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## AELFRIC'S 'SILENT DAYS'

By JOYCE HILL

In both series of *Catholic Homilies*, between the homilies for Palm Sunday and Easter Day, Ælfric included a notice to the effect that church custom forbade preaching on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the last three days of Holy Week, which he calls 'silent days'. In the First Series, issued in 989 or a little later, we read:<sup>1</sup>

Circlice ðeawas forbeodað to secgenne ænig spel on þam  
þrym swig-dagum.  
(Church customs forbid any homily to be delivered on  
the three silent days.)

In the Second Series, two or three years later, he states more briefly:<sup>2</sup>

Ne mot nan man secgan spell. on þam ðrim swigdagum  
(No one may deliver a homily on the three silent days.)

Ælfric's belief that no homilies should be preached on these three days is borne out by his practice: neither here nor at any subsequent stage in his career did Ælfric provide homilies for the last three days of Holy Week, even though, in writing some of his later homilies, he made provision for days not covered in the First and Second Series of the *Catholic Homilies*.

Ælfric derived his authority, as he believed, from church custom, rather than from a particular source. But the use of the phrase "circlice ðeawas" in the First Series pronouncement pinpoints the difficulty that we face in attempting to trace the particular preaching practice that Ælfric had in mind. He could have derived his authority from monastic custom, in which he was trained, or from secular custom, for which the *Catholic Homilies* make provision. Yet neither the *Regula Sancti Benedicti*,<sup>3</sup> the *Regularis Concordia*,<sup>4</sup> nor the secular *ordines* in use in the early middle ages<sup>5</sup> detail the days on which preaching should or should not be carried out. For the most part, indeed, preaching is ignored, since it was not treated as part of the regular liturgical structure, but remained a matter of ecclesiastical custom, as Ælfric's First Series statement acknowledges.

Nevertheless, enough is known about the practice of Ælfric's predecessors, writing in Latin, and that of late Anglo-Saxon

vernacular homilists to discover whether, in his refusal to preach on the last three days of Holy Week, Ælfric was in the mainstream of early medieval tradition and whether it was the tradition of not preaching that gave these days their collective name of 'silent days'.

Before surveying the surviving evidence relating to preaching practices on these days, however, it is necessary to dispose of Gatch's suggestion that the two statements are not about preaching, but are about the custom of not reading the martyrology on these three days.<sup>6</sup> It is true that *spel(1)* is an appropriate word for a martyrology narrative, but the custom to which Gatch refers is peculiar to the monastic life,<sup>7</sup> whereas the ecclesiastical context of the *Catholic Homilies* is essentially secular: nowhere in them does Ælfric comment on the practice of reading the martyrology; it was simply not relevant. The basic meaning of *spel(1)* is 'story'. Its more specialised sense of 'biblical narrative' and hence 'homily' is a natural semantic development and it is in this way that *spel(1)* is commonly used in many ecclesiastical texts, including Ælfric's own works.<sup>8</sup> Here, in both 'silent days' pronouncements, Ælfric selected a word that was particularly apt for the kind of homily that the *Catholic Homilies* provide since they are almost entirely exegesis of biblical or other ecclesiastical narrative, with the 'story' not only explained, but also related.

Yet, as comments on preaching practices, the statements are puzzling. Ælfric's confidence that his refusal to preach was based on well-established ecclesiastical practice is hard to understand when one considers the practices both of his Latin predecessors<sup>9</sup> and of other vernacular homilists and compilers of vernacular homiliaries in late Anglo-Saxon England.

In the Latin Preface to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies* Ælfric acknowledges his indebtedness to Smaragdus and Haymo.<sup>10</sup> Source studies have confirmed this debt and have also demonstrated the pervasive influence of Paulus Diaconus,<sup>11</sup> the immediate source for many of the homilies in which Ælfric correctly names Augustine, Jerome, Gregory or Bede as the exegetical authority. All three homiliaries have independent homilies for Maundy Thursday (Paulus in fact repeats Bede's for this day) and all are exegetical homilies that use John xiii, the gospel reading for the day,<sup>12</sup> although Smaragdus continues far beyond it, with exegesis of chapters xiv-xvii. Smaragdus has nothing for Good Friday, but both Haymo and Paulus provide for it. Haymo's is based on the day's gospel, John xviii-xix;<sup>13</sup> Paulus Diaconus uses a general homily on the Passion, written by Leo the Great,<sup>14</sup> but, since the homily is not specific to any one gospel account, it is as appropriate for the Wednesday of Holy Week, for which it was originally intended, as for Good Friday; passion narratives were read on both days.<sup>15</sup> All three provide for Holy Saturday. Haymo does not follow a continuous gospel text,<sup>16</sup> but Smaragdus<sup>17</sup> and Paulus (= Bede)<sup>18</sup> independently follow the gospel reading from Matthew xxviii.<sup>19</sup> In his source-homiliaries, therefore, Ælfric would have found evidence of an established practice of providing homilies for these three days and models, if he had chosen to follow them, for exegetical treatments of the day's

gospel, of the kind most favoured by him in the *Catholic Homilies*.

Vernacular homilies and homily-collections in late Anglo-Saxon England likewise indicate a tradition different from that which Ælfric seems to have had in mind.

In the last decade of the tenth century, shortly after the *Catholic Homilies* were first issued, they were arranged into a single annual cycle, as Ælfric had envisaged might be done,<sup>20</sup> and used to form the bulk of a vernacular homiliary that now survives only in an early eleventh-century copy, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 340.<sup>21</sup> Although this MS was used at Rochester, the compilation may have been made originally at Canterbury,<sup>22</sup> in which case its contents reflect preaching traditions at one of the major ecclesiastical centres during Ælfric's lifetime. The compiler ignored Ælfric's statements about not preaching and included anonymous homilies for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday in order to make the annual cycle more complete. As vernacular homilies they were no doubt intended for public preaching; at Rochester the collection was certainly used by seculars.<sup>23</sup>

All three homilies provided for the last three days of Holy Week, though different from each other and different again from Ælfric's work, are liturgically based, as are those in the Carolingian homiliaries,<sup>24</sup> in that they follow the gospel reading for the day. The homily used for Maundy Thursday, ff.128-34v, is that printed by Assmann as Homily XIII<sup>25</sup> and gives what is in the main a sober interpretation of John xiii 1-30.<sup>26</sup> For Good Friday the homily provided [ff.134v-44] is a modified version of Vercelli Homily I,<sup>27</sup> a homily that predates Ælfric. It is a free translation, with exegesis, of John xviii-xix.<sup>28</sup> The homily for Holy Saturday [ff.144-52v]<sup>29</sup> is an exegesis of Matthew xxviii 1-10, although the reading for the day usually stopped at verse 7. They were probably copied into the MS as part of a larger block of non-Ælfrician homilies that run without a break from the Second Sunday in Lent to Holy Saturday, but Scragg argues convincingly that the Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday homilies were worked over to form a set of three, and that the Maundy Thursday, or Holy Saturday homily, or both, might even have been new compositions.<sup>30</sup> Certainly Bodley 340 and its early eleventh-century derivatives, Corpus Christi College Cambridge MSS 198 and 162,<sup>31</sup> which retain the Holy Week homilies, testify to the belief, in the Canterbury-Rochester area at least, that homilies needed to be provided for these days, and that it was an important enough issue for some trouble to be taken in doing so.

At the end of the eleventh century, marginal notes made in Worcester registered vigorous protests against Ælfric's First Series pronouncement that church custom forbade the preaching of homilies on the three 'silent days'. Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 178, a second recension MS written in the first half of the eleventh century, probably at Worcester,<sup>32</sup> is almost entirely made up of works by Ælfric; for Palm Sunday it uses the First Series homily and retains the remark that immediately follows about not preaching, since nothing is done to fill the gap; there are, in any case, only twelve homilies for particular occasions.<sup>33</sup> But a later

user of the MS has added the following marginal note on p.299:<sup>34</sup>

Ac þis ne þynceð no us well gesæd. forðy on ælcne timan mon ah to laranne 7 to tihtanne folc to bereowsunge. 7 to wirceanne ures drihtenes willan 7 allra swiðost folce is to reowsinne on ðissum ðrim dagum. þonne hi-gehyrað. hu ure drihten hælend crist ðrowade for us. Eac biscepas æt heora bisceopstole sæcgað larspel þonne hi lædað in penitentes. 7 hi doð absolutionem. 7 sume sæcgað spell of þære crismhalue 7 of þam balsome.

(But this does not seem to us to be at all well said, because [one should preach] on each occasion one has for teaching and instructing the people to be penitent and to perform our Lord's will and above all it is for the people to be penitent on these three days, when they hear how our Lord Saviour Christ suffered for us. Moreover, bishops in their cathedrals deliver a homily when they lead in the *penitentes* [penitents], and they pronounce *absolutionem* [absolution], and some deliver a homily about the consecration of the holy oil and about the balsam.)<sup>35</sup>

The note bears the cryptic signature *cplfmbn*, interpreted by Ker<sup>36</sup> as Coleman, possibly the same Coleman who was biographer to St Wulfstan of Worcester, his Chancellor in 1089, and Prior of the cell of Westbury-on-Trym in 1093.

A briefer marginal note on f.86 of Bodleian Library MS Hatton 114<sup>37</sup> asserts with equal confidence, "Þis nis no wel gesæd" ("This is not at all well said"). Again, it is an objection to the First Series pronouncement since, although the MS uses the Palm Sunday homily from the Second Series, it repeats the ending and the silent days notice from the Palm Sunday homily in the First Series. The note is unsigned but, like C.C.C.C. 178, Hatton 114 contains marginalia by Coleman and probably this marginal note is his also. The MS, a homiletic miscellany, was written at Worcester in the third quarter of the eleventh century.<sup>38</sup>

Gatch believes that Coleman's longer objection was prompted by his interest in the ceremony of the Reconciliation of Penitents, performed by bishops only, and at which the bishop preached a catechetical sermon.<sup>39</sup> If this were true, Coleman's note could not be read as a general objection to Ælfric's statement about not preaching. It would need to be understood, rather, as an assertion of a relatively new ecclesiastical practice<sup>40</sup> and as the private reflections of a man preoccupied with the ceremonial duties of his bishop (a matter which was of no concern to Ælfric in the *Catholic Homilies*).

Gatch's interpretation of this marginal note, however, ignores much of what it says. Coleman does indeed refer to the episcopal ceremony of the Reconciliation of Penitents in the final sentence, and to the practice of preaching on that occasion. But it is a statement about the one day, Maundy Thursday, on which the ceremony was held; it is not a general statement about preaching practices

on the last three days of Holy Week. Furthermore, the statement about Maundy Thursday begins "Eac" ("Moreover"), as if the final sentence is to provide information that is additional to the rest of the note. The main thrust of Coleman's objection is in everything that precedes the final sentence, and in this part we find an assertion of the need to preach on each of the three days for which Ælfric refused. "Ðonne hi hyrað hu ure drihten hælend crist ðrowade for us" ("When they hear how our Lord Saviour Christ suffered for us") may even indicate that Coleman expected the homilies to be based to some extent on the liturgical readings, even if his opening phrases suggest that catechetical elements may also be included. Coleman's marginal notes, therefore, are evidence that the secular church had an established tradition of public preaching on the last three days of Holy Week in the late eleventh century. Worcester seems not to know of the church customs to which Ælfric appealed nor, despite that centre's respect for Ælfric's work, was it prepared to follow his lead.

The one remaining piece of evidence against Ælfric provided by extant vernacular homilies<sup>41</sup> is Archbishop Wulfstan's Maundy Thursday homily,<sup>42</sup> one of the very few authentic Wulfstan homilies written for a particular Feast Day. It is an expression of Wulfstan's episcopal duties in being for the ceremony of the Reconciliation of Penitents. The source, a Latin sermon by Abbo of St Germain, is found in a number of related MSS that seem to be derived from Wulfstan's commonplace book<sup>43</sup> and in one, Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 190, is included the literal translation into Old English from which Wulfstan worked. As one would expect, it differs from most of the Latin and Old English homilies so far considered in not being based on a gospel text; rather, it is typical of Wulfstan's preoccupation with, amongst other things, church practices and archiepiscopal functions. Bethurum believes that "this sermon appears to be another case in which Wulfstan is attempting to bring the English church into conformity with continental Roman practice".<sup>44</sup> Admittedly Wulfstan's sermon is specifically episcopal and is unlike those of Ælfric in the circumstances in which it was preached, as well as in its subject-matter and form; if Ælfric had provided a homily for Maundy Thursday it would not have been similar to Wulfstan's. But Ælfric's statements that one must not preach on the last three days of Holy Week are absolute; no exceptions are made for any office or branch of the church. Wulfstan, on the other hand, an admirer of Ælfric and a man familiar with regulatory literature, seems to have felt no hesitation in encouraging the establishment of a liturgical practice that called for the preaching of a sermon on Maundy Thursday.<sup>45</sup>

It is impossible to comment with total confidence on the practices of the late Anglo-Saxon church, particularly when we are concerned with the secular branch and with the act of preaching, since our evidence is so incomplete. Ælfric's First Series statement about not preaching was perpetuated by some scribes when they copied the Palm Sunday homily, and by no means all homily collections made good the lack of homilies for the last three days of Holy Week, though they were not, in general, intended to provide a comprehensive *temporale*, so that one can scarcely argue from their

gaps. The most that can be said is that *Elfric's* position appears not to have been symptomatic of a widespread practice within the secular church, nor did he establish a trend even amongst those who knew and respected his work.

What was it, then, in the ecclesiastical practices with which he was familiar, that led him to assert that no homilies may be preached on these three days? *Elfric's* reference to them as 'silent days' suggests, as we shall see below, that his frame of reference was monastic although, in the absence of information about preaching practices in any of the reformed houses of late Anglo-Saxon England, including Winchester, we have no means of finding out where the practice originated, or with whom.

Only on one other occasion does *Elfric* refer to *swig-dagas* and, as in both series of *Catholic Homilies*, it is in a statement about Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, again grouped under the general title of 'silent days'. In the homily *De Doctrina Apostolica* *Elfric* lists the days when the laity can communicate:<sup>46</sup>

Eawfæste men magon gan to husle be Godes leafe Sunnandagum on Lenctenfastene, and on ðam þrim Swigdagum, and on Easterdæge, and on þam Ðunresdæge on þære Gangwucan, on ðam dæge þe Crist to heofonum lichamlice astah, and on Pentecosten, and on ðam feower Sunnandagum þe beoð æfter þam feower Ymbrenfastenum.

(The devout can go to communion, with God's permission, on Sundays in Lent, and on the three Silent Days, and on Easter Day, and on the Thursday in Rogation Week, on the day when Christ ascended bodily into the heavens, and at Pentecost, and on the four Sundays which follow the four Ember Fast.)

The homily makes use of material written at different dates but, although it was not issued until the time of the *Saints' Lives*, c. 992-1002, the part of the text that includes the reference to the 'Silent Days' is probably contemporary with the period of the *Catholic Homilies*; Clemoes has even suggested that this early portion of the text was issued as part of a letter before being converted to homiletic use.<sup>47</sup>

We cannot assume that *Elfric* calls these days 'silent days' because he regards them as non-preaching days. Neither statement about not preaching in the *Catholic Homilies* makes a causal connection and further, the list in *De Doctrina Apostolica* implies that, for *Elfric*, the term *Swigdag* was customary nomenclature on a par with *Gangwuce* or *Ymbrenfasten*. Yet no other homilist uses the term and, as far as I am aware, it is not a translation of customary Latin nomenclature.

In fact *swig-dæg* occurs only once apart from the three uses by *Elfric*, but the context of this one other occurrence is revealing. It is used, again as a technical term for the last three days of Holy Week, in a translation of the *Regularis Concordia* extant in an early eleventh-century MS, Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 201.<sup>48</sup> Where the translation was done, and by whom, is unknown.

But whoever was responsible for it must have worked within a monastic milieu similar to Ælfric's and he, like Ælfric, and unprompted by the Latin text, uses the term as standard nomenclature that needs no explanation: the Latin is simply "diebus", which is rendered in Old English as "swigdagum". The *swig-* element is also used earlier by the translator, again without any prompting from the Latin, when the Night Offices for the three days are referred to in the phrase "o[n] þam þrim swig-uhtan"<sup>49</sup> ("in the three silent Nocturns"), translating Latin "trium noctium" ("for three nights").

Ælfric was intimately familiar with the *Regularis Concordia* and in three of his letters presented adaptations of some of its provisions. In one of these, the second English letter to Archbishop Wulfstan, written probably in 1006,<sup>50</sup> soon after Ælfric became Abbot of Eynsham, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are referred to as a group by the term *swige-niht*:<sup>51</sup>

23. In cena domini et in parasceue et in sancto sabbato.  
On þyssum þrym swige-nihtum 3e sceolan sinȝan ætȝædere  
be fullan eowerne uhtsanȝ, swa-swa se antifonere tæcô.  
(23. In cena domini et in parasceue et in sancto sabbato.  
[On Maundy Thursday and on Good Friday and on Holy  
Saturday.]  
On these three silent nights you must sing your Nocturns  
together in full, as the Antiphonar prescribes.)

Although the letter was ultimately directed to the secular clergy, the liturgical practices detailed in this part of the letter are monastic, reflecting the contemporary movement to enjoin secular clergy to observe the custom of reciting the monastic Hours. Ælfric employs *swige-niht* in a notice about the Night Office (cf. *swig-uhtan* in the C.C.C.C. 201 translation of the *Regularis Concordia* quoted above). The choice of *-niht* in preference to *-dæg* is thus dictated by the immediate context. The significant elements, however, are the re-use of *swige-* to characterise these three days, and the contextual association with monastic liturgical practice as established in the *Regularis Concordia*. Neither of the other two letters provides similar collective terms. In the Latin letter to the monks of Eynsham,<sup>52</sup> written in 1005, the three days are grouped, but the Latin phrases used are non-technical; the references to "the three days" or "the three nights" could, out of context, refer to any three days or nights, like the general terms in the Latin text of the *Regularis Concordia*. The letter to Wulfsige, Bishop of Sherborne 993-1001/2, makes no reference to the three days as a group.<sup>53</sup>

For anyone following the *Regularis Concordia* the last three days of Holy Week stood out as days with distinctive liturgical practices. Particular ceremonies were performed on each day; the entire psalter was recited in choir; the martyrology was not read; the daily Office followed the secular *ordo*; and parts of the liturgy were performed in silence.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, neither the *Regularis Concordia* nor Ælfric's letters comment on monastic preaching practices on these three days. But, as with secular *ordines*, preaching is simply ignored as being a matter of custom rather than rite, and



so we can draw no conclusion from the absence of comment.

The use of *swige-* as the defining term for these three days focuses attention on the characteristic liturgical silences,<sup>55</sup> but whether the preacher was also silent is something that we do not know. It seems clear that *swig-dæg* and its related *swig-uhte* and *swige-niht* are monastic terms which enjoyed a limited existence as short-hand terms for the last three days of Holy Week. Since the period of use is in the years around 1000,<sup>56</sup> and the users are those closely concerned with the dissemination of the practices of the *Regularis Concordia*, one is tempted to suggest that *swig-dæg*, *swig-uhte* and *swige-niht* were 'Winchester words',<sup>57</sup> although this must remain a speculation until we know more about the ultimate origin of the various items that are included in C.C.C.C. 201.<sup>58</sup>

It may be that the Silent Days at Winchester were distinguished not only by the liturgical practices detailed in the *Regularis Concordia*, but also by a variation in the non-liturgical act of preaching, a variation which Ælfric extended to secular practice. If not, then it may have been Ælfric himself who extended the meaning and practice of the Silent Days and so provided the laity with a distinctive 'silence' analogous to the silences of the monastic liturgy. The attempt to model secular practice on the monastic is characteristic of the age. But on this occasion Ælfric was at variance with some of his major sources and with the practice in at least parts of the late Anglo-Saxon church. It is difficult, therefore, to escape the conclusion that in this instance his practice was idiosyncratic.

Professor Cross, whose lifetime of scholarship is honoured in this volume, has done much to advance our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon homiletic tradition in general and to illuminate the skill and learning of Ælfric. It is therefore an especial pleasure to be able to offer him a paper on an Ælfrician topic. He would, I know, be the first to accept that Ælfric is not infallible, and to recognise that it is his personal enthusiasms and occasional idiosyncrasies that, along with the prefaces and the many asides, make the Ælfrician corpus so revealing of their author.

- <sup>1</sup> Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, I (Ælfric Society: London, 1844) p.218. All translations from Latin and OE are my own. For discussion of the dating of the *Catholic Homilies*, see P.A.M. Clemoes, "The Chronology of Ælfric's Works", in *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies in Some Aspects of their History and Culture, presented to Bruce Dickinson* (London, 1959) pp.212-47, and Malcolm Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, EETS SS 5 (1979) pp.xci-xciii. Clemoes (p.244) proposes 989 for the First Series and 992 for the Second. Godden (p.xciii) is in favour of a slightly later date, with the Second Series being sent to Sigeric at Canterbury in 995, and the First Series "perhaps a year or so before".
- <sup>2</sup> Malcolm Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, EETS SS 5 (1979) p.149.
- <sup>3</sup> *Benedicti Regula*, ed. Rudolphus Hanslik, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 75 (Vienna, 1960). Chapter 9 of the Rule (Hanslik, p.55) prescribes the reading during the Night Office of: "expositiones . . . quae a nominatis et orthodoxis catholicis patribus factae sunt" ("commentaries [on the lections] which have been made by renowned and orthodox Catholic Fathers"). In essence the monks are to be given exegetical homilies. The Rule does not state whether there were days when these homilies were not delivered, and there are no other references to preaching practices.
- <sup>4</sup> Ælfric's own adaptations of the *Regularis Concordia* (for which, see below, p.124) are also silent on this point.
- <sup>5</sup> The *ordines* are collected by Michel Andrieu, ed., *Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge, II: Les Textes (Ordines I-XIII)*, *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et Documents*, Fasc. 23 (Louvain, 1948). J.R. Hall, "Some Liturgical Notes on Ælfric's Letter to the Monks at Eynsham", *Downside Review* 93 (1975) p.298, argues that Ælfric's liturgical practice was that of *Ordo XIII A*, with some modifications, but the *Ordo* contains no reference to preaching. *Ordo XIII B*, however, specifies that on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, "leguntur homelie sanctorum patrum ad ipsum diem pertinentes" ("the homilies of the holy fathers relevant to the particular day are read") (Andrieu, p.499, for Maundy Thursday, and repeated for Good Friday and Holy Saturday on p.500). The repeated injunction is a Gallican interpolation (Andrieu, p.494). Carolingian homiliaries met this requirement (see below, pp.119-20). Apart from *Ordo X*, which makes a passing reference to episcopal preaching (Andrieu, p.357), this is the only early medieval *Ordo* to give a directive about preaching; in recommending the reading of patristic exegetical homilies based on the lections, it follows the general recommendation for Nocturns in the *Regula Sancti Benedicti* (see note 3 above). Church councils are usually uninformative, but from the fact that the Fourth Council of Toledo (canon 7) castigated the seventh-century Spanish Church for preventing the people from entering the church on Good Friday and refusing to preach to them, one can deduce that preaching on Good Friday was regarded as sound ecclesiastical practice: Johannes Dominicus Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio X* (Florence, 1764) p.620.
- <sup>6</sup> Milton McC. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto, 1977) p.178, n.30.
- <sup>7</sup> The martyrology was read at the daily Chapter: see Dom Thomas Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque* (London, 1953) p.17 and p.28, note 1. For the custom of not reading the martyrology on the last days of Holy Week, see Dom Thomas Symons, "Sources of the

- Regularis Concordia*", *Downside Review* 59 (1941) p.279.
- <sup>8</sup> A *Microfiche Concordance to Old English*, compiled by Richard L. Venezky and Antonette diPaolo Healey (Toronto, 1980).
- <sup>9</sup> I refer below only to the authors of Latin homiliaries used by Ælfric. It is worth noting, however, that the tradition of preaching to the people throughout Lent was well established in the early church: Ursmer Berlière, "Le Prône dans la liturgie", *Revue Bénédictine* 7 (1890) p.149.
- <sup>10</sup> Thorpe, ed., *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* I, p.1.
- <sup>11</sup> Cyril L. Smetana, "Ælfric and the Early Medieval Homiliary", *Traditio* 15 (1959) pp.163-204.
- <sup>12</sup> Paulus Diaconus, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 95 (Paris, 1861) col. 761; Haymo, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 118.420-6; Smaragdus, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 102.203-221. For the lection, see John Walton Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week: Its Services and Ceremonial*, Alcuin Club Collections 29 (Oxford, 1932) p.94; Walter Howard Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy, II: The Roman Gospel-Lectionary*, Alcuin Club Collections 30 (Oxford, 1934) p.39.
- <sup>13</sup> PL 118.426-44. For the lection, see Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week*, p.120; Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* II, p.39.
- <sup>14</sup> PL 95.1326.
- <sup>15</sup> Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* II, p.39; Luke was read on Wednesday and John on Friday. See also n.28 below.
- <sup>16</sup> PL 118.444-5.
- <sup>17</sup> PL 102.222-4.
- <sup>18</sup> PL 95.1326.
- <sup>19</sup> Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week*, pp.172-4; Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* II, p.39.
- <sup>20</sup> Thorpe, ed., *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* I, p.2 (Latin Preface to the First Series).
- <sup>21</sup> For comments on the contents of the MS, its history, derivation, date and provenance, see N.R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957) pp.361-7; Kenneth Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford, 1953) pp.148-98 [originally published as "MSS. Bodley 340 and 342: Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*", *RES* 7 (1931) pp.7ff.; 8 (1932) pp.51ff.; 9 (1933) pp.1ff.]; D.G. Scragg, "The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies and Prose Saints' Lives before Ælfric", *Anglo-Saxon England* 8 (1979) pp. 237-40.
- <sup>22</sup> D.G. Scragg, "The Corpus of Prose Saints' Lives before Ælfric", p.240. Mary P. Richards, "Innovations in Ælfrician Homiletic Manuscripts at Rochester", *Annuaire Medievale* 19 (1979) pp.13-26, regards the MS as having been produced at Rochester.

- 23 Mary P. Richards, "Innovations . . ." p.14.
- 24 Liturgically based, exegetical homilies were needed in the monastic context and McKitterick believes that the Carolingian homiliaries met this need as well as being used for private devotion. She considers, however, that the Frankish clergy made full use of such collections for public preaching (Rosamund McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms*, 789-895 (London, 1977) p.102). Vernacular homilists in England certainly exploited the form for public preaching; we know, in addition, that a copy of the *Catholic Homilies* was made for Æpelweard's private use (Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*, p.161); and Gatch (*Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England*, p.54), suggests that Ælfric's homilies may also have been used in monasteries.
- 25 Bruno Assmann, ed., *Angelsächsische Homilien und Heiligenleben*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. III. Band (Kassel, 1889; repr. with a supplementary introduction by Peter Clemoes, Darmstadt, 1964) pp.151-63.
- 26 In the Roman rite the reading usually ended at v.15, but there was some variability of practice. See Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week*, p.110, and Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* II, p.66.
- 27 Max Förster, ed., *Die Vercelli-Homilien: I.-VIII. Homilie*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. XII. Band (Hamburg, 1932; repr. Darmstadt, 1964) pp.1-43. For some comment on the extent of the modification, see D.G. Scragg, "The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies . . ." p.239.
- 28 Ælfric prescribes the reading of John's account of the Passion in his second English letter to Wulfstan, §40, Bernhard Fehr, ed., *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa. IX. Band (Hamburg, 1914) p.162. According to Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* II, pp.38-9, Matthew's Passion was read on Palm Sunday, Luke's on the Wednesday of Holy Week, and John's on Good Friday; Mark's Passion, previously omitted, only subsequently came to be read on the Tuesday of Holy Week (Frere, p.67). At the end of the First Series Palm Sunday homily, Ælfric points out that all four Passion narratives are read in Holy Week, one on Palm Sunday and the others later (Thorpe, p.216). The implication is that, whatever preaching tradition he was following, he was certainly up-to-date in his liturgical practice. In the *Catholic Homilies* the Passion narrative in general is covered by the two Palm Sunday homilies, particularly that in the Second Series, which presents a composite account.
- 29 The homily has been edited by Ruth Evans, "An Anonymous Old English Homily for Holy Saturday", *Leeds Studies in English*, New Series 12 (1981; for 1980 & 1981) pp.129-53.
- 30 D.G. Scragg, "The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies . . ." pp.239-41.
- 31 The MSS are discussed by N.R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, pp.76-82, 51-6, and by D.G. Scragg, "The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies . . ." pp.241-3.
- 32 Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, pp.60-4; Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, pp.lxviii-lxx.
- 33 Listed by Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, pp.lxviii-lxix. Since the scribe was not writing up anything approaching a comprehensive *temporale* (unlike Ælfric), there was no need for him to justify the absence of homilies for the last three days of Holy Week. The

retention of Ælfric's note here can therefore be seen as an act of mechanical copying. As such, it is of less value in assessing how widely Ælfric's view was shared than the much more deliberate and considered act of the compiler of Bodley 340, who went against Ælfric in adding homilies for these days.

- <sup>34</sup> Neil Ker, "Old English Notes Signed 'Coleman'", *Medium Ævum* 18 (1949) p.29.
- <sup>35</sup> Although the general sense of the note is clear, the syntax of the first half is difficult to follow, perhaps because, as a marginal note, the sentence structure is incomplete. If *agan* (3rd. sg. pres. indic. *ah*) is being used correctly, meaning 'to have' in the sense of 'to possess', a clause such as that inserted in the translation needs to be understood. If *ah* could be translated 'has to', in the sense of 'is obliged', a possible translation would be: "because on every occasion one has to teach and instruct the people to be penitent and to perform the Lord's will". There is, however, no support for this sense of *agan* in OE, apart from a mis-translation in the OE Bede. The final clause of Coleman's note is a reference to the practice of consecrating the chrism (a mixture of olive oil and balsam) on Maundy Thursday, for subsequent sacramental use.
- <sup>36</sup> Ker, "Old English Notes Signed 'Coleman'", pp.29-31.
- <sup>37</sup> Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, pp.391-9, gives a description of the whole MS, including its marginal notes.
- <sup>38</sup> Godden, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series*, pp.li-liv; lxix-lxx.
- <sup>39</sup> Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England*, p.210, note 105.
- <sup>40</sup> See below, p.122.
- <sup>41</sup> Many OE homily collections are too small or too miscellaneous to provide negative evidence in Ælfric's favour. For example, although the Blickling MS contains no homilies for these three days, there are so many other days not provided for that we cannot safely draw any conclusions from the collection.
- <sup>42</sup> Dorothy Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford, 1957) pp.236-8 (text), 345-8 (notes).
- <sup>43</sup> Dorothy Bethurum, "Archbishop Wulfstan's Commonplace Book", *PMLA* 57 (1942) pp.916-29.
- <sup>44</sup> Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, p.347.
- <sup>45</sup> Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, pp.346-7, draws attention to the impressive and moving way in which this ceremony was performed at Worcester by St Wulfstan, and it is clearly this ceremony that Coleman had in mind, at least in part, when he made his marginal note in Bodley 340. The ceremony of the reconciliation of penitents is also included in *The Leofric Missal*, a Gregorian Sacramentary written in Lotharingia in the tenth century and brought to England (F.W. Warren, ed., *The Leofric Missal* (Oxford, 1883) pp.92-3). Bethurum, *loc.cit.*, has further comments on the use of this ceremony in late Anglo-Saxon England.
- <sup>46</sup> John C. Pope, ed., *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*, II,

EETS OS 260 (London, 1968) p.628.

- <sup>47</sup> P.A.M. Clemoes, "The Chronology of Ælfric's Works", pp.221, 225-6. See also Pope, *Homilies of Ælfric*, p.614.
- <sup>48</sup> Julius Zupitza, "Ein weiteres Bruchstück der *Regularis Concordia* in altenglischer Sprache", *Archiv* 84 (1890) p.8. For a description of the MS see Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, pp.82-90. C.C.C.C. 201 is a composite MS. Only the part containing the *Regularis Concordia* translation is early eleventh-century. The other two parts are from the mid-eleventh-century.
- <sup>49</sup> "Ein weiteres Bruchstück der *Regularis Concordia*", p.7.
- <sup>50</sup> Clemoes, "Chronology . . ." pp.241-5.
- <sup>51</sup> Fehr, ed., *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, p.154.
- <sup>52</sup> Mary Bateson, ed., "Excerpta ex Institutionibus Monasticis, etc.", in *Comptus Rolls of the Obedientiaries of St. Swithun's Priory, Winchester*, ed. G.W. Kitchin, Hampshire Record Society 7 (1892) App. VII, pp.171-98. Ælfric's comments on Holy Week are on pp.183-9.
- <sup>53</sup> Fehr, ed., *Die Hirtenbriefe Ælfrics*, pp.1-34. The two Latin letters to Wulfstan (pp.35-57, 58-67) make no mention of Holy Week.
- <sup>54</sup> Dom Thomas Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia*, pp.36-49. For the martyrology, see also note 7 above. For comment on the secular *ordo* familiar to Ælfric, see note 5 above. Ælfric's letters also refer to what are obviously familiar liturgical silences.
- <sup>55</sup> The explanation of *swig-dæg* given by Bosworth-Toller refers to "silence in the ordinary business of life" (rather than liturgical silences), and to the silence of church bells, but no OE sources are cited in support of this: Joseph Bosworth, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, edited and enlarged by T. Northcote Toller (Oxford, 1898) p.955.
- <sup>56</sup> In a homily for the First Sunday after Easter in the twelfth-century Trinity College Cambridge MS B.14.52, it is noted that the last three days of Holy Week are called "swidagas": R. Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century*, EETS OS 53 (1873) p.101. Since, by the twelfth century, the term was no longer understood, it is 'explained' that the three days are so called because they are the days when Christ lay in the tomb. Frederick Tupper, one of the earliest scholars to comment on Ælfric's 'silent days' pronouncements, refers scathingly to the "luxuriant popular etymology" of this MS: "Anglo-Saxon Dæg-mæl", *PMLA* 10 (1895) p.222. To the best of my knowledge, the first comment on the 'silent days' is that by K.W. Bouterwek, ed., *Cædmon's des Angelsächsen biblische Dichtungen* (Gütersloh, 1854) pp.CLVIII-CLVIX.
- <sup>57</sup> The term was introduced by Helmut Gneuss, "The Origin of Standard Old English and Æthelwold's School at Winchester", *Anglo-Saxon England* 1 (1972) pp.63-83.
- <sup>58</sup> The translation of the *Regularis Concordia* in C.C.C.C. 201 was presumably intended originally for nuns, since 'abbess' is inserted as an alternative for 'abbot', as Mary Bateson noted in "Rules for Monks and Secular Canons after the Revival under King Edgar", *EHR* 9 (1894) p.707. Subsequent copyists

merely repeated the adaptation. It is a detail that points to Winchester as a possible place of origin for the translation. L. Whitbread, "MS. C.C.C.C. 201: A Note on its Character and Provenance", *PQ* 38 (1959) pp.106-12, notes that the first two parts of the MS contain a considerable amount of material by Wulfstan or associated with him. He argues that this material was assembled at Worcester and copied into the MS that we now know as C.C.C.C. 201 at Canterbury, under Lanfranc, when attempts were made to replace the manuscript losses sustained in the fire at Christ Church soon after the Battle of Hastings. The ultimate origin of the items assembled at Worcester is, however, a question that Whitbread does not discuss. The Worcester scriptorium copied many of Ælfric's works and Wulfstan consulted him for support in his efforts to further the traditions of the Reform. There is a distinct possibility that if Worcester needed a translation of the *Regularis Concordia*, it would have looked to Winchester to supply it.