TRANSCRIPTIONS PART II
POST 6 DECEMBER 1642

I. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 29r–34v

Giovanni Andrea Serra SJ[500] to Giovanni Paolo Oliva SJ,[501] novice director, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome; on the death of FS, 13 December 1642

(29r) Molto Reverendo in Christo Padre

[Pax Christi]

Dio sa con quanto desiderio ho bramato di ricevere alcuni giorni prima la di Vostra Riverenza delli 28 del passato per consolare il Padre Francesco Perseo, che ogni giorno mi domandava se havevo ricevuto risposta della mia, che mi fece scrivere. Passò final[men]te doppo 24 giorni di malatia sabato passato li 6 [dicembre] all'altra vita, veramente, con invidia di molti per haver lasciato in sì poco tempo tanto buon odore delle sue virtù in questo collegio che da Padri anche più gravi l'ho sentito lodare col nome di Santo,

Tre cose in questa sua malatia ha havuto tra gl'altre amirabili, La divotione della Beata Vergine, il parlar di Dio, et una allegrezza incredibile in tanti dolori patiti, et ultimamente nel morire non mi mancherebbero casi particolari per provar tutto questo, ma non voglio essere longo, non posso però taccere quel che disse il giorno avanti la sua morte al Padre Fabritio Pignatelli,[502] il quale discorrendo di cose indifferenti in camera sua domandò al Padre Francesco

[500] In 1642, Giovanni Andrea Serra SJ (b. 1620) was a student in the Jesuit college in Naples. ARSI, *Neap.* 104, fo. 49. He entered Roman novitiate, 26 November 1638. ARSI, *Rom.* 64, fo. 160.

[501] Giovanni Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681) served as superior, and novice director, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome, 1641–1651. He was elected vicar general of the Society of Jesus in 1661, and became father general in 1664. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, II, 1633–1642.

[502] Fabritio Pignatelli SJ. In 1642, he was a member of the Jesuit college of Castellamare, on the coast between Naples and Sorrento. ARSI, *Neap.* 104, fo. 47r.

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che mostrava segno di disgusto, se voleva quache cosa, gli rispose: Padre sì, vorrei parlasse di Dio adesso, e sempre, perché altrimente s'accresce il mio male, stupì il Padre, e corretto per dir così d'un novitio raccontò un essempio della Beata Vergine, e veramente incontrò il suo gusto, perché l'istesso Padre Francesco di questa sempre discorreva, sempre questa ringratiava, mostrando[si][503] veramente figlio con una innocenza di Paradiso, e giaché non poteva andar lui in Chiesa a ringratiarla, diceva lui, del patire, che provava in quel letto, non quietava sinche due volte il giorno non mandasse me in luogo suo all'altare della Conettione, e io l'assicurassi d'esserli stato; Che maraviglia dunque se si mostrava sì allegro e nel patire, e nel morire.

Avisato l'ultima volta per l'altra vita dal Padre Spirituale esclamò subito ridendo *Laetatus sum in his, quae dicta su[nt] mihi in domum Domini ibibus*,[504] e seguito il salmo, e tutta quella (29v) sera si trattenne in atti sì devoti, sì santi, che più d'uno diceva di trattenersi in quella camera per eccitarsi a devotione, ne bisognava trattarci di vita perché ne sentiva disgusto parendoli d'esser più beato morendo, Disse al Padre Spirituale nondimeno, che se era gloria di Dio gl'impetrasse dal Signore Iddio, che restasse in quelli dolori, et affanni della malatia per una eternità intiera, che lui si contentava. Iddio lo contracambiò bene anche in questa vita, perché li concesse una morte felicissima con tutti li suoi sentimenti, quieta, senza turbationi, anzi ridendo, parlò sin all'ultimo ponto, havendo sempre in bocca quelli quattro tesori, che Vostra Riverenza insegna a suoi novitii, e mezzo quarto avanti che spirasse domandò a me se mi ricordavo il 2° santo che lei consigliava a pegliarsi nel ponto della morte, e nominando io San Martino, subito voltato al crocifisso disse *se adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius non recuso laborem*,[505] e queste furono l'ultime o penultime parole, se non erro, che dicesse, andandosene poi come angelo di Paradiso al Cielo.

Gli domandai mi lasciasse qualche ricordo il giorno avanti che morisse, mi rispose, che non lasciassi mai la mia oratione, e che facessi conto delle cose piccole, credo, che lo spirito santo lo facesse parlare, spero che pregherà per me come mi promisse nel paradiso, e che insieme m'impetrerà tanta gratia di poter mettere in essecutione i suoi ricordi, cert'è che per me è stato un grand'essempio; Mi ha lasciato li tre Tomi della sua filosofia, che teneva, haverò occasione di adoprarla con veneratione. Li vot[i] il Padre Provinciale gle l'haveva

[503] The text gives 'mostrandogli'.

[504] *Recte* 'ibimus'; 'I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord', Psalm 122:1.

[505] 'Lord, if I am still needed for your people, I do not decline the task': adapted from words attributed to St Martin of Tours (d. 397) as he was dying. See footnote in the translation.

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concessi 15 giorni prima quando incominciò ad agravarsi prima che gli fosse portato il viatico. Li Novitii perfetti di Vostra Riverenza Iddio se li piglia, gl'imperfetti li lascia acciò si perfettionino, io sono di questi secondi procurerò d'arrivare i primi e lo dico con qualche sentimento, e tutto il desiderio.

Auguro a Vostra Riverenza felicissime le prossime feste del santo Natale, come anche al Padre Domenico Vanni,[506] né mi sono mai scordato quanto gli devo; Godo et invidio insieme al Padre Nicolò Gentile[507] la conversatione di Vostra Riverenza e stanza in Santo (34r) Andrea, se di già fosse venuto la supplico a salutarmelo caramente. Ho riverito come m'impone il Padre Preposito Padre Carrafa,[508] e Poderico, e tutti risalutano caramente Vostra Riverenza, e gli restano obligatissimi della memoria, che tiene di loro.

Se gli ricorda servo il Padre Spinelli, et io mi raccomando caldamente alle sue santi sacrificii et orationi

Napoli li 13 Decembre 1642

Di Vostra Riverenza

Il P. Contri seguita a tenerci tutti sospesi, hoggi sta più tosto peggio, che meglio, speranza in rimedii humani non v'è più, sta debilitatissimo e più s'implorano gli agiuti del cielo, di quel che si speri in quelli della terra, martedì sarà il giorno quarantesimo critico per lui, e a medici di gran timore, et osservatione.

Figlio e servo in Christo Indegnissimo

Gio. Andrea Serra

(34v) Al molto reverendo in Christo Padre il Padre
Giov. Paolo Oliva[509] rettore della Compagnia
di Giesù

[506] Domenico Vanni SJ: in 1641 was assistant (*socius*) to the rector in the novitiate, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale. ARSI, *Rom.* 80, fo. 299r.

[507] Nicolò Gentile SJ. In 1641 he was tutor (*repetitor*) in theology in Roman College. ARSI, *Rom.* 80, fo. 294.

[508] Vincenzo Carrafa SJ (1585–1649). In Naples, he was rector of the professed house, 1630–1633, 1637–1640, and rector of the college, 1633–1637. Thereafter he was rector of the Roman College for a brief period. From 1646–1649 he was general of the Society. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Iesús*, II, 1627–1629.

[509] Giovanni Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681); rector, novitiate at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome, 1641–1651.

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Roma

Translation

(29r) Most reverend father in Christ

The peace of Christ

God knows with what desire I longed to receive some days ago your reverence's letter of the 28 [November] to console Father Francis Percy, who used ask me every day if I had received a reply to my letter, which he had me write. He finally passed to the other life after an illness of 24 days on Saturday last 6 [December]. Truly, many were envious [of him] for having left in this college in so short a time such good odour of his virtues that I have heard fathers including those more grave praise him with the name of saint.

I have found three things among others admirable in this illness of his: devotion to the Blessed Virgin [Mary], speaking of God, and an incredible joyfulness in so many sufferings endured. Finally, in [his] dying, particular cases are not lacking to prove all this, but I don't want to be long. However I cannot remain silent about what he [Francis] said to Father Fabritio Pignatelli the day before he died; Pignatelli, talking about banal matters in Francis's room, asked Francis to indicate some displeasure, if he wished something, who replied: Father, yes, I would like that you would speak about God now, because otherwise my pain increases. This amazed the father. Corrected so to speak by a novice, Fabritio related an edifying story of the Blessed Virgin, which truly matched Francis's taste, because Father Francis continued to talk of this, continuously thanking her, showing himself with a heavenly innocence truly to be a son. And although he himself was unable to go to the church to thank her, he used say, because of the suffering he was experiencing in bed, he did not relax until twice a day he had sent me in his place to the altar of the [Immaculate] Conception, and that I had assured him that I had been there. What wonder therefore that he showed himself so joyful both in suffering and in dying.

When the spiritual father[510] gave him notice, for the last time, of the other life, he exclaimed suddenly as he laughed, 'I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord', and followed [with] the psalm. All that evening he continued in prayers so devout, and so holy, that several said that they remained

[510] In a Jesuit community, the spiritual father was the priest designated to care for the spiritual life of the community and its individual members.

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in that room to be aroused to devotion. Not wanting to talk of life because he experienced distaste for it, he appeared to them more blessed while dying. Nevertheless he said to the spiritual father, that [if it were for God's glory] that he would remain in those pains and shortness of breath of his illness for a full eternity, that he would be content. God repaid him well also in this life, for he granted him a most happy death, with all his faculties, tranquil without agitation, rather smiling; he spoke up to the last, always having on his lips these four treasures, which your reverence teaches his novices, and some minutes before he expired, he asked me if I remembered the second saint which you used to recommend, to [invoke] at the moment of death. I named Saint Martin, and suddenly turning towards the crucifix he said, 'Lord, if I am still needed for your people, I do not decline the task',[511] and these were the last, or penultimate, words, if I'm not mistaken, that he uttered, then going off like an angel of paradise to heaven.

I asked him that he might leave me some memento the day before he died, he replied to me that I should never abandon my prayer and that I should value the little things;[512] I believed that the Holy Spirit was making him speak; I hope that he will pray for me in paradise as he promised me, and that together he will beg for me so much grace to be able to put into practice what was memorable about him; what is certain is that he has been for me a great example. He has left me the three books of his philosophy [course], which he had; I will have occasion to use them with veneration. Father Provincial granted him the vows[513] fifteen days beforehand, when his condition began to get worse, before the viaticum was brought to him. Those of your reverence's novices who are perfect, God takes; the imperfect ones he leaves so that they might perfect themselves, I am among these second ones; I will try to be among the first. I say this with some feeling, and every desire.

[511] Adapted from the words attributed to St Martin of Tours (d. 397) as he was dying: '… et si adhuc in eodem labore pro castris tuis stare me praecipis, non recuso nec faticentem causabor aetatem …' [but if you request me to remain before your camp to continue to fulfil the same task, I do not refuse and I will not invoke the weaknesses of age …']. Sulpice Sévère, *Vie de Saint Martin*, I, ed. Jacques Fontaine, *Sources Chrétiennes*, 133 (Paris, 1967), 340–341.

[512] This may be an echo of a phrase of John Berchmans SJ (1599–1621): to do the ordinary things in an extraordinary way. The cult of the youthful Berchmans was promoted by the Society in the years after his death. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[513] The Jesuit provincial permitted Slingsby, exceptionally, to make the three vows (poverty, chastity, obedience) which men make at the end of the two-year period of novitiate. At his death Slingsby had been a novice for less than 14 months.

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I offer your reverence most happy wishes for the coming feast of holy Christmas, as also Father Domenico Vanni, and I have never forgotten how much I owe [you]. I enjoy and envy, together with Father Nicolò Gentile, the conversation of your reverence during [my] stay in Sant'Andrea; if he has already arrived, I ask you to greet him dearly on my behalf. I have reverenced as you ordered me Father [Rector] Father Carrafa, and Poderico, and all in turn greet your reverence, and they remain most obliged that you remember them.

Father Spinelli remembers you, and I entrust myself warmly to your holy sacrifices [i.e. masses] and prayers

Naples 13 December 1642

Father Contri continues to hold us all in suspense, today he was rather worse, than better; there is no longer hope in human remedies; he is very weak, and heavenly helps are sought more than one might hope from earthly ones. Tuesday will be the critical fortieth day for him, and of great fear and observation for the doctors.

Your reverence's son and most unworthy servant in Christ

Giovanni Andrea Serra

II. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 21v–22r

Nicola Consalvi on FS [undated; after 6 December 1642]

(21v) Cose notate sopra il P. Perseo da Nicola Consalvi[514]

Haveva[515] nel caminare e nel portamento della sua persona una compositione singolare, di più nello stare al suo tavolino, nella ricreatione, sempre uniforme in questa parte.

Haveva grande modestia d'occhio senza veruna affectatione.

Haveva[516] una affabilità con un gratioso riso, e modesto in bocca continuo nella ricreatione, con singolare verecondia, e rispetto verso gl'altri non havendo mai nepure in cosa leggierissima trasgredito le leggi della verecondia. Parlava cordialmente di Dio, e della Madonna Santissima soleva dire, che dovevamo essere molto divoti di lei, perché era Madre nostra, ma con particolar sentimento

[514] Novitiate interview for Nicola Consalvi (b. 1622), Rome, 8 May 1641. ARSI, *Rom.* 171, fos 222r–224v.

[515] Margin: in different hand, 'Modestia'; following marginal words in same hand, different from author of text.

[516] Margin: 'Verecondia'.

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Stando[517] male d'occhi, e visitandolo io, stava contentis[sim]o, e sempre con la sua solita giovialità e riso e soleva dire del patire che era la più nobil cosa, e la migliore, perché Cristo sapienza eterna, che non vuole, né si può ingannare, ha fatto così; nella imitazione di Cristo haveva particolare sentimento.

Haveva[518] un'obbedienza straordinaria, poiché mai l'ho visto, che non sia stato prontissimo anco al cenno, e all'avviso del Portinaro; et era a quello con grande humiltà rassegnato, et in questa virtù (21r) dell'humiltà[519] spiccava particolarmente, nella ricreatione stando giustamente come un putto rassegnato al parere d'altri cedendo, non parlando di sé quanto a chi fosse, mai, né mostrando punto il suo sapere anco gustando degl'offitii humili, non parlava ne meno di sé nepure in cose spirituali.

Haveva grandissimo desiderio, che un suo fratello si convertisse, onde tenerissimamente ce lo raccommandava, e una volta sentendo, che l'Inghilterra andava molto bene nelle cose della fede, ne godeva molto, e pregavaci, che facessimo tutti sopra cio oratione. Di più al suo fratello per convertirlo andava ogni giorno quasi.

Havendo doi volte havuto una medesima penitenza per una medesima colpa per poca avvertenza[520] del Portinaro in cosa però leggierissima venne al Portinaro e in grand'humiltà, modestia, e verecondia a dimandarli così. Se mi volete far la carità di dichiararmi il mancamento per potermene emendare.

Mi pare veramente, che caminasse irreprensibilmente in ogni cosa, e angelicamente, non havendovi io conosciuto imperfettione veruna. Il P. Oliva Rettore lo diede per modello nel dir la messa a Sacerdoti Novitii.

(22r) Quando[521] veniva mortificato dal P. Rettore Maestro di Novitii[522] al tempo de mancamenti, il che spesso succedeva per esercitio della sua virtù, sempre stava con un modesto e allegro volto. Ci[523] è stato un fratello, il quale mi ha detto, haverlo notato, che mai si appoggiava, nepure quando riposava nè nella sedia, istessa, dove riposava.

[517] Margin: 'Patientia'.
[518] Margin: 'Obedientia'.
[519] Margin: '[hu]milis'.
[520] Margin: abbreviation, unclear.
[521] Margin: in different hand, 'Amor crucis'.
[522] Giovanni Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681); rector, novitiate at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Rome, 1641–1651.
[523] Margin: word covered by paper.

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Translation

(21v) Some things noted about Father Percy by Nicola Consalvi

He had a particular bearing in walking and in his carriage of himself, more so when he was at his small table, at recreation, always unchanging. He had great modesty of the eyes without any affectation.

He was affable with a gracious laugh and always self-effacing in speech at recreation, with singular modesty, and respect towards others not having ever, even in a most trifling matter, transgressed the laws of modesty. He used to speak in a friendly way of God, and of the most holy Madonna he used to say, that we should be most devout towards her, because she was our mother, but with especial feeling.

Having difficulties with his eyesight, when I visited him he was most happy, always with his customary cheerfulness, and laughter, and he used to say of suffering that it was the most noble thing, and the best, because Christ, eternal wisdom, who neither wants to nor can deceive, had behaved like that; he had a special feeling for the imitation of Christ.

His obedience was extraordinary, for he was most prompt [at responding] even to the nod and the indication of the doorman; and with great humility he was resigned to [following] this indication, and in this virtue (21r) of humility he stood out especially at recreation, where he stood truly like a cherub resigned to yield to the opinion of others, not speaking of himself to anyone, never displaying his knowledge, and even enjoying humble duties, not speaking of himself in spiritual matters either. He had a huge desire that one of his brothers[524] would convert [to Catholicism], whence most tenderly he would recommend him to us. Hearing once that matters of the faith were going very well in England, he enjoyed this very much, and he asked us that we all would pray for this. Further, he used to go [to pray] almost every day for the conversion of his brother.

Having twice had the same penance for the same fault for paying little attention to the doorman in something however that was most trifling, he came to the doorman and in great humility, modesty and self-effacement to ask him as follows: if you wish, you can do me the charity of declaring to me the fault so that I may correct it.

It truly seems to me that he walked without fault in all things, angelically; for myself, I haven't known any imperfection [in him]. Father Rector Oliva held him as a model for priest novices in saying the mass.

[524] Francis's only brother (Henry) had in fact already converted; Francis greatly desired the conversion of his father.

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(22r) When he was corrected by Father Rector, Novice master, at the time of declaring faults, which used to happen frequently in order to exercise his virtue, he always had a modest and cheerful face. There was one brother who said to me, that he noticed, [Francis] never would lean against [a support], neither when he was resting, nor in the chair where he was resting.

III. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 45r–v

Tomaso Mascambruno SJ to Gioseppe Blonditio SJ, 2 January 1643

(45r) +

Carissimo in Christo [fratello]

Pax Christi[525]

Vi ringrazio di tutto cuore della consolatione, che m' havete data con la vostra lettera, con l'occasione di queste sante feste. Prego il Signore Dio, che ve le conceda felicissime con il nuovo, e cento altri anni, come io vivamente desidero. Intorno alla morte del P. Perseo: io vi dico con ogni sincerità, che ogni gran santo si può contentare di morire con quella tranquillità d'animo, resignatione alla divina voluntà, desiderio di morire; con che è morto lui. Che veramente ha edificati, e consolati tutti che hanno sentito sommamente di essere privi d'un specchio di santità come era lui. Però lui era già maturo per il cielo; et Iddio l'ha voluto per sé; dove con l'orationi aiuterà più efficacemente di quello, che haverebbe fatto con le pa[tibolo] l'Inghilterra.
Con che mi raccomando alle vostre sante orationi. Da Napoli 2 di Gennaro 1643

Servo indegno in Christo

Tomaso Mascam[bruno][526]

f. Gioseppe Blo[n]ditio[527]

[525] 'Pax Christi': salutation typical of Jesuit letter-writing.

[526] Tomaso Mascambruno SJ (*c.*1583–1663) entered Naples Province novitiate in 1598. In 1642 he was *admonitor* and *prefectus rerum spiritualium* in the Naples college. ARSI, *Neap.* 83, fo. 14. Joseph Fejér, *Defuncti secondi saeculi Societatis Iesu (1641–1740)*, III (Rome, 1988), 251.

[527] Giuseppe Blanditio SJ (b. 1614) entered Roman novitiate on 5 February 1631. ARSI, *Rom.* 58, fo. 210.

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(45v) +

Al carissimo in Christo fratello il fratello Gioseppe Blanditio della Compagnia di Gesù

Roma [seal removed]

Franc[esco] Sling[528]

Della morte del P. Perseo vero nomine Slingisby

Scritta ad un repetitore di questo Collegio

Translation

(45r) Dearest brother in Christ

The peace of Christ

I thank you wholeheartedly for the consolation which you have given me with your letter on the occasion of these holy feast days. I pray the Lord God that He may grant you most happy feast days with the new year, and a hundred other years, as I warmly desire. Regarding the death of Father Percy: I say to you in all sincerity, that every great saint may be happy to die with the tranquillity of soul, resignation to the divine will [and] desire for death with which he died. Truly he has edified and consoled all who have greatly felt the loss of a mirror of holiness, such as he was. However he was already ripe for heaven; God wanted him for Himself there, where he will help through prayer more efficaciously than England would have done [with] the scaffold.[529] Thus I recommend myself to your holy prayers.

From Naples 2 January 1643

Most unworthy servant in Christ

Tomaso Mascam[bruno]

F. Gioseppe Blo[n]ditio

(45v) To the dearest brother in Christ brother Gioseppe Blanditio of the Society of Jesus Rome

[528] These and following words in different hand.

[529] The sense is that he will help more through his prayers in heaven, than dying as a martyr in England.

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On the death of Father Perseo true name Slingisby

Written to a *repetitore*[530] of this college

IV. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 50r–v

Bernardo Angelici SJ to Giovanni Maria Bentivogli SJ, 11 June 1643

(50r) Carissimo in Christo fratello

Pax Christi

Vedo quanto la charità vostra mi scrive circa il desiderio che ha d'esser informato da me di qualche cosa d'edificatione notata del Padre Perseo giovane già nostro condiscepolo. In risposta non gli posso dir altro di sì santo giovane che sempre ho ammirata la sua rara modestia in ogni cosa, et anche ogni prontezza in argumentare e far ciò che di lui io volevo, mentre stavo al suo circolo, onde non volendo ben spesso nissuno argumentare bastava che io gl'accennassi che non c'era pericolo che non havesse argumentato benché fosse all'improviso, e l'istessi scolari quando gli avvisavo per argumentare scusandosi tutti di non potere mi dicevano lo dica Vostra Riverenza a Perseo che non c'è pericolo che replichi mai, e dica di no.

Ho notato anche in lui con haverci discorso alcune volte che ogni cosa interpretava in bene, et se vedeva cosa che non la potesse manifestamente scusare si componeva tutto dando in un santo eccesso di rigorosa modestia. M'è dispiaciuta da una parte la nova della sua morte per haver noi perso un'esempio così sublime di perfettione christiana, dall'altra parte me ne son rallegrato, perché son sicuro d'esser lui andato dritto in Paradiso, e pregar per tutti noi appresso SDM[531] che quanto m'occorre alle vostre santissime orazioni molto mi raccomando

Viterbo[532] li 11 Giugno 1643

Humilissimo servo in Christo

[530] In the Jesuit university system, a *repetitor* was a senior student who led junior students in comprehension exercises of the materials covered in lectures.

[531] Abbreviation, 'Sua divina maestà' [his divine majesty], reference to God, typical Jesuit phrase, used by Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises.

[532] Jesuit college, Viterbo (Provincia Romana). A. Hamy, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire des domiciles de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Paris, [1892]), 2.

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Bernardo Angelici[533]

[ ]Cr[534]

(50v) Al mio carissimo in Christo fratello M[aestr]o Giovanni Maria Bentivogli[535] della Compagnia di Giesù

Roma

Collegio Romano

Translation

(50r) Dearest brother in Christ

The peace of Christ.

I note how much your charity impels you to write to me regarding your desire to be informed by me about any matter of edification noted in young Father Percy our former fellow-student. In reply I can only say of such a holy young man that I have always admired his rare modesty in everything, and that he was always ready to participate in formal academic exercises ('argumentare') and to do what I required of him, while I was part of his [study] group; whenever it happened that no one wished to present an argument, it was enough that I would nod to him, and there was no risk that he would not present an argument, even when asked unexpectedly. Whenever I would ask the students to present an argument, and all would excuse themselves saying they were unable, they would say to me, Your reverence, ask Percy, there's no risk that he would ever refuse.

Having spoken with him on several occasions, I have noted that he interpreted everything in a positive light, and if he saw something that clearly he could not excuse, he arranged everything in a holy excess of rigorous modesty. On the one hand I was sorry to learn of his death, for we have lost such a sublime example of Christian perfection: on the other hand I rejoiced, because I am sure that he has gone directly to paradise, and that he prays for us before His Divine Majesty. This is as much as comes to mind. I entrust myself to your most holy prayers.

[533] Bernardo Angelici (b. *c.*1617), entered Roman novitiate on 17 April 1633. ARSI, *Rom.* 57, fo. 157v.

[534] Unknown abbreviation.

[535] In the years 1641–1644, Giovanni Maria Bentivogli ['Bentivolus'] SJ (not yet a priest) was serving as a lower-level teacher in the Roman College. ARSI, *Rom.* 80, fos 294, 317v.

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Viterbo 11 June 1643

The most humble servant in Christ

Bernardo Angelici.

(50v) To my dearest brother in Christ Master Giovanni Maria Bentivogli of the Society of Jesus

Rome

Roman College

V. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 54r–v

Giuseppe Ceccaroni SJ to Giovanni Maria Bentivogli SJ, 12 June 1643

(54r) Carissimo fratello in Cristo

Pax Christi

Non poco sono restato maravigliato in sentire la morte del Padre Perseo, la modestia del quale, e singolare obedientia, che egli haveva in ripigliare, et argomentare, ancor quando non gli toccava, vi sarà molto nota, per essere cosa amirabile con tutte l'altre cose, che io ho inteso dalli suoi collegiali Inglesi, dalli quali vi potrete informare delle penitenze, che egli faceva nel collegio con grandissima edificatione di tutti, e delli patimenti supportati in prigione, quando andò in Inghilterra[536] per convertire li suoi parenti etc con che finisco et alle sue orationi et a quelli de gl'altri amici con affetto singolare mi raccomando.

Di Fabriano[537] li 12 di Giugno 1643

[P.]C.V.

Servo indegnissimo e fratello in Cristo

Giuseppe Ceccaroni

[536] It was as a result of converting family members in Ireland that Francis was imprisoned.

[537] Fabriano, in Ancona province, a Jesuit college. Hamy, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire des domiciles*, 2. In 1641, Giuseppe Ceccaroni was a Jesuit teacher (not yet ordained) in this college. ARSI, *Rom.* 80, fo. 309r.

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(54v) De f. Fran[cesco] Slingisbaeo[538]

Al mio carissimo in Cristo fratello Maestro Giovanni Maria Bentivogli[539] della Compania di Giesù

Roma

Translation

(54r) Dearest brother in Christ

The peace of Christ

I was not a little amazed at hearing of the death of Father Percy. The modesty and exceptional obedience, which he had in taking part in revision exercises and academic arguments, even when it wasn't his turn, will be well known to you. This was something admirable, along with all the other things which I have learned from his English fellow-students, from whom you will be able to inform yourselves of the penitential exercises which he used do in the college to the greatest edification of all, and of the sufferings endured while in prison, when he went to England to convert his relations etc. With this I conclude and I entrust myself to all your prayers and to those of the other friends with special affection.

From Fabriano 12 June 1643

Most unworthy servant and brother in Christ

Giuseppe Ceccaroni

(54v) To his dearest brother in Christ, Master Giovanni Maria Bentivogli of the Society of Jesus

Rome

VI. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 55r–v

Tomaso Mascambruno SJ to Francesco Mascambruno SJ, 4 July 1643

(55r)

Del P. Perseo qui fu pochi giorni e visse da Ang[el]o come fece costì. S'ammalò e nell'inf[ermi]tà stette con somma quiete, e patienza;

[538] Inserted later, different hand and ink.
[539] See previous letter.

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quando l'attese la morte mostrò somma allegrezza, e rassegnazione nella divina volontà stette sempre fin che spirò facendo atti divotamente e morì santamente. Altro di lui non posso sapere per essere stato qui poco tempo.

Con che mi raccomando alli santi sacrifici di Vostra Riverenza

Da Napoli 4 di luglio 1643

Di vostra riverenza

Servo indegnissimo in [Christo]

Tomaso Mascambruno[540]

(55v) Al molto riverendo in Christo padre il Padre Francesco Mascambruno rettore di Compagnia di Gesù

Roma

Translation

Concerning Father Percy: he was here for a few days[541] and lived as an angel as he did where you are [i.e. Rome]. He became ill and he bore his sickness with great tranquillity and patience. When death was approaching he showed great cheerfulness, and he was resigned to the divine will at all times until he expired, devoutly uttering prayers, and he died in a holy way. I cannot know any more about him because I have been here a short time.

With this I entrust myself to the holy sacrifices [Masses] of your reverence

From Naples 4 July 1643

Of your reverence [I am] the most unworthy servant in Christ

Tomaso Mascambruno

[540] Tomaso Mascambruno SJ (*c.*1583–1663): see **document III**.
[541] FS was in Naples from September 1642.

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VII. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 76r–79r

Bartolomeo Conventino SJ re FS in novitiate, Rome [undated; post 6 December 1642]

(76r) +

A.M.D.G.

Io Bartolomeo Conventino[542] testifico di haver notate le seguenti virtù nel P. Perseo di felicissima memoria mentre egli fu novitio in Roma

Nel parlare mi parve sempre, che particolarmente si potesse scorgere in lui un grandissimo affetto, e studio dell'imitatione di Christo, sì perché spesso toccava questo punto,[543] sì perché era grandissimo il sentimento che mostrava[544] nel trattare della vita e massime della passione di Christo: et una volta paseggiando in giardino al tempo della ricreatione, io gli sentii dire che il desiderio e la mira sua era di arrivare a tal regno, che se gli fusse dimandato perché ubidiva, perché si humiliava, perché si mortificava etc havesse a tutto potuto rispondere solamente Perché un Dio è morto per me.

Era meravigliosa la tenerezza, che haveva verso l'humanità santissima di Cristo et egli stesso confessava di sentirsi mosso grandemente nella consideratione dell'affabilità, mansuetudine etc[545] che andava riconoscendo in Cristo nel che disse anche, che si serviva di questo modo, cioè che s'imaginava qualche persona da lui conosciuta per santa, dotta etc e che si come non harebbe potuto veder patire questa senza suo gran dolore, così molto più si moveva à compatir Cristo.

Parlava con grandissima riverenza e sentimento del Santissimo Sacramento, et io gli udii dire che per eccitare l'affetto verso di esso quando diceva messa usava questo modo, che s'imaginava Cristo o nel prettorio flagellato[546] o nel horto sudando sangue, o nel calvario, o in altr'atto simile e quando tenendo fisso l'occhio in (76v) quel luogo gli pareva di vedere Christo, e di compatirlo, allhora diceva a se stesso

[542] Bartolomeo Conventino SJ (1623–1659) entered Roman novitiate 30 April 1641. ARSI, *Rom.* 58, fo. 29v. Fejér, *Defuncti secondi saeculi Societatis Iesu (1641–1740)*, III, 289.

[543] Right-hand margin: first of series of qualities noted, different ink and hand: 'Memoria [Jesu] Christi vitae et passionis'.

[544] Paper is damaged.

[545] Margin: 'erga Christi humanitas'.

[546] Margin: 'erga V[itae] Sanct[or]um'.

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ecco qui che tu hai presente quel medesimo, confessando che restava colpito da questa riflessione quasi improvisa.

Una mattina tra l'altre hebbi occasione di conoscere il grande affetto che questo benedetto padre portava alla Beatissimma Vergine[547] perché andando con lui et un altro compagno a caminare, tutto il viaggio che si fece dalle quattro fontane a S. Giovanni Laterano ritornando all'istesso luogo per S. Croce in Gerusalemme, tutto dico si passò in raggionare della Beatissima Vergine di cui disse tanti, e sì belli sentimenti che mai mi ricordo di haver udito ragionamento con più consolatione. Quello che in ciò mi ricordo determinatamente è che domandandogli io come si poteva fare per divenir devoto di questa gran Regina, egli disse che sopra ogni cosa stimava necessario il convincersi come quelle lodi che si dicevano di lei v.g. l'esser pietosa, l'esser potentissima, il proteggere chi l'invoca etc non erano solamente encomii, ma verità certissime, et effetti infallibili della sua bontà. Di qui, diceva, nascerà che l'huomo s'applichi da dovero al suo servitio e divotione, e sogiunse che egli già si era veramente convinto, di modo che teneva per certo che Dio non concedesse molte volte l'acquisto della santità, e delle virtù non perché non volesse darlo ma perché non gli era chiesto per mezzo della sua madre. Similmente mi ricordo, che quella mattina disse tra gli altri affetti, o Dio e come ha mai potuto il Demonio accecare in guisa gli (77r) heretici, che tenghino farsi disshonore a Dio mentre si honora la Beatissima Vergine? Dunque quello che ha posto ne suoi precetti, che siano riveriti i padri, e le madri di ciascheduno, haverà discaro che si honori la madre sua?

Era tanta la stima, che havea della Compagnia, che io un giorno gli sentii dire queste precise parole, Veramente io non so imaginarmi mezzo veruno sopra quelli, che ci dà la Compagnia per acquistare la vera perfettione;[548] e pure (soggiunse) gli huomini si possono imaginare cose assai. Tuttavia tornò più volte a testificare che egli non sapeva, né poteva fingerlo. Similmente disse che quando si vestì e venne con gli altri restò sommamente ammirato della pontualità e perfettione, con cui si viveva, e nel sentire i mancamenti, che al quarto solito si dicono a novitii, disse tra se stesso amirato di sentir riprendere cose tanto leggieri, Giesù vogliono, che siano angeli! Un'altra volta pure gli udii dire che se gli Heretici havessero potuto penetrare il modo di vita che si teneva in S. Andrea del Novitiato, teneva certissimo che assai più si sarebbono convertiti, che per molte prediche.

[547] Margin: 'erga BV'.
[548] Margin: 'aestimat Societatem'.

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Era di tanta prudenza e cognitione nelle cose dello spirito, che essendo molte volte interrogato nelle conferenze cosa credesse di qualche dubbio proposto da altri novitii, non mi ricordo che mai errasse;[549] so bene che sentii più e più volte approvare grandemente le sue risposte dal maestro de novitii[550] il quale quando ci era qualche dubbio, che altri non havessero saputo spiegare, ricorreva al P. Perseo. Dirò una di queste sue (77v) risposte, che mi ricordo. Fu dimandato da un novitio se portando il caso che venisse dimandata alcuna cosa leggiera in presto, né vi fosse tempo di domandarne licenza, tuttavia combattuto dal rispetto humano la dasse, ma però ricoprendo il tutto sotto pretesto della carità fraterna, come harebbe potuto fare questo tale in somiglianti occasioni per conoscere se veramente lo moveva a sodisfare il fratello la carità o pure il rispetto humano. Interrogato dunque sopra ciò il P. Perseo diede questa regola, che si facesse riflessione come trattarebbe se gli fosse dimandata l'istessa cosa da alcun altro a cui sapesse di sentire qualche avversione o almeno non ne havesse tanta stima, e che se vedeva, che a questo non sarebbe stato si pronto a dargli l'istessa cosa, era segno che nell'altro lo tirava il rispetto humano.

Era puntualissimo et attentissimo in tutte le sue attioni. Quando veniva in sala alla ricreatione osservai che inginocchiatosi in mezzo di essa si segnava con gran riverenza, e molto adagio con il segno della croce, e faceva questa breve oratione[551] che si suole ma tenendo sempre gli occhi fissi in terra, e con grandissima serietà: poi alzatosi in piedi stando pure nel mezzo dava un'occhiata adagio d'intorno in torno a quaterni, e mi pareva, che in quell'atto gli si vedesse in faccia l'indifferenza di andare con quelli che fosse più piacciuto a Dio; non seppi però mai il fine preciso perché ciò facesse.

Mi occorse[552] una volta di aprire il tiratore del suo tavolino, e restai stupito della pulizia et aggiustatezza con cui lo teneva. Quando gli era imposto qualche uffitio si faceva instruire puntualmente, ne dimendava (78r) alla ricreatione, e si conosceva una certa ansia e premura, che haveva di farlo compitamente.

Essendo venuto a Roma un suo parente heretico, lo raccomandò più volte alle orationi de novitii e mostrò nel parlare il gran desiderio,[553]

[549] Margin: 'Intelligentia rerum specularum'.
[550] The novice master was Giovanni Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681).
[551] Margin: 'Obic'.
[552] Margin: '[Or]etor'.
[553] Margin: 'Zelus'.

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che haveva di quell'anima: vi andò più volte à trattare, ma di quello che facesse vi sarà alcun'altro più informato di me.
La sua modestia era angelica senza una minima affettatione; mai gli fu veduto torcere il collo da alcuna parte, teneva quasi sempre gli occhi bassi e nel passegiare,[554] se non diceva l'offitio, teneva per lo più una mano posata sopra il petto e sotto di essa l'altro braccio attraversato alla cintura.

Era affabilissimo e parlava posatamente ma con una certa cordialità di Dio, che mi pareva impossibile sentirlo senza infiammarsi.

Era verecondissimo e molte volte l'ho veduto arrossire tutto, quando da i fratelli gli era domandata qualche cosa, che pareva potesse ritornare in sua lode, et alcune altre non rispondeva niente et altre se pur diceva alcuna cosa di se stesso si vedeva una certa simplicità, e schiettezza, che l'huomo non restava offeso ne pur da una minim'ombra di iattanza.

Rispettava tutti grandissimente né mai censurò o detto o fatto di veruno; e di questa virtù fece particolar mentione il P. Oliva dopo la sua santa morte dicendo[555] che era stata cosa degna veramente di meraviglia, come un huomo di tanto ingegno, e giuditio non havesse mai mostrato un minimo disprezzo [—][556] di un detto del più semplice novitio, che vi fosse.

Insisteva assai nell'[u]bidienza[557] del giuditio e diceva (78v) che richiedeva molta perfettione adducendo ancora molti motivi per abbracciarla.

Il P. Oliva suo Rettore lo diede per esempio[558] a gli altri novitii nella modestia e nella purità della conscientia e si può credere che lo dasse in tutte le virtù

Quando partì per Napoli era nel tempo, che egli faceva gli essercitii spirituali con i novitii, e per quanto io credo fu avvisato improvisamente di questo viaggio. Non poté per tanto né abbracciare, né parlare con i novitii,[559] che ancora stavano ritirati; ma andando, credo la sera avvanti al partire, alla casa professa fece ricreatione con i novitii che quivi stavano, uno de quali mi ha detto che parlò sempre con gran spirito di Dio; ma non disse ne pure una parola del suo partire.

[554] Margin: 'Modestia'.
[555] Margin: 'Humilitas'
[556] Paper is perforated here.
[557] Margin: 'Obedientia'.
[558] Margin: 'Modestia'.
[559] Margin: 'ubic'.

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Non[560] fu veduto mai turbato et una volta gli sentii dire, che lo teneva consolatissimo il sapere, che né infermità né altro sucesso se lui voleva poteva impedirlo, che non servisse, e desse gusto a Dio.

Stando in prima probatione, et andandovi ad insegnarli[561] di tessere discipline, gli domandai se haveva forbicette per tagliare non so che filo et egli mi rispose di sì andando à pigliare quelle della lucerna e nettandole, del che accortomi io, gli dissi dunque non gli hanno portate altre forbicette? Ma egli arrossendosi, e sorridendo non disse altro; ma mi accorsi che gli dispiaceva fosse stata scoperta la sua humiltà.

Benché fosse di [complessione] molto delicata e che non[562] havesse troppa sanità, ad ogni modo faceva penitenze e discipline in refettorio, dove lo (79r) viddi una volta, che si batteva a tutto potere in tal atto, che m'intenerì.

Finalmente posso dire che non ci ho mai veduto mancamento veruno e che non trovo virtù la quale non mi paia, che spiccasse in lui benché non possa ricordarmi de casi particolari. So che dopo la sua partita et in altre occasioni che ho sentito parlar di lui chiunque l'havea conosciuto, havea molto che dire delle sue virtù. Basti per tutti il P. Oliva il quale come si dee credere havea piena cognitione dell'anima sua, e disse a tutti i novitii dopo la sua morte oltre a molte altre lodi, che se vi fosse stato alcuno il quale havesse detto di haver veduto un minimo mancamento, o inosservanza nel P. Perseo, egli voleva chiamarlo risolutamente buggiardo: e pure è noto a tutti quanto il sudetto Padre sia lontano dall'essagerare. Questo è quello, che mi son potuto per adesso ricordare del molto che ho veduto nel Padre Francesco Perseo, e deporlo a maggior gloria di Dio

Laus Deo, Deiparae Virgini et S. Ignatio

Translation

(76r) AMDG[563]

I Bartolomeo Conventino testify to have noted the following virtues in Father Percy of most happy memory while he was a novice in Rome

In his conversation, it always seemed to me, one could detect in him in a particular way a most great affection for and study of the imitation of Christ, because he used always mention this, and also

[560] Margin: 'Quies a[nimae]'.
[561] Margin: 'paupertas'.
[562] Margin: '[M]rgot'?
[563] Ad maiorem Dei gloriam [For the greater glory of God]: Jesuit motto.

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because he used to show great feeling in referring to the life and especially the passion of Christ. Once while walking in the garden during recreation, I heard him say, that his desire and goal was to reach that kingdom, and that if he were asked why he used to obey, why he used to humble himself, why he used to mortify himself etc. he would only have been able to reply, Because a God has died for me.

Marvellous was the tenderness he had for the most holy humanity of Christ. He himself confessed himself to feeling greatly moved in considering the friendliness, the meekness etc. which he recognized in Christ. He further said that he used the following method, that is, that he would imagine some person known by him to be holy, learned etc. and that as he would not have been able to see this person suffer, without great sorrow on his own part, so much more he was moved to have compassion with Christ.

He used speak with great reverence and feeling of the most Blessed Sacrament. I heard him say that to arouse feeling towards the Blessed Sacrament when he was saying mass, he would use this method, that he would imagine Christ either scourged in the pretorium, or sweating blood while in the garden, or on Calvary, or in some similar situation. When, with his gaze fixed on that place, (76v) he appeared to see Christ and to have compassion for him, then he would say to himself, here you have Christ himself present. And he confessed that he was struck by this almost unexpected reflection.

One morning I had occasion to get to know the great affection that this blessed father had for the Blessed Virgin. Going walking with him and another companion, for the entire route from the Quattro Fontane to San Giovanni Laterano returning to the same place via Santa Croce in Gerusalemme,[564] he spent the entire journey in discoursing on the most blessed Virgin, about whom he expressed such beautiful sentiments that I can never recall having heard reflections with greater consolation. What I recall specifically is that when I asked him how one might become a devotee of this great queen, he said that above all he deemed it necessary to convince oneself that those praises that are said of her, namely that she was compassionate, she was most powerful, that she protects those who invoke her etc. were not merely praises, but rather most certain truths, and infallible fruits of her goodness. From which, he used say, it will follow that the individual would truly apply himself to her service and devotion. He added

[564] 'Quattro Fontane' are a set of four fountains located at the intersection of Via delle Quattro Fontane and Via del Quirinale, adjacent to what had been the Jesuit novitiate; San Giovanni Laterano and Santa Croce in Gerusalemme are two of the seven basilicas which comprise a pilgrim route in Rome ('Sette chiese') established from medieval times.

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that he was already truly convinced of this, to such an extent that he held it for certain that God frequently would not grant the acquisition of holiness and of the virtues, not because He didn't want to give this, but because He had not been asked through the intercession of His mother. In a similar way I recall that on that morning he said among other things, o God, how could the devil ever have blinded (77r) the heretics in such a way that they would hold that honouring the most blessed Virgin would dishonour God? Therefore He who has placed among His precepts that everyone's father and mother was to be revered[565] would be displeased that one would honour His own mother?

His esteem for the Society was such, that one day I heard him say these precise words: truly I cannot imagine any other means superior to those which the Society gives us to acquire true perfection. And indeed, he added, men can imagine many things. In any case he reiterated several times that he did not know how to, nor could he feign it.

Similarly he said that when one got dressed and came with the others he very much admired the punctuality and perfection with which they lived. In listening to the faults, which at the quarter [of charity][566] it was customary for the novices to tell, he said to himself he marvelled to hear such inconsequential things censured. Jesus, they wish that they were angels! Again another time I heard him say that if the heretics would have been able to become acquainted with the way of life which prevailed in the novitiate at Sant'Andrea, he held that certainly many more would be converted, than by many sermons.

He was of such prudence and knowledge in the things of the spirit, that when he was questioned frequently in the conferences what he thought of some issue raised by other novices, I don't recall that he ever erred. I well know that many times I heard the novice master greatly approving his replies. Whenever there was some uncertainty, which the other novices would not have known how to resolve, the novice master used turn to Father Percy. I will relate one of his (77v) replies which I recall. A novice presented the situation where he was asked for something inconsequential suddenly, and there wasn't time to ask permission for this; overcome by human respect, he gave it;

[565] FS is referring to the fourth of the Ten Commandments.

[566] 'quarter of charity': in the Jesuit novitiate, several times a year a specific gathering of all novices led by the novicemaster took place. The novicemaster would invite the novices to name and comment on the external faults of one of their number who was required to kneel before the others facing the wall; each novice had his turn in receiving such criticism. The novicemaster facilitated the process to ensure fairness and added his own comments to those of the novices; I am grateful to Brian O'Leary SJ for this explanation.

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but however placing the whole episode under the pretext of fraternal charity; how might he have been able to do this in similar situations so as to know whether it was charity, or human respect, that moved him to satisfy the confrere. When asked about this, Father Percy gave this rule, that one might reflect on how he would respond if he had been asked for the same thing by someone else towards whom he knew he felt some aversion, or at least for whom he had little esteem, and that he notices that he would not have been so ready to give him the same thing; this was a sign that in the first case, human respect was influencing him.

He was most punctual and attentive in all his actions. When he used to come into the common room at recreation I noticed that he used to kneel in the middle of the room and bless himself with the sign of the cross with great reverence and in a measured way. He used make this brief customary prayer but always with his eyes fixed on the ground, and with great seriousness. Then rising to his feet and standing just in the middle he looked around slowly, and it seemed to me that in this gesture one could see in his face his indifference in going towards the confrere who was most pleasing to God. However I never knew precisely why he did this.

It happened once that I opened the drawer of his small desk and I was amazed at how clean and neat he kept it. When some role was assigned to him, he made sure he was instructed in detail about it, he used to ask (78r) about the duties at recreation, and it was noticeable that he had a certain anxiousness and concern about fulfilling the role competently.

One of his heretic relatives came to Rome. Several times Francis asked the novices to pray for him, and in speaking [Francis] showed his great desire for this soul. He went several times to discuss with him, but about what he did, there will be someone else more informed than I am.

His modesty was angelic without the least affectation. His neck was never seen turned in any direction, almost always he kept his eyes low, and in walking, if he wasn't saying the office, he used to hold one hand on his chest, and below this he held the other arm crossed at his belt.

He was most friendly and used speak of God in a calm way but with a certain cordiality, and it appeared to me impossible to listen to him without becoming ardent.

He was most diffident and many times I saw him blush profusely, when the confreres asked him something which, it appeared, might redound to his credit. At other times he didn't respond at all, and on other occasions if he were to say something about himself one noticed a certain simplicity and frankness, so that the man was not offended, not even by the slightest trace of arrogant superiority.

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He used to respect everyone greatly and he never criticized what anyone said or did. Father Oliva made particular mention of this virtue after his holy death saying that it had been something truly wonderful, how a man of such intelligence and judgment would have never shown the least contempt for something said by the most simple novice. He insisted much on the obedience of judgment and used to say (78v) that it required much perfection, giving many motives for embracing it.

Father Oliva, his rector, held him as an example of modesty and purity of conscience to the other novices, and one may believe that he gave him as an example in all the virtues.

He was doing the spiritual exercises when he left for Naples, and as far as I know he was informed unexpectedly of this journey. Thus he wasn't able either to embrace or to speak with the novices, who were still on retreat. Going to the professed house, I believe on the evening before departure, he had recreation with the novices who were there. One of these told me that he spoke always with great spirit of God, but that he didn't say a word of his departure.

He was never seen upset, and once I heard him say that for him it was most consoling to know that neither sickness nor any other event, if he wished, could prevent him from serving and pleasing God.

He being in first probation,[567] and going to teach him how to weave disciplines,[568] I asked him if he had scissors to cut some thread. He replied that he had, and he went to take those for the oil lamp and cleaned them. This I noticed. Therefore I said to him, did they not give you other scissors? But he blushed, and smiling said nothing. However I understood that he was displeased that his humility had been discovered.

Although he was of a very delicate complexion and his health wasn't great, nevertheless he used to perform penitential exercises and use the discipline in the refectory, where I (79r) once saw him striking himself with all his strength in that act, so that I was moved to pity.

Finally I can say that I never saw any lack at all in him, and that I do not find any virtue in him that would be preeminent, although I cannot remember particular cases. I know that after his departure and on other occasions I have heard him spoken of by whoever had known him, and these spoke much of his virtues. Father Oliva suffices for all these, who, as one is given to believe, had full understanding of his soul. Oliva said to all the novices after his death, as well as many

[567] First probation: refers to the first stage of the two-year Jesuit novitiate, generally lasting about two weeks.

[568] A small whip composed of interwoven cords, used by individuals on themselves as a penitential exercise.

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other commendations, that if there had been anyone who would have said that he saw the slightest lack or inattention [to the rules] in Father Percy, he (Oliva) would want to call him clearly a liar. And indeed it is known to all how much the self-same father is far from exaggerating. This is as much as I have been able to remember of so much that I have seen in Father Francis Percy, and this I testify for the greater glory of God.

Praise be to God, the Blessed Virgin, and Saint Ignatius.

VIII. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 67r–v

Father David Lewis, priest, fellow-student, re FS in English College, Rome (1639–1641) [undated, post 6 December 1642]

(67r) P. Caroli Bakeri[569] sacerdotis condiscipuli

[D] P. francisco Slinghisbeo in Coll[eg]io Anglorum Romae[570]

Cum eiusdem cum illo Recreationis essem, enixe a me petiit, ut curiosius eum observarem, et non solum culpas, in eo deprehensas, sed et actiones quae perfici Ullo modo poterant, sincere et libere ei aperirem, idem mecum se acturum pollicens, Si tamen hoc mihi onerosum et minui gratum non videretur. Addidit, emolumentum non leve utrique nostrum inde resultaturum tanquam a medio valde efficaci ad veram perfectionem solidamque virtutem acquirendam. Salutari enim istius exercitii beneficio fore aiebat, ut defectus nostri minimi nobis innotescerent, in quorum cognitionem multi minus emendationem neuter nostrum sibi relictus deveniret; haec [in]ter alia urgebat, et haec quidem experientia postea comprobavit. Mutuas autem has nostras accusationes singulis septimanis iterandas censebat,[571] tempusque congruum fore mediam horam in Sabbato Confessionem immediate praecedentem. Praeter Collegii regulas etiam minutissimas, et alia quae mihi memoria exciderunt, pauca haec infra scripta exacte observanda proposuit.

In Refectorio

Panem in mensa aliosque cibos decenter tractare, Ut in quid supererit, aliis vel sibi postea inservire posset.

[569] Name added later; different hand and ink; David Lewis [St David Lewis: alias Charles Baker] (1617–1679), Jesuit and martyr, *ODNB*.

[570] Title in different hand from body of text.

[571] Margin: 'in choro coram Sanctissimo Sacramento'.

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Cibum proxime sibi porrectum sumere.
Vinum poculo caute infundare, neque nimium, ne diffluerent.
Nimiam aviditatem in comedendo fugere.
Non loqui, neque aliis loquendi occasionem dare.
Ad tollendum gustum et delecta[ti]onem[572] [ovendum] inter comedendum lectori attente auscultare.

In Scholis

+ Inter eundum

+ Dato signo ad scholas aut aliud quemvis locum statim descendere.

Casu quo socius assignatus abesset, propinquiori se adiungere.
Quamprimum ac aperivatur Schola, subito rectuque in illam locumque proprium pergere.
Explicationis tempore aliis rebus non occupari.
Inter disputandum modestia uti, neque alios invidere, aut illorum argumenta nihili facere.
Scholis peractis, ad locum designatum festinare, ne expectare alii cogantur.
(67v) +

In recreatione

Non solum non minimo temporis spatio abesse sine licentia, sed neque talem licentiam petere, nisi urgente negotio quod alias commode fieri nequiverat.

Quoad situm corporis inter sedendum omnimoda[m] modestia[m] observare; nec inter colloquendum aliorum nudas manas aut faciem tractare.
Colloquia utilia maxime promovere.
Post signum datum a recreatione, ne minimum sedere aut loqui, sed ad cubicula statim pergere.
Sed in his omnibus caeterisque Collegii regulis levissimis tanta rigida fuit eius observantia, ut vix ullam unquam accusationis materiam suppeditaret, licet, ut verum fatear, magnam in hac re diligentiam adhibuerim, imo nec invenire erat, de quo diceretur, quod melius aut perfectius fieri poterat. Quamprimum tamen ac ad locum destinatum conveneramus, statim in genua provolutus (in eo enim situ suas culpas audire patierat) orationem praemisit, modoque quasi laetabundo sed humillimo suos defectus aperiendos expectabat; Sed

[572] This and the following word are unclear.

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cum eandam ei occinerem cantilenam, mihi, scilicet, non suppetere quod illi objicerem, confundi totus videbatur, auribusque parum laetis haec accipiens, prius surgere noluit, quam saepius repetieram me non habere quod dicerem. Quod spectat ad studia Mathematica, ad quae se valde propendere aiebat, ut rigide in eum animadverterum, saepius precatus est. Cum enim pro hisce studiis horam illam solitam in Schola phisica sibi destinaverat, huic tempori adeo se alligavit, ut [se] vel minimo temporis spatio post signum datum finis lectionis Mathematicae proposition[um] cui erat intentus prosequeretur, et librum non clauderet, hoc ut culpam postea aperie[n]dam praescripsit. Sed nec ullum accusationi in hac materia locum reliquit. Si vero, me absente, ut leviter in ulla re offendiscet, ipse sui accusator erat. Me de defectu aliquo admonens, mitissime sed efficaciter hoc fecit, firmissimis rationibus exemplisque e Cassiano ut plurimum deductis quaecunque dixerat confirmans. Et sic quod mediae horae supererat, pie transegit.

Translation

(67r) From Charles Baker,[573] priest, fellow-student

On Father Francis Slingsby in the English College at Rome[574]

Once when I was together with him at recreation, he fervently requested me to observe him closely and to disclose to him, sincerely and freely, not only the faults I noted in him but also actions which could in any way be improved. He promised he would do the same for me, provided that this did not seem irksome and unwelcome to me. There would be no slight gain for both of us from that practice, he added, since it is a powerfully efficacious means towards acquiring true perfection and sound virtue. He said that a salutary benefit of this exercise would be that our smallest faults would become known to us, while if left to himself neither of us would come to awareness of them, much less amendment. These were some of the things he said, among others, and experience afterwards confirmed them. He considered that our mutual criticisms should be repeated once weekly[575] and that the half-hour on Saturday immediately prior to confession

[573] Charles Baker (*vere* David Lewis) (1617–1679), from Monmouthshire, south Wales, admitted to English College, Rome, 6 November 1638. He was ordained priest July 1642 and joined Society of Jesus, April 1645. He was martyred in the context of the Popish Plot on 27 August 1679 and canonized in 1970, *ODNB*.

[574] Title in different hand from body of text.

[575] Margin: 'In the choir, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament'.

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would be a suitable time. Apart from even the tiniest College rules, and other matters which have escaped my memory, he proposed that the few things set out hereunder should be observed exactly.

In the Refectory

To handle the bread on the table and other foods in a considerate manner, so that whatever was left over might afterwards be usable for others or oneself. To take the food that was placed closest to oneself.
To pour wine carefully into the cup and not too much, lest it spill.
To avoid excessive avidity in eating.
Not to speak or give others an occasion for speaking.
In order to suppress the pleasure of taste and choice flavours while eating, to listen attentively to the reader.

In the Schools

While moving (between locations)
Once the signal is given for school or for any other place, to go down immediately.
Should the assigned companion be absent, to join someone who is relatively closely positioned.
As soon as school opens, immediately and decently to go in there to one's own place.
While explanation is being given, not to occupy oneself with other things.
While in disputation, to practise modesty; not to envy others or despise their arguments as worthless.
When school has concluded, to make one's way quickly to the designated place, lest others be compelled to wait.

(67v) In recreation

Not merely not to be absent for even the smallest space of time without permission, but not even to ask for such permission, unless for urgent business which cannot conveniently be accomplished otherwise.
As regards the posture of the body while sitting, to observe decency in every way; and during conversation not to touch the bare hands or faces of others.
To do one's utmost to make conversations useful.
After the signal is given to leave recreation, not to sit and talk even for the shortest time but to go immediately to the cubicles.

But in all these and other rules of the College, even the slightest, his observance was so rigorous that he scarcely ever supplied any material for criticism, even though, to speak truly, I practised great

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diligence in this regard. Nor indeed could anything be found of which it might be said that it could have been done better or more completely. Nevertheless, as soon as we had met at the designated place, falling immediately on his knees (he subjected himself to hearing his faults in that position), he said a prefatory prayer and waited for his faults to be disclosed in rather a joyful, though an extremely humble manner. But when I sang him that same old song, namely, that there was nothing to hand that I could find fault with in him, he seemed completely disconcerted, receiving these words with ears that were scarcely joyful. He was unwilling to rise before I had repeated a number of times that I did not have anything I could say.

In what concerned the study of mathematics, to which he said he was powerfully drawn, he particularly often requested me to observe him with concentrated attention. Since he had marked out for his attendance the hour normally given for these studies in the School of Physics,[576] he bound himself entirely to this time. After the signal was given for the end of the lesson in mathematical propositions which he had been following intently, if even the slightest space of time elapsed before he closed his book, he prescribed this to be a fault that should afterwards be disclosed. But he did not give any ground for criticism in this matter either. Indeed, if I were absent and he light-mindedly offended in anything, he himself was his accuser.

When he admonished me for some fault, he did so very gently but efficaciously, with extremely well-founded reasons and examples for the most part taken from Cassian,[577] confirming the things he had said. And thus whatever was left of the half-hour, he put to pious use.

IX. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 68r–69v

Thomas Clifton: relation re FS in English College, Rome (1639-41) [undated, post 6 December 1642]

(68r) Thomae Cliftoni Copia relationis

Coll. Angl.[578]

Obtenta prius a superioribus licentia per mediam horam singulis diebus legebamus una partem aliquam Graeci Testamenti: nunquam ille unum verbum non accurate intellectum praeterire voluit, ego

[576] At the Jesuit-run Roman College (*Collegio Romano*).
[577] Cassianus (*c.*360–*c.*435), monk and writer on monastic life.
[578] Note on author, top right of page, in different hand.

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laboriosam istam diligentiam saepius miratus petii aliquando ut mihi indicaret quamobrem ea in re tantopere laboraret: respondit sperare se id sibi aliquando in Anglia utile fore in convertendis haereticis qui solidis rationibus destituti ad Graecum textum recurrunt, et verborum latebris, in quibus nescio quam peritiam praetendunt, contra Catholicos se muniunt.

Nunquam ab eo contra ullum genius hominum durius aliquod dictum prolatum, nisi semel, audivi: Atque id ita accidit: Interrogatus a me quid in causa esset quod hic in Italia plurimi Energumeni reperiventur in Anglia vel paucissimi[579] inter[580] haereticos:[581] Insolita quadam animi vehementia aiebat se putare haereticos omnes obstinatos revera esse a diabolo obsessos.

De aliis aut tacebat aut honorifice loquebatur, erat apud nos quidam minime malus ingenio tamen, atque hoc omnes sciebant, parum prompto inter recreanda nescio quis aliquid ab eo minus frapienter dictum per jocum retulit F.P [Franciscus Perceus] subrisit, atque aliud quid simile de eodem narravit. Ego (ut inter nos conveniebat) stato tempore illum de isto facto admonebam. Mirum est quantum ille sibi irascebatur, quantam suam mihi superbiam prae dicabat, quod christianum (ut eius verbo utar) fratrem suum contempsera[ ] atque aliis idem fagentibus applauserat. Mihi vero, quod mouveram, tantas gratias egit, ut quantum ex vultu, verbis, atque aliis indiciis potui collige[re] nihil unquam in vita illi aeque gratum, ac ista admonitio fuerit, (in qu- tamen ad eius animum [ten]tandum aliqua acerbitate usus sum) foverim.

Eundem ille vultum omni tempore servabat: dicebat mihi aliquando nunquam se, ex quo ad Collegium venerat, animo minus sedato usum fuisse ac septimana illa praeterita: quo audito plurimu[m] mecum miratus sum, nam tota illa hebdomada accuratius solito eum observaveram neque aut vultu, dictis, factisve ullum vel leviseimum perturbati animi indicium deprehenderam.

(68v) Blank

(69r) In recreationibus colloquia semper instituebat aut de lectione ad mensam aut de rebus in Anglia contra haereticos, ita ut multae istiusmodi historiae ab illo inter recreandum relatae mihi in memoria haerant minime pervulgatae, sed ad fidem Catholicam haereticis persuadendam utilissima.

Nunquam ille a collatione non abstinuit, quae tamen omni mane scholaribus in Collegio proponitur: quae abstinentia aestivo

[579] '3' inserted above word.
[580] '1' inserted above word.
[581] '2' inserted above word; possibly indicating a change in word sequence.

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nonnunquam tempore summam illi molestiam (atque id certo scio) creavit.

Quos sibi in Collegio minus benevolos habuit eos data occasione beneficiis affecit, quod ego non semel observavi, et si quis eorum in re aliqua excelluit tacitis semper defectibus illud aliis cupide narravit.

Aestate cum summo mane e Collegio egrederemur meditationem ipse per viam confecit, et si inter familiares esset ad id eos hortabatur, sive secus ipse solus meditabatur.

Per annum integrum ego illius mores de industria notavi, sermones, gestus [etc] et nunquam vel minimum invidiae, impatientiae, levitatis aut altrem alicuius imperfectionis signum percipere potui, nisi illud late reputandum sit, quod supra commemoravi.

(69v) +

P. Thomae Cliftoni De P. Perseo[582]

Translation

(68r) Copy of the relation by Thomas Clifton[583]

English College

Having first obtained the superiors' permission, for half an hour on particular days we read together some part of the Greek Testament.[584] He never wished to pass over even one word not accurately understood. Many times I was amazed by this laborious diligence, and once I asked him to let me know why he was so painstakingly thorough in this work. He replied that he hoped it would be useful to him at some time in England in converting heretics who, destitute of solid arguments, had recourse to the Greek text and, cloaked with words in which they pretend to have I don't know what kind of expertise, set up defences against the Catholics.

I never heard him utter a particularly harsh word against any kind of people, except once. And this is how it happened. When I asked him why it was that here in Italy there were very many possessed persons, while among the heretics in England there were very few, with a certain vehemence of mind, unusual for him, he said that he thought all obstinate heretics were in reality possessed by the devil.

[582] Same hand as note on top of fo. 68r.

[583] Thomas Clifton (*vere* Normanton) (*c.*1615–1665), of Suffolk, entered English College, Rome, in early November 1639. He subsequently joined Benedictines, and served as theology professor at Douai, where he died. Kelly (ed.), *Liber Ruber*, 22.

[584] Denotes the New Testament in Greek.

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He either kept silent about other people or spoke of them with respect. Among us there was somebody whose natural talents were by no means bad, but who nonetheless (and everyone knew this) had very little ready wit. During recreation someone, I don't know who, jokingly repeated some not very sensible thing this man had said. F. P. [Francis Percy] smiled and he himself told some other similar story about the same man. I myself (as was appropriate between us two) at the set time admonished him about this. It was astonishing how angry he became with himself, and how much he accused himself before me of pride, that a Christian (to use his own words) had despised his brother and had applauded others doing the same. He thanked me, however, because I had admonished him, with such warmth that from his face, his words and other indications, I could infer that I had never exerted any helpful influence on his life as gratifying as that admonition had been (even though, in order to test his soul, I had expressed myself with a certain acerbity).

He preserved the same expression of countenance at all times: he used to say to me now and then that, ever since he had come to the College, he had never been so disturbed in spirit as during the previous week. When I heard that I was greatly astonished, as throughout all that week I had observed him with uncommon care and I had detected no sign, even the slightest, of mental perturbation whether in his countenance, speech or actions.

(68v) Blank

(69r) During recreation times he always initiated conversations either about the reading at the meal or about activities in England against the heretics. Hence many stories of this kind, told by him during recreation, have become fixed in my memory; publicly they are very little known, but they are exceedingly useful for persuading heretics to come to the Catholic faith.

He never failed to abstain from the collation [or light meal] which is laid out every morning for the scholars in the College: sometimes during the summer weather this abstinence caused him (to my certain knowledge) extreme distress.

Whenever the opportunity arose, he conferred kindnesses on those in the College whom he regarded as less friendly to him. I witnessed that myself more than once. If any of those people excelled in something, eagerly he told this to others, keeping quiet about their faults.

In summer, when early in the morning we set forth from the College, he undertook a meditation along the way, and if he was with people well-known to him he urged them to engage in it, otherwise he meditated alone.

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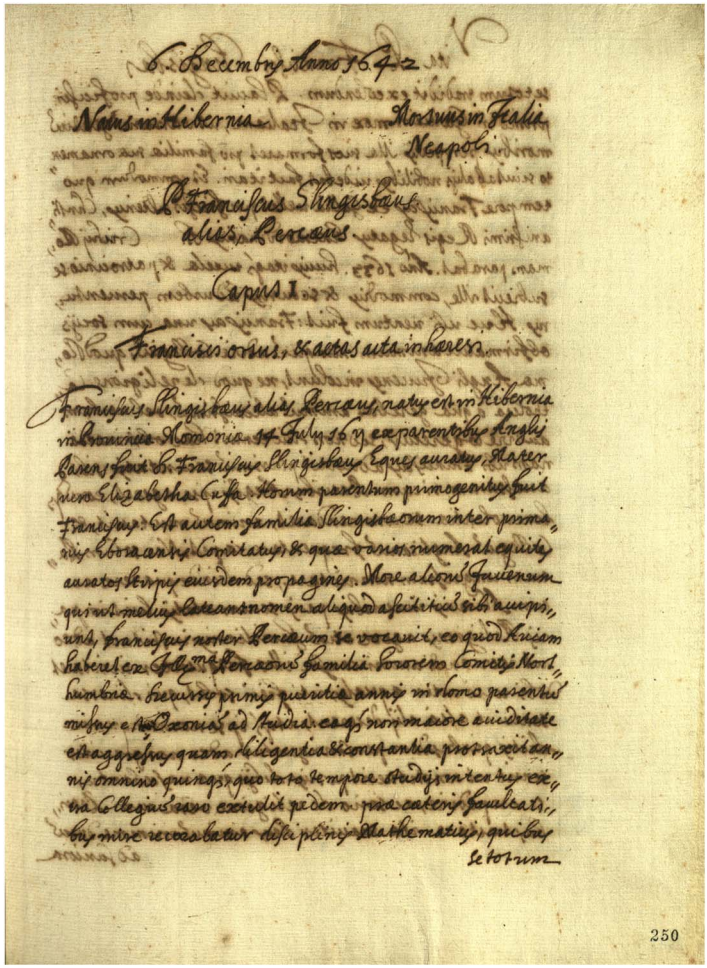


Figure 2. Beginning of unfinished *vita* of Francis Slingsby, ARSI, *Vitae* 149, fo. 250r.

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For an entire year I took note of his habits of industry, ways of speaking, gestures, etc., and I was never able in the slightest degree to perceive envy, impatience, levity, or any other sign of imperfection, unless what I have recalled above should broadly be considered so.

X. ARSI, *Vitae* 149, fos 250r–258v

Life of Father Francis Slingsby alias Percy [unfinished; covering years 1611–1634]

(250r) 6 Decembris Anno 1642

Natus in Hibernia Mortuus in Italia Neapoli

P. Franciscus Slingisbaeus alias Percaeus

Caput I
Francisci ortus, et aetas acta in haeresi

Franciscus Slingisbaeus alias Percaeus, natus est in Hibernia in Provincia Momoniae 14 Julii 1611 ex parentibus Anglis Parens fuit Sr Franciscus Slingisbaeus Eques auratus, Mater vero Elizabetha Cuffa. Horum parentum primogenitus fuit Franciscus. Est autem familia Slingisbaeorum inter primariis Eboracensis Comitatus, et quae varios numerat equites auratos stirpis eiusdem propagines. More aliorum Juvenum qui ut melius lateant nomen aliquod ascititium sibi acccipiunt, franciscus noster Percaeum se vocavit, eo quod Aviam haberet ex Illma Percaeorum familia Sororem Comitis Northumbriae. Decursis primis pueritiae annis in domo parentum missus est Oxoniam ad studia eaque non maiore aviditate est aggressus quam diligentia et constantia protraxit annis omnino quinque, quo toto tempore studiis intentus extra Collegium raro extulit pedem. prae caeteris facultatibus mire recreabatur disciplinis Mathematicis, quibus se totum (250v) tradidit excolendum. Placuit deinde proficisci primo in Galliam mox in Italiam, ut variarum gentium moribus perspectis illae suos formaret pro familiae suae ornamento sicut ab aliis nobilibus videbat factitari.

Et commodum quo tempore Franciscus ex Gallia vellet proficisci ulterius, Christianissimi Regis legatus extraordinarius D. [ ] Crichii[585] Romam parabat Anno 1633 huius itaque tutela et patrocinio se subiecit ille, commodius et securius ad urbem perventurus. Haec ubi ventum fuit. Franciscus una cum sociis obfirmavit animum nunquam adire Collegium, quod Romae Angli Iuvenes

[585] Charles I de Blanchefort, marquis de Créquy (1578–1638), appointed French ambassador to Rome in 1633. Roman D'Amat (ed.), *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, IX (Paris, 1961), col. 1207–1208.

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incolunt, ne quod de religione Catholica a qua gerebat animum alienissimum, vel verbum audire cogeretur, sed non diu tenuit hac obstinatio nam ubi Franciscus advertit plurimum securitatis sibi accessurum si cum Patribus Anglis ipse ageret, eorumque benevolentiae se commendaret, animum mutavit, et Collegium Anglicanum frequentare caepit. Nec solum Patrum congressum non vitare, sed deinde quaerere ac cum Alumnis iuvenibus paris secum aetatis licet imparis Religionis agere etiam familiarius instituit adeo ut recreandi animi causa illos frequenter visitaret Ubi vero inter aequales uti fieri solet, qui diversa sentiunt alia alii dicerent, atque ipse nonnumquam dictis quibusdam perstringeretur adeo non graviter sensit ut constituerit potius dubiis quae nascebantur se expedire, ac serio de religione vera cum Patribus tractare.

ita suaviter Deus animum minime durum ad saniora (251r) consilia flectebat, dicebat enim Franciscus se si de veritate catholicae Religionis convinceretur, nec hora unica absque ea victurum, sed continuo se ad Ecclesiam veram convoluturum etiam cum vitae ipsius corporalis iactura. Post vanos de religione congressus et disputationes privatim habitas tandem unius S. Augustini auctoritatem staturum se edixit. Ne tamen in re tanti momenti deciperetur, quoniam adulteratos esse a Catholicis Sanctorum PP codices iam olim in Anglia inaudierat, excerpta ex Sancto doctore loca aliquot conferre instituit operose cum vetustissimis manuscriptis vaticanis et ne fusus etiam in iis sibi fieret, ipsos Heidelbergenses codices ex Palatina Bibliotheca Romam sub Gregorio XV translatos accurate inspexit. Tandem ubi veritati Catholicae suffragari mirifice omnes vidit, manus dedit, et de ratione aggregandi se in gremium Ecclesiae caepit agere.

Id cum Sodalibus Acatholicis significasset deterrere illi primum modis omnibus et avocare conabantur, sed frustra, tandem promiserunt se quoque futuros catholicos, si prius relictis Romae sarcinis suis et pecunia, cum illis Franciscus pergeret Geneuam exploratum, quod Ministri Catholicorum argumentis essent responsuri, quibus si non satisfacerent abunde, se quoque omnes una cum illo Catholicam Religionem amplexuros. Consenserat in idem Franciscus spe plenus socios Christo lucrandi, unde protinus condictum itineris tempus fuit, sed postquam a sociis degressus in suum se conclave recepit tantus eum repente tremor ac horror (251v) invasit ut miraretur ipse, et cum illius nullam in se causam deprehenderet agnovit digitum Dei admonentis ne tam periculos[o] itineri se committeret, nec salutem suam alienae quaerendae studio in tantum discrimen coniiceret. Quare flexis humi genibus orationique se tradens et promissi sociis facti paenitens decrevit omni mora praevia certam securamque reddere salutem suam in Ecclesiae catholicae portu, postea si sociis staret eadem mens eorum quoque salutem

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provisibus procurare. Hoc ipsum sequenti die retulit sociis magna animi constantia, nec minore est executus, hinc omne consilium de suscipienda profectione Geneuensi evanuit.

Pergebat interim Franciscus momenta omnia quibus ad catholicam religionem monebatur: ponderare diligenter, et animam quam sortitus fuerat bonam diviniae gratiae aptare. Erat ipse non solum pacatus et quietus adeo, ut ne ludenti quidem elaberetur verbum, quod ullune posset offendere, sed adeo compositus in verbis omnibus et actionibus, ut omnium quibuscum agebat, animos in sui amorem pertraheret. Modestiae tamen eximiae comes erat verecundiae, et utriusque[586] castitas omnino admiranda. Cum versaretur Romae nec dum Catholicus cum sociis suis haereticis, quadam vice ab illis induci se permisit, ut cum illis officium salutationis Matronae cuidam, praestaret. Socii cum illo pergunt ad Meretricem, ab eaque in conclave admittuntur, illi captata subducendi se occasione omnes egrediuntur, solo cum lupa relicto Francisco nihil simile cogitante, e[t] quidem observatis post se (252r) foribus cubiculi, ne illi egressus pateret. Hic procax faemina intentatam nihil relinguere quo Iuvenem ad patrandum facinus posset pellicere: ridentibus interea prae foribus sociis, et de expugnata Francisci virginitate, (passim enim vocitabant eum Virginem.) triumphantibus. Ipse tamen singulari Dei gratia praeditus, tanta fortitudine et constantia impudicam faminam elusit, ut integerrimam castitatem victis voluptatibus ex acie gloriosus retulerit, praeclarum sane facinus et in Catholico optime educato, atque adeo in religioso viro suspiciendum, suppar illi quod in Bernardo et Thoma Aquinate merito omnes mirantur et depraedicant.

Postquam omnibus optime ponderatis omnino statuit religionem Catholicam amplecti erroresque suos penitus execrari, restabat ut S. Officii Inquisitionis tribunal absolvendus ab Haeresi adiret, et cum ipsum Inquisitionis nomen invidia gravi atque etiam odio apud omnes Haereticos laboret, quo facilior illi redderetur Conversio, permissum illi fuit ut in privatis aedibus Illmi D. Boccabollae tunc Assessoris S. Officii abiurationem haeresis deponeret. Eo igitur Franciscus dum cum duobus Patribus de Societate se conferret novis Diaboli tentamentis impeti, et insolitis mentis tenebris obscurari, angoribusque animi tantum non prosterni.

Occurrebat identidem: quid si in hac religionis Mutatione in qua tantum positum est ad huc decipere? quid si fallere? (252v) quid dicens parentes et Amici? aliaque quae Diabolus suggerebat, Sed Franciscus exclusis omnibus et viriliter superatis perexit porro, et

[586] 'utriusque castitas': chastity of both [modesty and bashfulness].

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ex more antiquos errores eiuravit; continuoque sentit redire mentis lumen, et animi tranquilitatem cum magno laetitiae spiritualis augmento. Conversus iam pietatis exercitiis totum se tradidit, ut vel socii illius licet hetorodoxi dicerent placere sibi fervorem Francisci et optare ut omnes quam profitentur fidem simili ornarent pietatem. Mores quos ante conversionem habuit ex honestatis et modestiae legibus optime compositos, in dies magis ac magis excolere studebat, et exornare omnibus in locis semper sibi similis, in modestia exteriore excellebat, sed praecipue in templo, et eo tempore quo sacerdoti ad aram facienti aderat, iunctis enim ante pectus manibus tunc continenter orabat, et praesertim Christum quanta poterat maxima veneratione adorabat.

Cum ad Emnmm Cardinalem Barbarinum Summi Pontificis Nepotem adiisset, cumque officii causa humiliter salutasset tantam sui aestimationem in Cardinali excitavit primo suo Congressu, ut ille postea diceret cuidam Praelato, se in Francisco deprehendisse dictum vere esse a S. Gregorio, Anglos esse quasi Angelos hinc reliquo postea tempore mansit erga illum propensus, et non obscuris beneficiis amorem suum illustravit. Ubi de S.P. Ignatii exercitiis Spiritualibus, quibus se aliqui quotannis solent excolere, intellexit Franciscus nihil magis in votis (253r) habuit quam in ea incumbere atque con[vert]ere directione non solum prima vitae Catholicae principia sed integrum cursum instituere, quare integris octo diebus illis diligentissime vacavit non minore interioris hominis gustu, quam fructu et utilitate, persuasis ínterim sociis Franciscum alio concessisse corpori recreando quo tempore ille in Collegio Anglicano deliciis Spiritualibus perfundebatur. Inter alias meditationes, quae animum illius permoverunt, illa praecipue perculit, qua de fine ad quem homo est creatus pertractatur. hac enim peracta, rebus omnibus mature ponderatis, statuit apud animum suum omnino remittere nuntium mundo, quod in illo infinita videret, quae abhoc fine animum avocarent, et quod in religiosa vita plurima essent adiumenta ad eum finem conseguendum, Religiosorum virorum coetui se adiungere Ne vero decretum hoc animi e memoria excideret in libellum aliquem illud retulit ex quo describo una cum rationibus quibus permoveri se senserat ad traducendam inter Religiosos viros reliquam vitam. Triplici modo, inquit vivitquis in hoc mundo, vel ut Saecularis vel ut Ecclesiasticus, vel ut Religiosus, illum autem statum vita oportet eligere, qui omnibus consideratis aptissimus iudicatus fuerit ad finem ultimum assequendum, talem autem existimo Religionem propter Sequentes rationes.

1ª quia Religio plura habet adiumenta et parviora impedimenta, (253v) quam caeteri duo status vitae. Patet primum membrum, cum

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in illis nihil sit ad perfectam vitam instituendam utile, quod in religione multo abundantius non reperiatur: et insuper multa alia quae religioni sunt peculiaria aut saltem frequentiora: ut bonum exemplum regula vivendi, commoditas vacandi Deo, Specialis gratia in tentationibus, salubrius consilium, illecebrarum fuga liberatio a sollicitudinibus mundanis, passionum extirpatio cum infinitis aliis. Veritas ultimi membri ex eo constat, quod religio nullum habeat impedimentum sibi proprium et quod non sit omnibus commune, Sed contra reperiuntur multa in statu seculari aut Ecclesiastico, a quibus liberantur religiosi, ut implicatio in rebus mundi, divitiarum copia, honoris ambitio, sollicitudo ex familia, mala exempla et lex mundi divinae legi prorsus contraria

2ª Constat in Christo omnem fuisse perfectionem quam ut nos doceret praecepta nobis tradidit; nec his contentus exemplo etiam suo omnia confirmavit, nusquam vero invenio praecepta eius plenius observari, nec exempla eius melius exprimi imitatione quam in religione, ubi enim verior paupertas, ubi submissior humilitas, ubi maior abnegatio sui, ubi promptior susceptio crucis ubi simplicior conversatio sine dolo, ubi perfectior unio et fortius vinculum charitatis, ubi innocentius vivitur, aut ferventius Deus colitur? cum igitur religio ad Christi perfectionem proxime accedat, omni iure caeteris (254r) perfectior existimanda est, et propter excellentiss[ ] perfectionis eligenda.

3ª Omnis vere sapiens illud vitae genus debet eligere quod monens elegisse desideraret. Omnes autem procul dubio religionem se amplexos esse, aut saltem instar religiosorum vixisse hora mortis optarent. nihil igitur consultius fieri potest, quam illud nunc amplecti, quod in hora mortis tantum praebehit solatium.

4ª Diabolus tunc gravissimis utitur tentationibus ad impediendam aliquam resolutionem, quando illud praeiudet futuram causam maximi alicuius boni. Ideoque hoc meum propositum tanto magis salutare, [et] Deo gratum existimo, quanto fortius ab inimico oppugnatum comprobaverim: maximas enim habui gravitates, conturbationem mentis, et carnis reluctationem ad hanc resolutionem amplectendam. Sed haec omnia clare vidi militare contra finem a Deo mihi constitutum, et exinde haec omnia a Diabolo emanasse, con[ji]cio, quod post superatas difficultates ineffabilem animi quietem et consolationem senserim

Propter has quatuor rationes statuo et firmiter propono adiuvante Divina gratia, me, et omnia mea Dei Optimi maximi servitio dicare et pactum aeternum cum illo inire, ut ille sit mihi Deus, et ego illi Servus, semperque paratus ero pro libitu superioris dulci Christi iugo

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collum porrigere. Ita Franciscus cuius omnia propemodum verba discripsi, ait ex iis colligi posset quanta luce divinitus accepta mens (254v) illius fuerit illustrata et quibus amoris divini facibus voluntas eius accensa. Quare vero prae caeteris Religionibus Societatem Jesu elegens subinde referam ubi annutum de hoc votum conceptum, sicut in illius manu scriptis ad verbum inveni, quod votum ille sua manu descriptum Confessario suo consignavit. Atque ex illo tempore veluti non sui amplius sed iuris alieni factus, nil agere ille nisi ex praescripto Confessarii aut Superioris, atque in illis Deum ipsum venerari, diligere et perfectissimo studio obtemperare. Regulas Societatis non modo diligenter legere, et suspicere, sed etiam perfecte quantum temporis locique ratio patiebatur observare, praesertim eas, quibus quotidiana horae unius meditatio, bina Examina, aliaeque pietatis exercitationes ab omnibus instituendae mandantur.

Sub Quadragesimae tempus anni 1634 placuit Deo Francisci Virtutem et patientiam acutissimis arthindid[i]s doloribus probare, quo aria ex aedibus quas prope Collegium Anglicanum conduxerat in ipsum delatus Collegium, qua melior ipsius cura haberi posset plane insignia dedit patientis et ad omnem Dei voluntatem compositae voluntatis indicia, adeo vel omnibus esset aedificationi, qui tam adultam virtutem merito mirabantur in Iuvene adeo tenero et admodum nuper ex mundi Castris Vitaeque ex haeresi ductae ad signa patientis Christi translato. Ubi ex infirmitate caepit convalescere ad Parentem quem religuerat in Hibernia litteras scripsit, quibus suam ad fidem (255r) Catholicam conversionem significavit ex rationibus adiectis quibus Deo bene iuvante fuerat inductus ad eiurandos errores, in quibus tanto tempore caeci instar vixisse pudebat et vero en animus paenitebat. Parens acceptis filii litteris, et eius percepta, quam nunciabant, conversione ingenti furore iuxta ac dolore correptus, continuo respondet iubetque quam primum in Hiberniam redire, Sperabat siquidem a Papistis, sic vocant Catholicos, avulsum inter suos non gravate veterem religionem recepturum. Ubi ille parentis voluntatem intellexit, re prius commendata Deo in orationibus, subinde superioribus exposita, ex illorum consilio qui virtutem illius habebant perspectam, Roma discessit plenissimus Spe parentem, totamque familiam cum aliis multis convertendi, et redeundi Romam ad absolvenda studia, quam primum negotia cum suis in patria composuisset. Quatuor annis et medio Roma abfuit, quo toto tempore Meditationis horam aut duplex examen conscientiae nullo unquam die omisit, sive in Hibernia, ubi diutius contigit commorari, sive in Anglia, aut Gallia per quae Regna transivit. Hoc ipse post modum

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retulit Superiori cum illi de rebus omnibus conscientiae rationem exacte redderet.

Caput II Redit in Hiberniam Franciscus et incarceratur

Vix pedem intulerat Franciscus in Regnum Hiberniae cum boni (255v) omnes Catholici non solum gratulari sibi illius conversione, sed eius congressu delectari in eoque eximiam mirari modestiam integerimis moribus capi. tum vero propter excellentes has dotes suspicere iuxta et intime amare. Prima illius cura hic fuit convenire P. Robertum Nugentium à Societate nostra, totiusque Missionis Superiorem, morabatur ille cum Comitissa Hildariensi [*recte* Kildare] in illius arce, data primum illi suae conscientiae ratione, totiusque confecti itineris, ei se totum tradidit regendum nihil omnino facturus nisi illius ex ductu et consilio, vel mandato, quem Christi loco suscipiebat amandum, colendum, et sequendum. Illud vero tanta cum perfectione et constantia perfecit, ut ab illius nutu nullus illum revocaret aut retardaret consuetudo, nullus hominum sensus aut respectus, uti dicimus humanus. Iustum scilicet deducebat Dominus per vias rectas, et ostendebat[587] rationes aeternas et caelestes omnibus humanis sensis superiores. P. Robertus mirum in modum tam singulari virtute recreatus, morumque integritate et constantia in fide, plenus summa fiducia, et ipse copiosi fructus à se dimisit Franciscum ad convertendos parentes et amicos, nec vanam fuisse spem eventus felicissimus brevi post tempore comprobavit. Franciscus cum suis donis magna cum modestia ac prudentia agens tantum brevi effecit cum rationibus solidis, tum insigni christianorum morum innocentia, ut mater illius, duae Sorores ac Frater parati essent haeresi eiurata catholicam fidem complecti, in eaque vivere ac mori etiam invito parente homine obstinato, placuit P. Roberto differre faeminas melius probandas et edocendas.

(256r) Sed Henricum fratrem continuo admittere ad haeresim eiurandam, quod ille non minore suo quam francisci gaudio fecit, atque ista fuit prima praeda quam franciscus erebi ereptam transtulit in libertatem filiorum Dei. Permotus fuerat Henricus solida francisci de rebus fidei doctrina, et moribus eidem conformibus studebat circa idem tempus Henricus Oxoniae paullae ante in eadem universitate nominatus liberalium artium et Philosophiae Magister, qui ubi perceperat fratrem suum Romae ad Catholicorum partes avertisse, nunc vero a parente in Patriam revocatum propediem expectari,

[587] Based on the biblical book of Wisdom 10, 10: Justum deduxit per vias rectas et ostendit illi regnum dei ([Wisdom] lead the just one in straight paths and showed him the kingdom of God).

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ceteris omnibus relictis solas de fide quaestiones perlegebat, professus se vel fratrem ad suas partes quas deserverat reducturum, vel se concessurum in partes catholicas illius si verioribus ac solidioribus rationibus ab illo convinceretur ubi vero Franciscus in patriam apulit et quotidianis a parente disputationibus exercebatur, aderat semper Henricus et tacitus non solum quae dicerentur utrinque ponderabat, Sed etiam Francisci in disputando cum parente modestiam, in urgendo efficaciam, in respondendo claritatem, patientiam insuper magnam ubi a parente indignabundo perstringeretur, omnia denique observabat accurate, praeterea privatim subinde cum Francisco agebat Henricus et illius virtute, quae occultari adeo non poterat quo[d] radiis suos frequenter diffunderet, mirum in modum rapi se sentiebat et affici, ut nollet diutius alia fide vivere quam illa, quam videbat in fratre adeo constanter et innocentibus moribus exornatam.

Non multo post ubi parens se frustra laborasse vidit reducendo ad partes suas Francisco, quin imo et uxorem suam, alterumque filium (256v) cum filiabus ab illo ad Catholicorum partes ut accederent persuasos furere primum caepit, subinde gravia quaedam minari nisi Franciscus respiceret, quem ad modum ille dicebat, quare voluit ut ex condicto de fide disputationem institueret. Erat apud illos Jacobus Usherus Hiberniae Pseudo Primas magni apud omnes vicinos nominis ob doctrinam, cum hoc certamen ineundum erat, Francisco ita volente ita iubente parente in has angustias coniectus Adolescens, coram omnibus se coniecit in genua fervent[er]que Deum est obtestatus ut sibi et Religionis causae non deesset, et qui Infantium linguas soleret facere disertas, ea nunc suggerere non gravaretur quae oportuna sciret in his angustiis, in quas non iniecisset se ultro suis viribus fisus, sed invitius esset coniectus plenus fiducia divini auxilii, adfuit Deus et effecit ut Franciscus non modeste magis quam clare solideque fidem Catholicam propugnaret et quae obiiciebantur refutaret cum insigni plausu Catholicorum qui aderant, qui fatebantur ea quae fuerant prolata a Francisco aliquid sapere quod supra communem usum esset et humanam consuetudinem. dabatur illi quippe in illa hora, quomodo et quid loqueretur.

Hac filii victoria, qua ad capessendam fidem uti debuisset parens, magis exacerbatur, vana statuit tentare ad expugnandum Franciscum, sed omnia irrito conatu, primum quidem ad se vocatum Franciscum blandis verbis studet demulcere, ostendens se magno doloris sensu affectum, quod ille suam et familiae suae fortunam adeo prodegisset, futurum enim fuisse si pristinam servasset fidem, e[t] etiamnum fore, si eam denuo reciperet, ut inter Regios Consiliarios sibi suisque omnibus magno esset adiumento iuxta et ornamento (cui Franciscus

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magna cum constantia non tamen (257r) sine debita modestia et reverentia respondit. Ego vero optime Parens, adeo insanus non sum, ut caelestia adquae catholici aspirant et soli perveniunt, iis postponam, quae terrena sunt et caduca, malo pro exiguis quae sperare me iubet plane incerta ea complecti quae in caelis sunt certa, ubi regnare cogito et spero, nec multo inferiora dixit Henricus Frater, nam cum illi parens Henrice frater tuus dolore intimo mea paene viscera ruperat, tu vero dolore penitus me conficis, respondit ille modeste, dolorem tibi creare, O Patre minime deberet quod Angelis in caelis gaudium parit, gaudent enim illi, Christo teste super uno peccatore poenitentiam agente. Et vero Henricus tanta animi constantia errores veteres erat detestatus, Catholicamque Religionem complexus ut dicere non dubitaret se in fide Catholica mansurum constantem etiam si alius nullus in mundo Catholicus reliquus esset.

Simili constantia praedicta fuit Mater et Sororem altera nam altera quam a franciscio didicerat fidem deservit ob metum Mariti haeretici. Tertia autem cum haeret dubia de fide capessenda morte sublata est. Hanc conversionem plenam plane admirabilem fecerunt, Parentis improbitas et mala quae non levia nec inaniter poterant timeri, siquidem Mater Francesci a Marito male tractabatur longo iam tempore et inveterata dissidia non solum animos sed habitationem diviserant, insuper media, quibus a Marito sustentabatur ad modum tenuia erant, haec omnia etiam fortissimam faeminam poterant terrere, et in suscepto conversionis cursu retardare. Sed illa superior omnibus calamitatibus quas praecedebat e[t] postea re ipsa perpessa est, nec minimum in suscepto consilio trepidavit sed contra audentior perrexit.

Poterat soror (257v) praeter parentis indignationem etiam mariti offensionem verita ad tempus saltem differre conversionem idem potuisset facere frater, qui totus a parente pendebat, nihilominus tamen Deo duce et francisco fortes facti omnia haec saluti animae, et Dei vocantis voluntati intrepide posthabuerunt. Nec minus fuerunt postea constantes intenenda fide suscepta, quam fuerant animosi in ea capessenda; quod procul dubio Francisci precibus est ad scribendum.

Dum enim ille carcere conclusus detineretur, parens Henricum in Anglia ablegavit, ratus fore ut ille a francisco avultus, et inter [ ]os hareticos anglos constitutos facile rediret ad vitam quam deseruerat nuper Religionis umbram. Matrem vero utriusque filii et filiam utriusque fratris convitiis et adhortationibus destitutas faeminiae volubilitate novam religionem non difficulter deserturas.

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Neutrum tamen illi e voto successit, Deo ostendente nullum esse consilium contra dominum.[588] Omnes quippe superatis difficultatibus non levibus suam constantiam insigniter probaverunt. nam sicut ille conatu omni eos amoverat, qui spiritualibus colloquiis et consiliis afflictos faeminarum animos poterat stabilire, ita e contrario Deus e medio sustulit maximum quod habebant impedimentum, paulo enim post excessit e viciis filiae maritus homo haeresis amantissimus, et fidei catholicae osor acerbissimus duxit quidem illa ut uxor mariti mortem temporalem sed magis haeretici hominis exitium aeternum, gavisa tamen fuit quod matrimonii vinculis liberata, caelestis sponsi nuptias, quae vera libertate (258r) animas beant, sperare liceret et curas omnes temporales et molestias, cum aeternis iisque laetissimis commutare, id quod ipsa ex animo praesidit et ut alios suae felicitatis faceret participes, bonum enim est communi activum sui, et cum alios cum praesertim Ancillas, quae ipsa a francisco didixerat sedulo edocuit, et praeter fidem suo exemplo omnem virtutis honestatem impressit.

Nec minor fuit constantia Henrici, ille enim non solum haereticorum olim suorum sodalium precibus, sollicitationibus imo irrisionibus non fuit commotus, sed crevit, inter adversa fides ipsius et adeo singularis ut illa non videretur esse Iuvenis nuper ad fidem conversi sed viri maturi a puero omni virtutum genere inter Catholicos optime exculti. Testimonium sane praeclarum ex Anglia scripserunt ii, quibuscum aliquot menses vixerat inter filias et amicos Illsmi ViceComitis Falkland olim Proregis Hiberniae.

Dum Franciscus cum sororis suae marito ageret, eiusque conversionem urgeret ferventius respondet ille ioculariter et ardente ore, Caput, inquit, Religionis vestrae cornua habet, intelligebat ille Papam, quem Antichristum et bestiam Apocalypticam nominant haeretici, his contumeliis excitatus Francisci Zelus par pari redditurus et vestra ait Religio prodiit ex femoralibus[589] Henrici octavi, quod cum alter offuso cum risu excepisset, repetiissetque saepius et Francisci Matri habinde retulis[s]et, quamquam ab illa esset vissus isthaec verba supprimere, percrebuit tamen per familiam hoc dictum et ad aures Ministrorum delatum ansam praebruit accusandi Franciscum, quod indecore de protestantium Religione esset locutus

[588] Based on the biblical book of Proverbs, 21:30: Non est sapientia, non est prudentia, non est consilium contra Dominum. (There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, there is no plan [that will succeed] against the Lord.)

[589] 'femorale': a covering for the thigh. Charlton Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (New York and Oxford, 1879).

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(258v) alia vice Parens ut Franciscum perverteret illum secum duxit ad PseudoEpiscopum Armacanum. Ille ubi esset conatus probare Catholicos vertari in errore et tempus venisse in Apocalypsi praedictum, quo Ecclesia vera deficeret Franciscus solita cum modestia respondit aliter a S. Patribus loca ille explicari, accedere quod plurimis aliis locis veritas Catholicorum protestantium ver[o] falsitas comprobetur, atque hac argumentatione usus est, religio illa non potest esse vera, quae docet haeresim, sed vestra docet haeresim, cum doceat non licere orare pro defunctis, qua est antiqua haeresis teste Augustino, Epiphaneo, aliisque, docet igitur unam haeresim manifestam. Hic ArchiEpiscopus [h]arere primum ad responsionem minime expectatam, subinde explicare haereseos nomine intelligi non raro quamcumque opinionum differentiam, alia[e]que similia. Demum cum non pauca ultro citroque dictae essent Franciscus ut se molestia disputationis liberaret, demisse rogat Archiepiscopum, dignaretur ille pro sua religione facere, quod ipse paratus esset praestare pro fide Catholica: ubique demum istud esset Archiepiscopus quaesivisset, illico Franciscus flexis genibus et occulis in caelum sublatis orat Deum ut si fides Catholica, quam profitebatur, vera non esset terra subito se vivum absorberet. Ad hac Pseudopresul tremere toto corpore, et obscuris vocibus claram magnamque animi perturbationem ostendere. Parens graviter offensus hoc filii facto, et Praesulis commotione, franciscum protinus iubet facesseret, paruit ille, et rem totam altissimo silentio pressit, percrebuit tamen inter Catholicos rei[590]

Translation

(250r) 6 December 1642

Born in Ireland Died in Italy Naples

P. Francis Slingsby alias Percy

Chapter 1

Francis's upbringing, and the period of his life spent in heresy

Francis Slingsby, alias Percy, was born in Ireland in the province of Munster on 14 July 1611, of English parents. His father was Sir Francis Slingsby, Knight Bachelor; his mother was Elizabeth Cuffe. Francis was their firstborn son. The Slingsby family is, moreover, one of the most prominent families of the county of York, with several Knights Bachelor among the progeny of that stock. Like other young

[590] Text ends abruptly here.

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men who, in order to remain more concealed, adopt some derived (or assumed) name, our Francis called himself Percy, for he had a grandmother of the most distinguished family of the Percys, who was a sister of the Earl of Northumberland.[591] After spending his first boyhood years in his parents' house, he was sent to Oxford for studies, which he undertook with eagerness and diligence and constant application. He spent five years there in all, and in this entire time, intent on his studies, he rarely set foot outside the College.[592] Above other skills, he was wonderfully recreated by the disciplines of mathematics, and he applied himself fully (250v) to master these. Thereafter he chose to travel first of all to France and directly afterwards to Italy so as, having observed the customs of various peoples, to form his own conduct for the distinction of his family, as he saw other noble persons typically doing.

And at the very moment (in the year 1633) when Francis wished to travel onwards from France, the extraordinary legate of the Most Christian King, Monsieur [ ] de Créquy,[593] was preparing to go to Rome. Accordingly, Francis committed himself to the legate's protection and patronage, so as to reach the city more conveniently and safely. Having arrived there, along with his companions Francis resolved never to go to the College where young Englishmen dwell in Rome, since he wished not to be obliged to hear even a word about the Catholic religion, to which he had an extremely hostile attitude. But he did not sustain this obstinacy for long, because when he perceived that he might be assured of the utmost safety if he were to have dealings with the English fathers[594] and commend himself to their goodwill, he changed his mind and began to frequent the English College. Not alone did he not avoid meeting the Fathers but thereafter he began to seek them out, and he also began to have friendly dealings with the young students of his own age, notwithstanding the difference of religion, to such an extent that for mental recreation he visited them frequently. As commonly happens among equals where people perceive things differently, various people would express different

[591] Mary Percy (d. 1598), sister of Thomas Percy (1528–1572), 7th earl of Northumberland, and of Henry Percy, 8th earl of Northumberland (*c.*1532–1585). See Thomas Percy, *ODNB*. Mary Percy married Francis Slingsby (*c.*1522–1600), the grandfather of Francis Slingsby (1611–1642).

[592] FS was a student at Trinity College, Oxford. He graduated with a BA on 5 February 1628[9]. Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses* (London, 1891), *sub nomine*.

[593] Charles I de Blanchefort (1578–1638), marquis de Créquy, appointed French ambassador to Rome in 1633. Roman D'Amat (ed.), *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, IX (Paris, 1961), cols 1207–1208.

[594] i.e. Jesuits.

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views, and sometimes he was slightly hurt by particular things that were said. But he was not at all grievously upset, and he resolved to free himself of the doubts that were germinating [in him] and to have serious discussion with the fathers about the true religion.

And thus God gently turned his mind, which was very little hardened, towards more salutary (251r) counsels. Francis, indeed, used to say that were he to be convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion, he would not live for one single hour without it, but rather he would continuously attach himself to the true Church even at the expense of his bodily life. After some fruitless meetings about religion and disputations held in private, at length he declared that he would acknowledge the authority of St. Augustine[595] alone. Lest however he should be deceived in a matter of such importance, since previously in England he had heard that the Catholics had corrupted the manuscripts of the church fathers, he began to make a laborious comparison of a number of passages extracted from the Holy Doctor [Augustine] with the most ancient Vatican manuscripts. So as not to become over-extended in [studying] those, he made a thorough inspection of those very Heidelberg codices which were brought to Rome from the Palatine Library under Gregory XV.[596] At length, when he saw that all of them [i.e. those passages] were wonderfully supportive of Catholic truth, he yielded, and he began to act regarding the procedure for attaching himself to the womb of the Church.

When he had indicated this to his non-Catholic companions, at first they attempted by all means, though vainly, to deter and hinder him. Eventually they promised that they too would become Catholics if Francis would go with them (leaving their baggage and money in Rome) to Geneva, to examine what the ministers would say in reply to the Catholic arguments. Then, if their counter-arguments were not abundantly satisfactory, they would all embrace the Catholic religion along with him. Francis, full of the hope of converting his companions to Christ, concurred with that, and a time was agreed forthwith for making the journey. But afterwards when he retired to his chamber, after parting from his friends, so great a trembling and feeling of horror suddenly assailed him (251v) that he was amazed. Unable to discover any inherent cause of it, he acknowledged the finger of God, warning him not to commit himself to such a perilous journey,

[595] St Augustine of Hippo (354–430), doctor of the church.

[596] Gregory XV, pope (r. 1621–1623). On Slingsby in Rome, see B. Mac Cuarta, 'Francis Slingsby and Rome, 1633–1642: From Irish protestant to Jesuit novice', in Alexandra Maclennan (ed.), *The Irish Catholic Diaspora* (Oxford, 2023), 47–64.

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nor to cast his own salvation in such danger in his zeal for seeking the salvation of others. Accordingly, kneeling on the ground and committing himself to prayer, he repented of the promise made to his companions. Anticipating all the hindrances [i.e. to his salvation, implied by the journey to Geneva], he decided to entrust his own salvation for certain safety to the harbour of the Catholic Church, and afterwards, if his companions were similarly minded, to attend to their salvation also with [proper] means. On the following day he communicated this to his companions with great firmness, and no less resolutely he carried it out: from then on, every intention of undertaking the journey to Geneva disappeared.

In the meantime, Francis was exploring all the important considerations which urged him towards the Catholic religion: pondering diligently, and with the good attitude he had chosen to have, making his mind amenable to divine grace. So much was he at peace, so calm, that he did not let slip so much as a word to a jocular companion which could in any way offend; not only that, he was so composed in his every word and action that he drew the souls of all those he dealt with to love him. Nonetheless he was a companion of exemplary modesty and bashfulness, and the chastity of both[597] was in every way admirable. While he was living in Rome, not yet a Catholic, with his heretical companions, on some occasion he permitted himself to be swayed by them to perform together the social courtesy of greeting a certain lady of rank. His companions and he proceed to a harlot [who] admits them into her chamber. Seizing an opportunity to withdraw from Francis, all of them go out, and Francis was left alone with the whore, though he had no such intention; but however they guarded the bedchamber door after they had left (252r) so that he had no means of exit. That shameless woman left nothing unattempted by which she might entice the young man to commit a crime. His companions meanwhile were laughing outside the door and celebrating the conquest of Francis's virginity (frequently they used to call him The Virgin). He, however, possessed of the singular grace of God, evaded the lewd woman with such firmness and fortitude that he gloriously bore away his chastity fully intact from the battle, overcoming the sensual inducements. This was certainly a remarkable deed, and one which would have been admired in a Catholic who had received the best education, and even in a vowed religious; it was almost on a par with what everyone admires and extols in Saints Bernard[598] and Thomas Aquinas.[599]

[597] *utriusque*: his chastity in both [modesty and bashfulness].
[598] St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), monastic reformer, mystic and writer.
[599] St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), philosopher and theologian.

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After giving everything the best consideration, he fully resolved to embrace the Catholic religion and to abominate his errors utterly. It remained for him to go to the tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition to be absolved from heresy. And since the very name of the Inquisition is afflicted by severe ill-will and even hatred among all heretics, so that an easier conversion would be granted to him, he was given permission to make his abjuration of heresy in the private dwelling of the Most Excellent D. Boccabolla, then assessor of the Holy Office.[600] On that account, then, Francis, while he was conferring with two fathers of the Society, was assailed with new temptations of the devil and was blinded by an uncommon darkness of the mind. But even tormented to this degree in spirit, he was not prostrated.

Repeatedly the same questions presented themselves: what if there was a deception in this change of religion, where so much was at stake? What if there was some trick? (252v) What would his parents and friends say? – and other things that the devil suggested. But Francis, rejecting all these and manfully overcoming them, proceeded onwards, and abjured his old errors in the customary manner; and continually he felt his luminosity of mind returning, and tranquillity of soul with a great increase of spiritual joy. Once converted, he applied himself entirely to spiritual exercises, so much so that even those companions of his, unorthodox as they were, said that Francis's fervour pleased them, and they wished that all should adorn the faith they professed with a similar piety. As time went on, more and more he strove to cultivate and embellish those excellent principles which, prior to his conversion, he had compounded from the laws of honesty and modesty. Always true to himself in all situations, he excelled in outer modesty, but especially in church, and whenever he was in the presence of a priest officiating at the altar, with hands joined before his breast he prayed continuously, and above all he adored Christ with the greatest reverence of which he was capable.

When he approached his Eminence Cardinal Barberini,[601] nephew of the Supreme Pontiff, after he had paid his respects with the humility due to the other's rank, he evoked such esteem in the cardinal

[600] FS absolved from heresy, [1] September 1633, Rome. Archive of Congregation for Doctrine and Faith (ACDF), Decreta 1633, fos 151r, 152v.

[601] Francesco Barberini (1597–1679), cardinal, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-barberini_(Dizionario-Biografico) (accessed 8 January 2023).

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at their first meeting that the latter afterwards, speaking to a certain prelate, said that he had grasped that in Francis the saying attributed to St Gregory[602] was true, namely: the English (*Angli*) are like Angels (*Angeli*).[603] He remained well-disposed towards Francis for the remaining time afterwards and expressed his love with favours of no insignificant kind.

When Francis heard of the Spiritual Exercises of holy Father Ignatius,[604] by means of which it is customary that every year various people improve themselves, there was nothing he wished more (253r) than to devote himself to them and to change direction with the aim of establishing [in himself] not just the first principles but an integral course of Catholic life. On that account, he gave up eight entire days to their most diligent practice, which besides being useful and fruitful, was no less pleasing to the inner man. In the meantime, his companions were convinced that Francis had succumbed to physical recreation of another kind, at the time when he was being filled with spiritual delights in the English College.

Among other meditations which stirred his mind, he was especially struck by one: that which treats of the end for which man is created.[605] Having completed this meditation, and pondering everything maturely, in the privacy of his own soul he resolved to divorce himself from the world, because he saw an infinity of things there which called his mind away from that purpose, and because in religious life there were many helpful resources towards achieving that end. He decided to join the company of religious men [i.e. to enter religious life]. Lest this resolution of the soul lapse from memory, he recorded it in a kind of book from which I transcribe, along with the reasons by which he felt himself motivated to devote the rest of life to living among vowed religious.

> There are three ways, he said, in which somebody lives in this world, as a secular person, as a priest, religious [i.e. member of a religious order]. One

[602] Gregory the Great, pope (r. 590–604).

[603] This saying was attributed to the man who became Pope Gregory the Great, on seeing some English boys in the Roman market, a story recounted in Venerable Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of England*, Book II, chapter 1.

[604] Ignatius Loyola (1591–1556), saint, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). For the text of the Spiritual Exercises, see Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean (eds), *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings* (London, 1996).

[605] The *Principle and foundation* meditation, text in Munitiz and Endean (eds), *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, 289: 'The human person is created to praise, reverence and serve God Our Lord, and by so doing to save his or her soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for human beings in order to help them pursue the end for which they are created …'

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should accordingly choose that state in life which, when all is considered, has been judged most apt for achieving the final purpose. I judge vowed religious life to be such a state, for the following reasons.

1ª. Because religious life has more helps and fewer impediments (253v) than the other two states of life. This is evident first of all, because anything in those other states of life which is useful for establishing the life of perfection is found much more abundantly in the religious life; and apart from that, there are many other things which are peculiar to the religious life or at any rate more frequent there. These include good example, a rule of life, convenience of finding time for God, special grace in temptations, more salubrious counsel, escape from enticements, liberation from worldly cares, extirpation of the passions, with an infinity of others. The truth of the argument finally consists in this, that religious life has no impediment proper to itself which is not common to all. But conversely, many things are found in the secular state or the ecclesiastical state from which vowed religious are freed, such as involvement in worldly affairs, copious wealth, ambition for honour, concern for family, bad examples, and the law of the world being utterly contrary to the law of God.

2ª It is established that all perfection was in Christ. In order that he might teach it to us, he handed down rules; not content with these, he even confirmed them all by his own example. And nowhere do I find that his precepts are more fully observed, and his example better imitated than in religious life, for where is poverty more authentic, humility more submissive, abnegation of oneself greater, and the acceptance of the cross more prompt? Where is there simpler conversation, without guile? Where is union more perfect and the bond of charity stronger; where does one live more innocently and cherish God more fervently? Since therefore religious life approaches most closely to Christ's perfection, with every justification (254v) it must be regarded as more perfect than the others, and fit to be chosen on account of the excellence of its perfection.

3ª Every truly wise person must choose that type of life which, if he were advising, he would desire to be chosen. All, moreover, without doubt would choose at the hour of death to have embraced religious life, or at least to have lived in the manner of vowed religious. Therefore nothing can be done more judiciously than to embrace now what may offer such solace at the hour of death.

4ª The devil employs the greatest temptations to impede any resolution, at a time when this prejudices the future possibilities of the greatest good for somebody. Therefore I regard this proposition of mine that I may have approved as all the more salutary, and gratifying to God, the more powerfully it has been attacked by the enemy. I have had the greatest distress, and perturbation of mind, and resistance of the flesh to embrace this resolution. But I have seen clearly that all these things are battling against the purpose which is constituted for me by God, and I infer from this that all these things have emanated

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from the devil, because after overcoming my difficulties I would have felt an indescribable calmness and consolation of mind.

For these four reasons I resolve and firmly intend, with the help of divine grace, to consecrate myself and everything I have to the service of the great Lord God, and to enter an eternal pact with Him, so that He may be my God and I His servant, and I will forever be prepared at my superior's pleasure to offer my neck to the sweet yoke of Christ.

Thus says Francis; I have transcribed almost all of his words, and from them one may gather with what a received light of divinity his mind had been illuminated (254v), and what fires of divine love ignited his will. On this account he chose the Society of Jesus before other religious orders, and I will forthwith record his acceptance of the vow, as I have found it literally in writings by him personally, where he transcribed that vow in his own hand [and] submitted it to his confessor. And from that time on, as if no longer under his own governance but under the rule of another, he did nothing unless prescribed by his confessor or superior, and in those he revered, esteemed and with the most perfect zeal obeyed God himself. Not only did he diligently read and look up to the Society's Rules,[606] but insofar as was reasonably possible in the given time and place, he observed them, especially the requirement for one hour's daily meditation and the two examens,[607] and the other pious exercises which are commanded to be observed by all.

During Lent in the year 1634, it pleased God to test Francis's virtue and patience with most acute pains of the joints, and therefore he was brought through the open space from the dwelling he had rented near the English College to the College itself, where he could have better care.[608] He gave clear signs of patience and indications of a will in every way composed to the will of God, so that he was an edifying example to all, who were properly amazed at such mature virtue in such a tender youth, and one who had been in the camps of the world and the life of heresy, and who had only lately been brought over to the battle-standards of the suffering Christ.

[606] Denotes the compendium, *Regulae Societatis Iesu*, in circulation among Jesuits at that time, and frequently republished (e.g. Rome, 1590; Naples, 1599; Rome, and Lyon, 1607; Palermo, 1630). It normally contained a summary of the Jesuit *Constitutions*, rules for conduct, and Ignatius' letter on obedience.

[607] The *examen*: an Ignatian exercise comprising a short period of reflection on self (generally about 10–15 minutes), practiced twice a day, in which one looks back over the half-day, seeking to notice movements of consolation and desolation in one's spirit.

[608] As an indication of serious ill-health at this time, 7 crowns were paid to his apothecary on 7 March 1634. Archivum Venerabilis Collegii Anglorum de Urbe (Archive of the Venerable English College in Rome), Depositi 311, 58.

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When he began to convalesce from his illness, he wrote a letter to his father whom he had left behind in Ireland, informing him of his conversion to the Catholic faith (255r) for reasons which he included. By God's good help, these considerations had led him to abjure his errors; he was ashamed for having lived in them so long, in a condition resembling blindness, and behold, truly his soul repented. His father received the letter and understood the principles of its author, as declared there. Seized by a mighty rage and at the same time feeling sorrow on account of the conversion, he replied immediately, commanding his son to return to Ireland at the earliest opportunity. His hope was that, if only he were torn away from the papists (as they call the Catholics) and among his own relatives, his son would take up his old religion again without reluctance. When he understood his father's will, having first commended the affair to God in prayer, he then immediately explained it to his superiors, who had observed his virtue, and on their advice he left Rome, in high hopes of converting his father and his entire family, among many others, and of returning to Rome to complete his studies as soon as he had settled his affairs with his relations in his native land. For four years and a half he was away from Rome, and in all that time he never once omitted the hour of meditation and the two-fold examination of conscience even for a single day, whether he was in Ireland, where he spent the greater part of the time, or in England or France while passing through these kingdoms. He himself afterwards reported this to his superior, giving him a precise account of conscience regarding all matters.

Chapter 2 *Francis returns to Ireland and is imprisoned*

Scarcely had Francis set foot in the kingdom of Ireland when all good (255v) Catholics sought not only to congratulate him on his conversion but also to have the pleasure of meeting him and to admire his extraordinary modesty and be charmed by his faultless manners, and because of these excellent gifts they began to esteem him and love him most dearly. His first concern in Ireland was to meet Fr Robert Nugent from our Society, superior of the entire mission. Fr Nugent was staying with the countess of Kildare in her castle.[609] Francis first gave him his account of conscience and an account of the entire journey he had just completed, and he committed himself totally to be ruled by him, saying that he would do nothing whatever except by Fr

[609] Elizabeth Fitzgerald (d. 1645), dowager countess of Kildare, *DIB*, https://www.dib.ie/biography/fitzgerald-elizabeth-a3142 (accessed 29 November 2023); Kilkea castle, near Athy, County Kildare.

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Nugent's direction and counsel, or command, since he was recognizing him in the place of Christ to be loved, cherished and followed. This he performed with so much perfection and constancy, that at his [Nugent's] nod, no [bonds of] companionship, no feeling or respect for people, or as we might say, nothing human would restrain or delay him. That is to say, the Lord was leading the just man by the right paths, and he was disclosing heavenly and eternal plans which were beyond all the human senses. Fr Robert was wonderfully refreshed by such singular virtue, moral integrity and constancy in the faith. Filled with supreme confidence, and he himself a man of abundant fruits, he sent forth Francis to convert his parents and friends, and after a short space of time, the most felicitous outcome proved that the hope had not been in vain. Gifted as he was, and acting with great modesty and prudence, Francis achieved so much in a few words with solid reasoning and by the remarkable innocence of his Christian morals, that his mother, two sisters and brother were prepared to abjure heresy and embrace the Catholic faith, and to live and die in it, even against the will of his father, who was an obstinate man. Fr Robert, however, thought it best to delay [the reception of] the women, so that they might be better tested and instructed.

(256r) But he chose to admit Francis's brother Henry immediately to abjure his heresy, and Henry did so, with joy equalling that of Francis. And that was the first booty which Francis seized from the underworld and transferred to the liberty of the sons of God. Henry was moved by Francis's solid doctrine on matters of faith, and by his conduct which was in conformity with the same. Henry was studying about that time in Oxford: shortly before, in that same university he had received the degree of Master of Liberal Arts and Philosophy. When he perceived that his brother in Rome had turned to the Catholic side, and had now been summoned by his father to his homeland and was expected there very soon, leaving everything else aside he undertook a thorough examination solely of questions of faith. He declared that he would either bring back his brother to the side he had deserted, or he himself would yield to his brother's Catholic side, if he were convinced by truer and more solid arguments which Francis had. From the time when Francis landed in his homeland and was exercised in daily disputations with his father, Henry was always present and silently pondered the things that were said on either side; and not those only but also Francis's modesty in disputing with his father, his efficiency in arguing, his clarity in responding, and moreover his great patience when he was furiously reproached by his father – in a word, all of this Henry carefully observed. Furthermore, he repeatedly had private discussions with Francis, and he felt himself captivated and affected in a wonderful degree by his brother's virtue,

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which could not be hidden because it frequently shed its rays, and so he did not want to live any longer in any other faith except what he saw so constantly in his brother, a faith that was adorned with his blameless morals.

Not long afterwards, when his father saw that he had laboured in vain to bring Francis back to his own side (furthermore his wife and his other son, (256v) along with his daughters, had been persuaded by Francis to go over to the Catholic side), he first began to rage, then promptly threatened Francis with some grave consequences unless he showed respect for his own way of speaking, for which reason he desired to hold an arranged disputation about the faith. In that community James Ussher,[610] the pseudo-primate of Ireland, had a high reputation for doctrine among all contemporaries. The contest had to be entered against him. Francis, a mere adolescent,[611] was flung into these straits, given that his father willed and commanded it. Before everyone he threw himself on his knees and fervently implored God not to abandon him and the cause of religion. And since God was accustomed to making infant tongues fluent, let Him not be reluctant to supply those resources which He knew to be opportune in these difficulties! He had not thrown himself into a contest, relying on that which was beyond his strength; rather, he had been brought unwillingly into the dispute, full of trust in divine assistance. God was at hand, and he saw to it that Francis, modestly but not less clearly and solidly, contended for the Catholic faith and refuted whatever objections were made. He won remarkable applause from those Catholics present, who declared that the arguments Francis brought forward had wisdom in them beyond common usage and human custom. So much was granted him, certainly, at that hour, in his way of speaking and in what he said.

By this victory of his son, from which the father should have profited in taking hold of the faith, he was embittered even more. Vainly he had resolved to try to conquer Francis; all his endeavours had proved futile. Firstly, then, he called Francis to himself and with flattering words tried to soften him, revealing that he was afflicted with a great sense of sorrow, because Francis in such a manner had squandered his own and his family's fortune. If he had preserved his original faith, in the future he would have become (and even now he might be, if he received that faith afresh) one of the royal counsellors,[612] which would be a great support to him and all his relatives, as well as

[610] James Ussher (1581–1656), Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh from 1625.

[611] In summer 1634, when this encounter with Archbishop Ussher occurred, Francis had just turned 23.

[612] Sir Francis was doubtless referring to the Irish privy council, of which he himself was a member.

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a mark of distinction. Francis replied with great firmness, and nevertheless not (257r) without due modesty and respect. Best of fathers! I am not so insane that I would prefer, over those heavenly goods to which Catholics aspire and which they alone attain, goods that are earthly and transitory. Instead of the petty things that command me to hope for what is plainly uncertain, I prefer to embrace those which in heaven are certain, where I think and hope to reign.

And what his brother Henry said was not much inferior to this: for when his father said to him, Henry, your brother has almost ruptured my bowels with the deep sorrow he has given me, and you with sorrow are destroying me completely, Henry modestly replied, father, what gives joy to the angels in heaven should by no means give sorrow to you. For we have Christ's word that they rejoice over one sinner who repents.[613] And indeed Henry, with great steadfastness of mind, had detested his old errors, and embraced the Catholic religion, and he did not doubt to say that he would remain constant in the Catholic faith even if there were no other Catholic left in the world.

Of similar constancy were his mother and one of his sisters;[614] another sister, however, whom Francis had instructed, abandoned the faith for fear of her husband who was a heretic.[615] A third sister, moreover, while she was clinging to doubts about adopting the faith, was carried off by death.[616] They made this complete conversion in a way that was wholly admirable: there was the father's wickedness, and evils that were not trivial, nor were these to be feared in vain [they were not unlikely], since Francis's mother, indeed, had been badly treated by her husband for a long time, and inveterate dissensions had divided not only their souls but their dwelling place. Moreover, the means of support which she had from her husband were slender for the purpose. All of these things might have scared even the strongest woman and impeded her in her course of conversion. But she bore herself superior to all the calamities which she endured to the full, those preceding and following this event, nor did she have the least trepidation in pursuing her purpose but, on the contrary, proceeded more boldly.

[613] The words attributed to Henry are a paraphrase of the gospel passage, 'Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance', Luke 15:7.

[614] Ann Slingsby, married to Alexander Cosby.

[615] This was most probably Elizabeth Slingsby, married to William Dodwell.

[616] Mary Slingsby (d. 1635), married to Sir Francis Willoughby. On the conversion of the Slingsby womenfolk, see B. Mac Cuarta, 'Jesuit conversions in Wentworth's Ireland', in Mary Ann Lyons and Brian Mac Cuarta (eds), *The Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland 1560–1760* (Dublin, 2022), 167–192.

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The sister (257v), dreading her father's indignation and, in addition, her husband's displeasure, could have deferred the conversion at least for the moment; her brother could have done the same, since he was totally dependent on his father. Nonetheless, made strong by God their guide and by Francis, they bravely esteemed all these things of less value than the salvation of their souls and the will of God who was calling them. They were afterwards no less steadfast in holding onto the faith which they had adopted, than they had been spirited in adopting it; and undoubtedly this is to be ascribed to Francis's prayers.

For while Francis was confined in prison, the father sent Henry away to England, calculating that when he was torn away from Francis and placed in the midst of committed English heretics, he would easily return to the life which lately he had deserted as being merely a shadow of religion. The mother of both the sons, and the sister of both the brothers, when deprived of their corrections and encouragements, with the mutability of their sex would abandon the new religion without much difficulty.

But neither of these things turned out as he desired it, for God showed that there is no counsel against the Lord.[617] All of those persons, indeed, overcoming difficulties of no inconsiderable kind, gave outstanding proof of their steadfastness. For even as the father, trying with all his might, removed those who by their spiritual conversation and counsel could have stabilized the souls of the afflicted women, so God on the opposite side removed from their midst the greatest obstacle that confronted them. A short time afterwards the daughter's husband, a great lover of heresy and one who hated the Catholic faith most bitterly, died of his vices.[618] As a wife, indeed, she received (the pain of) her husband's temporal death but still more, the eternal ruin of a heretic. However, she rejoiced at the fact that, freed from the bonds of marriage, she might hope for the wedding with a celestial spouse which delights minds with true liberty, (258r) and replace all her temporal cares and troubles with great eternal joys. She sincerely cherished that hope, and so as to make others participants in her happiness (for the good is an active force for the general benefit), to others and especially to her maids she diligently taught what she had learned from Francis, and apart from faith, her example carried the stamp of all the honesty of virtue.

No less constant was Henry. Not alone was he not shaken by the appeals, solicitations and indeed mockeries of the heretics who had

[617] The author is drawing on Proverbs 21:30: 'There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, there is no plan [that will succeed] against the Lord.'

[618] Alexander Cosby, husband of Ann Slingsby, died 6 August 1636. TCD MS 1216, fo. 65r.

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once been his companions, but his faith grew amidst adversity, and his faith was so remarkable that it did not seem to be the faith of a young man lately converted to Catholicism, but that of a mature man who had been excellently brought up among Catholics from boyhood with virtues of every kind. A truly splendid testimony was written from England by people with whom he had lived for some months, among the daughters and friends of the most illustrious Viscount Falkland, formerly the viceroy of Ireland.[619]

While Francis was engaged with his sister's husband, whom he was most fervently urging to convert, the latter replied jestingly and with strong feeling: The head of your religion, he said, has horns. He meant the pope, whom the heretics call Antichrist and the beast of the Apocalypse.[620] Aroused by these insults, Francis was eager to return like for like. And *your* religion, he said, came forth out of Henry the Eighth's underpants.[621] The other received this with a burst of laughter and repeated it often afterwards, and he promptly told it to Francis's mother. Although it seemed proper to her to suppress those very words, the saying nevertheless spread abroad through the family and was brought to the ears of ministers [of the Church of Ireland], offering an opportunity of accusing Francis, that he had spoken indecently of the religion of the Protestants.

(258v) On another occasion his father, seeking to pervert[622] Francis, took him with him to the pseudo-bishop of Armagh.[623] That man attempted to prove that the Catholics had fallen into error and that the time predicted in the Apocalypse had arrived, when the true church would degenerate. With his accustomed modesty, Francis replied that those passages had been explained differently by the holy fathers of the church, and furthermore in many other places the truth of the

[619] For a Catholic account by one of the daughters of Sir Henry Cary (*c.*1575–1633), and Elizabeth Cary (1585–1639), 1st Viscount and Viscountess Falkland, of William Chillingworth's attempt to draw the Cary siblings from Catholicism while in the household of Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland (1609/10–1643) at Great Tew, Oxfordshire, when Henry Slingsby was staying there, see Heather Wolfe (ed.), *Elizabeth Cary Lady Falkland: Life and Letters* (Cambridge and Tempe, AZ, 2001), 180–200.

[620] 'beast of the Apocalypse': theme in the New Testament book of Revelation. For the apocalyptic worldview among Protestants in Ireland, see Alan Ford, 'Apocalyptic Ireland 1580–1641', *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 78:2 (2013), 123–148.

[621] The origin of the Anglican schism in the lust of Henry VIII was a central trope in the history composed by the English Catholic, Nicholas Sander (*c.*1530–1581), *De origine et progressu schismatis Anglicani* (Cologne, 1585), translation, with introduction and notes: David Lewis, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism: Published A.D. 1585* (London, 1877), e.g. 'He [Henry VIII] gave up the Catholic faith for no other reason in the world than that which came from his lust and wickedness', 162. I am grateful to Gerard Kilroy for a discussion of Sander's view of Henry VIII.

[622] To pervert: 'to turn (any one) aside from a right to a false or erroneous religious belief or system (i.e. from what the speaker or writer holds to be such)', *OED*.

[623] James Ussher (1581–1656), appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh in 1625.

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Catholics and indeed the falsehood of Protestants is proved. And he used the following argument: the religion which teaches heresy cannot be true, but your religion teaches heresy, since it teaches that we should not pray for the dead; that is an ancient heresy, attested as such by Augustine, Epiphanius[624] and others, and therefore [your religion] teaches one manifest heresy. Here the archbishop was dumbstruck by an answer which he had not in the least expected. Then he began to explain that heresy was not infrequently to be understood as a name for any difference of opinions, and other similar statements. At length, when a good deal had been said back and forth, Francis, so as to be freed from the irksome disputation, modestly requested the archbishop: let him deign to do for his religion what he himself was prepared to perform for the Catholic faith. When the archbishop at length asked what that was, there and then Francis, bending his knees and with his eyes raised to heaven, prayed to God that if the Catholic faith which he was professing was not true, then the earth should instantly swallow him alive. At this the pseudo-prelate trembled all over his body, and making obscure utterances, he displayed a manifest and great perturbation of soul. Francis's father was highly displeased by his son's action and the prelate's disturbance. Immediately he ordered Francis to remove himself, and Francis obeyed; and he covered the entire event in the utmost silence, but [news] of the affair spread among the Catholics …[625]

XI. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 20r–23v

Father William Malone SJ, rector, Irish College, Rome: on FS, summer 1634 to 1639 [undated, c.1643]

(20r) Patris Gulielmi Malonii Rectoris Collegii Hiberniae Romae qui illius fuit confessor in Hibernia

De Patre Francisco Slinghisbaeo alias Percaeo in Hibernia[626]

A reditu in Hyberniam vitam egit tam mirifice piam, quae omnium tam Protestantium quam Catholicorum oculos summa cum admiratione in se convertit. Videre enim erat iuvenem aetate florentem, in aula regia cum nobilioribus, et inter illos sanguine coniunctis, familiarem, vultu decorum, vestium apparatu splendidum, modestiae

[624] St Epiphanius (*c.*315–403), bishop of Salamis. He wrote 'Panarion', a text known as the 'Refutation of all the heresies', in which he describes and refutes all heresies known to him since the beginning of the church. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.

[625] Text ends abruptly here.

[626] Full title, and note on author, in different hand, and different ink.

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tamen, pietatis, ac c[ae]terarum virtutum tam sedulum cultorem, ut haereticorum non pauci et primi in eius personam tenerrime affecti, cuius oderant relligionem, in illo sibi suaeque haeresi conciliando graviter desudarent, rati hoc, si effici posset, professioni suae fore tum honori tum emolumento, sed et operam et oleum perdidere omnes, tanta eius erat in tuenda vere fide constantia, facilitas tanta. Nec in firmissimus solum suae fidei rationibus assignandis, sed et in aliis suadendis, ut eandem amplecterentur, plurimum valuit. Brevi enim matrem, fratrem natu minorem, sorores, aliasque ab inveteratorum errorum caeno eius opera emersos, Ecclesiae Catholicae communioni restituit. Adhuc autem et pater ipse, licet haeresis suae propugnator acerrimus, in intellectu iudicioque convictus ab illo credebatur, qui tamen ob fines mundanos contrarium exterius profiteri non destitit, idemque cum aliis propinquis haereticis sentire, qui Franciscum vehementius adoriebantur urgebantque, odio incitati, quod ob matris caeterarumque conversionem in illum conceperant.

Tandem pater, suadentibus amicis, statuit eum coram D. Ushero[627] Primate haeretico, plenus spei tanti viri doctrina effectum iri, ut ex Protestantibus unus de novo fieret; Nec cum eo congredi recusavit Primas, ad disputationem tamen capessendam tardior videbatur Franciscus, ob suos, quos allegavit, in litteris leves progressus, Primatis vero diuturna in scholis exercitia. His non acquiescens pater, [eu]m obedire imperat. Quo audito, protinus consensit obsequentissimus filius, prius tamen humiliter petens, ut brevem coram deo oratiunculam effundere liceret, et ut simili postea precandi formula Primas uti dignaretur. Concesso quod optaverat, genuflexus deum devote oravit, ut gratiam suam sibi impertiret, qua adiutus, nihil ore proferret aut tueretur, praeterquam quod indubitatam veritatem dictaret conscientia, Et si quid auderet contra, aperiretur illico terra, et vivum absorberit eum Tartarus. His peractis, conversus ad Primatem idem ab eo fieri postulat, et dein disceptationem inchoaturum se pollicetur. At interno horrore perculsus impalluit Primas, totoque tremens corpore, exclamavit: Desperatus homo es, qui taliter Deum tentare ausus es, Abi hinc, tecum ulterius agere nolo, protinusque in vicinum se coniecit cubiculum, relictis DD. Francisco Slingsbeo (20v) et Carolo Cooto[628] equitibus auratis cum aliis pluribus si non parum attonitos, at certe aedificatos parum.

Biduo post a satellite apprehensus, in carcerem compingitur, ubi in loco amplo, aperto, humidoque intra turrim lapideam, rigidae

[627] James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland, appointed 1625.
[628] Sir Francis Slingsby, and Sir Charles Coote, father and uncle respectively of FS.

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integraeque hiemis frigora pertulit, non sine uberiore tamen animi laetitia internoque gaudio, intumescentibus enim prae frigoris violentia inferioribus [co]rporis partibus.

Tantas coeli iniurias, tantamque temporis inclementiam ne sentire videbatur. De his autem certior factus e nostris unus, ignoto habitu assumpto, incarceratum visere ausus est, reque prout ferebatur comperta, eum tantumque eius circa se incuriam increpavit, vestes sibi, aliaque ad valetudinem recuperandam tuendamque necessaria parare iubens. Monitis illico morem gessit, fassus tamen, se plurimum cupere pro Deo veraque Dei relligione graviora his perpeti. Crebrae ad illum fuerunt multorum visitationes praesertim Catholicorum, et inter has nobilium quorundam. Nemo vero non rediit summopere aedificatus tam pio eius zelo, tam admirabili patientia. At Comes De Castle-haven, tanta morum eius suavitate prae caeteris mire capiebatur, adeoque non destitit Deputatum Wentworthium importunius sollecitare, donec eum e carcere demum in proprias aedes transferindum impetraverat. Ubi quomodo se gessit, patet tum ex amplissimo Comitis ipsius testimonio da[629] viri sanctitate, tum ex incredibili fere pietatis augmento, in comite ipso, in fratribus eiusdem, in tota denique familia, eius opera et exemplo propagatae. Ocultatus testis ipsemet saepe fui quotidianarum meditationum quas in privato sacello nobiles hi iuvenes una cum eo peregerunt; eo profecto cum devotione, applicatione, exteriorique corpori compositione, quae devotissimum Societatis nostrae novitium docere potuit. Huiusmodi eius conversationem expertus est Comes De Castlehaven, parem postea repperit senior Comitissa De Killdare,[630] quae mediantibus apud Deputat[u]m amicis Franciscum a comite ad se removendum obtinuerat, quem ut sanctum praedicabat, quem ut filium tenerrime et unice amabat. Nec aliter vixit suae potestatis vir tand[e]m factus, quocumque perrexerit, semper dilectus deo et hominibus, cum quibuscumque egerat, omnium animas adeo sibi conciliavit, ut eius suasu et industria ex Catholicis plurimi pessimae vitae nuntium remittentes, iam probi et pii, Ex haereticis multi errores suas pristinas deserentes, iam vera verae ecclesiae membra efficerentur, licet in eorundem vita reformanda ecclesiastici et relligiosi alii diu multumque sed incassum laboraverant. Et haec animarum negotiatio tam faeliciter ei semper ad votum successit, ut nullum unquam, hybernum praecipue, ab haeresi revocandum susceperit, quem non Catholicum dimisit,

[629] Perhaps 'de' intended.
[630] Elizabeth Fitzgerald, countess of Kildare (d. 1645), *DIB*.

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patribusque nostris deinde tradidit, ut in Catholicae fidei fundamentis exactius [in]structur.[631]

(23r) Donumque hoc divinitus ei concessum, adeo in omnium ore erat, ut a principalioribus consiliariis unus, praesente Deputato additoque iuramento, asseveraret, totum in errores papisticos populum lapsurum, nisi ab illo, Francisco s[ci]licet, tunc in carcere detento, serio caveretur. Imo in secretorum consiliorum conclavi ab haeretico praedicante missae legebantur litterae, querelarum plenae de eo tanquam lupo voracissimo, in quem nisi propere dimitterentur canes, puta satellites, brevi fore ut Reformitatorum ovile[632] vacuum et inane repperiretur.

In urbe Dublinensi, ubi ut plurimum commorabatur, mirum dictu, quantum in multorum animis mutationem pie eius conversatio operata sit. Illum enim in sacello nostro sine oculorum hac illacue nedum corporis motu per horam saepius genuflexum, devotionibusque affixum, in sacrosancta Eucharistia reverenter sumenda frequentem, in Misse, imo et in pluribus audiendis aliquando assiduum videre erat, et his a variis [ ] limibus curiosius observatis, magna apud eos incrementa sumpsit pietas. Vitae autem eius exemplaris efficaciae argumentum non leve est illud, quid nobiles quidam iuvenes aetate Francisco pares, ex eius consortio et familiaritate eo pietatis devenerunt, ut quandam quasi Sodalitatem inter se instituerent, in qua non solum ipsi pie et exemplariter degebant, sed et alios dissolutioris vitae iuvenes ad meliorem frugem et parem vivendi normam reducere conabantur.

Senex iam pater Dubliniae morari solitus, quamvis ab extraordinariis favoribus et gratiis in filium conferendis, quantum poterat abstineret, nec in iisd[e]m aedibus una secum degare pateretur, Papistae inde notum sibi [ ] multum metuens, libens tamen privata cum eo colloquia saepe miscebat, et quidquid ad expensas communes necessarium videbatur, manu liberali elargiebatur, Imo eo vique paternus erga filium amor aliquoties procedebat, ut in spem magnam adduceretur Franciscus, patrem haeresi suae renunciaturum. Quamobrem nulla non obsequia ei alacriter praestitit, Imo, eo iubente, curias frequentare, causas fovenses, aliaque eiusmodi negotia saecularia prosequi non recusavit, id et hanc provinciam, licet naturali eius inclinationi contrariam prompte suscepit, eo semper respiciens, ut animam eius coelo tandem lucraretur, Quod dubio procul effectum iri credebatur, Si diutius regno immoratus fuisset, sed ob novas de eo

[631] William Malone's relation continues on fo. 23r.
[632] The image of the sheepfold and the threatening wolf is found in John 10:1–16.

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querelas imminente rursus incarcerationis periculo, navem de improviso conscendere coactus Angliam appulit, decessus sui causis per litteras ad patrem amplissime et humillime prius[633] expressis.

Ne prolixior sim, quamdiu in hybernia vixit, pleraque virtutum genera, ut pietas, mortificatio humilitas et animarum zelus ita in eo relucebant, ut a nemine in dubium vocari poterat, quin

(23v) +

specialibus Dei auxiliis praevent[u]s, eam relligiosae perfectionis metam iam attigisset, ad quam institutum nostrum[634] principalius collimat, adeoquem ante ingressum in Societatem omnibus numeris absolutus Jesuita censendus erat, ut in ipso novitiatus limine merito in illum quadraret illud, *fundamenta eius in montibus sanctis*,[635] Quae omnia cum patres nostri probe noverant, quid mirum, si profectioni eius in exteras regiones minus libenter assenserint, iactis iam ab illo una cum fratre, sub professore ex nostris, philosophiae fundamentis. Quod ad novitiatum attinet, quidni cum eo hac in re dispensari poterat, ut eundem in Hybernia proficeret, nec sane hoc ei displicere videbatur. Cum enim haud ignoraret, quam dilectus esset omnibus, quacunque incedebat, quantumque apud omnes valebat tum in pietate promovenda, tum in litibus dirimendis, non potuit non fateri, et saepe fassus est, se plurimum delectari mirata illa incolarum ad virtutem devotionemque propensione. Unde haereditati suae renuncians, fratri in mandatis dedit, ut 400 aureas annuatim, quibus pia iuventute hyberna educanda fundaretur seminarium in Belgiis.

Tandem confessario suo, Romam accersito, socius ei adiungitur Franciscus, quo nuntio adeo laetabatur, ut suum hac in re assensum, tanquam immoderatum condemnaret, Satanaeque tentationem fore vereretur. Romam appulsus, suum in Hybernorum Collegium ingressum Patri Generali proposuit, cum ea tamen animi resignatione, quam inviolatam in sui dispositione semper custodierat; Nostros ut superior[e]s suos agnoscens, illis in omnibus obtemperans, eorum dicta in omnibus alacriter exequens, Ut discerni vix poterat, ad quid magis propendebat illi animus. Taceo hic eius in lectione spirituali sedulitatem, non solum enim privatim sed et in itinere, in diversoriis pium libellum evoluit, quod a Protestantibus quibusdem, qui hoc curiosius observaverunt mihi nuntiatum est. Taceo eius in cogitatione verbo et opere innocentiam, quae saepenumero post diligens examen vix absolutionis materiam in confessione suppeditaret.

Taceo modestiam, quae eo illum impulit, ut confessarium consuleret utrum non satius foret vestibus uti tenuioris pretii, quam

[633] 'prius' interlined.

[634] 'Institutum nostrum': refers to the Jesuit foundational text, the 'Formula of the Institute', forming the preamble to the Jesuit *Constitutions*.

[635] Psalm 86:1, 'Fundamenta eius in montibus sanctis'.

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quas a parentibus acceperat. De humilitate quid dicam? Ut in ea se exerceret, occasiones non oblatas quaerebat, oblatas avide arripuit, unde post datam semel in confessione absolutionem, unum a confessario enixe petiit, ut, nimirum, eius pedes deosculari sibi liceret.

Translation

(20r) [From] Father William Malone, rector, Irish College, Rome, who was his confessor in Ireland

Concerning Father Francis Slingsby alias Percy in Ireland.

From his return to Ireland he led a life so wonderfully pious which attracted to him the greatest admiration of everyone, of Protestants as much as of Catholics. For they saw that he was a young man in his prime, in the viceregal ['royal'] court with the more celebrated people, and among them [some] related [to him] by blood; [and he was their] friend, handsome of face, splendidly dressed, and yet such a careful cultivator of modesty, piety and the rest of the virtues, that not a few of the leading heretics were very tenderly attached to his person; though they detested his religion they laboured zealously to win him over to themselves and to their heresy, thinking that if it could be achieved, his adherence would be an honour as well as a gain, but they all wasted their time and trouble, so great was his steadiness and his ease in defending the true faith. And he was very effective not only in being very firm in giving reasons for his faith, but also in persuading others, so that they embraced the same. For, in brief, he restored [his] mother, younger brother, sisters, and various other women, arisen by his efforts from the mire of long-standing errors to the communion of the Catholic Church.

And in addition to this the father himself too, although a most vehement defender of his own heresy, was believed to have been convinced by him [Francis] in mind and judgment; although on account of worldly ends [the father] did not cease outwardly to profess the opposite, and to express the same with other Protestant relatives, who were addressing and pressurizing Francis most vehemently, incited by the hatred they conceived against him because of the conversion of his mother and the other women.

At length his father, by the persuasion of friends, placed him in the presence of the heretical Primate Lord Ussher,[636] full of hope that he would be influenced by the teaching of such a man to become one of the Protestants anew; and the primate did not refuse to meet with

[636] James Ussher (1581–1656), archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland.

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him, although Francis seemed rather slow to undertake a disputation, because, as he alleged, of his slow progress in scholarship, [and] the primate's long experience of exercises in the schools.[637] His father not agreeing to [this objection], ordered him to obey, on hearing which the most obedient son forthwith agreed, first however humbly begging that he might be allowed to offer a brief prayer before God, and that afterwards the Primate might deign to use a similar form of prayer.

His wish being granted, he prayed devoutly on his knees to God to bestow his grace on him, with the help of which he might utter or uphold nothing, except that which [his] conscience would dictate as the undoubted truth. And if he should dare anything to the contrary, that the earth might open immediately and the underworld would swallow him up alive. These things being done, turning to the primate he asks that the same might be done by him, and thereafter he promised to begin the disputation. But struck with inner horror the primate turned pale and, trembling all over, exclaimed: You are a desperate man, who have dared thus to tempt God, Go from here; I want nothing more to do with you; and he betook himself hastily to a nearby room, leaving Lords[638] Francis Slingsby (20v) and Charles Coote,[639] knights, with many others, if not particularly astonished, [they were] certainly too little edified.

Two days later he was arrested by a guard and confined in prison where in a large, open and damp place within a stone tower,[640] he bore the cold of an entire hard winter, not however without a fuller gladness of mind and inner joy, for the lower parts of his body were swollen from the ferocity of the cold. He seemed not to feel such harshness of the climate and such inclement weather. One of ours,[641] informed of these matters, having dared in disguise to visit the prisoner, and verified the situation as it was reported and chided him and his carelessness about himself, ordered clothes for him and the supplying of other things necessary for the recovery and protection of his health. He conformed immediately to the advice, admitting

[637] The academic disputations which were a staple of early modern university education.

[638] 'Dominus' in this usage was an appellation indicating a person of rank, and does not denote a peerage in the English sense.

[639] Sir Charles Coote (d. 1642), *ODNB*. Coote was married to Dorothea Cuffe, sister of Elizabeth Cuffe, wife of Sir Francis Slingsby (*c.*1569–1651).

[640] Slingsby was incarcerated in Dublin Castle, most likely in the gatehouse. On this location as a prison in the early seventeenth century, see Sean Duffy, John Montague, Kevin Mulligan, and Michael O'Neill, *Dublin Castle: From Fortress to Palace*, I: *Vikings to Victorians: A History of Dublin Castle to 1850* (Dublin, 2022), 86–89.

[641] Phrase denotes a fellow-Jesuit.

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nevertheless that he greatly desired to suffer harsher things than these, for God and for his true religion.

There were many visits to him, especially by Catholics, and among these some of the nobility.

Everyone indeed returned greatly edified by his zeal which was so pious and his patience which was so admirable. Moreover the earl of Castlehaven[642] was, more than the rest, remarkably captivated by such sweetness in his character, and to such a degree that he did not cease relentlessly to solicit [Lord] Deputy Wentworth,[643] until at last he obtained his transfer from prison to his [Castlehaven's] own house. Where he so conducted himself, it is known both from the very ample testimony of the earl himself concerning the man's holiness, and from the quite unbelievable increase of piety in the earl himself, in his brothers and indeed in all his household, generated by his deeds and his example. I myself have often been an eyewitness of the daily meditations which these young noble folk undertook with him in the private chapel with devotion, application and bodily composure, which could have instructed the most devout novice of our Society. In this manner the earl of Castlehaven experienced familiar association with him, the same which the dowager countess of Kildare afterwards came to know, who by the mediation of [her] friends with the [lord] deputy had obtained that Francis was removed from the earl to herself; she praised Francis as a holy man, and loved him as a son most tenderly and to a singular degree.

In no other way did he live having at last become a man who was his own master,[644] wherever he went [he was] always beloved of God and of people; whomsoever he spent time with, he softened the souls of all towards himself to such a degree, that by his persuasion and industry, many among the Catholics of a most wicked life, who were divorced, [are] now upright and pious; many of the heretics, deserting their former errors, now were rendered faithful members of the true church, although churchmen and other religious had laboured long and hard, but in vain, to reform their life. And this issue of [the heretics'] souls succeeded so happily for him according to his wish, that he never undertook to win back anyone, especially an Irishman, from heresy, whom he did not send away a Catholic, and afterwards entrust to our fathers, so that he might be more exactly instructed in the basics of the Catholic faith.[645]

[642] James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven (bapt. 1612–1684), *ODNB*.
[643] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), lord deputy of Ireland, 1632–1640.
[644] Literally 'a man of his own power', i.e. not subject to another's authority.
[645] William Malone's relation continues on fo. 23r of the manuscript.

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(23r) And this gift, divinely granted to him, was so much in the mouths of all, that one of the principal counsellors, in the presence of the [lord] deputy and an oath being sworn, declared that the whole populace was going to fall into popish errors, unless they were earnestly guarded from him, namely Francis, then detained in prison. Indeed, in the chamber of the secret councils,[646] a letter sent by a heretical preacher was read, full of complaints about him as though [he were] the most greedy wolf, [and] that unless the dogs, namely the guards, were speedily loosed against him, in a short time the sheepfold of the reformers [i.e. Protestants] would be found empty and worthless.

In the city of Dublin, where he dwelt for the most part, it is wonderful to relate what a change was worked on the minds of many through acquaintance with his piety. For he was seen in our chapel[647] quite often kneeling for an hour without moving his eyes this way or that, still less his body, fixed in [his] devotions, frequently receiving the holy eucharist reverently, at mass, indeed also at times assiduous in hearing many [masses], and after these things had been carefully observed with sidelong glances by various … [people], piety increased greatly among them.[648]

His life of exemplary virtue was no small evidence (or argument); for certain young nobles of the same age as Francis became pious through fellowship and friendship with him, so that they set up a certain sodality, as it were, among themselves, in which not only they themselves spent their time piously and in an exemplary fashion, but they also tried to bring back other youths of more dissolute life to a more virtuous condition and a similar way of living.

Now his aged father was accustomed to stay in Dublin, although he abstained from bestowing extraordinary favours and kindnesses on [his] son, as much as he could, and he was not known to spend time together with him in the same house, greatly fearing that [by doing so] he might be considered a papist. Nonetheless gladly he often used to share private conversations with him, and he used to give with a free hand whatever seemed necessary to [their] common expenses, and indeed at different times fatherly love towards the son was advancing with vigour, so that Francis was led to great hope that the father

[646] Denotes the Irish privy council.

[647] There was a magnificent chapel in the Jesuit premises known as Kildare Hall. See Rolf Loeber and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, 'Kildare Hall, the countess of Kildare's patronage of the Jesuits, and the liturgical setting of Catholic worship in early seventeenth-century Dublin', in E. FitzPatrick and R. Gillespie (eds), *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2006), 242–265.

[648] The Latin original here is not clear, hence the translation is approximate.

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was about to renounce his heresy. Therefore [Francis] enthusiastically rendered certain services to him, indeed, at his bidding he did not refuse to frequent the courts, tending to lawsuits, or to pursue other worldly business of this sort; he took care of this duty, [which] he undertook promptly though against his natural inclination, for this reason, always mindful of him, that he might at length win [his father's] soul for heaven, because it was believed beyond doubt it was going to be accomplished, if he had remained longer in the kingdom [Ireland]. But on account of new complaints about him [Francis], in imminent danger of imprisonment once again, he sailed to England, forced suddenly to take ship, having beforehand expressed the causes of his departure most fully and humbly in a letter to his father.

That I may not be too prolix, while he lived in Ireland, many kinds of virtue, such as piety, mortification, humility and zeal for souls shone so brightly in him, that it could not be called into doubt by anyone that, (23v) preceded by the special assistance of God, he had already achieved that goal of religious perfection, to which our institute[649] principally aims, and to such an extent that before [his] entry into the Society he was esteemed fully a Jesuit,[650] so that of his own merit at the start of [his] novitiate, that was perfected in him, [namely] [he has set] *his foundations on the holy mountains*.[651] Since our fathers knew all these things well, what surprise [would there be], if they had less willingly assented to his departure into foreign parts; under a teacher of ours he together with [his] brother[652] had already laid the foundations of philosophy. As far as the novitiate is concerned, why could a dispensation not have been given for him in this matter, so that he might fulfil the same [i.e. novitiate] in Ireland, and this certainly did not seem to displease him.[653]

For since he was not unaware how beloved he was of all, wherever he went, and how much he prevailed with everyone both in promoting

[649] Denotes Society of Jesus. The Society's foundational document is referred to as 'The Formula of the Institute'. See John Padberg, 'Formula of the Institute', in Thomas Worcester (ed.), *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the Jesuits* (Cambridge, 2017).

[650] Literally 'complete in all respects'.

[651] The quotation is from Psalm 86/87:1: 'His foundation is in the holy mountains', King James version.

[652] Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613). Francis was among the group of twelve young men who in 1636 were studying philosophy under Henry Cavell SJ in Dublin. Robert Nugent to Father General Vitelleschi, 15 September 1636, Moynes (ed.), *Jesuit Irish Mission*, 401–402.

[653] Regarding where Slingsby might do his novitiate, by contrast to this view of the Dublin Jesuits, Fr General Vitelleschi was clear that Slingsby should enter the Society in Rome. Vitelleschi to Irish mission superior, 23 May 1637, Moynes (ed.), *Jesuit Irish mission*, 160.

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piety, and in dissolving quarrels, he could not but confess, and often did confess, that he was greatly pleased by that admired propensity of the inhabitants to virtue and devotion. Whence, renouncing his inheritance, he gave his brother instructions [regarding] 400 crowns [*aureas*] a year, with which a seminary for educating pious young Irishmen should be founded in Belgium.

At length his confessor[654] being summoned to Rome, Francis was attached to him as a companion, by which news he was so gladdened, that he condemned as immoderate his own approval in this matter, and feared it would be the temptation of Satan. Having arrived in Rome, he proposed to Father General[655] his own admission to the Irish College though with that resignation of mind which he had always kept undisturbed in his outlook; recognizing our [Jesuit] superiors as his, obeying them in all things, eagerly following their orders in all matters, as if it was scarcely able to be discerned, to what his mind was more inclined.

Here I pass over in silence his application in spiritual reading, for not only privately but also when travelling, in [his] places of lodging he opened a little pious book, which was reported to me by certain Protestants who had observed this very attentively.

I pass over in silence his innocence in thought, word and deed, which time and again after diligent examination in confession scarcely sufficed as matter of absolution.

I pass over in silence his modesty, which drove him to consult his confessor whether it would be better to use clothes of less value, than those which he had received from his parents.

What shall I say of his humility? That he practised this [humility]: [when] opportunities were not offered, he sought them, [when they were] offered, he eagerly seized them, whence one time after absolution [was] given in confession, he earnestly begged one thing from [his] confessor that, truly, he would allow him [Francis] to kiss his [confessor's] feet.[656]

[654] William Malone SJ was appointed rector, Irish College, Rome. He travelled to Rome in October–November 1637. Slingsby had been assigned to him as travelling companion. Vitelleschi to Irish mission superior, 3 October 1637, 5 December 1637, Moynes (ed.), *Jesuit Irish Mission*, 160. But in fact Slingsby met with the earl of Castlehaven, and these travelled together in France, before Slingsby eventually arrived in Rome, in early February 1639. **Documents XII, XIV(iv)**.

[655] Muzio Vitelleschi, Jesuit father general 1615–1645.

[656] For a similar gesture of respect towards a priest in early seventeenth-century England, see reference to the lady who asked to kiss the feet of John Gerard SJ, as recounted in his autobiography, John Gerard, *The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*, trans. Philip Caraman (New York, 1952), 31.

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XII. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 1r–4r

On FS: from imprisonment autumn 1634, until entering novitiate, Rome, September 1641 [undated, c.1643; beginning of text is missing]

(1r)

32. Dum in carcere esset vigens fuit Catholicorum omnium ad illum visitandum concursus ut perpetua quaedam visitationum series de mane usque in vesperam fere quotdie texeretur. Qua in re mira eluxit Dei in aptum misericordia, quas ne visitationes istae honorificae ipsum supra se extollerent, ita illum interius angi scrupulis et affligi permittebat, ut licet corpore ade[a]t visitantibus, animo tamen abriperetur in scrupulos, ut nullam fere pro illis quietem sibi caperet.

33. Mittebat ad illum sic detentum Pater frequenter libros haereticos complures, ad quos legendos licet facultatem haberet a S. Inquisitione Romae ante discessum suum inde concessa, non alia tamen lege illos a Patre acceptare voluit nisi et ipse alios vicissim Catholicos quos ipse submittebat, perlegeret, quod ille perfecit licet non eo quo optabatur fructu.

34. Ibidem dum versaretur crebrius ad illum miserat Cancellarius Hiberniae[657] qui idem Pseudo-Episcopus est Londinoderri,[658] invitans ad Colloquium de Religione, cui cum franc[iscus] constanter respondisset se de nulla re quam Ecclesia Catholica docet dubitare, ideoque supervacaneum futurum adventum Illustrissimae Dominationis Suae, tandem tamen importunitate obtrudentis victus, respondit se quidem paratum esse audire quae sua Ill. D. dicturum esset, defecturus [quod] se meliori modo quo posset. Postero die accessit ad arcem ille, et cum de Communione sub utroque diu cum francisco disputasset, tandem decessit nec reditum amplius unquam tentavit.

35. Alio tempore ante dum adhuc in domo Paterna esset, Pater ut illum perverteret abducit illum secum ad Pseudo-Archiepiscopum Armacanum Primatem Hiberniae[659] et virum inter Heterod[oxos] supra eos eruditionis fama celebrem; eo cum pervenissent multis

[657] Adam Loftus, viscount Loftus of Ely (1568–1643), appointed lord chancellor of Ireland, 1619, *ODNB*.

[658] John Bramhall (bapt. 1594–1663), consecrated Church of Ireland bishop of Derry, 26 May 1634, *ODNB*.

[659] James Ussher (1581–1656), appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh, 1625.

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conatus est probare Archiepiscop[us] Romanam Ecclesia[m] in vari[is] erroribus versari; [v]enisseque iam tempus defect[ui] in Apocal. praedicatum ad quod cum francisc[us] modeste respondisset alios SS. Patres et interpretes aliter loca illa interpretari, se illorum potius interpretationi fidem adhibere, praesertim cum alia argumenta certitudinem fidei Catholicae evincerent, et e contra falsitatem [sese] Protestantium deinde per viam argumentationis contra Protestantes subintulit. Illa religio vera esse nequet quae docet vel unam apertam Haeresim, sed vestra Prot[estanta]m docet apertam haeresim [quod] minorem negatam ab Archiepiscopo probabat sic vestra religio docet non licere orare pro defunctis, sed haec haeresis antiqua fuit enumerata inter Haereses tam a S. Augustino quam a S. Epiphanio[660] [quod] docet unam saltem apertam haeresim. Hic Archiepiscopus horrore aliquantulum mox subiungere; verbum Haeresis antiquitus [s]aepius accipiebatur pro quacumque discrepantia opinionum quo in sensu vocata est a sanctis illis haeresis. Hic ult.[ ] cum multa dicta essent tandem franciscus ut se molestia disputationum huiuscemodi liberaret, rogat (1v) submisse Archiepiscopum, dignaretur id facere pro sua religione quod ipse pro fide Catholica praestare paratus esset quod eum quid illud esset sciscitatus fuisset Archiepiscop[us] fran. illico flexis genibus et sublatis in caelum manibus in hunc modum orare coepit: Submisse rogo omnipotentem Deum in cuius conspectu sto, ut si fides Catholica Romana quam profiteor non sit unice vera, terra subito dehiscat et me vivum absorbeat. Dum haec ille dice[bat] tremebat toto corpore Praesul et confusis vocibus magnam animi perturbationem prae se tulit, ad quam irascens filio Pater cum indignatione facessere inde iubet quocirca di[s]cessit Fran. et licet de re tota altum ipse premeret silentium, percrebuit tamen inter Catholicos statim provocationis huius fama, et tanquam de parta victoria de Primate sectae contrariae merito omnes laetati sunt. Quin etiam haec ipsa historia relata post modum ipsi Pontifici Urbano 8 et Cardinali Barberino ab Illustrissimo Comite Westmedano[661] Hiberno in suo ad Urbem accessu, mirum est quantum utrosque exhilaravit prout ipsemet Westmedanus Patribus deinde Coll'Anglicani suo ore retulit.

36. Post aliquot septimanas in carcere sic exactos[662] perductus tandem ad examen est coram duobus Consiliariis Regiis, et cum duplex crimen ipsi impingeretur 1° quod praedicta verba contumeliosa in Religionem Protestantium protulisset, ortum scilicet habuisse ex

[660] St Epiphanius of Salamis (d. 402) composed a tract (entitled *Panarion*) giving all heresies known to him, with refutation. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.*

[661] Richard Nugent (1583–1642), created 1st earl of Westmeath in 1621, *DIB.*

[662] *Recte* 'exactas' to agree with 'septimanas'.

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fe[mo]ralibus Henrici 8. 2° quod persuadere aliis conatus fuisset fidem Catholicam quod per leges Anglicanas sub paena perduellionis est prohibitum. Ad 1um, ingenue fassus est se verba illa protulisse sed ioco et privatim cum marito sororis suae ut contumeliam ab ipso in Pontifice ioco impactam simili ioco et phrasi in Anglia satis communi retorqueret. Ad 2um fassus etiam est se conatum esse persuadere alii[663] viam unicam ad salutem attingere ad quam ipsemet aspirabat, et cum Consiliarius alter inferret, id crimen esse secundum leges laesae Majestatis respondit ille, si ita sit, diffiteri nequeo, nec infectum reddere valeo. Atque ita iudicio abductus est.

37. Cum primum Romae rescitum fuisset ipsum in vincula coniectum fuisse, mirum dictu est quantopere adlaboravit Em. Cardinalis Barberini ut eum libertati restitueret, eum in finem efficacissimas litteras statim ad Reginam Angliae[664] dedit, et ad Ducissam praeterea Sabaudiae[665] alias scripsit rogando ne ipsa apud sororem suam Reginam Angliae pro libertate fran[cisci] intercederet. Demum tantum effecit ut Regina Angliae tot Magnat[um] precibus pulsata curavit scribendum per suum P. Confessorem ad franc[isc]um, videret quid desideraret, se [omnino] id effecturam

(2r) 37. Hinc ut putatur cum sententia alioquin exilii in ipsum ferenda esset, primam exemptus carcere [ ] datus est in custodiam Illustrisissimo Comiti de Castelhaven[666] qui Catholico ferventisso pro illius libertate multum diuque antea desudaverat, et aedes suas pro custodia obtulerat.

38. His in aedibus[667] biennium ferme vixit[668] tanta cum omnium admiratione et stupore ut Illustrissimus Comes serio postea P. Rectori Collegii Anglicani Romae affirmavit, se diligenter ipsum et toto illo tempore observasse et postea in Gallia ubi per annum ferme integrum simul traduxerunt, nec tamen vel otiosum verbum nedum quid affine culpae in eo unquam deprehendisse. Addebat expectare se auditurum si forte Franc. ante ipsum moriatur et in incepto virtutis

[663] *Recte* 'aliis'.

[664] Queen Henrietta Maria (1609–1669), *ODNB*. She was consort of Charles I and was the daughter of Henri IV of France and Marie de'Medici and a sister of Christine Marie, who became duchess of Savoy.

[665] Christine Marie de France (1606–1663), duchess of Savoy. M. Prevost and R. D'Amat (eds), *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française* (Paris, 1959), *sub nomine*.

[666] James Touchet (bapt. 1612–1684), became 3rd earl of Castlehaven on execution of his father in 1631, *ODNB*.

[667] 'fer' deleted.

[668] 'vixit' interlined; in fact FS merely spent several months in summer 1635 in the earl's household.

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studio perseveret, qualia non nisi[669] de Magnis Dei famulis audiri solent.

39. Hac insigni morum compositione iam tum effectum est ut pro Religioso et Jesuita a multis partim haberetur, ita ut Patris nomine a pluribus prima fronte[670] (quanquam holoserica splenderet veste) consalutatus fuerit, quin ipsi cauponarii et opifices praesertim in Gallia Parisii [Lu]gduni et alibi cum ad ipsos accederet non alio fere quam Patris nomine (prout testatus est idem Illustrissimus Comes) eum compellabant

Interrogavit illum serio aliquando Mater sua num rerum esset quod de futuro illius Religioso statu vulgo spargebatur, quod eum ille facete elusisset, pressius rogavit illa, vis ergo coniugari? volo inquit ipse.[671] et uxorem ducere? etiam uxorem (respondit) ducam. et liberos habiturus es? etiam liberos ait ille si Deus dederit habiturus sum, omnia spiritualiter intelligendo. licet enim de paranda illi uxore opulenta et praenobile saepius ab amicis agitaretur, nunquam tamen anello pactus est se a proposito Castitatis in Religione quam prae omnibus mundi divitiis et voluptatibus constanter adamabat.

40. Vocatus tandem a P. Gen[erale] Romam ad persequenda ibi studia alacriter[672] statim obedivit et accepto praetextu fugae ex persecutione quam ipsi quidam ex affinibus propter conversionem sororis suae denuo[673] adornabat clam Patre ex Hibernia in Angliam inde in Galliam se subtraxit, ubi in antiquum hospitem suum Illustrissimum Comitem de Cast[674] incidens ab eo fere annum tradendum ipsi Matheseos causa detentus est.

41. In Gallia cum Laudunum[675] progressus esset una cum Illustrissimo Comite et fratre suo Henrico[676] ad videndos celebres illo energumenarum exorcism[os] iamque ecclesiam quandam in qua exorcizabatur daemon simul ingressi essent, Apagite inquit daemon qui pietatem tantam prae vob[is] fertis, quare vos Religiosos vos non eff[er]tis? Sed unus inqu[it] vestrum Religiosus erit, reliqui duo longe sunt a tale proposito quod verissimum fuit

(2v)

669 'non nisi' interlined.
670 'prima fronte' interlined.
671 'ille' deleted.
672 'alacriter' interlined.
673 'denuo' interlined.
674 James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven.
675 Loudun, France.
676 Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613).

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42. Alias ibidem sed in alia Ecclesia, cum franc[iscus] daemoni lingua Anglicana et abstrusis vocabulis[677] in no[min]e Domini imperasset ut creatorem suam adoraret, utque terram oscularetur et pulvere lingua sua lamberet, fecit id totum licet cum magna relucta[tione] daemon indignans se ad ea etiam per saecularem cogi; et sub finem exorcismi cum congesta in unum cumulum multorum illic praesentium rosaria, reliquiaria, et numismata suis dominis distincte reddere iuberetur, Francisco restituit[678] reliquiariam thecam suam nominib[us] Jesu et Mariae insignitam, licet ab alio quopiam clam in cumulum coniectam, addidi[t]que: Accipe magne serve Dei qui patrimonium paternum pro amore Domini sui contemptisti, vexillum fidei tuae etc et tum ne fratri quidem non nota fuerat intentio francisci de patrimonio deserendo[679] multo minus aliquibus externis.

43. Romam postquam pervenisset, obtulit ei Cardinalis Barberinus locum in familia sua iamque habitationem in Cancellaria parari ipsi iusserat. Sed recusavit franciscus, submisse rogans ut sub protectione Eminentiae Suae in Collegio Angl[orum] sibi viveret[680] liceret iam iam sic[681] faciendum decreveratum Patris Generalis ad finem [usque] Philosophiae. Annuat Cardinalis, sed tunc obtulit ut cubiculum ibi separatum et famulum saltem[682] acceptaret se tanquam Protectorem Collegii cum ipso super his libenter dispensaturum. Verum et hoc modeste recusavit, et P. Rectorem[683] insuper vehementer ursit ne quid sibi indulgenter concedi prae caeteris sive in victu sive in vestitu sive in cubiculo ullatenus pateretur.

44. In ipso statim ingressu in Collegium sp[e] solidum vitae novae fundamentum iacere desiderans exercitia spiritualia exp[e]tit et magnis ad virtutem omnem motibus perfecit. Ad contemptum suimet sibi altius imprimend[us] rogavit Confessarium ut sibi a Superiore licentiam impetradit flagellandi se publice in Refectorio tanquam servum malum inutilem, et indignum sancto Alumnorum caetu.

45. In Collegio regularum etiam minimarum diligens observator fuit et relictas fere ab aliis consuetudines pias ubi id ex superiorum voluntate futurum intellexit in praxim revocavit. Non erubuit a

[677] 'et abstrusis vocabulis' inserted.
[678] 'thecam' deleted.
[679] 'de patrimonio deserendo' inserted.
[680] An eror: the infinitive 'vivere' would be expected here.
[681] 'iam iam sic' inserted.
[682] 'saltem' inserted.
[683] Thomas Fitzherbert SJ (1552–1640) served as rector of English College, Rome, 1619–1639. McCoog, *English and Welsh Jesuits*, 170.

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Praefecto vel Vice Praefecto iuniorum in se licentiam petere quoties exiret e cubiculo (quanquam alii id non facerent) quia antiqua Regula sic praecip[i]ebat.

46. Nihil nisi ex praescripto Superiorum agebat, ad quorum nutum (licet alioqui esset capacissimo ingenio) se in omnem partem facile instar pueri flectebat.

47. Valde serio affirmavit Illustrissimus et Piissimus Comes de Castlehaven cum Romae esset se plus pietatis ex illius consortio ha[b]esse quam ex ullo alio humano medio. Si quid ipse virtutis in se haberet, totum se id francisco secundum Deum debere. + Novisse se plures et plures in Hib[ern]ia qui ex solo Francisci aspectu et [c]olloquio vigentes ad virtutem stimulos percepissent.

[+ *Margin, but deleted*: A[ffir]mavit idem Illustrissimus Comes P. Rectori Collegii Angl[orum] et P. Thomae Fitzharbartus[684]]

(3r) De P. fran. Slinghisbaeo

48. Toto biennio ferme quo in Collegio Anglicano Philosophi[e] studuit, virtutum omnium exemplum Alumnis caeteris fuit. Regulas vel minimas maximi faciebat, nec ad illarum transgressionem vel[685] aliorum exemplo vel quod obsoletas viderentur adduci se sinebat. exemplo sit:[686] inter alias Collegii illius Regulas est ut Alumni egressuri cubiculis veniam petant a Praefectis cubiculorum (qui maturiores Alumni et Sacerdotes plerumque sunt) vel saltem eosdem moneant si ad Superiores sese conferant. In desuetudinem ferme venerat haec Regula ex nimia Praefectorum indulgentia tamen quod praescriberetur in Regulis quae ad mensam menstruatim omnibus praelegi solent, re communicata cum superiore, statuit illam Franciscus sibi observandam, observavitque exacte quoties exibat e cubiculo, dehortantibus licet Praefectis ipsis prae verecundia quadam ne id facer[e] quibus aliisque similia dissuadentibus respondere solebat, nolle se pro tantillo labore tanti meriti iacturam facere.

49. Unum aliquem ex sociis maturioribus et magis spirituali profectui addictus superiore approbante[687] adhibere solebat in monitorem sibi, conveneratque inter eos ut alter alterius mores in omnibus censorio oculo inspiceret, tum diebus sabbatinis vesperi in choram secedentes flexis genibus alternatim audiebant quid alter in altero

[684] Thomas Fitzherbert, rector, English College, Rome, 1619–1639.
[685] 'vel' inserted.
[686] 'exemplo sit' inserted.
[687] 'superiore approbante' inserted.

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per septimanam minus decore aut recte actum adnotasset, id quod verique ad insignem virtutem magno plane adiumento fuit.

50. Nihil illo mansuetius, nihil candidius; columbinam plane simplicitatem induerat ita ut irasci nunquam[688] (quamvis ab aliis ut inter studiosos fit subinde provocatus aut agitatus) visus fuerit.

51. Orationis donum praeclarum omnino a Deo[689] nactus fuerat ita ut in reddendo rationem conscientiae suo confessario, fassus sit se raro aut nunquam [*Margin*: De voto particulari ipsius et sanctis propositis vide in libello quo secret[a] animi sensa notavit] ferme distractiones pati, ariditatem tamen et desolationem quadam animi saepe prout visum est Domino probare servum suum.

52. Ad disciplinas ieiunia cilicia caeterasque corporis afflictiones propensus valde fuit ut a Confess[ari]o fraenandus fuerit. Bis ordinarie in hebdomada flagello in se saeviebat, et cum loci commoditas subinde deesset petebat a Confessario eunte, ad mensam secundam vesperi, clavem cubiculi ut in eo[690] occultius clam omnibus ut liberius suas devotiones perageret.

51[691] Denique toto tempore quo inter Alumnos in Collegio illo vixit non aliter pro ratione loci[692] sese ponit, quam in Religione sese gesserunt B. Aloysius[693] aut[694] Jo[hann]es Berchmans[695] (3v) quorum vitas egrie[696] aemulabatur, adeo ut illius Confesarius saepius sancte affirmaverit, raro se in illius confessionibus materiam etiam sufficientem invenisse nisi repetita ex vita ante conversionem acta.

52. Valetudinis causa iussus est per aestatem anni 1640 et 1641 Tibur et Tusculum[697] concedere et[698] in Tusculana quidem villa ubi inter

[688] 'nunquam' inserted.
[689] 'a Deo' inserted.
[690] 'in eo' inserted.
[691] Numeration as given in manuscript.
[692] 'loci' inserted.
[693] Aloysius Gonzaga (1568–1591), Italian Jesuit student. He died serving plague victims in Rome, was beatified 1605, and was canonized 1726. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.
[694] 'aut' inserted.
[695] John Berchmans (1599–1621), Flemish Jesuit student. He died in Rome, was beatified 1865, and canonized 1888. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.
[696] *Recte* 'egregie'.
[697] 'Tibur' refers to 'Tiburtinum' (Tivoli) and 'Tusculum' refers to 'Tusculanum' (Frascati), where the Jesuit Roman Province had houses. Hamy, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire des domicilies*, 2.
[698] 'qui' deleted.

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Nostros degebat eodem plane modo se in omnibus gerebat ac si in Collegio esset, ad[ ] enim ibi humilitatis exercitio quod cum nostro fratre Coad[iuto]re[699] in culina scutellas[700] saepe lavabat tergebatque.

53. Cum biennii finis appeteret in Collegio, monitus est ut sacros ordines susciperet, et sic se ad ingressum in Religionem ad quam velut ad alteram Rachelem[701] toto iam septennio et amplius anhelaverat se praeparet. Ad hos igitur magno fervore se accinxit, et tandem die … [702] Julii 1641 sacerdotio initiatus est. Officium divinum, et Messam magna semper cum attentione et reverentia recitavit.

54. festum Beati francisci Borgiae[703] pro ingressu suo in Novitiatum elegit, atque ita pridie eius diei viz 30 Septembris 1641[704] comitantibus de more Alumnis colleg[is] suis ad domum probationis S. Andreae in Monte Quirinali perrexit et mox Habitum ibi relig[i]osum quem animo diu antea gestaverat etiam corpore induit.

56. Cum ante ingressum de sanitate ipsius addubitaretur a nonnullis, et de mittendo illo prius Tusculum[705] ad corroborandos vires locutus fuisset Collegii [Rector] Cardinali Barberino, subiunxit Cardinalis subvereri se ne propter infermam valetudinem ferre non posset Religionis onera, quare iterum ac serio magno animi sensu,[706] obtulit illi familiam suam, affirmans gratissimo id sibi futurum, et quandiu sibi suppeteret, futurum coen[ ] panem.

57. Consideratissimus erat in omnibus quae agebat, ac ratione plurimum utebatur, unde nihil temere aggrediebatur, nec devotionis impetu indiscrete[707] se abripum patibatur sed re bene ponderata ad [ ] consilio fere in omnibus Superiorum quando ad eum poterat. tantoque erat prudentia naturalis et consilii in eo donum ut iam tum designaretur ab omnibus in magno Societatis superiorem.

[699] *frater coadiutor*: Jesuit brother (as distinct from priest).

[700] Variant of 'scutula': little dish or platter.

[701] The biblical figure Rachel first appears in Genesis 29, where it is recounted that Jacob must work for seven years to win her hand.

[702] Blank.

[703] Francisco de Borja [Borgia] (1510–1572), Spanish Jesuit. He was elected 3rd general, Society of Jesus, in 1565. He died on 30 September 1572 and was beatified in 1624. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, II, 1605–1611.

[704] '1641' inserted in different ink.

[705] Frascati, in Alban Hills, east of Rome.

[706] 'magno animi sensu' inserted.

[707] 'indiscrete' inserted.

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58. Humillimus erat in conversatione et in despicientia sui solide fundatus, unde errores suos si quos subinde incidereat et tarditatem quandam naturae cui obnoxius erat[708] libenter et palam profitebatur et exameni in Philosophia subiecit se prompte (quanquam propter invaletudinem exemi facile potuisset) dictitans nolle se decipi homines circa ipsum et existimare, scire ipsum plusquam revera sciret.

59. Modestia vultus et exterioris hominis compositio tanta fuit, ut omnes quibuscum egerit in sui admirationem rapuerit, nihil in illo unquam leve, nihil inordinatum, nullum unquam verbum aut elusum aut iracundum audivisses, sed eadem perpetuo serenitasque vultus morumque candor in omnibus elucebant ut (4r) certe de illo dixeris quod de fratre suo Humberto dixit S. Bernardus:[709] *Erat*[710] *humilis corde, dulcis sermone, strenuus opere* (in studiis)[711] *fervens caritate, in commisso fidelis, in consilio circumspectus et prudens. Compositus erat super omnes homines quos viderim in diebus istis, unus et idem perseverans omni tempore et omni hora.*

Quae in Novitiatu egerit petenda sunt inde quomodo mortuus, Neapoli

Translation

(1r) 32. While he was in prison, a flourishing throng of Catholics of all kinds came to visit him, so that there was a continuous series of visits threaded together from morning to evening almost every day. In this remarkable situation, lest those visits, with the honour they conveyed, should raise him above himself, God's mercy shone forth [upon him] to the right extent, allowing him to be inwardly disquieted and afflicted by anxieties. Hence even though in his body he was present for the visitors, mentally he was torn away by his anxieties, so much so that because of them he obtained scarcely any rest.

33. While he was in detention his father frequently sent him numerous heretical books. Although he had been given a licence to read such works, issued by the Holy Inquisition in Rome before his departure [from Rome],[712] he did not wish to accept them under another law from his father unless the latter in turn would read other Catholic

[708] 'et tarditatem quandam naturae cui obnoxius erat' inserted.

[709] The following quotation is from St Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Sermo in obitu Domni Humberti', J. Leclercq and H. Rochais (eds), *S. Bernardi Opera*, V: *Sermones II* (Rome, 1968), 444. I am grateful to Bernard Joassart for facilitating access to this volume.

[710] Author omits 'ergo'.

[711] Author adds '(in studiis)'.

[712] Permission granted to FS to read heretical books, 27 April 1634. ACDF, Decreta 1634, fo. 81r.

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books which he himself submitted; his father did so, although not with the benefit that had been wished for.

34. While he remained in that place [i.e. in prison], the Chancellor of Ireland,[713] who is also the Pseudo-Bishop of Londonderry,[714] repeatedly sent him greetings, inviting him to have a conference about religion. Francis steadfastly replied to him that he had no doubts about anything which the Catholic Church teaches, and therefore the arrival of his most honourable lordship would be futile. At length, however, worn down by that wheedling man's importunity, he replied that he was prepared to hear whatever his most honourable lordship had to say, so as to set himself free from this in the best way he could. On the following day the other man [Bramhall] came to the fortress [Dublin Castle], and after a long disputation with Francis about communion in the two forms,[715] at length he went away and never again attempted to return.

35. At another time, while he was still in his paternal home, his father, so as to pervert[716] him, took him along with him to the Pseudo-Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland.[717] That man is famous among the heterodox by his reputation for erudition. When they came to him, the archbishop tried by many arguments to prove that the Roman Church had strayed into various errors, and that the time of desertion predicted in the Apocalypse[718] had already arrived. To this Francis replied modestly that others, fathers who were saints and commentators, had interpreted those passages differently, and that he would give credence rather to their interpretation, especially since other arguments demonstrated the certain truth of the Catholic faith. And conversely, by argumentation against the Protestants, he then added the falsehood of their faith. A religion cannot be true

[713] Adam Loftus, viscount Loftus of Ely (1568–1643), appointed lord chancellor of Ireland, 1619, *ODNB*.

[714] John Bramhall (bapt. 1594–1663), consecrated Church of Ireland bishop of Derry, 26 May 1634, *ODNB*. The author may have been misinformed, or misunderstood his information concerning these two positions.

[715] Holy communion under bread and wine. In the Roman Church the chalice was reserved to the celebrant at mass, whereas it was shared with the laity in the churches of the Reformation. It was a frequent point of dispute between the Christian denominations in the wake of the Reformation. In 1628, Bramhall engaged in a similar dispute in Yorkshire with recusants in North Allerton. John McCafferty, *The Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian Reforms, 1633–1641* (Cambridge, 2007), 30–31 (I am grateful to John McCafferty for a discussion of Bramhall's interest in disputing with recusants).

[716] To pervert: 'to turn (any one) aside from a right to a false or erroneous religious belief or system (i.e. from what the speaker or writer holds to be such)', *OED*.

[717] James Ussher (1581–1656), appointed archbishop of Armagh, 1625.

[718] The New Testament book of Revelation (or Apocalypse).

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if it teaches even one manifest heresy; but your Protestant religion teaches a manifest heresy.[719] When the archbishop denied the minor premise, Francis proved it as follows: your religion teaches that it is not permitted to pray for the dead, but this ancient heresy was numbered among the heresies both by St. Augustine[720] and by Saint Epiphanius,[721] therefore it teaches at least one manifest heresy. Here the archbishop, horrified, straightaway interjected some little remark: in antiquity the word heresy was more frequently taken to mean any discrepancy of opinion, and in this sense it is called heresy by those saints. Here when much had been said, at length Francis, so as to be free of the unpleasantness of such arguments, (1v) humbly asked the archbishop: would he deem it worthy to do for his religion the service that he, Francis, was prepared to do for the Catholic faith? When the archbishop had enquired what this was, there and then Francis, on bended knees and raising his hands to heaven, began to pray in this manner: Humbly I ask Almighty God, in whose sight I stand, that if the Roman Catholic faith which I profess is not the only true one, let the earth suddenly open and swallow me alive! While he was saying this, the prelate trembled all over his body, and with confused sounds he showed signs of being greatly perturbed. Infuriated by this, Francis's father indignantly ordered him [Francis] to leave that place, wherefore he went away, and although he himself kept a deep silence about all that had happened, nonetheless news of his challenge immediately spread abroad among the Catholics, and taking it as a victory scored over the primate of the hostile sect, for good reason they were all overjoyed. And indeed, when this very story was afterwards told to Pope Urban VIII himself and Cardinal Barberini by the most honourable Earl of Westmeath,[722] Irishman, on his arrival in Rome, it was remarkable how this story delighted both of them, as Westmeath himself afterwards personally related to the fathers of the English College.

36. After spending some weeks in prison, at length he was taken for examination before two royal councillors,[723] and a twofold crime was imputed to him: 1°, that he had uttered the previously mentioned insulting words about the religion of Protestants, namely that it had

[719] Abbreviated word here in Latin; unclear.

[720] St Augustine of Hippo (354–430).

[721] St Epiphanius of Salamis (*c.*315–402) composed a tract (entitled *Panarion*) giving all heresies known to him, with refutation. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.

[722] Richard Nugent (1583–1642), created 1st earl of Westmeath, 1621, *DIB*; in early 1635, the earl and four of his family visited Loreto and Rome, and on 25 April they dined in the English College. Foley (ed.), *Records*, VI, 611.

[723] Members of the Irish privy council may be intended here.

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originated out of Henry VIII's underpants;[724] 2°, that he had tried to convert others to the Catholic faith, which according to the laws of England was prohibited under the penalties for treason.[725] On point 1, he frankly declared that he had uttered those words, but jokingly and privately to his sister's husband, so as to return the insult which the latter had directed against the pope with a similar jocular phrase fairly common in England. On point 2, he declared also that he had tried to convert others to the only path to attain salvation, to which he himself aspired; and when the other councillor drew the conclusion that this was a crime according to the laws of lèse-majesté, he replied: if the fact is so, I cannot deny it, nor am I able to render it undone. And accordingly he was taken away for judgment.

37. When first it was learned in Rome that he had been thrust into prison, it was astonishing how assiduously his eminence Cardinal Barberini[726] went to work to have him restored to liberty. To that end he immediately despatched an extremely cogent letter to the Queen of England;[727] he wrote another to the Duchess of Savoy,[728] asking her to intercede for Francis's liberty with her sister the English queen. At last his representations were so effective that the Queen of England, moved by the appeals of so many high dignitaries, then had a letter written by her father confessor to Francis, so that she might see what he desired, and she would ensure that his wish was entirely fulfilled.

(2r) 37. Hence because, as it was believed, a sentence of exile was otherwise due to be passed on him, firstly he was released from prison and given for constraint into the custody of the most honourable Earl of Castlehaven,[729] a most fervent Catholic, who for a long time before had made intensive efforts for his release and had offered his own dwelling as a place of custody.

[724] Literally, thigh covering. The jest regarding Henry VIII was evidently in the preceding section of this text, which has not survived.

[725] By a statute of 1581, 'Act to retain the Queen's Majesty's subjects in their due obedience' (23 Eliz. 1 c.1), it became a treasonable offence to convert or be converted to the Roman Catholic faith.

[726] Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597–1679).

[727] Queen Henrietta Maria (1609–1669), *ODNB*. She was consort of Charles I, a daughter of Henri IV of France and Marie de'Medici and a sister of Henrietta Maria was Christine Marie, who became duchess of Savoy.

[728] Christine Marie de France (1606–1663), duchess of Savoy. M. Prevost and R. D'Amat (eds), *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française* (Paris, 1959), *sub nomine*.

[729] James Touchet (bapt. 1612–1684), became 3rd earl of Castlehaven on the execution of his father in 1631, *ODNB*.

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38. Francis lived for almost two years in this dwelling, with astonished admiration from all, as the most honourable earl afterwards earnestly declared to Fr Rector[730] of the English College in Rome. The earl had diligently observed him throughout all this time and afterwards in France, where they spent almost an entire year together, and yet he had never heard him utter even an idle word, let alone a word associated with guilt. He added that, if Francis should happen to die before him, assuming he had sustained the zeal for virtue that he showed initially, then he [the earl of Castlehaven] expected he would hear such things about him as one normally hears only about great servants of God.

39. Such was his excellent disposition and conduct, already at that time it had caused him to be taken by many, for the most part, for a religious and a Jesuit. So he was addressed by numerous people by the name of Father on first encounter (although he was brightly dressed all in silk); and even the shopkeepers and workmen, especially in France (in Paris, Lyons and elsewhere), when he approached them, they did not address him hardly by any other title than father (as that same most honourable earl has attested).

Once his mother asked him earnestly whether what was commonly rumoured, that in future he was to be a religious, corresponded with fact. When he pleasantly evaded the question, she asked him more precisely: do you wish to marry, then? I do want to, he said. And to take a wife? I will also (he replied) take a wife. And will you have children? I will have children too, he said, if God should give them (understanding all this in a spiritual sense). Although frequently he was urged by his friends to set about acquiring for himself a wealthy wife, of a distinguished noble family, nonetheless he never sealed an engagement with a ring, being resolved upon chastity in religious life, which he steadfastly loved above all the wealth and pleasures of the world.

40. At length he was called by Fr General[731] to Rome to study there. Immediately, with alacrity, he obeyed, and availing of the pretext of fleeing from persecution (which one of his relatives was preparing

[730] FS merely stayed several months in the earl's household. Thomas Fitzherbert SJ (1552–1640), rector, 1619-1639, *ODNB*. It is not clear if and when the earl of Castlehaven was in the English College, Rome. He arrived in Rome on 30 March 1639, when he received King Charles's letter asking him to join the king on his journey to York, and soon left Rome for England. Sir William Hamilton to Secretary Windebank, 31 March/10 April 1639. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I. 1638–1639* (London, 1871), 629. The earl is not mentioned among the visitors to the College; the author may be confounding the earl with his brother, Mervin Touchet, who dined there about 1 November 1639. Foley (ed.), *Records*, VI, 619.

[731] Muzio Vitelleschi SJ, father general of the Society of Jesus in years 1615–1645.

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anew for him, on account of the conversion of his sister), he covertly left his father in Ireland, going to England and thence to France. There he happened to meet his host of earlier times, the most honourable earl of Castlehaven, by whom he was detained, spending almost a year with him, because of mathematics.[732]

41. In France he travelled to Loudon,[733] together with the most honourable earl and his brother Henry,[734] to see there the famous exorcisms of women who are possessed. As soon as they entered a certain church where a demon was being exorcised, Away with you, said the demon, you who bring so much piety before you; why do you not raise yourselves to the rank of religious? But one of you, he said, will be a religious; the other two are a long way from any such resolution (which was perfectly true).

(2v) 42. At another time, in the same town but in a different church, Francis, speaking abstruse words in English, commanded a demon in the name of God to adore his Creator and to kiss the ground and lick the dust with his tongue. And the demon fully did so, although with great reluctance, indignant at being subjected to such compulsion by a layman; and shortly before the end of the exorcism, when distinctly ordered by Francis to return to their owners rosaries, reliquaries and coins [or medals] belonging to many people there present, all piled in a heap, the demon restored to Francis a reliquary case of his own marked with the names of Jesus and Mary, although covertly thrown into the heap by someone else, and he added the words: Great servant of God, who has spurned your paternal inheritance for the love of God, take hold of the standard of your faith, etc. And at that time Francis's brother, much less any unrelated persons, knew nothing at all about Francis's intention of renouncing his patrimony.

43. After he had come to Rome, Cardinal Barberini offered him a place in his household, and he ordered accommodation to be prepared for him in the Chancery.[735] But Francis refused, humbly requesting that under the protection of his eminence he might be

[732] Castlehaven was keen to study mathematics with Slingsby while they were travelling together in France.

[733] A town in France, south-west of Tours. On the exorcisms in Loudun in the 1630s, see Michel De Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago and London, 2000); Sarah Berber, *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern France* (London and New York, 2004), 135–140.

[734] Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613).

[735] Palazzo della Cancelleria: residence of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, appointed vice-chancellor of the Holy Roman Church in 1632. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-barberini_(Dizionario-Biografico)/?search=BARBERINI%2C%20Francesco (accessed 30 November 2023).

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permitted to reside forthwith in the English College, there to do what Fr General had determined until the end of the philosophy course. The cardinal agreed, but then he offered Francis that at least he could receive a separate room and a personal servant; he himself as Protector of the College would gladly make available to him still more. But in fact he modestly refused this also, and he furthermore earnestly urged Fr Rector[736] not to allow anything at all to be granted in special favour to himself more than others, whether in food, clothing or accommodation.

44. Immediately upon his entering the College, wishing to lay a solid foundation for a new life, he desired spiritual exercises and performed them fully, with powerful movements towards virtue of all kinds. In order to impress himself more strongly with self-contempt, he asked his confessor to obtain for him from the superior permission to flog himself publicly in the refectory as a bad and unprofitable servant, unworthy of the students' godly assembly.

45. In the College he diligently observed the rules, even the least of them, and he brought back into practice pious customs that had almost been abandoned by the others, when he knew that this would conform to his superiors' will. He did not blush to seek permission from the prefect or vice-prefect of juniors whenever he left his room (although the others were not doing so) because the ancient rule so prescribed.

46. He used to do nothing except with the sanction of his superiors, and in every way he yielded to their expressed will like a boy (although otherwise he had a most capable intelligence).

47. The most honourable and most pious earl of Castlehaven declared in profound earnest, when he was in Rome, that he gained more piety from Francis's company than from any other human means. If he had any pious virtue in himself, he owed it all to Francis, under God. He knew a great many people in Ireland who, purely from Francis's appearance and conversation, had felt vigorous impulses towards virtue.

[*Margin, but deleted*: (What) the most honourable earl declared to Fr Rector of the English College, Fr Thomas Fitzherbert]

(3r) 48. During the period of almost two years when he studied philosophy in the English College, he was an example of all the virtues to the other students. He obeyed even the smallest rules to the utmost, nor did he permit himself to be induced to transgress either by the example of others or because [the rules] seemed to be

[736] Thomas Fitzherbert SJ (d. 6 August 1640), rector, English College Rome, 1619–1639.

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obsolete. To take one example: among other rules of that College, there is one that students who wish to leave their rooms should ask permission of the room prefects (who for the most part are the more mature students, and priests), or at least inform them if they are going to confer with their superiors. This rule had practically fallen into disuse because of the prefects' excessive indulgence. Nevertheless, because it is prescribed in the rules[737] that are customarily read to all at table once monthly, Francis, having communicated with his superior about this, resolved that he ought to observe it. He observed it exactly, however many times he left the room; even if the prefects themselves from embarrassment dissuaded him, he replied to them as he normally responded to others who were saying the same, that he did not want to sacrifice so much merit on account of so little trouble.

49. With his superior's approval, he used to consult one of the more mature fellow-students, one of those most devoted to spiritual progress, as his mentor. There was an agreement between them that each would inspect the conduct of the other in all things with a critical eye. Then on Saturday evening they would go apart into the choir, and on bended knees they would hear alternately what each one had noted in the other's actions during the week that was less appropriately done, or rightly done. And truly, that was of evidently great assistance towards achieving eminent virtue.

50. No one was more placid than he, no one was more candid: plainly he put on the simplicity of the dove, so that he was never seen to become angry (although as happens among students, from time to time he was provoked or disturbed by others).

51. From God he had received a gift of prayer that was altogether outstanding, so that in giving his account of conscience to his confessor, he said that he rarely or almost never [*Margin*: On a particular vow of his and his holy resolutions, see the little book[738] where he noted down the secret movements of his soul] suffered distractions; but however there was frequently an aridity and a certain despondency of mind, according as it pleased the Lord to put his servant to the test.

[737] On the daily and weekly routine prescribed for the students, see Maurice Whitehead, '"Established and putt in good order": The Venerable English College, Rome, under Jesuit administration, 1579–1685', in James Kelly and Hannah Thomas (eds), *Jesuit Intellectual and Physical Exchange between England and Mainland Europe, c.1580–1789* (Leiden and Boston, 2019), 315–336, here, 326–329.

[738] This book is not extant.

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52. He was greatly disposed towards the disciplines,[739] fasting, hair-shirts, and other corporal afflictions, to the point where he had to be restrained by his confessor. Normally twice in the week he used to flog himself with ferocity, and since frequently a convenient place was lacking, he used to ask his confessor who was leaving for the second sitting [of the evening meal] for the key of his room, so that he could conduct his devotions there, more covertly and unknown to everyone and with more freedom.

51.[740] Finally, during all the time when he lived among the students in that College he conducted himself as befitted that place, in just the same way as Blessed Aloysius[741] or John Berchm[ans],[742] (3v) whose lives he emulated outstandingly, had borne themselves in religious life. And hence his confessor very often solemnly affirmed that in his confessions he had rarely found sufficient material, unless it were things repeated from the life he had led before his conversion.

52. For reasons of health, he was ordered to withdraw to Tivoli and Frascati[743] for the summer of the years 1640 and 1641. In a villa in Frascati where he stayed with members of ours [i.e. Jesuits], he conducted himself in all things entirely as if he had been in the College. [The only addition] there was an exercise of humility in which he, with a Jesuit brother, often washed and scrubbed dishes in the kitchen.

53. When the end of his two-year term in the College was approaching, he was advised to take holy orders, and accordingly he prepared himself to enter religious life, which he had eagerly desired, like another Rachel,[744] for seven years and more. For this he equipped himself with great fervour, and at length on the [ ][745] day of July 1641

[739] A small whip of about five cords. At the tip of each was attached a sharp piece of metal. In religious life in the early modern era it was used for self-flagellation. For a historical overview of this ascetical practice, see Paul Bailly, 'Flagellants', in M. Viller et al. (eds), *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire*, V (Paris, 1964), cols 392–408.

[740] The numeration of paragraphs begins once more at 51; this appears to be a scribal oversight.

[741] Aloysius Gonzaga (1568–1591), an Italian Jesuit student. He died serving plague victims in Rome, was beatified 1605, and was canonized 1726. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[742] John Berchmans (1599–1621), Flemish Jesuit student. He died in Rome, was beatified 1865, and was canonized 1888. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[743] 'Tibur' refers to 'Tiburtinum' (Tivoli) and 'Tusculum' refers to 'Tusculanum' (Frascati), in the hills east of Rome, where the Jesuit Roman Province had houses. Hamy, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire des domiciles*, 2.

[744] The biblical figure Rachel first appears in Genesis 29, where it is recounted that Jacob must work for seven years to win her hand.

[745] Blank. On 30 June 1641, in the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso (located in Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome), Slingsby was ordained priest. Kelly (ed.), *Liber Ruber*, 21

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he was ordained a priest. He always recited the divine office and the Mass with great attention and reverence.

54. He chose the feast of Blessed Francis Borgia[746] for his entry to the novitiate, and on the day preceding that feast day, i.e. 30 September 1641, with the customary escort of his fellow-students from the College he proceeded to the novitiate at Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, and soon afterwards he put on his body the religious habit which he had long before worn in his soul.

56.[747] Prior to his entry, some people had doubts about his health, and the college rector had spoken to Cardinal Barberini about sending him first to Frascati to build up his strength. The cardinal agreed that he too was apprehensive lest Francis should not be able to bear the burdens of religious life on account of feeble health. He therefore, yet again and in grave earnest, magnanimously offered him [a place in] his household, declaring that this would be most gratifying to him, and Francis would have full board there as long as he himself would have it.

57. He was most thoughtful in all that he did, using his reason to the utmost, so that he never undertook anything rashly, nor did he allow himself to be swept away imprudently by the vehemence of devotion: rather, he pondered the matter well, having regard in almost everything to the advice of superiors, when it was possible [for him to consult them]. His natural prudence and gift of counsel were so great that even there he was already marked out by all to become one of the Society's great superiors.

58. He was exceedingly humble in conversation, with a solid foundation of contempt for himself. Hence he gladly and openly acknowledged his errors, if he committed some from time to time and indulged a certain sluggishness of nature, which was a fault of his. He submitted himself promptly for the examination in philosophy (although on account of his ill-health he might easily have had exemption), saying that he did not wish men to be deceived regarding himself [i.e. his capability] and to think he knew more than in reality he did know.

59. Such was his modesty of countenance and the disposition of the exterior man, that all who had dealings with him were swept away in admiration for him. You would never have heard a word from him that was frivolous or intemperate, never a mocking or angry word; constantly he had the same serene expression and candour of conduct

[746] Francisco de Borja [Borgia] (1510–1572), Spanish Jesuit. He was elected 3rd general, Society of Jesus, 1565. He died on 30 September 1572 and was beatified on 23 November 1624. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, II, 1605–1611.

[747] The numeration of paragraphs jumps from 54 to 56.

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which shone forth in all his dealings, (4r) so that certainly you would have said about him what St. Bernard said of his brother Humbert: *He was humble of heart, sweet in speech, energetic at work* (or study)*, fervent in charity, faithful to his commitments, thoughtful and prudent in counsel. More than all other men whom I saw in those days, he was well-ordered, remaining one and the same in all seasons and at all moments.*[748]

Accounts of what he did during his novitiate must be sought in the place where he died, Naples.

[748] Quotation from St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), 'Sermo in obitu Domni Humberti', J. Leclercq and H. Rochais (eds), *S. Bernardi Opera*, V: *Sermones II* (Rome, 1968), 444.

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XIII KBR MS 3824-5, fos 80r-106v

Father Maurice Ward's account of FS, for the years 1634-1642, January 1643

(80r) P. Mauritii Wardaei Sacerdotis Hiberni	(80r) From Father Maurice Ward, Irish priest
Anno 1643[749]	In the year 1643
Relatio Brevis de vita et moribus Reverendi P. Francisci Slingisbaei e Societate Iesu, pro eo tempore, quo vitam saecularem egit in Hibernia, post quam fuisset ad fidem Catholicam conversus.	A brief account of the life and character of the Reverend Father Francis Slingsby of the Society of Jesus, during that time he lived a secular life in Ireland, after he had converted to the Catholic faith.

[749] In different hand from body of text.

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Felicis memoriae Reverendum Patrem Franciscum Slingisba[e]um e Societate Iesu probe novi in Hibernia, cum ibi, reversus ab urbe Roma post felicissimam suam conversionem ad fidem Catholicam, per aliquot annos commoratus, saecularem adhuc ageret vitam, cum eoque frequens occasio, et commoda opportunitas saepe familiarius conversari permisit, de cuius moribus et egregia pietate, hic breviter aliqua referam, quae de ipso ratione initae consuetudinis ignorare non potui; Et multo plura relatu digna recensere potuissem, Si aut studiosior fuissem virtutum illius observator, aut certe quod melius dixerim virtus illius captum meum non superavisset.

I knew quite well the Reverend Father Francis Slingsby, of happy memory, of the Society of Jesus in Ireland when he had returned there from Rome after his most blessed conversion to the Catholic faith. Living there for several years, he continued to lead a secular life, and I had the frequent opportunity and convenient occasion to have personal conversations with him. Here I will briefly report some things about his character and outstanding devotion of which I could not be ignorant because of his known customary ways. And I would have been able to cover many more things worth telling, if I had been a more careful observer of his virtues, or certainly I would have said it better if his virtue had not outstripped my capacity to appreciate it.

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Vix ille pedem in regno fixit, cum omnes boni Catholici, quibusquam agebat eius integritatem (80v) in pretio habere coeperunt, eamque admirari et predicare: Sed ingresso in regnum prima illa fuit cura, Reverendum admodum Patrem Robertum Nugentium Superiorem Societatis Iesu in illa missione, cum Illustrissima Domina Comitissa Kildariensi in castro suo commorantem, adire, eique rationem itineris sui, et animum explicare, ac preterea in eius obsequium se totum offerre, cum quo habita idonea conferentia, eius arbitrio dirigi se voluit, tam in modo vivendi, quam iis rebus quas suscipere proposuit, cui exactissimam deinceps obedientiam prestitit, admirabili sane promptitudine quacunque occasione ad illius voluntatem se confermans, ubi eam vel nutu solum perciperet, nullo respectu humano aut saecularis consuetudinis eum ab expedita executione retardante, ne quidem spiritualium consolationum, cum tamen solum rebus spiritualibus videretur oblectari;

Hardly had he set foot in the kingdom when all good Catholics with whom he dealt began to value his integrity, (80v) and to admire and talk about it. But on coming into the kingdom his first concern was to go to the Very Reverend Father Robert Nugent, the superior of the Society of Jesus in that mission, who was staying with the Most Honourable Lady Countess of Kildare[750] in her castle, and to explain to him the reason for his journey and his intention, and in addition to offer himself totally to his service. When he had had a suitable conference with him, he wanted to be directed by the superior's will, both in his manner of living and in the matters that he proposed to undertake; and [he] offered him the most exact obedience from then on, with quite wonderful promptness on whatever occasion bending himself to the superior's will, when he only perceived it even by a nod, slowed down in his speedy execution of that will by no human respect for secular custom nor even for spiritual consolations, although he seemed to delight only in spiritual matters.

[750] Elizabeth Fitzgerald, countess of Kildare (d. 1645), *DIB*. She gave Kilkea castle, county Kildare, to her kinsman Robert Nugent SJ for the use of the Jesuits. Robert Nugent SJ (1577–1652), Irish Jesuit mission superior, 1627–1646.

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Placuit interea piissimae matronae ignoti[751] iuvenis pietas, cuius mores sagaci observatione[752] coepit inspicere, situm corporis modestessimum, oris et membrorum compositos gestus, loquentis gratiam et maturitatem, denique odorare virtutem, eximiam quidem, et raram in iuventute, (81r) qua se mirifice recreari sensit; Et iam bene affecta erat erga tantam probitatem, Si quidem illa iam longo usu sanctorum hominum, non alios deligere consuevit quam eos quos in virtute eminentiores cognoscit, et cum his familiarius agere, cum aliis vero, qui eiusmodi non sint, non nisi ex necessitate:

Meanwhile the piety of the unknown youth pleased the highly devout lady. Through her keen observation, she began to see his character, his very modest posture, his well-mannered facial expression and gestures, the grace and maturity of his speech, and finally the fragrance of virtue, so fine and rare a thing in youth, (81r) and she felt wonderfully refreshed by this. And she had already been well disposed to such great goodness, since she had by long experience of holy persons become used to selecting only those whom she knew to be quite outstanding in virtue and to dealing with them in a familiar way, but with others who were not such [she dealt with] only when necessary.

[751] 'ignoti' inserted.
[752] 'observatione' inserted.

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At pater Nugentius francisci adventu nimirum laetus in quo aliquid magnum sibi pollicebatur (neque ille expectationem frustratus est) eum a se dimisit, ad visitandam matrem et alios quos sanguine propinquiores habuit: Nec multo post ille revertitur, uno agmine secum adducens et matrem et sororem, et fratrem, paratos omnes iam dimittere haeresim in qua ab ipsis incunabulis enutriti fuerunt, quae res tanto notabilior fuit, quanto plus difficultatis superandum intervenit: Nam mater a parente illius[753] iamdudum aspere satis tractabatur et inveterata dissidia animos illorum et habitationem dividebant (a multis enim annis ante non convixerant) et media quibus mater se sustentaret (81v) maritus coarctabat; quanto magis desolationem expectabat, si religionem mutaret; Et hoc ipsum quod timebat, eve[n]tus probavit; nam[754]

But Father Nugent was no doubt delighted at Francis's arrival, and had great expectations of him (and his expectations were not disappointed). He sent him off to visit his mother and his other closer kin. And not much later he returned, bringing with him mother and sister and brother in line,[755] all ready to renounce the heresy in which they had been nurtured from their cradles. This was all the more remarkable in view of the greater difficulty that had to be overcome. For his mother had for a long while been treated fairly roughly by his father, and deep-seated arguments had divided their spirits and their living quarters (they had not lived together for many years previously), and the husband was restricting the means by which the mother supported herself. (81v) She was expecting an even greater degree of abandonment if she changed her religion. And the very thing she feared turned out to be the case, for she suffered many

[753] 'illius' inserted
[754] 'illius' deleted.
[755] Dame Elizabeth Slingsby, Ann Cosby (married to Alexander Cosby), and Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613).

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plurimas illa deinceps calamitates perpessa est: soror autem praeter vultum parentis, etiam mariti sui indignationem metuebat, qui nihilo minus diversae religionis tenax fuit: Et frater qui a solo parente pendebat, non aliud quam aerumnas sibi imminere praevidebat: Omnes tamen neglectis periculis, Deo Duce et francisco fortes facti, ad Castrum comitessae Kildariensis accesserant,[756] quod asilum fuit tam Catholicis qui in vicinia ab haereticis vexabant[u]r, quam iis qui ad orthodoxam religionem se convertere[757] cupiebant: ibique P. Nugentius statu rerum et personarum inspecto,[758] fratrem quem magis maturum repperit paulo ante opera R. P. Gulielmi Malonii ad hoc dispositum Ecclesiae reconciliavit, mulieres vero[759] in alium tempus destulit, vel quia sexus fragilitatem metueret, vel quia facta idonea constantiae probatione id cedere in eam utilitatem iudicasset.

misfortunes from that time on. But his sister feared, beyond the displeasure of her father, the indignation of her husband as well: he adhered no less tenaciously to a different religion. And his brother, who depended entirely on his father, saw nothing but trouble looming for him in his future. All of these nevertheless, ignoring the dangers, emboldened by God leading them and by Francis, had come to the castle of the countess of Kildare, which was an asylum both for Catholics who were being troubled by heretics in that area and for those who wanted to convert to orthodox religion. And there Father Nugent, looking at the state of the situation and the individuals, reconciled to the Church the brother, whom he found more mature, a little earlier with the help of Reverend Father William Malone who had been entrusted with this task.[760] The women he deferred to a later time, either because he was apprehensive about the vulnerability of their sex or because he had judged that a suitable test of their steadfastness beforehand would be advantageous.

[756] 'accesserant' inserted.
[757] 'se convertere' inserted.
[758] 'Nugentius statu rerum et personarum inspecto' inserted.
[759] 'vero' inserted.
[760] William Malone SJ (1586–1656), *ODNB*.

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Inter hoc francisci pater, qui utrumque (82r) eius ferebat conversionem, re intellecta exasperatus, totus ira et indignatione frendet, uti et eius socer, quorum conspiratione iam miseris fratribus vicina calamitas imminebat, cui etiam Deus subministravit occasionem, qua adversarii servos Christi confundere expectabant, sed longe diversus ab earum expectatione eventus fuit; Nam ipsi eandem, quam iuvenibus inferre putabant, confusionem receperunt. Celeberrima quippe fuit fama disputationis, qua franciscus Pseudo-primatem Hiberniae Jacobum Usherum virum magni nominis apud omnes haereticos, non solum in illa, sed etiam in vicinis regionibus evicit[761] antequam certamen ipsum inirent, non tamen[762] argumentis, sed brevi oratiuncula, quam in genibus positus disputationi praemisit. Efficax quippe illa fuit et talis qua apud

Meanwhile Francis's father, who was (82r) having to put up with the conversion of each of them [i.e. the two brothers], exasperated on learning of the matter, raged full of wrath and indignation as did his father-in-law, and by their conspiracy another disaster was looming over the unfortunate brothers. For this God also provided an opportunity through which adversaries were expecting to overthrow the servants of Christ but the outcome was far different from their expectation, for they suffered the same defeat that they were intending to impose upon the young men. Indeed quite well known was the story of the disputation by which Francis overcame the pseudo-primate of Ireland James Usher,[763] a man highly respected among all the heretics, not only [in Ireland] but even in nearby regions, before they began the contest, not with arguments but with a brief prayer which he made on his knees to start the disputation. It was

[761] 'evicit' inserted.
[762] 'tamen' inserted.
[763] James Ussher (1581–1656), appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh in 1625.

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viros Catholicos, et sapientium iudicio nescio quid supra communem usum et humanum consuetudinem redolebat;[764] unde ex ipso modo et circumstantiis, aliquid caelestis luminis introspiciebant: Acclamatum igitur fuit francisco, et qui agnoverunt lucem, eam diligere et predicare caeperunt nimirum[765] Catholici: Heretici vero, qui (82v) verae virtutis sensum non habuerunt et quorum oculi, ad lucem caligantes in vitiorum tenebris fuerunt excaecati, eam deprimere moliti sunt: ac ne novum lumen apparens ultra se diffunderet, sub modio abscondere, dum illum in carcerem Dubliniensem detruserunt; sed frustra illi obscurare voluerunt, quod Deus super lucernam hominibus apparerere[766]statuit, si quidem ipsa illa magis magisque

certainly efficacious, and it was such among the Catholic men, giving off a scent of some kind of judgment of wise men beyond common usage and human custom. From here, out of his very manner and the way things were, they were examining something of a divine light. Therefore Francis was acclaimed, those who knew the light began to love it and preach it, namely the Catholics.[767] But the heretics (82v) who could not perceive true virtue and whose eyes, shrouded before the light, had been blinded in the darkness of their vices, tried to repress it. And to keep the new light [which was] appearing from spreading out beyond itself, they hid it under a bushel basket[768] when they imprisoned him in the Dublin jail. But it was in vain that they wished to hide it there, because God had decided that it should be visible to people on a lampstand, and indeed by

[764] 'redolebat' inserted.
[765] 'nimirum' inserted.
[766] *Recte* 'apparere'.
[767] Here the author draws on the image of light and darkness in John 8:12, where Jesus declares, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'
[768] Jesus' parable about not hiding the lamp under the basket ('bushel' in King James Version) may be found in the synoptic gospels: Matthew 5:15–16, Luke 8:16–18, and Mark 4:21–25.

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claruit, et in omnes fere regni partes se subito diffudit.

the very darkness of the prison cell that light grew brighter and brighter, and it suddenly spread out to almost all parts of the kingdom.

Nam uno eodemque tempore, Dublinii sedebant comitia generalia regni,[769] quae quator in anno solent celebrari, et inchoabat etiam parliamentum, unde necesse fuit ingentem multitudinem populi, et totam nobilitatem simul confluxisse in quorum omnium conversatione celebres fiebant de re transacta discursus. auxit etiam admirationem singularis patientia incarcerati, et exemplaris vitae ratio, quam plerique suspiciebant;

For at one and the same time, at Dublin the general assembly was sitting, those that are typically held four times a year, and the parliament was starting at the same time.[770] For this reason there was necessarily a huge crowd of people, and all the nobility at the same time had convened, and in all their conversation there was much talk about the incident that had occurred, and what also increased their admiration was the singular patience of the one who had been imprisoned and his exemplary way of life that many people respected.

[769] The author is mistaken; the assembly was of the city (not of the kingdom).

[770] The quarterly meeting of the common council or assembly of Dublin corporation, held in the upper house of the tholsel, comprising aldermen and commons. Colm Lennon, *The Lords of Dublin in the Age of Reformation* (Dublin, 1989), 53–55 (I am grateful to Ian Campbell for this reference). The 1634 Irish parliament opened on 14 July, and the first session ended 2 August. The second session was from 4 November to 14 December 1634. Dermot Fenlon, 'Wentworth and the parliament of 1634: An essay in chronology', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 94:2 (1964), 159–175.

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Caeterum ingressus carcerem (qui melioris notae personas tantum recipit) plures ex optimalibus ibidem ante se Catholicos repperit; Alii vero socii mox accesserunt, quos prorex indign[e][771] ferebat, suis consiliis in parlamento se opponere Ecce, quomodo Deus qui in servis (83r) suis vere mirabilis est,[772] totam scenam (id quod adversarii minime perceperunt) ita disposuit, ut ignominia innocentis servi sui illustrior evaderet; Haec enim omnia gesta sunt in conspectu universae nationis, et cum participes incarcerationis illius omnes egregiae pietatis specimen prae se tulissent, tum inter omnes emicuit francisci virtus, qualis decebat christianum hominem pro christo patientem: fervor orationis erat assiduus, modestia singularis, et conversatio sancta et salubris, qua non solum tolerantiam iniuriarum in sociis Catholicis lenibat,[773] eorumque animos ad orationem, et devota christianae pietatis exercitia excitabat, Sed etiam nonnullos ab Haeresi

But entering the prison (which only receives persons of better standing) he found many of the leading Catholics in the same place before him. But other companions soon joined them, ones whom the viceroy[774] resented for opposing his plans in parliament: Look, how God, who is truly wonderful in his servants, (83r) so arranged the entire scene – what adversaries failed to perceive – that the shame of his innocent servant became more honourable. For all these things have transpired in the sight of the entire nation, and when all his fellow inmates let the example of his great devotion be known, then the virtue of Francis flashed out among everyone, as is fitting for a Christian person suffering for Christ. The fervour of his prayer was constant, his modesty singular, and his conversation holy and wholesome, such that with it he not only softened the suffering of injustices among his Catholic companions and roused their spirits to prayer and devout exercises of Christian piety, but he also brought back some from heresy. This

[771] *Recte* 'insignis'.
[772] A paraphrase of Psalm 67:36: 'Mirabilis Deus in sanctis suis': 'God is wonderful in his saints.'
[773] 'sed etiam' deleted.
[774] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), appointed Irish lord deputy in 1632.

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reduxit; Que[775] res quamplurimos accendebat eius cognoscendi desiderio: inter quos Illustrissimum Comitem De Castlhaven, virum pietate et constantia fidei inprimis celebrem, cui ante illud tempus prorsus ignotus fuerat franciscus: Is incarceratum (quem admodum et alii plures) visitat, ab eoque regressus pro sua liberalitate pecunias affatim per servum transmittit, ne qua re indigeat quas tamen franciscus su[m]mus (83v) etiam contemptor, remisit, tametsi magne se estimare liberalem condonantis animum monstraret, cui maximas agere gratias servum desiderat.

aroused in very many people a great longing to know him. Among them was the most illustrious earl of Castlehaven,[776] a man especially celebrated for his devotion and the constancy of his faith, a man to whom Francis had before that time been quite unknown. He visited him in prison (just as a good number of others did as well), and returning from him sent him through his servant very sufficient funds in his own generous way, so that Francis would not be in want of anything. But Francis, (83v) greatly despising these sums, sent them back, although he showed that he greatly valued the generous heart of the benefactor, to whom he wanted the servant to give the greatest thanks.

[775] *Recte* 'Quae'.
[776] James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven (bapt. 1612–1684).

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Nemo vero eorum qui eum visitabant, reperiebatur, qui in illo aliquod virtutis specimen, unde aedeficationem sumeret, non agnosceret; memini mecum ibidem eum convenirem, tametsi bona pars dies preteriisset, et locum ipsum frequens turba impediret, quae tractandi[777] gratia cum altero[778] cubiculi illius consorte intrabant, orantem in genibus reperisse interiecta cortina non minori tranquillitate devotioni suae intentum, quam si in solitudine fuisset. Nempe aspirans sursum animus,[779] ad alia parum attendebat:

But none of those who visited him could be found who did not recognize in him a kind of model of virtue from which he could draw some edification. I recall meeting him there, although a good part of the day had passed and a large crowd was blocking the place, a crowd that was entering for the sake of dealing with another inmate in that room, and finding him praying on his knees behind a curtain that had been drawn between the two. He was praying with no less composure and focus on his devotions than if he had been on his own. Indeed his soul was striving upwards, and he was not attending much to the other things.

[777] 'tractandi': 'c' interlined.
[778] 'altero' interlined.
[779] 'parum' deleted.

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Nunc redeo parumper ad alterum fratrem: quem cum pater suus in fide constantem reperisset, a qua eum nullis artibus, aut terrore poterat dimovere, In Angliam a se removit, vel quia avulsum a fratre ibi facile reduci speraret ad haeresim, quam dimisit, vel quia illo amoto, et altero fratre incarcerato, minus difficile sibi[780] exestimaret, uxorem et filiam a proposito divertere: Neutra tamen res ad eius mentem successit: omnes enim superatis difficultatibus constantiam suam probaverunt: Et (84r) quemadmodum ille removeri curavit ab earum consuetudine eos qui maxime consolationem spiritualem adferre possent muliebri imbecillitati, ita Deus e contra sustulit maximum impedimentum, quod earum saluti poterat obstare. Paulo enim post excessit e vita filiae maritus[781] cuius feci

Now I return for a little while to the other brother.[782] Since his father had found him steadfast in his faith, and he could not budge him from it with any stratagems or threats, he sent him away to England, either because he hoped while he was separated from his brother there he could easily be brought back into the heresy that he had renounced, or because while he was removed and the other brother in prison, he thought it would be less difficult for himself to change the minds of his wife and daughter. Still neither design turned out as he intended. All of them, overcoming the difficulties, proved their steadfastness. And (84r) as he tried in whatever way to remove from their society those who could best bring spiritual consolation to their womanly fragility, God on the other hand took away the greatest impediment to their spiritual wellbeing. For a little later

[780] 'sibi' interlined.
[781] 'maritus' interlined.
[782] Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613).

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supra mentionem, cuius mortem etsi adolescentula vidua deploravit lachrimis coniugali amori debitis, hoc tamen in eiusdem funere solamen habuit, quod liberiorem aditum haberet ad nuptias Christi cui illa mox in Eclesiam Catholicam recepta, opera Reverendi P. Gulielmi Malonii, se coniunxit, fidemque in reconciliatione[783] ei promissam tenaciter deinceps servavit: Et ecce ipsam iam alios ad fidem instruentem, ancillas suas edocentem quae a fratre suo francisco nuper acceperat, cuius[784] indolem optimam, quantum sexus ferebat, modestia, et devota conversatione expresserat; Ex alia vero parte fratrem eius in Anglia tam sua quam francisci virtute et spiritu quo bene imbutus fuit[785]

the daughter's husband died,[786] the daughter I mentioned above, and the widow though very young wept over his death with the tears that were due to spousal love, yet she had this consolation in his burial, that she had freer access to marriage to Christ. With the help of Reverend Father William Malone[787] she was soon received into the Catholic Church, and joined herself with [Christ]; henceforth she firmly held to the faith she had promised to him in reconciliation. And lo and behold, she then instructed others in the faith, teaching her maids what she had recently received from her brother Francis. Her excellent character, the best among womankind, she had expressed in her modesty and in devout conversation. But on the other side, her brother

[783] 'in reconciliatione' interlined.
[784] 'spiritum imbueret' deleted.
[785] 'quo bene imbutus fuit' interlined.
[786] Alexander Cosby (d. 6 August 1636). TCD MS 1216, fo. 65r.
[787] William Malone SJ (1586–1656).

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egregie decertantem, adversus adversarios fidei, inter quos fuerunt plurimi eius olim familiares amici tanto amplius metuendi. Sed et orthodoxae religionis integritatem, castimoniae (84v) puritate illustravit, siquidem egregium ille modestiae suae specimen exhibuit inter nobilissimas virgines, filias Illustrissimi Vicecomitis Falkland, alias Cary proregis olim Hiberniae in quarum contubernio simul cum matre eum in Anglia commorari contigit per aliquot menses; Et iam adulta apparebat virtus[788] quam ille quidem in brevi addidicit, et talis quae illustre testimonium merebatur, quod etiam de eius integritate in utroque genere ex Anglia in Hiberniam delatum fuit.

in England, well steeped with both her own and with Francis's virtue and spirit, was making a valiant struggle against the adversaries of the faith, among whom were many of his formerly close friends, who were so much the more to be feared. But he showed the integrity of his orthodox religion (84v) by the purity of his chastity, since he gave an outstanding example of his modesty among [those] most noble young ladies, the daughters of the most illustrious viscount Falkland, also known as Cary the former viceroy of Ireland.[789] It happened that he stayed in their company along with their mother[790] in England for several months. And already there appeared that mature virtue that he had learned in quite a short time; it was such as merited a glowing testimony, one which was also reported from England to Ireland about his integrity in both kinds.[791]

[788] 'virtus' interlined.
[789] Henry Cary, Viscount Falkland (*c.*1575–1633).
[790] Elizabeth Cary, Viscountesss Falkland (1585–1639).
[791] Probably refers to integrity in both mind and body.

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Inter haec predictus Comes de Castlehaven, pro francisci libertate sollicite egit apud proregem eamque in fine obtinuit, sed ea lege, ut in familia eiusdem comitis se continens, ultra spatium trium milliarium non recederet, (ruri enim sicuti plerique nobiles in illo regno familiam suam alebat) Deinceps vero mitior factus prorex, permisit, ex assignatum terminum excederet non aliter tamen quam presente eodem Comite aut saltem non nullis ex eius família: Quae mandata religiosissime semper observavit (85r) franciscus, nullam sibi transgressionem, ne furtivam quidem indulgens. Caeterum difficile dictu est quantum alacritatis attulerit novus ex carcere receptus hospes tam Comiti quam eius fratribus et sororibus, ac toti denique domui, quam exemplo pietatis et virtutum mirifice recreabat.

During these events, the aforementioned earl of Castlehaven, anxious to free Francis, took up the issue with the viceroy, and at length he obtained his freedom, but under the condition that keeping himself in the household of that earl, he [Francis] would not go more than three miles from it (for just as many of the nobles in that kingdom do, [the earl] raised his family in the country). But then the viceroy, softening, allowed him to exceed the designated boundary as far as that earl could or at least as far as some of the family could. These commands Francis always scrupulously observed, (85r) allowing himself no transgression not even surreptitiously. But it is difficult to express how much excitement the new guest, received from prison, brought to the earl and to his brothers and sisters and to the entire household, which he refreshed wonderfully by his example of devotion and the virtues.

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Tota quidem ante vicinia resonabat laudes nobilissimae illius familiae, eoque magis, quo magis rarum apparebat, illustrissimam iuventutem intueri plus divinis obsequiis, quam iuvenilibus[792] licentiis[793] addictam, et inter gaudia fraternitatis insignem vigere pietatem: Auxit alacritatem omnium adveniens franciscus, quem omnes[794] germana dilectione venerabantur. Et brevi in singulos eorum fructus conversationis illius redundare caepit. Comes ipse, cui onus familiae incubuit, iam ab adolescentia maximas adversitates pertulit in quibus ferendis, non solum generosam animi fortitudinem monstravit, sed etiam fidei singularem constantiam, et iam paululum cessabant cruces, quatenus francisci consuetudine, Deo ita disponente, novum robur aquireret, ad perferendas novas. Nam postquam ultimo recessit ab eo franciscus, variae calamitates supervenerunt (85v)

Before long the whole locality resounded with the praises of that most noble family and all the more so for what appeared more rare: the sight of most illustrious young people more attached to divine obedience than to youthful liberties, and the flourishing of a remarkable devotion among the joys of brotherhood. At Francis's arrival everyone's joy increased. Everyone venerated him with a genuine affection. And in a short time the fruits of association with him began to overflow to each of them. The earl himself, on whom the burden of the household lay, already from his youth bore the greatest adversities, and in bearing them he showed not only a great-hearted personal courage, but also a special steadiness of faith; now for a short while his crosses stopped, so that by the customary manner of Francis and God's disposition, he attained new strength to bear with fresh trials. For after Francis had left him for the last time, various disasters befell him, (85v) and he bore with them patiently in his

[792] Altered from 'iuvenilis' to 'iuvenilibus'.
[793] 'blandim[en]tis' deleted.
[794] 'omnes': 'n' interlined.

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quas ille, more suo patienter sustinuit[795] Hunc, franciscus virum solidae pietatatis,[796] licet iucundum conversatione appellabat, quem etiam, aiebat solitum fuisse, lectitare librum P. Alphonsi[797] Rodriguez de conformitate cum volunte divina,[798] cui assuefecit tanquam adversitatum suarum communi remedio; id vero an ex consilio[799] francisci egerit, indubio mihi est.

habitual way. Francis called him a man of solid devotion, although pleasant company; and he also said he was accustomed to read often the book of Father Alonso Rodriguez about conformity with the divine will. He had become very familiar with this book and used it as a general remedy for his troubles; but I have no doubt that he did this on Francis's advice.

[795] The four lines following have been deleted.

[796] *Recte* 'pietatis'.

[797] 'P. Alphonsi' inserted subsequently.

[798] Alonso Rodríguez SJ (1538–1616), *Ejercicio de perfeccíon y virtudes cristianas* (Seville, 1609). This spiritual text had been translated to French, Italian, Latin, German, Dutch, and, partially, English, by 1626. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, IV, 3394–3395. *recte* 'voluntate'. Castlehaven probably used one of the English translations, by Sir Toby Matthew, of parts of this text: *A treatise of mentall prayer. With another of the presence of God […] translated out of the Spanish into English* (St Omer, English College Press, 1627), or *The first two treatises of the first part of Christian perfection, the one of the estimation and affection to spiritual thinges. And the other, of the perfection of ordinary actions* (St Omer, 1631), or *The stoop gallant. Or a treatise of humilitie composed by the reverend father F. Alfonso Rodriguez of the Societie of Jesus* (Rouen, 1631). On the content of this work, see John Donnelly, 'Alonso Rodriguez's *Ejercicio*: A neglected classic', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 11:2 (1980), 16–24.

[799] Altered from 'consilii' to 'consilio'.

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Sed cum idem comes venationibus et innocenti recreationi multum fuisset addictus, Hortante illo Mathematicae disciplinae oblectationem adiunxit, quam ipse illum edocuit. Longum fuisset omnia prosequi: Quare ut reliqua omittam, ita orandi exemplo nobilissimis illis fratribus praeivit, ut non solum ipsi eius consuetudinem imitarentur, sed sorores etiam. Et harum natu minor, quippe ad omnem pietatem flexilis, vocalibus precibus mentalem etiam orationem adiunxit. Haec gratia[800] et formae pulchritudine inprimis excellebat, et cum eius connubia plurimi expeterent (86r) praevaluit nobilissimus iuvenis Dominus Richardus Butlerus Comitis Ormondiae frater; quam in uxorem duxit.

Though the earl had been much given to hunting and innocent pastimes, at Francis's urging and instruction he began to enjoy the subject of mathematics. It would take too long to detail everything, and so I omit the rest. He so outstripped his most noble brothers by the example of his prayer that not only did they imitate his custom of praying, but his sisters did as well.[801] And the youngest of these, open indeed to every devotion, even added mental prayer to vocal prayer. She especially stood out in her grace and in beautiful appearance, and when many came to woo her, (86r) a very noble young man, Master Richard Butler,[802] brother of the earl of Ormonde prevailed, and he married her. His own native disposition had inclined to devotion,

[800] Vocal prayer denotes reciting of set prayers; mental prayer involves the inward movement of the whole person to God.

[801] Siblings of James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven: brothers George (d. 1669), Benedictine monk; Mervin, 4th earl (d. 1686); sisters Lucy (d. 1662); Dorothy (d. 1635); Frances (b. 1617), who married Richard Butler; Anne (?b. post 1624). Cynthia Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder: Sex, Law and the 2nd Earl of Castlehaven* (New York and Oxford, 2001).

[802] Richard Butler of Kilcash, youngest brother of James Butler (1610-1688), 12th earl and 1st duke of Ormond, married Frances Touchet (b. 1617), daughter of the 2nd earl of Castlehaven. Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: The Irish Aristocracy in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London, 2012), 421. In the Irish Catholic revolt of 1641, Richard led a force to the outskirts of Waterford, 26 December 1641, Richard Bagwell, *Ireland under the Stuarts*, II (London, 1909), 4.

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Is cum suapte indole ad pietatem fuisset propensus novae tamen maritae exemplari consuetudine visus est se ipsum superare, impetum iuventutis restringere, non auferri aequalium exemplis, sed pietatem diligere, missas audire reverenter, sacramenta frequentare, et alia virtutis incrementa acquirere: Et iam etiam zelum Catholicae religionis maximum pr[ae] se fert, quando quidem pro illa tuenda, pro rege suo et republica, non dubitat se fratri suo opponere et contra eum cum Catholicis pugnare.

but by the exemplary manner of his new spouse he seemed to overcome his very self: he restrained the forceful drive of youth and did not get carried away by the example of his peers, but loved devotion, reverently attended mass, frequented the sacraments, and gained other increases of virtue. And he even now displays the greatest zeal for Catholicism, in so far as to protect it for his own king[803] and country, he does not hesitate to oppose his own brother and to fight with the Catholics against him.

[803] Charles I.

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En quales in fructus dimanavit francisci virtus et exemplum; Et sane si pedum illius et conversationis observarentur vestigia multa eiusmodi potuissent reperiri.

See what fruits derived from Francis's virtue and example! And indeed if his footprints and associations were observed, many such things could be discovered.

Sub id tempus quo primum accessit emissus carcere ad aedes prefati comitis, P. Robertus Nugentius rogavit P. Georgium Geraldinum, quem forte a se dimettebat proficiscentem ad locum habitationis suae, ut franciscum de itinere visitaret, Et cum eo etiam literas ad franciscum scripsit, quibus significavit (86v) hunc virum fuisse aprime sapientem et spiritualem, cui tuto se posset aperire et statum animi credere, ideoque cum illo confidenter ageret de rebus suis,[804] tanto securius, quod is magister fuisset primorum novitiorum[805] quos in illo regno

Around the time that he first got out of prison and came to the earl's home, Father Robert Nugent asked Father George FitzGerald,[806] whom he happened to send off on the way to his own place of residence, to visit Francis on his journey. And he wrote a letter for Francis to take with him; in which he indicated (86v) that this man [FitzGerald] was especially wise and spiritual, and he could safely reveal himself and entrust him with his state of mind, and therefore he could confidently engage with him about his own issues, all the more securely because he had been the master of the first novices that the

[804] 'suis' interlined.
[805] 'novitiorum' interlined.
[806] George FitzGerald [Geraldinus] SJ, b. 1598 County Meath; entered SJ 1604 in Rome; died 11 August 1646, Dublin. Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 581.

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Societas habuisset, unde idoneus qui iuvenem posset dirigere. Imperata uterque fecit, et rescripsit P. Geraldinus se visitasse franciscum, quem Josepho exeunti e carcere, aut animae e flammis purgantibus exurgenti comparavit: Munda quippe apparebat illi haec anima, ac si vitae praeteritae rubigniem in carceris purgatione amisisset: Neque alia fortasse magis idonea esse[807] potuit, quae eam deberet, purgatio, quam ea qua connexa fuit cum confessione fidei contra quam ille in vita praeterita visus est maxime[808] peccavisse: tametsi enim errore deviaret, ab aliis tamen criminibus abstinebat, quantum colligi potest ex sermonibus quos faciebat, de modo vivendi quem ante conversionem suam usurpabat. Nam honestioris vitae sodalibus

Society had had in that kingdom, and so he was fit to direct the young man. Both did as they were told, and Father FitzGerald wrote back that he had visited Francis, whom he compared to Joseph coming out of prison,[809] or to a soul emerging from cleansing flames. Indeed this soul appeared clean to him, as if he had lost all the rust of his past life in the purgation of the prison cell. Nor could any other purgation of his debt have been more suitable perhaps than that by which his soul was joined with the confession of the faith against which he seemed to have most especially sinned in his earlier life. For although he went astray in his wandering, he still abstained from other offences, from what could be gathered from the conversations he had about the manner of living he enjoyed before his conversion.

[807] 'esset' altered to 'esse'.
[808] 'maxime' interlined.
[809] For the biblical story of Joseph in prison in Egypt, see Genesis, chapters 39–41.

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potissimum adherebat, studiis litterariis (87r) bene intentus, ac honestis occupationibus addictus, quales fuerunt mathematicae disciplinae et alia exercitia, quae ipsius qualitatem decebant, quae tanto magis a vitiis eum retinebant, quanto maiorem ex eorum usu hauriebat voluptatem, Deo ita animum illum temperante, in quem erat coelestem gratiam suam collaturus, ut solam[810] fere obscuritatem erroris praeire sineret, tanto lumini, quo illum deinceps illustravit.

For he especially clung to companions of a more honourable life, well intent on his literary studies, (87r) and given to honourable occupations, such as were the mathematical disciplines and other exercises which were fitting for his style of character. These kept him from vices in proportion to the pleasure he experienced from engaging in them, with God so controlling his spirit, onto which he was going to bestow his own heavenly grace, that he allowed him practically on his own to pass by that darkness of error by means of the great light by which he was then illuminating him.

[810] Text difficult to interpret. Possibly in error for 'solum'.

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At postquam plures menses hoc modo in familia predicti Comitis tranegisset,[811] Ecce tandem integrae libertati restituitur quam ut primum obtinuit, ad castrum Comitissae Kildariensis se transtulit, cui adventus francisci non minus gaudii attulit, quam desiderii sui reliquerit in altera familia, a qua tum recessit. Cum enim matrona optima omnes virtutis cultores, et hos solos diligat, non est mirum quod aliquid plus dilectionis tribueret virtuti in illa nobili schola carceris probatae, et ex illa cum tanto applausu exeunti, siquidem ipsa in carcere nata fuit, quo tempore parentes illius in arce Londinensi captivi tenebantur; ad hoc scilicet[812] nata, ut adversa sustineat, vel adversa tolerantes diligat

But after he had spent several months this way in the earl's household, all his liberty was at length restored, and as soon as he attained it, he moved to the castle of the countess of Kildare. His arrival brought her no less joy than a decrease in her longing for the other household from which she had withdrawn.[813] For when an excellent matron loves all those who cultivate virtue, and loves them alone, it is not surprising that she should bestow more love on virtue which had been tested in that noble school of imprisonment. And as she came out of it with such great applause, seeing that she was born in it, at the time her parents were held imprisoned in the tower of London;[814] born to this, she held up under adversities, or she loved those who were bearing with adversities.

[811] *Recte* 'transegisset'.

[812] 'scilicet' interlined.

[813] In the early 1630s, Elizabeth countess of Kildare moved from the Fitzgerald castle at Maynooth to live in the family's castle at Kilkea, County Kildare.

[814] Elizabeth's parents were Christopher Nugent, 14th baron Delvin, and his wife Mary, daughter of Gerald Fitzgerald, 11th earl of Kildare. From December 1580 until June 1583, Delvin was imprisoned in Dublin and subsequently in the Tower of London, and was detained in London until December 1585. Thus it is possible that Elizabeth was born while her parents were imprisoned in the Tower of London. Elizabeth Fitzgerald (d. 1645), *DIB*.

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(87v) Sed ante omnia, tanquam solum ad orandum libertatem acquisivisset francisco prima fuit cura Spiritualibus ibidem exercitiis vacare quae dirigente P. Nugentio magna animi sui cum voluptate persolvit: Et me etiam tametsi longissime imparem socium simul cum illo idem opus agredi[815] contigit, sed aegritudo corporis, et negotii cuiusdam intervenientis necessitas vix ceptum opus dimittere coegerunt, magno tamen semper mihi solatio fuit, vel sic incepisse, quando quidem illa opportunitas in eius consuetudinem familiarius me[816] introduxit. Nihilo minus in brevi sane magnum humilitatis illius specimen conspexi. Cum P. Nugentium et me etiam instantius rogaret, ut sibi copia fieret pedes meos deosculandi, quod ego nimirum erubescens et si quantum opportebat, concedere renuerem, demum tamen annuente P. Nugentio hoc eius instantiis concedere necesse fuit.

(87v) But above all things, as if he had acquired freedom only in order to pray, Francis's first care was to give time to spiritual exercises in that same place, which, with Father Nugent as his director, he completed with great spiritual delight. And though I was a most unequal companion, it turned out that I undertook the same [exercises] with him, but ill health and the urgency of a certain business that came up forced me to abandon the work soon after it had begun. Still it was always a great consolation to me even to have started it in this way, since that occasion made me more familiar with his accustomed way of life. Nevertheless, to be brief, I saw a clearly great example of his humility. When he insistently asked Father Nugent and me to give him permission to kiss my feet, I refused to allow it, of course blushing, and however much I had to, I refused to yield, but finally, with Father Nugent in agreement, it was necessary to grant this [in response to] his pleadings.

[815] Altered from 'agregi' to 'agredi'.
[816] 'me' interlined.

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O quanta animi mansuetudine ad eiusmodi opus ille se tunc demisit, sane etiam nunc eius recordatione erubesco.

O with what great gentleness he then lowered himself to that deed – even now I blush to recall it!

Sub id tempus etiam me amice rogabat ut quos in illo defectus animadverterem, sibi detegerem, idem se mihi facturum (88r) pollicitus, quod etiam fideliter faciebat. Nam ingenue culpas meas, quas facile fuit detegere, mihi aperiebat. Ego tamen e contra (fateor advigilabam, et optabam evincere preces, quas pro remuneratione pollicitus erat) nec tum temporis, nec deinceps unquam, in illo quidquam quod me iuste posset offendere, observavi, Sed id quod in illius vita[817] culpae censuram maxime arbitratus sum mereri, id ipsum virtus fuit. Nam post modum agnovi, ignorantia virtutis me fuisse deceptum; Et res huiusmodi erat: forte exibat in vicinum campum R.P. Nugentius mane ambulaturus, et inter exeundum ad cubiculum francisci pulsavit, quem cum orantem offendisset, perturbare noluit, sed desideravit finita sua meditatione, ut sequeretur, interea se prope domum moraturum. Perseveravit in oratione franciscus eaque finita, ad mentem

Around that time, he also kindly asked me to reveal to him any defects that I noticed in him, promising that he would do the same for me, (88r) which he also faithfully did. For he honestly revealed to me my faults, which were easy to uncover. Yet I on the other hand (I confess I was vigilant and I hoped to win his prayers which he had promised as a payment) observed neither at that time nor ever thereafter anything that could rightly offend me. But that which I judged in his life especially deserving of censure, that very thing was virtue. For after a while I realized I had been deceived by an ignorance of virtue. And the matter was like this: Reverend Father Nugent would happen to go out into a neighbouring field early in the morning for a walk, and while going out, he knocked at Francis's room. He encountered Francis at prayer, and did not want to disturb him, but wanted him to follow after he had finished his meditation, and meanwhile Nugent waited nearby, close to the house. Francis continued in prayer and when he had

[817] 'vita' inserted.

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praemonentis reliqua[818] executus est. Interim ego existimabam reverentiam[819] tali viro debitam exigere ut tum etiam orationem interrumperet: sed hoc neque ipse P.[820] Nugentius optabat, imo oppositum, qui nihil magis desiderabat quam eius virtutem fovere, (88v) et qua posset ratione illi incrementum adferre, nec deerant alii comites aut utilis occupatio, quibus interea moram expectationis falleret, quae solum prestolandi franciscum gratia non[821] fiebat, quod etiam franciscus ipse sciebat; Et preterea in mentem revocabam exemplum S. Francisci (quod ab ipso ante audieram) qui sibi gravem poenitentiam inflixerat, eo quod orationem ad vocem alicuius avocantis deservisset. Quare re melius considerata (quamquam non illo tempore[822]) virtutem fuisse, non vitium, demum[823]

finished it, he went on to carry out the remaining [tasks] according to the mind of his adviser. Meanwhile I thought that the reverence due to such a man required that he [Francis] even then would break off his prayer. But Father Nugent himself did not wish this, no, rather the opposite, and he wanted nothing more than to foster Francis's virtue (88v) and increase it however he could; nor were other companions lacking or a useful occupation he could meanwhile take up to pass the time. This not only became the grace of waiting for Francis, but Francis himself knew it as well. And besides I called to mind the example of Saint Francis (which I had heard earlier from him), who had inflicted a serious penance on himself for the reason that he had abandoned his prayer on hearing someone who had called him away. For this reason, when I thought over the matter better

[818] 'reliqua' interlined.
[819] 'reverentiam' interlined.
[820] 'pa' deleted.
[821] 'non' interlined.
[822] In text, 'tempre'.
[823] 'demum' interlined.

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agnoveram, id quod maxime imperfectum et reprehensibile in omni eius conversatione existimaveram, si quidem fervori orationis et constantiae melius id credo,[824] tribui potest, quam promptitudinis defectui, ad obsequendum.

(although not at that time) I at last knew it was a virtue not a vice, that which I had thought especially lacking and reprehensible in all of his association, since it could be better attributed (I do believe) to the fervour of his prayer and his constancy, rather than to a defect in his readiness to obey.

[824] 'id credo' interlined.

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Frustra igitur id laboris suscipiebam, cum res captum meum superaret, et in eiusmodi homine culpas detegere opus fuisset viri sapientis et bene exercitati in virtutibus, non vero inexperti iuvenis. Ille interim de mea fide querebatur, tanquam si amicum non egissem, dum culpas illius silentio tegerem; revera tamen hoc inde contigit quod nihil unquam in eius moribus (89r) adnotaverim, quod vere culpam esse mihi persuadere possem: Sed hoc possum, et ausim addito etiam iuramento affirmare, me nunquam in eius vita quidquam adeo grave deprenhendisse, quod vel umbram peccati venialis existimarem. Et sane nihil unquam contigit mihi quod magis mirarer, quam videre talem iuvenem tam recentem Catholicum adeo in fide solidum, et omnibus virtutibus abunde instructum, adeo in rerum spiritualium intelligentia versatum, et tam alienum a vitiis.

In vain therefore was I worried since the matter exceeded my understanding, and uncovering the faults in such a man would have been the work of a wise man and one well practised in the virtues, but not of an inexperienced young person. Meanwhile he was complaining about my loyalty as if I had not acted as a friend, while I kept completely silent about his faults. In reality, nevertheless, it never occurred thereafter that I noted anything about his behaviour (89r) that I could persuade myself was really a fault. But I can, and I would dare to affirm this, even on oath: that I never caught sight of anything in his life that was serious to the point of my judging it to have even a shadow of a venial sin. And indeed, no more wonderful thing ever happened to me than that I saw such a young man so recently a Catholic [who was] so solid in his faith and abundantly furnished with all virtues, so versed in the knowledge of spiritual matters, and so far removed from the vices.

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Quae res in admirationem rapiebat quamplurimos: et alios quidem ita perculit, ut iam amplius fastidio haberent ignaviam suam, qui tot annis in relligione Catholica perseverantes ne umbram acquisivessent eorum, quae ipse paucis mensibus assecutus est: Alios vero ad studium virtutis excitabat, eique proborum omnium affectum simul ac singularem reverentiam conciliabat; A Saecularibus Catholicis, quibuscumque innotuit, sed maxime ab iis, qui zelum fidei, aut pietatis prese ferebant, (89v) summopere diligebatur, eiusque virtutem ac relligionem devota quadam aemulatione recensebant: Viri autem religiosi etiam ii,[825] qui maiori apud populum in veneratione habebantur, et qui iure

This swept many away in admiration. And it indeed so struck others that they now became more repulsed by their own slackness, they who persevering in Catholicism for so many years had not yet attained even a shadow of what he had achieved in a few months. He roused others to the pursuit of virtue, and won for himself the warmth and singular reverence of all people of integrity. He was most highly esteemed by Catholic laypersons, whichsoever ones knew him, but especially those who displayed a zeal for the faith or for devotion, (89v) and they acclaimed his virtue and piety with a kind of devout emulation. But men in religious life, even those who were held in great esteem among the people, and those who were rightfully to be considered better judges

[825] 'etiam ii' inserted.

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censendi erant meliores virtutum aestimatores, eo quod et[826] ipsi semitas domini inter longa exercitia virtutum probaverint, francisci pietatem et mores optimos apud alios et inter se colladabant,[827] maximarum virtutum exempla in illo colligentes: Et qualem nos[828] fuisse putemus illum[829] qui oculos intuentium ita in se traheret, tanto saecularibus[830] venerabilior, quanto longius illi sese ab eius perfectionibus distare percipiebant, tanto religiosis amabilior, quanto melius intelligebant, quam arduae opus virtutis fuerit, in vita saeculari quemquam ita se posse regere.

of virtues for having themselves tested the ways of the Lord in the course of lengthy exercises of the virtues – they too praised Francis's devotion and excellent character in the presence of others and among themselves, recollecting the examples of the greatest virtues in him. And what kind of person should we think that person to be who so drew the attention of everyone to himself, more venerable to the lay people the further that they saw themselves to stand from his perfections, and more lovable to members of religious orders the better they understood what a work of high virtue it was for anyone in a worldly life so to conduct himself?

826 'et' inserted.
827 *Recte* 'collaudabant'.
828 'nos' interlined.
829 'illum' interlined.
830 Change of ink.

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P. Nugentius vero qui eum magis intime penetrabat, ut cui eius conscientia prorsus fuit aperta, ab eoque regebatur, sanctam animam appellabat, de eoque multa depredicabat, quae alteri convenire non poterant, quam ei qui eximia fuisset sanctitate et innocentia praeditus, qualem opinionem de francisco ipse semper alebat.

Father Nugent, who got to know him more deeply as the one to whom [Francis's] conscience was directly open and the one by whom Francis was directed, called his soul holy, and he extolled extensively many things about him that would not characterize anyone but one who had been endowed with outstanding saintliness and innocence. Such an opinion he always cultivated concerning Francis.

Forte presens semel adstabam cum in coetu honoralissimo[831] prelatorum et sacerdotum, celebris fieret de eius virtute (90r) et moribus discursus, inter quos eius pietatem commendabat Reverendissimus Archiepiscopus Dubliniensis, vir animi mansuetudine non minus quam genere clarus, et P. Nugentius qui tum interfuit, multa eius encomia referebat, ac longo discursu differebat de intelligentia ac notitia rerum spiritualium, qua imbutus erat franciscus mirari se aiebat, et vix in

Once I happened to be present when in a very honourable assembly of prelates and priests there was much talk of his virtue (90r) and character. Among them, commending his devotion, was the most reverend archbishop of Dublin,[832] a man famous for his gentleness of soul no less than for his pedigree, and Father Nugent, who was there at the time, reported many praises of him, and in a long discourse spoke at length about the understanding and knowledge of spiritual matters with which he said he was amazed that Francis was steeped in, adding

[831] *Recte* 'honorabilissimo'.
[832] Thomas Fleming OFM (1593–1651), appointed Catholic archbishop of Dublin in 1623, *DIB*.

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viris professis Societatis Iesu, se posse desiderare, aut reperire amplius.[833] Eidem Illustrissimo Dubliniensi charus fuit, ac similiter Episcopo Medensi viro plurimum venerabili in illo regno ob vitae integritatem et doctrinam, uti et aliis[834] praelatis: Illustrissimo Comiti Westmediae cuius merita in Ecclesiam nemo in illa regione nescit, uti et aliis e prima nobilitate regni dilectus fuit, et in honore habitus, Et quo quisque sanctioris vitae fuit, aut magis probatae fidei, eo magis erga franciscum visus est affici; Et quis posset melius dignoscere sanctimoniam quam huiusmodi homines?

that he could hardly be able to find this lacking or present in any greater degree among the professed fathers of the Society of Jesus. Francis was dear to the most distinguished archbishop of Dublin and likewise to the bishop of Meath,[835] a man most venerable in that kingdom for the integrity of his life and doctrine, as he was also dear to other prelates as well; to the most illustrious earl of Westmeath[836] whose service to the Church is known to everyone in that area; and he was loved also by others from the first rank of nobility in the kingdom, and was held in honour. And to the extent that a person was characterized by a holier life and had a faith that was more tested, just to that extent was the person apparently more well-disposed towards Francis. And who could better discern holiness than people of such a sort?

[833] Change of ink.
[834] 'pl' deleted.
[835] Thomas Dease (*c.*1568–1651/2), appointed Catholic bishop of Meath in 1622, *DIB*.
[836] Richard Nugent (1583–1642), created earl of Westmeath in 1621, *DIB*.

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Sane Comitissa Kildariensis, non aliter quam ut sanctum hominem tractabat, quo nomine cum de eo mentionem faceret, quod (90v) frequenter faciebat, eum appellabat (et pene communis illa vox fuit omnium qui eum familiarius noverant, aut certe, quod excellenti fide, et praeclarissimis virtutibus fuisset instructus.) Illum apud hospites suos in mensa, et colloquiis privatis commendabat, resque ab illo gestas mira animi sui voluptate et dilectionis sensu referebat. Vita scilicet francisci, mores, et tota conversatio odorem optimum redolebant, quem fuisse odorem sanctimoniae matrona sagax colligebat: Nec forte inter saeculares alia[837] magis idonea fuit persona, quae in saeculari iuvene sanctam innocentiam discerneret, quam illa quae onus vitae saecularis cum tanta integritate et tam illustri pudicitia novit coniungere, Si quidem illa, postquam esset marito suo orbata, cui unico tantum anno nupta fuit, in flore aetatis suae

Indeed the countess of Kildare treated him no differently than she would a holy person, and whenever she mentioned him, which (90v) she used to do frequently, she would refer to him by that expression (and that phrase was common to everyone who got to know him well, or certainly they would say that he had been endowed with excellent faith and the most outstanding virtues). She would commend him in the presence of her guests at table, and in private conversations, and with a wonderful interior pleasure and feeling of delight she would report the things that he had done. Indeed Francis's life, character, and all his conversation gave off the best fragrance, which that wise lady considered the odour of sanctity. And there did not happen to be any other person among the laity more fit to discern holy innocence in a young layperson than she who knew how to join the burden of secular life with such integrity and such outstanding modesty; since she, after she had lost her spouse, with whom she was married for only a year,

[837] 'alia' interlined.

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viduitatem inchoavit, quam irreprehensibilem servavit tanto annorum decursu, et tot viris maximis eius connubia expetentibus, usque in hunc diem, idqu[ ] inter varias adversitates quarum plures pro Eclesia Catholica sustinuit, cui illa semper, eiusque filiis afflictis, authoritatem suam tamquam (91r) umbram praebuit, et inter tot illustria virtutum exercitia, quae eius nomen universae genti celeberrimum reddit ac praeterea filium suum unigenitum admirabili sanctitate conspicuum (nam impar aetas auxit admirationem) iam caelo misit, quem ipsa nono circiter aetatis anno morientem (nec parva illa fuit liberalitas viscera sua condonantis) Christo salvatori suo, masculo plane spiritu, obtulit, quem tum presentem in venerabili sacramento adorabat, quo etiam presente mundissimam filii animam intra sua viscera recepit: mira res: In festo Annuntiationis Beatissimae Virginis, ipso tempore quo sacrosanctum Eucharistiae sacramentum communicabat, sensit foetum quem in utero conceptum portabat,

began her widowhood in the flower of her life and preserved it blamelessly for so many years even with so many of the greatest men wooing her, up to this day.[838] And this was one of many difficulties she has borne for the Catholic Church. To the Church, and to its troubled children, she always offered her authority like (91r) a protective shade, doing this in the midst of so many splendid practices of the virtues, which has made her name quite famous to the entire nation. In addition she has already sent to heaven her only born son, distinguished by his admirable holiness (for his unusual age increased the admiration), the one whom, dying around the age of nine years (and that generosity was not negligible, the generosity of one bestowing the fruit of her womb) she clearly with a sturdy spirit offered to Christ her saviour, whom she was adoring at that moment in the holy sacrament, in whose presence she also received the most pure soul of her son within her womb. A marvellous thing! On the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin,[839] at the very time at which she was

[838] Elizabeth's husband, Gerald Fitzgerald, 11th earl of Kildare, died early in 1612, leaving her an infant son; the child died in November 1620, Elizabeth Fitzgerald (d. 1645), *DIB*.

[839] The feast of the Annunciation takes place on 25 March.

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iam animam recipere (, quod mulieres facile novunt dignoscere) ac si christus advenientem conduceret, et dignatus fuisset quasi[840] manu sua animam illam in corpusculo collocare[841] ex quo illam compendio liceat aestimare; Sed de hoc eius filio plura hic non attinet: solum quod ad rem presentem facit: Illa quae talem florem produxit, idonea fuit, quae redolentem (91v) in simile germine odorem perciperet: Et quae puerum sanctum enutrivit, et optimis moribus efformavit, facile potuit in alio iuvene sanctimoniam dignoscere agnovit illa, et idcirco materna eum deinceps dilectione prosecuta est. et ille vicissim, eandem filiali obsequio semper est veneratus.[842]

taking the holy sacrament of the eucharist, she sensed that the child that she had conceived and was carrying in her womb now quickened with life (something that women are very capable of discerning), as if Christ were assisting his arrival and had reckoned that soul worthy to place in the little body by his own hand, from which she could deem this soul as a gain. But of her son, now is not the place to say more, only what touches upon the present matter. She who produced such a flower was fit (91v) to perceive the fragrance wafting from a similar seed. And the one who nurtured a holy boy and formed him to have the best character was easily able to discern the holiness in another young man. She knew those things and therefore afterwards she accompanied him with a maternal love. And he in turn venerated her always with a filial obedience.

[840] 'quasi' interlined.
[841] 'collocare' interlined.
[842] 'et ille vicissim … veneratus' inserted in different ink.

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Sed cum dilectus fuisset hominibus, quanto charior censendus est fuisse Deo[843] a quo in illum dona gratiae fluere videbantur, et cui ille studebat unice placere et ampliori mentis excessu vacare, Si quidem nullo tempore aut occasione impediri se sustinebat quominus unam saltem horam per diem impenderit orationi mentali, ut omittam extraordinaria tempora, quae frequentissime sacris meditationibus tribuebat[844] et alia pietatis illius exercitia, quae indicibili gustu obibat; Ad domos Catholicorum quando accedebat, quamprimum opportune poterat, explicabat quasdum imagines et pios libellos quos circumferebat, locum ad orandum disponens: Et vere ad hoc ipsum iter suum festinare videbatur, nam aliquando incitato cursu equo insidens ferebatur, quem tamen inter eundum sistebat, ad orandum, aut persolvendas aliquas devotiones, quas ante (92r) persolvere forte urgens festinatio non sineret. Si vero simul iter perficeret

But though loved by people, how much dearer should he be thought to be to God, from whom the gifts of grace seemed to be flowing into him; he was eager to please only God and to devote himself to Him with full spiritual ecstasy; since he allowed himself to be kept by no season or occasion from spending at least one hour a day on mental prayer, not to mention those extra times which he very frequently gave to holy meditations and other exercises of his devotion, which he performed with inexpressible relish. When he came to the homes of Catholics, as soon as he conveniently could, he explained certain images and devotional pamphlets that he carried around with him, arranging the place for prayer. And he truly seemed to hasten his journey to this very end, for occasionally he rode sitting on a horse at full gallop, which he nevertheless halted during the trip, to pray or to finish some devotions which (92r) possibly his pressing haste would not allow him to complete. But if he were perhaps completing a journey together with

[843] 'Deo' interlined.
[844] 'tribuebat' interlined.

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cum aliquo a quo[845] instrui posset, ab eiusdem ore pendebat, ac de rebus spiritualibus tractans itineris fastidia levabat, aut potius animum oblectabat salutaribus alloquiis, aut recitandis simul cum eo precibus. Domi certe cum P. Nugentio in longas horas sermonem de rebus spiritualibus extrahebat, et sancta iuvenis desideria invitabant optimum senem ut fuse depromeret, ea quae in eius bonum cederent, et magno progressu ad praeclaras virtutes euntem[846] promoverent:[847] unde etiam non raro evenit, ut cum occupationes eum per diem retinerent, tempora somni sibi adimeret, quo studio francisci satisfaceret, desiderio habens famem tam nobilem divina esurientis explere. Sed neque Franciscus avidior fuit ad hoc imbibenda quam studiosior in aliorum utilitatem depromenda: Dicebat enim opus Christiano homine dignum esse, ea quae

someone by whom he could be instructed, he hung on that person's words, and while treating of spiritual matters he eased the discomforts of the journey, or rather he delighted his heart with spiritually helpful conversations, or with reciting prayers along with him. Certainly at home with Father Nugent he drew out their talk about spiritual matters to long hours, and the holy desires of the young man prompted the excellent old man to provide abundantly those things which contributed towards Francis's good and advanced him, as he made great progress toward the higher virtues. And so it occasionally happened that when work occupied him for a day, [Nugent] shortened his sleeping time to satisfy Francis's zeal, having a longing to sate so noble a hunger in the one so hungry for divine [gifts]. But Francis was just as eager to take these in as he was zealous to share them for the help of others. For he said that it was a worthy

845 'quo' interlined.
846 'euntem' interlined.
847 'ut' deleted.

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ipse addisceret, alios edocere,[848] et hoc gratitudinem exigere.

(92v) Cum eo saepius exibam deambulationis gratia, quo genere recreationis plurimum capiebatur (nam aeris optima temperies et camporum amoenitas adhoc eum trahebant) qua occasione de humilitate aut aliis virtutibus liberiore spiritu discurrere consuevit indicibili studio et affectu; Et certe res spirituales non minus quam ipsam auram videbatur spirare: Humilitatem dicebat aliud non esse quam veritatem, quod veracitas maxima esset propriam inbecillitatem agnoscere; In caetu vero hominum, et quando opportunitas loquendi se offerebat raro agebat, nisi de rebus ad pietatem spectantibus, eoque sermones discurrentium secum mira artificio inflectebat, quo factum est, ut eos qui virtutis studio, aut pietatis exercitiis delectabantur, magnopere recrearet, quandoquidem inutiles discursus semper declinans fructuosis sermonibus maius desiderium virtutum in eorum animis excitabat. Cum iis

work for a Christian to teach others those things that he himself had learned, and that this demanded gratitude.

(92v) I often went out with him for a walk; it was a kind of recreation that he liked very much (for the excellent weather and the beauty of the landscape attracted him to it). On such an occasion he typically spoke quite freely, with an inexpressible zeal and feeling, about humility or the other virtues. And indeed he seemed to breathe spiritual realities no less than the air itself. He would say that humility was nothing other than truth, because the greatest truthfulness would be to acknowledge one's own weakness. But in a gathering of people, and when the occasion to speak arose, he rarely discussed anything other than matters bearing on devotion, and with marvellous ingenuity he turned rambling conversations in this direction. This greatly refreshed those who were delighted by a zeal for virtue or exercises of devotion as he always kept turning away from useless talk and aroused in their souls a greater longing for fruitful conversation. But with those for whose

[848] Words following have been deleted.

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autem in quorum conversione ad fidem Catholicam laborabat, non nisi de rebus ad aedificationem eorum spectantibus, agebat, erudiens eos in misteriis fidei, et multa explicans ad maiorem rerum intelligentiam, et animorum (93r) in re capta stabilitatem: sane quoties matrem suam et sororem, cuius opera ambae ad fidem accesserunt; visitabat, ambae illum tanquam angelum advenientem gaudentes excipiebant, et ab eius ore incredibile desiderio pendebant, quas impense ad omnem pietatem informabat;

conversion to the Catholic faith he was working, he treated of nothing but matters bearing on their edification, instructing them in the mysteries of the faith and explaining many things to their greater understanding of various matters, and making their hearts firm (93r) in what they had grasped. How many times indeed did he visit his mother and sister, both of whom he helped to come to the faith. Both joyfully received him like an angel arriving, and with unbelievable longing they hung on his words as he formed them diligently to complete religious devotion.

mirabilis praeterea fuit efficacitas, et vis, quam in verbis suis habebat, tanquam potens sermone, quod hinc facile est colligere: Dum enim ille peregre proficiscitur, eius interea frater, (de quo supra dixi) ingenio et iudicii maturitate pollens, in universitate

His effectiveness was wonderful besides, and the energy that he had in his words, just as he was powerful in discussion. This is easily gathered from this story: While he was setting out to travel abroad, his brother[849] (whom I mentioned earlier) in the meantime remained at Oxford

[849] Henry Slingsby.

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Oxfordiensi remanet, ibique de more loci et religionis, quam tum profitebatur, studia philosophica et theologica prosequitur, Sed cum per literas ab ipso francisco receptas intellexisset, de eius conversione ad religionem orthodoxam, Ecce totum se tranfert[850] ad controversias fidei, relicto priori studio, atque[851] in iis pertractendis integrum impendit[852] annum, et beneficio universitatis[853] interea laborem suum promovet, quo finito in Hiberniam ad parentem suum revertitur: sub idem etiam tempus adest ab Italia franciscus (93v) debito obsequio reveretur parentem, et salutat fratrem suum, quem

university, fully capable intellectually and of mature judgement, and there according to the custom of place and religion that he was then professing, pursued his philosophical and theological studies. But when he had learned of Francis's conversion to orthodox religion, by a letter he had received directly from Francis, straight away he turned entirely to controversies of the faith, abandoning his earlier study. And he spent a whole year examining this subject. And with the support of the university he advanced his own work. When it was finished he returned to his father in Ireland. About the same time Francis returned from Italy. (93v) He honoured his

[850] *Recte* 'transfert'.
[851] 'atque' interlined.
[852] 'impendit' interlined.
[853] 'intera' deleted.

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ante se penes illum repperit, et mox ipso in loco patri suo expostulanti, qua par erat modestia rationem mutatae religionis exponit; Inter haec Henricus, (nam hoc est nomen fratri illius) qui integro anno se armaverat[854] adversus fratrem eo fine solum ut illum erroris convinceret, et ita rursus ad haeresim quam dimiserat reduceret, illo unico discursu familiari, qui inter franciscum et parentem intercedebat, permotus, ipso in loco fidem Catholicam amplecti resolvit, quod totum ipse postmodum fassus est.

father with due obedience and greeted his brother, whom he encountered in the house. Soon in that place, as his father demanded an explanation, he, with suitable modesty, explained the reason for changing his religion. During this discussion, Henry (for that was his brother's name), who had armed himself against his brother for an entire year with the sole purpose of thoroughly refuting his error and so bringing him back to the heresy that he had forsaken, was deeply moved by that extraordinary family conversation which was taking place between Francis and his father; on the spot he resolved to embrace the Catholic faith, and he confessed it fully soon thereafter.

[854] Altered from 'armabat' to 'armaverat'.

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Et quid mirum si illius verba pondus et virtutem haberent, cum illa semper singularis modestia, et mentis sinceritas comitarentur, si quidem in sermone ille praeceps non fuit, sed tanquam singula verba bene praemeditans, ea mature, et composito semper animo et vultu proferebat, tam amabili candore mentem suam aptis verbis exprimens ut in illis nihil fictum appareret, multo minus quidquam mendacii, quo nec per iocum quidem, neque etiam per modum ironiae utebatur unquam (94r) forte cum se pararet[855] ad studia philosophica quae una cum aliis iuvenibus[856] privatim agredi (nam scholae publicae Catholicis non permittebantur) sub Reverendo P. Henrico Cavello Societatis Iesu statuit. Dialecticum pervolvebat, qua occasione dicebat, fallacias opportere addisci, non tamen ut

And is it any wonder if his words had such weight and worth, since always that special modesty and purity of heart accompanied him, since he was not hasty in his speech but deeply thoughtful about each of his words, which he brought forth opportunely and always with a steady heart and countenance, expressing in the right words with a winning sincerity his own thinking so that nothing seemed fake, much less at all a deception, which he did not ever employ, even by way of a joke or by way of irony, (94r) except perhaps when he was getting ready for philosophy studies that he decided to undertake privately with some other young men (for public classes were not allowed for Catholics) under Reverend Father Henry Cavell[857] of the Society of Jesus. In the course of reading through dialectic [logic] he used to say that one had to learn fallacies, yet not so that we may use them

[855] 'pararet' interlined.
[856] 'ag' deleted.
[857] Henry Cavell [MacCavell], b. 1605 County Down, Ireland. He entered Society of Jesus on 4 October 1624 at Tournai, France. He died on 20 April 1643, Ireland. Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 577.

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iis utamur, sed ut oppugnantes veritatem fallaciis, refellamus: Alias literas humaniores repetebat, et inter alia exercitia stilum exercebat precipue epistolarem, materiam vero eligebat amicitiam, de qua per mutuas literas tractabat cum amico quodam suo, Sed licet commodo in primis stilo uteretur, magis tamen apparebat amantis animi sinceritas, quae ex ipsis verbis et modo scribendi facile colligi poterat, quae illum singularem amicitiae cultorem monstrabant, sicut revera fuit. Nam in illius animo fidelis dilectio abundabat; sed alios amabat, quorum virtutes suspiciebat, alios vero propter spem virtutis, tametsi de facto improvisos,[858] aut imbecilles reperiret: et ita amabili sua consuetudine plures ad pietatis amorem pelliciebat: (94v) praeterea quos stabiliores in fide, aut virtute clariores noverat, ad eorundem usum et amicitiam

but so that we may refute those opposing the truth with those fallacies. At other times he would revisit humanistic literature and among the other exercises he would practise composition, especially epistolary composition, but he would choose as his content friendship, and he would discuss this topic through letters shared with a certain one of his friends. But although he especially practised a friendly style, the purity of his loving heart nevertheless became more apparent. It could be easily gathered from his very words and from his way of writing; these showed him to be that extraordinary cultivator of friendship that he in fact was. Faithful affection filled his soul to overflowing. He loved some whose virtues he admired, but others on account of a hope for their virtue, even if he found them in fact improvident or weak; and so with his appealing way, he attracted many to a love of devotion. (94v) In addition, he was eager

[858] *Recte* 'improvidos'.

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imbecilliores alios adducere studebat, ex quo non parva utilitas subsecuta est, ut experientia docuit; Artificiosa nimirum fuit charitas illius, et variis instrumentis animarum lucra quaerebat, etiam mathematicis, neque labori suo[859] aut incommodis illis parcebat, ubi se huiusmodi spes offerebat. Vidi illum aliquando, cum satis molestum iter conficeret, adhuc ulterius proficiscentem mediis pluviis, neglecto amicorum consortio, et commoditate loci, spe conveniendi quendam nobilem iuvenem, quem Ecclesiae Catholicae lucrari plurimum exoptabat.

to connect in association and friendship some who were weaker with those whom he knew to be more steady in their faith and clearer examples of virtue. Some considerable advantage came from this as experience has taught. His charity was no doubt artful, and he sought profit for souls by various devices, even mathematics, and he spared none of his labour or inconvenience on them, when such a hope presented itself. I saw him once, when he was finishing up a rather tiresome journey, going on yet further in the middle of rains, leaving aside the fellowship of his friends and a convenient place [lodging], in the hope of meeting a certain young nobleman, whom he deeply hoped to gain for the Catholic Church.

[859] 'suo' interlined.

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Inter haec francisci parens qui eum diu aspere tractabat, paulatim coepit rigorem remittere; nam cum hoc modo nihil se proficere videret, demum filii mansuetudine et modestia clementior factus est, iamque in gratiam recepto lites suas, et negotia in curia pertractanda commisit, quod munus ille diligenter obivit, tametsi longe a desideriis et animi sui inclinatione alienum, sed multa fastidia, quae in eiusmodi rebus occurrunt etiam iis qui altiora non sapiunt, miti animo (95r) pertulit; et si quidquam illi molestiam efferre posset, hoc ipsum fuit; non aliter tamen hoc aut alia munia a patre imposita suscipiebat, quam praeunte P. Nugentii consensu cuius arbitrio omnem quam parenti carnali exhibebat, obedientiam limitabat, nec plus minusve se saecularibus negotiis immiscebat, quam idoneum ille censeret, quae magis necessitate compulsus et studio parendi pertractabat, quam quod in illis gustum aut voluptatem sentiret; Idem eius

Meanwhile, Francis's father,[860] who had been treating him harshly for a long while, gradually began to soften his severity. For when he saw he was making no progress this way, he finally became milder through his son's gentleness and modesty, and now taking his son back into favour, he committed [to Francis] his lawsuits and business to be handled in court, a duty that Francis diligently performed, even though they were far from his desires and natural inclinations; and he bore many disagreeable chores that come up in these affairs even for those who have no knowledge of higher realities, and he bore them with mildness. (95r) And if anything could irk him, it was this. However, he would only undertake this or any other services imposed by his father with Father Nugent's prior consent. To this man's judgment he submitted all the obedience that he showed to his father by the flesh [i.e. by family bonds], and he engaged in secular affairs neither more nor less than that man judged suitable. And he dealt with such matters more compelled

[860] Sir Francis Slingsby.

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pater forte in Momoniae provinciam proficiscens, quo in loco terrae eius et possessiones iacebant, comitem itineris assumpsit franciscum. Tenentes vero sive subditi maiori ex parte fuerunt Catholici, qui omnes non exigua alacritate recipiebant franciscum supra modum laeti, quod herum Catholicum et tantae probitatis virum cui post mortem parentis subessent, habituri fuissent, in eoque multum prosperitatis sibi pollicebantur, quibus[861] omnibus ille benignum se et affabilem exhibuit, ad eorum aedes, quo Deo melius vacaret divertens, relicto patre inter eos qui diversae religionis fuissent; Et inter hos Catholicos (id quod aliis in locis facere consuevit) quos in hunc finem emebat, libellos pios, coronas, et alia huiusmodi quae ad pietatem fovendam spectarent, dividebat (95v) quae

by necessity and his desire to obey than because he took any relish or pleasure in them. When his father happened to set out for the province of Munster, where his lands and holdings lay, he took Francis as his travel companion. But his tenants or subjects were largely Catholics. They all received Francis with exuberant enthusiasm, in joy beyond measure, because they were going to have a Catholic master and a man of such integrity, and would be under his authority after his father's death. And they looked forward to much prosperity under him, as he had shown himself kind and approachable to all of them, spending time at their houses where he might use the occasion better for God, leaving his father among those who were of a different religion. And among these Catholics (something he had become accustomed to doing in other places), he

[861] 'omb' deleted.

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res illum tanto amplius desiderabilem fecit. Sed quod magis mirum est, ipsum Tubacco comparabat, quo populum capi sciebat: Illa quidem herba multas inutiles consuetudines mundo attulit, et odorem non omnibus gratum, quem tamen in fragrantiam convertere studebat franciscus praedicto in loco virum quendam patri suo adhaerentem convertit, eumque commode[862] instruxit, quem deinceps pater, postquam ab eo franciscus recessisset, calidis artibus agressus, et pollicitationibus deceptum rursus pervertit.

distributed devotional booklets, rosaries, and similar items that helped to nourish devotion, (95v) which he used purchase for this reason. And this made him all the more a person in demand. But what is more surprising is that he obtained tobacco by which he knew how to take hold of the people. Indeed, that leaf has brought many useless habits to the world and an odour that not everyone likes, but still it was one that Francis eagerly tried to turn into a fragrance. In the previously mentioned locality, he converted one of his father's dependents and helpfully instructed him. Then his father craftily approached this person after Francis had just left him, and deceiving him with promises corrupted him again.

[862] 'commode' interlined; 'idone' deleted.

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Inter patrem illius et matrem (ut ante insinuavi) inveterata dissidia intercedebant, quam discordiam tollere impense laborabat franciscus sed cum id difficillimum fuisset, cum pater, ut pote obstinaci[o]ris animi nollet cedere, et matrona afflicta gravem sibi fieri iniuriam crederet, ita in eorum causa temperabat animum, et affectum regebat, ut cum de eorum dissentione[863] mentio fieret, neutrum condemnaret ita ut nescires cui parti magis inclinaret aut affectione magis faveret, sed utrique compatiebatur, rem Deo commendans, adeo ille monstrabat se revereri, et diligere suos parentes.

Old divisions separated his father and mother (as I suggested earlier). Francis struggled tremendously to remove this discord. Since it had been a most difficult situation, as the father who was of a more stubborn nature did not want to yield, and the afflicted lady believed that a great injury would be done to her, [Francis] so tempered his own attitude to their quarrel and controlled his emotion, so that when mention was made of their disagreement, he condemned neither one, so that you would not know which way he leaned or felt preference for, but he sympathized with both, commending the matter to God, so far did he show that he revered and loved his parents.

[863] 'dissentione' interlined in different ink.

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Sed longe maioris dilectionis specimen erga parentes Spirituales, qui eum Christo genuerant, inhibebat. Memini enim, facta illi semel mentione (96r) genitoris sui carnalis, et felicis memoriae R.P. Joh[864] Gerardis alias[865] Tomsoni, qui eum ad fidem Catholicam perduxit et ni fallor[866] rogatus utrum magis diligeret, illum respondisse (et tum amabile ore suspiciens affectionis sua[e] teneritudinem et vultu et verbis[867] ipsis expressit) se millies, et sine comparatione hunc magis quam illum diligere ut cui plus debebat, eo quod Eclesiae et saluti suae eum spiritualiter genuerit: Omnes reverebatur, quibuscum agebat, habito unius cuiusque respectu, qui eius personae aut dignitate conveniebat quae

But evidence of far greater love he showed towards his spiritual parents, who had given him birth in Christ. For I remember once, at a reference to his physical father (96r) and to the happy memory of Reverend Father John Gerard,[868] also known as Tompson, who had led him to the Catholic faith, and if I recall correctly, that when asked which he loved more, he answered (and putting on a most loving expression, he expressed in his face and in his very words the tenderness of his affection) that he loved that one [John Gerard] a thousand times as much, without comparison, than this one [Sir Francis Slingsby], as he owed him more, in that he gave him birth spiritually for the Church and for his own salvation. He respected everyone with whom

[864] 'Joh' interlined in different ink.
[865] 'alias' interlined in different ink.
[866] 'ni fallor' interlined.
[867] 'et vultu et' interlined.
[868] John Gerard SJ (1564–1637), spiritual father at English College, Rome, from 1627 until his death, *ODNB*.

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res illi mutuam reverentiam comparabat non solum a viris Catholicis, sed ab ipsis etiam haereticis, usqueadeo ut illum etiam suae religionis fuisse optarent, ad illam illustrandam: magistrum suum Patrem Henricum Cavellum de quo supra, qua par erat veneratione honorabat, apud quem philosophiam incaepit, in eoque sibi[869] plurimum complacebat, quod praeter doctrinam, insignem pietatem discipulos suos erudiret, ac praecipue cultum Beatissimae Virginis.

he dealt, having the esteem for each that was appropriate for his station or rank. And this brought him mutual respect, not only from Catholic men but also from the heretics themselves, to the extent that they would wish he was also a member of their religion. Here is an illustration of this point: He honoured his teacher, Father Henry Cavell, presented above, with all due reverence. And with him he began philosophy, and he took a great deal of pleasure in the fact that besides the subject, that man taught his pupils a notable devotion, and especially the cultivation of a devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin.

De praelatis, quibus maxime obsequium debebat, honorifice loquebatur, eorumque incomia et virtutes cum sensu debitae aestimationis, recolebat. In Archiepiscopo Dubliniensi mansuetudinem laudabat; In admodum Reverendo Patre Mutio Vitellesco, tam hanc, quam alias multas virtutes depraedicabat,[870] quem ipse incaepit revereri,

He spoke honourably of prelates, to whom especially he owed obedience, and he used to think over their praises and virtues with a feeling of due esteem. In the archbishop of Dublin[871] he praised his gentleness; in the Very Reverend Father Muzio Vitelleschi,[872] he spoke openly of this and of many other virtues. He began to revere this man, indeed by approaching him with some

[869] 'sibi' interlined.
[870] Line and half following have been deleted.
[871] Thomas Fleming OFM (1593–1651), appointed Catholic archbishop of Dublin, 23 October 1623, *DIB*.
[872] Muzio Vitelleschi SJ (1563–1645), general of the Society from 1615 until his death. *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, II, 1621–1627.

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accedente aliqua affectione futuris scilicet obsequiis praeludente, etiam (96v) cum nondum fuisset Catholicus cum forte ei occurrisset[873] hoc venerabili eius aspectu[874] exigente: quanto magis post conversionem suam illum aestimabat, cuius obsequium et obedientiam, caeteris omnibus, quantumvis sibi charis praeferebat: Agnoscebat in P. Roberto Nugentio magnam omnino sanctitatem, et addebat neminem se novisse, qui hanc melius tegeret; nimirum oculi illius perspicaces erant ad dignoscendam virtutem. et ita alia in aliis extollebat, ex quibus omnibus ille sibi tam uberem virtutum copiam visus est collegisse.[875]

affection [Francis] anticipated the obedience that he would come to have for him, even (96v) when he was not yet a Catholic, when he happened to meet him and feel the force of his venerable appearance. How much more did he esteem him after his conversion, service and obedience to whom among all others he put ahead of however much he owed his own kin. He recognized in Father Robert Nugent an altogether great holiness and added that he knew no one who hid this better. No doubt his eyes were clear-sighted for discerning virtue. Just so he extolled other virtues in other people, and from all of them he seemed to have gathered so rich a supply of virtues for himself.

[873] 'cum forte ei occurrisset' interlined.
[874] 'aspectu' repeated, and deleted.
[875] Following three lines have been erased.

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Eminentissimi Cardinalis francisci Barberini patroni sui clementiam humili animo et agnitione memorabat a quo etiam tolerantiae suae solamen epistolas ab urbe in Hiberniam missas[876] recepit. De se ipse fatebatur, cum Romae sibi copia fieret deosculandi pedes summi pontificis, se tum temporis, viso Urbano VIIIo sensisse in animo suo internam et cordialem reverentiam versus Dei vicarium, ac si Christum Dominum intuereretur sibi presentem. Sed et Christi etiam personam in quolibet sacerdote, quantumvis humili respiciebat; fuerunt enim nonnullae delicatae animae, quae sibi difficile esse monstrabant ad (97r) cuiusvis sacerdotis

With humble spirit and acknowledgement he recalled the mercy of his patron the most eminent Cardinal Francis Barberini,[877] from whom he also received, as consolation for his endurance, a letter sent from Rome to Ireland. He himself confessed, that, in Rome, when he was allowed to kiss the feet of the supreme pontiff, he felt in his soul at that time on seeing Urban VIII[878] a deep and warm reverence for God's vicar, as if he were gazing on Christ the Lord present before him. But he also respected the person of Christ in each priest however lowly; for there were some delicate souls who showed that it was difficult for them to descend to the (97r) condition of any priest whatsoever, especially if

[876] 'ab urbe in Hiberniam missas' interlined.

[877] Francesco Barberini (1597–1679). He was created cardinal 1623, served as secretary of state under Urban VIII, and as Vatican librarian 1627–1636. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-barberini_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ (accessed 2 October 2023).

[878] Urban VIII, pope (r. 1623–1644).

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conditionem descendere, praecipue si quid educationis, literaturae, aut etiam virtutis desideraretur:[879] Ille vero se prompte et volenti animo huiusmodi hominibus subiicere, paratum esse, nec non confessiones et conscientiam suam committere, ubi res ita posceret; assuevit tamen ubicunque morabatur, aut transibat, sapientissimum quem invenire poterat, conscientiae suae ducem seligere. Cum omnes viros religiosos in veneratione haberet, tum maxime Patribus Societatis Iesu, adhaerebat, eosque usu et ipsam Societatem summo amore et aestimatione prosequebatur, et praeterea quoscunque noverat charitatis erga proximum opera exercere, hos se diligere monstrabat.

any education, letters, or even virtue were lacking. But he readily and with a willing heart was prepared to submit himself to such men, and also to commit his confessions and conscience to them where the situation so called for it. Nevertheless, he became accustomed, wherever he stayed or passed through, to select the wisest one he could find as a guide for his conscience. He revered all religious and he was especially close to the fathers of the Society of Jesus, and he associated with them and gave the Society itself his love and esteem; and in addition, he showed that he loved whoever he knew was performing works of charity towards his neighbour.

[879] 'desideraretur': two letters 're' inserted.

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Iuvenis quidam fuit e familia Comitissae Kildariensis qui solebat exire una cum sacerdote in villam ubi sacram apud populum fiebat et dum hic confessiones exciperet ille interim aut altare parabat aut rudes pueros in doctrina Christiana instruebat; In hunc vero iuvenem ab huiusmodi operibus redeuntem memini incidisse franciscum qui eum[880] dextera aprehendens, et hilaritate vultus, et sermonis amabilitate sibi in primis charum fuisse monstrabat simulque exprimebat desiderium quo ipse ferebatur ad eiusmodi opera exercenda (97v) Insuper mala et adversitates perferentes non sermone tantum, sed opere etiam iuvabat: familiam quandam Catholicam ex Anglia advenientem multis aerumnis, aegritudine, ac egestate confectam, solabatur, et elemosinis sublevabat, quae postquam ille ex patria recesset eius absentiam lamentabatur.

There was a certain youth from the household of the countess of Kildare who used to go out together with a priest to an estate where there was mass with the people; and while the priest was hearing confessions he would in the meanwhile prepare the altar or instruct uneducated children in the Christian faith. I remember Francis meeting this young man as he was returning from such tasks and giving him a handshake; Francis showed by his joyful expression and the friendliness of his speech that this person was especially dear to him. And at the same time he expressed the longing he himself had to undertake works of this kind. (97v) In addition to the troubles and oppositions he suffered, he gave his assistance not only in speech but even in action: he comforted a certain Catholic family coming from England, worn down by many troubles, by sickness, and by want, and he supported them with his alms; after he left the country the family missed him greatly.

[880] 'man' deleted.

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Virum quendam nobilem, quem Dei providentia celebrem genti fecit, dum in carcere fuisset, inter alios tolerantiae suae[881] consortes tenere[882] visus est diligere tametsi omnes dignissimi fuissent, quos amaret, sed forte quia is vitae suae, et possessionum detrimento vicinior apparebat: In summum enim discrimen adductus fuit, proregiis ministris immodesta ambitione vitae illius et bonis insidiantibus, cum ante iudices sisteretur omnes diversae ab eo[883] religionis, potens etiam adversarius (qui proregem gubernabat) contra consuetudinem se presentem exhiberet, vel ut iudicum clementiam diverteret, ne quid ni favorem inocentis inclinarent, vel certe ut severa sua inclementia eundem teneret: oppugnabant etiam legis periti eloquentissimi, quos appellant, consilium regis, Et omnia demum ruinam minabantur:

While he had been in prison, among all those who shared in his sufferings, he seemed to have a tender affection for a certain nobleman whom God's providence made famous. Although all whom he loved had been very worthy individuals, yet [he loved this person] perhaps because he felt closer to his life and loss of possessions. This man was brought into the greatest hazard, as the ministers of the viceroy[884] with their extravagant ambition for his life and goods plotted against him, when he was taken before judges, all of a different religion from his, and also a powerful adversary (who guided the viceroy) appeared, against the usual custom, either to divert the mercy of the judges so they did not incline to give any favour to the innocent party or indeed so that he restrained that favour by his own severe mercilessness. The most eloquent legal experts also fought against him, the ones whom they call the King's Counsel.

[881] 'suae' interlined.
[882] 'tenere' interlined.
[883] 'eo' interlined.
[884] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), lord deputy of Ireland 1632–1640.

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accurrebat etiam ad spectaculum ingens multitudo rei eventum expectans.

And all these things were at length threatening his downfall. And a huge crowed rushed to the spectacle, awaiting the outcome of the event.

Adfuit tamen innocenti Deus, et os et sapientiam contulit, cui ille fidere videbatur: nam in tantis periculis imperterritus innocentiam suam, servata oris, et animi tranquillitate,[885] (98r) ita patefecit, ut Catholicis laetitiam, adversariis vero confusionem adferret, omnibus admirantibus eloquentiam, et iurisperitiam tanquam caelo lapsam; sed quem[886] fuisse angelum[887] putares? certe et familiarem fuisse constat franciscum;[888] et alter alterum dilexit.

Still God was there supporting the innocent man, and his mouth brought forth wisdom, in which he seemed to trust. For undisturbed by any fear in the face of such great dangers, keeping tranquillity in his speech and heart, (98r) he so laid bare his own innocence that he brought joy to the Catholics but confusion to his adversaries, with everyone in awe at his eloquence and his legal knowledge, which seemed to fall from heaven. But who do you think was his angel? Certainly it is clear both that Francis was a close friend and that they esteemed one another.

[885] 'servata oris et animi tranquillitate' inserted in different hand and ink.
[886] 'sed quem' interlined.
[887] 'eius' deleted.
[888] 'franciscum' interlined.

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Neque ego hoc aut alia huiusmodi refero, quod hic illa inserere per se spectet, Sed quia efficax omnino argumentum integritatis desumi solet ex familiaribus, cum ubique inter saeculares, tum maxime iis in locis, in quibus Catholici haereticis permiscentur, Sed multo magis in iuventute quam non solum exempla, sed ipsa aetas ad licentiam provocat; Hoc inter alios multos favores divinae providentiae debuit franciscus quod a primo conversionis ad ultimum vitae terminum, optimis eum sodalibus, et sancto ubique consortio adiunxerit: Et hoc notabile in primis est, quod plerique eorum quibus primis post conversionem suam annis adha[e]sit insigne aliquod fidei suae testimonium exhibuerunt. Author conversionis illius P. Geraldus[889] Tomsonus, quam illum docuit, acerbo ipse cruciatu fidem[890] probavit. P. Robertus Nugentius septem annorum

I am not reporting this or other such things for their own sake, but because altogether effective evidence of integrity is typically taken from close associates, both everywhere among laypeople and especially in those places where Catholics are mixed together with heretics; but much more so is this the case in youth, in which not only examples [of conduct], but the very stage of life, provoke to licence. Among many other favours Francis owed this to divine providence: that from the start of his conversion to the end of his life, God linked him with the best of companions, and with a holy fellowship in every place. And this is above all worthy of note: that many of those to whom he clung in the first years after his conversion gave some remarkable witness to their faith. The one who sparked his conversion, Father Gerald Tompson,[891] gave proof of the faith he taught him, undergoing harsh torture. Father Robert Nugent

[889] 'Joannes' inserted above 'Giraldus' in different hand and ink. The insertion denotes name of John Gerard SJ (1564–1637), English Jesuit.
[890] 'fidem' interlined.
[891] John Gerard SJ used the alias 'Tompson'. While a prisoner in the Tower of London, April–October 1597, he was tortured, *ODNB*.

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persecutionem sustinuit, integris cohortibus itinera eius (quae noctu potissimum conficiebat,) die noctuque obsidentibus, per quos tamen saepe medios transibat, illaesus, deo ducente, cum tamen hac, illac discurreret, (98v) fervore spiritus[892] et frequentia populi maxima, praedicare non cessans. Fuerunt etiam inter primos quibus ibidem adhaesit Reverendus Pater Guilielmus Malonus tum superior residentiae Dubliniensis, et Pater Henricus Fiz-Symonius, quorum prior impresso volumine, quod iamdudum Catholicorum manus cum fructu et debita aestimatione percurrit, pseuprimatem

endured a persecution of seven years, with entire cohorts lying in wait day and night for him on his journeys (which he carried out especially by night); and still he often passed right through their midst unharmed, with God as his guide, as he dashed back and forth, (98v) in the fervour of the Spirit, with the largest of congregations, preaching incessantly. Likewise there were among the first of his close associates the Reverend Father William Malone,[893] then superior at the Dublin residence, and Father Henry FitzSimon.[894] The first of these vanquished the pseudo-primate of Ireland with a printed book that long before circulated through

[892] 'spiritus' interlined in different hand and ink.

[893] William Malone SJ (1586–1656) served as superior of the Dublin Jesuits until 1635 when he was appointed rector, Irish College, Rome. From 1621 he was engaged in a theological controversy with James Ussher who was appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh in 1625. Malone composed *A reply to Mr James Ussher his answere* (Douai, 1627), *ODNB*.

[894] Henry FitzSimon SJ (1566–1643) was incarcerated in Dublin Castle, 1599–1604, *ODNB*.

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Hiberniae evicit, alter vero venerabilis senex iam 80 annorum, sed qui in iuventute sua haresi infectus fuit, a qua recedens in Societatem Iesu se recepit, et interiectis aliquot annis iuventutis suae errores in eodem carcere Dubliniensi purgavit: Et haec ipsa fortassis tacito praesagio praeludebant iis quae francisco superventura fuerunt:

the Catholic community with effect and due respect. The second was a venerable old man of 80 years who had been infected by heresy in his youth, but gave it up and joined the Society of Jesus; after several years he purged the errors of his youth in the same prison in Dublin. And these very occurrences perhaps provided a silent forewarning of the events that were going to befall Francis.

Deinde quotquot fuerunt socii illius in carcere Catholici, Zelo non exiguo fidem orthodoxam etiam num probant; Nam inter praecipuos esse dicuntur, qui parti Catholicorum adhaerentes hoc armorum tumultu, tot mala et aerumnas pro illa tuenda et pro rege suo sustinent: ita vetus illa multorum sanctorum schola, non tantum una cum francisco patientiam illos[895] edocuit, sed etiam comunem fidei ardorem: prius quidem et alio modo hunc[896] monstravit franciscus sed tamen comune

Thereafter all his prison companions who were Catholics witness to the orthodox faith with considerable zeal, even up to now [January 1643]. For they are said to be among the leading ones who, adhering to the party of the Catholics in the confusion of armed conflict, hold up under miseries and troubles for its preservation [i.e. of the orthodox faith] and for their own king.[897] Thus that old body of many saints together with Francis not only taught them endurance, but also a shared passion for the faith. Of course Francis first displayed

[895] 'illos' interlined.
[896] 'hunc' interlined.
[897] Charles I (1600–1649). In the summer of 1642, in the political and military crisis affecting the three Stuart kingdoms (England, Ireland, Scotland), the Irish Catholics united politically and militarily in the Catholic Confederation, pledging loyalty to the king, and the Catholic faith.

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aliquid in eorum zelo semper se habere ostendit, quandoquidem pios eorum conatus orationibus ab initio prosecutas[898] est, uti mihi in tyrocinio suo eum visitanti retulit. E carcere vero emissus Comitem de Castlehaven, qui etiam in ipsa adolescentia sua viro dignum exhibuit (99r) fidei suae testimonium, hunc virum nobilissimum non solum in ipsa Hibernia habuit familiarem sed etiam, deinde in Anglia et Galliis testem suae virtutis. Integrae autem libertati restitutus Comitissam Kildariae adeo propter fidem suam haereticis exosam, ut nonnulli eorum male zelosi castrum illius sentinam inferni appellent, qui licet odorem virtutis non percipiant, illustri vituperio sibi exosam

this passion in another way but still he always showed that he had something in common with their zeal, in so far as he from the beginning [of the Confederation] accompanied with his prayers their devoted endeavours, as he reported to me in the novitiate, when I visited with him.[899] But on getting out of prison, [regarding] the earl of Castlehaven, who also in his early youth had given witness to his faith,[900] a witness worthy of a man (99r), Francis had this most noble man not only as a familiar friend in Ireland itself but also afterwards as a witness of his virtue in England and among the French. When he had been restored to his full liberty, [verb is missing] … the countess of Kildare, who was so odious to the heretics on account of her faith, so that some of them

[898] *Recte* 'prosecutus'.

[899] Francis Slingsby entered the Jesuit novitiate at Sant'Andrea, Rome, on 30 September 1641, where he resided until moving to the Jesuit college, Naples, in about September 1642.

[900] Here the author may be referring to the role of James Touchet (bapt. 1612–1684), 3rd earl of Castlehaven, in bringing charges of sexual misconduct against his father, Mervin Touchet, 2nd earl of Castlehaven (1593–1631), leading to the latter's execution. James Touchet, *ODNB*.

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commendant. Alii tamen mitiores sanctificatam domum agnoscunt:

who were wickedly zealous would call her castle the cesspool of hell. These were people who could not perceive the fragrance of virtue, and by their remarkable censure they make her a hateful figure among themselves. Yet others who are kinder acknowledge the holy quality of her house.

Atque ut alios multos omittam, magister illius P. Henricus Cavellus sub quo partem[901] philosophiae addidicit, hoc elapso anno cives Dublinienses patientiam pro fide edocuit, raptus a lectulo in quo paraliticus iacebat, in foro verberatus et derelictus in conspectu amicorum et civium, qui eum unice diligebant, sed non audebant erigere, deinde in carcerem et postmodum in naviculam una cum viginti aliis sacerdotibus proiectus, in qua demum vivus in Galliam appulit. De collegio Anglicano et Tyrocinio quid necesse est

And, to leave out many other episodes, his teacher, Father Henry Cavell under whom he [Francis] learned part of philosophy, in this past year [1642] taught the citizens of Dublin what it is to suffer for the faith: he was seized from the bed in which he lay in a palsy, and was beaten in the market place and left behind in the sight of his friends and fellow citizens (who had a special affection for him but they dared not halt [the proceedings]); he was then thrown into prison and a little later into a boat, together with twenty other priests, in which he finally arrived in France, still alive.[902] Of the English college[903]

[901] 'partem' interlined in different hand and ink.

[902] Henry Cavell [Mac Cavell] SJ (1605–1643). Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 577. In Dublin, towards the end of May 1642, Cavell was beaten with rods by government forces. At Pentecost (30 May/9 June 1642) he was among twenty priests and religious (including two Capuchins) who were shipped from that city, arriving in La Rochelle, France. See Stanislaus Kavanagh (ed.), *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, I (Dublin, 1932), 298–301. Matthew Hartegan SJ to father general, 5 August 1642, ARSI, *Anglia* 6a, fo. 20r–v.

[903] Francis Slingsby was resident in the English College, Rome, from February 1639 until September 1641.

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loqui: ibi enim in portu fuit, et meritum subiectionis addidit exercitae satis virtuti, sed et utraque iuventus ad probationem fidei Romanae crescit, aut certe ad praeclarissimas virtutes.

and the novitiate [in Rome] it is necessary to say something: for there he was in a place of refuge, and he added the merit of submission to his sufficiently exercised virtue, but through both youth grows towards assent of the Roman faith, or certainly to the most excellent virtues.

Sed et hunc divinae providentiae favorem summopere visus est franciscus aestimare, et in eo situm aliquod[904] ingens misterium agnovisse, qui ne[905] parenti suo fidebat nec intra eosdem parietes cum illo dormire, aut quibusvis aliis quorum fidem aut conversationem haberet suspectam, nisi id mera necessitas cogeret; nec (99v) tum quidem consueta[906] pietatis exercitia dimittebat: quaerebat

But Francis seemed to judge that this was supremely the favour of divine providence, and he seemed to acknowledge that something of an enormous mystery was placed in him. He did not trust his own father nor [did he dare] to sleep within the same walls with him, or with any others whose faith or association he considered suspect,[907] unless pure necessity would force him. (99v) Not even then did he fail to do his usual devotional exercises.

[904] 'aliquod' interlined.
[905] *Recte* 'nec'.
[906] 'dre' erased.
[907] The sense here is that Francis did not wish to sleep under the same roof as any Protestant.

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enim apta loca et tempora orationibus, et lectionibus sacris; biblia sacra, et pios libellos, spiritui suo et proposito quam poterat reperire[908] idoneos, Secum quocunque pergeret, circumferens, eorum usu et frequenti lectione devotionis sensum alebat, ac spiritum suum ad progressum formabat. Necesse igitur fuit hanc[909] animam tam bene ab initio temperatam (nam prima conversionis tempora exercitiis spiritualibus inchoavit) ita alienam ab omni prava consuetudine, ita ubique viris sanctis adhaerentem, rebus divinis, aut honestis occupationibus semper intentum,[910] gratiae caelestis influxum non levem, et magna sanctitatis incrementa indies acquirere.

For he sought out appropriate places and times for prayers and for sacred reading, [namely] the holy bible and small devotional books suitable for his spirit and intention as he was able to find them. And carrying them around with him wherever he went, he nourished his feelings of devotion by his use of them and his frequent reading, and he shaped his spirit so that it made progress. Therefore it was necessary that this soul, so well-controlled from the start (for he began the first period of his conversion with the Spiritual Exercises),[911] so foreign to all perverse habit, so attached to holy men everywhere and always intent on divine matters or honourable occupations – it was necessary for such a soul as this to obtain a substantial influx of heavenly

[908] 'aptos' deleted.
[909] 'hanc' inserted in margin.
[910] *Recte* 'intentam' – to agree with 'animam'.
[911] Denotes the prayer programme devised by Ignatius Loyola. For the text of the Exercises, see Munitiz and Endean (eds), *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, 281–360. Francis Slingsby first undertook the Exercises (in the customary eight-day form) with John Gerard SJ as guide, at the time of his conversion while in Rome, September 1633.

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Verum prae reliquis virtutibus patientia eius eminebat, Si quidem nulla superveniente occasione quidquam cholerae monstrabat, nec cuiusvis rei aut hominis fastidium; nunquam ab illo verbum audivi, quod ullius famam laederet, ne quidem eorum qui ipsa haeresi fuissent infecti, sed magis commendabat eos in quibus aliquid commendatione dignum reperiebat, si res ita posceret. De rebus ullis adversis non querebatur, neque de iis qui sibi iniuriam quomodocunque fecissent: Parentis sui in haeresi pertinaciam, quae omnium maxime illum angebat miti animo ferebat, assiduis votis eius conversionem suspirans, quam devotis orationibus Deo commendabat.

grace and to make great advances in holiness from day to day.

But ahead of all his other virtues, his patience stood out, since he showed no trace of anger on any subsequent occasion nor any aversion to any event or person. I never heard a word from him that hurt anyone's reputation, not even the reputation of those who had been infected with heresy; but he commended more those in whom he found something worthy of commendation, if the situation so called for it. He did not complain about any adversities, nor about those who had done him injury in what manner soever. He bore with a gentle spirit the stubbornness of his own father in heresy, a stubbornness that of all things most greatly distressed him, sighing in his constant longing for his conversion, which he commended to God with his devout prayers.

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(100r) Caeterum maestiore[912] vultu nusquam apparuit, nec quisquam ex eius sermone, aut ex facie melanconiae aut deiectionis animi signum percepit, sed oris serenitatem ubique servavit, ita ut merito colligi posset passiones animi et corporis in illo fuisse prorsus edomitas: alioquin excitatae mentis et spiritus fuit[913] cuius etiam apparebant[914] indicia. fuit indole dulcis, et conversatio illius, etiam iis qui pietatem non curarent, expetibilis; In rebus prosperis nunquam modestae hilaritatis terminum excedebat, neque usquam quavis causa movente prorumpebat in risum licentius, aut in quo excessum notares tametsi vita illius plerumque adversis et secundis fuisset permixta.

(100r) But in other respects he never appeared with downcast face, nor did anyone take from his talk or from his face a sign of melancholy or dispiritedness, but everywhere he maintained a serene look, so that it could rightly be gathered that in him the passions of mind and body had been fully conquered. In other respects, he was of a lively mind and spirit, of which there were signs. His nature was appealing, and his company desirable, even for those who were not interested in devotion. When things were going well, he never exceeded the bounds of modest humour, nor did he ever burst into uncontrolled laughter for any reason; nor would you notice in him any excess [of sentiment], although his life had been mostly a mixture of adversities and good fortune.

912 'maestiore' interlined.
913 'fuit' interlined.
914 'signa' deleted.

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Adfuit tandem ex Anglia de consensu parentis frater illius Henricus, qui modo vitae et consuetudinis eius imitator laudabilem vitae saecularis rationem ducit in Hibernia, et iam fortasse multa sustinet incommoda, cum ab initio tumultuum intra mania Dublinii esse dicatur, ubi omnes Catholici gravibus aerumnis urgentur; Cum vero hunc et Annam sororem (de qua supra) simul cum francisco esse contingeret, maiorem mentis alacritatem monstrabat (nam et ambos unice amabat, et fraterna familiaritas iure aliquid amplius exigebat) quam tamen laetitiam non in carnis et sanguinis unione sitam esse crederes; Sed ex spiritu christi processisse; Nam de christo aut de rebus ad pietatem aut fidem spectantibus magno animorum consensu et iucunditate inter se tractabant. (100v) Erga famulos

At length, with the consent of his father, his brother Henry came from England to support him. Henry was leading a praiseworthy manner of lay life in Ireland, imitating Francis in his way of living and custom, and now at this time perhaps he endures many inconveniences: since from the start of the troubles [October 1641], he is said to be in the midst of the madness in Dublin, where all the Catholics are being pressured by the worst hardships. But when it happened that he and his sister Anna[915] (see above) were together with Francis at the same time, he [Francis] showed a greater mental energy (for he had a special love for both of them and his closeness to his siblings rightfully amplified that somewhat), and still this joy you would not believe was situated in the union of flesh and blood, but proceeded from the spirit of Christ, for with great personal agreement and

[915] Ann Slingsby. Her husband Alexander Cosby died 6 August 1636. TCD MS 1216, fo. 65r. She was received into the Catholic Church on 3 December 1636.

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mansuetudinem et charitatem monstrabat, nec quemquam illorum de eo conquerentem quidquam audiebam: Hoc solum fastidium uni eorum attulit, ei nempe quem habuit[916] penes se cum[917] in domo Comitis de Castlehaven moraretur; Is querebatur, quod herus suus multum indulgeret orationibus, neque ad morem et consuetudinem aequalium suorum se formaret, sed cum Georgio praedicti comitis fratre genuflexionibus certaret, et alter alterum deperderet. Illos ipse instruebat, et si quem eorum a se dimitteret, id faciebat cum mansuetudine et charitate, largiendo iis supra quae pactus fuisset stipendia. Puerum pauperem quem assumpsit pedisequum, a se dimittens apud quendam, a quo panem lucrandi artem addisceret, locabat.

delight they talked with one another about Christ or about matters bearing on devotion or faith. (100v) He [Francis] showed gentleness and charity towards the servants, nor did I hear any one of them complaining at all about him. He expressed this single annoyance to one of them, namely to one whom he had with him when he was staying at the residence of the earl of Castlehaven. [Francis] complained that his master much indulged this servant's prayers and he did not conform to the custom and manner of his equals, but with George,[918] the brother of the earl he competed in genuflexions and they ruined each other. He himself instructed them and if he dismissed any of them from his service, he would do this with gentleness and charity, bestowing on them an amount greater than what the agreed stipend would

[916] 'habuit' interlined in different ink, same hand.

[917] 'cum' interlined; same ink as 'habuit'.

[918] George Touchet (d. before 1689?), 2nd son of 2nd earl of Castlehaven. He made monastic profession at the English Benedictine priory, Douai, 22 November 1643, *ODNB*.

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Alius fuit literatura imbutus, quem franciscus postquam opera eius amplius non uteretur, elemosinis ad studia prosequenda[919] sublevabat.

have been. Dismissing from his service a poor boy he had taken on as a footman, he placed him with a certain person from whom he would learn the skill of making bread for a living. Another servant was steeped in literature; after Francis could not use his services further, he supported him with alms to pursue his education.

A voluptate omnino alienus fuit, quod hoc indicio colligere est. forte cum Horatium poetam in manu semel haberem, ex eoque illi legerem locum[920] quendam ex sermonibus, ubi de voluptate fugienda tractabat, franciscus, non quidem poetarum more,

He was a complete stranger to pleasure. This we can gather from this clue: I once happened to have a book of Horace in hand, and I read to him from there a certain passage from his *Sermones*, where he considered the avoiding of pleasure.[921]

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[919] 'in' deleted.

[920] 'locum' inserted in different ink, same hand.

[921] A precise identification of this reference to the *Sermones* of the Latin poet Horace (65–8 BC) is not possible. However, the author may be referring to the passage beginning 'Sperne voluptates' [Scorn pleasures], Horace, *Epistles: Book 1*, ed. Ronald Mayer (Cambridge, 1994), 60 (Epistle 2, lines 55–71). For an English translation, see Colin Macleod, *Horace: The Epistles Translated into English Verse* (Rome, 1986), 8–10.

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qui norunt etiam contrariis affectionibus sermonem aptare, sed cordata aversione animo suo displicere voluptatem indicavit: Victus illi semper moderatus fuit et potus, quem invenire poterat, tenuissimus,[922] et eundem tenorem ubique servavit: Inter prandii et caenae tempora consuevit a cibo et potu refrenare, neque illam consuetudinem infringebat (101r) aut itinerum molestiis lassus, aut aestu sitiens, aut de more loci, et consuetudine hospitalitatis eorum ad quorum aedes accedebat instantiis affatim sollicitatus, cum tamen ante suam conversionem, ita siti et ariditate laboraret, ut etiam de nocte ex ipso lecto saepe[923] consurgere ad quaerendum potum aut aquam bibendam (uti ex ipso audivi) necesse haberet, adeo ille se superavit et in re cepta constans fuit; neque in hoc solum, sed in aliis[924] quibuscunque imo in rebus minimis

Then Francis, not indeed in the manner of poets, who knew how to adapt the language even to contrary feelings, indicated with hearty aversion that pleasure personally displeased him. Having overcome it, he was always moderate and drank very little of what he was able to find, and he kept the same course everywhere. Between the times of lunch and dinner, he was accustomed to refrain from food and drink; nor did he break that custom, (101r) either when weary from the toils of the road or when thirsty from the heat, or when he was greatly worried about the local custom and the practice of hospitality of those to whose home he had come in situations of urgency, since already before his conversion he struggled so much with thirst and dryness that even at night he often had to rise from his bed to look for a drink or water to drink (as I heard from him); so far did he overcome himself and keep steadily to his course.

[922] 'et potus … tenuissimus' interlined in the same ink and hand.
[923] 'saepe' interlined in the same ink and hand.
[924] 'rebus' deleted.

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optimum ordinem servavit, otium ubique fugiens, cui nullum tempus visus est tribuisse. Cautius inter mulieres agebat, et modesto silentio potissimum; iuniores autem aut virgines vix etiam de necessitate, et tum quidem brevissime alloquebatur, sed quam illaesum se custodiret ab omnibus quae castitatem offendere possent, hinc liceat colligere.

Not in this [matter] alone but in whatever others, indeed even in the least things he kept the best order, everywhere fleeing leisure, to which he seemed to have given no time. He was more cautious in spending time among women and most of all he kept a modest silence. He hardly addressed younger men or young ladies even when necessary, and then very briefly. But one may gather from this how unharmed he kept himself from everything that could offend chastity.

Dum in Galliis ageret, nondum haeresi dimissa, antequam Italiam adiret, contigit quandam nobilem faeminam eius consuetudine oblectari, adeo ut coniugium expeteret, et ille vicissim eiusdem amore irretitus fuit, et iam de matrimonio agebatur, et parum ab hoc aberant, cum Deo aliter rem disponente, ille occasionem sumit in Italiam proficiscendi: rogatus autem familiariter ab

When he was spending time in French regions, while still not free of heresy, before he went to Italy, it happened that a certain noblewoman took enjoyment in his company, so that she sought to marry him, and he in turn was ensnared by love of her. There was already talk about the marriage and they were quite close to it, when, as God was arranging a different course, he took the opportunity to set out for Italy. But when asked

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amica quadam persona, in Hibernia quid factum fuisset de eius amata, sive sponsa ingenue respondit, se illam dum rediret ex Italia non vidisse; neque etiam visitare voluisse, ne quid prioris conversationis in memoriam revocaret, aut (101v) denuo tentationibus locum tribueret.

in personal conversation by a certain woman friend of his in Ireland what he had done about his beloved or betrothed, he answered frankly that he had not seen her since he returned from Italy; nor had he even wanted to visit her, so as not to recall any of their previous association, or (101v) to give space once again for temptations.

In ipsa vero Hibernia contigit eum per aliquod tempus commoratum fuisse in quodam loco, ubi tum degebat nobilissima quaedam virgo forma simul et pietate praestans, quam in matrimonium cum eo coniungi, non solum inter amicos puellae desideratum fuit,[925] sed etiam ipsi insinuatum, et praeterea erga se affici virginem percepit: Et cui demum[926] aptius ille nuberet, si nubere voluisset? Amovit tamen omne periculum, subridendo tantum cum

But in Ireland itself it happened that he had stayed for some time in a certain place where there lived a certain very noble young lady, outstanding in beauty as well as devotion. Not only did some of her friends want her to marry him, but it had also been suggested to him, and furthermore he saw that the young lady had some feelings for him. And whom better, then, would he marry, if he had wanted to marry? Still he removed every danger, merely smiling when the matter was raised with him,

[925] 'fuit' interlined in different ink.
[926] 'demum' interlined in the same ink as 'fuit'.

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ea res illi insinuaretur, uti ipsum audivi exponentem P. Nugentio, cui exacte reddebat rationem omnium, quae ipsi contigerant, praecipue maioris momenti, eaque sinceritate, ut fictum nihil appareret, et tam humili modo, ut longe alienum a vana gloria crederes; dicebat enim agnoscere Dei beneficia, eaque fateri non pugnare cum humilitate, sed sibi illa tribuere vitium haberi; Quae puritas animi praeterea colligi potest ex oratiuncula quam ipse usurpabat quam hic subiicio

O bonitas praeveniens non propter me aut consuetudinem[927] *aut quidquam aliud sed propter te Deus meus et omnia Amen.*

as I heard him explaining to Father Nugent, to whom he was giving a full account of everything that had happened to him, especially things of greater importance, with such sincerity that nothing appeared fabricated, and so humbly that you would think him utterly far from vainglory. For he would say that to acknowledge God's gifts was to confess them humbly, not fight them, but that to attribute those things to oneself was to be considered a vice. This purity of heart moreover can be gathered from the little prayer he used; I attach it here:

O surpassing goodness, not for my sake or custom or anything else but for you, my God and my all. Amen.

[927] 'aut consuetudinem' interlined.

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Nec dici a me potest, nec forte ab alio satis exprimi, qui spiritum francisi[928] non haberet, (102r) quanto gustu et spiritus dulcedine hanc proferret. Porro laudis appetens non fuit, neque etiam inter homines consuevit captare occasionem se deprimendi aut extollendi, et cum forte aliqua eius encomia quidam[929] attulisset, modeste rogavit, ut deinceps ab huiusce modi absesteret.

Denique ad animi et corporis munditiem addebat castissimum amorem versus Dei matrem in cuius obsequium se variis modis devinciebat, singularem ubique exprimens affectum et pietatem, et cum omnia illius festa devotissime celebraret, tum maxime diem illum, quem (ni fallor) nominabat natalis eiusdem virginis, in quo ipse Deo renatus in gremium sanctae matris Eclesiae, in portum salutis, se fuisse receptum exultabat.

It cannot adequately be said by me, or perhaps by another who did not have the spirit of Francis, (102r) with what great relish and sweetness of spirit he uttered this prayer. Furthermore, he was not a seeker of praise nor was he, even among people, in the habit of taking the opportunity to disparage or exalt himself. And when someone happened to speak some praise of him, he modestly asked him to desist from that kind of talk.

Finally, to cleanliness of mind and body he added a most chaste love towards the Mother of God to whose obedient service he bound himself in various ways, expressing everywhere a singular feeling and devotion. And he celebrated all her feasts most devotedly, above all that day, which (unless I am mistaken) he used to call the birth[day] of the Virgin, on which he himself, reborn for God in the embrace of holy mother Church, used to exult that he had been received into the port of safety.[930]

[928] *Recte* 'Francisci'.
[929] 'quidam' interlined in different ink.
[930] Francis Slingsby was received into the Catholic Church in Rome, 8 September 1633 – the feast marking the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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In summa tanto[931] animi hilaritate et corporis modestia omnia christianae pietatis exercitia tractabat, ut convenientius angelo se amabili visione Christi salvatoris delicianti[932] eiusque agnitam bonitatem reverenti, comparari potuerit, quam homini.

Sed opus longum fuisset eius virtutes enumerare, et, quod fateor, captum meum, (neque id mirum est) excedit. Quare res eminentiores ab illo gestas, aliis quibus magis est congruum illas recensere, enarrandas relinquo, (102v) ac praecipue ea quae ultimis temporibus in Hibernia gesserit, in quibus pro maiori parte stabilem mansionem Dublinii fecit, cum non desint qui illa referant, praesertim R. P. Guilielmus Malonus, qui non solum eam residentiam gubernavit, sed etiam tam illi, quam fratri suo et sorori a confessionibus fuit. Unde etiam

In such supreme good cheer of spirit and modesty of body he used to perform all the exercises of Christian devotion, so that he might be more properly compared not to a human being but rather to an angel enjoying the appealing vision of Christ the saviour and revering his acknowledged goodness.

But it would take too long to list his virtues, and, as I confess, it exceeds my understanding (nor is that surprising). Regarding his more eminent deeds, which are to be related, I leave to others who are more fit to review these, (102v) especially those he performed in recent times in Ireland, when he lived for the most part in Dublin, and there are those available who might relate these, especially Reverend Father William Malone, who not only governed that residence,[933] but also was a confessor for him as for his brother and sister. That is why I have not dared to touch upon the internal dispositions of

[931] *Recte* 'tanta' – to agree with 'hilitaritate'.
[932] 'delicianti' interlined in different ink.
[933] Denotes the Jesuit community in Dublin, where William Malone was superior. From 1637 to 1647 he was in the Irish College, Rome. William Malone (1586–1656), *DIB*.

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internas animi illius dispositiones non audens attingere, quarum idoneus arbiter non sum,[934] haec minora, quae forte ab aliis in tanta copia praeteriri possent, colligere volui, quae potissimum indiciis externis, aut comuni hominum aestimatione, potui percipere, neque ad ha[e]c ipsa enarranda mihi accedendum putarem, nisi ad hoc rogatus fuissem, et ea talia sint, quae vix ignorare potueram, nisi ea scire noluissem aut oculos lumini clausissem; Multa enim ipse mecum comunicabat, pro innocentis[935] animi sui ardore,[936] et praeterea frequens eram inter eos quibuscum ipse magis familiaris et amicus fuit, et domi et foris saepe intereram sermonibus, qui de eius virtute et moribus fiebant

his soul, not being a fit judge of these matters, but I have wanted to collect these lesser matters that perhaps might be omitted by others in so great a quantity of material. I was able to perceive these things especially by external clues or by the judgement shared by people, and I would not think that I should attempt to narrate them unless I had been asked for this. And they are such that I could hardly have failed to know about them unless I had not wanted to know them or had closed my eyes to the light. For he himself shared many things with me, in the ardour of his innocent spirit; and moreover I was often among those for whom he was a more familiar friend, and I was frequently part of conversations which took place both at home and outside about his virtue and character.

[934] 'quarum idoneus … non sum' interlined; same ink.
[935] 'innocentis' interlined.
[936] Three words deleted; 'ardore' inserted.

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Interea nova exoriens tempestas, quam eius adversarii excitare caeperant, ex patria recedere suadebat; Et opportune in ipso tempore (103r) meritum obedientiae superaddidit providens Deus. Tunc enim literas ab Admodum Reverendo Patre Mutio Vitellesco recepit, quibus eum ad Urbem evocabat; Ille igitur ad datum signum expeditus, e medio amicorum, et conspectu, subito abripitur patiens divelli se ab operatione tam sancta et fructuosa, neque lachrimas afflictae matris propinquorumve respiciens, neque desolationem eorum, quos ipse ad fidem perduxit, eos tantum Deo, et patribus Societatis Iesu commendans: Et ita felicibus ventis, sed magis spiritu Dei (ut arbitror) afflatus, egreditur, summum sui desiderium, et admirationem in omnium animis qui eum noverant relinquens.

Meanwhile a new storm arising, one that his adversaries had begun to stir up, persuaded him to leave his country. And opportunely at that very time, (103r) God providently included in addition the reward of obedience. For at that time he received a letter from the Very Reverend Father Muzio Vitelleschi calling him to Rome. Therefore at the giving of this signal, unencumbered [travelling light], he is suddenly removed from his circle of friends and from their sight, enduring the separation from such holy and productive work, and not looking back upon the tears of his afflicted mother and of his kin, nor the desolation of those whom he himself had led to the faith, merely commending them to God and to the fathers of the Society of Jesus. And so powered by favourable winds, but more by the Spirit of God (as I judge it) he goes forth, leaving behind that intense longing and admiration for him in the souls of all those who knew him.

Et sane res omnium admiratione dignissima fuit, videre talem iuvenem in flore aetatis ita moribus temperatum, et inter multa iuvenilis licentiae blandimonta[937] rigorem senilis maturitatis

And indeed, the matter was most worthy of everyone's admiration: to see such a young man in the flower of his life, so ordered in his ways, and holding to the discipline of ripe maturity amid the many allurements of youthful

[937] *Recte* 'blandimenta'.

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retinentem, nuper immunda haeresi infectum, nunc tanta integritate conspicuum, et in medio saeculi pene plusquam religiosam degere vitam; omnis aetatis ac sexus homines, ad pietatem et christianos mores inflectentem: formidabilem praeterea haereticis, simul etiam ac[938] venerabilem, siquidem hoc eius innocentia extorquebat, quam improbi, nunquam reprehendere valuerunt, nec maculam in eo reperire, nisi virtutes improbarent, de quibus solis querebantur: Et haec omnia (103v) inter prima conversionis suae[939] elementa: Nec sane exigua potuit illa esse virtus, quae illum spectabilem redderet inter tot praestantes Catholicos, viros iniuriis, et persecutionibus saepe gravibus, abunde probatos, quales multi (quae Dei bonitas est) in illo regno reperiuntur: parumne est inter tot ac tales exemplum fidei et pietatis designari, et fama excellere? Addo etiam frigescenti mundo iam denuo

licence, formerly infected by an unclean heresy, now remarkable in such great integrity and leading a life almost more than religious [i.e. than that of a member of a religious order] in the midst of the world; bending people of every age and both sexes towards devotion and Christian habits; and in addition [he was] formidable to heretics, and at the same time worthy of their great respect as well, since indeed his innocence wrested it from them, which they, being reprobates, could never criticize, nor could they find blame in him unless they blamed his virtues, which was all they were complaining about. And all these things (103v) were at the early stages of his conversion. Nor could his virtue have been small: it made him notable among so many outstanding Catholics, men abundantly tested by sufferings and often serious persecutions – such men are numerous (which is the goodness of God) in that kingdom. Among so many and such people,

[938] 'ac' interlined.
[939] 'suae' interlined.

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aliquid representare, quod pristinae innocentiae, et fervoris, qui olim in primitivae Eclesiae christianis enituit, [ut][940] praesentem aetatem in memoriam reduceret, et quod viri sapientes iudicarent non esse absimile ardori quo nonnulli ex antiquis Eclesiae columnis fide et spiritu ferventes zelare gloriam Christi caeperunt? Et quid plura? proborum omnium unanimi consensu apellari sanctum iuvenem et censeri? Neque ullum testimonium forte valentius est quam vox tantae multitudinis, cum ipsa mater Eclesia hoc semper in pretio habuerit tanquam inditum divinitus ad denotandos eximios quosdam Dei servos; Non enim facile est errare tantam turbam, praecipue cum is cui acclamatur, non in solitudine agat, aut intra clausos parietes, sed ante ora et oculos omnium, et cuique

is it not enough to be designated as an example of faith and devotion and to excel in reputation? I add also to show afresh to a world already growing cold something of the pristine innocence and fervour that once shone forth in the Christians of the primitive church, to bring the present age back to an awareness of it and what wise men judge to be not dissimilar to that ardour by which some of the ancient pillars of the church, fervent in faith and spirit, began to promote zealously the glory of Christ? And what more? To be called a holy young man and judged as such by the unanimous consent of all decent people? Nor is there perhaps any stronger testimony than the voice of such a large crowd, since Mother Church herself has always valued this as something divinely declared in order to mark out certain excellent servants of God.[941] For it is not easy

[940] 'ut' missing in manuscript.

[941] 'servants of God'. Recognition of a person as a 'servant of God' was an initial stage in the canonization process. This process was reformed and placed under the Roman Sacred Congregation for Rites, established by Sixtus V in 1588. See entries 'Canonization' and 'Rites, Congregation of Sacred', *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.

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accessibilis familiari testimonio cuiuslibet[942] locum praebens, quemadmodum vixit franciscus

(104r) Sed cum omnes virtutes illius mirabiles omnino sint obedientia et amor subiectionis merito plus caeteris admirationis sibi vendicant: Nam quoad omnem modum vivendi, semper eam regulam servabat, quam P. Nugentius praescriberet, ad nutum illius pluribus aut paucioribus expensis contentus, commoditates aliquando conditioni suae competentes, non tantum superflua, a se abdicans; et interveniebant nonnunquam occasiones, in quibus, nisi saecularem animum omnino exuisset, erubescere potuisset non id agere, quod caeteri illius facerent aequales, sed ille omnem mundanae consuetudinis, aut aestimationis verecundiam negligebat: sed tamen[943] etiam easdem resumebat commoditates, non minori promptitudine, ubi id probaret idem P. Nugentius, quamquam magis

for such a great crowd to make a mistake, especially when the one who is acclaimed works not in solitude or within closed walls, but before the faces and eyes of all, accessible to everyone, offering a place for the familiar testimony of anyone, [regarding] the way Francis lived.

(104r) But though all his virtues are doubtless wonderful, his obedience and love of submission rightly claim more than the rest. For in every aspect of living he always kept that rule that Father Nugent prescribed, happy with more or less expenditures at his [Nugent's] command, sometimes giving up conveniences suitable to his status, not merely that which was unnecessary; and sometimes there arose occasions on which, if he had not totally divested himself of a worldly spirit he could have blushed not to do what his peers were doing; but he set aside every embarrassment coming from worldly usage or opinion. Still he also took up again those same conveniences with no less readiness when Father Nugent approved them, although he inclined more to those things that seemed to be linked with greater mortification, until [Francis] might consult him. And he was much

[942] 'cuiuslibet' interlined.
[943] 'tamen' interlined.

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inclinaret ad ea quae maiori cum mortificatione, coniungi viderentur, dum eundem consuleret: Et adhuc multo amplius avebat interiorem animum subiicere: Neque illi tantum hanc praestabat obedientiam, sed etiam superioribus residentiarum; et ubi stabilem habitationem firmabat, ibi etiam stabilem inibat modum et regulam obsequendi, quemadmodum Dublinii potissimum contigit; at ubi minus moraretur, saltem literas a P. Nugentio recipiebat, quibus curae superiorum commendabatur earum residentiarum (104v) per quas transibat, quos actionum suarum testes esse desiderabat, aut certe ab iis di[r]igi in rebus suis gaudebat. Hanc ego in illo virtutem ita sum admiratus, ut sine stupore in memoriam reducere non possim (et si qua laus est ignorantis iudicium)[944] cum etiam experientia notum habeam quam difficile sit, virum saecularem, et in saeculo agentem, saecularem animum deponere et respectus humani,

more eager still to subdue his inner self. Nor did he tender obedience to him alone but also to the superiors of [Jesuit] residences. And where he took up a fixed dwelling-place, there he entered into a steady manner and rule of obedience, the way he did in Dublin above all. But where he sojourned a shorter time, he at least received a letter from Father Nugent, by which he was commended to the care of the superiors of those residences (104v) through which he was passing. He wanted them to be witnesses of his actions, or certainly he was very happy to be directed by them in his affairs. I so much admired this virtue in him that I could not recall it without astonishment (even if the judgement of one who is ignorant is any praise), since I have learned by experience how difficult it is that a layman, living in a secular environment, would put aside his worldly mind and how human regard is deeply rooted in the minds of this kind of people, especially when laws or rules did not constrain him to this, but rather his love of submission

[944] 'et si … iudicium' interlined.

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eiusmodi hominum in mentibus altum[945] inhaereant, praecipue cum leges aut regulae adhoc eum non constringerent, sed amor subiectionis, et ductus Dei, et praeterea fortassis non nisi pauca ante se[946] haberet huiusmodi exempla, eorum, qui in talibus circumstantiis, onus vitae saecularis cum tanta vitae religiosae perfectione, coniunxerunt, et utrumque onus in vita magis periculosa sustinuerunt. Qualis fuisset ille in virtutum maturitate, qui talis in sanctitatis suae infantia apparuit. Quid dicam de invincibili constantia? Sed calamum expedit temperare, tametsi affectus abundet erga amicum optimum.

and God's guidance; and in addition, perhaps he only had a few examples of this type before him of those who in such circumstances joined the burden of a worldly life with so great a perfection of a religious life, and upheld the double burden in a life that was more dangerous. How would he have been in the maturity of his virtues, who was of such a kind in the infancy of his sanctity? What should I say about his unconquerable steadfastness? But it is best for my pen to be sparing, although my feelings overflow towards my excellent friend.

Haec in Hibernia gesta sunt: Sed Romam etiam subsequi amicum contigit, tametsi interiectis aliquot annis: Et forte iter perfeci, cum illi inchoandum fuit tyrocinium: ut primum appuli, de francisco sollicitus quaesivi, cuius desiderio longi itineris molestias saepe lenivi, cuius etiam nomen ab

These deeds were done in Ireland. But I happened also to follow my friend to Rome, even though there were some years in between. And perhaps I completed that journey when he was starting his novitiate.[947] As soon as I landed I anxiously asked about Francis – I often eased the discomforts of the long journey with

[945] 'altum' interlined.
[946] 'se' interlined.
[947] Francis Slingsby entered the Jesuit novitiate in Rome, 30 September 1641.

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epistola ipsius[948] avulsum circumtuli, sed cum iam in sacris esse dictum fuisset, temparare[949] mihi (105r) quod vere illud hominis sancti esse sacrificium existimarem non potui, antequam illius missam audirem[950] cur enim ego animo viventem non venerarer, quem in veneratione habituram post illius funera, etiam ipsam matrem Eclesiam sperabam? Sed illud interea mihi mirum apparebat, tametsi tunc temporis virtutem esse[951] non animadverterem, quod cum ego multa illi

eagerness for his company; I even carried around his name, torn from a letter of his. But when I was told that he was already a priest, I could not keep myself (105r) from thinking that truly that was the sacrifice [Mass] of a holy man, before I heard his Mass for why would I in my heart not venerate him while [he was] alive whom I hoped that even Mother Church herself would hold in veneration after his funeral? But meanwhile it appeared strange to me, although I did not notice his virtue at that time, that though I was able to give him much news

[948] 'ipsius' interlined.
[949] *Recte* 'temperare'.
[950] Arrow indicating material to be interlined – but no text inserted.
[951] 'esse' interlined.

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de amicis suis possem recensere, ille nihil quaesierit; Post paucos vero dies in illum rursus incidi forte ante portam S. Andreae in monte, et cum illi gratulatus fuissem, quod bene haberet, et hilaritatem prae se ferret, respondit id mirum non esse, quod tunc nuptiis suis vicinus fuisset, ad quas accedere statuit vel illo vespere vel saltem sequenti, id est ad Sanctum Andream, ibique valedixit; consuevi deinde ibidem commorantem aliquoties visitare, et sane abunde apperebat[952] illum nuptiarum gaudiis exultare, si quidem hoc ipse fatebatur, et ex ipso sermone et vultu percipi poterat; fateor ego infirmitatem meam, si quando me aliquis languor occuparet, aut me ad aliquam pietatem excitari

about his friends, he did not ask at all about them. But after a few days I chanced to meet him once again in front of the gate of Sant'Andrea in Monte,[953] and when I had congratulated him that he was doing well and showing good cheer, he answered that it was not strange because then he was very near his 'nuptials', to which he had decided to go either on that evening or at least on the following, that is to Sant'Andrea, and there he said farewell. Thereafter I was accustomed to visit him several times while he was staying there; and indeed he seemed to exult in the joys of his 'nuptials', since he himself confessed this, and one could sense it in his speech and his facial expression. I confess my weakness: if ever any listlessness took hold of me,

[952] *Recte* 'apparebat'.
[953] Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Jesuit novitiate, Rome.

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cuperem, ad eundem accedebam vel in eius solo aspectu remedium imbecillitatis mihi[954] promittens; Sed neque ab illo unquam redibam nisi aut affatim aedificatus, et animo alacrior iuxta expectationem, aut certe miserans peccata mea et indignitatem, quam clarius nunquam licuit inspicere, quam in illo speculo virtutum: (105v) in quo vere caelestes gratiae abundantius resplendebant: Sed neque ingrato tot favores contulit clementia divina; inter alia enim dicebat, sibi nihil adeo defuisse, ac gratitudinem, qua Dei beneficentiam agnosceret, eique dignis gratiarum actionibus corresponderet, quod ipsum maxime declarabat animum gratum et agnoscentem auxilia divina.

or I wanted to be roused to some devotion, I would go to this very man, promising myself a remedy for my weakness merely by the very sight of him. But I never returned from him except thoroughly edified and more spiritually alert than I had expected, or certainly I returned sorry for my sins and unworthiness, which I could never see more clearly than in that mirror of virtues. (105v) In him, truly, divine graces shined forth most abundantly. But divine mercy did not confer so many favours on an ungrateful soul. He used to say, among other things, that nothing was so lacking to him as much as gratitude by which he might acknowledge God's kindness and answer him with worthy thanksgiving – something that itself most strongly declared that his soul was grateful, acknowledging God's help.

[954] 'mihi' inserted in margin.

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Alias dicebat, in isto loco scandalum esse, si quis verbum protulisset, quod immediate ad gloriam Dei non tenderet: rursus incidente sermone de quibusdam iuvenibus, novitiis praetereuntibus asserebat illos iuvenes toto corde suo Deum diligere: Sed ubinam ego me reperio? aut quorsum huc nisi quia virtus exiens est, quae forte cum fructu a nobis colligi possit qui diversam agimus vitam.

Atque haec aliqua viventis est descriptio, quantum quidem ad notiam[955] meam spectat, si quid conferat ad eius vitam inscribendam: nunc aliquid morientis Addam …

At other times he would say that it was a scandal in that place, if anyone uttered a word that did not directly aim at the glory of God. Again, when talk arose about certain young men, novices passing by, he claimed that those young men loved God with all their heart. But where do I find myself? Or why here, except that virtue is departing, and it can perhaps be fruitfully gathered by us who are leading a different life?

And this is some representation of the living man, at least as much as bears on what I noticed, if it contributes anything to the writing of his life. Now I will add something about him as he was dying …

[955] *Recte* 'notitiam'.

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Nam cum subita semel infirmitate corriperetur, eique nemo praesens fuisset praeter me unum et iam iam moriturum se crederet, ita se pie et sancte disponebat ad mortem, ac si longo tempore horam illam praescivisset; Inter alia, quae tunc devoto et christiano spiritu proferebat, haec verba, languescentem vultum ad me convertens dixit (106r) O Mauriti, si hic iam me mori contingat, dic P. Nugentio, me ex animo de peccatis meis poenitere. Hoc vero illi contigit in Hibernia post quam fuisset in libertatem restitutus, in domo Comitissae Kildariensis, et media[956] non fuit, casu me solum vigilante: Sed respiravit demum, Deo illum ad clariorem exitum reservante: Qualis ergo et quam illustris debuit fuisse mors illa, ad quam se deinceps tantis meritorum incrementis praeparavit, qui ad improvisam horam ita dispositus fuit,

When he was once gripped by a sudden sickness, and no one was around him except for me alone, and he believed himself just about to die presently, he prepared himself for death in so devout and holy a way as if he had for a long while in advance known that hour. Among other things that he expressed at that time with a devout and Christian spirit, turning his weakening gaze towards me he said these words: (106r) 'O Maurice if it happens that I die here and now, tell Father Nugent that from my heart I do repent of my sins.' This in fact happened to him in Ireland after he had been restored to freedom, in the residence of the countess of Kildare, and the household was not there, but by chance I alone was keeping vigil. But at length he recovered, God keeping him for a more splendid leave-taking. So what kind of death and how distinguished must that one have been, for which he henceforth prepared himself by so

[956] *Medium, ii* – denotes 'the community'.

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Si tamen illa mors dici debeat, et non transitus felicissimus ab aerumnosa vita, in qua multa incommoda pro christo patienter pertulit, ad beatitudinem vitae immortalis, in qua modo inter sanctos Dei conspicuum cum Christo regnare, ad quem ille tota mente aspirabat, pie credere liceat.

many additional merits, a man who was so ready for the unforeseen hour – if that really ought to be called death and not a most happy passage from a troublesome life, in which he patiently bore many inconveniences for Christ, for the blessedness of immortal life, in which now it may be devoutly believed that he reigns gloriously among God's saints with Christ, to whom he aspired with all his mind.

Ego vere ita esse spero, et arbitror; de proinde quem amicum habui in terris viventem, non merito quidem meo, Sed illius mansuetudine, eundem fore fidelem pro me in caelis intercessorem devota expectatione confido, cuius virtutem et praeclara merita, sicut finem non facio diligendi, ita eorum aliquid imitari, et assequendi, Deus optimus maximus concedat, et illius ferventius aspirare, ac demum pertingere, quo clarescentem (106v) gloria illius vultum conspiciam, quem humiliantem se in terris conspexi. Amen

I truly hope it is so, and I do think it is. And that is why I trust with devout expectation that he will be a faithful intercessor on my behalf in heaven, the one whom I had as a friend on earth, not by my merit, certainly, but by his kindness; just as I cannot stop esteeming his virtue and remarkable merits, so may God almighty grant that I imitate and achieve something of them, and aspire most fervently to what is his, and finally attain that place where I may look upon his face shining (106v) in glory, the face which I looked upon humbling itself on earth. Amen.

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Ad gloriam Dei, et servi eius honorem, hanc indigestam relationem scripsit Mauritius Wardaeus, almunus collegii Hibernorum de Urbe, et Sacerdos, tam illo munere, quam eius cui hoc adfert testimonium, familiaritate indignus. Utinam in animo scribentis aliquod pietatis incitamentum relinquat, et hic animus ad memoriam tam sanctae conversationis mitescens, aliquid in melius proficiat, quem durum presentia devotissimae consuetudinis tam parum emollivit.

In Januario 1643[957]

For the glory of God and the honour of his servant, Maurice Ward wrote this unorganized account. He is a student of the college of the Irish in Rome and a priest, unworthy both of that office and of the friendship of the one who is the subject of this testimony. Oh that it might leave some inducement to devotion in the soul of its writer, and may this soul, mellowing at the memory of such a holy familiarity, make some progress for the better, that hard heart whom the presence of a most devout companionship has softened all too little.

In January 1643

[957] 'in Januario 1643' in a different hand.

XIV. KBR MS 3824-5, fos 5r–14v

Testimony of Robert Spreul SJ re FS, [undated; c.1643]

Text (i)

(5r) Ihs[958] maria

Narratio fratris nostri Roberti Spreul ex Societate nostra[959]

De insigni pietate, et illustri virtute, R.P. Francisci Slingsbie, e Societate Iesu prebyteri[960] natione Angli, e nobili et antiqua familia oriundi, et patrimonii ampliss[imi] haeredis, aliquae observationes, ab oculato teste et innumerabilibus obligationum vinculis illi devincto; conscriptae.

Si in omnium Sanctorum vitis qui sanctitate floruerunt, iure optimo illust.[961] Regii prophetae, *mirabilis Deus in Sanctis suis*,[962] tum maxime in praesenti occasione usurpari posse, sine ulla exaggeratione syncere existimo: unica enim S. Pauli conversione excepta, paucissimos reperies, ad virilem aetatem extra Ecclesiae Catholicae gremium enutritos, qui in ipso conversionis suae primordio, non citius fidem orthodoxam quam insignem vitae sanctitatem, et christianae perfectionis culmen amplexi sunt:

Id autem quam eminenter faelicissimae memoriae P. franciscus praestitit, vel ex hoc solo constare potest, quod statim postquam Romae conversus erat, spiritu[a]lia exercitia Sancti Ignatii suscipiens, adeo sese divino nutui et inspirationi, obsequiosum exhibuit, ut amplo patrimonio, et opulentis facultatibus spretis, Societatis Iesu institutum tanta animi constantia, ad vitam in eo degendam elegit, ut non solum vocationem per octennium integrum in saeculo, non obstantibus summis difficultatibus et obstaculis, firmam conservavit verum etiam magno animi ardore perfectionem relligiosam, exactissima regularum nostrarum observantia, conversando cum saecularibus, Haereticis, tum domi tum in aula, prosequutus sit.

[958] Abbreviation: 'Iesus'.
[959] Title in different hand from body of text.
[960] *Recte* 'presbyteri'.
[961] Read 'illustrissimi', abbreviated to 'illust.'
[962] Psalm 67:36.

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Et quidem in ipsa sui[963] conversione ad fidem Catholicam, multa notatu digna, et extraordinaria occurrerunt, nam in veritate investiganda tam prudens et syncerum examen instituit; in examinandis pp.[patrum] testimoniis de controversiis fidei huius temporis, tam intensum studium adhibuit: in continua fere et ferventi oratione, crebris ieiuniis, et copiosis eleemosynis, ad explorandam divinam voluntatem; tam diligenter sese exercuit; et super omnia universa mundi blandimenta; honorum et promotionum spem, et expectationem; amicorum et parentum indignationes, et inimicitias tam invicto animo superavit ut facile in ipso limine, qualem habitura essent tam fausta auspicia exitum appareret. sed ea omnia in particulari, iis pertractando relinquo qui tunc Romae adfuerunt rerum omnium prout gestae sunt probe conscii, illa solum sigillatim enarrabo, quae ipse viderim, postquam Roma in Hyberniam rediit.

In primo autem loco, res meo iudicio magni quidem momenti, sese considerandam offert; cum enim Haeretici, quotquot relligionem catholicam profitentur, superstitiosos, Idololatras, deliria et paradoxa in rebus fidei amplectentes[,] insanos denique et non sui compotes [ae]xistiment, eos presertim qui ab eorum secta desciscunt, indignatione maxuma prosequuntur, ita ut cum caeterae difficultates omnes superatae sint, haec sola plerosque[,] caeteroquin de veritate fidei catholicae convinctos, in suis erroribus retineat, timor scilicet opprobrii, dedecoris et infamiae quae subire oportebit: quae quidem quam vera sint ii omnes vere experiuntur qui ad fidem catholicam conversi sunt. noster tamen invictus Athelta[964] tam forti animo difficultatem hanc superavit, ut relligionem catholicam palam et aperte non solum profiteretur, verum etiam de tam insigni beneficio divinitus sibi collato, gloriaretur[,] et immensas Deo gratias ageret, et hoc quidem eo pluris existimandum est, quod multis post conversionem, relligionem catholicam non palam (5v) sed privatim profiteri conceditur, quam quidem conditionem generoso admodum animo p. franciscus respuit, et cum proregem hyberniae, vicecomitem Wentwoorth,[965] propinquo consanguinitatis gradu sibi licet[966] coniunctum, salutatum; post reditum, adiret, acerrimum tamen[967] catholicorum persecutorem, intrepide coram ipso, in frequenti nobilium haereticorum coetu, catholicum cum se professus est, et cum prorege, aliquem relligionis

[963] 'sui' inserted.
[964] *Recte* 'athleta'.
[965] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), Viscount Wentworth, lord deputy of Ireland, 1632–1640.
[966] 'licet' inserted.
[967] 'tamen' inserted.

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catholicae articulum impugnante, disputationem sustinuit,[968] quae omnia a primario proregis camerario praesente, mihi narrata sunt.

Cum autem pater eius, summae in eo regno authoritatis, in illustranda et amplificanda sua familia, magnam spem in filii sui prudentia, et supra aetatem[,] animi maturitate ab omnibus laudata, reposuerat, nihil non egit ut a relligione Catholica mentem eius abalienaret, propositis illi ante oculos, detrimentis et dedecore familiae tam illustri inustis, quod incapacem sese promotionum, honorum et ad publica gerenda munera[969] reddidisset (catholici enim a publicis reipub[licae] officiis arcentur per leges) sed cum p. franciscus cum singulari reverentia et mansuetudine, illa Christi Domini verba, *Quid prodest homini si universum mundum lucratus fuerit, animae vero propriae detrimentum patiatur*,[970] pro responso[,] insinuavit, percipiens pater eius, quod cum Apostolo omnia terrena ut stercora arbitratus sit,[971] et quod hoc modo apud eum praevalere non posset, licet ei ut a secretioribus esset Regi a consiliis (quod supremus dignitatis gradus reputatur) spem amplam iniecerat: nihil aliud sibi reliquum esse existimavit, quam ut vi argumentor[ ] relligionem catholicam falsam esse, filio suo persuaderet, ut ita scrupulum conscientiae illi incuteret,

et cum iam ex quotidiannis congressibus cognovit se in disputando de rebus fidei p. francisco long[e] inferiorem esse, voluit illum ad Archiepiscopum et totius Regni primatem Doctorem Usher[972] adducere, qui doctissimus inter Haereticos ut re vera erat existimabatur et qui libros contra catholicam relligionem scribendo, magnam sibi authoritatem conciliaverat: cum autem multa Archiepiscop[us] contra fidem obiiceret, complacuit Domino Deo mirabili modo constantiam eius in relligione catholica probare, aut potius palam facere, solita enim eius promptitudo et alacritas in propugnanda acriter fide orthodoxa, et pristina lumina et motiva omnino illi adempta sunt, et summa mentis caligine et obscuritate affectus est, in his ergo angustiis constitutus, mentem ad Dominum Deum pro auxilio et directione eius elevans, summam mentis illustrationem dispersis tenebris, de veritate fidei catholicae sentiens, in genua provolutus est, obtestans Dominum Deum quod, si ipse fidem orthodoxam a Christo Domino

968 'instituit' deleted.

969 'sese' deleted.

970 Matthew 16:26: 'quid enim prodest homini si mundum universum lucretur animae vero suae detrimentum patiatur': 'for what shall it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, but loses his soul?'

971 The reference is to the apostle Paul, Philippians 3:8: 'I look upon everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ.'

972 James Ussher (1586–1656), appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland in 1625.

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et Ap[osto]lis praedicatam non professus sit, iuberet ut terra dehisceret, et illum obsorberet. haec cum magno fervore loquutus, ab Archiepiscopo ut tantundem pro fide sua praestaret, postulavit, Qui quidem summa cum (6r) festinatione resiliens, asservit p. franciscum sui compotem non esse, et quod temeraria praesumptione fidem suam tueri vellet, hoc vero factum cum aliqui etiam Catholici improbarent, sciscitans ego postea cur id fecisset, respondit se summa cum animi tranquillitate et deliberatione id fecisse, hoc praesertim animo, ut patrem suum[973] tandem de firma sua resolutione, de fide catholica non deserenda certiorem faceret, ut ita tot importunis vexationibus, quae ipsum a vita solitaria, exercitiis spiritualibus, et ne sibi vacare posset impedimento fuerant, liberaret.

Quod quidem licet mediante hoc heroico actu tandem praestitum sit, nihilo tamen minus, diversus longe effectus immediate subsequutus est, ita enim prorex et Archiepiscopus irritati sunt, ut eo ipso die in carcerem coniectus sit, ubi ea animi aequitate singulari modestia et mansuetudine cum omnibus conversatus est, ut magnum amorem et benevolentiam ab haereticis ipsis sibi conciliavit, Catholicos vero ipsum visitantes magnopere consolatus est, non solum per eam quam in relligione catholica profitenda prae se ferebat constantiam et ad extrema omnia in tali causa supportanda, promptitudinem[,] verum etiam per pia sua colloquia et sanctam conversationem, varios ad morum emendationem, et sanctioris vitae rationem ineundam insigniter permovit, unum prae caeteris cognovi ego, eius pia conversatione ita affectum, ut non exiguam vitae commutationem postea fecerit, non aliae causae, quam exemplo et praeclaris virtutibus p. francisci eam acceptam ferens,

Dum autem in carcere remaneret, iterum ab alio Episcopo Haeretico D. Bromnell,[974] qui acumine et doctrina excellere putabatur, ad subeundam pro fide disputationem provocatus est, materia et argumentum ab Episcopo selectum erat, sumptio S[anctissimae] Eucharistiae sub unica specie, nulla enim est controversia, in qua confidentius victoriam sibi, quam in hac pollicentur et sperant. Primarius quidam ex proregis Aulicis, diem disputationi indictum mihi, significavit, simulque ut praesens essem invitavit (adhuc enim Catholicus non eram) cum autem, uterque nostrum ad disputationem audiendam accessit, Episcopus accessum non concessit, ita ut nobilis (qui haereticus etiam erat) a quo invitatus eram aperte dixerit, videri sibi Episcopum suae fidei cuius tutelam suscepit,

[973] Altered from 'suam' to 'suum'.

[974] John Bramhall (1594–1663), consecrated Church of Ireland bishop of Derry, 26 May 1634, *ODNB*.

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parum securum esse modo suae relligionis consortes ad disputationem illam admittere, nollet, in hoc autem congressu,[975] longe aliter quam in priori cum primate habito res successit, tam enim clara lumina de veritate relligionis Catholicae divinitus sibi inspirata expertus est, ut quaecunque ab Episcopo sibi obiecta fuerint, facillime dilueret; et certe quam egregie relligionem Catholicam hac occasione propugnaverat, hinc constare liquet,

quod sciscitanti mihi postea de eventu rei, et conquaerenti quod adesse non licuit, Is qui unicus disputationi intererat haereticus, et relligionis catholicae summus impugnator, nihil respondit, quod, sibi ab Episcopo satisfactum esset, argueret, solumodo rem dissimulare et tegere videbatur, quod utique non fecisset, si levissimum gloriandi de parta victoria, cum quavis apparentia, fundamentum habuisset.

Pater autem francisc[us] ingenue mihi confessus est, (6v) rem ita successisse, uti ipse fieri optabat, falsitatem enim argumentorum Episcopi non solum clarissime interiori mentis acie perspexit et vidit, sed et gravissimar[um] rationum copiam sibi occurrisse, quibus omnia ab Episcopo producta falsa esse palam faceret. Cum autem perspexerant omnibus iam exploratis modis, nullam amplius de reditu p. francisci ad ipsorum fidem spem superesse, diuturna saltem carceris afflictation[e] castigare decreverunt. Sed Benignissimus Dominus consilia, ipsorum irrita fecit, non alio sicuti eventus comprobavit, fine [,] quam ut fidelissimi sui servi, de gloria divini sui nominis, propagandi, flagrantissimi, opera, in multorum conversione uteretur, Serenissima siquidem Angliae Regina[976] de statu et incarceratione p. francisci certior facta, litteras ad proregem dedit, quibus libertatem eius e carcere post octo ni fallor menses impetravit.

Sui autem iuris factus, diverso longe modo[,] quam iuventus nostr[i] temporis libertate sua utebatur, a liberiori enim spiritualis vitae exercitio, in carcere impeditus, veluti flamma diuturno tempore et violenter compressa, splendore[977] relligiosarum virtutum, et ardore[978] ferventiss[imae] charitatis, per insignem et vere Angelicam vitae sanctitatem universa civitati[979] in qua vixerat praelucebat, cum enim post liberationem ipsius e carcere, invitaretur a patre, cui unice erat dilectus, propter eximias eius virtutes, ut domum rediret veluti

[975] 'multo' deleted.
[976] Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I.
[977] Altered from 'splendorem' to 'splendore'.
[978] Altered from 'ardorem' to 'ardore'.
[979] i.e. Dublin.

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Alter Abraham[980] e domo sua et cognatione sua egredi voluit, veritus namque ne[981] ut mundo etiam aliqua ex parte satisfaceret, splendidiorem vitam et magis deliciosam in domo patris (familia quippe nobili et divite[)] tum in victu tum in vestitu, tum etiam in famulitio, quam vitae statui cui se iam devoverat congrueret, transigere cogeretur:
multis et assiduis precibus a patre aegre tandem obtinuit, ut Dublini privatim commorari liceret, non alio fine, quam ut vitae relligiosae[982] et proximorum saluti unice incumberet, et cum patribus Societatis[983] qui in ea urbe residentiam habebant, liberius ageret, unico ergo pauperi famulo contentus, in domo privati civis, divertere decrevit, ubi omni vitae pompa deposita, quae alioqui illius conditioni debebatur, eam vitae rationem inivit, quae multis Relligiosis sub claustrali disciplina viventibus pudorem incutere posset, nullus enim Novitius in tyrociniis distributionem temporis sibi praestitutam exactius illo observatu[s] constituta enim tempora a patre spirituale, surgendi, orandi, etc. Iuxta Societatis morem praescribi sibi voluit, quae exactissime ex amore obedientiae observabat, horam integram orationi mentali mane impendebat, genibus nudis, studio deinceps, sacrae lectioni, sacro audiendo[984] in tempus prandii sese applicabat, examen conscientiae mensa[e] praemittebat, horam praecise recreationi dabat:
de Deo, sanctorum vitis, et rebus piis, cum illis de familia colloquia miscebat, qui omnes mihi testificati sunt non sine magna animorum commotione, colloquia ipsius ab illis audita fuisse, et quod ex nullius unquam conversatione, tam ingentem fructum fecerint; finita recreationis hora ad cubiculum (8r) se recipiebat,[985] ubi paululum quiescens examen particulare, a duobus aliis distinctum peragebat, deinde sese iis exercitiis sicuti ipsi praescriptum erat vacabat, corporis afflictationem[,] disciplinis, ciliciis, ieiuniis, exercebat, raro domum nisi urgente aliquo negotio egrediebatur[,] et temporis bene et fructuose terendi tam

[980] Genesis 12:1: 'The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."'

[981] Following word deleted.

[982] 'totam se' deleted.

[983] i.e. of the Society of Jesus: Jesuits.

[984] 'sacro audiendo' inserted; 'sese' deleted.

[985] Fo. 7r is blank; fo. 7v contains 'Admodum Reverendo in Christo Patri. P. Nathanaeli Sowthwelio, e Societate Iesu Romae'. Nathaniel Southwell (1598–1676) entered Society of Jesus as a priest on 8 March 1625–1626. From 1627 to 1637 he was attached to the English College, Rome, as minister (Jesuit in charge of the material wellbeing of the college). In 1641 and 1642 he was confessor at the college. McCoog, *English and Welsh Jesuits*, II, 299.

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intensum studium adhibuit, ut ne momentum quidem in otio transigeret; sacramenta paenitentiae et Eucharistiae, omnibus festis diebus, more Societatis cum singulari devotione frequentabat, omnem denique vitae rationem Societatis instituto ita conformabat, ut audacter affirmare audeam neminem in quocunque tandem collegio[,] maius intensum studium, quam ille sui iuris in saeculo, in disciplina relligiosa et exacta regularum observantia collocasse: Et certe in legendis et relegendis regulis adeo assiduus erat, ut eas veluti alter Berkmans,[986] continuo secum circumferret; idque in loco tam secreto ut licet inter Haereticos continuo conversaretur, nemo id percipere posset[,] in superiori enim parte pilei quo ex castoris pilis utebatur, serici rasi intus consuto, regulas portabat:

Hanc autem singularem et admirandam vitae rationem licet P. franciscus omnibus quibus poterat modis, clam reservabat, incedebat enim[,] bysso, holoserico[,] texto itidem Attalico indutus[,] hoc siquidem et proprius status, et parentum imperium necessario illi imponebant nihilotamen minus efficere non potuit quin suavissimus virtutum suarum odor, longe lateque spargeretur, eoque magis, quod non solum inter Haereticos, sed inter ipsos Catholicos, neminem invenire erat, qui similem vitae elegendae modum amplecteretur: neque quidquam in ore omnium frequentius erat, quam p. francisci laudatio, et virtutum eius commemoratio. cum enim apud nos in regionibus nostris usu receptum sit, ut filii Nobilium virorum maxime vero Haeredes magnarum facultatum, in summo splendore, tam in victu, vestitu, quam famulitio vivant, equos siquidem alere, venationem exercere, et alia id genus vitae oblectamenta impigre amplecti, Quae omnia cum iuvenem nobilem in primo aetatis flore[,] honorificentiss[im]e et in summis deliciis dum in Haeresi erat educatum respuentem, licet in se licita et statui suo non inconvenientia cernerent, idque in Metropoli totius regni,[987] ubi in[988] Aula proregis, plurimi ipsius cognati et amici degerent: et vitae rationem mundo omnino contrariam cum verum omnium sublunarium magno contemptu summa alacritate ineuntem viderent; non modo catholici, qui in ea civitate plurimi erant, verum etiam Haeretici, summis laudibus p[atrem] francisc[um] prosequebantur, et sanctum aperte proclamabant, cuius rei oculatus testis ego fueram.

(8v) Sed non sine singulari Dei providentia, tam publicum virtutum suarum Theatrum illi assignatum erat: plurimi enim Cathol[ici] tam

[986] John Berchmans SJ (1599–1621), Flemish Jesuit student who died in Rome.
[987] i.e. Dublin.
[988] 'in' inserted.

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raro vitae exemplo, commoti, non solum in fide catholica confirmati, verum etiam in vitae emendatione, ingentes progressus fecerunt: Haeretici etiam non pauci eius opera conversi sunt, In[989] quorum numero, Ego, qui haec scribo, licet tali beneficio omnino indignissimus, fueram: profiteor enim quanta possum synceritate, quod[,] post multos exantlatos labores in scrutinio veritatis nullum me tam efficax ad amplectendam relligionem catholicam inductivum expertum esse, quam eximia sanctitas, quae in vita p. Francisci elucebat, et inter alios multos ab eo ad fidem conversos, frater eius natu minor, summae indolis et spei adolescentis, ingenue mihi confessus est, quod regularis illa et relligiosa uniformitas, quam in orando, sacra lectione, conscientiae examine [etc] p. Franciscus constantissime observavit praecipuum fuisse motivum quod ad abnegandam haeresim ipsum induxerat, tam constans enim vitae tenor, cum tanta probitate coniunctus, rarum quid inter Haereticos, et insolitum omnino est neque sola vitae sanctitate; Licet hoc praecipuum erat, tam multum fructum fecit: gravissimis etiam rationibus et argumentis haereticos confutavit, et in controversiis fidei elucidandis, summum ingenii acumen monstrabat:

Haec licet magna sint, unum tamen addam, quod quidem nescio an non Aliquid supra humanum sapiat, non solum enim ego experientia propria, sed quotquot cum ipso familiariter agebant unanimi consensu testificari audieram: occultam quandam virtutem, conciliandi sibi multorum benevolentiam, et ad imitationem suarum virtutum alliciendi animos eorum quibuscam[990] conversabatur, licet ille nihil minus prae se ferret, illi inditam fuisse: quendam autem prae caeteris cognovi, qui ex solo eius aspectu, magna virtutum incitamenta, animo suo impressa esse expertus est, et certe nescio an ullum unquam cognovrim, in cuius externo, maior verecundia, modestia et benignitas[991] (tranquilli animi, et passionibus liberi non obscura indicia) apparebant; quod multi e nostra Societate Relligiosi, qui eum saecularem in coll[egi]o Rom[an]o praecipue vero eius condiscipuli palam in hunc diem testantur, cum enim de eo forte incidat sermo plurimi qui nomine tenus eum non cognoverant, circumscriptione quadam nominis vice utuntur [videlicet] modestus ille Anglus, sanctus, benignus

[989] 'Inter' altered to 'In'.
[990] Read 'quibuscum'.
[991] 'et benignitas' inserted.

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[etc.] tam alta virtutum suarum vestigia[992] solo externa praesentia, aspicientium animis impressa reliquit.

(9r) Quamvis autem sibi va[c]are, et soli Deo, mediantibus praedictis exercitiis et in publico raro prodire summopere desideravit, cum tamen de lucrandis animis minima spes iniecta esset, omnia privata (quod magnae perfectionis est) aut missa facere, aut differre paratus erat, neque ullum laborem aut molestiam in hoc genere detrectavit, operam suam pauperibus ac divitibus iuxta offerens, familiam integram, maritum [scilicet,] uxorem et liberos omnes ad fidem Dublini convertit, Matrem etiam suam, sororem et fratrem, praeter multos alios ad 20 ad minus. Dum in Hybernia commoraretur, quod quidem non parvi momenti res est si difficultas Haereticum convertendi consideretur.

Inciderunt forte dum simul diversaremur in manus meas aliqua ipsius scripta, quae summam eius et admirabilem diligentiam in perfectionis studio consequendae, claro indicio esse possunt, minimos enim defectus, et animi motus notaverat, redarguendo sese acriter et expostulando de re illa commissa, pios doloris, et amoris affectus miscendo, actus denique virtutis contrariae eliciendo, hoc autem faciebat de rebus quidem minimis, si [e.] g. aliquem primum aversionis motum sentisset dum ab aliquo tempore studiorum aut orationis visitaretur, tanta[m] conscientiae puritatem suspirabat.

Haec et alia multa ab eo ad multorum fructum gesta, melius p[atri] suo confessori quam mihi nota sunt. ampliorem eorum narrationem itaque aliis relinquo ea solum breviter subiungam, qua[e] in itinere quod Avenione,[993] Romam una cum magna mea consolatione, fecimus, occurrebant observatu digna. quam prompte enim, et quanta cum animi resignatione, non obstante fructu eximio quem faciebat, patriam, parentes, et bona omnia reliquerat, cum Romam per litteras vocatus est, et quam insignem heroicae obedientiae actum fecerit, in ordine ad observantiam voti Roma ad sepulchrum Beati Aloisii[994] postquam conversus erat, aliis enarrandum, quippe melius iis compertum relinquo.

(9v) Blank

[992] 'ex' deleted.

[993] Latin form of Avignon, city in south-east France.

[994] Aloysius Gonzaga SJ (1568–1591), Italian Jesuit student who died in Rome, beatified in 1605.

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Translation: Text (i)

(5r) Jesus, Mary

Account written by our brother Robert Spreul, of our Society

Some observations written about the extraordinary piety and remarkable virtue of Rev. Fr Francis Slingsby, a priest of the Society of Jesus and native of England, who was born into an ancient noble family, and was heir to a large patrimony, as made by an eyewitness, who was also strongly attached to him by countless bonds of obligation.

If, among the lives of all the saints who were distinguished for sanctity, on the highest authority of the most illustrious royal prophet,[995] *God is wonderful among His saints*,[996] then the following can, I sincerely believe, without any exaggeration be stated to the greatest extent on the present occasion, with the sole exception of the conversion of St Paul:[997] you will find very few men brought up to adulthood outside the bosom of the Catholic Church who at the very outset of their conversion had no sooner embraced the orthodox faith than they reached extraordinary sanctity of life and the summit of Christian perfection.

But, moreover, how eminently Fr Francis – of happiest memory – stood out, can be seen even from this single fact: that immediately after he had converted in Rome, he took the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius[998] so much to heart and showed himself so obedient to the divine will and inspiration that, spurning a large inheritance and great wealth, he chose the rule of the Society of Jesus with such constancy of mind, and elected to spend his life in it, so that not only did he keep his vocation firm for eight whole years in the secular world, in spite of the greatest difficulties and obstacles, but he also pursued religious perfection with great ardour of mind by the most exact observance of our rules,[999] while keeping company with laypeople who were heretics, both at home and at court.

Indeed in his very conversion to the Catholic faith, many noteworthy and extraordinary things happened: for instance, in the search for truth he began an examination which was both prudent and sincere, in examining by intense study the testimonies of the fathers [of the Church] concerning the controversies of the faith of this time; in

[995] King David, to whom the composition of the psalms was attributed.

[996] Psalm 67:36 Vulgate, Douay-Rheims translation.

[997] The conversion of St Paul is related in Acts 9:1–19.

[998] For the text of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola, see Munitiz and Endean (eds), *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, 281–360.

[999] i.e. of the Society of Jesus.

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his almost constant and fervent prayer, frequent fasting and abundant almsgiving, while seeking the will of God; so diligently did he apply himself and overcome with such an unbroken spirit all the many blandishments of the secular world, the hope and expectation of public offices and promotions, the disdain and hostility of friends and parents, that it is easy to see, from the very outset, what results such favourable auspices would have. But I leave all the details of these events to be dealt with by those who were in Rome at the time, well aware of all of them just as they happened, and I shall relate one by one only those things which I myself have seen, after he returned from Rome to Ireland.[1000]

In the first place, a matter of truly great importance, in my judgement, now presents itself for consideration; since heretics consider all those who profess the Catholic religion as superstitious people and idolaters, embracing what is crazy and paradoxical in matters of faith, in short they consider insane and not in possession of their faculties; [therefore] they attack with the greatest indignation especially those who break away from their sect; so that when all the other difficulties are overcome, only these kept the majority, otherwise convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith, in their errors, that is, the fear of the reproach, shame and disgrace which would have to be endured: all those who have converted to the Catholic faith truly learn the truth of those very things. However, our undefeated athlete[1001] overcame this difficulty with such a strong spirit that he not only professed his Catholic religion openly and publicly, but also boasted about such a great blessing being divinely bestowed upon him, and gave great thanks to God. This is to be valued in him all the more, since it is permitted to many, after conversion, to profess the Catholic religion not openly (5v), but privately, a condition which Fr Francis with very noble spirit refused. On his return [to Dublin], when he went to Viscount Wentworth,[1002] the viceroy of Ireland, although closely related to him by blood, he paid his respects to him; notwithstanding he was the most severe persecutor of Catholics, in the very presence of a crowded group of noble heretics [Francis] undauntedly professed himself a Catholic. When the viceroy attacked some article of the Catholic

[1000] Francis Slingsby arrived in Dublin from Rome in July 1634.

[1001] In the New Testament, the word 'athlete' is derived from the verb 'to wrestle', and was used to describe Christian combat. Xavier Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Terrence Prendergast (London, 1980), 105. The athlete as a symbol of Christian dedication and perseverance in the face of difficulty features in the Pauline letters, e.g. Philippians 2:16; Galatians 2:2 and 5:7; 2 Timothy 4:7; 1 Corinthians 9:24–26.

[1002] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), Viscount Wentworth, lord deputy of Ireland, 1632–1640.

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religion he [Francis] kept up the argument. All of these things were told to me by the viceroy's principal chamberlain, who was present.

However, his father, who held the highest authority in that kingdom, wishing to make his family famous and great, had placed great hope in the prudence of his son, the maturity of whose spirit – which was beyond his years – was praised by all. There was nothing he did not do to alienate his son's mind from the Catholic religion, by presenting before his eyes the damage and shame which would be branded on such an illustrious family because he himself would render himself ineligible for promotions and offices and for performing public duties (for Catholics are banned by the laws from holding public offices of the state). But when in response Fr Francis put forward, with exceptional reverence and mildness, those words of Christ the Lord, '*What does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, but loses his own soul?*',[1003] his father realized that he considered along with the apostle [i.e. Paul] that all earthly things were mere dross,[1004] and that he could not prevail over him in that way, although he [Sir Francis] had suggested to him a broad hope that he [Francis] would have been among the privy councillors to the king[1005] (which is considered to be a position of the highest rank). He believed that there was nothing left for him to do but to persuade his son by force of argument that the Catholic religion was false, so that he might strike into him the scruple of conscience.

And since he already realized from their daily meetings that he was greatly inferior to Fr Francis in debating matters of faith, he wanted to bring him to the archbishop and primate of the whole realm, Dr Ussher,[1006] who was considered as being the most learned among the heretics, as he in fact was, and who by writing books against the Catholic religion had won himself great authority. However, when the archbishop made great objections against the faith, it pleased the Lord God miraculously to test his [Francis's] firmness in the Catholic religion, or rather to show it openly. For his usual readiness and speed in ardently defending the orthodox faith, as well as his former enlightenment and motives, were taken away from him completely and he was affected by the densest mental blindness and obscurity of thought.

[1003] Matthew 16:26.

[1004] The reference is to Philippians 3:8: 'I look upon everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ.'

[1005] Sir Francis Slingsby was appointed to the Irish privy council in 1621.

[1006] James Ussher (1581–1656), appointed Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland in 1625.

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Finding himself in these straits, he raised his mind to the Lord God to support and guide him, and – the highest illumination of the mind dispelling the darkness – he perceived the truth of the Catholic faith. He threw himself down on his knees, imploring the Lord God that if he himself had not professed the orthodox faith as preached by Christ and the apostles, he would command that the earth might split open, and swallow him up.

He said these things with great fervour and requested the archbishop to offer surety to the same degree on behalf of his own faith. But he, for his part, recoiling with the greatest (6r) speed, claimed that Fr Francis was not master of himself, and because he wished to defend his faith with rash presumption, even some Catholics criticized what he had done. Later when I enquired why he [Francis] had done this, he replied that he had done it with total peace of mind and deliberation, as he had particularly intended to inform his father finally of his own firm resolution not to abandon the Catholic faith, so that he might free himself in that way from so many harsh trials, which were a hindrance to his following the solitary life with its spiritual exercises, which he could not do without.

Even if, with this heroic act, he prevailed in the end, none the less, a very different result immediately followed: for the viceroy and the archbishop were so enraged that on that very day he [Francis] was thrown into prison, where he conversed with everyone with that fairness of mind, [and] singular moderation and gentleness, that he won to himself the great love and goodwill even of the heretics. He greatly consoled the Catholics who visited him, not only by means of that constancy in professing the Catholic religion which he displayed, but also by his readiness to bear to the very end all those things which have to be borne in such a judicial process. Indeed, with his pious discussions and holy conversation, he even prevailed remarkably on various people to correct their conduct, and to embark on a more holy way of life. I myself got to know one man, above all the rest, who was so affected by pious conversation with him that he subsequently made great changes to his way of life, relating that he had undertaken this for no other reason than the example and the outstanding virtues of Fr Francis.

While he was in prison, he was on another occasion summoned to take part in a disputation in favour of the faith by another heretic bishop, Lord Bromnell,[1007] who was considered to excel in acuteness and learning. The subject matter and the theme were chosen

[1007] John Bramhall (1594–1663), consecrated Church of Ireland bishop of Derry, 26 May 1634, *ODNB*.

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by the bishop: the taking of the most holy eucharist under a single species.[1008] For there is no controversy in which they more confidently promise and hope for victory than this one. One of the viceroy's principal courtiers told me which day had been announced for the debate. He invited me at the same time to attend (for I was not yet a Catholic). But when both of us came to hear the debate, the bishop did not allow us to enter, so that the nobleman by whom I had been invited (who was furthermore a heretic) said openly that it seemed to him that the bishop had so little confidence in his faith, the defence of which he had undertaken, that he would not admit to that debate those who shared his religion. However, at that encounter things unfolded very differently compared to the previous one with the primate, for he [Francis] had experienced such clear illuminations, by divine inspiration, about the truth of the Catholic religion, that he easily refuted whatever objections were made by the bishop. Just how outstandingly he defended the Catholic Church on this occasion can be clearly established from the following: when I later made enquiries about the outcome of the matter, and complained that I was not permitted to attend, the only one present at the dispute – a heretic, and the main opponent of the Catholic religion – gave me no answer. He claimed he had been paid off by the bishop. It was clear that he was only dissembling and covering up the matter, which he would not have done in any circumstances if he had had even the slightest ground for boasting of the victory gained, whatever the appearances were.

Moreover Fr Francis openly confessed to me that (6v) the matter had turned out as he himself had hoped it would, for he had not only examined and seen the falseness of the bishop's arguments most clearly and sharply in his mind's eye, but also an abundance of most weighty reasons had occurred to him for making plain all the false arguments adduced by the bishop. But when they now perceived, after examining all the possibilities, that there no longer remained any hope of Fr Francis' returning to their faith, they decided to punish him with a long prison sentence in any event. But the most Blessed Lord[1009] turned their plans to nothing for no other purpose – as the outcome proved – than to use the works of his most loyal servant, who was the most passionate one in spreading the glory of his divine name, for the conversion of many. The most serene Queen of England,[1010] who was

[1008] In the celebration of the eucharist, the churches of the Reformation offered communion under both species (bread and wine) to the laity, whereas in the Roman Church, communion under both kinds was limited to the presiding priest. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, I, 449.

[1009] Synonym for Jesus Christ.

[1010] Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I.

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informed about the circumstances and the incarceration of Fr Francis, sent a letter to the viceroy, by which she obtained his liberation from prison, after eight months if I'm not mistaken.[1011]

However, once placed under his own authority, he made use of his own freedom in a very different way than young people of our time, for – hindered in prison from the freer exercise of the spiritual life, like a flame violently kept down for a long time – he shone out to the whole city in which he lived[1012] with the splendour of religious virtues and with the ardour of the most fervent charity, through an outstanding and truly angelic holiness of life. For, after being freed from prison, he was invited by his father, to whom he was especially beloved on account of his exceptional virtues, to return home; like a second Abraham[1013] he [Francis] wished to leave his home and his relations, fearing that as he might be giving satisfaction to the world to a certain extent, he might be compelled to live a more splendid and more delightful life in his father's house (for it was a household noble and rich both in its manner of life and its dress, as well as in its servants) than would suit the state of life to which he had now devoted himself. Accompanied by many incessant prayers, with difficulty he finally obtained permission from his father to live privately in Dublin for no other end than to devote himself completely to the religious life and the welfare of his neighbours, and to spend time more freely with the fathers of the Society who had a residence in that city.[1014]

Content with a single poor servant, he decided to lodge in the house of a private citizen, where, setting aside all of life's pomp, which in other circumstances was due to somebody of his status, he entered into a way of life which could have shamed many [vowed] religious living in cloistered discipline. For no novice from among the young recruits observed the arrangement of time set out for them in a more exact manner than he did, for he wished his spiritual father to prescribe for himself [Francis] the times for rising and praying, etc., according to the custom of the Society, which he observed most exactly from a love of obedience. Early in the morning he used to

[1011] FS was arrested on foot of a warrant issued 8 November 1634 (Mark Empey (ed.), *Early Stuart Irish Warrants, 1623–1639* (Dublin, 2015), 177–178), and was incarcerated in Dublin Castle. By May 1635, he was living in the custody of the 3rd earl of Castlehaven at his home in Maddenstown, County Kildare. By November 1635 he was fully liberated.

[1012] Dublin.

[1013] Abraham responded to the Lord's call: 'The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you"', Genesis 12:1.

[1014] On the Jesuit establishment at Kildare Hall, near Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, see Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 'Kildare Hall, the countess of Kildare's patronage of the Jesuits', 242–265.

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devote a full hour to prayer on his bare knees, and apply himself successively to study, to sacred reading, to listening to sacred reading at lunchtime. He used to have an examination of conscience before his meal, and give one hour exactly to recreation: with those of the household he would mix discussion about God, the lives of the saints, and holy matters, all of whom bore witness to me, not without deep personal emotion, that they had listened to conversations with him, and that they had never taken such great fruit from any other acquaintance. When the hour of recreation ended, he would go back to his bedroom, (8r) rest for a little while and go through a particular examination distinct from the other two, then spend time on those exercises which he had prescribed for him, and practise the chastisement of the body by disciplines,[1015] hair shirts and fasts. He would rarely leave the house unless there was some urgent business, and he devoted such zeal to using his time well and fruitfully that he spent not one moment at leisure. He used to participate in the sacraments of penance and the eucharist on all the feast days, with singular devotion in accordance with the custom of the Society.

In short, he conformed his whole way of life to the practices of the Society in such a way that I dare confidently to affirm that nobody in any college ever devoted more intense zeal than he did, on his own free initiative [and] in a secular context, to religious discipline and to the perfect observance of the rules. Indeed he was so assiduous in reading and re-reading the rules that he used to carry them around with him all the time, like a second Berchmans.[1016] This was in a place so secret that even if he was constantly mixing with heretics, no one could observe it, for he used to carry the rules[1017] in the top of his beaver-fur hat, one with a pouch of smooth silk inside.

Although Fr Francis kept this exceptional and admirable way of life secret by all the means he could, for he used to walk about dressed in richly woven linen and silk, since both his own status and his parents' commands obliged him to do so. He could nevertheless not keep the most pleasing odour of his own virtues being spread far and wide. And this all the more so because, not only among the heretics, but

[1015] The ascetical practice of using a small five-cord whip on one's shoulder, common in religious life in the early modern era. Bailly, 'Flagellants', cols 407–408.

[1016] John Berchmans SJ (1599–1621), Flemish Jesuit student who died in Rome, celebrated for seeking perfection in attending to the simplest tasks. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[1017] Denotes the small compendium, *Regulae Societatis Iesu*, in circulation among Jesuits at that time, and frequently republished (e.g. Rome, 1590; Naples, 1599; Rome, and Lyon, 1607; Palermo, 1630). It normally contained a summary of the Jesuit *Constitutions*, rules for conduct, and Ignatius' letter on obedience. See also **document X** in this edition.

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even among the Catholics themselves, no one could be found who would embrace choosing such a way of life. There was nothing more often on everyone's lips than the praises of Fr Francis and mention of his virtues. For it is usual among us in our countries[1018] that the sons of noblemen – and especially the heirs of substantial property – should live in the height of splendour: in their food, clothing and in their servants, breeding horses, going hunting, and actively surrounding themselves with other such delights in life. When they perceived a young noble in the first flowering of youth, [who] while in heresy was educated most honourably and in the height of luxury, who rejected all these things although they were permissible and not out of keeping with his station; and this was happening in the capital of the whole kingdom[1019] where very many of his relatives and friends were spending time in the court of the viceroy; and when they saw him taking on with great eagerness – and with great contempt for all earthly things – a way of life altogether contrary to that of the world, not only the Catholics, who were many in that city, but also the heretics, used to honour Fr Francis with heaps of praise and openly proclaim him to be a saint. I myself was an eyewitness to this fact.

(8v) But it was not without the special providence of God that such a public stage for his virtues was given to him: for many Catholics, moved by such a rare example of life, were not only confirmed in their Catholic faith but they also took huge steps in amending their lives. Many heretics also were converted through his efforts. I myself, the writer of this account, was among their number, even though I am completely unworthy of such a favour. I acknowledge with as much sincerity as I can that, after enduring many hardships in the search for the truth, I experienced nothing so powerful in leading me to embrace the Catholic religion, as the exceptional holiness which shone forth in the life of Fr Francis. Among many others who were converted to the faith by him was his younger brother:[1020] a person of great talent and with the hope-filled spirit of a young man. He confessed frankly to me that the unswervingly regular and religious way which Fr Francis most constantly observed in praying, sacred reading and the examination of conscience was the pre-eminent reason which moved him to abandon heresy. For the course of his life was so steadfast, and bound up with such uprightness, a rare thing among the heretics, and altogether unusual. And not merely in the holiness of his life, even though this was pre-eminent; he produced great results; he refuted

[1018] The Stuart kingdoms of England, Ireland and Scotland, where the author had lived.
[1019] Dublin.
[1020] Henry Slingsby (b. *c.*1613).

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the heretics using the most weighty grounds and arguments, and in explaining controversies of the faith he showed his extremely acute intelligence.

Although these are important, I will add one further consideration, which I wonder if it does not savour of something supernatural, for it is not something only from my own experience, but from having heard it testified by unanimous consent from whomsoever had personal dealings with him: that a certain secret capacity had been implanted in him, one of winning the good will of many, and of enticing the minds of those with whom he conversed, so as to imitate his own virtues, although he was not making any show of them at all. Moreover I got to know – more than all the others – one who, merely from Fr Francis' appearance, experienced great impetuses to the virtues impressed upon his soul. Certainly I do not know whether I might ever have made the acquaintance of anyone in whose outward manner there appeared greater diffidence, modesty and kindness – the clear signs of a mind at peace and free from passions. This is something which many religious of our Society,[1021] and particularly his fellow students, openly testify to this day from when he was a layman in the Roman college:[1022] for when he happened to be spoken of, many who did not know him by name still use a roundabout term instead, such as 'that modest or holy or kind Englishman', and the like, so deep were the traces of his virtues left by his external presence alone, fixed in the minds of those who saw him.

(9r) Furthermore, although he very much wished to have time for himself and for God alone by means of the exercises mentioned earlier, and rarely to appear in public, nevertheless, whenever there was the slightest hope of winning souls, he was ready either to dismiss or delay all private matters (which is something of great perfection). He did not turn down any toil or trouble in this type of work but offered his help equally to the poor and the rich. While living in Ireland he converted a whole family in Dublin – husband, wife and all their children – to the faith, as well as his own mother, sister and brother, besides many others, at least twenty in all. This is a matter of no small importance, considering all the difficulties in converting a heretic.

While we were lodging together, some things written by him happened to fall into my hands. These can serve as a clear indication of his outstanding and admirable zeal in the pursuit of perfection: for he had noted down the slightest defects and movements of his soul, rebuking himself severely and expressing strong disapproval of the

[1021] The Society of Jesus (Jesuits).
[1022] The Roman College (*Collegio Romano*), founded by the Jesuits in 1551.

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fault he had committed, mixing devout feelings of pain and of love, and finally summoning up acts of the opposite virtue. He used to do this even about the tiniest things: if for example he had some initial feelings of aversion when visited by someone at a time of study or prayer. For so great a purity of conscience did he yearn.

His father confessor[1023] knows better than me about these and the many other deeds carried out by him to the benefit of many. I therefore leave to others a fuller telling of them, and I briefly add only those things worthy of observation which happened on the journey which to my great consolation we made together from Avignon to Rome. I leave it to others – as indeed they have more certain knowledge of the matter – to tell how promptly, and with what resignation of mind, notwithstanding the excellent harvest he was reaping, he had left his fatherland, parents and all his goods, when he was summoned by letter to Rome, and what an outstanding act of heroic obedience he made in the observance of the vow [made] at the tomb of Blessed Aloysius[1024] in Rome after his conversion.

Text (ii)

(10r) Admodum R[everen]de Pater

P.C.[1025]

Praeterieram oblivione, aliqua scitu digna in iis quae mandato R[everenti]ae Vestrae scripseram circa vitam et mores p. Henrici[1026] Slingsbei faelicissimae memoriae, quae quidem hic paucis adiungere, tum syncerrissimus meus in defunctum amicum amor, tumetiam[1027] mandatis R[everenti]ae vestrae obtemperandi desiderium, veluti stimulus et calcar, excitant me et compellunt.

Cum itaque frater Germanus p[atris] francisci, Dominus Henricus Slingsbee[,] nobilissimae indolis adolescens (qui a fratre[1028] catholicus factus, magno cum fervore eius exemplo, et convictu, perfectionem altissimam vitae christianae, etiam in saeculo non obscure prae se ferebat) e Gallia in patriam reditum pararet, paucos ante

[1023] William Malone SJ was Slingsby's confessor while the latter was living in Ireland, and before Malone's departure for Rome, where he served as rector, Irish College. Malone had arrived in Rome by 5 December 1637. Moynes (ed.), *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 160.

[1024] Aloysius Gonzaga SJ (1568–1591), Italian Jesuit student, who died as a result of caring for plague victims in Rome. He was beatified in 1605. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[1025] 'Pax Christi': the conventional salutation in letters between Jesuits.

[1026] *Recte* 'p. Francisci'. Henry was Francis's brother.

[1027] *Recte* 'tum etiam'.

[1028] i.e. Francis Slingsby.

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eius discessum dies, tractare peramice in[ter] fratres coeptum est, de resignatione patrimonii in gratiam D. Henrici, minoris natu, Hic mecum egerat, ut P. Francisco, eius nomine (erat enim modestissimus) proponerem; se quidem[1029] in promptu esse ut vitam relligiosam eligeret, si hoc vitae propositum tanquam a Deo profectum frater eius ratum haberet; verum enimvero ex altera parte existimare sese, matura rei deliberatione habita, expediens futurum iri, divini obsequii ratione habita, ut alter eorum vitam in saeculo transigeret, et in haereditatem paternam succederet, atque ita nobilis familiae memoriam ad posteros propagaret, [+ MARGIN cum hi duo soli ex prole mascula superessent.] eo[1030] tamen concilio,[1031] ut patrocinio suo et clientela, pauperiores catholicos ab oppressionibus Haereticorum, tueretur, orphanos et viduas aleret, et caetera misercordiae opera sedulo exerceret, hac enim ratione divina obsequia non minus promovere posse, immo sua opinione magis, quam si uterque relligiosus esset[:] ad haec praestanda integrum patrimonium necessarium videri.[1032]

Ad haec benigne, et prompte sine ulla haesitatione P[ater] Franciscus, se quidem[1033] concilium fratris sui quoad unicam eius partem magnopere laudare, in impendendo [scilicet] patrimonio in operibus misericordiae quod autem ad memoriam familiae propagandam attineret, se quidem longe alio animo esse, mundum enim abunde populatum, ad splendorem familiae conservandum, patrimonia satis ampla, in tanto mundi luxu, integra profundi, et licet de fratris pia intentione nil dubitaret, incertum tamen esse, qua mente posteri eius futuri essent; idcirco gratius longe Domino Deo futurum iri, si integrum patrimonium post mortem patris in fundando amplo seminario in Belgio pro adolescentium educatione impendatur, Qui ad patriam reversi relligionem Catholicam promoverent, hac itaque ratione familiae memoriam ad posteros securius et laudabilius transmitti posse, et alumni in hoc seminario enutriti, maximo cum faenore [MARGIN + et divini obsequii incremento] posteritatis vices expleturi essent; sibi denique mirum videri homines, tam immensos labores subire, ad momentaneam sui memoriam in hoc mundo continuandam, et tamen de perenni et interminabili aeternitate parum aut nihil curare. haec et alia multa de

[1029] 'quidem' inserted.
[1030] Corrected from ea (intentione).
[1031] 'intentione' deleted.
[1032] 'videri' inserted.
[1033] A second 'se quidem' is crossed out – an indication that this letter may have been copied from a previous draft.

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verum terrenar[um] contemptu, disserens; conclusit denique, magnitudinem meriti, et augmentum gloriae, quae[1034] consequerend[o] fundatore in his oper[ibus] cuicunque tandem mundanae faelicitati longe anteponenda esse[,] quippe qui participes futuri essent omnium bonorum operum (10v) quae a singulis ibi educatis, vel in ordine ad Deum, ut orando, sacrificando, [etc] vel ad proximum, praedicando, confitendo, sacramenta administrando [etc] perpetrarentur. Quam autem clara haec sint, animi, divina gratia et caelesti luce illustrati indicia, elegantiori calamo exarandum relinquo.

Contigit etiam ut ego primus fuerim, qui acerbissimum de eius morte nuncium, Magistro Novitiorum P. I. Paul[o] Olivae de[di]derim, qui tam inopinat[o] casu perculsus, magnopere mortem eius luxit, dicens mortuum esse illum a quo plura, ipse in omni virtutum exercitio didicerat, quam eum docuisset; et quod unum in eo (quod forte in nullo unquam reperierat) observasset cum angelica scilicet vitae innocentia et eximia sanctitate raram, etiam inter provectiores, coniunctam[1035] prudentiam; et eam[1036] animi moderationem, ut nullam unquam ab eo proficisci actionem videret quae discretionis et prudentiae sale non esset condita[.]

neque hoc contentus, connovitios eius omnes in Aulam convocat, praemissoque de brevitate et incertitudine vitae discursu, mortem p. francisci ipsis aperuit, praecipiens ut coronas Beatae Virginis pro defunctis in Societate recitari solitas, non eo fine, dicere[ ] ut a purgatoriis flammis liberaretur, [MARGIN + quippe quod istis suffragiis P. Francis[cus] non indigere arbitre[tur].] sed in gratiarum actionem quod Dominus Deus tam excellens exemplar in sanctitate vitae et regularum observantia exactissima, ex convictu et conversatione p[atris] Francisci, iis largitus esset; exhortans omnes ut + tam praeclaram virtutum omnium Ideam, sibi ante oculos perpetuo haberent, de cuius integritate et illibatis vitae moribus, omnes quotquot aderant testificari secum[1037] possent, tam irreprehensibilem[1038] P. Francisc[i] in relligiosa disciplina fuisse observantiam, ut ne vel minimam regulam violatam unquam ab eo dicere auderent.

Non spero latere R[everenti]am Vestram, quod in Hybernia inter multos vere apostolicos ab eo exantlatos labores, familiam integram Dublini, maritum scilicet, uxorem et liberos omnes ad fidem Catholicam convertit, Quod quidem et alia multa quae caeteros

[1034] The syntax here appears to be faulty.
[1035] 'coniunctam' inserted.
[1036] 'eam' inserted.
[1037] 'sibi' deleted.
[1038] 'esse' deleted.

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omnes latent, frater eius D. Henricus testificari posset qui mihi ingenue confessus est, insigni P. Francisci vitae regularitate[1039] pietate et modestia, maius eum commotum fuisse, quam ullis argumentis quibus usus est, ut[1040] religionem Catholicam amplecteretur.

Haec quantalacunque[1041] grati animi et synceritatis erga amicum charissimum meae, indicia, raptim exarata et multis mendis aspersa, aequi bonique R[everenti]am Vestram consulere precor,

R[everenti]ae Vestrae Humillissimus in Christo servus
Rob[ertus] Spreul

Translation: Text (ii)

(10r) Very Reverend Father,

The peace of Christ

The most sincere love I have for my late friend, as well as the desire to obey your reverence's instructions, stir and compel me, like a goad and a spur, to add here in a few lines some things worth knowing about the life and character of Fr Henry[1042] Slingsby, of most happy memory, which I omitted, through forgetfulness, in what I had written on your reverence's instruction.

Fr Francis's full brother, Master Henry Slingsby, a young man of most noble nature, was preparing to return from France to his homeland. Having been made a Catholic by his brother, he openly showed by his great fervour – in example and conviction – the highest perfection of Christian life, even in the secular world. But a few days before his departure, they began to discuss – in the very friendly way brothers do – giving up his [i.e. Francis's] right to inherit their father's estate in favour of Henry, his younger brother. The latter had suggested to me that I should propose this to Fr Francis in his name (for he was a very reserved person). Henry for his part was ready to choose the religious life, if his brother confirmed that this course of life seemed to be something proceeding from God. But on the other hand, however, after mature deliberation on the matter, he [Henry] considered that it would be expedient, taking into account obedience to the divine will, that one of them should spend his life in the secular world, and succeed to their father's estate. He would by that means still hand on the

[1039] 'et' deleted.
[1040] 'ad' deleted.
[1041] *Recte* 'quantulacunque'.
[1042] *Recte* 'Francis'. Henry was Francis's brother.

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memory of their noble family to their descendants, since these were the only two remaining male offspring in the family.[1043] Thus by this strategy he could – using both his patronage and his dependents – protect poorer Catholics oppressed by the heretics, feed orphans and widows and zealously carry out other works of mercy. In his opinion, it would be possible by taking this approach to promote obedience to the divine will not less, but even more, than if each of them had become a religious. The entire estate seemed necessary to carry out these actions.

Without any hesitation Fr Francis kindly and promptly said that he was full of praise for his brother's suggestion concerning his own share, namely to spend the inheritance on works of mercy. But as regards furthering the memory of his family, he was of an entirely different view, for the world was completely devastated, and the patrimony, sufficiently great to preserve the honour of the family, was being squandered in its entirety amidst great worldly extravagance. Although he had no doubt about the pious intent of his brother, nevertheless it was not clear what view his future descendants were going to have. For this reason it would be much more pleasing to the Lord God if after the death of their father the undivided estate would be used in founding a large seminary in Belgium for the education of young men. These would return to their fatherland [i.e. Ireland] and promote the Catholic religion, and it would thus be possible to prolong the memory of the family among their descendants in a more secure and praiseworthy way. The students nurtured in this seminary would pay the dues owed to posterity with maximum interest and with the added benefit of obedience to the divine will.[1044] Finally, it was a wonder to him that men appeared to undertake such great labours so as to prolong a fleeting memory of themselves in this world, and yet to care little or nothing for eternity, which was everlasting and never-ending. He debated these and many other aspects of his disregard for the things of this world, and in the end concluded that the amount of merit, and the increase in glory, to be acquired by becoming a founder in these works ought to be greatly preferred to any worldly happiness. In fact they were going to be participants in all the good works (10v) which would be carried out by each man educated there, either in relation to God, by praying and offering mass, or for their neighbour, by preaching, hearing confessions and administering the sacraments. However, I leave it to a more elegant writer to set down how clearly

[1043] 'since these … in the family', inserted in margin.

[1044] 'and with the added benefit … divine will' inserted in margin; the proposed college was to provide priests for service in Ireland.

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these are signs of a mind illuminated by divine grace and heavenly light.

It also happened that I was the first to bring the very bitter news of his death to the novice-master, Fr Gian Paolo Oliva,[1045] who was shocked by such an unexpected event, and greatly mourned his passing. He said that he had learned more about every exercise of the virtues from the man who had died, than he himself had taught Fr Francis. He had observed one thing in him (which perhaps he had never found in anyone else): namely a rare prudence – even among the more advanced – joined with an angelic innocence of life, and the utmost holiness. Also there was a self-control, such that he never saw any action proceed from him which was not flavoured with the salt of discretion and prudence. Not content with this, he [Oliva] called together all his fellow novices to the hall, and after prefatory remarks on the shortness and uncertainty of life, he informed them of the death of Fr Francis. He instructed them that the usual rosaries of the Blessed Virgin for the departed in the Society should be said, not for the purpose of freeing him from the flames of purgatory, for in fact he thought that Fr Francis did not need these prayers of intercession,[1046] but to give thanks that in the companionship and conversation of Fr Francis the Lord God had bestowed on them so excellent an exemplar of holiness of life and of the most exact observance of the rules. He called on everyone to keep always before their eyes this outstanding archetype of all the virtues; all who were present were able to witness for themselves the integrity and untainted manner of his life, that Fr Francis's observance of religious discipline had been so blameless that they would not have a mind to say that he had ever broken any rule, no matter how small.

I hope it does not escape Your Reverence that among the very many apostolic works carried out by him in Ireland, he converted to the Catholic faith an entire family in Dublin, namely the husband, wife and all the children. These as well as many other incidents escape the attention of all the rest [i.e. which nobody else knows about]. His brother, Henry, would be able to testify – as he frankly made known to me – that the outstanding regularity of life of Fr Francis, his piety and modesty, had had more of an effect on him, than any arguments he used, to get him to embrace the Catholic faith.

[1045] Gian Paolo Oliva SJ (1600–1681), father general of the Society, 1664–1681. He was appointed novice-master and rector, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, in 1641. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, II, 1633–1642.

[1046] 'since Fr Francis … of intercession' inserted in margin.

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I beg Your Reverence to take in a good and gracious spirit these little expressions of my grateful heart and sincerity toward my very dear friend, written hastily and sprinkled with many mistakes,

Your Reverence's most humble servant in Christ,

Robert Spreul

Text (iii)

(12r) Ihesus Maria

De virtutibus patris percaei alia quaedam obser[vandi] digna[1047]

[Margin: 1] In itinere nostro Romam, Savonam pertranseuntes, d[um] aliquot militiae, et alii ex ea urbe cives, in ea nav[e] in qua nos vecti sumus, Genuam[1048] una venerunt, quo cum appulimus, exscensus vetitus fuit, donec examinarent an per Nicaeam in Provincia[1049] iter fecissemus, ubi falsus rumor pestilentiam late grassari asserebat, [prae]ter haec autem, qui Savona venerant, metuentes, ne si nos ingenue confiteremur ubi res erat, omnes simul in navicula ea, per duas septimanas, veluti in carcere (ut f[ieri] solet in similibus eventibus) intra portum includerem[ur] una voce patrem percaeum, qui Italice loquebatur, adeu[ntem] aiebant necessarium omnino fore, ut ea in re dissimu[let] neve fateretur ullo modo Nos illac pertransisse, quib[us]cum respondisset,[1050] se mentiri non posse, [ ] improperia iungentes non obscure prae se ferebant, nos n[on] impune laturos, si nostra causa ita male mulctaren[t] [,] quibus omnibus non obstantibus, imperterritus respondit [al]ter, se omnia prius extrema perpessurum, quam ut Dominum Deum suum, vel levissime quidem offenderet, postea ad me conversus, ne inquit in tam manifesto discri[mine] imparati simus[,] sed integrum rei eventum Domino Deo pe[r] intercessionem S. Catharinae De Genua, cuius corpus [deinde] visitabimus, commendemus. Quo quidem sermone vix f[acto,] licentia omnibus a Magistratu concessa est, urbem [ ]diendi, sine ullo examine ulteriori, contra quam prius [in]tenderant.

[Margin: 2] Magnopere studebat tam in ordine ad se quam ad a[lios] ut in divino servitio illud Christi Domini persuasum sibi h[oc]

[1047] The right hand margin of fo. 12r is damaged, and the reading of some words is uncertain; approximations have been inserted within square brackets.

[1048] Savona lies on the Mediterranean, about 56 kilometres (35 miles) west of Genoa.

[1049] Nice.

[1050] 'p. percaeus' deleted.

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iugum meum suave, et onus meum leve,[1051] neque aliquid quod hominibus adeo inculcari debeat, quam insignis Daemonis fraus, qua persuadere mundo satagit, Divin[um] servitium aggredientibus, vitam severam rigidam an[xiam] degendam esse, et hoc quidem documentum[,] in conversio[nem] cuiusdam ad religionem Catholicam, ab ipso procurato, [mag]no cum fructu exercuit, cum enim in generali totius [vi]tae confessione facienda, perplexis, et anxiis cogitati[onibus] caepit paenitens agitari, pater percaeus re animadversa, dulci et suavi sermone, animum eius mitigavit, summa cum mentis tranquillitate, et spirituali ga[udio] confessionem suam peregerit.

(12v) [Margin: 3] Non minore mentis puritate, et intentionis rectitudine negotia secularia pertractabat, aut studia prosequebatur adhuc in saeculo, quam exercitia spiritualia peragere solitus erat, quippe utraque pro Deo fieri arebat, cum autem quidam ab ipso conversus, vespera ante Diem festum quo sacra synaxi sese reficere statuebat, negotium quoddam saeculare peragendum erat necessario, et de hoc, cum patre percaeo lamentabatur, quod distractiones mundanae debitam praeparationem impedimento futurae essent, respondit benigne, hoc ex amore proprio proficisci sibi videri, ut autem hoc pateat, infit in negotii huius procuratione, offeras Domino Deo, laborem illum et molestiam, quam in eo conficiendo subire oportet[,] eadem animi devotione et pietate, qua sacram lectionem, et animi recollectionem aggressurus eras, et experieris,[1052] non minore cum fructu, ad sacram synaxim accedes, quam si illud quod voluntas propria suggereret, praestitisses.

Robertus Spreull.

RS[1053]

Ihesus Maria[1054]

Adiuncta quaedam de patre Perceo

[1051] Matthew 11:30: 'iugum enim meum suave est et onus meum leve est': 'for my yoke is easy and my burden is light'.

[1052] 'hoc' deleted.

[1053] The letters 'R' and 'S' form one ligature; these letters, and the following words, added later.

[1054] Two words deleted – possibly 'De virtutibus'.

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Translation: Text (iii)

(12r) Jesus, Mary

Further matters worthy of note concerning the virtues of Fr Percy

On our way to Rome, while travelling through Savona, a few soldiers and other citizens of that city came to Genoa in the ship carrying us. When we landed there, we were forbidden to go on shore until they checked whether we had travelled via Nice in Provence, where a false rumour was spreading that a plague was raging on a wide front. In addition, those who had come from Savona feared that if we admitted openly where the plague was located, we would all be confined to that small ship for two weeks, imprisoned – as it were – inside the port, as is usually done in such circumstances. Going to Father Percy, who spoke Italian, with one voice they said that it would be absolutely necessary that he would keep the matter secret and not admit in the slightest that we had travelled through there [i.e. Nice]. When he replied to them that he was incapable of lying, they showered lots of jibes at him and made it clear that they would not carry us without punishment, if they themselves were to be punished so badly because of us; notwithstanding all this, Fr Percy responded, undaunted, that he would endure all the greatest extremities before offending his Lord God in the least way. Then he turned to me, and said: 'So as not to be unprepared in such an evident crisis, let us commend the outcome of the whole matter to the Lord God through the intercession of Saint Catherine of Genoa,[1055] to whose remains we will soon be paying a visit.' These words had barely been spoken by him when – without any further examination, despite what they had earlier in mind – licence to [visit] the city was granted to us all by the magistrate's office.

He used earnestly to apply himself – as regards both himself and others – so that in his divine service he was convinced of Christ the Lord's saying: *my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*[1056] For him there was nothing which ought to be impressed upon mankind so much as the devil's notorious deceit, by which he [the devil] strives to persuade the world that a harsh, stern, troublesome life is to be led by those who set about the service of God. This was the lesson which he employed with

[1055] Caterina Fieschi Adorno (St Catherine of Genoa) (1447–1510), *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/caterina-fieschi-adorno-santa_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ (accessed 8 October 2023). For a consideration of her life, her mystical writings, and her influence, see entry by Marcel Viller in Viller et al. (eds), *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, II, cols 290–325.

[1056] Matthew 11:30.

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abundant fruit for the conversion – procured by himself – of someone to the Catholic religion. For instance, when a general confession of the whole of his life was to be made, and a penitent began to be agitated by anxious thoughts, Fr Percy, after noticing the difficulty, soothed his mind with sweet and pleasant words, and [the penitent] proceeded to carry out his confession with complete peace of mind and spiritual [joy].

(12v) He used to carry out his worldly business, or pursue his studies while still in the world [i.e. before entering religious life], with no less purity of mind and rightness of intention, than that which he habitually showed when doing his spiritual exercises, in fact he was thirsting that both be done for God. When, on the evening before the feast-day on which he had decided to be renewed by the holy mass, for someone who had been converted by him it was necessary that some secular business had to be done; the person was lamenting about this with Fr Percy, saying that the distractions of the world would hinder the preparations required; Fr Percy kindly replied that it seemed to him that this sprang from his own self-love, but in order that this might be seen, in his care for this matter he began to say: you should offer to the Lord God the hard work and trouble required in carrying it out, with the same devotion and piety of mind with which you were about to approach the sacred reading, and the recollection of mind, and you will find that you will approach holy mass with no less fruit, than if you had offered that which your own will had suggested.

Robert Spreull.

RS[1057] Ihesus Maria
Some additions concerning Father Percy

Text (iv)

(13r) De quibusdam praeclaris virtutum actibus R.P. Francisci Slingsbee, societatis Iesu faelicissimae memoriae. Dum ex Hybernia Romam iter faceret:

Postquam P. Franciscus, patria, parentibus, et omnibus, quae in hoc mundo chara esse solent, relictis, et spretis, In Angliam appulisset, ad iter Romam sese accincturus, oblivione praetereundum minime censeo, heroicum quendam actum ab ipso editum: discesserat ille ex hybernia patre inscio, quippe qui discessum eius proregis authoritate omnino impedivisset, viatico et sumptibus pro tam longo et

[1057] The letters 'R' and 'S' form one ligature: this, and the words following, added later.

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arduo Itinere destitutus, sed hoc floccifaciens prae summo quo flagrabat animi ardore; ut mundum relinqueret:[1058] vestitum simplicem et pauperem Londini sibi comparavit, eo animo et consilio, ut iter pedes conficeret, et si alia omnia defecissent, ostiatim Romam usque mendiceret, Quod quidem non minori quam Beatus Stanislaus,[1059] fervore, fecisset[1060] si non per particularem providentiam Dei aliter ordinatum esset:
cum enim esset in procinctu ad iter capessendum, venit ex Hybernia nobilis quidam cui virtus eius probe cognita erat, Comes de CastleHeaune, eo consilio et intentione ut ad exteras regiones de more invisendas peregre proficisceretur, Nactus igitur P[atrem] Franciscum Londini[1061] non destitit, donec frequentibus orationibus et deprecationibus, Itineris sui comitem sibi adiungeret, sed magno suo emolumento, nam per sanctam conversationem Patris Francisci, et virtuosa exempla, ita commotus est, ut ab eius directione et gubernamine[,] totus penderet. Et certe quam efficaciter ad vitam sancte et pie transigendam, conversantium secum animos, occulta quadam virtutum suarum esca, alliceret Hinc liquide constare potest: cum [•n•] ut vulgo dicitur, raro peregrinantes sanctificand[ ] et plerique nobilium in suis peregrinationibus, aliis omnibus, quam sanctitati incumbant, hic tamen comes aliam longe ex praescripto Patris Francisci inivit rationem: iis enim rebus quae apud exteras nationes in pretio sunt perlustratis et cognitis, reliquum tempus, studiis Mathematicis impendere, ut ita otium et peccandi occasionem evitaret, Comiti auctor fuit: sese Magistrum et praeceptorem exhibens, in iis siquidem disciplinis apprime doctus erat: hac igitur pia illecebra animum nobilis ab omni mali occasione avertens, viam sibi ad quod primario collimabat praeparavit, tandem enim effecit ut non minus Christianae perfectionis assequendae quam disciplinarum, studio et desiderio teneretur: Sacramentum siquidem paenitentiae singulis septimanis, sancte obire, et sanctissima etiam Eucharistia omnibus Dominicis et festis, nunquam omisit, Lectionem sacram, et alia devotionum exercitia, statutis horis, constanter peragere, persuasit, Quae quidem eo magis existimanda sunt, quod nobilis hic iamdudum ad virilem et maturam pervenerat aetatem, uxorem et liberos habens.

Ad hunc igitur modum cum biennium integrum in Gallia degerat sanctitatem et christianae vitae perfectionem non solum in semet sed

[1058] 'et' deleted.
[1059] Stanislaus Kostka (1550–1568), Polish Jesuit novice who died in Rome, beatified 1605, *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús.*
[1060] 'fecisset' inserted.
[1061] London.

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in aliis quoque promovendo Epistolam a R.N.P. Generali (13v) Mutio Vitellescho accepit, in qua licet nihil esset quod directe eum Romam vocaret, propensionem tamen suae Paternitatis ad hoc, colligens, magna celeritate ad iter sese accinxit, comite, omnibus modis tentatis, frustra renitente, quem tamen ne alioquin de se optime meritum, offenderet, de consilio suo vitam relligiosam amplectendi certiorem fecit: Non potest verbis explicari, quam aegre id animo tulerit comes, non solum quod spe sua, fruendi societate Patris Francisci, per totum iter suum excidererat, quam quod soror sua unica, rarae pulchritudinis et virtutis, amplissima dote instructa, cui D[ominum] Franciscum maritum in animo suo destinaverat, tam faelici sorte privaretur: Id enim tum in Hybernia per amicos, tum in Itinere D[omino] Francisco iamdudum proposuerat, sed sicuti caetera mundi blandimenta invicto animo, floccifecerat, ita non minori animi fortitudine, hanc etiam difficultatem viriliter superavit: tanto enim animi ardore caelestia sponsalitia[1062] anhelabat, ut terrena veluti alter Alexius facile contemneret.

Cum autem in Hibernia simul eramus, postquam eius opera, et pia industria Catholicus factus fuerim, et sancta ipsius conversatione ad melioris vita[1063] rationem ineundam incitatus, inter alia pia documenta et consilia spiritualia exercitia S. Ignatii (quorum excellentiam et utilitatem luculenter mihi significaverat) peragere suasit: quae quidem cum sub ductu R. p.p. Malonii[1064] suscepi, piis eorum orationibus, magis, quam meis meritis D. opt. Max.[1065] vanitatem, et inconstantiam rerum omnium sublunarium, luce meridiana clarius, mihi demonstravit. Relligiosae igitur vitae institutum amplecti in illis exercitiis statuens, in discessu p. francisci, convenimus in Gallia simul congredi, et Romam una proficisci, Cum igitur Avenionem[1066] usque pervenerim, et adhuc ubi terrarum charissimus meus amicus esset, ediscere non potui, atque ita Romam pergere cum praesenti sodalitio, veritus ne ipsum non reperirem, statuens: Benignissimus Dominus, Nolens me tanta simul consolatione et eximia aedificatione privari, in gravem morbum incidere permisit, qui me in adventum eius retinuit: cuius quidem mentionem idcirco facio, ut singularem amici mei charitatem, et humilitatem, quam meae aegritudinis tempore, erga me exercuit enarrem: non solum namque pecunias mihi mutuo dedit,

[1062] 'velut' deleted.
[1063] *Recte* 'vitae'.
[1064] William Malone SJ (1586–1656), *ODNB*.
[1065] 'Deo optimo maximo': to God the best, the greatest.
[1066] Avignon.

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sed vilissima quaeque officia me licet invito, (quippe cui ego potius inservire quam ille mihi tenebar) quae ne servo quidem praecepisset mihi praestitit:

(14r) Postquam autem ita convaluerim, ut iactationem Itineris aliquo modo ferre possem, Avenione[1067] 20 Novembris 1639[1068] iter incepimus, cuius quidem peragendi rationem ita suaviter instituit et ordinavit P. Fransisc[us] ut sicuti maiorem nunquam consolationem hactenus quam in eo Itinere habuerim, ita neque in hac vita[1069] habiturum me, credam: Itineris ordo talis fuit: primo mane equis conscensis Itinerarium recitavimus, postea magnum temporis intervallum quod horam excedebat orationi mentali: p. Fransiscus devotissime vacabat, maiori multo animi recollectione, quam ego iam in cella[.] facta reflexione, quam nunquam omittebat, per horam quasi alteram, lumina et fructum orationis, piissimis colloquiis mihi communicabat, ex quibus colligere perspicuum erat, quod eminentem contemplationis gradum Deus illi donaverat, seraphicos enim et ferventissimos animi affectus, clarissima etiam sp[irit]ualium rerum lumina, proposita denique ad perfectionis Relligiosae culmen et ap[i]cem consequendum syncerissima in oratione semper habebat:
postea vero his colloquiis finitis reliquum tempus matutinum, studiis suis Mathematicis etiam equitando dabat, tam excellentem enim memoriam, et imaginativam, habebat, ut omnes Euclidis demonstrationes absque libro conficere, tanto cum fructu, et tam exacte, ac alii apprime in his studiis versati in suis cubiculis circino et aliis requisitis instructi facere solent: si autem mane missae sacrificio interesse non liceret, in urbe ubi prandimus, ei[1070] intereramus: si vero occasionem Missam audiendi per viam defuturam p. Franciscus, inquisitione diligenter facta, [a]gnovisset, nocte praecedenti, parochianum, vel in monasterio aliquo, relligiosum, commonefacere per hospitem curavit, ut tali hora constituta summo mane, sacrum nobis facerent, mercede, saepe ubi quis illud recipere velit, data: post prandium vero, aliquo temporis spatio, de rebus piis conferendis dato, ad studia iterum vel ad caelestium rerum contemplationem sibi solitar[i]e vacabat: inclinante vero die antequam ad diversorium appropinquaremus, ad coronam Beatissimae Virginis, et etiam Sancti, si festus esset, cuius commemoratio celebrabatur, secum recitandum invitabat: examen deinde conscientiae adiungebat, ut scilicet eo 'citius' post caenam ad quietem sese componeret, ut maturius mane ad iter expediti essemus:

[1067] Avignon.
[1068] *Recte* '1638'.
[1069] 'in hac vita' inserted.
[1070] 'ei' inserted.

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ad urbem vero ubi diversandum esset appulsi, quot potuit ante noctem Ecclesias et monasteria, visitavit, et Sanctissimum Sacramentum adoravit: In diversorium vero regressus, ne momentum temporis in otio transigeret, ad studendum sese diligenter usque ad caenam accinxit: multos enim libros onerario equo secum portabat: Ut vero humilitatem suam et caritatem exerceret, peiorem equum, lectum, cibum [etc][1071] sibi elegit: praetendens aegritudinem (14v) meam ex necessitate id exigere: Licet hoc ut praetextu, et ut virtutem suam clam tegeret, uteretur. et hanc Itineris rationem constantissime observavit: sacramenta vero paenitentiae et sanctissimae Eucharistiae singulis D[omin]icis et festis de more, summa cum devotione, per integrum iter frequentabat: cum autem ad civitates maiores venimus, ubi per aliquot dies remansimus, locis sanctis et insignioribus rebus perlustratis, reliquum tempus domi studendo vel orando transigebat. si quae autem Loca ubi sancti alicuius sepulchrum aut corpus esset, praetereunda essent, summa cum veneratione et devotione multas horas ibi orationi impendebat: opera vero misericordiae, siqua sese obtulisset occasio; diligenter exercebat, cum enim Genua ad Ligurinum portum transfretaturi essemus, et Relligiosus quidam ordinis Sancti Francisci discalceatus, naulum quod Navarcho persolveret non haberet, summa cum charitate pro eo persolvit: Eleemosynas etiam variis in monasteriis ad missae sacrificium pro conversione sui patris offerendum reliquit.

Atqui haec sunt quae pro meo modulo observasse me memini, non dubitans quin plurima alia, prae mea in virtutum exercitio dignoscendo, ignorantia, et summa eius diligentia et humilitate, ne probitas sua aliis innotesceret, observatu digniora, in hoc itineris tempore ab eo perpetrata sint; caeterum eum apud me sui, quantum nemo unquam ante, desiderium[1072] reliquit: nullum enim efficacius motivum ad tepiditatem meam, et torporem excitandum experior, quam cum[1073] in mentem revocem, quanto cum animi ardore, tot egregiis de Diabolo, mundo et carne reportatis victoriis, ad relligiosam perfectionem consequendam, omnia sua studia et desideria dirigebat, D. opt. Max. pro infinita sua bonitate concedere mihi dignetur, virtutum suarum characteres ita animo imprimere, ut eas pro mensura gratiae mihi data, syncero studio imiter, ad Divini nominis gloriam, et animae meae salutem.

[1071] Abbreviation.
[1072] 'sui' deleted.
[1073] 'cum' inserted.

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Translation: Text (iv)

(13r) Concerning some outstanding acts of the virtues of Rev. Fr Francis Slingsby, of the Society of Jesus, of most happy memory, while he was making the journey from Ireland to Rome:

After Fr Francis had left behind and spurned his fatherland, his parents and all that is held dear in this world, he travelled to England so as to equip himself for the journey to Rome. I do not at all think that we should pass over in forgetfulness a certain heroic act that he performed: he had departed from Ireland without his father's knowledge, for in fact the man had obstructed his departure completely, on the authority of the viceroy.[1074] He was destitute of the provisions and funds needed for such a long and arduous journey, but made light of this out of the great spiritual ardour with which he was burning. So as to leave the secular world behind, he bought himself simple, poor clothing in London, with the intention and plan of carrying out the journey on foot; if all else was lacking, he would beg from door to door all the way to Rome.

This he would have done with fervour, no less than Blessed Stanislaus,[1075] if things had not been ordained otherwise by the special providence of God: for when he was all set and on the point of taking to the road, a certain nobleman came from Ireland, whose virtue was well known to him: the earl of Castlehaven.[1076] He was departing for abroad with the plan and intention of visiting foreign parts for the customary sightseeing purposes. He came across Fr Francis in London and did not cease until he was able to persuade him, with frequent prayers and entreaties, to join him as a fellow traveller on his journey, but it was to his own great advantage, for he had been so moved by the holy conversation and virtuous example of Fr Francis, that he would depend completely on his direction and guidance. Indeed it can clearly be seen from the following how effectively [Francis] was able to lure the minds of those who kept company with him to lead their lives in a holy and sacred way, with his virtues as hidden bait, as it were. Rarely do people travel abroad with

[1074] Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), lord deputy of Ireland 1632–1640. By a proclamation of September 1635, it was illegal to travel from Ireland to England without licence from the lord deputy. Robert Steele (ed.), *A Bibliography of Royal Proclamations of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns … 1485–1714*, II (Oxford, 1910), 35.

[1075] Stanislaus Kostka (1550–1568), of a Polish noble family. He walked from Vienna via Dillingen to Rome, where he entered the Jesuit novitiate on 27 October 1567 and died there on 15 August 1568. He was beatified in 1605. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*.

[1076] James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven (bapt. 1612–1684), *ODNB*.

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•n•,[1077] as it is commonly called, for the purposes of sanctification. And most nobles in their travels have inclinations towards everything but holiness. However this earl started on a totally different way of life on the instructions of Fr Francis, namely having surveyed and got to know those things which are prized in foreign countries, he spent the rest of his time on mathematical studies. In this way Francis was the model for the earl as regards avoiding idleness and occasions of sin. He showed himself to be the master and instructor, since he was exceedingly learned in those disciplines: hence, by using this holy enticement he averted the mind of the nobleman from every occasion of evil; [in himself] he prepared the way towards what he was chiefly aiming at, for in the end he brought it about that [the earl] would be held no less by his zeal and desire in attaining Christian perfection than by his interest in learning. He never missed the sacrament of penance every week, so as to die a holy death, nor the most holy eucharist every Sunday and feast-day, and [Francis] persuaded him to do spiritual reading and the other devotional exercises consistently at the established times. All these things are to be considered even greater, since this nobleman had long reached the age of manhood and maturity, having a wife and children.[1078]

After he had spent two full years in France[1079] in this way, promoting holiness and the perfection of the Christian life, not only in himself but also in others, he received a letter from our reverend Fr General, (13v) Mutius Vitelleschi,[1080] from which, although there was nothing directly calling him to Rome, he nevertheless inferred his paternity's inclination for this, and got himself ready for the journey with great speed, although the earl resisted in vain, despite trying all means. However, so as not to offend the person who had otherwise deserved the best from him, he informed him of his plan to embrace the religious life. It is not possible to set forth in words how much this distressed the earl, not only because his hope of enjoying the company of Fr Francis for the whole of his journey had been lost, but also because his only sister,[1081] who was a woman of rare beauty and

[1077] Abbreviation unclear; perhaps a reference to 'nobilitas' (the nobility).

[1078] In 1628, James Touchet married Elizabeth Brydges. James Touchet, 3rd earl of Castlehaven, *ODNB*.

[1079] Spreul's chronology was mistaken here, for Slingsby was still in Dublin in mid 1637, and had arrived in Rome by early February 1639, indicating that he was in France from about November 1637 until leaving Avignon on 20 November 1638.

[1080] Muzio Vitelleschi SJ (1563–1645), father general of the Society, 1615–1645.

[1081] The author's assertion that James Touchet had only one sister is mistaken. The 3rd earl's siblings were George, Mervin, Lucy, Dorothy, Frances, and Anne. 'Genealogies of the Touchet and Stanley families', in Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder*, x–xi; Dorothy (d. 1635) had married Edward Butler, 4th Viscount Mountgarrett. Maurice Ward noted that

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virtue, and provided with a very substantial dowry, for whom he had in his mind intended Master Francis as a husband, would be deprived of such a happy fate. For he had long ago proposed this to Master Francis both in Ireland through friends and on the road, but just as he [Francis] had dismissed the rest of the world's attractions with his unconquerable spirit, he manfully overcame this difficulty also, with no less personal courage. He used to pine for the heavenly betrothal gifts with such spiritual fervour, that like a second Alexius of Rome[1082] he easily disdained the earthly ones.

But when we were together in Ireland, and after I, due to his efforts and energetic devotion, became a Catholic and was roused by holy association with him to enter upon a better way of life, he persuaded me among other sacred lessons and plans, to undertake the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius (the excellence and usefulness of which he had made brilliantly clear to me).[1083] And when I undertook these, under the guidance of Rev. Fr Malone,[1084] the good Lord God showed me – more clearly than the midday sun, and more through the pious prayers I found there rather than my own merits – the vanity and inconstancy of all earthly things. Having decided, therefore, in these exercises to embrace the religious way of life,[1085] on the departure of Fr Francis, we agreed to meet in France and to go to Rome together. Consequently when I reached Avignon, and still could not find out where in the world my dearest friend was, I decided to go to Rome with the company then present, fearing that I would not find him. The most gracious Lord, unwilling that I be deprived of such great comfort and of exceptional edification simultaneously, allowed me to fall seriously ill, which detained me until his arrival. I mention this so that I may relate the singular charity and humility of my friend which he showed towards me at the time of my illness: for he not only lent me money, but performed the lowliest duties for me, even though against my will (especially since I was the one obliged to serve him, rather than he me), tasks which he would not even have told a servant to do.

one sister was already associated with Richard Butler in 1635, and she may be identified as Frances, for they subsequently married. Thus the sister Castlehaven intended for Slingsby was either Lucy (who married John Anktill), or Anne (? b. post 1624).

[1082] St Alexius of Rome. According to legend, Alexius left his wife on their wedding night, going on a lengthy pilgrimage, before returning to Rome to live as a beggar in his father's house. D.H. Farmer, *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, 1992).

[1083] For the text of the Spiritual Exercises, see Munitiz and Endean (eds), *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, 281–360.

[1084] William Malone SJ (1586–1656).

[1085] i.e. to join a religious order.

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(14r) But after I had recovered enough to be able to bear somehow the agitated movement of the journey, on 20 November 1639 [*recte* 1638] from Avignon we took to the road. Fr Francis established and arranged the way of carrying out this journey in such a smooth manner that it was as if I had never before then had greater consolation than on that journey, nor do I believe that I shall have the like in this life. The [daily] routine on the journey was as follows: in the early morning after mounting our horses we read our itinerary aloud. Then there was a long period, of more than an hour, which Fr Francis used to spend very devoutly in mental prayer with much more recollection of soul, than I do now in my cell. After the reflection, which he never used to omit, he used to share with me for about another hour, in the holiest of discussions, the lights and fruit of his prayer. From these it was evident to gather what a high degree of contemplation God had granted him, for in his prayer he always had seraphic and most fervent spiritual movements, and also very clear illuminations of spiritual matters. Finally he always used to have the most sincere intentions for seeking the peak and summit of religious perfection.

After that, when these discussions were concluded, he used to give over the rest of the morning time to his own mathematical studies even while horse-riding. For he had such an excellent and imaginative memory that he was able to complete all the proofs of Euclid[1086] without a book, with such fruit, and just as exactly as others – exceedingly well versed in these studies, in their own bedchambers and with a pair of compasses and other requisites – were in the habit of doing. But if it were not possible to attend the sacrifice of the mass in the morning, we used to attend it in the town where we were having lunch. If however Fr Francis, having made careful enquiries on the previous night, found out that there was no prospect of hearing mass *en route*, he would arrange through our host to impress upon a parish priest or a religious in some monastery, so that at a fixed time in the early morning they would say mass for us, [and] a fee was often paid where they wished to receive it. After lunch, after giving some time for discussing sacred matters, he again devoted his time to studying or to contemplating heavenly things on his own. And as the end of the day approached before we came near to a lodging house, he would invite us to recite the rosary of the Most Blessed Virgin with him, and also – if it was a feast-day – of the saint whose commemoration was being celebrated. He would then add an examination of conscience, so as by

[1086] Euclid (*fl.* 300 BC), Greek mathematician, author of *Elements*, and hugely influential in study of geometry.

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this to compose himself 'more speedily' for sleep after the meal, and so that we would be ready for the road rather early the next morning.

Arriving at a town where we were to lodge, he visited as many churches and monasteries as he could before nightfall, and prayed in adoration of the most holy sacrament.[1087] On retiring to the lodging house, lest he would spend a moment of time at leisure, he prepared himself to study intensively until mealtime, for he carried many books with him on his pack-horse. Indeed, to practise humility and charity, he would choose the worst horse, bed, food, and the like, for himself, pretending that (14v) my illness required this of necessity, although he was using this as an excuse, so as to keep his own virtue secret. He kept most consistently to this programme on the route: to be sure, he used habitually to frequent the sacraments of penance and of the most holy eucharist with the greatest of devotion, on every single Sunday, and on feast days, throughout the whole journey.

But when we came to bigger cities, where we stayed for a number of days, after visiting the holy places and the more prominent sights, he used to spend the rest of his time in the house studying or praying. If we had to pass by some places where there was the tomb or remains of some saint, he would spend many hours there in prayer, with the greatest veneration and devotion. If the occasion arose, he used to carry out works of mercy attentively; [for example] when we were about to cross the sea from Genoa to the port of Livorno,[1088] and a discalced religious of the Order of St Francis did not have the fare to pay the captain of the ship, he paid it for him with the greatest of charity. [Francis] left alms in different monasteries for celebrating mass for the conversion of his own father.

Now these are the things which I for my own small part can remember having observed. But I do not doubt that many other more noteworthy deeds were done by him during this journey, but [not mentioned here] out of my ignorance in discerning his exercise of the virtues, and because of his supreme diligence and humility which did not want his goodness becoming known to others. For the rest, he left with me the feeling of grief for him, the way that no one else before ever has. I find no more effective motive to rouse me from my lukewarmness and my indolence than when I recall with what spiritual fervour, and with how many exemplary victories won over the devil, the world and the flesh, he used to direct all his efforts and desires to the attainment of religious perfection. May the Lord God in his infinite goodness deign to grant me so to

[1087] The Catholic practice of praying before the sacrament reserved in a chapel or church.

[1088] Ligurinum: a variant of Livorno (port city west of Pisa).

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impress the characters of his virtues in my heart that I may imitate them with sincere zeal according to the measure of grace granted to me, to the glory of the divine name, and the salvation of my soul.

XV. KBR MS 3824-5, fo. 56r

Henry Slingsby to Father General Muzio Vitelleschi on the death of his brother, Kilkenny, Ireland, 17 May 1644

(56r) Ex litteris Perillustrissimi Domini Henrici Slingisbaei datis Kilkenniae in Hibernia 17 Maii 1644 de morte fratris sui P. francisci ad P.N.S. [Patrem nostrum scripsit]

Nemo vitio vertere mihi iuste poterit quod extraordinario quodam doloris sensu prosequar[1089] iacturam talis Fratris qui mihi secundum Deum ac sanctos eius praecipuus Auctor fuit et adiutor ad omnia quae sub felicitatis nomine in hac vita comprehendi possunt. Ab ipso ortum secundum sed meliorem [tr]axi, natus eius opera Deo et Ecclesiae Catholicae; Illius curae ac precibus adscribo quod in eadem Ecclesia huc usque ad stuporem multorum constans perseverem; Illius tum monitis tum exemplis fortiter impulsus sum ad agendam vitam professioni[1090] fidei susceptae consentaneam, et utinam in ea postquam ab illo divulsum sum, non nimium proh dolor! refrixissem. Si felicitatis ullius in numero habendus sit hono[r] qui defertur ab hominibus, eo etiam solitus illius causa fruor, et quidem copiosius ibi, ubi innotuerat ille magis, ego minus. Si existimatio aliqua virtutis ac probitatis mihi meisque rebus afferre poterit aliquid adiumenti, ubicunque aut vixit ille aut quocunque[1091] pervasit saltem nominis illius fama per totum hoc Regnum, certus sum me nullo eorum commodorum [c]ariturum quae conciliare solet bonus odor nominis. Possideo Illius libros, possideo et agros, omnia denique Illius tendo praeter virtutes, quibus tamen si ille me vestire potuisset, certo sci[o] nunc non carerem, usque adeo libenter transfusurus erat in me etiam illas. Verum cum persuasum habeam me frui nunc saltem Illius precibus confido me virtutum quoque ex parte participem futurum pro mensura gratiae et capacitatis.
(56v) Blank

[1089] 'mortem' deleted.
[1090] 'verae' deleted.
[1091] 'quocunque' interlined.

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Translation

(56r) From a letter by the most illustrious Master Henry Slingisby, given in Kilkenny[1092] in Ireland on May 17, 1644 concerning the death of his brother Fr Francis, [which] he wrote to our Father[1093]

No one will be able justly to impute it as a fault to me that, with an extraordinary sense of grief, I will describe the loss of such a brother, who, in compliance with God and his saints, was my principal adviser and helper towards all that can be expressed under the term happiness in this life. From him I received a second and better birth, when through his work I was born to God and the Catholic Church; I attribute it to his solicitude and his prayers that I steadfastly persevere in that Church to this day, to the astonishment of many; by his admonitions and example I have been powerfully motivated towards making my life consistent with the profession of the faith that I have adopted; and if only I had not – alas! – exceedingly flagged in zeal[1094] now that I have been forcibly separated from him! If honour that is bestowed by men may be counted as any kind of happiness, usually I enjoy that also on his account; and indeed, the more copiously according as he became more prominent, and I became less so. If a reputation for virtue and probity may be of some assistance to me and my affairs, then in all parts where he had lived or, at any rate, wherever in the entire kingdom the fame of his name had spread, I am certain that I will lack none of those advantages which a good reputation usually attracts. I possess his books, and I also possess his lands, and lastly I increase everything of his, except his virtues. But if he could have adorned me with those, I know with certainty that I would not lack them now, so gladly would he have poured them into me. And truly, being convinced that now I benefit at any rate from his prayers, I am confident that I will also share in the virtues, according to the measure of my grace and capacity.

[1092] Henry Slingsby was a member of the general assembly of the Catholic Confederation, based in the city of Kilkenny; he was one of fifty-two members of the commons whose names appear on all four extant lists; the Confederation served as the Catholic government of Ireland, 1642–1649. Micheál Ó Siochrú, *Confederate Ireland, 1642–1649: A Constitutional and Political Analysis* (Dublin, 1999), 258.

[1093] Denotes Father General (Muzio Vitelleschi).

[1094] Literally 'become cold'.

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