he defer starting the third volume of *Institutions liturgiques*, but he sees the saint's story as developing themes which he has already tackled in the liturgical project. He was to follow a similar way of working throughout his life, breaking off from a major essay on contemporary trends in ecclesiastical history in 1858 to write eighteen articles on an obscure Spanish mystic, Maria of Agreda and, in 1863, to translate the spiritual exercises of a rather better known German saint, Gertrude of Helfta.² Additionally he was to spend a considerable amount of time and energy in the last years of his life writing a second version of the Cecilia story that deals with the social and political aspects of her life and describes the archeological research which G.B. de Rossi had carried out in the Roman catacombs.³ He saw these three women as exemplars of a theological position but also of a mystical tradition that he was anxious to retrieve and he is clearly not selecting them at random from the range of saints available to him in the Roman liturgical calendar. These women, I argue, are not significant for him just because they are saints; in fact Maria is still today in a kind of limbo⁴. Their lives span fifteen hundred years of Christian tradition from Cecilia whose tomb was identified by de Rossi as

¹ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, "Preface", p. 8.

² Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme*; Guéranger, *Les exercices de sainte Gertrude* (transl.) (Paris, 1863).

³ Guéranger, *Sainte Cecile et la société romaine*.

⁴ The process of canonization for Maria was promoted by the Spanish bishops in 1666, soon after her death. So far she has secured the title Venerable; in theory this means she can proceed to canonization. See Colahan, *The visions of Sor Maria d'Agreda*.

late- second century, to Gertrude who lived from 1258-1301 and to Maria who lived from 1602-1665. In hagiographical terms the first is a saint of late Antiquity, the second of the high Middle Ages in Germany and the third a mystic of Counter-Reformation Spain. Gertrude and Maria were both recognised by their close contemporaries as mystics and both were nuns in enclosed orders. Cecilia's story is contained in her *Passio*, an alleged witness account of her life and death of which the earliest record occurs in a fifth-century manuscript. This account stresses the centrality of mystical communication in her story; Gertrude and Maria are both remembered by the textual record of the events communicated to them by other than natural means. The very broad span of their experiences leads me to deal with them as exemplars of a theological position and of a method of contemplation and, for this reason, I deal with their writings thematically rather than chronologically.

I want to consider the notion of exemplarity as a way of talking about the three women who are the subject of this chapter and to suggest that there are at least two ways of using this as a framework for analysis. At the simplest level it is possible to think about an exemplar as a person who is worthy of imitation and who earns recognition through the conduct of his or her life and through the public recognition that is awarded to them by the community in which they live. In this sense of the word there are three processes at work – the individual life, the appreciation of the worth of that life by their peers and some kind of process by which a community recognizes the life formally. The practice of canonization, which seems to have its origins in the veneration of the early martyr, can be thought of in this light.⁵ Speaking very generally saints are seen to demonstrate the qualities which imitate the life of Christ and, in the early years, were normally martyrs as well as saints. Guéranger uses this simple model of exemplarity in the conventional Roman Catholic sense when writing about a rationale for the significance of saints in the liturgy.

Or, ces mystères passent en nous, s'incorporent à nous chaque année par l'effet de la grâce spéciale qu'apporte leur communication dans la liturgie, et l'homme nouveau s'établit insensiblement sur les ruines de l'ancien rapprochement avec les membres de la famille humaine qui l'ont mieux réalisé; l'enseignement pratique et l'encouragement ne nous arrivent-ils par nos chers Saints dont le Cycle est comme étoile? En les contemplant, nous

⁵ Origen (c.185-c.254) is the first writer to give the cult of martyrs an express theological foundation within the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. He taught that prayer to the saints is efficacious in so far as the faithful follow in their footsteps, O.D.C.C. p.1445.

arrivons à connaître la voie qui mène au Christ, comme le Christ nous offre en lui-même la Voie qui conduit au Père.⁶

This non-problematic approach to exemplarity, however, assumes that the divine type is easily recognized and universally accepted; it assumes that the life of Christ is instantly recognizable and based on incontrovertible evidence and that it has been described in the same way throughout the whole of Christian history. In fact Guéranger himself, only four years later, in the preface to *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, is already moving beyond this non-problematic version and is alerting his readers of his intention to use Cecilia's story to demonstrate certain qualities which, although they may have been valued at the time when she lived, need translation into a contemporary context if they are to have relevance to the catholic laity in the nineteenth century. He writes:

L'Eglise reconnaît et honore dans sainte Cécile trois caractères dont la réunion la distingue souverainement au sein de cette admirable famille des Bienheureux qui resplendit au ciel et en fait descendre les grâces et les exemples. Ces trois caractères sont : la virginité, le zèle apostolique, le courage humain qui lui a fait braver la mort et les supplices; triple enseignement que nous apporte cette seule histoire chrétienne.⁷

However six pages later and barely a third of the way through the *Préface* he has already replaced virginity with the word continence, a slippage which continues until the end and which allows him to replace a strictly sexual notion of abstinence with a more general term for restraint or discretion and one which can be applied equally to other appetites, for example excessive consumption. It seems that he has already moved beyond the notion of an absolute Christian virtue to one which can be interpreted by his readers in a way which has relevance for them personally and which engenders admiration for the way in which Cecilia conducts herself, throughout her life and death. Not only this, but the belief for which she is prepared to die, according to her *Passio*, is one which is founded on the doctrine of the Trinity and of the life after death.⁸ We are therefore dealing with a much more complex notion of

⁶ Guéranger, *L'année liturgique*, "Préface générale", p. 24.

⁷ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, "Préface", p. 9

⁸ I have used the term *Passio* throughout; Cecilia's story was not accepted as an actual account of her trial; Guéranger uses a fifth-century version, supposedly based on an earlier version

exemplarity than that of the imitation of a virtue or a set of virtues but one which recognizes virtues as historically constructed and Christian doctrine as contested. Cecilia's life and death have a lesson for nineteenth-century Christians, not just because she was martyred on account of her beliefs but because the virtues she represents can be interpreted by Catholics in their own context and, most importantly, because the doctrine she proclaims is the one that which is under attack at the time Guéranger was writing.

Guéranger's notion of exemplarity is much closer to notions which seek to identify the particular conditions under which a belief or doctrine is contested and to demonstrate the way in which the individual who is responsible for sustaining the belief and countering challenges achieves this at their particular historical point in time.⁹ An extended or problematic view of exemplarity also allows him to focus on the key concerns which underlay his work on the liturgy, that is to say the perceived neglect of prayer at the expense of a rigid morality and the downgrading of Marian and other saints' festivals in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century editions of the Gallican breviaries. As I show, the other two women he writes about are distinguished not so much by conventional Christian virtues as by the promotion of certain key doctrines which were still contested in the nineteenth century, by their ability to receive and transmit their supernatural experiences through text and by their ability to convince members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the significance of their messages at the time when they wrote. Cecilia, Gertrude and Maria exemplify what, in Guéranger's view, is core belief which is under attack from both secular and religious sources in the nineteenth century and which he is concerned to retrieve for the renewal of the inner life of the Church. It is probably not a coincidence that he chose women who were from different periods in history, who wrote in different languages and who lived in different countries in western Europe- Rome, Germany and Spain. The monastic tradition, as established by the rule of St Benedict in the fifth century, is critical, in his view, to the way in which the writings of Gertrude and Maria survive

containing witness accounts. The term Acts is conventionally reserved for the actual transcript of a martyr's trial. For a discussion of the authenticity of the Cecilia narrative see Cabrol et al., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne*, vol. 2, coll. 2712-2779.

⁹ I am indebted to the discussion on exemplarity in G.Cubitt, "Introduction: heroic reputations and exemplary lives" in G.Cubitt and A.Warren (eds.), *Heroic reputations and exemplary lives* (Manchester, 2000), pp.1-26.

and the liturgy assures the continuity of the message, embedded as it is in the liturgical Calendar and in the daily Office. Writing in the preface to his translation of Gertrude's exercises, he says:

L'école dont parle ici le P.Faber, et qui a pour base la règle du Patriarche des moines d'Occident, commence à Saint Grégoire le Grand et s'arrête à Louis de Blois qui la clôt dignement; et telle a été l'indépendance de l'Esprit-Saint que des femmes y ont prophétisé comme les hommes. Il suffit de rappeler sainte Hildegarde et sainte Gertrude, à côté de laquelle figurent avec honneur sa soeur sainte Mechtilde et la grande sainte Françoise romaine. Quiconqu'en fera l'expérience, s'il a pratiqué les auteurs plus récents sur l'ascèse et la mystique, ne tardera pas à sentir cette saveur si différente, cette autorité douce qui ne s'impose pas, mais qui entraîne. Là, rien de cette habilité, de cette stratégie, de cette analyse savante que l'on rencontre ailleurs; procédés qui réussissent plus ou moins, et dont on ne recommence l'application qu'avec le risque d'en sortir blasé¹⁰.

This passage gives the best clue to the reasons why the three holy women are chosen. As well as leading conventionally saintly lives, they exemplify not only a set of core beliefs which are contested but also a certain kind of mystical tradition which, itself, had been challenged by the more ascetic practices of the seventeenth-century followers of Barbe Acarie and the women of Port-Royal later in the century. In contrast the lives of Gertrude and Maria both show that each acted as a kind of 'règle vivante' in terms of mystical practice, a monk or nun perceived by the members of the community to embody the different qualities and knowledge expected from a member of the order. Not only does this person provide a daily demonstration of the Rule, but he or she is also recognised by their fellow members of the community; the role is acquired, not ascribed – to use more sociological terminology.¹¹

Although I have interpreted the negative allusions in this passage as referring to the ascetic practices that were practised by the 'Jansenist' nuns of Port Royal, the references to "le P. Faber" require comment. Guéranger is referring to a work by the English Oratorian, Frederick Faber, whom he had met on his visit to England in 1860,

¹⁰ Guéranger, *Les exercices*, pp.24-25. Guéranger adopts the convention, since disproved, that Mechtilde was Gertrude's sister. This arose because Gertrude was confused with the abbess of the monastery at Helfta, Gertrude of Hackenorn. There is no reference in his text to the sources on asceticism and mysticism he mentions.

that is three years before translating Gertrude's exercises. Guéranger admired Faber's spirituality and, in this passage, gives him the credit for reawakening people's interest in the older forms of monastic spirituality which, he felt, had been neglected in France since the seventeenth century. It is possible that Guéranger considered that the English Oratorians had been less susceptible to the influence of northern mysticism than their French counterparts since they had inherited a different tradition which was not tainted by 'Jansenism'. This is especially interesting since Faber himself had a Calvinist upbringing and only converted to Roman Catholicism in 1845. Earlier in the preface to the exercises Guéranger writes:

Le pieux et docte P.Faber a relevé avec sa sagacité ordinaire les avantages de cette forme de spiritualité qui ménage la liberté d'esprit, et produit dans les âmes, sans méthodes rigoureuses les dispositions dont les méthodes modernes n'ont pas toujours le secret."Nul ne peut lire, dit-il, les écrivains spirituels de l'ancienne école de saint Benoît, sans remarquer avec admiration la liberté d'esprit dont leur âme était pénétrée. Sainte Gertrude en est un bel exemple; elle respire partout l'esprit de saint Benoît. L'esprit de la religion catholique est un esprit facile, un esprit de liberté; et c'était là surtout l'apanage des Bénédictins ascétiques de la vieille école. Les écrivains modernes ont cherché à tout circonscrire, et cette déplorable méthode a causé plus de mal que de bien. (*Tout pour Jesus*, Chapitre viii, viii).¹²

It is possible that Faber was referring to Ignatian methods of spiritual exercise, which were dependent on a variety of techniques which could be taught and where a state of meditation is achieved by following a strict discipline.¹³ For both Faber and Guéranger, however, the monastic tradition of mysticism still had much to commend it and, for Guéranger, it is significant because it is intimately linked to liturgical practice.

Guéranger's attitudes to prayer date back to his early years at Solesmes. Cuthbert Johnson has analysed his correspondence with Euphrasie Cosnard, the daughter of a local notable in Sablé-sur-Sarthe.¹⁴ The central theme of the letters is that to love God is the first commandment and that this should be a constant objective

¹¹ For a discussion of Weber's distinction between acquired and ascribed status, see P. Berger, *Invitation to Sociology, A humanistic perspective* (London, 1966).

¹² Guéranger, *Les exercices*, "Préface", pp. 22-23

¹³ H.Graef, *The Light and the rainbow*, pp. 353- 356.

for the individual, even when they are feeling discouraged and aware of their own weaknesses. In order to achieve a healthy spiritual life, there is a need for a sense of proportion and of self-worth and the best way to achieve this condition is to live a life in harmony with the liturgical life of the Church. Several of his directions to Euphrasie mention the need to develop a sense of time which is religious rather than secular and to focus on the different feasts of the Church where the significant events of Christ's life are unfolded and retold in identical fashion every year. Some examples of his directions are:

Ne craignez rien, soyez simple, aimez Dieu et ayez l'esprit en repos ---. Ne cherchez-pas midi à quatorze heures. Vous savez que Dieu est le meilleur et le plus fidèle des amis.¹⁵

Allez à Dieu par la sainte communion, le plus souvent possible et ne vous en faites pas une affaire, mais bien un pain quotidien qu'il faut manger pour vivre et dont il ne faut pas avoir peur.¹⁶

Vous ne deviendrez mieux qu'en communiant souvent, et vous ne deviendrez digne de communier souvent qu'en devenant meilleure. La conclusion est qu'il faudrait faire marcher ces deux choses à la fois.¹⁷

and in one of the later letters Guéranger specifically encloses a copy of *La cité mystique de Dieu*“ which Euphrasie has asked to borrow.

Donnez-moi donc de vos nouvelles. Comment allez-vous? Moi , je vais assez bien, avec des embarras par dessus la tête. Je vous envoie le premier volume de Maria d'Agréda que vous me demandiez depuis si longtemps. Adieu, priez bien pour moi qui en ai tant besoin et qui ne peux jamais oublier de le faire pour vous. Adieu, tout a vous comme vous savez en N.S.¹⁸

¹⁴ Johnson, *Guéranger, a liturgical theologian*, pp. 99-107.

¹⁵ *Correspondance Guéranger- Euphrasie Cosnard*, Archives at Solesmes. There are twenty-eight letters, written between 1828 and 1834. I have consulted typewritten copies of the ones from which I quote.

¹⁶ op. cit., early May 1834 . The letter is undated but internal evidence confirms its attributed date.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 2 December, 1831

¹⁸ *ibid.*, early September, 1834.

This confirms that early on in his career Guéranger was already familiar with the writing of Maria of Agreda and felt its content would be useful to Euphrasie. The debates about frequent confession were a constant source of friction between the Jansenists and Jesuits in the seventeenth century and there is evidence that this still caused differences of opinion amongst the nineteenth-century clergy.¹⁹ It is interesting that in a letter to Giovanni de Rossi, nearly thirty years later, Guéranger makes similar recommendations to another of his spiritual mentees who was experiencing professional and personal stress:

Soyez plus pratiquement pieux, mon cher Nino; fréquentez davantage les sacrements, priez plus souvent et plus volontiers, vous sentirez le courage renaître dans votre âme par la transformation qui s' y opérera.²⁰

In summarizing this discussion on what I have called extended or problematic exemplarity, I want to suggest that there is an unarticulated link between Guéranger's own mystical experience of 1823, his advice to Euphrasie from 1831-1834, the concerns which he first addresses in *Institutions liturgiques* (1841), the start of the project for *L'année liturgique* (1841) and his decision to write the first edition of *Histoire de Sainte Cécile* in 1849. Gertrude and Maria join Cecilia in his mind as women who exemplify three separate strands of the Christian tradition, which are in danger of being lost to nineteenth-century French Catholics. These women exemplify the restoration of core doctrine, the mode of transmitting doctrine through mystical communication and liturgical practice which is the key to the preservation of both doctrine and mystical method. The three women are not saints in the sense of demonstrating conventional saintly virtues, although they all do this in different ways. They are women whose lives can be read at different levels for an insight into ways of improving one's own spirituality and

¹⁹ The most famous of these debates was provoked by the publication of Antoine Arnauld's *De la fréquente communion* in 1643. See J.D.Crichton, *Saints or sinners? Jansenists and Jansenists in Seventeenth-Century France* (Dublin, 1996), pp. 155-158. The control of access to confession and to the mass became a matter of dispute between the parish priest of Solesmes and Léon Landeau, mayor of Solesmes, who preferred to communicate at the abbey church. Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, pp. 347-348.

²⁰ *Correspondance Guéranger-de Rossi*, Archives at Solesmes, 17 May 1861.

relating it to one's own life.²¹ As I show below, they are all in danger of being lost to the Christian tradition either through a discrediting of their testimony or because their message has been distorted through the secularisation of their story. Because Guéranger never wrote down his reasons for selecting these particular saints, rather than others, from the liturgical calendar some of what I argue below is hypothetical but, taken together, their narratives can be read as a summary of the theological positions which he had argued for in *Institutions liturgiques*.

Heroines as exemplifiers of doctrine.

It is in this context that the quotation at the head of this Chapter is important; Guéranger's history of St Cecilia (late second or early third century AD) is exploring the same themes as those which are central to *Institutions liturgiques*; the significance of the liturgy as a dogmatic tool and as the source of the foundational message of Christianity. Guéranger's use of the word "mémoire" in this quotation is interesting; the word, in French, refers to either the textual or the physical marker of a past event, although in this instance he is using it to refer to both kinds of memorial. His first *Histoire de Sainte Cecile* includes a commentary on the whole text of her *Passio* and this is followed by a history of Cecilia's cult from the earliest times up to the nineteenth century. Guéranger itemizes in great detail both textual and iconographical items but the idea for the history was inspired by his second visit to Rome in 1843 where he seems to have consulted the original Latin version of Cecilia's *Passio*.²² In 1848 there was still little drive to open up the excavation of the

²¹ C. Humphrey, "Exemplars and rules" in S.Howell, (ed.), *The ethnography of moralities* (London, 1997), pp.34-43. Using anthropological data, Humphrey argues that Mongolian heroes are constructed in such a way that their lives provide scripts from which individuals can select for their own situation. The narratives have proved resilient over time, even during the communist period.

²² Guéranger appears to have consulted the original Latin version, which was edited by A.Bosio and published in Rome in 1600. He does refer in his text to the French translation, which appeared in 1617 but I am assured that the Archives at Solesmes do not hold a copy of this and it is therefore unlikely that he used it. Communication from L.Soltner, archivist until 2001.

Roman catacombs, although this was to start shortly afterwards²³. His decision to write about the text and the iconography is important but since he privileges the first, this suggests that it is the message that Cecilia communicates that is uppermost in his mind in the late 1840s. Cecilia's narrative has always been a powerful one in Christian hagiography, although at the time when Guéranger was writing his first version the texts on which Bosio based his version were known to date only from the fifth century.²⁴

The unknown fifth century author of the *Passio* begins with a brief prologue where he regrets the fact that the victories of Christ's soldiers are often forgotten, whereas eulogies of famous men are preserved everywhere in stone and brass. Cecilia is an example of the former group; here is a young and beautiful girl, a Christian who has resolved to keep her virginity, without telling either her parents or her fiancé, none of whom are Christians. Her wedding day arrives and, when finally alone with her husband, she reveals her secret and persuades him of the need to convert. She tells him about the angel who protects her and says that if he wishes to see this angel he must go to the third milestone on the Appenine Way where he will find the holy bishop, Urban hiding amongst the tombs. Valerian does as she wishes and while Urban is praying over him, an old man dressed completely in white appears. Valerian is terrified, falls to the ground but is helped to stand up and is offered a book which he must read before he can be baptised. The text contains the essential belief which Valerian must confess before he can be baptised and Guéranger, following Bosio, recounts the event:

Valérien lève les yeux et commence à lire sans prononcer de paroles. Le passage était ainsi conçu: " Un seul Seigneur, une seule foi, un seul baptême: un seul Dieu, Père de toutes choses, qui est au-dessus de tout et en nous tous".*

* Unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptisma, unus Deus et Pater omnium, qui super omnia et in omnibus, nobis est.²⁵

²³ It was during Guéranger's third visit to Rome in 1851 that he first met de Rossi; he supported the latter in his efforts to persuade Pope Pius IX to reopen the excavations that had been neglected since Bosio's time. *Correspondance Guéranger- de Rossi*, 22 September 1852.

²⁴ Cabrol et al., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne*, vol. 2, coll. 2712-2779.

Valerian affirms, is baptised and returns home where he finds Cecilia dressed completely in white, praying, and above her the winged angel, shining like a fire and holding two crowns of lilies and roses which he places on the couple's heads but which are invisible to others. Before he disappears, the angel asks Valerian if he has anything to request and Valerian replies that it is his wish that his brother, Tibertius, is converted. Shortly afterwards Tibertius arrives at the house and, just as he is kissing Cecilia on her head, he comments on the strong smell of lilies and roses and the emotions that this smell evokes in him. Valerian explains that if Tibertius wishes to know more he too must visit Urban and be baptised. Tibertius is alarmed since he knows that Urban, a famous Christian, has already been condemned to death twice by the authorities and that he runs the same risk if found in his company. Cecilia speaks to him about the future life for Christians:

En effet, lui dit-elle, si cette vie était la seule, s'il n'en était pas une autre, ce serait avec raison que nous craindrions de la perdre; mais s'il est une autre vie qui ne finira jamais, faut-il donc redouter celle qui passe, quand, au prix de ce sacrifice, nous nous assurons celle qui durera toujours.²⁶

Tibertius is astonished at the idea of another, better life and Cecilia explains that the trials we experience in this life are only a preparation for a better life. He is still sceptical and wants to know if anyone has ever returned from this life to tell people about it. At this point, the author of the *Passio* says:

Alors Cécile, se levant avec la majesté d'un Apôtre, fit entendre ces imposantes paroles."Le Créateur du ciel et de la terre et de tout ce qu'ils contiennent a engendré un fils de sa propre substance, avant tous les êtres, et il a produit par sa vertu divine l'Esprit-Saint; le Fils, afin de créer par lui

toutes choses, l'Esprit -Saint pour les vivifier. Tout ce qui existe, le Fils de Dieu, engendré du Pere, l'a créé; tout ce qui est créé, l'Esprit-Saint , qui procède du Père, * l'a animé.²⁷

²⁵ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, p. 52.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.64.* Gueranger adds a note here to explain that this was an early definition of the Holy Ghost which was changed in the Nicene Creed to the doctrine that the Holy Ghost proceeds

Tibertius protests that she has just insisted that there is only one God and now she is saying that there are three. In Guéranger's translation Cecilia replies:

Il n'est qu'un seul Dieu dans sa majesté, et si tu veux concevoir comment il existe dans une Trinité sainte, écoute cette comparaison. Un homme possède la sagesse; par sagesse nous entendons le génie, la mémoire et l'intelligence; le génie qui découvre les vérités, la mémoire qui les conserve, l'intelligence qui les explore. Reconnaissons-nous pour cela plusieurs sagesse dans le même homme? Si donc un mortel possède trois facultés dans une seule sagesse, devons-nous hésiter à reconnaître une Trinité majestueuse dans l'unique essence du Dieu tout-puissant?²⁸

I have quoted this passage at length, since it contains a very clear statement of the Trinitarian position and it demonstrates something about the personality of Cecilia herself, as perceived by the writer of the story – a theme I return to later. There are other instances in the *Passio* that communicate key doctrine, notably in Cecilia's dialogue with Almachius her prosecutor, where she argues that the message of the Christian faith is that the power of institutions, like the one he represents, is temporal whereas her power comes from God himself who is immortal; further on she impresses and infuriates him by saying that whereas God has power over life and death, he only has power to give her death. Almachius orders her to be taken home and suffocated in her own bath and, when this is unsuccessful, he orders her to be decapitated. Her prophecy is fulfilled, since the executioner is unable to strike off her head with the three statutory blows and she dies peacefully, bleeding to death from her wounds and surrounded by her fellow Christians and servants. She is buried by Urban, in such unclear circumstances that one element of her cult, which was to persist, was the contested fact of her existence. In spite of this, the words that she received through direct communication with God, were preserved in the liturgical Office and were handed down through the celebration of her feast day.²⁹

from the Father and the Son. The doctrine is still a subject of disagreement between western and eastern orthodoxies.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.65.

²⁹ Pius V's breviary actually contains a much curtailed version of the story and the emphasis in the Office, which is a Double, was on Cecilia's virginity since many sections are taken from the Common Office for a virgin and martyr. It is also significant that, Cecilia's feast day falling on November 22, it was unlikely that Guéranger would live to write the commentaries in *L'année liturgique* and he nominated a successor, Fromage.

Gertrude of Helfta lived from about 1256 until 1301. In contrast with Cecilia, there are authenticated accounts of her life, although it is important to note that these were not available to Guéranger and he used evidence about the facts of her life, which in the twentieth century has been shown to be incorrect. This does not seem to be serious, although in the nineteenth century she was confused with the abbess of her monastery, Gertrude of Hackeborn. The timing of the first translations of her writing is more significant. *Les exercices* were published as part of the first volume of her complete works in 1536. This was part of a collection of all the writing of the 'women of Helfta' edited by Lanspergius, a Carthusian monk, and published by the Charterhouse foundation of Saint Barbara in Cologne. The edition was widely disseminated in Spain, Portugal and Italy, although not in France or England.³⁰ Gertrude was a choir nun and, after her conversion at the age of twenty-five, she was entrusted with the spiritual direction of the novices. Her writing was popular in France from the middle of the seventeenth century, nearly a century after her dissemination of her works in southern Europe. She was most often associated with the mystical current represented by Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-90), the Visitation nun, whose visions came to her in the form of the bleeding heart of Christ, as he appeared on the cross; devotions to Margaret Mary up to the present time represent the mingling of His blood with hers. This, actually, seems quite alien to Gertrude's vision which is quite specifically linked to a vision of Christ as a living spouse and companion and which celebrates his life, as laid out in the liturgy. Her writings are mainly in German, in one instance in Latin, and are directed to the nuns who were her companions. The aim is to help them lead a life that is closer to Christ and, in this way, closer to God.

The exercises comprise a series of directions or prescriptions on how to pray in order to obtain the companionship with Christ that Gertrude herself experienced and the inspirations which accompany the writing occur at precise dates of the liturgical year. It is important, when thinking about the relevance of her message for Guéranger,

³⁰ J.Houlier and A.Schmitt, *Gertrude d'Helfta. Oeuvres spirituelles: vol.1, Les exercices* Solesmes, 1966, "Introduction", p.25," *Carmélites et Bénédictins en France*", p. 25 ff. For a bibliography of Gertrude's works translated into Spanish in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see J Carvalh, *Gertrudes de Helfta e Espanha* (Porto, 1981).

to remember that she lived from 1265-1301.³¹ The term spiritual exercises originates in a text from St Bernard of Clairvaux, where he argues that bodily exercises, as practised in the monastic tradition, are to be undertaken for the purpose of better being able to undertake spiritual exercises; it was important to distinguish between asceticism for its own sake and moderation as a means to heightened spirituality. The term exercise was used up to the late sixteenth century and, after Ignatius Loyola, it came to mean a technique which can be employed by anyone wishing to improve the quality of their prayer and of their spiritual life. Gertrude's other works deal with her visions of and messages from Christ and were written down by a fellow nun for the benefit of the community of her fellow nuns but Guéranger chose to translate *Les exercices*, which I take to be significant.³² The exercises are collected into seven books and draw the attention of readers to times during the daily Office when it is appropriate to say certain prayers or perform certain actions. They are not intended to be privileged over other activities in the cloister and they take their place alongside other practices like the reading of scripture, the choral Office, devotions to particular saints and private prayer. They are grouped around seven themes; rebirth, spiritual conversion, dedication of the self, following Christ, mystical union, 'Jubilus' and life in death. One way of interpreting the themes is to treat them as a template for the life of the nun, from baptism through to death and beyond and which God revealed to Gertrude at the time of her own conversion when Christ appeared to her and invited her to be his companion, promising that he would always accompany her.³³ This is an important point; Gertrude's mysticism is Christocentric but although throughout her writing Christ is presented in His human nature, He is always presented as one with the Holy Spirit and as part of the Trinity while "still in the substance of the flesh".

³¹ Gertrude's nearest woman contemporary in France is Marguerite d'Oingt (12 ?- 1310). Marguerite was a Carthusian nun who wrote mainly in provençal. See A. Duraffou et al, *Les oeuvres de Marguerite D'Oingt*, (Paris, 1965). There do not seem to be any extant writings by French women in the mystical tradition after 1310 until those of Barbe Acarie at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

³² Guéranger, *Les exercices*, Préface, p. 9, "Les merveilles qui signalèrent la vie de Gertrude se rapportent presque toutes à l'étroite familiarité qu'il plut au Fils de Dieu d'entretenir avec elle, d'une manière si constante et touchante qu'il a semblé au pieux Louis de Blois qu'on y pouvait prendre l'idée des relations qui durent exister ici-bas entre le Sauveur et sa sainte Mère".

³³ A. Barratt, *The herald of God's loving kindness*, Books One and Two (Michigan, 1991), pp.100- 174.

This is the reason for the bridal imagery which she frequently uses and which might have caused problems for some of Guéranger's audience because of its overt sexuality.³⁴ I give examples of some of the ways in which Gertrude advises her fellow nuns on how to achieve a sense of close companionship with Christ and, in this way, with God and the Holy Spirit.

In the first exercise, 'Baptism', she recollects the ceremony of baptism and confirmation and recommends reading the Creed, signing oneself with the cross, receiving Mary as a godmother, being named, being immersed, putting on the white baptismal gown and receiving the lighted candle. She is trying to exhort her readers to a new beginning and uses words like renew, reshape, remake, regenerate, restore; she recommends meditation on the power of receiving communion, linking the notion of the Eucharistic presence with that of commitment and renewal. In the second exercise, 'Spiritual conversion', she focuses on the anniversary of the clothing of the nun in her monastic habit as a basis for meditation, on the idea of excluding from life everything that is not dedicated to Christ. In the third exercise, 'Dedication of the self', she uses the rite of the Consecration of Virgins to meditate on the theme of spiritual matrimony, and the consequences of commitment to a life with Christ. The whole ceremony is evoked by wedding imagery, from the mutual exchange of vows and the kiss of love that seals an inseparable union. The bond of love between the two spouses is compared to that which unites the Father to the Son and the union is celebrated by a mystical dance in heaven.³⁵ I give below two excerpts which demonstrate Gertrude's recommended technique for meditation and also give a flavour of the content of the exercises:

³⁴ P.Guéranger, *Les exercices*, "Préface", pp. 33-34. " Il ne nous reste plus qu'un mot; il sera à l'adresse de ceux qui seraient tentés de tirer scandale du langage passionné de sainte Gertrude, dans les épanchements de son amour envers le Sauveur des hommes.-----une plus forte dose de spiritualisme eussent peut-être conduit l'écrivain à se demander si, au contraire ne serait-ce pas l'amour humain qui aurait dérobé à l'amour divin ses expressions enflammées? Dieu, inspirateur de toutes les affections pures et saintes, a voulu aussi être aimé de sa creature. Dans l'ancien et le nouveau Testament, il a daigné lui-même s'appeler L'Epoux.

³⁵ It is interesting that both Cecilia's *Passio* and Gertrude's exercises evoke wedding imagery. Although much of the spousal imagery draws on St Bernard, the *Passio* is based on a fifth-century manuscript which suggests an early date for this topos.

Toutes les fois que tu voudras vaquer à l'amour, retire ton Coeur de toutes les affections désordonnées, des embarras, et des phantasmes; choisis pour cela le jour, à savoir: le matin, au milieu du jour et le soir, pour suppléer au fait de n'avoir jamais aimé le Seigneur ton Dieu de tout ton Coeur, de toute ton âme et de toute ta force. Et alors, en toute affection, en toute dévotion et intention, tiens-toi unie à Dieu dans la prière, comme si tu voyais l'époux lui-même, Jésus, présent, qui, de fait, est présent dans ton âme.³⁶

Le soir, tout anéantie et défaillante dans l'attente de goûter et voir éternellement la face melliflue du Dieu Agneau, précipite-toi dans les embrassements de Jésus, ton Epoux qui t'aime; comme une abeille diligente, adhère tout entière par un baiser à son Coeur; demande-lui le baiser dont la vertu est si grande que, mourant à toi-même, maintenant à ta mort, tu passes en Dieu, et deviennes avec lui un seul esprit, criant dans ta soif:

“ Comme le cerf aspire aux sources d'eaux, ainsi, mon ame te desire, ô Dieu. Mon âme a soif du Dieu fort, du Dieu vivant. Quand irai-je, quand paraîtrai-je devant la face de Dieu? Mes larmes sont mon pain, le jour et la nuit, lorsqu'on me dit chaque jour: Ou est ton Dieu?”³⁷

These brief extracts demonstrate some of the key features of Gertrude's writing; the linking of meditation to specific times of the liturgical day, the scriptural references, the bridal imagery and the visual symbolism which is translated into poetic language. It is almost impossible to separate Gertrude's theology from the form taken by the articulation of her message.³⁸ Gertrude is not a scholastic; she is not engaged in speculative discourse about the meaning of the Trinity or the relative merits of Thomist or Scotist explanations about the nature of divinity. She delivers her message about the dual nature of Christ and the knotty problem of the one and three persons in a way which is untouched by doubt and which is permeated by references to liturgy. Her writing communicates doctrine but in a manner which is neither arid nor complicated but physically explicit and which exemplifies the monastic notion of linking mediation to liturgical practice.

The third woman that Gueranger wrote about in the period after completing *Institutions liturgique* was Maria of Agreda (1602-1665). We know from his correspondence with Euphrasie Cosnard that there was a copy of the first volume of a

³⁶ Houlier andt Schmitt, *Les exercices*, "Exercice" 5, p. 157

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 169-170. I have used Houlier and Schmitt's annotated version for these quotations.

³⁸ P..Doyère, *Gertrude d' Helfta*, vol. 2, *Le Herault*, Livres I et 2, "Introduction", p. 51.

French translation of Maria's most well known work, *The mystical city of God*, in the library at Solesmes as early as 1834. This was probably the edition translated by T. Croset and published in Brussels in 1715, which is still in the Archives there. Guéranger did not read Spanish but he had clearly found a copy of volumes two and three of Croset's edition or had read one of the Italian translations that appeared shortly after her death. It was not until 1858 that Guéranger began the articles and it seems that he was provoked to do this by a new French edition of Croset which appeared in 1856.

Maria's original text in Spanish was written down in 1637 but was not published until 1670, five years after her death, a delay that I discuss below. *The mystical city of God* is a vast work; there are three volumes that include eight books, each containing twenty-five chapters. It is an account of the life of the Virgin Mary, as dictated to Maria by Mary, and it starts before the creation of the world and finishes with her assumption into heaven. The first volume includes an account of the life of Ann and Joachim, with the details of Mary's conception, her childhood and the period up to her marriage to Joseph; the second volume deals with the period from the Annunciation to the Ascension and the third with the events after the Ascension of Christ up to her own Assumption. The mystical communication from Mary to Maria took place over several years and most of the material is not found in the canonical gospels. The framework for the story is the liturgical calendar and the feast days of the Church, rather than any of the versions in the canonical gospels and the emphasis of the whole work is on the mystery of the Incarnation. At the end of each chapter, as written down by Maria, Mary provides her own commentary on the events that have been narrated. She gives considerable emphasis to the stages before her own birth which only occurs in Book One, Chapter Twenty One and it is probably on account of this that the work was supported by advocates for the promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, the subject of a dispute between Philip IV of Spain and Pope Gregory XV in 1621.³⁹

However the thrust of her argument is the creational message of the Old Testament, the doctrine of recapitulation and the topos of 'la nouvelle Eve'. Maria's referenced sources, when they are given, are most frequently to the Old Testament

and the extended sections on Mary's life after Christ's death and resurrection give her an organisational role in the early Church. She acts as guarantor of the continuity of the message in the days after the Crucifixion when the apostles were scattered and confused. Maria clearly saw the theological dangers of making claims that Mary was part of the Godhead. Guéranger quotes lines from one of the interventions that Mary makes to Maria in his own commentary:

Ma fille, le monde a un grand besoin de cette doctrine et ce désordre provient de ce qu'ils ont perdu cette crainte et ce respect qu'ils lui doivent .L'hérésie affecte de dire que nous autres catholiques, en exaltant et en développant le mystère de Marie, nous tendons a produire une divinite nouvelle. Rien n'est plus juste ni plus faux. Par la compréhension des merveilles de la mystère de Dieu, l'intelligence arrive a une vue plus complète du divin mystère de l'Incarnation; et ce n'est qu'à la faveur de ce mystère qu'il nous est possible en ce monde, d'acquérir la véritable connaissance de Dieu. Marie est réellement l'échelle mystique, la porte du ciel, pour arriver sûrement et avec une pleine lumière .Ce qui est, dans un sens plus étendu, la Porte par où nous devons entrer--.⁴⁰

Mary seems to say to Maria that she is not a mediator between humans and God but an essential doorway, a means of understanding the mystery of the Incarnation which was foretold by the Old Testament prophets; she stands on the threshold between the old and the new because she has given birth to the Word and she carries on the work after the death of Christ because although he dies, the Word does not die.

The sheer size of *The mystical city of God* makes it difficult to summarize and I have chosen to discuss the extracts which Guéranger highlights in four of the articles in *l'Univers*. His commentary begins with the section on Creation where Mary says that Christ became incarnate through a woman and that this happened before the creation of the sky, earths and stars. This is why Mary is free from sin because sin had not yet occurred. There is a reference to 'Proverbs' 8 and the idea that the history of the world is the history of a story constantly recapitulated and foretold by the prophets. God has revealed himself through others in previous generations ("When Abraham was, I am", St John,8, 58)). There follows a simplistic rationale for how Mary the mother of Christ was conceived immaculate; her body was conceived on a

³⁹ S.Stratton *Spanish art*, p.88.

⁴⁰ *l'Univers*, 15 August 1858. This is, of course, the feast of the Assumption.

Sunday but her soul only joined this on the following Saturday. As an infant she was transported to heaven for a few minutes. This idea is supported by a reference to Revelation 21,1-3. (‘Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more ‘). The next chapters recount Mary’s childhood, the miraculous talents she acquired, the death of her father Joachim six months after she entered the temple, her unhappy life there and her marriage to Joseph when she was fourteen. After her marriage, she only agrees to obey Joseph on condition that she is allowed to give alms to the poor; she knows that she is special and chosen for a purpose. The first volume ends with a reference to the passage in Proverbs 31 which, Guéranger notes, contains the celebrated portrait of the ‘femme forte’, the capable wife who is far more precious than jewels.

The second volume of *The mystical city of God* begins with the Annunciation; Maria paints a picture of Mary as taller than women of her own age and with details of her features and clothes. At the moment of the conception of Christ the material world trembled but humans felt nothing. The significant moment was when Mary gave her consent to give birth to Christ:

Au moment où la Vierge acquiescait aux volontés du ciel, l’humanité du Verbe était formée en elle du plus pur de son sang, l’âme était créée et unie au corps, et l’union personnelle des deux natures en Jésus commençait pour durer éternellement.⁴¹

Maria then points out that the first to receive the news about the Incarnation were all women – Anne who was told about her role in the event, Mary who had received the news from Gabriel and Elizabeth her cousin, at the time of the Visitation. Maria records that Mary supported the household during Christ’s childhood and stresses that Christ entered public life with her agreement. The famous moment at the wedding in Cana when Christ calls his mother ‘Woman’ is said to occur because Christ wishes to emphasize her humanity and to show that the power to perform miracles did not come from her but from Him. There is a suggestion that by this time Mary had already come to exercise a leadership role amongst the other women and an account of the times she experienced bilocation. She is transported to a mountain top to experience

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 26 September 1858.

the Transfiguration, she witnesses the Last Supper from another room where she also empathizes with the agony of Christ in Gethsemene and where she witnesses the betrayal of the apostles. In her commentary on this section Mary, speaking directly to Maria, says:

Durant cette éclipse du collège apostolique, la foi, l'espérance et la charité se maintenait en elle avec une ardeur toujours croissante; elle représentait à elle seule la vitalité de l'Eglise.⁴²

The emphasis in the section on the Crucifixion is on the attempts of Satan to prevent it from happening . Mary does nothing since she has known from all time that this must happen and that the Word must die in order to redeem mankind. The first appearance of Christ to his mother after the Crucifixion lasted for three hours and he then stayed with her in the room whenever he was not appearing to the disciples. Three days before the Ascension she is instructed by the Trinity to take care of the early Church and to be its mother and mistress. An interesting case of bilocation then occurs, Mary ascending with Christ to heaven but at the same time remaining on earth so that she can carry out her tasks in the Church. Mary also points out that it is through bilocation or rather multilocation that Christ can be present in the bread and blood and also in heaven⁴³.

In the third volume Maria records that Mary chose to come back to earth after she had ascended to heaven with Christ. She refers to St John's affirmation of this in *Revelation*, 21 when he celebrates the New Jerusalem and when he describes Mary arriving from heaven dressed as a bride for her husband. Mary tells Maria that, after her own first communion, the sacred host which she took frequently stayed in her from one communion to another. It is she who organised the first journeys of the apostles (Maria actually uses the term bilocations) when they were scattered on their

⁴² ibid., 10 October 1858.

⁴³ The references to bilocation are reminiscent of the early visions of Maria as a very young nun when she perceived herself transported to South America to aid in the work of the Jesuit missionaries amongst the Indian tribes. However Maria was later to say that she regarded her early visions as untrustworthy and this may have helped her case with the Inquisition. She entrusted the first version of *The mystical city of God* to Philip IV and it was this version which ultimately authenticated her text. See C.Colahan, "Maria de Jesus de Agreda, The

various missions and she herself accompanied St John the Evangelist on his mission to Ephesus. Mary describes the setting up of the first monastery for sixty- three women in Ephesus and she claims that, as long as she, Mary, was alive there were no heresies. Returning to Jerusalem she takes part in the celebrations of the festivals that formed the first calendar year of the early Church.

Ces pratiques de la Reine du ciel, par lesquelles elle sanctifiait les principales époques de l'année liturgique devaient assurer aux fidèles qui les célébraient dans la suite en union avec elle les grâces les plus abondantes et les plus précieuses.⁴⁴

Maria records that Mary's death occurred at the age of seventy and she says that she did not have to pass through the last judgement. Mary, commenting on this, attributes it to Christ's intervention with God, arguing that since his mother was conceived immaculate she also took part in his Redemption. Maria herself, using her own words concludes the final volume:

On rapporte diverses autres choses de la mort et de la résurrection de la bienheureuse Vierge; mais comme elles ne m'ont pas été manifestées je ne les écris pas. Du reste, dans toute cette histoire divine, je n'ai pas eu à choisir mes matières et je n'ai pas pu dire que ce qui m'a été enseigné et ce qu'on m'a demandé d'écrire.⁴⁵

The mystical city of God was treated by Maria of Agreda's contemporaries as a mystical communication in support of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. The extracts which Guéranger selects to comment on two hundred years later, when the doctrine had been recently promulgated, are those relating to Mary's assent to the participation in Christ's birth, her actions immediately after the birth of Christ and during his lifetime and to the significant role she had in setting up the early Church, especially the liturgical office and the apostolic missions. Maria's relatively sparse comments on the Crucifixion and Mary's absence from the event itself, suggest that he is concerned to point out the importance of Mary's humanity and of her

sweetheart of the Holy Office" in M.Giles (ed.), *Women in the Inquisition, Spain and the New World*, (Baltimore, 1998), Chapter 8, pp. 155-170.

⁴⁴ *l'Univers*, 21 November, 1858.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 21 November 1858.

competence and of the way in which she guarantees the dual nature of Christ, as epitomised in the doctrine of the Trinity, rather than as a partner in redemption..

Secularisation, neglect and slippage; posthumous successes and setbacks.

If Cecilia, Gertrude and Maria are all, in their different ways, communicators of the foundational message, then they are also women who were admired by their own communities at the time when they were writing and, in each of their cases, there is evidence to show that both their contemporaries and later generations valued their work and their lives. As described in the *Passio*, Cecilia clearly has presence and is admired by the Christian community. Her strategy for converting Valerian is bold, going through with the marriage ceremony and only admitting her vow of chastity after the wedding. She was, according to the story, admired by Urban and her debate with Almachius, her accuser, is argued with referenced sources and fearlessly. She attacks his authority on the grounds that his power only extends to the temporal. As a representative of the State he has power over her life and not over her death. Metaphorically this is demonstrated in the story since the executioner fails to cut off her head and she dies in her own time, in her own house.

Her twentieth century biographers show that her fellow nuns admired Gertrude for her learning and spirituality.⁴⁶ Guéranger's admiration for Gertrude no doubt derived in part from his belief that she had been abbess of a famous monastery but he also appreciated the quality of her writing, her attachment to the liturgy and his belief, expressed in the preface to his translation of her exercises, that she was one of the later exponents of a lost form of monastic spirituality. Guéranger had access to more detailed and more recent information about Maria, from the introduction to Croset's translation of *The mystical city of God* and from the Vatican records concerning the authentication of her visions and the process of beatification.⁴⁷ The

⁴⁶ A.Barratt, *The herald of God's loving kindness*, Books 1 and 2 (Michigan, 1991); M.Finnegan, *The women of Helfta; scholars and mystics* (Athens, Georgia, 1991); G.Lewis and J.Lewis, *Gertrude the Great of Helfta, Spiritual exercises* (Michigan, 1989).

⁴⁷ T.Croset, *La cité mystique de Dieu, miracle de sa toute puissance, abîme de la grace, histoire divine et la vie de la très sainte Vierge Marie, mère de Dieu , notre reine et*

first five articles in the series in *l'Univers* establish the key events in her life and he offers supporting evidence for the quality of her spirituality and the fact that she belongs to a long line of saints who have received private revelations.⁴⁸ The thrust of the articles is to argue that Maria was a mystic whose visions were authentic and recent research using the same material to which he had access suggests that his assessment was reasonable. As Colahan has shown, the record of her oral submissions to the Spanish Inquisition on charges of potential heresy shows that she was able to convince her judges by the force of her arguments and by a skilful acknowledgement that her early experience of bilocation may have been the result of youthful imagination rather than of direct communication from God.⁴⁹

All three women, however, were subject to forms of neglect or scrutiny after their death. Although Cecilia's feast remains in the liturgical calendar, her *Passio* was judged to be apocryphal and large sections of the narrative were excluded from her Office at the time of the Counter-Reformation, along with that of other saints.⁵⁰ Gertrude's writings were lost to most of European Christianity for two hundred and fifty years from her death in 1301 until she was retrieved by the Carthusians in 1543.⁵¹ Even then it was not until the Carmelite nuns established communities in France in the 1620s that she became popular in France. Maria of Agreda is, perhaps, the best example of a mystic whose writings were unknown in France, precisely because towards the end of the seventeenth century she had been the subject of a tribunal on which censored her writings. In all these instances, Guéranger sees evidence of a persisting Jansenist tendency in the Gallican Church to undervalue mystical tradition and, at the same time, to misunderstand the significance of liturgy in defending and promoting the foundational message of Christianity. He also identifies a tendency to secularise the iconography of representations of saints and mystics which he attributes in part to the current fashion for naturalism and historicism.⁵² In order to understand

maîtresse (Brussels, 1715). An earlier translation had been published in France in 1678 and it was this which provoked the hostility of the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne.

48 *l'Univers*, 23 May 1858; 1 June 1858; 20 June 1858; 18 July 1858; 1 August 1858.

50 P. Loret, *La messe du Christ à Jean-Paul II* (Mulhouse, 1988), pp. 156 ff.

51 Houlier and Schmitt, *Les exercices*, "Introduction", pp. 25-26.

this position better, I shall examine how, in different ways, the three women do seem to have been particularly vulnerable to shifts in ideological positions in the Church and in society.

Cecilia seems to have been the subject of representations that were influenced by the period in which her cult was celebrated and this was one of the reasons that Guéranger devotes the second half of his history to a description of its development up to the present day. It is likely that her anonymity lies behind this, although the dramatic nature of her story and its retention in the liturgical calendar in spite of doubts over her existence allowed writers and artists opportunities for poetic licence. As Cabrol and Leclerc have pointed out, the original transcript of the *Passio* was changed in the earliest versions of the Office for her feast day which, while they were based on the fifth century text, made a change to accommodate the words to the tempo of the chant. In the first antiphon in the Office for Laudes, which is repeated in the Office for Vespers, the words “in corde suo” are suppressed so that the impression is given that Cecilia sang, accompanied by an organ. Whereas the antiphon at the Office of Matins read:

Cantantibus organis, Caecilia virge in corde suo soli Domine decanatabat
dicens: Fiat cor meum immaculum ut non confundar.

the antiphon at Laudes and Vespers read:

Cantantibus organis, Caecilia Domine decantibus dicens: Fiat
cor meum immaculum ut non confundar.

It is the second version which survived in the Roman breviary and which gave rise to the literary and artistic representations of Cecilia accompanied by or playing an organ. This was expanded to include secular instruments in seventeenth-century Italian iconography and it became a popular topos in nineteenth-century representations. Carlo Saraceni's portrait of *St Cecilia and the Angel* (c.1610) was a striking early example of this innovation and the late nineteenth-century painter John Waterhouse exhibited what is perhaps the most “profane” image of the saint at the

⁵² Cabrol et al., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, vol.2, col. 2772.

Royal Academy Exhibition of 1895.⁵³ As early as 1849 there is evidence that Guéranger was concerned about the secularisation of Cecilia's image; this is confirmed in a letter he wrote to Madame Thayer, the wife of one of the monastery's most important benefactors:

J'achève en ce moment une histoire de Sainte Cécile que vous recevrez bientôt. Ce travail devrait être publié dans trois mois, on ne peut rien tirer de ces imprimeurs de province. En attendant les quelques semaines que mon volume demande encore, permettez-moi de m'adresser à vous pour un renseignement. N'ai-je pas vu, chez vous, une gravure de sainte Cécile avec deux anges, d'après Paul Delaroche? Ce n'est pas ce que l'artiste a traité avec afféterie et sans rien de chrétien m'ait laissé un souvenir agréable, mais j'aurais besoin de savoir si le tableau a eu la réputation au Salon ou ailleurs. Vous me rendriez service, en me renseignant là-dessus.⁵⁴

The picture that Guéranger is referring to is *Sainte Cécile*, a portrait by Paul Delaroche, of Cecilia receiving a small clavier from the hands of two kneeling angels. Delaroche had made preliminary sketches in Rome, using his wife, Louise Vernet, as the model and it was completed in London in July 1836. Delaroche was influenced by the Italian "primitives" he had seen on his visit to Tuscany and the techniques he used were an attempt to reflect their style. In the letter to Madame Thayer Guéranger refers to the "afféterie" (best translated as affectation or preciousness) which was the assessment made by the contemporary art critic, Henri Delaborde. However, Guéranger is asking for an assessment of how the picture was received by the Salon and the general public. Although there is no record of her reply, subsequent research shows that St Cecilia was a very popular topic in nineteenth century French painting and that twenty-six illustrations were produced between 1831 and 1848. Gautier, reviewing the Salon where it appeared in 1837, was extremely sarcastic about Delaroche's attempts to evoke the Pre-Raphaelites and his comments provide an insight into the reasons for Guéranger's interest in the painting:

⁵³ See *The Genius of Rome (1592-1623)*, Royal Academy of Arts, 20 January-16 April 200, no.77 and A.Hobson, *The art and life of J.W. Waterhouse R.A. 1849-1917* (London,1980), pp.78/79.

⁵⁴ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise*, pp. 264. See also Fig. 1, p.151.



Fig.1. Paul Delaroche, *Sainte Cécile*, 1836. Engraving by François Forster, 1840. Bordeaux, Musée Goupil.

Les peintres gothiques, malgré leur pâleur de ton, modèlen: admirablement, et avec très peu d'ombre, ils obtiennent un relief suffisant, tant la dégradation des tons est habilement ménagée; ici rien de semblable; ---; les figures des anges sourient niaisement et n'ont point cet air d'onction et de béatitude des anges gothiques, leurs bras, d'un rose violâtre, ont l'air d'être recouverts d'un maillot de soie, comme ceux des choristes de l'Opéra et leurs mains sont si maladroitement juxtaposées que celle qui porte l'épINETTE paraît avoir huit doigts ---.⁵⁵

The original painting, which is today in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is a very good early example of the kind of painting for which the English pre-Raphaelites became celebrated; they and their successors continued to paint highly stylised but naturalistic representations of Cecilia and other saints up to the end of the century, and these paintings are still very popular with the public and with collectors today.⁵⁶

Guéranger was to attempt to correct this secularisation of the Cecilia narrative in the last major work he wrote before his death and which I discuss in Chapter Six.⁵⁷ In this work he includes twelve engravings of the saint, the earliest dating from the thirteenth century and none of which includes a musical instrument. The fashion for depicting Cecilia with a musical instrument not connected with sacred music dates from the Baroque period in Italy and is linked to the more general trend to humanize religious painting and to make it appeal to the emotions rather than to the intellect. Carlo Saraceni's painting, *St Cecilia and the angel* (c.1610) is one of the first examples where she is depicted playing an instrument associate with secular music, the mandolin, whilst the angel is playing a double bass! The fashion for naturalistic representation had been introduced by Caravaggio (1592-1623) and he had applied it to his depiction of musical subjects as well as to his depictions of low-life genre

⁵⁵ *la Presse*, 10 March 1837.

⁵⁶ All the information in this section is drawn from the catalogue commentary of a recent exhibition of Delaroche's work. See C. Allemand-Cosneau and I. Julia, *Paul Delaroche. Un peintre dans l'histoire* Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 22 October, 1999- 17 January 2000, p.296, 35 "Sainte Cecile", 1836, 35a Gravure au burin de Francois Forster, 1840.

⁵⁷ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*.

scenes.⁵⁸ Guéranger's attitude to art, especially when artists are depicting religious subjects is very similar to his attitude to the historicizing trends in nineteenth century ecclesiology which he criticized in *Essai sur le naturalisme*:

---s'il fût jamais un temps où les enfants de l'Eglise ont dû porter haut la bannière du surnaturel, ce temps est celui où nous vivons; qu'ils doivent en toutes manières professer ce principe fondamental du christianisme, et craindre par-dessus tout de favoriser, par leurs réticences ou par l'imprudenc de leur langage, la tendance naturaliste que l'incrédulité moderne a su imprimer à tout ce qui touche de près ou de loin à la religion. La philosophie incroyante s'est réfugiée dans le naturalisme comme dans une citadelle inexpugnable; elle a fait de la toutes les concessions; elle est devenue tolérante, respectueuse même, pour le christianisme; elle avoue tout, jusqu'à ses torts du XVIIIe siècle; mais il est un point sur lequel elle ne cédera jamais: c'est sa prétention à nier le surnaturel.⁵⁹

In other words Guéranger is saying that contemporary naturalism, whether in painting or in historical accounts of Christ, all undermine the divinity of Christ and the saintliness of the saints. These attempts bring both Christ and the saints to the same level as ordinary human beings and deny the transformational message of the Incarnation that their lives and their writings communicate.

Of all the three women, Maria Agreda's work was most subject to challenges from the ecclesiastical establishment. Although the Spanish Inquisition did not accuse her during her lifetime, the orthodoxy of *The mystical city* was subject to scrutiny after her death. In 1745, in an attempt to resolve the confusion and ill-feeling which the ambiguous status of her writing caused between Italy and Spain, Pope Benedict XIV set up a commission to advise on both the text itself and on the authenticity of the supernatural communications she had received from Mary.⁶⁰ The commission did not report until 1771, under Clement XIV, and Pius IX eventually published the seventeenth-century decision that the work was not heretical and that the material was authentic in 1856. In the time between Benedict's decision and its publication, the work was translated into German, Italian and French and published throughout Europe, although not in France. The French translations were published in Belgium

⁵⁸ *The Genius of Rome* 1592-1623, Royal Academy of Arts, 20 January- 16 April 2001.

⁵⁹ Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme*, "Préface", pp. 4-5.

because the work became the subject of a highly politicised tribunal, initiated by the University of Paris in 1695 as a result of which it was censored for nearly a hundred and fifty years in France.⁶¹ A new edition of the 1695 translation by T.Croset followed the 1856 decision and it was this event that triggered Guéranger's series of articles in *l'Univers*. Thirteen of Guéranger's articles are devoted to the subject of this tribunal since he considered that it was the result of a Jansenist faction in the Faculty which was suspicious of any writing considered supernatural and which exerted influence on both Louis XIV and Bossuet not to intervene in the debate.⁶²

It was the publication of Thomas Crozet's French translation of *The mystical city of God* which sparked the reaction of the Sorbonne. Guéranger's description of the origins of the charges that the work was heretical link these to the damage done to the cult of Mary in the late- seventeenth- century breviaries and the neglect of the mystery of the Incarnation. He criticizes the writers of the French School (Bérulle, Condren and Olier are named) for an over-emphasis on Christ at the expense of Mary. "Ils concentrent tout le christianisme dans la connaissance de Jésus Christ" and forget that her mission in the Church was not only to give birth to Christ but to cooperate with him and under him in the education of those who are members of his Church.⁶³ The next five articles are concerned with an overview of his perception of the problems that this Christocentric approach posed for the development of doctrine generally in the seventeenth-century . He attributes this, interestingly, to the fact that the emerging research on the Fathers was not used to review medieval scholastic dogma and, in consequence, the Church in France missed the opportunity to progress its theology. "Chez nous, cette reine des sciences succomba d'inanition après son divorce avec la scholastique".⁶⁴ In the next article he lists the sources he has used for his account of the process set up to censure Maria's work and he includes in these

⁶⁰ It was these Vatican papers that Guéranger had consulted in 1843.

⁶¹ T.Kendrick, *Mary of Agreda; the life and legend of a Spanish nun* (London, 1967), pp.81-82. Kendrick identifies one hundred editions published in Europe since her death. The latest complete English edition was reprinted in 1996. See *The mystical city of God* transl. F.Marison (Washington, 1996).

⁶² *l'Univers*, 16 January 1859- 18 September 1859.

⁶³ *ibid.* 31 January 1859

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, 11 April 1859.

sources the diary of Bossuet's nephew, the abbé Le Dieu, with whom the former corresponded during the trial.⁶⁵ The following articles contain an account of the preparation of the sixty propositions condemning the work which took the Commission two months to prepare and includes an account of the perceived illegality of the court to judge the book. This point was raised by the Franciscans who were supporters of Maria's work and appears to have caused a near riot.⁶⁶ Guéranger's articles become increasingly difficult to follow but the thrust of his argument is that Bossuet failed to intervene, in part because he was ageing and not well motivated. He quotes excerpts from Le Dieu's diary and a letter from Bossuet to his nephew which indicates the latter's impatience with the whole affaire; "Tout le monde est soulevé contre l'impertinence impie du livre de cette Mère".⁶⁷ The Commission sat for thirty-four sessions and, at the end of the debates, the vote was decisive, if not overwhelming, eighty-five for censure of the work and sixty-seven against. This was not quite the end of the affair since there were appeals but finally, on 1 October 1696, the censure was read out to a meeting of the Court and the secretary was ordered to record the censure in the register of the Faculty before the meeting moved on to the next item on the agenda! Chaos ensued, according to Guéranger and the sitting was suspended. As he writes in the article "Ce fut le dernier acte de ce grand drame qui avait duré sept mois". His analysis of the whole process which follows this comment is that the protagonists of censure were motivated by a desire to downgrade the cult of the Virgin Mary, that some were settling old scores, that it was a deliberate gesture by the Faculty to show their independence from Rome and that some of the younger members were openly Jansenist in their sympathies and certainly opposed to "les voies mystiques".⁶⁸

The remainder of Guéranger's articles are concerned with the consequences of the decision and the difficulties experienced in France after this time for the publication

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 15 May 1859.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, 29 May 1859.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 29 May 1859. It is worth noting here, although Guéranger does not mention it, that Bossuet was engaged at the time in a correspondence with Fénelon over the case of Marie Guyon and the Quietist controversy.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 7 August 1859.

of any work which relied on supernatural communication. He makes an interesting comment on this issue which is a good indicator of his position in general:

Car il est reconnu en principe , ainsi que nous l'avons établi plus haut que les revelations privees sont sujettes à contenir quelque melange d'erreur, par suite de la faiblesse humaine, laquelle ne sait pas toujours discerner les idées préconçues qui projettent quelquefois leur ombre jusqu'au sein même de ces illustrations fugitives dont Dieu favorise ses élus.⁶⁹

This recognition that mystical communication is always problematic is evidence of a sociological insight he had which was in advance of his time. It is also the reason for his defence of Maria who, in turn, was defending an idea which had been neglected and challenged and who, in his view, had a right to be heard. His comment also demonstrates why he goes on to translate Gertrude's exercises which represent a tradition even more closely linked to liturgy.

Writing women and the monastic tradition.

If Guéranger used the articles in *l'Univers* to champion the cause of what he calls "révélations privées", then his decision to translate the exercises of Gertrude five years later is designed to privilege a particular kind of mystic communication which, in his view, is one of the contributions which the western monastic tradition has bequeathed to the Roman Catholic Church. This tradition which goes back to St Benedict and which has always been open to women is closely linked to the liturgical tradition and Gertrude's exercises are a particularly good example of the genre.⁷⁰ A part of his argument in the case of Maria of Agreda is that this tradition was lost, in France, between the beginning of the fourteenth century and up to the early

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 9 October 1859.

⁷⁰ Guéranger, *Les exercices*, "Préface", pp. 14-15 "Le grand patriarche saint Benoît recevait d'elle les témoignages de la plus filiale tendresse ---. Saint Grégoire le Grand, saint Augustin, saint Bernard étaient l'objet d'hommages spéciaux de la part de Gertrude; et, entre les Saintes, elle aimait de préférence sainte Agnes, la tendre épouse de l'Agneau divin; sainte Cathérine, la noble et et éloquente philosophe d'Alexandrie, la vierge et martyre sainte Marguérite, si chère à tout le moyen âge---. Listing names chronologically is a technique Guéranger often uses to denote a tradition of writing or prayer.

seventeenth century. His argument, in the case of Maria, was that it was the Jansenist 'conspiracy' which had brought about this mistrust of the supernatural; there is no reason to suppose that he did not see the same process at work in the case of Gertrude.

This interpretation is supported by comparing the situation in Spain where there was a tradition of women writers, exclusively nuns, who were born the generation before Teresa of Avila and who were protected partly by the fact that they lived in enclosed orders and partly by the support they received from the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Spain.⁷¹ The receptivity of early seventeenth century Spain to the works of Gertrude which I discussed above suggests that there was a more welcoming climate for writing of this kind in Spain than in France.⁷² The fact that the works of the Spanish nuns were written in the vernacular was also a factor in the production of their own visions and mystical communications and there is evidence that they acted as transcribers for each other, a tradition which was carried on by both Teresa of Avila and Maria of Agreda.⁷³ While it is possible to argue that Guéranger valued the continuity of tradition in Spain, the qualities he valued in the writings of Gertrude, I suggest, were the fact that she wrote in Latin and the fact that her visions were linked to his beliefs about the Incarnation and about Mary's relationships with Christ.

Les merveilles qui signalèrent la vie de Gertrude se rapportent presque toutes à l'étroite familiarité qu'il plût au Fils de Dieu d'entretenir avec elle, d'une manière si touchante qu'il a semblé au pieux Louis de Blois qu'on y pouvait prendre l'idée des relations qui durent exister ici-bas entre le Sauveur et sa sainte Mère. C'est en lisant les cinq livres des *Insinuations de la divine bonté* que l'on arrive à comprendre à quel point une âme peut être chère à Dieu et répondre à ses avances.⁷⁴

⁷¹ R.Surz, *Writing women in late medieval and modern Spain. The mothers of Saint Teresa of Avila* (Philadelphia, 1995), pp. 128-129. Surz reports that many of the women writers in the convents were protected by Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros, Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo who died in 1517.

⁷² I have used the following texts for background information for this topic; E.Arunel, and S.Schlan, *Untold sisters. Hispanic nuns in their own words* (Albuquerque, 1989); V. Lagorio, "The medieval continental women mystics: An Introduction" in P. Szarmach, *An Introduction to the medieval mystics of Europe*, ch.7 pp.161-194; D.Renevey and C.Whitehead (eds.), *Writing religious women. Female spiritual and textual practices in late medieval England* (Cardiff, 2000); C. Walker Bynum, *Jesus as mother. Studies in the spirituality of the high Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982).

⁷³ Arunel, *Untold sisters*, "Introduction", pp. 4-5.

This raises an interesting point about the women mystics in the late medieval period and provides an insight into why Guéranger was concerned to promote Gertrude's exercises. Mark Atherton, in a recent translation of the writing of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) shows that Hildegard herself acquired her knowledge of Latin from regular attendance at the Office, rather than from any formal instruction.⁷⁵ Atherton reports that the mystical practices associated with the writing of Hildegard and her contemporaries was formalised in the twelfth century by a writer, Hugh of St Victor, who wrote a textbook *Didascalion* which emphasized the value of reading ('lectio divina') and meditation ('meditatio'). According to this textbook, meditation was "the practice of reading aloud and pondering with the whole person – not only with memory, will and attention, but also with body, mind and spirit- on the meaning of the text."⁷⁶ Atherton quotes extracts from Hildegard's own account of how she experienced her visions:

The light which I see is not confined to one place, but it is far, far brighter than a cloud which carries the sun; nor can I gauge its height or length or breadth and it is known to me by the name of the "reflection of the living light". And just as the sun, the moon and the stars appear in the waters, so the Scriptures, sermons and virtues and certain works that humans have wrought, shine on me brightly in this light---

Whatever I see or learn in this vision, I hold in my memory so that I can recall whatever I have seen or heard; and I simultaneously see and hear and understand and, as it were learn in this moment. But what I do not see, I do not understand, because I am unlearned. And the words which I write I have seen and heard in the vision; nor do I put down words other than those I hear in the vision, and I present them in Latin, unpolished, just as I hear them in the vision. For I am not taught in this vision to write as the philosophers write; and the words in this vision are not like those

⁷⁴ Guéranger, *Les exercices*, "Préface", p. 9. See also Ludovicus Blosius, *A book of spiritual instruction*; revised edn. transl. B. Wilberforce (London, 1955), "Letter to Florentius A Monte", pp. 16-17. "Even if we could not prove by other arguments the certainty and firmness of the Catholic faith except from the books of those blessed virgins Gertrude, Mechtilde, Hildegarde, Elizabeth of Schoenau, and Bridget the widow, what they have written ought to make the heretics exceedingly ashamed."

⁷⁵ Hildegard of Bingen. *Selected writings*, translated with an introduction and notes by Mark Atherton (London, 2001).

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, "Introduction", p. 19.

which sound from the mouth of man, but like a trembling flame, or like a cloud stirred by the clear air.⁷⁷

Although there is no evidence that Guéranger read Hildegard of Bingen, he was familiar with Hugh of St Victor and was clearly attracted to the kind of mysticism that the twelfth-century monastics practised. It was this form of meditation that which was familiar to Gertrude and it is highly likely that this is the model Guéranger had in mind when he advised Euphrasie Cosnard to go regularly to Mass and when he was planning *L'année liturgique* as an accompanying reader to the Offices. In the preface to Gertrude's exercises, he singles out "Exercice du divin amour" as a particularly valuable text ("l'on arrive à comprendre à quel point une âme peut être chère à Dieu et répondre à ses avances").⁷⁸ A brief extract from this exercise echoes some of the descriptions of meditation provided by Hildegard and contains the same combination of biblical sources, Victorine theology and visual imagery:

O amour, te voir, c'est être hors de soi pour s'abîmer en Dieu .S'attacher à toi, c'est s'unir à Dieu par une alliance nuptiale. O lumière très sereine de mon âme, et matin resplendissant, ah, deviens enfin en moi le point du jour, luis sur moi avec tant de clarté que dans ta lumière je contemple la lumière, et que par toi ma nuit soit changée en jour. O mon très aimé Matin, tout ce qui n'est pas toi, que par amour de ton amour, je le répute pour rien et vanité. Oh, visite-moi dès le point du jour, pour me transformer soudain en toi tout entière.⁷⁹

In this chapter I have argued that in the period between completing the first three volumes of *Institutions liturgiques* and his death in 1875, Guéranger chose to write about three exemplary women whose lives encompassed fifteen hundred years of Christianity. For which audience was he writing? Before discussing this in the concluding chapter, I examine the second work about St Cecilia that he wrote towards the very end of his life and which offers some answers to this question.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷⁸ Guéranger, *Les exercices*, "Préface", p. 9.

⁷⁹ Houlier and Schmitt, *Gertrude d' Helfta*, "Exercice du divin amour", p.159.

VI Archaeology in support of doctrine: Recapturing St Cecilia for the faith.

Nous ne devons pas aimer les choses à cause des lieux, mais les lieux à cause des bonnes choses.¹

Je suis citoyen de Rome souterraine.²

Models and messages

In Chapter Two, I discussed Rowan Williams' paper on the organisation of the early Church in the years preceding the Council of Nicea (342). Williams compares two possible models, one which conceptualises a centralised system with authority flowing down from Rome from a very early period and the other a much more open network of early Christian communities, physically separate over a wide area and in contact through the exchange of letters, missionaries and, in some instances, money.³ This second model seems closer to the situation described in the writing of the Fathers; for example Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Gregory of Nyassa, were not Roman by birth, although the first two and probably the third, visited Rome and studied and preached there. One of the earliest debates concerning the language of the liturgy took place between St Hippolytus and two early popes, Zephyrin and Callistus.⁴ Long before the formal split between western and eastern orthodoxies, the Church carried on an internal debate over doctrine alongside the debates with the various Gnostic heresies that figure so prominently in the writings of Irenaeus. Clement of Alexandria uses the term Gnostic as synonymous with what we

¹ Extract from a letter written by St Gregory the Great to St Augustine of Canterbury, quoted in Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, vol 1, p. 166.

² *Correspondance Guéranger-de Rossi*, 27 February 1855.

³ Williams, *The making of orthodoxy*, ch.1 pp. 1- 23.

would now call Christian and much of his writing is concerned to demonstrate that his teaching is the true Gnosticism.⁵ Whilst modern analyses of this kind were not available to Guéranger, his reading of the Fathers led him to appreciate the conflictual nature of the early years of Christianity and, in his later writing, to over-emphasize the role that Rome played in the resolution of the debates.⁶ This is not surprising given his own strong support of the papacy in his early writing and his anti-Gallican stance in general. Writing in the preface to the first *Histoire de Sainte Cecile* in 1849, he says:

Cependant, avouons-le avec sincérité, l'état des sociétés européennes à quelque degré de l'échelle sociale qu'on l'envisage, atteste que les catholiques d'aujourd'hui ont besoin de retremper leur énergie aux sources mêmes d'où est émané le principe de vie indestructible qui existe toujours chez eux ---. Cette régénération devenue nécessaire, cette direction dont le besoin se fait sentir, nous le trouverons dans l'étude attentive de notre passé. Aux jours où s'ouvrit la prédication évangélique, le monde était plus malade encore qu'il ne l'est aujourd'hui; la Parole de la vie descendue du ciel, mais cependant confiée à des hommes, le sauva de la mort.⁷

As early as 1849, he is already thinking about similarities between the unsettled state of society in his own time and the decadent period in the history of Rome and about comparisons between those Romans who adopted Christianity and the society, which still worshipped pagan gods. There is also evidence that he saw himself fulfilling the role of historian in bringing to light some of the particularly patrician values which Cecilia's presumed family exemplified:

Une traduction pure et simple de son récit n'eût pas rempli notre but qui était de faire complètement connaître sainte Cécile; il nous a semblé que le biographe d'un saint avait les mêmes droits que tout autre historien, et qu'il n'exagérait point son rôle, si quelquefois, au défaut des renseignements positives, il suppléait à l'aide d'une vraisemblance justifiée par les monuments. C'est ainsi, par exemple, nous n'avons fait aucune difficulté d'attribuer à la famille Caecilia

⁴ Loret, *La messe du Christ à Jean-Paul II*, ch .2 , p. 51.

⁵ Guéranger is always very wary about using Clement of Alexandria as a source for his views on the early Church. Clement's writing is informed by his Greek background and he is always concerned to stress the theological orthodoxy of his views. See D.Buell, *Making Christians; Clement of Alexandria and the rhetoric of legitimacy* (Princeton, 1999), p. 95 "Shall we not, at the risk of displeasing our fathers bend our course towards the truth and seek after him who is our father?"

⁶ There is no evidence that Guéranger ever read Gibbon's *Decline and fall of the Roman empire* but his views often reflect those of the English historian.

⁷ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, "Préface", p. 6-7.

Metella l'honneur d'avoir produit notre sainte Martyre. On sait que cette race, si glorieuse déjà au temps de la République, existait encore dans Rome sous les empereurs du troisième siècle, et que le nombre de ses membres était très considérable. Les *Actes* de sainte Cécile nous apprennent qu'elle était d'une illustre famille de Rome, nous avons pensé, avec Bosio, qu'on était en droit de la rattacher à la famille historique que le nom de Caecilia désignait suffisamment.⁸

He raises the question of Cecilia's ancestry in 1849, although he has only a small section about this, preferring to devote the chapters which follow the account of the *Passio* to a history of her cult from the earliest times up to the nineteenth century. This leads directly to ask why Guéranger felt the need to produce, at a very late date in his life, another version of the Cecilia story and one which emphasizes her Roman origins, rather than the Incarnational message which is the focus of the *Passio*. The second version of her story that appeared in 1874 is a very different kind of publication, written for a similar audience as the first but with other motivations and including other messages.⁹

In a recent article Simon Ditchfield has argued that there was a quite specific effort on the part of ecclesiastical historians and the clerical hierarchy in Tridentine Rome to create what he calls an early Christian school of sanctity.¹⁰ This was constructed on the material remains of saints, which had been retrieved from their original place of burial in the Roman catacombs and interred in the reliquary chapels, consecrated in Rome in the second half of the sixteenth century. It was accompanied by the production of martyrologies and of ecclesiastical histories by scholars such as Baronio. The excavations of early archaeologists like Antonio Bosio and the liturgical reforms of Pius V are also part of the movement. Ditchfield identifies this as a Counter-Reformation strategy to locate a hagiographical community within a geographical community so that a chronologically disparate group of saints became identified with a particular moment in Church history. The findings from patristic studies had raised the hope that it would be possible to reconstruct many features of early Christianity and the Tridentine project sought to capture this for Rome.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 19-20. The French word "monuments" used in this extract refers to written documents

⁹ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*,

¹⁰ S.Ditchfield, "An early Christian school of sanctity in Tridentine Italy", in S.Ditchfield (ed.), *Christianity and community in the West. Essays for John Bossey* (Aldershot, 2001) ch.11, pp. 183- 205.

Ditchfield's paper is largely devoted to the case of a particular saintly community – early Christian Roman virgins. His conclusions are that their credentials as Roman were more significant than their virginity and that this allowed contemporary Roman women of a certain class to use them as exemplars, irrespective of sixteenth century prevailing social norms concerning virginity. Their conjured-up presence could become an inspiration to Catholics whose faith was challenged by the religious turmoil of the time; this is illustrated by a quotation from the journal of an English visitor to Rome in 1581:

And if any where a man stand nigh to these tombs, he perceaveth his sence by and by ravished with this sayd force, for the sight of the coffin entering into the hart, pearceth it, stirreth it up and moveth it in such a maner, as if he that lyeth there dead, did pray with us, and were visibly present to be seen. ¹¹

The power of relics and of other memorials to evoke emotional responses in the religious consciousness was not, of course, new and is the basis of much conventional catholic devotion. The Counter-Reformation project in Tridentine Rome was characterised by the sheer volume of activity and its specific alliance with Counter-Reformation political events. The translation of the bodies of the saints Nereus, Achilles and Flavia Domitilla on Sunday 11 May 1597 is one such event; another is St Philip Neri's annual procession to the seven churches.¹² More closely linked to the early Christian virgins was the disinterment of St Cecilia's body by Cardinal Sfondrati from underneath the altar of St Cecilia's titular church in Trastevere and its subsequent display and reburial in the same location. This event is even more spectacular when one considers the political drama being played out in the trial and condemnation to death of Beatrice Cenci in 1599 for the murder of her abusive father. Sfondrati commissioned a statue by S. Maderno, the baroque sculptor who is alleged to have drawn a sketch of the shrouded and reclining figure of the saint, as it was revealed when removed from the coffin. ¹³

¹¹ Gregory Martin, *Roma sancta* (1581), ed. G.B.Parks (Rome, 1969), p. 27.

¹² S.Ditchfield, *Liturgy, sanctity and history in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the preservation of the particular* (Cambridge, 1995), ch. 3, Hagiography as liturgy in a local context: pp. 85-96.

The different events are not formally linked but the argument is convincing that in this particular place, Rome, and at this particular time, the closing years of the seventeenth century, a consistent exercise in the reification of Roman sanctity seems to have taken place. The success of this, it was believed, depended on the practice of ostentatious display and on the active participation of the Roman community, with the aim of arousing emotion and effecting religious commitment.

Whilst the phenomenon is explicable in the context of Counter-Reformation Rome, it is less obvious why towards the end of his life Guéranger felt the need to produce another version of his earlier history of Cecilia. The work is an elaborate production with text outlining the history of Rome from its foundation up to third century AD. It contains over a hundred and sixty lithographs and engravings and the account of Cecilia's life and martyrdom is reduced to seventy- seven pages in a work of five hundred and sixty pages. Before discussing the text, I want to suggest that there at least three factors at work-, the nineteenth- century revival in the popularity of catacomb relics and associated devotional practices, the personal commitment which Guéranger felt to the inheritor of Bosio's mantle, Giovanni Baptiste de Rossi, and the increasing strain to popularise which appeared in both his writing and in his projects towards the end of his life.

Celestial communities in nineteenth- century France

The notion of recreating a spiritual community in a geographically different location was a feature of catholic piety after the Revolutionary period in France and, specifically, after the return to Rome of Pope Pius VII in 1800. This development drew together clergy and laity who, later in the century would diverge over those issues that separated Gallican and Ultramontane wings of the Church.¹⁴ Philippe

¹³ A. Bosio, *Historia passionis B. Caecilia virginis, Valerianis, Tiburtii et Maximimartyrum* (Nunc primum in lucem edita Romae apud Stephanum Paulinum, 1600) (trans. S. de Welles) (Arras, 1617) p. 274-275.

¹⁴ C. Bailly, *Un préat d'ancien régime au XIX^e siècle, sa famille et son groupe; le cardinal de Rohan-Cabot, archevêque de Besançon, 1788-1833* (Paris 1904), pp.179-180. Bailly relates the story of how, as a young abbot, the Duc de Rohan buried the relic of Saint Victoria in a

Boutry has analysed the diffusion of the relics of early martyrs, whose remains had been removed from the Roman catacombs during the early excavations undertaken in 1578.¹⁵ The practice, which had been put under the control of Vatican legislation in 1667, required an applicant to approach the Custodian of the Holy Relics, responsible to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, with a request for a 'body'. Mostly these remains belonged to unknown persons, many of them children, who, it was thought, had been martyred for their faith in the early centuries of the Church's history. The criterion by which their martyrdom was recognised was the representation of a palm branch close to the tomb and a bowl or saucer, presumed to have contained a portion of their blood. The existence of the registers belonging to the Custodian has allowed Boutry to identify the recipients of a relic and to show their geographical distribution. It is evident from this data that in the century and a half following the establishment of the system in 1667, most of the relics went to the Italian states. However, whilst Fénélon refers to the practice in the late seventeenth century in France, it was not until the 1830s that there was a marked increase in the acquisition of this kind of relic.¹⁶ Between 1837 and 1850 a very high proportion of these relics went to France.¹⁷ The nature of the relics, sometimes a few fragments and very rarely a complete skeleton, meant that, if they were to be displayed, it was necessary to fix them in wax and, normally, dress them in appropriate clothes before enclosing them in a reliquary. It was also the custom to give them a name and, since most were unknown, to adopt an adjective, which represented the qualities of the presumed saint; for this reason, they were commonly known as 'saints baptisés'. It is evident that this practice, seen to be

chapel at his home in La Roche-Guyon; the ceremony was attended by several notable aristocrats and by Berryer, Lacordaire, Montalembert, de Salinis and Gerbet".

¹⁵ P. Boutry, "Les saints des catacombs. Itinéraires français d'une piété montaine (1800-1881)" in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire: Moyen âge et Temps modernes* (Ecole française de Rome, Rome, 1979), 91, pp. 875-930.

¹⁶ F. Fénélon, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris 1848-), vol. 42, pp. 271-279.

¹⁷ The first record for this period was that of a statue of a young boy, named St Léonce, a gift by Gregory XVI to the abbey of St Peter at Solesmes in 1837. Delatte records the event: "--la statue de cire, où étaient incrustés les ossements échappés au lent travail de destruction de quinze siècles, était enfin parvenue à Solesmes---. Dom Guéranger avait fait préparer dans la crypte située sous le maître-autel de l'église abbatiale un arcosolium décoré de marbres et de peintures, à l'imitation des chapelles des catacombs, comme pour restituer à l'hôte aimé qui venait prendre possession de la crypte quelque chose de cette paix et de ce silence où il avait depuis son martyre doucement reposé". Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, pp. 236-237.

an area of expertise developed in Italy, was new to France, since in 1839 Guéranger was invited to write a short manual, explaining how to go about both the preservation and the display of the relics and the process of naming them¹⁸. Boutry quotes a passage from this brochure.

On trouve encore aujourd'hui de ces marbres muets [dont parle Prudence], qui couvrent des saints dont le Christ connaît seul le nom. L'usage est d'imposer un nom à ces saints inconnus, et on les appelle vulgairement "saints baptisés", à la différence des autres qu'on appelle saints de nom propre: "nomine proprio". L'absence de nom pour les premiers n'ébranle en rien la certitude de leur martyr, et par conséquent de leur sainteté; mais comme, dans le dénuement de notions où l'on se trouve à l'égard de ces saints, les plus légères indications sont toujours d'un très grand prix; on ne peut blâmer ceux qui cherchent de préférence à obtenir les reliques d'un saint propre.

Dans l'impuissance où l'on se trouve à assigner le véritable nom d'un martyr, on cherche du moins à s'en rapprocher, en lui conférant pour nom un adjectif latin qui rappelle son courage, son dévouement, ou la récompense dont il est entré en possession. Tels sont les noms de Generosus, Constans, Fidelis, Coronatus, Faustus, Felix etc.---. Cette imposition de nom n'a pas donc lieu dans l'intention de tromper le peuple, puisqu'au contraire on a toujours le soin de désigner sur le procès-verbal de découverte que l'on délivre avec le corps si le saint est de nom propre ou inconnu; mais on cède tout simplement à la nécessité reconnue par tous les hommes de désigner chaque objet par une appellation spéciale.¹⁹

It is possible to detect a note of reservation, on the part of Guéranger, in this passage; for example he makes it quite clear that he is describing an Italian custom and that the practice of assigning a name is a natural human response to an ambiguous situation - "la nécessité connue par tous les hommes". At this stage of his career, when he was still a young man and when he had made only one visit to Rome, he was certainly aware of the dilapidated state of the excavations in the catacombs where little effective work had been carried out since the time of Bosio. This brochure was written two years after his first visit to Rome to get the constitutional arrangements for the abbey of St Peter at Solesmes approved by the Pope. By this time he was effectively the expert in France on things Roman, which is presumably why his

¹⁸ P. Guéranger, *Explications sur les corps des saints martyrs extraits des Catacombes de Rome et sur le culte qu'on leur rend*, Angers, 1839. Delatte also records that this brochure was written at the request of the Bishop of Angers, following the gift of the body of Saint Agape from Gregory XVI to the Church of the Good Shepherd at Angers. The gift was apparently criticised by the 'Jansenists' at Angers, according to Delatte and the brochure was an attempt to demonstrate the orthodoxy of the practice in Italy. Both these transactions are recorded in the registers in Rome and it is interesting that both seem to have been gifts rather than responses to requests, something that Boutry does not report. See Delatte, op.cit. p. 247.

comments on Italian practice in the handling of relics from the catacombs are sought in 1839. It is important to remember that it was not until 1858 that Edmond Le Blant published his pamphlet showing that the bowl of blood was probably not related to martyrdom but to the burial rite of early Christians, a pamphlet which while seen as scandalous did, in fact, threaten the basis of beliefs about the practices of the early Christian Church. In the story of the internment of St Victoria, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, there is a clear reference to the nostalgia for the return of past institutions which was a feature of the early part of the century. The 'itinéraires français' that Boutry describes seem to have sprung from a different tradition than the tradition of processions and pilgrimages, a familiar aspect of French piety in the later nineteenth century. Boutry suggests that the subsequent concentration in certain areas of the relics of the young saints is associated with strong ultramontane traditions and, in the case of the West of France, with the influence of Dom Guéranger.

A closer inspection of the data, however, does not totally support this and it is another example of the way in which the study of catholic piety in nineteenth-century France has tended to ignore the evidence concerning different strands of thinking in the movement which is characterised as ultramontane. Between 1839 and 1849 there were around thirty-nine relics exported to 'Western France'. I have interpreted this as the area between the Loire and the Gironde and I have included the dioceses of Nantes, Rennes, Mayenne, Angers, Le Mans, Luçon and Bordeaux. There is a majority of recipients in the north of the area and a high proportion of requests from congregations and seminaries; without more research on the registers and on the motivations of the clergy and of the laity making the requests, it is not possible to be sure but the requests do not seem to come from individuals and groups who would have been particularly close to Guéranger and the majority were made between 1844 and 1849 when he was embroiled in the issues arising from the publication of *Institutions liturgiques*. He felt that better evidence existed in documents like the *Passio* of Saint Cecilia and the *Roma Sotterranea* of Bosio. After 1851, on his third visit to Rome when he first met de Rossi, he became even more convinced that the scientific excavation of the catacombs would provide a better insight into the foundational message of Christianity than the indiscriminate retrieval of relics.²⁰

¹⁹ ibid., pp. 17-18

In Chapter Five, I argued that Guéranger saw his the publication of his first history as a way of continuing the themes he had taken up in *Institutions liturgiques*. The focus of this later work is the message contained in Cecilia's response to Tibertius, concerning the Trinitarian basis of the Christian faith and the way in which this message has been transmitted by the liturgy and by the narrative about the saints and Mary. Towards the end of the preface, Guéranger makes an interesting critique of contemporary catholic piety, given the practice of acquiring the relics I have just described:

Les catholiques aujourd'hui sont, il faut l'avouer, moins enclins à cette tendance au rationalisme qui règne en souveraine, sur les matières hagiographiques, durant les deux siècles qui viennent de s'écouler. On ne scandalise plus de la vie des saints; on est même avide des récits merveilleux qui la retracent. Mais cette ardeur recèle un danger; car elle est aveugle. Avec ce mot de 'légende' qu'on a détourné de son sens traditionnel pour le prendre désormais dans l'acceptation que lui ont donné les protestants d'Allemagne, plusieurs d'entre nous croient pouvoir décider de tout quand il s'agit des vies des saints. Ils les goûtent assurément, ils les recueillent, ils en font des articles de revue, ou des feuilletons; mais ces récits ne sont à leurs yeux que les fictions innocents d'une gracieuse et sainte poésie; en un mot ils ne les croient pas. En persévérant dans cette voie, notre siècle passionné comme tous les siècles faibles, et avide de sentir bien plus que de se rendre compte, finirait par perdre de vue l'essentiel argument que l'Eglise catholique emprunte de la permanence des faits miraculeux dans son sein ---.La conséquence est qu'il faut distinguer la Légende vraie de la Légende fausse et ne pas confondre dans un goût plus ou moins enthousiaste les œuvres d'une crédulité puérile ou de l'imposture ---.Or l'étude seule et l'étude sérieuse peut mettre en mesure de faire ce discernement.²¹

Guéranger is writing this preface in 1849, ten years after the 'small brochure' on the treatment of relics. Boutry's evidence shows that the greatest increase in France overall of transmission of saintly relics from the catacombs occurred during the period 1844-1848. It is difficult not to interpret this plea as an indictment of the practice and the attendant devotional pieties at a time when the catholic faith was under yet another attack from contemporary German historians.²² These concerns must have

²⁰ Boutry, "Itinéraires français", pp. 893-894. Boutry's general thesis is that Guéranger took a more academic approach to the issue and, in a sense, betrayed his earlier beliefs. I think this is to ignore the interpretation that Guéranger put on the seventeenth century attempts to recover the early Church. I think that Guéranger's thinking is more closely associated, in his early career, with Chateaubriand's and that his thinking on devotional practices, as it changed, led him in a different direction from that of his contemporaries in the secular clergy.

²¹ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cecile*, "Préface", pp. 23-24.

been in Guéranger's mind when he made his third visit to Rome in 1851. His reputation with the Vatican had been established with the publication of all three volumes of *Institutions liturgiques* and by the relative success of his arguments in persuading the Gallican clergy of the need to adopt the Roman Breviary. Although he was reluctant to leave Solesmes, he was persuaded of the importance of making contact with Pius IX who had succeeded Gregory XVI five years earlier and who was perceived to be a reforming pope. Although his prime aim was to secure the support of the new pope for the regular orders in France, the visit was memorable for him because on 2 December 1851 he met Giovanni-Baptiste de Rossi, a young 'scriptor' in the Vatican library who was anxious to pursue his interest in the archaeological excavation of the catacombs which had been recently reopened.²³ Guéranger was able to use his influence with the pope to secure the latter's support for de Rossi's work which seems to have been discouraged, either on account of his youth or on account of his insistence on adopting a more scientific approach to methods of excavation. Shortly after obtaining this concession Guéranger was appointed as a consultant to the Congregation of the Index and, five days later, to the Congregation of Sacred Rites.

The meeting with de Rossi was to prove critical to the future direction of Guéranger's later writing and, particularly, for *Sainte Cécile et l'histoire de la société romaine aux trois premiers siècles*, since all the elements were in place at the time of their first meeting. De Rossi had been impressed by the earlier editions of the *Histoire* and the plea in the preface for a more scientific approach to the study of the first three centuries of Christianity and the status of those saints whose accounts had been transmitted through liturgical tradition. The political situation in Italy made it difficult for de Rossi to obtain and keep financial support for his archaeology and the politics of the Vatican meant that he required diplomatic as well as archaeological skills in obtaining authorisation to publish his findings; in addition he had to overcome the vagaries of the postal system in publishing his findings and in obtaining good lithographic productions. Louis Duchesnes, with whom de Rossi corresponded after

²² The German theologian D.F. Strauss applied his "myth theory" to the life of Christ and his famous *Leben Jesus* appeared in 1835, O.D.C.C., p.775 and p. 1547.

²³ For an account of Guéranger's third visit to Rome see L.Soltner, *Pie IX et Solesmes*, pp.12-24.

Guéranger's death, has left a striking portrait of the former in an obituary on the occasion of de Rossi's death in 1894:

L'homme était assurément plus grand que le savant ---. Il voyait tout, pénétrait tout; mais le sourire extérieur était si bien réprimée que l'on peut douter qu'il y ait jamais eu un sourire intérieur; son amitié était la plus sûre, son dévouement le plus sincère, le plus actif qui se puisse imaginer. Chrétien scrupuleux autant que sujet fidèle, il ne se croyait pas obligé pour cela d'écarter de ses relations, ou même de son amitié la plus étroite, ceux qui pensaient autrement que lui---. Sa probité scientifique, sa douceur, son aversion pour la controverse, ont été pour moi de grands exemples. Son entretien, ses lettres, m'ont souvent calmé ou consolé. Il avait dans l'âme une paix profonde et communicative. 'In pace'. Il a souvent déchiffré ces mots sur les épitaphes des anciens chrétiens; on peut les prendre comme la formule de sa vie.²⁴

Louis Duchesnes (1844-1922) was one of the more persistent critics of Guéranger; his pursuit of academic rigour and a modernist approach to the early years of the Christian Church made him impatient with Guéranger's obsession with saints and what he saw as the forces in the Church which held back his own research²⁵ His own correspondence with de Rossi was as an admirer of his and it is significant that during this period de Rossi, while giving support and encouragement to Duchesnes, never once allowed himself to criticise Guéranger.²⁶ This was undoubtedly because he recognised and appreciated the support he himself had received from the latter over a period of twenty- three years, starting from when he was a young man, trying to persuade the traditionalists in the Vatican of the desirability of a methodical approach to the excavation of the catacombs. This support continued when he had to combine his career in the Vatican library with that of archaeologist. His family commitments to his elderly mother and younger brother took up much of his time and his letters always include news about his wife and children. The correspondence between de

²⁴ L.Duchesne, *Bulletin critique*, *Revue historique*, 1894, pp.373-374.

²⁵ Writing about the young women he meets wishing to join convents, Duchesnes says: "Quand je rencontre de ces âmes, je souhaite toujours qu'elles acceptent d'être mères de famille." quoted in H.-I.Marrou, "Mgr Duchesnes et l'histoire ancienne du christianisme", p. 19.

²⁶ In one letter Duchesnes writes, "Le P. Martineau a écrit à la *Civiltà cattolica* pour avoir un article favorable. Il y a bien des raisons pour qu'on me traite avec bienveillance; la liberté de la critique historique est opprimée en France par l'école dite légendaire. Dom Guéranger a fait beaucoup de mal, et le livre de l'abbé Darras cause plus de ravages encore" in P.Saint-Roch (ed.), *Correspondance de Giovanni Battiste de Rossi et Louis Duchesnes(1871-1894)* (Rome, 1995), pp. 33-35.

Rossi and Guéranger is not only the record of a significant period in the scientific approach to studies of ecclesiastical history but also a record of mutual respect and affection, which continued in spite of geographical separation and often in spite of divergence of view. The careers of Guéranger, de Rossi and Duchesnes span the whole of the nineteenth century and can be read as an account of how the approach to the early Christian period moved from one of nostalgia for a lost simplicity and certainty, through one of meticulous classification and dating, towards an attempt to establish verifiable evidence through the deciphering of inscriptions and through comparative analysis. The last two exercises provided the basis of an archaeological account of the first three hundred years of Christianity. Guéranger's contribution, although it was to go largely unnoticed by both religious and secular authorities in France, was to insist on the theological evidence, which supported the excavations, and to draw attention to the importance of Church tradition in sustaining this. Guéranger's insight was to see the need for both textual and archaeological evidence and to understand that both might be contested; his other insight was to argue for the widest possible definition of tradition so that it included personal revelation as well as liturgical documents. The correspondence, which I discuss below, charts his preoccupations during this stage of his life.

The correspondence between the two men who met in December 1851 on the occasion of Guéranger's third visit to Rome has not been edited and published at the time of writing²⁷. There are one hundred and one letters, forty five from Guéranger and fifty six from de Rossi ; those from Guéranger to de Rossi have been transcribed from the originals which are held in the Vatican library; de Rossi almost always wrote in French and the originals are held with the Guéranger copies in the archives at Solesmes. It is perhaps unsurprising that the correspondence has been neglected by editors since it reveals as much about the personal relationship between the two men as it does about the actual process of archaeological excavation in the period up to the Italian publication of the first volume of *La Roma sotterranea cristiana*.²⁸ The motives of the two men in seeing that this work was carried forward and publicised were quite different. Guéranger's prime interest was in finding the tomb of Saint

²⁷ *Correspondance Guéranger-de Rossi*, Archives at Solesmes

Cecilia in order to establish that she had actually lived and that the archeological evidence would support the textual evidence contained in her *Passio*. He had discussed these problems when writing the first *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*. From his point of view, there were two major hurdles to overcome in establishing the authenticity of her message; the first was to do with the text and the second was to do with the location of her tomb. For de Rossi, there is a much broader concern – to establish a scientific approach to the excavation of the catacombs in Rome so that the ambiguity surrounding the graves of the early martyrs and other relics could be clarified and the whole discipline of “l’archéologie chrétienne” put on a credible footing. I think it is possible that de Rossi also saw his work as reclaiming the catacombs for the Vatican; the vulnerability of the papal states and the Vatican itself are a constant background to the correspondence, as are the later difficulties he experienced in getting his work recognised abroad and in working in a United Italy with its strong pressures to secularisation.²⁹

It is difficult to read the correspondence without being influenced by the evidence which de Rossi’s excavations finally produced and which, on the whole, seems to have stood the test of time.³⁰ From Guéranger’s point of view, in 1851, his concern is to establish the authenticity of the incarnational message that Cecilia preaches in her speech to Tibertius. One of the key points of disagreement between the two men was to establish the period when she lived. Guéranger considered this to be towards the end of the third century, whilst de Rossi’s work eventually established that the tomb that was discovered belonged to the end of the second century. The second area of debate concerned the location of the tomb since, at the time, it was not understood how or why her body had become separated from those of Valerian, Tibertius and Almachius before being buried under the altar of the titular church in

²⁸ G.-B. de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea cristiana* (Rome, 1864), vol. 1.

²⁹ *De Rossi-Guéranger*, 12 May 1872. This letter describes his difficulty in making a copy of one of the frescoes which Guéranger has requested. The owners of the land have refused permission for him to visit the catacomb at Domitilla and they are supported by the government.

³⁰ Cabrol and Leclerc, *Dictionnaire d’archéologie chrétienne*, vol.2, pp. 2712-2779. The authors describe a sequence of events which meant that Cecilia’s body was separated from that of Valerian, Tibertius and Almachius. This was partly attributable to Paschal I’s action in moving the bodies at the time of the Lombard invasions. De Rossi’s dating is still generally accepted.

Trastevere. De Rossi's excavations revealed a tomb that he identified as Cecilia's in the newly excavated cemetery of Callixtus. He reports the progress of his discoveries to Guéranger first of all in a letter in April 1853. Guéranger had been pressing him to identify the tomb, since he had gone ahead with the second edition of *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, knowing that de Rossi's findings might alter his own views but unwilling to defer the publication since there was the demand for a reprint. De Rossi begins by reproaching Guéranger for not having replied to his last letter and tells him that he is close to finding the tomb of Cecilia in the cemetery at Callixtus. He goes on:

Je suis dans les catacombs de la vigne Molinari (aujourd'hui ils sont au Saint Père), parvenu à m'approcher tellement de Sainte Cécile que je puis dire avec le Pape Paschal, qu'il me serait possible de l'entendre et de lui parler, si elle était encore là.³¹

Guéranger replies almost immediately, asking for more details and reminding him that it is he who, since 1837, has pressed for the opening up of the catacomb. De Rossi responds very quickly, speaking of "une étincelle électrique qui me ranime" and describing in great detail his methodology in establishing an hypothesis and then testing the findings against this to see if these support or destroy his hypothesis. He goes on:

Et avec cette joie ineffable (toute intérieure), et que je n'ai communiqué qu'à quelques amis bien choisis, j'ai trouvé des médailles et des inscriptions consulaires que j'avais déjà prévus.³²

Guéranger's reply to the news that de Rossi has found the catacomb of Saint Callixtus and the tomb of Cecilia is indicative of their relationship at this period. He interprets de Rossi's success as the result of divine inspiration ("ma bien aimée Sainte Cécile a été pour vous un stimulant qui vous a poussé à diriger vos investigations vers cette précieuse vigne ") but goes on to ask for all the details of the discovery, promising to come to Rome to visit the tomb of the great martyr,"dont je me suis fait si à propos, le chevalier". He goes on:

³¹ *De Rossi-Guéranger*, 28 April 1854. The reference to the pope is to Paschal's description of his discovery of the tomb in 880.

La portée de cette découverte est immense pour ma thèse Cécilienne; et les Actes en reçoivent une confirmation des plus précieuses. D'abord Tillement est vaincu une fois de plus, Sainte Cécile vivait au troisième et non au deuxième siècle et on doit se demander pourquoi on ait enseveli dans un tel endroit "inter Pontifices" une simple femme; il faut que sa vie, ses oeuvres et son martyr aient bien vivement préoccupé l'Eglise romaine.³³

He concludes that her Acts will now have to be allowed into the liturgy and that "les cryptes viennent désormais rejoindre leur autorité aux sacramentaires".³⁴ He appears to have written to de Rossi, again in November 1854, repeating much of what he had said in the previous letter and, presumably because he had no more news, he continues:

Ainsi mon cher ami, vous m'avez rendu la tombe de ma Sainte et vous avez restitué l'un des détails les plus importants des Actes; cette sépulture privilégiée entre collegos Episcopos, c'est immense pour certifier le grand rôle que Cécile a rempli sous Urbain --- et ce qui me plaît particulièrement c'est le contre coup qu'en reçoit notre cher Tillemont ---. Je ne regretterai qu'une chose, c'est que vous n'avez pas Tillemont avec vous pour le conduire par la main au tombeau".³⁵

This letter seems to have provoked de Rossi to respond fairly quickly at a time when he was particularly busy. He writes:

Personne n'a osé venir excepté Mgr. de Mérode avec quelques amis et une 'nouvelle Cécile', une dame anglaise convertie qui a pris le nom de votre sainte.---.³⁶

He goes on to say that Guéranger should not dismiss Tillemont's dating and that there is evidence that the popes alongside Cecilia are posterior to Urban. Since the tomb has not been opened, they do not currently have the evidence that she was buried there. Guéranger replies almost immediately he receives this letter (which seems to

³² *ibid.*, 28 April 1854

³³ *ibid.*, 28 June 1854.

³⁴ *ibid.*, 28 June 1854

³⁵ *ibid.*, 18 November 1854. Guéranger's dislike of Tillement is based on the perceived Jansenism of the latter and his attachment to Port Royal. There was a seventeenth century debate about Arianism and the doctrine of homoousion, the term used in the Nicene creed to express the relations between the Father and the Son within the Godhead.

³⁶ *De Rossi-Guéranger* 1 January 1855

have taken nearly three weeks to arrive), apologising for his insistence but saying he wrote “ pour stimuler votre paresse et, enfin, pour calmer mon inquiétude” and looking forward to the time when the two of them will meet:

Quand nous nous embrasserons ad sanctum Sixtum et que je vous porterai enfin ma pauvre deuxième édition , si heureusement mutilée et démentie par vous.³⁷

It is in this letter that he makes the claim “je suis citoyen de Rome souterraine” as part of a long diatribe against “ces hérétiques de Prussiens”, presumably a reference to Strauss and the other German “myth theorists”.

There is a long gap in the correspondence after this letter and both men were involved in other activities. However the correspondence in 1854-1855 is valuable, not only because it covers the period of the opening up of the catacomb of Saint Callixtus and the discovery of Cecilia’s tomb but because of the light it throws on Guéranger’s attitude to the excavations and on de Rossi’s loyalty to him. The early letters, from 1852 – 1853, are more concerned with de Rossi’s problems in getting authority and financing from the Vatican and he is clearly encouraged by the pastoral support provided by Guéranger and by any influence the latter may have exerted on the Vatican. With the start of the project and the findings, his time clearly becomes precious and it is clear that Guéranger does not understand fully at this point the amount of sheer hard work involved in establishing reliable dating, mainly done through the reconstruction of inscriptions. The gap between scientific and theological requirements becomes wider all the time and it also becomes clear that de Rossi’s work will reveal support for textual critics such as Tillemont.³⁸ De Rossi had a much broader aim and he was to find a great deal of evidence about the location of the cemeteries and the life of the early Church that was completely new. Guéranger’s near obsession with Cecilia made it difficult for him to see the wood for the trees and it is to the great credit of de Rossi that he never let this interfere with the personal relationship he had with him, asking his advice about marriage, the death of his

³⁷ *Guéranger-De Rossi* 27 February 1855.

³⁸ Louis Tillemont (1637-1698) was a French ecclesiastical historian, educated at Port Royal. He had close relationships with the Jansenists but did not take part in the controversies. His most famous work, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles*, 16 vols, (1693-1712) remained a classic patristic source throughout the nineteenth century.

relationship he had with him, asking his advice about marriage, the death of his mother, the difficulties his brother encountered as an early geologist in an unsympathetic academic environment and so on. He never seems to have forgotten the early encouragement he received as a very young man and his first child, a daughter, was baptised Cecilia. Guéranger, for his part, seems to have taken upon himself the responsibility for publicising the two volumes of *La Roma sotterranea cristiana* in France.³⁹ The last work he published before his death, the third version of the Cecilia story, in 1874 is designed, partly as a tribute to De Rossi's work and partly to publicize this amongst a wider audience. It is, however, a very different kind of publication from *La Roma sotterranea cristiana*. Although it is designed as a tribute to the saint and her community in Rome, it can also be read in a tradition of French nineteenth century historiography, which recaptured Rome for France and attempted to demonstrate the French as the true supporters of the faith. In this sense it takes its place in the tradition of the 'itinéraires' but as a version, supported by archaeological evidence and which requires its audience to become familiar with historical and theological issues.

Guéranger and de Rossi continued to correspond after the discovery of Cecilia's tomb; often the subject was about the progress of the archaeological excavations and the difficulties de Rossi encountered in securing funds and political support. From 1854 Guéranger turns his attention to other more pressing matters arising from the publication in 1855 of Alfred de Broglie's *L'église et l'empire romain au IV^e siècle*. This project took the form of twenty- six articles, published in *l'Univers* from 12 October 1856 to 20 December 1857 and which were republished as a critique of contemporary naturalism.⁴⁰ Oury has pointed out that this polemic against naturalism is perhaps best seen as a challenge to the tendency to discount the supernatural.⁴¹ It

³⁹ P.Guéranger, "Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae", *le Monde*, 27 February 1863; "La Roma sotterranea Cristiana" par M.le chevalier de Rossi "ibid.", 28 December, 1865, 2 February 1866, 1 May 1866; "La Roma sotterranea cristiana, vol .2 " *Revue de l'Art chretien* 12 (1868), pp.481-492; 13 (1869), pp. 60-63; 13(1869), pp.177-191.

⁴⁰ Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme..*

⁴¹ Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'église*, p. 303."Si la position de Dom Guéranger au sujet du naturalisme qu'il vaudrait mieux appeler la tendance anti-surnaturelle, était bien connue de ses moines et de ses amis, elle l'était moins du grand public où, à la suite de ses publications et

was often misinterpreted by his critics and I have already argued that this is the context in which it is important to read the articles on Maria of Agreda, as a defence of personal revelations at a time when this kind of writing was seen to be suspect.⁴² His criticism of de Broglie provoked a response from de Rossi who was far more in sympathy with the former's more rational and scientific approach to the study of early Church history.⁴³

These differences did not, however, prevent the continuing practical support that Guéranger gave to de Rossi in publicising the first and second volumes of *La Roma Sotterranea cristiana*, once they were published in Italy in 1864 and 1868.⁴⁴ In spite of this effort Guéranger seems to have felt it was necessary to reach a wider audience than the ecclesiastical community and, in the last few years of his life, he undertook a commission from the publishers Firmin-Didot to write a history of the saint which would give credit to the work of de Rossi but which would, at the same time, provide a vehicle for his own message. He seems to have had the idea of publishing a third edition of *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, as early as 1864, after learning about the Italian edition of the first volume of *La Roma sotterranea*; he writes:

Toutes vos belles découvertes me donnent l'idée de publier en manière d'introduction à la troisième édition de ma Cécile, un essai sur l'histoire de la Rome chrétienne depuis l'arrivée de Saint Pierre sous Claude, jusqu'à Alexandre Sévère --- Que dites-vous de cette idée d'un barbare?⁴⁵

And, once he has received a copy for Solesmes Guéranger writes:

des réponses à ses objecteurs, on voyait surtout en lui l'adversaire du gallicanisme sous sa double forme juridique et liturgique."

⁴² Guéranger, *Essai sur le naturalisme contemporain*, "Preface" ,p. 8, "---le sens des choses mystiques était engourdi, car la vie des saints n'était plus connue ---; les ordres religieux n'étaient plus qu'un souvenir, et le vide que leur absence causait dans les mœurs n'était pas même senti" Guéranger is writing about the condition of religion in France at the end of the eighteenth century.

⁴³ *De Rossi-Guéranger*, 30 April 1857, 5 June 1857, 7 September 1857.

⁴⁴ The full series of three volumes was not published in Italy until 1877 and the first French translation only appeared in 1917. There are copies of the first and second volumes of the first Italian editions in the Archives at Solesmes.

⁴⁵ *Guéranger-de Rossi*, 15 June 1864.

J'ai été ébloui de la grandeur et de la richesse des découvertes pour cette seule petite crypte de Saint Corneille.⁴⁶

He is, however, concerned that the work will sell very few copies in France unless there is a translation and a publisher willing to take this on. Since this did not prove possible (de Rossi seems to have had more success in finding a publisher for a German edition), Guéranger takes on the role of publicist in France for the discoveries, writing articles for *le Monde* and the *Revue de l'art chretien* in the mid 1860s. Finally, in 1873, he agrees a contract with the prestigious Parisian publishing house, Firmin-Didot :

La maison Didot m'a proposé de faire de ma Sainte Cécile une édition de luxe, et j'ai accepté. Il faut paraître vers la fin de Novembre. Malheureusement je suis obligé de remanier mon travail de fond en comble, et de l'abrégé immensément car on ne m'accorde qu'un seul volume. J'aurai au moins 300 gravures ou chromolithographies; les gravures sont déjà à l'ouvrage, et tout se prépare bien --. Cette publication aura l'avantage de populariser vos travaux et vos découvertes auprès du monde poli qui ne lirait jamais MM de Richemont, Northcote et Kraus. Je veux leur fair entrer les notions par les yeux, et pour cela il me faut une mise en scène universelle.⁴⁷

Six months later he still has some reservations about the project:

Ce sera un livre d'étrennes . J'ignore s'il sera goûté car il est bien sérieux – Peût-etre aussi avec l'attrait des gravures et l'élégance qui l'entourera aura-t-il son genre de succès? L'intérêt ne manque pas et je crois qu'on le lira plus que Northcote, de Richement et Kraus.---. Je suis historien, et je fais mon profit des vraisemblances, lorsque d'autres faits les soutiennent – Je suis votre chronologue, et c'est pour moi un grand charme --- pour être lu en France il ne faut pas avoir l'air trop savant .⁴⁸

Guéranger is clearly torn between the wish to publish a text that will do justice to de Rossi's findings and to the archaeological evidence but which will appeal to a French audience. He must have been aware that he probably did not have a long time to live and he was frustrated at the lack of interest in *La Roma sotteranea* in France, especially when it was popular in England and Germany. He sees the opportunity to

⁴⁶ ibid.,

⁴⁷ ibid., 25 January 1873.

⁴⁸ ibid., 9 August 1873.

write about his own view of the first three centuries of Christianity, using material he had gathered very early in his career.⁴⁹ Firmin-Didot had an excellent reputation for lithographic reproduction and their sponsorship would ensure that the book had a market. Nevertheless one senses that he is not entirely happy with the solution and his relief is palpable in the letter he received from de Rossi, to whom he had sent a copy of the first edition.

J'ai reçu avec grande joie votre lettre qui m'annonçait l'arrivée de ma Sainte Cécile entre vos mains, et l'impression favorable que vous en avez ressentie. C'était ce que j'attendais avec impatience; ainsi doit faire le disciple en présence du maître.⁵⁰

He promises to make one or two corrections in dating which de Rossi has suggested, although there are some things he will retain - ("vous voyez, cher ami, que vous avez affaire à un disciple un peu rebelle, mais je le fais si peu et si rarement que je mérite quelque pardon") and he finishes the last letter that he will write to de Rossi before his death with these words:

N'oubliez pas mes hommages à Mme de Rossi, ni le souvenir du vieux moine français à la très jeune Natalie. Tout à vous de Cœur, mon cher ami, + fr.P.G.A.de S.⁵¹

A monument to an early Christian spiritual community.⁵²

Many of the reservations that Guéranger expressed in his last letters to de Rossi appear in the preface to his third account of the life of Saint Cecilia and he was clearly relieved that de Rossi approved of the work overall.⁵³ The style and the rationale of

⁴⁹ P.Guéranger, *Les origines de l'église romaine*, (Le Mans, 1836).

⁵⁰ Guéranger-de Rossi 16 February 1874

⁵¹ *ibid.*, The final greeting is interesting and it is the only time in the correspondence that he uses this form of signature.

⁵² I use the word 'monument' deliberately since, in French, it can refer to a physical object or to a text.

⁵³ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*, "Préface", pp. 5-6.

the preface are different from the other prefaces; he starts with a reference to the troubled situation in France and Italy after the Franco-Prussian war and the early years of Italian Unification and to the difficulties of pursuing research in both countries. At the same time he praises the great strides that have been made in Christian archaeology which have paralleled similar advances in the study of the ancient world, especially Egypt and Assyria. He mentions the developments in local archaeology and in the recent interest in local history and he suggests that all this adds up to a climate in which the public is interested in evidence that illuminates the past and in the lives of the people at different periods in history. He continues with a theme, dear to his heart, the need to challenge the theories of Bauer and other German theologians who were querying the veracity of the New Testament texts attributed to Paul and the notion of Rome as the centre from which orthodoxy was propagated.⁵⁴ He concludes the preface by saying that his publication is based on scientific evidence but that it includes other facts about the history of early Roman Christianity based on surmise (*lorsque l'harmonie et la vraisemblance se montrent réunies en faveur d'un fait*”). In other words, where conclusive results were not available he allowed himself to put forward hypotheses, based on best available information⁵⁵.

L'étude sérieuse des lieux et des monuments, celle des écrits si lumineux et si substantieux de M.de Rossi, ses encouragements et l'amitié dont il nous a honoré depuis tant d'années, nous ont donné la confiance d'entreprendre cette oeuvre. Mais dès lors notre rôle n'est plus celui de l'archéologue qui examine isolement chaque détail, propose, discute et attend; l'historien doit raconter, en mettant à profit toutes les données susceptibles de nourrir son récit. Dans cette rénovation de l'histoire chrétienne de Rome, une foule de points ont été élevés au plus haut degré de certitude par notre savant maître mais lorsque l'harmonie et la vraisemblance se montrent réunies en faveur d'un fait, nous n'avons pas hésité à lui donner place dans notre narration.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Bruno Bauer (1809-1892) was a German theologian and historian with even more extreme views than Strauss, attributing the Gospel story to the imagination of a single mind, *O.D.C.C.*, p. 170.

⁵⁵ This idea is quite close to Leopold Ranke's aim of showing history 'wie es eigentlich gewesen', which can be translated as 'how it essentially was' See R.Evans, *In defence of history*, ch. 1, "The history of history", p. 17.

⁵⁶ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*, p. 7-8.

The text of this new work, therefore, comes with a health warning and Guéranger is, I think, trying to establish that he is constructing a 'monument' to Cecilia and Rome and to the early Christian period, in which there is an element of poetic licence. As he says in the last paragraph:

Quant à l'esprit de notre livre, il est ce qu'il devait être, chrétien et catholique--
-Ce que nous croyons, nous l'exprimerons avec le ferme sentiment
qu'éprouvent ceux qui, ayant accepté la parole révélée, se sentent être les
possesseurs de la vérité entière.⁵⁷

The work is long and, to a modern reader, extremely tedious. The first eleven chapters deal with the history of Rome since the beginning of the first century AD, the journeys of Peter and the period he spent in Rome, the conversion of Paul, his travels and his visit to Rome, the years of Christian martyrdom and the eventual peace of Antonius, followed by the period of hostility to the Church under Marcus Aurelius. This is followed by a history of the families of the Caecilli and the Valerii who Guéranger takes to be the ancestors of Cecilia and Valerian. It is not until page three hundred and forty-seven that the story reaches the life and martyrdom of Cecilia and the narrative contained in the *Passio* is covered in three chapters out of a total of twenty-four. The remainder of the book, after her death, is taken up with a discussion about the posthumous history of the saint, starting with her burial in the papal cemetery and with a description of her cult. These sections include a description of the history of the cemetery of Callistus and a chapter on the decline of the catacombs during the Middle Ages. The last chapter is devoted to an account of the excavations carried out by de Rossi and an account of the works of art and literature, which she has inspired in the nineteenth century, which, in Guéranger's view, are true to her memory.

The text comprises five hundred and sixty pages and is illustrated with one hundred and sixty engravings and lithographs, carefully selected so that the illustrations do not detract from the religious message (there are, for example, no depictions of Cecilia with a musical instrument and the majority of the portraits are pre-Raphaelite). It is difficult to understand how anyone could read the book from cover to cover, even in the period when it was produced, and the best way of

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.9

describing it is perhaps as a 'coffee-table' publication which people dipped in from time to time and which was a statement about the confessional position of a family. There is, however, one chapter that deserves particular attention because of the doctrinal message, which it communicates. Chapter Thirteen is entitled "The catacomb frescos".⁵⁸ It seems quite likely that many readers would quickly turn to this section since it provided the first glimpse that most French Catholics would have had of the catacombs since the discoveries in the 1850s and 1860s. Guéranger links his illustrations to the romantic notion that, during her childhood, Cecilia would have visited the catacombs and assimilated the messages conveyed by the iconography.⁵⁹

Guéranger selects catacomb images, not simply for their individual interest but in order to relate a story. He cannot, of course do this by taking an 'itinerary' through one catacomb, followed by another; he has to select from different geographical and chronological locations and, where there is no suitable illustration available, he has to substitute text; where he is unable to have a picture reproduced for technical reasons, he describes it as it appeared in de Rossi's text. He explains his strategy at the beginning of the section where he writes:

Au début de la synthèse doctrinale qu'offrent les peintures des deux premiers siècles dans les catacombes, il est naturel de placer les faits dont la succession historique constitue la base du christianisme.⁶⁰

In other words the iconography is illustrative of doctrinal points he considers to be those which are the central truths of Christianity. The first picture shows Adam and Eve at the foot of the tree of knowledge; the serpent is portrayed as triumphant, but in the following picture the head of the serpent has been broken by the woman's foot and is lying on the ground. The next one shows Noah, one of the markers of Christian teaching, since the flood allowed the possibility of a new start for mankind; God is punishing our ancestors but at the same time fulfilling the promise of a fresh life. Then comes Abraham offering his son as a sacrifice to God and learning that this same race

⁵⁸ See below, Appendix I, p. 209.

⁵⁹ There is an interesting parallel here with Atherton's description of acoustic acquisition which I discussed in Chapter Five, p. 158.

⁶⁰ Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*, pp. 255-256.

will produce a son who will save the world.⁶¹ Abraham is the father of Israel but also of all believers, even gentiles, as Paul taught the Romans. Israel performed a transitional role, preserving the name and worship of God through Moses and the commandments. As Guéranger writes:

Il faut à un Dieu un peuple qui conserve son nom et son culte, jusqu'à l'avènement du Sauveur promis, un peuple au sein duquel s'accomplissent les figures dont les réalités sont réservées au peuple cosmopolite des chrétiens.⁶²

There follows a reference to David and to the fact that a whole book of the songs of David has passed from the Jewish synagogue to the Church, then a reference to Elijah who prophesied the coming of Christ. This is followed immediately by paintings of the Virgin Mary, of the Annunciation, of Mary nursing the infant Jesus with the star overhead symbolising the revelation of his birth to the Magi, who represent the pagan world. Finally there is a drawing of Mary sitting on a throne and holding the infant Jesus and the following comment:

La série des peintures historiques retrace quelques-uns des prodiges de l'Homme-Dieu, de ces prodiges auxquels Cécile fera appel dans sa harangue à Tiburce, comme aux irréfragables arguments de la divinité du fils de Marie. Quant aux épisodes relatifs à la Passion du Sauveur, ils manquent, sauf peut-être celui du couronnement d'épines, au cimetière de Prétextat, et encore y serait-il tellement déguisé qu'on aurait peine à trouver des arguments pour répondre au contradicteur.⁶³

The emphasis on Mary and the apparent lack of any drawings depicting the crucifixion is interesting. The whole of this section emphasizes the incarnational message, the part played by Eve in the victory over the serpent, the very earliest prophecies concerning the virgin birth, the miraculous birth of Christ and the picture of Mary sitting on a throne and receiving the homage of the Magi. In other words Guéranger is rehearsing, through pictures, the doctrine of recapitulation interpreted by St Irenaeus as the restoration of fallen humanity to communion with God through the obedience of

⁶¹ *Revised Standard Version*, Gen.27, 1-19.

⁶² Guéranger, *Sainte Cécile et la société romaine*, p.258.

⁶³ *ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

Christ and also as a summing up of the previous revelations of God in past ages to Noah, Abraham, David, Elijah and so on.

The next series of drawings shows how the life of Christ exemplified the story; there is an account of the miracles performed by him, the healing of the blind man and the raising of Lazarus and references to the biblical precedents which foretold these events, especially the story of Jonah whose attempts to convert the Ninevites ended in tragedy. These drawings are linked to the mission of teaching and conversion given to the apostles and to the growing significance of the institutional church in supporting this process. The primacy of Peter and Paul is emphasized since it is they who ensure the continuity of the tradition of Christ as the Good Shepherd and pastor of his people. The Church is represented as a female companion to Christ and she is shown in the characteristic praying position with hands outstretched and palms upwards and as a ewe, conventionally recalling Susanna, surrounded by two wolves who are trying to attack her. This whole section, as depicted in Guéranger's choice of drawings emphasizes the role of women in the early Church.

The next section illustrates the role of the Holy Spirit in ensuring that the core message is carried on through the ages. The Holy Spirit is that part of the Trinity which is continuing, unlike Christ whose life on earth was finite, and which ensures the carrying on of the tradition throughout time, by inspiring the faithful. Guéranger says:

Dans la mission qu'il est venu remplir, non temporaire comme celle du Fils mais permanente jusqu'à la fin des siècles, L'Esprit-Saint qui est comme l'Âme de l'Eglise, opère en même temps sur chaque fidèle par la grâce dont il est le dispensateur et l'instrument. ⁶⁴

Then follow pictures of the dove, representing the Holy Spirit but also pictures of the tree that frequently appears alongside the dove. Guéranger suggests that the tree reminds Christians of the cross, but it has a positive message since it is the instrument by which the world is saved and also the instrument through which the Fall occurred. As he says:

⁶⁴

ibid., p.273

Toute l'antiquité des Pères, et le concert de toutes les liturgies de l'Orient et de l'Occident, célèbrent le choix que le ciel a fait du bois, pour réparer le dommage causé par le bois à l'humanité tout entière.⁶⁵

A sequence of drawings follows showing the lamb and the bowl of milk, the shepherd with his sheep and two bowls of milk – representations of Christian humility and the availability of Eucharistic milk to everyone who is sufficiently humble. In one of the few actual references to the writings of Clement of Alexandria that I have found in Guéranger's texts he says:

On sent que tous ces personnages ont traité avec Dieu, et qu'il leur en reste l'impression douce et profonde du néant de l'homme. Clément d'Alexandrie, dans son délicieux *Carmen au Christ, Roi des enfants*, épanche l'enthousiasme qu'inspirait à ses contemporains cette paix, fruit de l'humilité chrétienne.⁶⁶

At this point he introduces a drawing of Job, famed for his attitude to suffering as exemplifying a Christian attitude of detachment from the world and of patience in the face of adversity which is characteristic of the stance recommended by Clément for the Gnostic – that of continence in all things and which, of course, Cecilia exemplifies. He concludes the chapter with two rather unexpected examples of a pre-Christian hero and heroine, Orpheus and Psyche, both of whom through their examples represent love, sacrifice and humility:

Le mythe d'Orphée, type du Christ, en tant qu'il est le principe et l'auteur de l'harmonie universelle, nous conduit à celui de Psyché, adopté par les chrétiens de Rome à l'époque primitive. Sur les peintures des catacombes il ne se rencontre qu'en un seul endroit, et c'est encore au cimetière de Domitille dans la partie qui remonte aux siècles des apôtres. Un cubiculum qui ouvre sur le grand ambulacra présente jusqu'à trois fois ce sujet caractéristique. On n'a pas droit de s'étonner de voir la fable antique préoccuper l'attention des chrétiens qui arrivaient à connaître l'amour du Fils de Dieu pour sa créature, qu'il a aimée jusqu'à la mort et à la mort de la croix. Un mythe qui plaçait en scène l'Amour et ses divines recherches à l'égard de l'Âme, ne pouvait manquer d'intéresser comme une sorte de prophétie, les néophytes d'un esprit cultivé.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ ibid., p. 273

⁶⁶ ibid., p.273.

⁶⁷ ibid., pp. 313-314. Guéranger was particularly excited by the discovery of the illustration of Psyche. In May 1872 he wrote to de Rossi, asking for a copy of the fresco from the cemetery of Domitilla. See *Correspondance Guéranger- de Rossi*, 2 May 1872. He wrote back one

In this section Guéranger is attempting to show that the early Christians had an example of recapitulation before their eyes; the message of Christianity had been shown to the Greeks as well as to the Jews before the birth of Christ. Part of his argument with de Broglie's version of the early years of the Church was that the history of Christianity is not open to rational explanation alone. Without accepting the place of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity and the purpose He fulfils in revealing the gaps left by the canonical gospels, the foundational message is necessarily incomplete. As he writes in the preface to *Essai sur le naturalisme* :

--- le salut a été possible à tous, avant comme après l'incarnation du Verbe, et ne pas dédaigner les résultats de la science qui nous montrent, chez tous les peuples, les traditions de la révélation primitive encore saisissables à notre oeil, malgré la distance que tant de siècles et la rareté des monuments ont mis entre nous et ces âges lointains.⁶⁸

The section on the iconography of the catacombs is a kind of summary of Guéranger's theological position on the mystery of the Incarnation and, importantly, on the significance of the doctrine of recapitulation in reinforcing this mystery. It is quite easy to overlook the section since it is placed almost exactly half way through the complete work. It is likely that the novelty of the images and their provenance was a major factor in drawing the reader's attention to their message.

Nineteenth- century catacomb narratives.

Whilst the theological message in *Histoire de Sainte Cécile et la société romaine aux deux premiers siècles* is not easy to disentangle from the plethora of information about Rome at this period which included illustrations from all periods celebrating the cult of the saint, the chapter on the iconography of the catacombs is certainly unusual in comparison with contemporary publications on the topic. There

month later, thanking him for sending a sequence of four drawings and says, "Quel précieux secours pour ma Cécile", *ibid.*, 29 June 1872. See App.1, Figs. 31-32.

were various publications at this time whose objectives were also to familiarize the reading public with the findings of de Rossi. Two that are contemporary with Guéranger's, one English and one German, take a very different approach to the subject.⁶⁹ Northcote, who was an Anglican convert to Roman Catholicism and whom Guéranger had met on his visit to England in 1860, wrote a short guide to the catacombs. This is a modest production with maps and simple line drawings. Northcote had first visited the catacombs with Father Marchi, de Rossi and Perret who had been commissioned by the French government to write an account of the state of the catacombs. Northcote's first impressions were published in articles in the *Rambler* in 1847 but he returned in 1854 and 1855 when de Rossi's excavations had completely transformed the scene. Although intended mainly as a guide for English visitors to Rome, Northcote aims to provide a "short but trustworthy account of the leading features of the Roman catacombs". He concludes in his preface:

I have only put it into an English dress, that it might be within reach of all our countrymen and so tend to counteract the mischievous effects of certain cheap publications upon the subject which are in circulation among us, and of whose authors it would be charitable to believe that they have been misled by books, and never really visited the places which they have undertaken to describe.⁷⁰

Northcote is not referring to Guéranger who had not yet written his account of de Rossi's excavations but in the preface to a second edition Northcote writes about the subject as being "one of so much importance, and of such general interest, that it seem'd better to publish the work as it is rather than to postpone the publication to some distant and uncertain period with the hope of finding more leisure to complete it."⁷¹

Northcote's approach is to establish certain basic facts about the function of the catacombs such as when they were first constructed as cemeteries, to narrate their

⁶⁸ Guéranger, *Essais sur le naturalisme*, "Préface" p. 46. This whole section makes it easier to understand his delight on learning about the representations of Psyche who represents human and divine love in one person.

⁶⁹ J. Spencer Northcote, *The Roman catacombs or some account of the early burial places of the early Christians in Rome* (London, 1859); S. Northcote, W. Brownlow, F. Kraus, *Roma sotterranea. Die Romischen katakomben* (Freiburg, 1873).

⁷⁰ Northcote, op.cit." Preface", pp. 8-9.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, pp.11-12.

history up to the appointment of the Commission by Pius IX and to describe their architectural features in general. He then describes the paintings and sculptures in two chapters, treating these thematically, before writing two chapters that allow the visitor to follow a route through the catacombs on the Via Appia and on other sites. Finally he includes an account of the contents of the Christian museums of Rome and a special chapter devoted to the inscriptions retrieved from the catacombs. As he indicates in his preface the account is intended as a serious work but can also be used by visitors; it is about Rome, its archaeology and its early Christian monuments of interest to scholars or to an educated laity visiting Rome. The German work, which appears after the publication of de Rossi's *La sotteranea cristiana* is even more scholarly in approach and takes a strictly geographical approach, as well as having sources and page references cited. Both accounts, the second of which is contemporary with Guéranger's, are therefore firmly anchored in Rome but seem to make a deliberate effort to be scholarly and non-partisan, if not to say non-religious.⁷²

In conclusion, I want to suggest that Guéranger's account is quite different. There is no intention to provide a guidebook; it is unlikely that educated French Catholics would have been visiting Rome in the 1870s and it seems that Cecilia's aristocratic Roman origins are described in order to validate Rome as the hub in the early Christian community from which the spokes spread out in order to carry the core message to the West. Within the constraints imposed by his publishers he provides, within the book, a tour of the catholic faith, not a tour of the city and this is best illustrated in his manner of presenting the paintings and sculpture in the catacombs, not thematically, but by demonstrating a coherent message, made more vivid to readers by the arrangement of the illustrations, irrespective of date or location. This is, to our eyes and to his more austere contemporaries, a flagrant mishandling of the data. In some senses it is the visual equivalent of personal revelation as has been handed down via the mystical tradition. Even to readers today the message is not immediately obvious since the initial reaction in consulting the document is that it is about Rome and all things Roman. This was, after all, an excellent selling point and seemed to demonstrate its ultramontane credentials. It was on these grounds, however, that later scholars like Duchesnes were so dismissive of

⁷² Both these publications were written for an informed audience in Protestant countries.

Guéranger's writing, which they saw as deliberately contradicting established scientific evidence. If, however, one views Guéranger's purposes to be much more about recreating a spiritual rather than a historical community, then the work makes sense. It is close to his earlier projects in founding the community at Solesmes, in challenging the liturgical focus of the Gallican Church and in giving support to the requests for the relics of the 'jeunes saints' before the catacombs were re-opened. Certainly his correspondence with de Rossi often refers to the mystical aspects of the discovery of Cecilia's body as well as to the important challenge this offers to the fashion for devotional projects based on legend rather than on fact.⁷³ The establishment of the monastery of Saint Cecilia in the late 1860s suggests that he was attempting more than a Roman restoration- there is nothing remotely Roman about the architecture of the buildings, for example. I want to use this notion of creating a monument to a community of belief, where it is possible for the laity to pursue an 'itinéraire' in the concluding chapter and to propose that it is in this light that the third version of the story of Saint Cecilia is best read.

⁷³ *Guéranger- de Rossi*, 14 July 1857. 'Les saints martyrs vous aiment tant qu'ils vous poursuivent partout, vous leur illustre, leur pieux pèlerin qui recueille leurs traces après tant de siècles. Encore une fois cela n'est pas naturel.---. Tout ceci est au-delà de toute expression et je ne doute pas que ma grande et chère Cécile ne soit ordonnatrice générale de cet ensemble de découvertes inouïes dans les fastes de l'archéologie chrétienne. Elle vous aime, et souvenez-vous que c'est elle qui a été notre lien. Vous avez prophétisé sur son tombeau, en 1852; vous avez senti sa présence et, pour récompense, elle s'est faite votre cicerone sur la voie appienne. Notre "tessara" à nous deux est donc in Christo et Caecilia".

VII Restoring religious conviction in nineteenth-century France.

Protestants approach worship with hopes that it will be edifying, Catholics with the desire that it will be sanctifying.¹

Audience as a neglected variable in Guéranger's writing.

Modern commentators have pointed to the role played by the aristocratic laity in the setting up of the Benedictine community in 1833.² Chateaubriand, Montalembert and Madame Schwezine were amongst Guéranger's earliest supporters and the sponsorship to edit *Galliana christiana* which Guizot commissioned in 1836 came about through the influence of Montalembert.³ From the very beginning, however, members of the local community in Sablé-sur-Sarthe encouraged Guéranger in the project and it was their support, which allowed the community to survive in relative security, at least until the first expulsions in 1881. This constituency was made up of members of the professional classes in Sablé, in the Mayenne and in the villages around Solesmes and, as time went on, of the new industrialists who arrived in the Sarthe valley. An example of this early support was Guéranger's meeting, when he was still a young priest in Le Mans, with the father of Euphrasie Cosnard, who invited him to stay at his house in Sablé :

A force d'instances, [celui-ci] me décida à venir passer quelques jours chez lui dans ma ville natale; ce qui devait avoir une immense conséquence sur tout mon avenir. Dieu savait ce qu'il voulait faire; mais moi je l'ignorais profondément.⁴

Cosnard was the liquidator for the estates of the Marquis of Sablé and he assisted Guéranger in his purchase of the ruins of the former monastery that became the site of

¹ J.White, "Roman catholic and Protestant worship", *Studia Liturgica* 26 (1996), pp. 156-167.

² Spencer, *Politics of belief*, p. 54-56.

³ Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, pp.151-152.

⁴ *Autobiographie*, pp.128-129.

the new abbey of St Peter's. The Cosnard family were just one of many local bourgeois families with whom Guéranger corresponded over the years; sometimes the correspondence was of a pastoral nature and sometimes it was to encourage the individual to write for publication.⁵ The most significant example is the correspondence he conducted with the Bruyère family, notably Jenny, who became the first abbess of the community of St Cecilia at Solesmes, in spite of the violent opposition of her father.⁶ The dispute between Louis Landau, mayor of the commune of Solesmes, and the curé of the parish, demonstrates the loyalty of another of Guéranger's supporters to the monastic model of religious life.⁷ It is for this audience, the emerging educated catholic laity, that Guéranger is writing and there is evidence from contemporary culture to support this, especially in the field of historiography and art.⁸

The ideas which he introduces as early as 1849 in the preface to *Histoire de Sainte Cécile* are a first attempt to convince this new audience that the Roman Catholic faith still had much to offer them, by attempting to show the relevance of the early Christian story of her life and martyrdom to life in the middle of the nineteenth century in France. In the first seven pages of this preface he deplores the current political climate, one year into the Second Republic, and sees threats to religion from individualism and liberalism coming from every direction. Cecilia's story, he suggests, exemplifies three key catholic virtues, virginity, apostolic zeal and courage, which can be adopted by every Catholic. He very quickly changes the word virginity to continence and retains this word throughout. This is to redefine continence as associated with moderation and humility and he is, I suggest, keen to shift the

⁵ Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, pp. 674-678. Guéranger publicized Adolphe Segrétain's book, *Sixte V et Henri IV* in five articles in *le Monde*, 19 August 1861 – 5 January 1862. The Segrétain family had purchased land in the Mayenne after the Revolution. Without his knowledge they later promoted, unsuccessfully, the appointment of Guéranger to the new diocese of Laval which was created in 1855.

⁶ Oury, *Lumière et force*, pp. 156-157. Leopold Bruyère had opposed his daughter's vocation all his life. After the death of his wife in 1872 he became reconciled with Guéranger and was buried alongside the former in the cemetery at the abbey of St Cecilia in Solesmes.

⁷ Delatte, *op.cit.*, pp.347-348.

⁸ M.Samuels, "Illustrated historiography and the image of the past in nineteenth-century France", *French historical studies* 26/2 (Spring 2003), pp.253-280.

association of sin and physical pleasure towards a model of sin as intellectual pride which derives from Adam and Eve's desire for perfect knowledge and, therefore, perfect control of the world they inhabit. Cecilia's willingness to suffer on behalf of all believers, not just on behalf of an elite, is a consequence of a real, as opposed to a forced humility. The arguments she puts forward in her trial about the weakness of institutional power support this interpretation. Virginity is redefined as an ability to hold back from a worldly way of living, in attitudes to wealth, property and even to an over-reliance on family. Perhaps this can be thought of as an early critique of the 'culture of comfort' that John Merriman has traced back to the middle of the nineteenth century in France.⁹ Guéranger writes:

C'est la continence qui révèle à l'homme le secret de sa dignité, qui trempe son âme pour tous les genres de dévouement, qui assainit son cœur et relève son être tout entier. Elle est le point culminant de la beauté morale dans l'individu et en même temps le grand ressort de la société humaine. Or, en avoir le sentiment, l'ancien monde s'en allait en dissolution; lorsque le fils de la Vierge parût sur la terre, il renouvela et sanctionna ce principe sauveur, et les destinées de la race humaine prirent un nouvel essor.¹⁰

He treats the other two virtues in rather the same manner, arguing that it is necessary for Catholics to be open in speaking about their faith and to be ready to convert others by explaining the true doctrine that Cecilia champions. He is not advocating that the contemporary Catholic simply imitates her virtues but that he or she should uphold and promote the doctrinal position which Cecilia exemplifies. Guéranger returns to the complicated notions of sin, continence and attitudes to physical pleasure fifteen years later in the preface to *Les exercices* where he warns his readers not to be put off by the sexual imagery that Gertrude uses when describing her visions of Christ. He refers to the fact that some contemporary critics of the writing of mystics

⁹ J.Merriman, *A history of modern Europe* (New York, 1996), p.638.

¹⁰ Guéranger, *Histoire de Sainte Cécile*, "Préface", p.12. This whole section of the preface on continence is reminiscent of Clement of Alexandria and his notion of temperance, a quality available to both men and women. For Clement it is important not to despise the material world but to adopt a measured attitude to possessions and abstinence. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromates*, 3, 7 in A.Roberts and J.Donaldson (eds.), *Translations of the writings of the fathers down to AD 325* (Edinburgh, 1867), vol.4, p.110, "Clement of Alexandria, The Miscellanies".

like Gertrude comment adversely on the fact that she uses “le langage de l’amour profane”. His response to this is as follows:

La remarque est naïve sûrement; mais un peu de réflexion, une plus forte dose de spiritualisme eussent peut-être conduit l’écrivain à se demander si au contraire ce ne serait pas l’amour humain qui aurait dérobé à l’amour ses expressions enflammées? Dieu, inspirateur de toutes les affections pures et saintes, a voulu aussi être aimé de sa créature. Dans l’ancien et le nouveau Testament, il a daigné lui-même s’appeler l’Epoux; est-il donc surprenant que l’Eglise réponde à ses avances? Que son cœur, blessé d’amour pour l’infinie beauté, épuise, pour exprimer ce qu’elle ressent, le langage le plus tendre et le plus ardent qu’une nature puisse trouver en elle-même?¹¹

This comment can be interpreted as an implied criticism, not just of the unnamed critic who threw doubt on the divine inspiration of Gertrude’s visions but also as a rebuke to the repressive and guilt-laden nature of some of the attitudes that Germain describes in her critique of nineteenth-century Gallican ‘mentalités’.¹²

This poses an interesting question concerning audience. The fact that Guéranger chooses to draw attention to three women in his construction of Christian exemplarity might lead us to suppose that his texts are aimed primarily at women. I do not believe that this is the case since he always discusses spirituality as a condition which was equally available to men and women. Given that his audience is the bourgeois Catholic family, it is useful to consider some of the twentieth-century contributions to the debate about the bourgeois family in the middle of the nineteenth century in France. Modern analysis of family and religion at this period has emphasized a common theme - the important role played by women in moral and religious education in the home and in charitable work undertaken in the burgeoning female congregations or, later in the century, in the lay associations which replaced them.¹³ Explanations for the

¹¹ Guéranger, *Les exercices*, “Préface”, pp. 33-34

¹² Germain, *Parler du salut*, passim. See also K.Harrison, *Saint Thérèse of Lisieux* (London 2004). This recent study of the nineteenth-century saint underlines her sense of guilt and the qualities of self-effacement and self-sacrifice which she developed in compensation and which were more acceptable to society at the time. She was canonized in 1925, only twenty-eight years after her death.

¹³ See, for example, B. Smith, *Ladies of the leisure class* (Princeton, 1981); J.Mcmillan, *France and women, 1789-1914. Gender, society and politics* (London, 2000), ch. 4, “Angels of the hearth, leisured ladies and the limits of domesticity”, pp. 47-62; H.Mills, “Saintes soeurs et femmes fortes; alternative accounts of the route to womanly civic virtue and the history of

feminisation of religion are found typically in arguments about the way in which the discredited aristocratic norms for family life were re-defined to create a bourgeois life-style more in keeping with Revolutionary values. Nye has discussed the topic in terms of re-defining male codes of honour but, in fact, his emphasis is firmly on the family and on strategies for dealing with the conditions of middle-class life, including inheritance laws.¹⁴ The works of George Sand after 1848 can be viewed as an attempt to bolster the fragility of the new middle-classes by incorporating traditional rural knowledge and know-how into upwardly mobile artisan and agricultural families. Contemporary literature also alerted the reading public to the education of children, as advocated by Rousseau earlier, and this influenced child-rearing practice in the period after the Revolution.¹⁵ Perhaps the best-known analysis of the distribution of male and female roles in the period has been Laqueur's work on the ways in which medical and biological paradigms supported the notion of the incommensurability of the sexes.¹⁶

More recently literary critics in particular have argued that this focus on the family has led to an over-privileging of socially constructed gender in the analysis of bourgeois life-styles and to a neglect of issues around masculinity and the inhibition imposed on men from defining their status in terms of perceived feminine values.¹⁷ If it is an exaggeration to talk about a crisis of masculinity in nineteenth-century France, there is evidence to show that there was a crisis in male spirituality; this can be demonstrated in declining church attendance by men and by their greater participation in secular movements.¹⁸ Recent research by Catherine Harrison on emulation and voluntary associations in the Franche-Comté in this period shows that local

French feminism" in C.Campbell Orr (ed.), *Wollstonecraft's daughters. Womanhood in England and France 1780-1920* (Manchester, 1996), Ch.7, pp.135-150.

¹⁴ R. Nye, *Masculinity and male codes of honour in modern France* (Oxford, 1993). Nye's thesis is that middle class men developed family strategies to limit the number of children, which affected their attitudes to their wives' sexuality. Guéranger seems aware of this and warns against it: "que la paternité et la maternité ne soient plus un calcul, mais un devoir sévère. "Préface à Sainte Cécile", p. 11.

¹⁵ L. Steinbrugge, *The moral sex. Women's nature in the French Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1995).

¹⁶ T. Laqueur, *Making sex; body and gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA, 1990).

¹⁷ N.Schorr, *George Sand and idealism* (New York, 1993) pp.151ff ; R.Reid, *Families in jeopardy. Regulating the social body in France 1750-1910* (Stanford, 1993).

associations provided male bourgeois men with an opportunity to acquire status through peer recognition, in spite of the legal and constitutional constraints on association. Harrison shows, however, that charitable associations were less successful in achieving their aims than were associations devoted to scientific or antiquarian aims.¹⁹ One way of interpreting the power of the symbol of the Sacred Heart narrative to mobilise support for the Franco-Prussian war could well be that the narrative responded to a need for outlets for male spiritual aspirations which went beyond the nationalistic.²⁰

Although Guéranger never specifically refers to male spirituality as an issue, it must be remembered that he was writing at a time when the subject of spirituality was addressed in the context of a non-gendered debate about the effects of secularisation on the values and morals of the family. However the message of both prefaces is that the method of prayer and the method of contemplation is available to everyone. He mentions both Gregory the Great and Louis de Blois amongst its practitioners, as well as Gertrude, Cecilia, Gertrude and Maria who all exemplify a spirituality, which is gender-blind, and essentialist. The ambiguity surrounding the lives of these women and the way in which history has treated them can be understood as a gender-ambiguity or, at least as a picture of gender-free spirituality. The women's stories can be used, not simply as the exemplification of saintly values and conduct (heroism, fortitude, strength and so on) but as scripts which an individual can apply to himself or to herself. During his final visit to Rome in 1856, Guéranger visited Monte Cassino where St Benedict set up his community and where he wrote the rule that became the model for all enclosed monastic orders during the medieval period. While he was at the monastery Guéranger looked across the plain to Plombariola where tradition had it that St Benedict met his sister, St Scholastica, once a year. Later Guéranger celebrated Mass with the abbot of Monte Cassino and visited the ruined tower where Benedict had a vision of the soul of his sister being carried away to heaven. In a letter to a fellow monk Guéranger writes;

¹⁸ Anceau, *La France de 1848 à 1870*, pp. 173- 174. Anceau points out that there were significant differences between rural and urban communities.

¹⁹ C.Harrison, *The bourgeois citizen in nineteenth-century France. Gender, sociability and the uses of emulation* (Oxford, 1999).

²⁰ Jonas, "Anxiety, identity and the displacement of violence" pp. 58-59.

Il est une impression intérieure que je n'ai ressentie qu'en trois lieux au monde; à la confession de Saint Pierre; à la confession de sainte Cécile, aux stanze de Saint-Benoît au Mont-Cassin. Chacun des nuances très différentes, pour moi touche le ciel.²¹

It is perhaps unsurprising that, as a monk, Guéranger is reluctant to distinguish between gender in questions of spirituality and to popularise this in books which are aimed at an audience of both men and women. In this respect he is closer to several of the key literary figures of the period than he is to his religious peers. There does not seem to have been any research in recent French historiography on the issue of male spirituality in the nineteenth century. In England this topic has been studied as an aspect of High Anglicanism, although it has not been addressed along with that of spiritual equality and the routes to spirituality through the monastic life were even more restricted for writers such as Pusey and Neale than they were for Roman Catholic men.²² Whereas it may seem perverse to suggest that Guéranger's selection of the three holy women was designed to emphasize the availability of a route to spirituality for the male laity, it is in keeping with his stance of challenging conventional positions and with the evidence of his practice in establishing spiritually equal but organisationally separated enclosed communities.²³

Guéranger and the 'Jansenist conspiracy'.

His more recent biographers have avoided detailed comment on Guéranger's use of the term 'Jansenist' to cover a wide range of problems he identified in the organisation and practices of the Gallican Church; these included liturgical innovations, devotions to Mary and a persistence of the doctrine of predestination in different guises.²⁴ In 1863 Acton wrote a bitter attack on Guéranger, accusing him of

²¹ Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, p.569.

²² L.Millar, "The (Re)genduring of high Anglicanism" in A.Bradstock et al (eds.), *Masculinity and spirituality in Victorian culture* (London, 2000), pp. 27-43.

²³ The abbey of St Cecilia at Solesmes was founded in 1866.

doing the ultramontane movement irreparable harm by criticizing serious historical research, at the expense of traditional texts:

Dom Guéranger, the learned Abbot of Solesmes, is the most outspoken of these systematic adversaries of modern knowledge. The critical spirit of the close of the seventeenth century, in which members of the orders took the lead, and in which they were followed by the most learned men amongst the Jesuits as well as the Jansenists sprang, he says from a spirit of party, and belongs legitimately to the infidel Germans. If we would avoid scepticism, we must revise the canons of critical science and we shall recover much contested literature.²⁵

Guéranger was, in fact, critical of late-seventeenth-century attempts to explain differences of opinion over doctrine as a quarrel between political wings of the Church, and he was sceptical about the position that Bossuet took on this issue. Delatte, in his earlier biography, refers to articles that Guéranger wrote, defending the Jesuits and arguing that the Jansenist position was not so much a position taken up by warring clerics at the time as a fundamental shift in the way in which doctrine and practice were defined in the period after the Reformation.²⁶ The consequences, in his view, were that many texts from the medieval period were ignored when the Church was developing doctrine and, for whatever reasons, the situation was particularly dire in France, as opposed to that in other Roman Catholic countries in Western Europe. He was more explicit about this in the articles he wrote about the case of Maria of Agreda in 1858- 1859. His argument is that the Protestant Reformation, in an attempt to disinvest itself of the institutional practices of the Roman Catholic Church, had gone back to the writing of the early Fathers in order to discover the practices of the first Christians ("en un mot retrouver le christianisme primitif"). As a result of this, patristic scholarship in France, in particular, had followed the same route, with the result that the traditions and practices of the medieval period and, notably, the contribution of the monasteries had been by-passed:

²⁴ Neither Oury, *Moine au coeur de l'Eglise* nor Johnson, *A liturgical theologian* includes a reference to the term Jansenism in the index of either book.

²⁵ J. Acton, "Ultramontanism", reprinted in J. Acton, *Essays on church and state* (London, 1952), p. 58-59

²⁶ Delatte, *Dom Guéranger*, pp. 616-618. Delatte refers to an article, D. Guéranger, "Le Jansénisme et la Compagnie de Jésus," *Revue de L'Anjou et du Maine*, 2/2, p. 290. Delatte gives no date for the article but the context makes it clear that he is referring to 1858.

La force du scholasticisme était non à créer de nouveaux dogmes, mais à mieux pénétrer ceux qui ont été élevés dès le commencement, à mieux saisir leurs rapports, à réunir autour d'un même centre les rayons d'une même lumière.²⁷

These comments of Guéranger give a better insight into the criticisms in *Institutions liturgiques* of the Paris and Troyes breviaries. Michael Kwatera concludes that, broadly speaking, Guéranger's criticism of these breviaries was unfair and that the aim of the authors was to promote the study and use of ancient texts and practices and to ensure that the liturgy of the day reflected the new knowledge which contemporary scholarship had made available.²⁸ However, Kwatera also shows that twentieth century comparative liturgy, which was obviously not available to Guéranger has shown that "the Roman texts for the major Marian feasts were very largely borrowed from the liturgy of the virgins".²⁹ Kwatera argues that this initial emphasis on the virginity of Mary was one that became normative for the development of Marian liturgy, as was the prominence of the bridal theme. The evidence from the Troyes and Paris texts is that the French diocesan liturgists highlighted other images of Mary, for example as prototype of the Church and premier disciple which were more 'modern' and more in the interests of sustaining Marian devotion. Kwatera acknowledges Guéranger's concern to retain the Eve-Mary typology reflected in the Roman texts but points out that this can be problematic in that it is to idealize Mary to the detriment of all other women.³⁰ This is a familiar argument for twentieth-century feminists but it is to read Guéranger's critique of the liturgy in isolation from his other writing and to be over-sensitive to twentieth-century doctrinal developments.³¹ Kwatera suggests that this "led more than once to Guéranger's finding himself in material disagreement with the reform issued by the Second Vatican" and he quotes

²⁷ Guéranger, *l'Univers*, 11 April 1859.

²⁸ Kwatera, *Marian feasts*, p. 581.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 537. Kwatera is referring to 'The Common of Saints for Virgins'.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 580-581.

³¹ Warner, *Alone of all her sex*, "Prologue", 19-22.

Oury's assessment that it was his anti-Jansenism that has led to his marginality.³² This 'presentism' underlines a difficulty for any researcher attempting to revisit Guéranger's thinking but it is also to miss the points Guéranger makes elsewhere about the tendency of post-Reformation theology to bypass the high period of medieval monastic thinking.

It does, however, show that in one sense Guéranger highlighted the fundamental shift in Christian thinking which occurred somewhere around the middle of the fourteenth century and which accounts for the fact that, in Bossy's view for example, Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity share more in common than either does with late medieval Christianity.³³ From the point of view of the historian today it can be argued that the Renaissance and the scientific paradigm altered the way in which people, including theologians, thought about religion and that this led to a neglect of medieval scholastic thinking.³⁴ In France the way in which Protestant and Roman Catholic practices developed parallel, if different, forms in the fifteenth century has been a topic which has received attention, although the focus has been on Protestant topoi such as the sacerdotal role of the minister and the development of alternative devotional stances such as a discipline of the body and the importance of attention ('l'ouïe').³⁵ This more anthropological approach to religious practice was not available to Guéranger, of course, but it is interesting that he identified the roots of faith and commitment in the exercises of repetition and reflection, as it had been practised in the medieval tradition.

³² G.-M. Oury, "Aux origines du mouvement liturgique: Les *Institutions liturgiques* de Dom Guéranger (1840-1851), *Esprit et Vie*, 9 (1976), p.125.

³³ J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, "Préface", pp. 7-9.

³⁴ It has been argued that the neo-Thomist revival in late nineteenth century France is another example of the return to medievalism. See Foucher, *La pensée catholique*, ch.9, "La montée du Thomisme", pp. 237- 264.

³⁵ T. Wanegffelen, "Des protestants entre foi et croyance. Appartenir aux Eglises réformées françaises sans adhérer nécessairement au système genevois d'orthodoxie". Paper prepared for a presentation at the conference, "Belief and Dissent", organised by the *Society for French Historical Studies*, University of Warwick, 1-2 April 2004. Wanegffelen's idea of listening is very interesting in view of Guéranger's notion of reflection, which I discuss in the next section.

Retrieving a lost monastic tradition.

It is in the context of an attempt to retrieve a monastic tradition of mysticism and of scholarship, along with the doctrine of the early Church, that Guéranger's attempt to retrieve Cecilia, Gertrude and Maria of Agreda must be evaluated. In their different ways Gertrude and Maria both represent a continuing tradition, although in the case of the former this was interrupted by the political and social upheavals of central Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. His decision to write about Maria of Agreda and her monumental work *The mystical city of God* can be interpreted less as an attempt to argue the case for the promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception but more as an exemplar of a tradition of supernatural communication. The former dogma had become official doctrine in 1850 and his articles in defence of Maria were not written until 1858 when his preoccupations were with the impact of naturalism on the study of the canonical gospels. In his writing at this time he is clearly wishing to emphasize a second level 'Jansenism' which is not to do with quarrels between clerics but with repairing a disrupted tradition. It is clear that, for a variety of cultural and possibly geographical reasons, there was a continuous tradition of female mystical vernacular writing in the women's monasteries in Spain. This tradition pre-dated the more famous works of Teresa of Avila. The Spanish Inquisition dealt harshly with the writings of the Reformers like Erasmus and the sects that sprang up in Spain as a result of the new humanism in the early sixteenth century. Lay groups like those known as the 'Alumbrados' often encouraged female prophesying and the Spanish Church was particularly severe on the practice of 'dexiamente' where the aim was to achieve complete self-effacement and unity with God.³⁶ The women in the Spanish monasteries, however, received support from bishops like Cisneros and seem to have been encouraged to write down their communications, possibly as a way of exercising closer control over their activities.³⁷ These Spanish women seem to have preserved a more unbroken tradition of mystical

³⁶ G.Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila and the politics of sanctity* (Ithaca N.Y., 1996,) ch. 1, "Women and the pursuit of holiness in sixteenth-century Spain" pp.9-15.

³⁷ R.Surz, *Writing women in Spain*, "Introduction", pp. 11- 12.

communication that reflected the practices of the late medieval monastic tradition more faithfully.³⁸

Guéranger's support for Maria and for the new edition of her work which appeared in 1857 must, in my view, be interpreted in this light; first as an example of supernatural communication but also as a method of achieving spiritual knowledge through meditation on the liturgical office and through reflection on the commentaries and exegeses of scripture which the monastic timetable provided. I have already discussed Atherton's recent research on Hildegard of Bingen, which confirms that the process of reflection was an important factor in the visions and writings of monastic women.³⁹ Guéranger appears to have reached this conclusion without reference to any theories and to have contrasted it, in his own mind at least, with contemporary fashion for the evidence of the immediate senses and for positive proof.

Other writers at this time, notably Hegel, were exploring ways of explaining religious experience which were not constrained by positivist models of the nature of consciousness; there is no evidence whatsoever that Guéranger ever read Hegel and it is highly unlikely that he would have attempted this. Today Hegel is less well known for his theories about religion than for his theories about the way in which history is made. However his early attempts to develop a critique of rationalism and empiricism were pertinent to questions of theology as well as to questions of history. His insight was to conceptualise the individual as a reflective subject rather than as the one-dimensional rational thinker of Descartes whose model had dominated theories of the mind for so long. Hegel's model abolishes categories of object and subject in favour of a thinking individual who does not simply observe the world and fit his observations into an existing set of categories which have largely been determined by a set of social norms, for example those of scientific understanding and logic. Hegel's study on consciousness, *The phenomenology of mind*, starts with the problem of how the individual consciousness reconciles inner and outer experience; his answer, in

³⁸ I have not done any detailed reading on fourteenth century female mystics. It is interesting that the last French woman mystic that I can identify from the medieval period is Marguerite d'Oynt (died c. 1310) who writes in Provençal and is not technically French! Margaret Porette, who was burned for heresy in 1310 in Paris wrote in French but her work is in the tradition of late medieval mystics who claimed freedom from the Church. For Porette, see *O.D.C.C.* p.1309.

brief, is that this is achieved through reflection. The individual experiences a phenomenon, reflects on the experience and, in the process brings into play all his or her previous experience in order to make sense of it. Individual consciousness is composed of different sets of experiences for each individual and this will affect their perception of the phenomenon. Different learning experiences and different emotions associated with these will account for the significance individuals attach to any set of phenomena.⁴⁰ Whilst Freud, later in the century was to develop the notion of the emotions into a theory of the unconscious, Hegel's insights had implications for theology and for the way in which the acquisition of mystical communication might actually occur. Guéranger seems to have reached similar conclusions, empirically, and he was alert to the dangers of an interpretation of tradition that was over-dependent on positivist evidence alone. A more recent editor of Gertrude's work has likened her spirituality to an 'intériorisation' of the experience she acquired at the time of her conversion.:

Sa découverte de la vie spirituelle et mystique est beaucoup moins dans le don exceptionnel de la vision du 27 janvier que dans cette intériorisation qui lui a été rapelée et enseignée lors de cette rencontre ---. La grande vision du face à face a ce caractère d'intériorisation, le regard déifiqué ayant pénétré toute l'intimité de l'être pour l'impregner de l'image divine".⁴¹

Doyère goes on to quote Gertrude's reference to St Bernard and to compare the character of her writing with the medieval mystical tradition rather than with the introspective and more intellectual tradition of the Christian humanists writers of the 'Devotia moderna' school. It is at this point that historical explanations reach their limit since, as Rémond has pointed, out the criteria against which the authenticity of mystical communication is measured are those of the Church and not of other institutions in society.⁴² For Guéranger, however, *Les exercices* had a didactic value and the practice of the monastic life had a significant contribution to make to the renewal of faith in nineteenth-century France.

³⁹ See Chapter Five, pp. 159-160.

⁴⁰ Davies, *God within*, "Hegel: The contemporary of the future", pp. 13-25.

⁴¹ P.Doyère, *Gertrude d' Helfta, Oeuvres spirituelles*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1968), pp.41-43.

⁴² Rémond, "Conclusions", *Mgr Duchesnes et son temps*, pp.496-497.

The risks Guéranger undertook in establishing the monastic community at Solesmes in 1833 are not always appreciated. Between 1796 and 1880 over four hundred women's foundations were established and only seventy-four for men. Of these, fifty-four were new orders and twenty were restorations of orders that predated the Revolution.⁴³ The Revolutionary laws still threatened the legality of any community of men and the Concordat arrangements had not made any provision, either constitutional or financial for the regular clergy. Langlois attributes the popularity of the women's orders to the inability of the State to meet the needs of the poor, the weak and the criminal populations and men undertook these tasks much less frequently. Guéranger's aims, in restoring the Benedictine rule at Solesmes, were to revive the monastic liturgical office and to pursue the study of ecclesiastical history. The latter project became increasingly difficult for the community as a whole and the monastery remains even today renowned for its research on Gregorian chant rather than on other aspects of Church history.⁴⁴ His priorities remained those of community and prayer, as he had described in an early article:

Notre but principal a été d'établir une maison de retraite et de prière où pût refleurir quelque ombre des anciennes vertus du cloître, et d'offrir un asile aux âmes qui, appelées à la vie religieuse, ne trouvent point en France les secours nécessaires pour suivre leurs vocations.⁴⁵

There is ample evidence to show that, especially after 1850, his experience as abbot led him to emphasize the following of the monastic rule rather than research and publication for the community as a whole. In 1856 he wrote a manual for the use of his new master of novices, Dom Coutourier where he lists six basic conditions for the monastic life:

Séparation d'avec le monde (retraite et habit); célébration journalière et solennelle du service divin; travail; mortification du corps; vie en famille; oeuvres de zèle à l'égard du prochain.⁴⁶

⁴³ Langlois, *Le catholicisme au féminin*, pp. 204-208.

⁴⁴ Bergeron, *Decadent enchantments*, passim

⁴⁵ *l'Ami de la religion*, 1 August 1833. When Montalembert visited the new community in 1835 he was obliged to follow the timetable of the monastic day which he describes in detail in a letter to Rio. See Lecanuet, *Montalembert d'après son journal*, pp. 458-459.

By 1869 he has expanded this list to nine conditions:

Célébration journalière de l'office divin au chœur; vie commune dans toute son intégrité; travail sous l'obéissance; étude de saintes lettres; abstinence; vie de retraite; soin du salut des âmes (selon compatibilité avec la stabilité); visite régulière; pratique de la Règle dans son esprit, et le plus possible quant à la lettre.⁴⁷

It is clear that by the end of the 1860s his thinking had evolved ; the celebration of the Office is at the head of the list, personal study has replaced research and he emphasized the importance of “ the saving of souls, provided it is done within the Rule.” As Soltner points out Guéranger always held the view that the rule of St Benedict included an obligation to attempt to influence the world outside the monastery. Western monasticism, he argues, has always followed this tradition unlike Eastern monasticism that emphasized extreme asceticism and, in its earliest manifestations, isolation in the desert. The great virtue of the Rule was that it was not originally an Order and, ever since the time of St Benedict, different Orders have adopted it in whole or in part. The Rule was capable of modification to external conditions and did not recommend physical mortification as an end in itself but rather as an aid to meditation. This interpretation of the Rule made it possible for Guéranger to travel and to publish, whilst maintaining his position as leader of the community. As the correspondence with de Rossi reveals, this placed enormous demands on his time and no doubt accounts for the fact that his contemporaries often criticized his writing on the grounds of shoddy scholarship. He would probably not have disagreed with a modern assessment of the contribution of western monasticism to religious life:

Monastic emphasis was always on the prosaic process of daily conversion, the decision for God made- joyfully or wearily- time and again in the smallest matters of daily business with other human beings---. The genius of classical monasticism is its recognition of the reality of effort, tedium, painstaking regularities in the believer's attempt to be faithful to his vision, to be accessible to the violent, reshaping love of God.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Quoted in Soltner, *La pensée monastique*, pp.216- 217.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 218

⁴⁸ Williams, *The wound of knowledge*, p.115.

One of the last works Guéranger produced was a translation into French of the Rule of St Benedict and in the very short preface he makes it clear that he is writing for a wider audience than the monastic community and that the Rule has a value beyond the confines of the monastery. He concludes:

C'est donc avec une entière confiance que nous présentons aux amis de la science historique, et aux hommes qui ont à coeur les intérêts de Dieu et de l'humanité, cet essai de traduction du code monastique qui a été durant un si grand nombre de siècles, l'un des plus puissants instruments de la civilisation de l'Europe.⁴⁹

Today there are thirty sibling communities of Solesmes; twenty-one men's houses and eight women's housing seven hundred and sixty monks and two hundred and eighty 'moniales' respectively. They include foundations in Spain, Holland, England, Italy, South and North America and Senegal. The houses are all independent but adopt the Rule of St Benedict; there is no hierarchical organisation and each community is led by the abbot or abbess, both of whom have a paternal or maternal responsibility for their members but who are elected by the community.⁵⁰ The abbey of St Peter has a publication programme and an extensive catalogue of computer discs recording the Gregorian chant for which Solesmes is famous. There are guesthouses, a programme of retreats and self-catering facilities for individuals wishing to spend short periods for prayer or study. There is a shop in the main reception area and the parish church, which is part of the site, has sculpture surviving from the pre-Revolutionary period. In recent years the abbey has created a web site with information about the community and a handout containing answers to the sixteen questions most frequently asked by visitors. At the time of writing I was visitor 318,589 to log on to the site. The Office is still sung in Latin seven times a day, as it is also sung in the women's abbey of St Cecilia which is at the entrance to the village but more secluded than the men's house. Both houses are closed Orders so that, while their members go out to undertake various tasks, there is no very obvious monastic presence in the village, except for one hour on a Thursday

⁴⁹ Guéranger, *La règle du bienheureux père S. Benoît* (Angers, 1868), "Préface" p. 2.

⁵⁰ All the information in this section is from "Dom Guéranger, abbé de Solesmes. L'Eglise en prière", *Dieu est Amour* No. 164-165 (Rennes, 1995).

afternoon when the weekly 'promenade' takes pace. Perhaps the most telling reminder of the presence of both communities is the tolling of the bells seven times a day.

It is probably the ecumenical aspects of the community which are most emphasized today in the community's publicity literature but it is hard to know exactly why so many people visit Solesmes. In summer and on Sundays, at the traditional festivals, the abbey church is full and people arrive early to ensure a seat from where they can listen to the sung Office and, for the most part, communicate. In the widest sense Solesmes has become a kind of 'itinéraire' for a certain kind of French catholic community and certainly not simply an ageing one. To this extent it has managed to reconstruct itself in the twenty first century, even using modern media and marketing techniques.

For Guéranger, in the years between 1830 and 1870, the way to publicize and promote the ideals behind the foundation of the community at Solesmes was through a particular kind of writing of history which was closer to that of the nineteenth-century historiographers and the nineteenth-century history painters than it was to that of his clerical peers. It is on account of this that the ecclesiastical historians at the end of the century were unable to appreciate his work. His friend, Mgr Pie, bishop of Poitiers, probably got closer to an assessment of his talents than anyone. In his funeral oration, which runs to thirty pages, he says:

One thing is certain; in the person of Dom Guéranger, the Monk ---, the Monk, I repeat, was the prominent instrument of this grand and healthy renovation --- to bring in a better spirit, revive sound notions and awaken true Catholic sentiments in every soul he came across, this was the mission of the Abbot of Solesmes.⁵¹

Writing nearly thirty years ago about the ultramontane campaign to restore the authority of the Pope to the Roman Catholic Church in France, Austin Gough summarized the debate as follows:

The debate within the clergy revealed itself as a contest between two aspects of the Romantic movement, the Ultramontanes putting forward their vision of a supranational Christendom, and the Gallicans arguing for a Chateaubriandian romanticism in which religion was ultimately linked to "le pays".⁵²

⁵¹ Pie, *Funeral oration*, pp.18-19.

Although Gough does not say so, this is to suggest that the ultramontanes reconstructed the Catholic religion as a unifying and reconciliatory force that could heal the tensions and conflicts that survived the Revolution unresolved. One of the valuable lessons from taking a cultural history approach to the study of Guéranger's thinking has been that it highlights the ways in which art and literature during the period attempted in a variety of ways to come to terms with "the unique historical experience of France, which involves rupture and discontinuity to a much greater extent than in England and Germany".⁵³ The history paintings of Paul Delaroche and the historiography of Augustin Thierry, in the first half of the century, are good examples of the ways in which artists and writers attempted to reconcile violence and conflict into narratives of diversity within unity. It is in this sense that Gough's analysis can be read as a tale of competing versions of ecclesiastical history. This kind of analysis, however, is only useful up to a point when considering the case of Guéranger. Although he often uses the techniques of the Romantic historiographers in order to reach the Catholic laity, his 'point de départ' is the failure of theology in France to take account of the foundational message of Christianity contained, as he sees it, in the writings of the Fathers and distorted by the modernising processes of Renaissance and Reformation. His insistence on the pernicious influence of 'Jansenism' is designed to reveal conflicting interpretations of doctrine and practice, which still persisted, and to suggest that the reform of institutions would not, in itself, revive belief or, in French, 'croyance'.⁵⁴ I have tried to set out in this study the ways in which he thought that this could be achieved but to go further is to go beyond the bounds of historical analysis.

⁵² Gough, *Paris and Rome*. p. 156.

⁵³ Bann, *The clothing of Clio*, p.53.

⁵⁴ *Le Robert Mini*, p.169. Croyance n.f. 1, Action, fait de croire une chose vraie, vraisemblable ou possible.

Appendix A: Illustrations of frescos from the Roman Catacombs.

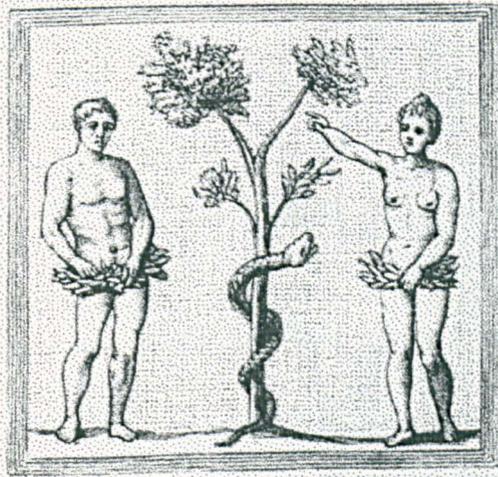


Fig.1

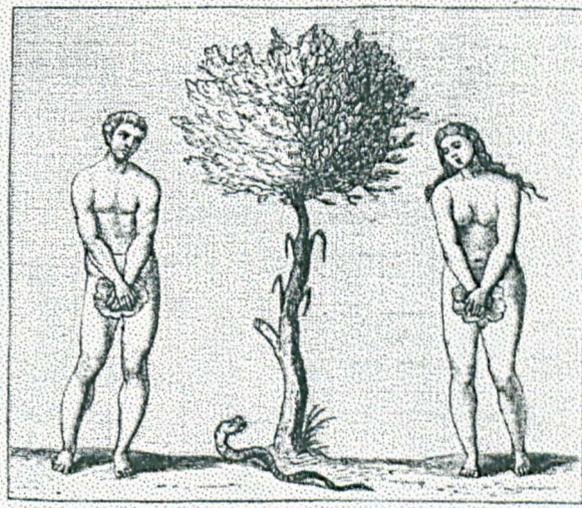


Fig.2

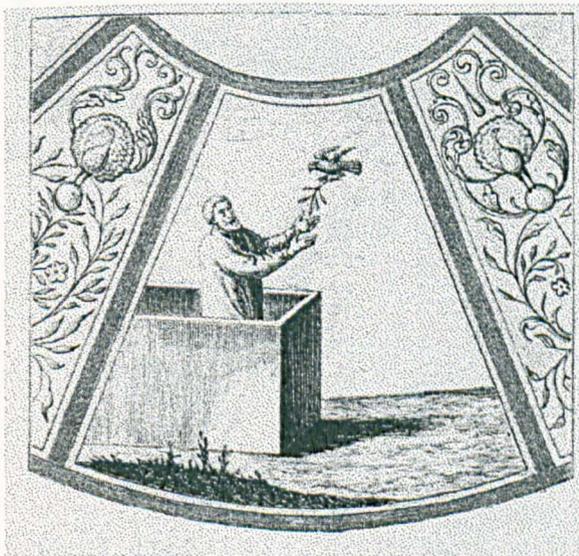


Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6

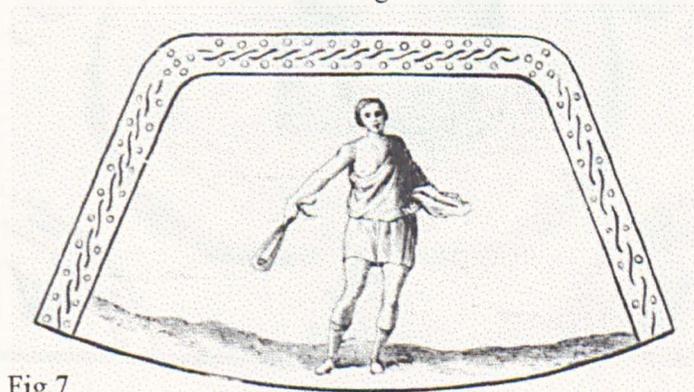


Fig.7



Fig.8

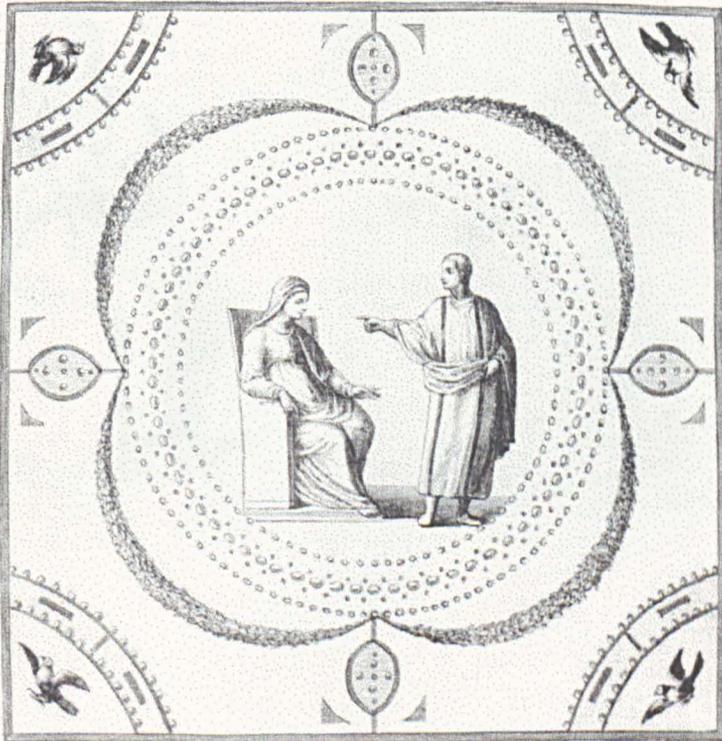


Fig.9



Fig.10



Fig.11

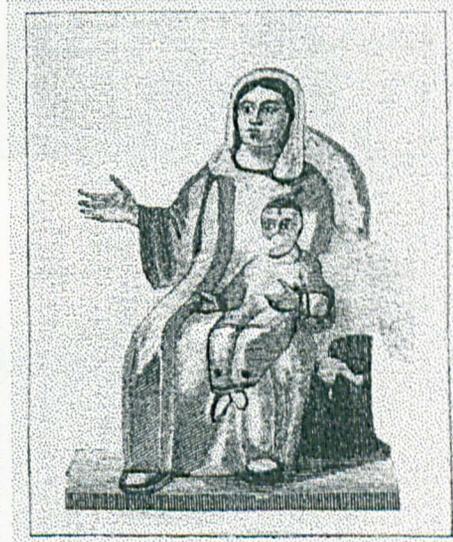


Fig.12



Fig.13

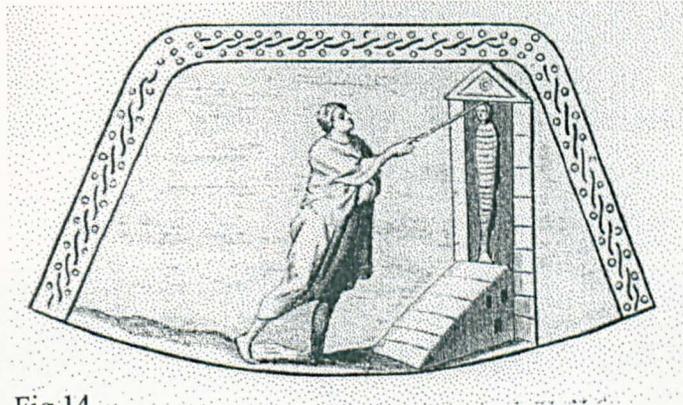


Fig.14

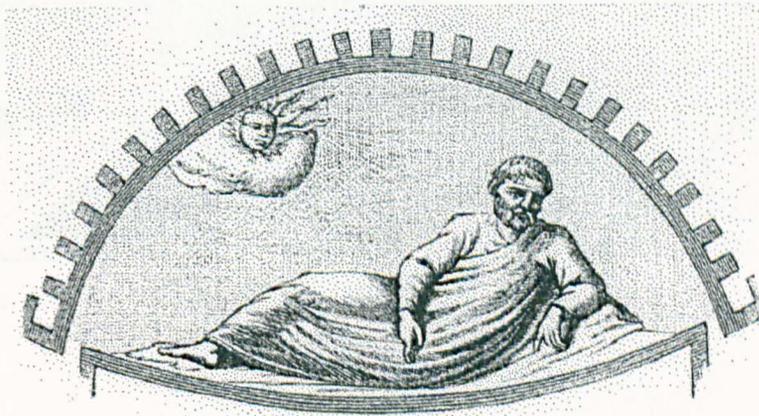


Fig.15

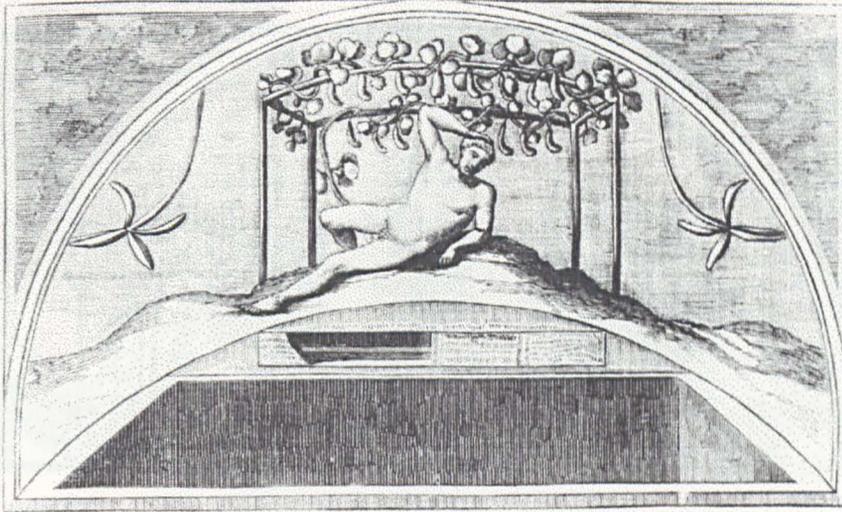


Fig. 16



Fig. 17

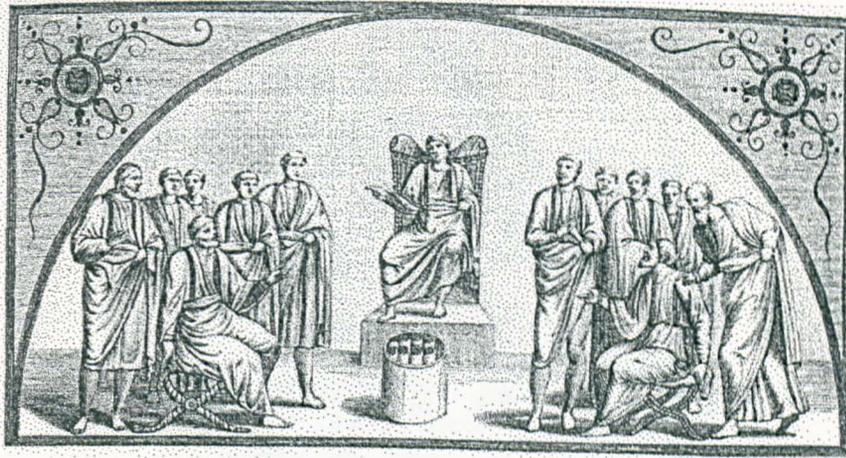


Fig. 18



Fig. 19



Fig. 20



Fig.21



Fig.22

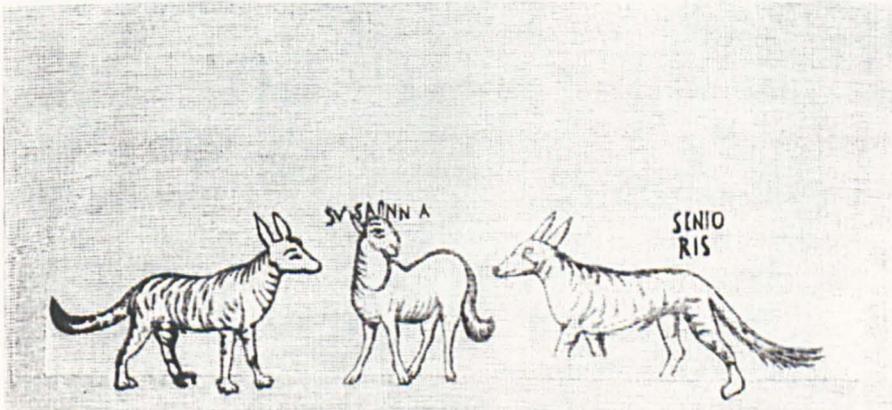


Fig.23



Fig.24



Fig.25



Fig.26

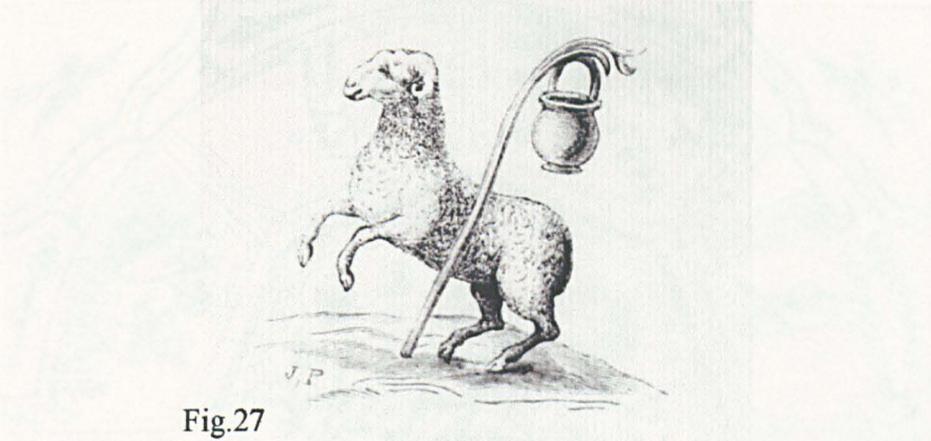


Fig.27

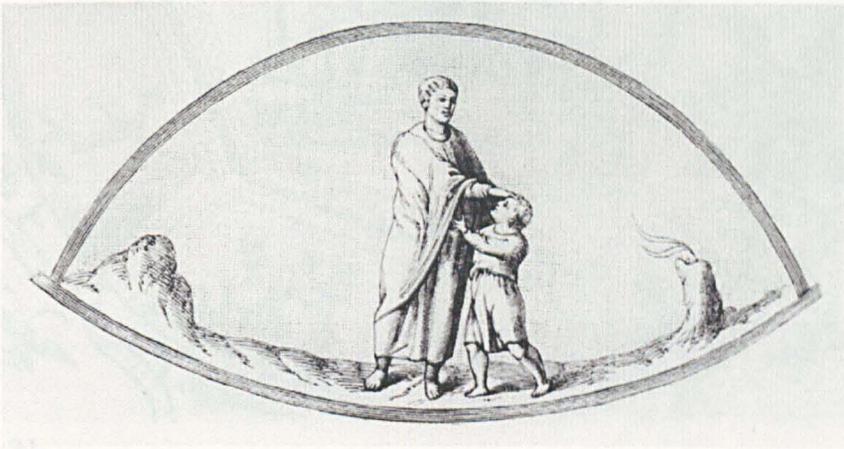


Fig.28



Fig.29



Fig.30

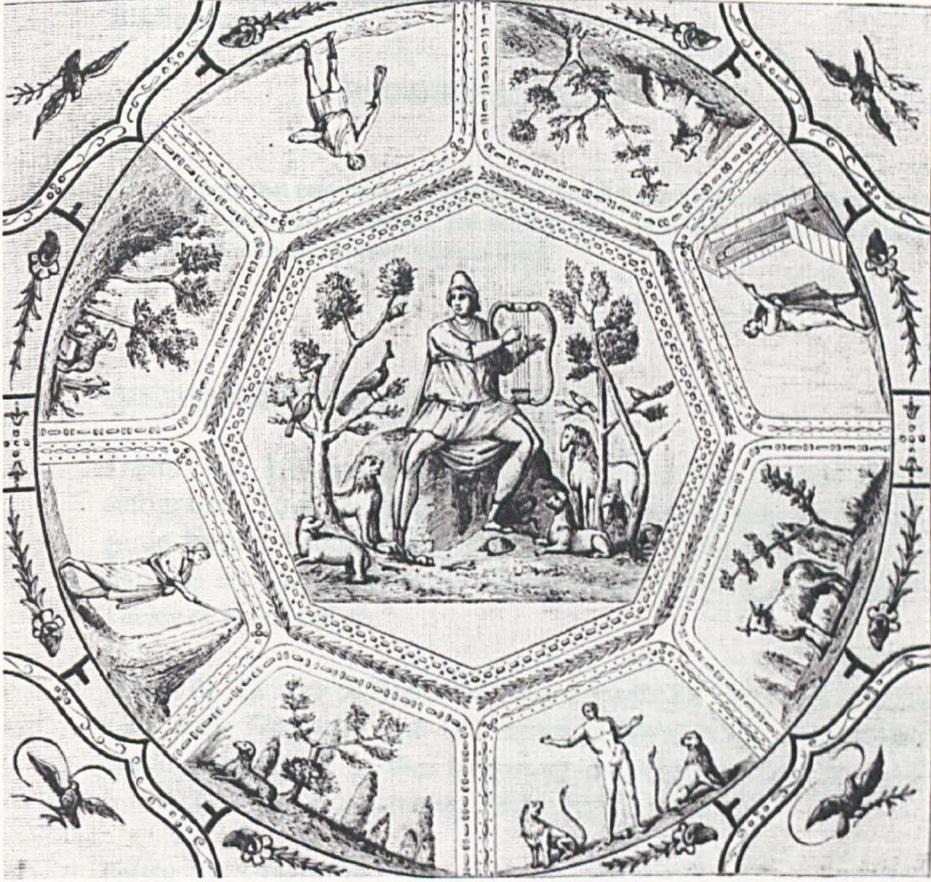


Fig.31



Fig.32

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