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Christian Woman, womanChrist: The Feminization of Christianity in Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Mary Elizabeth Baldridge
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Lawrence and Martha Baldridge, my sister and brother, Ruth Baldridge Piedot and David Baldridge, and the rest of my family and friends. Thank you for always encouraging me and believing in me.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the literary works of Contanza de Castilla, a fifteenth century Spanish nun, in comparison with those of Catherine of Siena, a fourteenth century Italian saint, and Teresa de Cartagena, another fifteenth century Spanish nun. The comparisons were made in order to determine whether similarities among the experiences and spiritualities of these three women led to similarities of gender strategies and/or participation in the feminization of Christianity.

Examination of the works of these three women was based on both the structure in which they wrote (the epistolary format), and the themes that they used to elaborate their spiritual beliefs (devotion to the humanity of Christ, methods of spiritual growth, the dangers of the world, and the authority of their voices). Examining these areas allowed certain conclusions to be drawn about these women.

Based on the comparisons made in the study, it was determined that, although all three women share an individual piety of the type that was spreading throughout

Christendom in the late Middle Ages (and which is often said to presage the Reformation), only Constanza and Catherine can truly be said to be involved in the feminization of Christianity. The similarities between Constanza and Catherine are likely based on the fact that both were associated with the Dominican Order.

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"In a world of prayer,
we are all equal in the sense
that each of us is a unique person,
with a unique perspective on the world,
a member of a class of one."

- W.H. Auden

Introduction

The nature of religious spirituality among women in medieval Spain has long been neglected by scholars, as has the subject of medieval Spanish women in general. Although we have a fair number of writings from women in other European countries from the twelfth century and afterwards, until recent years very little historical information about medieval Spanish women has been made generally available. Hence, studies of Spanish women's religious spirituality have traditionally begun with Teresa of Avila (1515-1582). Recently, however, a few documents written by medieval Spanish women have come to light. Two of the earliest of these women are Constanza de Castilla (c.1395-1478) and Teresa de Cartagena (c. 1415-?). The present study will examine the spirituality of Constanza de Castilla seen in

comparison with Teresa de Cartagena and Saint Catherine of Siena, the latter of whom was an important Italian lay sister from the mid-fourteenth century. The study will compare these three authors in order to explore the ways in which Constanza uses certain gender strategies to develop her own "feminization of Christianity." The term "feminization of Christianity" has been used by various critics to describe a change in Christianity that gained ground gradually through the course of the Middle Ages,[1] and endeavored to make Christianity more accessible to women by emphasizing the female aspects of the Divine.

In the early Middle Ages nearly all writers were men who were educated in schools administered by the Church and held positions in the Church. Towards the end of the Middle Ages this situation began to change. Though the Church was still the primary source of learning, education was no longer an exclusive privilege of the clergy. More and more lay men of power and lineage were becoming

[1] Caroline Walker Bynum has done perhaps the most in-depth study on this phenomenon in her book Jesus as Mother. She terms this change the "feminization of religious language" (135). Other critics to describe this phenomenon include Børreson (who describes it as a "matristic achievement") 250-268, Luongo 89, Newman (who uses the terms

educated and beginning to write. The same cannot be said of women. Educational opportunities were much more restricted for women throughout the Middle Ages and well into the Renaissance. While nuns formed the group of aristocratic women most likely to be educated, they rarely received as extensive an education as men.[2] Because of the lack of access to education for lay women, most medieval women writers were nuns. However, due to the monastic vow of enclosure, the works written by nuns were rarely circulated outside of their convents.

The fact that most medieval women writers were nuns is important in relation to an understanding of the gender strategies used to effect the aforementioned feminization of Christianity. Though male authors had branched out and were writing on an ever wider variety of secular topics,[3]

"womanChrist" and "feminization of Christianity") 3-5, and Ruether 5, 292.

[2] There are, of course, some notable examples of medieval women, such as Heloise, who were very well-educated.

[3] The Middle Ages saw male authors branching out into more secular types of literature. In Castile, for example, King Alfonso X, in addition to writing religious poetry, wrote several historical and juridical works. His nephew, Juan Manuel wrote a book of exempla, following the Middle Eastern tradition of the Panchatantra. Courtly literature also abounded in this time period. Volumes of courtly love lyrics were being published (the cancioneros), and in the later Middle Ages the sentimental novel emerged as an important genre. The authors of most

female authors still wrote primarily on religious topics.

The feminization of Christianity describes a cultural change that improved the perception of women and gradually allowed them a more active role in Christianity. In the late Antiquity and early Middle Ages (prior to the twelfth century), religious women, in Børreson's words, attempted,

> to actualize their salvational equality with Godlike men through ascetic defeminisation, overcoming their submale femaleness by virginity or widowhood. In fact, this transformation into perfect maleness remains a basic theme in early Christian and patristic texts concerning holy women, as well as in the few extant female writings from late Antiquity. (Børreson 249)

The prevailing attitude was that women would only overcome their "feminine weakness" by renouncing their femininity and metaphorically "becoming male." One unusually explicit and early reference to the event of "becoming male" is St. Perpetua's vision of being transformed into a man. As she awaited execution in the Roman arena in the year 203, she

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of these works were lay men. Many of them wrote both on religious and

had a vision of her imminent punishment and states: "and I was stripped naked, and I became a man" (Perpetua c. 10). Though this example is from late Antiquity, some elements of this idea (particularly the association of masculine traits as positive and feminine traits as negative) persisted into the early Middle Ages. Bynum notes that, even well into the Middle Ages, "for a woman to become a man was seen by medieval religious writers as spiritual growth; for a man to become a woman was a descent to sin or to irrationality" (Jesus as Mother 227).

After the twelfth century a new idea elaborated by men and women alike began to take hold. This perspective suggested that:

> female weakness can imitate God's lowering of himself through the incarnated and suffering Christ. In this sense of displaying divine power, feeble women can serve as God's chosen instruments by gifts of mystical grace and prophetic charisma. Starting with the traditional, although atypical use of female

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secular topics.

> metaphors describing Christ's human nature, medieval Christology is therefore reshaped in terms of 'becoming female.' (Børreson 249)

This change paralleled a growth in devotion to Christ and a new emphasis on individual piety in which "the individual began to reflect on the saving truths of the Christian religion, to enter himself into a personal relation to them" (Harnack 96). The combination of these elements allowed women a place of increased importance in Christianity. Women could now claim a definite and special brand of Christlikeness. However, though this feminization helped improve the perception of femininity by associating it with Christ, as Newman observes, it "in no way abrogated the androcentric values of religion-as-usual" (Newman 245). No major institutional change immediately arose out of this development. Women were still essentially relegated to a silent, secondary position in the Church. The impulse to "feminize" Christianity only served to further complicate the already complex relationship between women and an ostensibly patriarchal religion.

The "feminization" that was beginning to take root in

the medieval Church was brought about in large part through the influence of powerful nuns. In spite of the fact that women as a group were often silenced and separated from the outside world because of their vow of enclosure, some nuns were able to speak out and be heard. Many of them expressed through their writings what Barbara Newman refers to as the "womanChrist" model[4] of the feminization of Christianity. She describes the basis of this model as follows:

> that women, qua women, could practice some form of the imitatio Christi with specifically feminine inflections and thereby attain a particularly exalted status in the realm of the spirit. (Newman 3)

Both the women that followed the "womanChrist" model, and those that were otherwise involved in the feminization of Christianity were beginning to carve out a place for themselves by virtue of their very femininity, which made

[4] Several different methods of feminizing Christianity can be seen in different authors. Julian of Norwich, for example, focuses on Christ as mother (Bynum, Jesus as Mother 111). Birgitta of Sweden, rather than feminizing the Godhead, "attempts to divinise the female by making Mary Christotypic" (Børreson 265). Those women that follow the

them able to approach God on a level that was not accessible to men in the same way.

While it is true that women lacked the opportunities for education and self-expression that men had, and that they had more restrictions placed on them (such as the biblical interdict on female teachers), it is important to remember that this feminization of Christianity developed from minds and hearts devoted to Christianity and very firmly rooted in that same tradition. The nuns who contributed to the feminization of Christianity spent large portions of their daily lives in prayer and devotion and were firm proponents of individualized piety. Although a number of them were, at various times, suspected of heresy, witchcraft, and other illicit behavior, most of these women would never have taken the view that their writings deviated from the Church's teachings.

The fact that a number of different women from different time periods and different countries were involved in feminizing Christianity indicates the popularity of this development in the writings of medieval

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womanChrist model focus on the femininity of women and its association

nuns.[5] However, since women's writings were not widely distributed, and since most women were more than likely unaware of works by other women, the feminization of Christianity cannot be attributed to a concerted or coordinated effort on the part of women writers. The lack of uniformity in this movement is evident in the variety of different gender strategies used by these women. Some develop a "Christ as mother" theology by focusing on Christ's maternal characteristics. This type of imagery was most famously developed by Bernard of Clairvaux.[6] Others emphasize His humanity without focusing on His motherliness. Some emphasize their own feminine "debility" while others ignore it. Some remain orthodox while others slip into heterodoxy. In spite of their differences, these women do display a common desire to make Christianity more accessible to women.

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with Christ's "femininity."

[5] Elements of the feminization of Christianity can be seen in such diverse writers as Hildegard of Bingen (twelfth-century Germany); Julian of Norwich (fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England); Mechtild of Magdeburg, Gertrude the Great, and Mechtild of Hackeborn (thirteenth-century Germany); and Catherine of Siena (fourteenth-century Italy) to name a few.

[6] For a more detailed discussion of Bernard's use of Christ as mother imagery, see Bynum, Jesus as Mother 115-119.

While women in other European countries were contributing to feminizing Christianity through their writings as early as the twelfth century, the situation in Spain would seem to be different. Scholars have traditionally considered that women played an insignificant role in the creation of literature in the Spanish Middle Ages. The few medieval Spanish women whose literary works are known have consistently been understudied and undervalued. In his article "Spain's First Women Writers," Alan Deyermond notes that he received criticism from a Spanish reviewer for including too much information about three of the most well known Spanish medieval women writers (Leonor López de Córdoba, Florencia Pinar and Teresa de Cartagena) in his history of medieval Spanish literature, even though, in his own words, he only devoted "half a page to López de Córdoba, seven lines to Florencia Pinar, and three lines of a footnote to Teresa de Cartagena" (Deyermond 28). Deyermond goes on to express his surprise at the lack of interest among Hispanists in these writers (29). Although several decades have passed since Deyermond made his observations, these women authors, and others

whose works have been discovered more recently, have yet to receive adequate critical attention.

While medieval women's literature of Spain has remained largely unexplored, the study of medieval women's literature from other European countries has grown parallel to a rise in women's studies and feminist interpretations of literature that began during the 1960's and 1970's. Women such as Hildegard of Bingen, Birgitta of Sweden, Julian of Norwich, and Margery Kempe have received major attention. Because of this attention paid to European women authors, critical study of works written by women who had been previously neglected or unknown has received renewed impetus. The effort to locate and edit these texts has been undertaken in many of Europe's major libraries and archives.

During the past decade the study of Spanish medieval women has begun to take root among Hispanists. In 1992, Ana María Huélamo San José devoted herself to the recovery of a religious text that had previously been lost in the stacks of the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. In her detailed study, Huélamo identified Constanza de Castilla

(c. 1395-1478), prioress of one of the largest and earliest Dominican convents in Spain and granddaughter of a former king of Castile, as the author of a medieval prayer book manuscript entitled Devocio y oficio, the only known copy of which remains in the Biblioteca Nacional. Though some might question the extent to which a medieval prayer book has a specific "author", Huélamo defines Constanza as the author of the prayer book rather than as its compiler or translator, and discusses in detail what the term "author" means in relation to Constanza's work. There are translations of liturgical and devotional works in the prayer book, yet Constanza claims that she wrote the bulk of the prayers; and she lists the sections that she "composed" ("conpuso"), differentiating them from the works that are translations (Castilla, Libro 90). Huélamo discusses in great detail the narrative elements and strategies that define Constanza as the author of this prayer book, and she concludes that Constanza can indeed be considered the author of these prayers.[7]

In the years following Huélamo's article, interest in

[7] For a complete discussion of this topic see Huélamo 144-47.

Constanza's manuscript increased, and more studies were published. In 1995, both Ángela Muñoz Fernández (Acciones e intenciones de mujeres) and Ronald E. Surtz (Writing Women in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain: The Mothers of Saint Teresa of Avila) dedicated chapters to Constanza and her prayer book. In 1998, Constance Wilkins edited Constanza de Castilla's manuscript for the first time under the title Libro de devociones y oficios. By making this manuscript more readily available for study, Wilkins has opened a new avenue of investigation in medieval Spanish women's literature. The only previously known examples of medieval Spanish literary works written by women were an autobiography (Leonor López de Córdoba), a consolatory treatise (Teresa de Cartagena), and lyric poetry (Florencia Pinar and several other minor cancionero poets). Constanza de Castilla's Libro de devociones y oficios provides an example of devotional literature, a type of literature that played an important role in the lives of many medieval women. While interest in Constanza's text has led to the publication of the aforementioned book chapters and a couple of journal articles, there is still no in-depth

study of how Constanza de Castilla's work relates to the works of other medieval women.

While textual analysis of a literary work does not necessarily indicate what its author thought or believed, Constanza is, perhaps, more present in her work than are authors who compose less personal works. One of the primary reasons for this derives from the form in which she wrote. Her Libro de devociones y oficios is comprised of personal prayers, liturgical offices and translations of devotional texts. The nature of personal prayers and devotions is such that it involves intimate, subjective discourse. Personal prayers are one of the most intimate and individual forms of expression; in prayer the believer would communicate with God, before whom posturing and deception would be both useless and sinful.

Since Constanza attempts to communicate her inner self to God, I believe that features of her personal spirituality may be found in her prayers. All of the roles that she played in her daily life are reflected in these prayers; from the inherent power she enjoyed as a member of the royal family, to the humility and sense of belonging

she affirmed as a child of God, to the responsibilities she faced as a spiritual mother of nuns. These roles, and the authority that they gave her, infused her spirituality with a power that was unusual for a woman of her time. She used this power, through her writing, to help the nuns under her care find their place as Christian women by bringing them closer to Christ and Christ closer to them.

By examining Constanza's devotional texts, particularly those that she wrote or adapted, one gains a more intimate understanding of this remarkable woman's journey. I will examine that journey in three ways. First, I will reconstruct and examine Constanza's biography in order to gain a better understanding of her personal journey and will facilitate an exploration of the possible influences on her writing. I will then examine Constanza's original works and adaptations, that is, those works that are not translations of existing texts, in comparison with texts written by Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena in terms of both form and content. These two women were chosen for a number of reasons. Catherine of Siena is mentioned in Constanza's opening prayer. The context of

the reference to Catherine is interesting; Constanza evokes Catherine's name in a prayer based on the last supper. By juxtaposing Catherine and the sacrament of the Eucharist, Comstanza implies that she was aware of the fact that, toward the end of her life, Catherine subsisted solely on the Eucharist for nourishment and was unable to eat anything else. By juxtaposing Catherine with Christ washing the disciples' feet, Constanza indicates a possible awareness of the story that Catherine expressed her humility by washing the wounds of lepers and drinking the water. Thus we know that Constanza was familiar with Catherine (at least with some of the events of her life). It is likely that Catherine of Siena was the only Dominican woman of renown with whom Constanza was familiar. This gives Catherine the status of a potential role model for Constanza.[8] If Catherine was indeed a role model for Constanza, then some similarities would likely be seen in their spiritualities. Teresa de Cartagena was chosen in order to establish a counter point, or control, in judging the similarities and differences between Constanza and

[8] Indeed, this was Raymond of Capua's intention in using Catherine as an

Catherine. Fifteenth-century Spain was in a quite different situation regarding women's spirituality than other European countries. While other countries had produced female religious writers (who were frequently also mystics) as early as the twelfth century, such as not the case in Spain. Constanza and Teresa are literally the first religious women writers from Spain that are currently known. Yet neither Constanza nor Teresa are mystics.[9] Therefore, by adding Teresa de Cartagena to the analysis, I will be able to determine whether similarities between Catherine and Constanza are actual similarities between these two authors, are general characteristics of medieval religious women's writing, or are elements that grow out of their individual piety. In spite of the differences between the situations of fourteenth-century Italy and fifteenth-century Spain, there is a basis for comparison between these three women. All of them demonstrate an individual piety such as had become characteristic of late medieval Christianity. The goal of this piety was to

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example to spread the reform of the Dominican Order.

[9] Spanish mysticism is considered a sixteenth century phenomenon.

encourage a sincere and active devotion to Christ, and was motivated, in large part, by the fact of Christ's loving sacrifice, that He was willing to suffer so much to reconcile God and humanity. This piety is evident in the way in which they reflect on their own spirituality in order to grow closer to God, and then change their focus from inward (reflexive) to outward (evangelistic) in order to help others in their spiritual growth. A comparison of Constanza's works with those of these two other religious women of the approximate same period and similar individual piety will reveal whether the similarities among the experiences of these women led to similarities of gender strategies and/or adherence to the womanChrist model.

Chapter 1

Historical Background

Medieval women were rarely the subjects of biographies or chronicles. The few that were immortalized in literary works were usually women of unusual power or holiness. Constanza de Castilla, powerful and holy, was not eminent enough to merit a biography of her life. In fact, relatively little is known about Constanza de Castilla's life. However, by means of a close examination of historical documents, we can approach an understanding of her life and of the events that motivated her to write. Constanza's life and personal history is, in part, the history of Castile's ruling family. My discussion will provide a better understanding of the influences that shaped her life, allowing us insight into both the level of her self-determination and its underlying causes.

Pedro I (1334-1369),[10] the only child of King Alfonso XI of Castile (r. 1312-1350) and Queen María of Portugal, succeeded his father as king of Castile in 1350 when

[10] Commonly known as Pedro "the Cruel."

Alfonso died of the Plague.[11] Pedro's childhood was characterized by familial conflict. Both before and after Pedro's birth, Alfonso had publicly scorned his wife and maintained a very public affair with Leonor de Gúzman with whom he eventually had ten illegitimate children. Soon after the beginning of her son's reign, Queen María repaid years of public humiliation by having Leonor de Gúzman imprisoned and executed (O'Callaghan 419). This act added to the ongoing conflict between Pedro and his illegitimate half-brothers, Enrique, Count of Trastámara, and Fadrique, master of the Order of Santiago (sons of Pedro's father by Leonor de Gúzman). The rivalry between Pedro I and his half-brothers eventually led to civil war and contributed to Castile's involvement in the Hundred Years War, making this era one of the most turbulent periods in medieval Castilian history (O'Callaghan 414).

The conflict between Pedro and Enrique was particularly virulent and worsened through the years of Pedro's reign. This conflict was not, however, confined to the two brothers. Pedro, who had continued his father's

[11] Alfonso XI was the only ruling monarch to die of the Black Death.

plan of establishing a strong centralized government in Spain, alienated Castile's nobles who wanted to maintain "the right to continue to conduct themselves as the governors as much as the subjects of their king" (Russell, The English Intervention 20). In a smart political move, Enrique gained the allegiance of the nobles by supporting their complaints against Pedro (Russell, The English Intervention 20). This move would earn political power and support for Enrique and would aid him in his bid for the Castilian throne. In fact, Pedro had already survived two revolts of the nobility even before his final defeat and death at the hands of Enrique (Estow 154). The support of the nobles and the French were instrumental in Enrique's victory.

After ordering Pedro’s assassination, Enrique also effected the destruction of many materials related to Pedro’s reign. Enrique apparently wanted to eradicate any information that might provide a more objective record of Pedro's government (Peter E. Russell, The English

Intervention 18).[12] As a result, the most complete document that we have regarding Pedro's reign is the Crónica de Pedro (c. 1390) written by Pero López de Ayala after Pedro's assassination. Ayala, however, cannot be considered an objective source on Pedro's reign. He had been one of Pedro's supporters, but he abandoned Pedro to side with Enrique. As Clara Estow notes:

> Ayala had to justify four separate issues: his defection from Pedro's side; his support of Pedro for at least 16 years longer than many of his contemporaries; his loyalty to the new dynasty; and lastly, the continued loyalty to the Trastámarans by readers of his work. (xx)

Menéndez Peláez agrees that the Crónica de Pedro is more of a justification of Ayala's personal political views than an accurate historical account (395). Hence, Ayala presents a subjective view of the events of Pedro's reign.

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[12] Some controversy has existed over whether or not the lack of material related to Pedro's reign is, in fact, due to deliberate destruction or whether its cause is less sinister. Estow tends to believe that simple neglect or lack of interest has resulted in the loss of most records (xxii-xxiii). This is undoubtedly true to some extent. It does not, I believe, adequately explain the full extent of the lost records. It appears that at least some of the records must have been expunged early in the Trastámara reign.

The destruction of any documents that might either confirm or deny Ayala's claims has created much uncertainty about Pedro's reign and has fostered a debate among scholars regarding the chronicle's accuracy. Even modern-day historians have entered the debate. Clara Estow summarizes the controversy in the following terms:

> With the dearth of documentary material and the absence of other relevant first-hand accounts, the case against Pedro has depended largely on Ayala, the reign's chief witness. Subsequent generations of historians have taken sides; there are those who accept his characterization of Pedro as "the Cruel" and those who reject it and prefer Pedro "the Just." (Estow xxvi)

Estow asserts that the attempt to redeem Pedro's reputation dates back to the reign of the Catholic Monarchs (xxvii). I believe, however, that Pedro's vindication dates to the lifetime of his granddaughter, Constanza de Castilla, who was the prioress of the most important Dominican house in Madrid (c. 1416-1465). Constanza's devotion to her grandfather's memory can be seen in the many years she

spent planning and executing the removal of Pedro's body from an obscure, provincial church[13] to one of the most important monasteries in Madrid, much more fitting a former king of Castile (Getino 135).

In addition to his problems with his half-brothers, Pedro was also renowned for his numerous relationships with women. The first relationship of which we have record is Pedro's engagement to the English princess Joan de la Tour, daughter of Edward III and sister of John of Gaunt.[14] The marriage was arranged by King Alfonso XI and King Edward III in order to strengthen the relationship between Castile and England. The alliance was very important for the English monarchy, which desired to gain an ally on France's southern border during the Hundred Years War. Unfortunately for England, the marriage would never take place since Joan died of the Plague during her journey to Castile and "French ascendancy in Castile was promptly re-established" (Russell 9). In 1352, Pedro was engaged to

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[13] Pedro was initially interred at Puebla de Alcocer, a small town in southwestern Spain.

[14] For the most complete biography of Joan de la Tour to date see Mary Anne Everett Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, vol. III (London: 1851).

marry Blanche of Bourbon (the eldest daughter of the duke of Bourbon, niece of the French king Philippe IV and cousin to his successor Jean II). This alliance was sought by the French in order to solidify French/Castilian relations. However, before the marriage took place Pedro had fallen in love with María de Padilla, an orphaned member of Castile's lesser nobility who had entered service in the household of one of Pedro's closest advisors (Estow 132). Blanche's marriage to Pedro occurred in Castile in June of 1353, but after two days Pedro imprisoned her and returned to be with his mistress, María. This act caused considerable tension between Castile and France, a tension apparently compounded by France's failure to pay Blanche's dowry in a timely manner (Estow 138).[15] Blanche remained in prison until she was executed, allegedly by Pedro, in 1361 (at the age of twenty-five) after being accused of conspiring against her former husband (Estow 153). In 1354, after annulling his marriage to Blanche, Pedro married Juana de Castro, the daughter of Pedro de Castro who was a cousin of King Alfonso XI (King Pedro I's father). The Castro family

[15] According to Estow, Blanche's dowry was set at 300,000 gold florins

played an important role in the politics of both Portugal and Castile in the Middle Ages (Sitges 405-06), but would eventually be divided in their loyalties between Pedro and Enrique (Sitges 409). Pedro abandoned Juana the day after the wedding because he was warned of a possible alliance between her illegitimate siblings and Enrique of Trastámara. Sitges claims that Pedro never saw Juana again (409). After María de Padilla's death in 1361, Pedro declared that he had secretly married her before his marriage to Blanche of Bourbon, thereby legitimizing his children by María (Estow 212). These children (three daughters and a son who died before he reached his majority) were generally recognized as Pedro's legitimate heirs.

The historical information regarding Pedro's descendants, particularly those of the line that would become the Castilla family, comes from a chronicle entitled "Crónica del Rey Don Pedro y de su decendencia, que es el linage de los Castilla," (c. 1500) attributed to Pedro de Gratia Dei who was chronicler at the court of the Catholic

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(134).

monarchs. According to this chronicle, Pedro and Juana de Castro had a son named Juan. If this chronicle is accurate then Juan was Pedro's only surviving legitimate son. However, no corroborating evidence has been found to support Gratia Dei's claim that Juan was Juana's son. Regardless of who Juan's mother was, he was recognized as Pedro's son, was named in his will, and was incarcerated because of his relationship to Pedro (Sitges 447). According to Pedro's will, Juan was fourth in line of succession after his sisters Constanza,[16] Beatriz and Isabel, and was to inherit a great deal of money, jewels and sundry items upon his father's death (Montoto 318).[17]

In 1369, Pedro was assassinated in a plot organized by his illegitimate half-brother, Enrique of Trastámara. Prior to this event, Enrique had declared himself king of Castile, claiming that the Castilians had elected him according to Gothic tradition by rejecting Pedro's tyranny (O'Callaghan 432). However, this attempt did not significantly increase Enrique's power or decrease that

[16] This Constanza is the aunt of the Constanza de Castilla who is the subject of this study.
[17] See the appendix (pages 309-323) of Montoto's Historia de don Pedro I for a copy of Pedro's will.

held by Pedro. As a result, Enrique was forced to resort to more extreme measures. The exact details of Pedro's assassination have long been shrouded in myth and mystery due at least in part to the fact that the event has been immortalized in a variety of European literary and historiographic works. During the decades following Pedro's death he appeared in several non-Spanish works.[18] Geoffrey Chaucer immortalized Pedro in the Monk's Tale with the words:

> O noble, O worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne,
> Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee,
> Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth complayne!
> Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,
> And after, at a seege, by subtiltee,
> Thou were bitraysed and lad unto his tente,
> Where as he with his owene hand slow thee,
> Succedynge in thy regne and in they rente.
> (Chaucer 3172-3179)

Besides Chaucer, Sir Jean Froissart (French chronicler of the Hundred Years War) also wrote about Pedro's death

[18] France and England were particularly interested in the events because

saying: "...the two brothers fought, till King Henry [Enrique] drew his poniard and plunged it into Don Pedro's body" (Froissart 112).[19] Another more accurate version of the Hundred Years War from this same time period was The Life of the Black Prince by the Herald of Sir John Chandos.[20]

Though the available works differ on some details, the basic events of Pedro's last days are, for the most part, generally accepted. On the night of May 13, 1369, Pedro was surprised at his garrison at Montiel by French soldiers, who were headed by Enrique. Knowing that Montiel was not capable of withstanding a long siege, Pedro attempted to make a deal with Bertrand du Guesclin, the Breton captain. Pedro offered du Guesclin "the towns of Soria, Almazán, Atienza, Monteagudo, Deza and Serón, plus 200,000 gold doblas" (Estow 258) if he would help Pedro escape. Du Guesclin finally agreed and enticed Pedro to

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of their implications for the Hundred Years War.

[19] For an analysis of the inaccuracies in Froissart's chronicle see P.E. Russell, "The War in Spain and Portugal."

[20] In addition to these works written soon after Pedro's death, Pedro I and his death appear in works throughout history. Eight of Lope de Vega's plays have Pedro as a character. He also appears in works by Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, Rabelais, José de Espronceda, el Duque de Rivas, Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch, José Zorilla, Ramón López Soler and Voltaire

leave Montiel. However, unbeknownst to Pedro, Enrique had matched his offer. Once Pedro was in du Guesclin's camp, he was detained until Enrique arrived. Enrique reportedly stabbed Pedro to death while Pedro's men helplessly watched (Estow 259).

After his father's assassination, Juan and most of Pedro's other children sought refuge in English territories (primarily in Gascony), where they remained for many years (Sitges 448). During their exile, Juan's sisters set into motion the events that would eventually return him to his homeland; Beatriz entered a convent, Constanza married John of Gaunt the Duke of Lancaster (and son of King Edward III), and Isabel married his brother Edmund, the Duke of York.

Since Pedro I had named his daughter Constanza as his primary heir, her husband, John of Gaunt, spent years asserting his claim to the Castilian throne, and was recognized as the legitimate king of Castile by England and

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(Estow xxxv-xxxvi). Some authors depict him sympathetically while others revile him.

by the Roman Obedience[21] (the Roman pope had excommunicated the Trastámara line for following the Avignonese pope). John of Gaunt's political aspirations increased Castile's involvement in the Hundred Year's War (O'Callaghan 526). Enrique, in order to strengthen his position in Castile, provided France with naval forces to use in the war against England. John of Gaunt "endeavored to stir up Aragonese and Navarrese opposition to Castile" but was not very successful (O'Callaghan 527). His long, but ultimately failed attempt to claim the throne of Castile was resolved by the marriage of his (and Constanza's) daughter, Catherine, to the Trastámara heir, Enrique III, thus reuniting the two opposing lines of Castile (O'Callaghan 534).[22]

In 1388, Pedro's son Juan was returned to Spain as part of Catherine and Enrique's marriage agreement. This marriage agreement, part of the Treaty of Trancoso, also provided for Catherine's marriage to Fernando (Enrique's brother) should Enrique die, stated that King Juan would

[21] The term "Obedience" here refers to the sphere of authority over a group of subjects. Hence the Roman Obedience would include all countries under the authority of the Roman pope.
[22] See appendix 1 for Constanza's family tree.

give John of Gaunt six hundred thousand certified gold francs along with an annual life-long pension of forty thousand francs, insured that the Dukes of Lancaster would renounce their claim to the throne of Castile and León and other territories within Castile and León, and determined that within the space of two years the king and the duke would make a decision regarding Pedro I's children that remained in prison under King Juan's command (Sitges 445-446). As part of this arrangement Pedro's son Juan was imprisoned in a castle in Soria where he would presumably present no threat to the Trastámara line (Sitges 448).

While he was imprisoned (probably around 1388), Juan was married to Elisa de Falces,[23] the daughter of his jailer, and fathered at least two children who survived to adulthood; Pedro and Constanza, the latter being the subject of my study (Sitges 448). Although it is not known exactly when they were born nor which of the two was older, it is likely that Juan and Elisa's first child was born after 1389. Pedro was probably the elder of the two since

[23] Other than the fact that her father was Juan's jailer, nothing is known about Elisa's background.

he entered the Dominican order some four years prior to Constanza (in 1402) and since he died at a reportedly advanced age seventeen years before Constanza (Sitges 448). According to the inscription on Juan's tomb, in addition to Pedro and Constanza, three other children born of the union between Juan and Elisa died in infancy (Getino 135).

From birth, Constanza and Pedro's legitimacy as heirs to the Castilian throne placed them in danger. Although the Trastámara line and the line of Pedro I had been joined in marriage with the union of Catherine of Lancaster and Enrique III, the possibility that Pedro (Pedro I's grandson) could proclaim his rights as heir to the Castilian throne still existed. This might have conceivably thrown Castile back into a civil war similar to the one that had occurred during Pedro I's reign. Constanza herself posed a similar, if less direct, threat; in an age when dynastic and political marriages were common among the nobility, it was not beyond the realm of possibility that the man she married would use her lineage in order to further his own political ambitions. The perceived threat that Constanza and Pedro posed to the

future of the Castilian monarchy presented a dilemma for the Trastámara monarchs. Because of this dilemma, upon hearing of Juan's death and of Constanza and Pedro's existence, King Enrique:

> trató de haber a las manos al hijo [Pedro], con intención de echarle en la mesma prision que a su padre. Y por aviso y mandado de la reina doña Catalina, mujer del mesmo rey don Enrique, que era su prima hermana, fue guardado don Pedro para que el Rey no le pudiese haber, y a doña Constanza trajéronla al Rey, y la metió monja en el monasterio de Santo Domingo el Real, donde despues fue Priora muchos años. (Getino 18-19)
>
> [tried to get his hands on Pedro with the intention of putting him in the same prison where his father had been held. But on the advice and command of Queen Catherine, wife of King Enrique, who was Pedro's first cousin, Pedro was guarded so that the king could not get him, and Constanza was brought to the king and was placed as a nun in the Santo Domingo el Real monastery, where she

later was the prioress for many years.][24]

Pedro was appointed archdeacon of Alarcón in 1402 and Constanza professed as a nun of the Dominican order around 1406 (Surtz 42).

Both Pedro and Constanza held positions of authority within the Church. In 1406, Pedro was named bishop of Osma (presently known as Burgo de Osma) and in 1440 he became bishop of Palencia. Pedro, in his position as archdeacon and later as bishop, had at least two relationships with barraganas, or concubines, which produced eight children (Sitges 448).[25] While such a case was not uncommon during the period, it contradicted both official Church policy and the vows taken by the clergy. In fact, in 1380 the Law of Soria attempted to rectify this problem and openly condemned the practice (Sanza Lallana 4). Of Pedro's eight children, the eldest, Alonso was declared legitimate by

[24] All translations in this dissertation are my own unless otherwise noted.

[25] Pedro fathered children with two women. The first was Isabel Drochelin, an Englishwoman who was the granddaughter of Catherine of Lancaster's nurse. Isabel became one of Catherine's ladies-in-waiting at the age of six. She remained in Juan II's court after Catherine's death and became a lady-in-waiting to his wife, Queen María. Isabel remained as part of the court until Pedro met and fell in love with her. They ran off together and caused a great scandal. The other woman with whom Pedro fathered children was named Mari-Fernández

King Juan II in order that he might inherit his father's wealth. He was granted the title of Señor of Villavaquerin. Of Pedro's other children, Sancho was a member of the Royal Council and tutor to the Infante Juan, Pedro (son of Pedro) was Governor of Toledo, and Aldonza (a daughter) married a Treasury official. A number of Pedro's other descendants held positions of power and prestige in the Church and in the royal court (Marino 15). Pedro de Castilla died in 1461 from injuries sustained in a fall (Sitges 448).

Constanza also lived the majority of her life within the Church. By 1416, only a decade after becoming a nun, Constanza was already prioress of Santo Domingo el Real, the largest monastery in Madrid (Huélamo San José 137). She was probably in her early twenties or possibly even a teenager when she assumed this role. Muñoz Fernández speculates that her relationship with the royal family helped her to attain this position at such a young age (128). Regardless of the manner in which she became prioress, it would appear that Constanza subsequently lived

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Bernal, from Salamanca. Little is known about her except her name

a very pious life. P. Alonso Getino quotes Pedro de Gratia Dei as recording that Constanza "vivió santísimamente hasta que acabó su vida, habiendo hecho muchas y muy buenas obras..." ["lived a holy life until the end, having done many great works..."] (qtd. in Getino 130).[26]

The years of Constanza's rule as prioress (1416-1465) correspond to a period of material splendor for the monastery of Santo Domingo el Real. During these years the monastery received considerable economic support from the monarchy which allow it to grow in size and status (Getino 129). The primary architectural endeavor that Constanza undertook was the completion of the main chapel, which had begun a century earlier by her grandfather, King Alfonso XI. Constanza personally oversaw the completion of the chapel and celebrated the event by having tombs constructed for both her father and grandfather. She then had their remains moved from their respective resting-places and brought to Madrid (Getino 134-135). She also erected a memorial in their honor with the following inscription:

(Gratia Dei 23).

[26] Both Getino and Gratia Dei are extremely laudatory when describing Constanza de Castilla. At times their descriptions seem to take on a hagiographic tone.

Aquí yace el muy excelente señor don Juan, hijo del muy alto rey don Pedro, cuyas ánimas Nuestro Señor haya, e tres fijos suyos. Su vida fue en prisiones en la ciudad de Soria. Fue enterrado por mandado del rey Enrique en San Pedro de la misma ciudad. Trasladólo a 24 de diciembre, XLII años, aquí, en esta sepultura, sor doña Constanza, su hija, Priora deste Monasterio.

El Rey Don Pedro reinó en el mes de marzo, año de 1350 y finó a 23 de marzo 1369, y fueron trasladados sus huesos a 24 de marzo año de 1446. Por mandado del muy alto y muy poderoso Rey Don Juan a instancia de Soror Constanza su nieta, Priora de este Monasterio. (Getino 135)

[Here lies the most excellent lord don Juan, son of King Pedro, whose soul is with Our Lord, and three of his children. He lived his life imprisoned in the city of Soria. He was buried by mandate of King Enrique in Saint Peter's of the same city. His daughter, sister Constanza,

> prioress of this monastery, brought him here the 24th of December, [14]42.
>
> King Pedro reigned from March of 1350 to the 23rd of March, 1369, and his bones were brought here on the 24th of March, 1446. By mandate of the high and powerful King Juan, upon the insistence of sister Constanza his granddaughter, prioress of this monastery.]

By allowing Constanza to bury the remains of their common ancestor in a prominent place, Juan II, the first king that was descendant of both Pedro I and his half-brother Enrique II, appears to have attempted to rectify the past by recognizing the importance of his deposed ancestor, Pedro I, rather than vilifying him in the Trastámara tradition.

Throughout her life, Constanza maintained a good relationship with the royal family. Getino records this extraordinary link in the following terms:

> Fue, efectivamente, doña Constanza persona de gran cuenta en la Corte durante la Regencia de su prima doña Catalina de Lancáster; durante el reinado largo y revuelto de don Juan II, su hijo;

> durante el de su nieto Enrique IV, y todavía alcanzó los primeros días o los primeros resplandores de la reina Isabel, que la consideraría como a su abuelita y que ... llevó su interés por el Convento dominicano de Madrid a un límite extremado. (Getino 130)
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> [Doña Constanza was, effectively, a person of great consequence in the court during the regency of her cousin Catherine of Lancaster; during the long and tumultuous reign of don Juan II, her [Catherine's] son; during the reign of her grandson Enrique IV; and reaching into the first days or the first splendors of Queen Isabel, who considered her to be like a grandmother, ... and she brought interest in the Dominican convent of Madrid to new heights.]

Constanza also formed part of a circle of women that included Teresa de Ayala,[27] the prioress of Santo Domingo el Real of Toledo, who had been a mistress of Pedro I, and her

[27] Teresa was the niece of chronicler Pedro López de Ayala and some believe that their relationship was instrumental in the breakdown of López de Ayala's support for Pedro. See Estow page xvi, note 5 for a description of some of this controversy.

daughter (by Pedro I), María. This circle also included Queen Catherine of Lancaster (who was co-regent of Castile during the minority of her son Juan II) and her confidants Leonor López de Córdoba and Inés de Torres. According to Angela Muñóz Fernández, the relationship between these women represented for Constanza "la cúspide de una estructura relacional, de matronazgo, que la priora pone en movimiento a través de sus gestiones y acciones personales" ["the cusp of a relational structure, of matronage, that the prioress sets into movement through her efforts and personal actions"] (129). This circle of friendship formed a support network for the women, and especially for Constanza. With the help of these relationships she was able to stand out in various ways:

> en la rehabilitación de sus orígenes familiares; en la recuperación por la vía del privilegio de las riendas de control de su cuerpo, de sus movimientos, de su existencia cotidiana, y en el diálogo con Dios a través de la oración…, en todo esto radicó su proyecto de vida, que parece tener como meta y creo que consiguió, a su manera, su

> propia constitución y afirmación como sujeto, que parte del reconocimiento de ser mujer.
>
> (Muñoz Fernández 129)
>
> [in the rehabilitation of her familial origins; in the recuperation, by way of privilege, of the reigns of control of her body, her movements, and her daily life; and in dialogue with God through her prayer; in all of these things her project of life took root, a life that seems to have as a goal her own constitution and affirmation as subject, that starts with the recognition of being a woman.]

These achievements were, in many ways, unusual for a woman of the late Middle Ages. Constanza took an active role in her life and wielded authority of her own. Through her actions we can see that Constanza did control her daily life.

Constanza's relationship with the royal family, even after the death of Catherine of Lancaster, was so close that during Prince Enrique IV's childhood Constanza served as his tutor (Muñoz Fernández 128). Constanza's positive

and close relationship with the ruling monarchs continued during the reign of King Enrique IV (r. 1454-1474) and Queen Juana. Juana awarded Constanza ten thousand maravedíes upon her retirement in 1465 as a reward for the services she had rendered to the royal family (Muñoz Fernández 128).

Constanza's professional life was also characterized by power and prestige. During her priorship various popes and other Dominican authorities granted her "numerosas prerrogativas espirituales y materiales, tanto personales como para su comunidad, que la recolocan en una sorprendente posición de poder y autonomía personal" ["numerous spiritual and material prerogatives, both personal and for her community, that place her in a surprising position of power and personal autonomy"] (Muñoz Fernández 130). Among the authorities granting these privileges were the Popes Martin V, Eugene IV and Callistus III (Getino 132). The Dominicans Fray Luis de Valladolid, the Vicar General of the Dominican Order, and Fray Juan de Zamora, the provincial prior, also granted a variety of privileges to Constanza (Muñoz Fernández 130-132).

The list of privileges that Constanza enjoyed while serving as prioress was considerable. She did not take the vow of stability (as a Dominican she was not subject to this vow) and was allowed to come and go from the monastery as she pleased. While the vow of stability was considered one of the most important vows that a nun could take, Muñoz Fernández recognizes that the papal bull Periculoso, which attempted to regulate and normalize the practice of stability, did not have a generalized effect at this point in history (130). However, the extent to which Constanza was allowed freedom of movement around Madrid and within the royal court itself is noteworthy. In fact, Constanza's movements were not restricted to Madrid. She was allowed to travel to the Dominican monastery in Toledo to visit with her cousins and to check on her personal holdings (Muñoz Fernández 130). In addition to freedom of movement, Constanza was also allowed certain freedoms in dress. She was permitted to dress in linen and did not have to wear a headpiece because "parece le hace daño a la cabeza y a la vista de los ojos" ["it seems to hurt her head and her vision"] (Muñoz Fernández 130). This concession set her

apart within the monastery and allowed her a certain level of personal freedom to choose her wardrobe. Another of Constanza's personal freedoms that was unusual within the monastery was her permission to eat meat and eggs even during days of fasting and during Lent (Muñoz Fernández 130-131). In a country where even today a large portion of the population still observes Lenten dietary restrictions, permission granted to a nun to eat meat and eggs during Lent and days of fasting must have been seen as extraordinary in the late Middle Ages.

Constanza was also permitted to make the monastery a comfortable place for her personal habitation. She was allowed to build her own house within the monastery walls (Muñoz Fernández 131), she was given permission to have visitors from outside the monastery stay overnight (131), and she was permitted to have personal servants to care for her needs (134). The concern of the Church authorities for Constanza’s comfort indicated that they understood that Constanza's situation was unusual. In fact, besides being granted various privileges, Constanza was also exempted from certain duties. She was not required to attend all of

the offices of the monastery and could have a friar administer mass in her personal chambers when she was not able to go to the chapel. She was also allowed to choose her own confessor from either within or from outside of the Order (Muñoz Fernández 131-132). In addition, the nuns of her convent were give permission "a decir las horas de la manera que a Constanza le pareciese..." ["to say the hours in the manner that seemed best to Constanza"] (Muñoz Fernández 137).[28] She took on certain responsibilities and roles that were unusual for a woman of her time, such as adding new buildings to the monastery and writing a prayer book. Constanza retired from her role as prioress in 1465, probably due to her advanced age, and died in 1478 (Surtz 44).

The fact that Constanza was literate and thus capable of writing a book of prayers and devotions raises inevitable questions concerning the quality and breadth of her formal education. Constanza may have received an education because of her royal blood. According to Fray

[28] Muñoz Fernández notes the importance of this privilege because it introduces "pautas subjetivas de las mujeres en la ordenación del trabajo espiritual y del tiempo" ["subjective models of women in the ordering of spiritual work and of time"] (137).

Martín de Córdoba's book Jardín de las nobles donzellas (c. 1476), a princess "deue captar algunas oras del día en que estudie & oya tales cosas que sean propias al regimiento del reyno" ["should spend some hours each day in study and listen to such things as are appropriate to the administration of the kingdom"] because "alas [princesas y reinas] no es vedado estudiar en sabiduría ... [c]omo Sancta Catalina, que hera hija de rey & era instruyda en todas las artes liberals" ["for princesses and queens it is not prohibited to study in wisdom ... as Saint Catherine, who was the daughter of a king and was instructed in all of the liberal arts"] (Córdoba 224). The book, written for and dedicated to Princess Isabel, who later became Queen Isabel I of Castile (1451-1504), provides insight into some of the possible educational experiences for princesses in fifteenth-century Castile. While other women of the royal family would not have received as extensive an education as a princess, it is still known that noble women received a better education than their non-noble counterparts.

While Constanza's noble blood may have resulted in her high level of education, certain events place this

possibility in doubt. Constanza was born of a disinherited and imprisoned family, and likely spent much of her childhood in the atmosphere of her father's prison apartments. While it is possible that her father or maternal grandfather could have had a cleric teach Constanza and her brother, such an education would likely have been limited, especially for a daughter. It is therefore unlikely that she would have had an extensive education during her youth.

Constanza may have been educated in the monastery. According to Ronald Surtz, Santo Domingo el Real had a "maestra de escuela" in the fifteenth century who was in charge of teaching the nuns to read and write (46). It is unlikely, however, that this teacher taught Latin to the nuns because the lack of Latin literacy among the sisters impelled Constanza to translate many of her own works and other religious writings from Latin to Spanish. It is assumed that these translations were intended for the nuns in her monastery since there is no evidence that Constanza's Libro de devociones y oficios ever circulated outside of her monastery. In summary, while it is

difficult to know the amount of formal education Constanza received, social rank may have allowed her to begin a limited education during her childhood, possibly under the tutelage of a local cleric, and to continue within the confines of the monastery, through personal study and/or under the tutelage of her confessor. The monastery was an environment conducive to contemplative life, and Constanza's erudition suggests that she was an educated woman who pursued knowledge throughout her life. Regardless of the manner by which Constanza gained her education, we know that it must have been of some sophistication since she could read and translate ecclesiastical Latin.

While knowledge of Latin was not universal even among the most educated of lay people, it was prevalent as the language of the Church. Daily offices, liturgy, scriptural readings, daily conversation and teaching were all performed in that language. During the fifteenth century, however, Latin was by no means known by all those within the Church, especially women. Marie-Luise Ehrenschwendtner states that while Latin was always the principal language

among Dominican friars, "virtually from the foundation of their order the nuns used the vernacular as well" (Ehrenschwendtner 49). In the early years of the order, nuns were required to use Latin for the Divine Service, though few of them actually understood the language that they were reciting. Consequently, outside the chapel Latin faded in importance in the 1400s (Ehrenschwendtner 49). According to Ehrenschwendtner, "at the beginning of the fifteenth century [in Germany], supporters of the Dominican reform movement finally institutionalized table readings in the vernacular" in order to "deepen the sisters' comprehension of the Dominican religious life" (52). While this does not, necessarily, indicate that practices elsewhere in Europe were the same, it does suggest that few nuns were able to understand Latin. In addition, the fact that Constanza de Castilla wrote or translated nearly every section of her Libro de devociones y oficios in the vernacular, presumably in order to reach nuns who could not understand Latin, suggests that the same type of situation existed in Constanza's monastery.

If Latin was indeed poorly understood among nuns in

the fifteenth-century Castilian Church, translations into Spanish were of the utmost importance. Without such translations the nuns of Constanza's monastery would have had a limited understanding of the daily offices and of the religious works that they read or that were read to them. The mastery of Latin that Constanza demonstrates throughout her prayer book reveals that she was capable not only of translating to and from Latin into Spanish, but also of writing in Latin. Constanza composed some sections in Spanish and then translated them to Latin; others she composed in Latin and then translated to Spanish.

An example of Constanza's manipulation of both Latin and Spanish can be seen in her translations of the letters between Saint Ignatius of Antioch, the Virgin, and Saint John. Included in this section are a letter from Saint Ignatius to the Virgin, her response to him, and two letters from Ignatius to Saint John. As Surtz notes, the four Ignatian letters included in Constanza's prayerbook have been since determined to be apocryphal (although Constanza would not have known that they were apocryphal) (Surtz 50). While the reader might be tempted to wonder

why Constanza disseminated apocryphal letters in her prayerbook, J.B. Lightfoot explains that "in the middle ages the spurious and interpolated letters alone have any wide circulation" (Lightfoot 233). He goes on to state that these letters are found only in Latin and seem to have been composed in Latin (Ignatius wrote in Greek) (235). Constanza first presents the original Latin version of the letters before translating them into Spanish:

> Ignacio, dilecto diciplo, humilis ancilla Christi Ihesu.[29] De Ihesu que a Juane audisti et didicisti, vera sunt. Illa credas, illis inhereas, et Christianitatis votum firmiter teneas, et mores et vitam voto conformes. Veniam atem una cum Iohane, te et qui tecum sunt visitare. Sta et viriliter age in fide. Nec te moveat persecuçionis austeritas, set valeat et exultet spiritus tuus in Deo, salutari tuo.

[29] This text is included here just as it appears in Constanza's book. There are some spelling irregularities present. The original reads as follows: "Ignatio dilecto condiscipulo humilis ancilla domini. De Jesu quæ a Johanne audisti et didicisti vera sunt. Illa credas, illis inhæreas, et Christianitatis susceptæ votum firmiter teneas, et mores et vitam voto conformes. Veniam autem una cum Johanne te et qui tecum sunt visere. Sta et viriliter age in fide; nec te commoveat

(Castilla, Libro 102)

Constanza'a translation of this letter reads as follows:

> A Ignacio amado diciplo, la humil sierva de Ihesu Christo. Aquellas cosas que de Ihesu oíste e aprendiste de Juan, verdaderas son. Aquellas cree e a ellas te allega. E ten firmemente el voto de la christiandat e conforma el voto, las costunbres e la vida, mas yré yo de confirmo con Juan a te ver e a los que contigo están. Sta en la fe e obra virilmente; nin te mueva la aspereza de la persecución, mas valgas en Dios. E tu spíritu se alegre en Dios, Salvador tuyo. Así sea conplido. (Castilla, Libro 102)

Constanza's translations allowed the nuns of her monastery access to texts that they had previously been unable to consult because of their deficiencies in Latin. The fact that Constanza was, in effect, educating other women is an example of the concern that she felt for the spiritual growth those women. She was not content for her nuns to recite texts that they did not understand. Instead she

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persecutionis austeritas, sed valeat et exultet spiritus tuus in Deo

enabled them to take control of their own spirituality and to develop and individual piety by allowing them to understand spiritual matters to a greater degree.

Medieval Spirituality and Individual Piety

One of the primary characteristics of mid- to late-medieval spirituality is the rise of individual piety throughout the course of the Middle Ages. This piety was based on an individual relationship between the Christian and God. In his History of Dogma, Adolph Harnack labels this individual piety as a "theological piety (contemplation) having a reflex aim, modeled on Augustine and the Areopagite, and fertilized (though not thoroughly) in Bernardine devotion to Christ" (97). He emphasizes that this individual piety is not one among many forms of pre-Reformation piety, but rather the Catholic expression of piety prior to the Reformation (98). This piety, in its most elevated form, led to mysticism, the direct union of the Christian's soul with God.[30]

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salutari tuo. Amen" (Lightfoot 72).

[30] Harnack uses the term "mysticism" to refer to this individual piety. However, in order to eliminate any possible confusion regarding

After the Crusades both individual piety and mysticism underwent a fairly substantial change. The end of the Crusades, and the resultant opening of Jerusalem led to increased European presence there. Crusaders and pilgrims returned from the Holy Land with a zeal for Christ and His passion and spread that zeal in their homelands. By following in the steps of Christ and seeing where He lived, suffered, and died, Christians gained a new appreciation for the historical Christ and the events surrounding His human existence. As a result of this renewed zeal, devotion to Christ's humanity grew at an unprecedented pace.[31] This is evident in both the art and literature of the time period.

The rise of the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century contributed to the individual piety that was spreading throughout Christendom. The mendicants were very influential in the development and spread of the new individual piety. Harnack asserts that the importance of

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terminology, I will use the term "individual piety" and use "mysticism" in its more common meaning.

[31] Prior to the Crusades, devotion to Christ's divinity was more prevalent than devotion to His humanity. For a complete discussion of the rise of devotion to Christ (in both His divinity and humanity) can be found in Constable Three Studies 145-248.

the mendicant orders lies in the religious awakening that they produced over a period of 150 to 300 years (95-96). This awakening relies on the individual Christian's connection to the Divine.

Though it is generally asserted that the Dominican Order was more theocentric and the Franciscan was more Christocentric (particularly as regards mysticism),[32] both orders espoused contemplation as a way of approaching a union with the Divine. Thomas Aquinas, devoted to the scholastic method and scientific knowledge of the Divine, approached the mystical union with God on an intellectual level. As a result, Dominican mysticism, which held Thomistic teaching in high esteem, "is concerned more with intellect than with will or practiced piety and stresses contemplation and an intellectual vision of God" (Ozment 116). At various times this "speculative" mysticism was held in some suspicion due to its potential for pantheism. One of its most outstanding representatives, Meister

[32] Dominican mysticism is generally termed as "speculative" and Franciscan as "affective." This classification has proved useful in identifying some of the differences between the different types of mysticism. However, Oakley and Ozment both recognize some of the inherent problems of classifying mysticism in such a way. For a more

Eckhart, was condemned by the papacy for twenty-eight errors in his teaching. Franciscan mysticism, on the other hand, tends more strongly to volition over intellect, and has a reputation for orthodoxy. This mysticism is based in nominalism and follows the voluntaristic though of John Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas' primary "rival." While Thomas believed that scientific reasoning would allow the Christian to approach an understanding of God, Scotus denied this possibility, insisting that one can only gain knowledge of God through faith. Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventure are the most outstanding examples of this type of "affective" mysticism (Ozment 116).

Catherine of Siena, in spite of her identity as a Dominican, did not espouse the speculative mysticism of her Dominican counterparts. Catherine, as a lay sister, had been nourished on lay spirituality rather than on the Order's official teachings. Harnack has recognized the importance of the mendicant orders in the spiritual education of the laity, and notes that these orders, "by developing the principle of poverty, the apostolic life and

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thorough discussion of this topic see Ozment, Mysticism and Dissent 1-

repentance, as well as by preaching love" spread an individual piety among the lay people that had previously been found primarily among those of a religious vocation (111). Catherine of Siena came out of this movement. Her spirituality

> was certainly not the scholasticism of Aristotle and St. Thomas, on which her Dominican confessor and the other Friars Preachers she met had been nourished; nor was it the speculative mysticism of their brethren of the Rhineland. Catherine's whole cast of mind was that of a mystic and an apostle; she had no interest in theoretical questions. (Vandenbroucke 411)

This is important because Catherine, in her spirituality, was to be a role model for the fifteenth-century reform of the Dominican Order.

Though the Dominicans are frequently viewed as the more intellectual of the mendicant orders, this intellectualism began to decrease as the Middle Ages progressed. Thomism lost ground and nominalism gained

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60 and Oakley 94-100.

prestige to the point that nominalist piety "tended more and more to supplant the Thomist in the 15th century" (Harnack 107). Alongside the rise of nominalist piety came the rise of devotion to Christ and, specifically, to His suffering humanity.[33] Though Thomas Aquinas had set the stage for a Dominican devotion to Christ's humanity in his Summa theological, Dominican theology, as has been seen, is viewed as more theocentric than Christocentric.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the development and spread of the Devotio moderna movement shows the level to which devotion to Christ had grown. The literature and ideology of this movement are exemplified by Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ. Though Keith Whinnom has established that the devotio moderna did not reach Spain until the end of the fifteenth century (46), the individualized piety that had been spreading throughout the Middle Ages (and which led to the development of the devotio moderna) had reached and influenced all corners of Europe.

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[33] Devotion to Christ's humanity will be discussed in more detail in

The Dominican Order during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

The Dominican Order of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, leading up to and encompassing the years of Constanza's priorship, was undergoing an ideological upheaval. While the thirteenth century was seen as the high point of the Dominican Order, by the fourteenth century decay had begun to set in (Hinnebusch 28). The reasons for this decay can be found in a succession of events, among them being the outbreak of the Black Death and the Western Schism.

The Plague first erupted in Europe in 1348 and recurred various times throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, decimating European centers. It is estimated that within two years the Plague had killed between one-third and one-half of the population of Europe (Hinnebusch 28). Monasteries were in no way exempt from the Plague. In fact, the very nature of communal living often created an environment in which contagion spread from member to member very rapidly. Upon a recurrence of the

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chapter 4.

Plague in 1401, the Avignon Obedience, of which Spain was one of the few remaining provinces, lost 1,100 Dominicans (Hinnebusch 35). The resulting depopulation of the monasteries contributed to the decline not only of the Dominican Order, but of all orders because it forced them to accept candidates indiscriminately to fill the empty positions (Hernández 1). According to Hinnebusch:

> All the Orders made two important mistakes. They tried to man all their empty priories, spreading their personnel too thin, and they recruited young and poorly educated boys who were so immature that they had to be given wholesale dispensations from religious discipline. When they grew older, these boy-religious were so accustomed to a soft life that no one could call them to anything stricter. (Hinnebusch 35)

These problems (which were also experienced by the female communities) only served to exacerbate a decline that had begun to appear around 1290 and led to a "widespread collapse of spirit and religious discipline" (Hinnebusch 34).

One of the primary problems in the Dominican Order that arose as a result of the decline of religious discipline regarded adherence to the Order's vows. In apparent disregard of the Order's vow of poverty:

> priories began to hold properties, rents, annuities, and fixed incomes. They acquired mills, granges, houses, and endowments... In some places friars gave silent witness to their declining spirit when they built large and costly churches, cloisters, and buildings with the help of rich benefactors. (Hinnebusch 35)

This practice was due, in part, to the rapid growth of the Order. It was much simpler for a small band of preachers to maintain strict poverty, but as the Order's membership grew into the thousands, moneys provided by the faithful were frequently insufficient for the care of the brothers (Hinnebusch 35). As a result, friars began to develop independent resources by appealing to their families and friends. At this point, "vanity in clothing appeared" and "habits were made of better cloth" (Hinnebusch 35). Friars who had financial support often "turned cells into rooms,

or built apartments with private entrances through which servants, friends, and women could enter" (Hinnebusch 35).

The breakdown of discipline also led to a disregard of the Order's vow of chastity, which was manifested by the keeping of concubines by some members of the clergy (known in Spain as barraganía). While this was not an uncommon practice during the period, it contradicted both official Church policy and the vows of the various orders. In 1380, an official attempt was made in Spain to rectify this problem. The Law of Soria openly condemned barraganía. However, this condemnation arose as much out of the issues of inheritance raised by the children born of the clergy and their barraganas as out of the sinfulness of the practice (Sanza Lallana 4). The issue of barraganía added to the Order's internal strife.

The advent of the Great Western Schism (1378-1417) served to intensify the problems already present within the Dominican Order and to throw the Order into further confusion. As a result of the advent of two papacies, one in Rome and another in Avignon, the Order was split; some countries supported the Roman pope and others supported the

Avignonese pope. Spain under the Trastámara dynasty was an ally of France and thus supported the pope in Avignon. By 1409, John Puinoix, the master general of the Avignon Obedience, governed only the friars of Spain, Aragon, and Scotland, the only countries still faithful to Avignon (Hinnebusch 38).

The first attempt at a reform of the Dominican Order began among Tuscan friars in the early fourteenth century. These friars, called "spirituals," advocated a stricter adherence to the Dominican Rule (Hinnebusch 36).[34] However, their movement was eventually destroyed when they "drifted into unacceptable positions" (Hinnebusch 36). Stephen Lacombe began the first official reform attempt in 1369, but this attempt eventually failed due to Lacombe's adherence to the Avignon Obedience at the onset of the Schism (Hinnebusch 36). While neither of these attempts was ultimately successful, both influenced subsequent reform movements.

Catherine of Siena and her disciples initiated the

[34] Taking the terminology of the Franciscan reform, the Dominicans who advocated a return to strict adherence to the Rule were called "observants" and those who wanted to maintain the status quo were called "conventuals."

first permanent and successful reform. When Raymond of Capua, Catherine's former confessor, became master general of the Roman Obedience in 1380, he was in a position to spearhead the official reform of the Order. In 1388, "he sent out an encyclical calling all the provinces to found a priory of strict observance and mendicant poverty" (Hinnebusch 36). He intended to take friars from these reformed (or "observant") monasteries and send them to unreformed ("conventual") monasteries, "hoping in this way to reform the whole Order" (Hinnebusch 36). However, since Spain was still part of the Avignon Obedience, this particular reform did not enter Spain until the first quarter of the fifteenth century.[35]

Spain finally withdrew support from Benedict XIII, the Avignon pope, upon the advice of Vincent Ferrer prior to the Council of Constance (1414-1418) (Hinnebusch 46). This decision paved the way for Capua's reform to enter Spain's Dominican houses. It took a number of years, however, for the reform to take effect in Spain. Around 1423, Alvaro de Córdoba initiated the reform in Spain in the Santo Domingo

[35] St. Vincent Ferrer advocated a similar return to the Order's ideals

de Escalaceli convent near Córdoba (Beltrán de Heredia 3). From this first house, reform spread slowly throughout the region. Documentation shows that in the 1460s "Spanish Dominicans commonly emigrated to Italy in order to follow the austere regimen of the houses of the Congregation of Lombardy" (Giles 54). Many would then return to Spain to spread reformist ideals. By 1478, "major convents in Castile had been incorporated into the reform, and in that same year Sixtus IV issued a papal bull insuring support for the reform in Spain" (Giles 46). By 1489, the majority of Dominican Houses in Castile were observant (Giles 47). The Spanish Dominican reform gained its strongest supporters in the Catholic Monarchs, Fernando and Isabel, and during their reign nearly all of the Spanish Dominican houses were reformed (Hinnebusch 50).

Santo Domingo el Real, Constanza de Castilla's monastery, was reformed in 1495, nearly twenty years after Constanza's death (Beltrán de Heredia 34). We do not know Constanza's reaction to the reform that was permeating her Order during her rule as prioress. While most convents

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at approximately the same time as Raymond of Capua (Oakley 234).

reformed in the years following her retirement and death, she was almost certainly aware of the movement and may have faced some pressure to participate. Santo Domingo el Real's position as a house that enjoyed royal favor would likely have made it an attractive target for reformers. Constanza herself had been granted many benefices that resembled the practices that the reform was trying to change (with regard to eliminating excesses in vestment, food, living quarters, etc.). Therefore, it might seem natural to assume that Constanza would have opposed such a reform. In fact, in her prayer book she fails to recognize that these benefices might weaken her faith. However, Constanza retired in 1465, while the reform was still in its nascent stages in Spain. It is therefore possible that she never faced the issue.

History of Santo Domingo el Real[36]

The monastery of Santo Domingo el Real was one of the first Dominican monasteries for women. Founded by Saint

[36] The original Santo Domingo el Real monastery was built in 1218 and added onto throughout its history. The monastery was destroyed in 1839 and the community moved to a different location.

Dominic himself in 1218, it began as a mixed community. While it was established primarily as a community of women, from the beginning there was a small number of friars to care for the spiritual needs of the nuns.[37] However, the fact that the house was established primarily for the nuns can be seen in the following quote from Alonso Getino, a historian of Constanza's monastery:

> Las donaciones y privilegios o se otorgan a las monjas solas o se conceden a dueñas y frayres o más frecuentemente se hacen a la Comunidad de dueñas con licencia e otorgamiento del Prior de las Dueñas. (Getino 10)
>
> [the donations and privileges are granted only to the nuns or to the nuns and friars or, more frequently, are made to the Community of ladies with permission and license of the Prior of the Ladies.]

Getino goes on to record that there is no doubt that Saint Dominic himself established the community in Madrid as a mixed community in which a number of friars (the exact

[37] While the exact number of friars is uncertain, Getino suggests that,

number is uncertain) were always present "para el cuidado de las monjas" ["for the care of the nuns"] (12).

From its inception, Santo Domingo el Real of Madrid received a great deal of papal attention. In 1236, Pope Gregory IX placed the monastery under direct pontifical protection (Muñoz Fernández 125). The papacy continued to protect the monastery under subsequent popes. Nicholas IV granted three bulls of indulgences to the monastery in 1257. The first set of indulgences was granted to parishioners who confessed in Santo Domingo el Real's church during certain religious festivals. The second set of indulgences was granted in exchange for donations given for the construction of conventual dependencies. The third bull granted forty days of indulgences to those who confessed and did penance in the conventual church (Muñoz Fernández 125-126). In addition to their spiritual side, these bulls were designed to increase the economic and religious power of the monastery in Madrid.

In addition to the papal attention that Santo Domingo el Real received, the monastery also enjoyed royal

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like Prouille, the Madrid monastery housed five brothers (12).

patronage over the years. This patronage was at its highest level during the priorship of Constanza de Castilla, possibly because she was a cousin of the royal monarchs. The close relationship between Constanza and her cousins brought more royal favors and money to the monastery than at any previous point in the monastery's existence. In the words of Getino, Constanza's fifty-year priorship was:

> el periodo más brillante del Convento de Santo Domingo de Madrid ... y bajo su prelacía la Comunidad creciese como la espuma en crédito, en personal, en relaciones y hasta en posición económica. (Getino 129)
>
> [the most brilliant period of the Convent of Santo Domingo of Madrid ... and under her prelacy the community increased rapidly in reputation, in people, in relations and even in economic position.]

While the exact size of the monastery at its foundation is not known, during Constanza's priorship it housed eighty nuns and it dependencies included mills, farms, and

livestock. At the end of the fifteenth century the main buildings of Santo Domingo el Real covered an area that today would be the equivalent of a modern city block. In addition it held other lands held that were not contiguous to the monastery (Getino 150).

During Constanza's priorship, Santo Domingo el Real essentially became a refuge and a pantheon for the Castilla family. Getino states that:

> El hermano de doña Constanza la ayuda en todas sus empresas de mejora del Monasterio; su sobrino don Pedro de Castilla edifica la capilla de Santo Tomás; su sobrina doña María Ulloa levanta una casa junto al Convento y en comunicación con él; la familia toda de los Castilla tiene su panteón en la iglesia de Santo Domingo el Real, y por fin numerosas señoras de esa familia ... ingresan en el único Monasterio de monjas que Santo Domingo tuvo por bien levantar en España. (145)
>
> [Constanza's brother helped her in all of her improvements of the monastery; her nephew Pedro de Castilla built Saint Thomas' chapel; her niece

> María Ulloa built a house beside and communicating with the convent; all of the Castilla family had their pantheon in Santo Domingo el Real's church, and finally numerous young ladies of this family ... entered into the only monastery of nuns that Saint Dominic established in Spain.]

Much of the Castilla family's interest in the convent was probably due to Constanza's influence. Her act of burying both her father and her grandfather in her convent would have created a centralized place for the family to go to remember their past and to connect with their present. Constanza worked and lived for such a long time in this monastery that it must have been a familiar place for the Castilla family.

The exact date when Constanza assumed the position of prioress is unknown. However, a letter from Catherine of Lancaster discloses that Constanza already occupied that position by 1416 (Getino 130-131). By this time Constanza had been a nun for ten years, though she was still most likely younger than 25. While we are unsure exactly how

Constanza received such an exalted position at such an early age, it is not unreasonable to speculate that Queen Catherine of Lancaster may have used her power as Queen (and regent) of Castile to place Constanza in this role, much as she had when she appointed Constanza's brother as the bishop of Osma in 1406 (Getino 19). Constanza was prioress of Santo Domingo el Real until she retired in 1465.

During Constanza's tenure as prioress her monastery witnessed several events that are of historical interest. The first of these involves the now (in)famous burning of Enrique de Villena's library. In 1434 Enrique de Villena died in Madrid. He had the reputation of being a wizard and a student of necromancy. His library was reputedly full of books related to the black arts, so King Juan II ordered his confessor, Lope Barrientos, to burn Villena's library. Upon these orders, Barrientos "hizo una hoguera en Santo Domingo el Real, quemando aquellos libros..." ["made a bonfire in Santo Domingo el Real, burning those

books..."] (Getino 136).[38] Getino goes on to speculate as to the reason that this event took place in Santo Domingo el Real. He theorizes:

> sería porque Barrientos se alojaba en las dependencias del Convento. Barrientos era confesor del Rey y obispo. Fue también canciller de Castilla. Su estancia en Santo Domingo con el personal que le acompañara indica la capacidad de las obras debidas a doña Constanza. (Getino 137)
>
> [it could be because Barrientos was lodged in the Convent's dependencies. Barrientos was the king's confessor and a bishop. He was also chancellor of Castile. His habitation in Santo Domingo with the people that accompanied him would indicate the capacity of the works owed to Constanza.]

While this reasoning is speculation on Getino's part, it is a reasonable scenario based on what is known about the events that occurred, and based on the convent's proximity

[38] Though Barrientos has often been criticized for his role in the book-burning, Fitzmaurice-Kelly notes that Barrientos was solely following Juan II's orders and that he probably "burned as few books as possible, for he kept what was saved for himself" (60).

to the Royal Palace.

The second event of historical note related to Santo Domingo el Real and Constanza de Castilla took place toward the end of her years as prioress. This episode involves the disputed succession of the Castilian throne in the latter half of the fifteenth century. King Enrique IV's daughter, Juana, was the heiress to the throne. However, it was rumored that Enrique was impotent and that Juana was the illegitimate daughter of Beltrán de la Cueva, a former favorite of King Enrique.[39] In order to avoid further scandals and secure his own position on the throne, Enrique named his sister, Isabel, as his heir. Because of her extramarital relationships, Enrique's wife, Juana of Portugal, was imprisoned under the custody of Pedro de Castilla el Viejo, a cousin of Constanza. During her imprisonment she reportedly had an affair with Pedro el Viejo's son, Pedro el Mozo, who was her page and several years her junior. His father, Pedro el Viejo, took the two children resulting from this affair to Santo Domingo el Real so that Constanza could take care of them and raise

[39] For this reason Princess Juana was popularly called "la Beltraneja."

them in the secrecy of the monastery. While all of this was supposed to remain secret, it quickly became public knowledge. Queen Juana's scandalous behavior gave credence to the belief that her daughter was not King Enrique's biological daughter. Isabel's claim to the throne was, therefore, strengthened. (Getino 146-147)

One of the major problems that Constanza faced as prioress was dealing with personnel issues related to the Plague. In 1438, known in Spanish history as "the year of the Plague," one of the worst outbreaks of the Black Death occurred in Castile (Getino 137). The resultant depopulation of the monastery created problems for Constanza and her sisters as it did in monasteries across the country. Many positions were left vacant and many jobs left undone:

> los Conventos, sin personal para llenar los más indispensables oficios, cubrieron las bajas con niños de cualquier procedencia. Y estos niños, atraídos, reclutados sin vocación, educados sin disciplina, halagados con sistemáticas dispensas para que no arrojasen la carga, introdujeron en

> los Conventos una vida laxa y perjudicial, una disipación inconciliable con el recogimiento monástico, una vida, en fin, que se denominaba de claustro y que era más de mundo que de claustro. (Getino 268-269)
>
> [the convents, without personnel to fill the most indispensable offices, filled the vacancies with children from any type of background. And these children, attracted, recruited without vocation, educated without discipline, flattered with systematic dispensations so that they would not ignore their duty, introduced a lax and pernicious life into the convents, a dissipation that is irreconcilable with monastic reclusion, a life, finally, that was called cloistered and was in fact more worldly than cloistered.]

Constanza herself recruited nuns to fill the holes in her monastery. She even provided dowries for those who did not have sufficient economic resources. However, it is probable that at least some people without a true vocation entered the monastery at this time (Getino 271). During

Constanza's life, the problems threatened by the lack of vocation were controlled. Getino recognizes that:

> Su presencia, su autoridad, fue muro contentivo de la indisciplina que amenazaba. Por eso, a los pocos años de desaparecer la Infanta del estadio, aparece el conflicto y preocupaba mucho a la buenísima Isabel.
>
> [Her presence, her authority, was a barrier against the lack of discipline that threatened. Because of this, a few years after the princess [Constanza] disappeared from the scene, conflict arose and it worried the good Queen Isabel very much.] (Getino 271)

While major problems did not arise until after Constanza's death, she must have seen some indications of the problems that would later disorder her monastery.

In spite of the issues that Constanza faced every day as the prioress of a large and prestigious monastery, she accomplished many things, such as supervising a large building initiative and bringing the bodies of her father and grandfather to her monastery. Perhaps in part in

recognition of her achievements, she was granted many privileges. In addition to the privileges granted to her personally, the monastery in Madrid was granted papal concession to celebrate a festival between Easter and Passover in honor of the Santos Clavos [Holy Nails] (for which Constanza composed the hours that were to be recited) (Getino 132). Getino stresses that the privileges granted to Constanza were extended to her because of her extreme virtue and were unsolicited on Constanza's part (132). Whether or not these privileges were initiated by Constanza herself or by Church authorities, the fact that they were granted to her indicates the esteem in which she was held by those authorities. Constanza was beloved by both the Church and by those that surrounded her. This esteem appears to have continued even after Constanza's death, as indicated in the Bishop of Monopoli's description of Constanza (c. 1600):

> Está esta santa enterrada en el coro con su túmulo y bulto de piedra, y dicen personas que lo han visto que ha pocos años que estaba su cuerpo entero, habiendo tantos que era difunta,

> argumento de su santidad. (qtd. in Getino 133)
> [This holy woman is buried in the choir with her tomb and stone effigy,[40] and some say that they saw a few years ago that her body was intact, although she had been dead for so many years, which is an argument for her sainthood.]

Though she was never canonized, Constanza's accomplishments continued to have an impact long after her death. Perhaps her greatest (and certainly her most lasting) accomplishment was her Libro de devociones y oficios written to guide the nuns of her monastery in their daily devotional lives. It is this book of devotions and daily offices that serves as the focus of my study.

Manuscript and Textual Description

The Libro de devociones y oficios, as its title indicates, is a compilation of a variety of devotional texts and literary offices. The manuscript, located in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, consists of 103 parchment

[40] See appendix 1 for two photographs of Constanza's tomb, which is currently located in the Archeological Museum in Madrid.

folios that measure 165 X 115 mm, a conveniently portable size for a personal prayer book. The text itself is of a very legible fifteenth-century Gothic script which appears to be the work of two scribal hands (Wilkins xv). While the manuscript itself is not dated, the script and the orthography appear to be consistent with those of the late fifteenth century and, therefore, seem to be closely contemporaneous with the author's life (Wilkins xv). It was probably written around the time of the author's retirement in 1465. This date is supported by textual references to Catherine of Siena as "Saint" Catherine (she was canonized in 1461) and references to King Enrique IV who reigned from 1454-1474.

The Libro de devociones y oficios itself is divided into sixteen sections;[41] I will focus on the original prayers and adaptations in detail in this study.[42] As a

[41] To avoid confusion, all subdivisions of the Libro de devociones y oficios will be referred to as "sections". However, each section is, in itself, a unique and separate text.

[42] The sections examined in this dissertation correspond to the following folio numbers: Prayer on the life and passion of Christ, folios 1-31v; Supplication to Christ following the office of the nails, folios 74v-75r; Prayer to Christ, folios 82v-83r; Affirmations of faith and prayers for salvation, folios 91v-93r; Author's Suplication on the day of her death, folios 101r-102v; Fifteen Joys of the Virgin and prayer, folios 75r-78v; Seven Sorrows of the Virgin and prayer, folios 78v-79v.

compilation of a variety of materials, the sections contained in this work derive from different sources and have differing levels of originality. The sections are also composed in two languages: Spanish and Latin. They range from the truly original offerings (such as the opening prayer, written primarily in Spanish with some Latin Biblical references), to translations of existing religious texts (such as the letters of Saint Ignatius of Antioch to the Virgin Mary and John, presented in Latin and translated into Spanish). Other sections include adaptations of traditional Mariological materials (such as the fifteen joys of the Virgin and the seven sorrows of the Virgin).

In this study I will discuss Constanza's original prayers and adaptations in detail. The original prayers give us insight into Constanza's personal spirituality. The adaptations show us how she expressed her individuality (both in beliefs and in personality) through the use of traditional Mariological forms. Through a close examination of the Libro de devociones y oficios, I will explore Constanza's words and the form in which she

expressed them in order to gain a better understanding of the way in which she feminized Christianity in order to influence the spiritual growth of the women under her tutelage. Since proponents of the feminization of Christianity wanted to make Christianity more accessible to women, it would be most effective for them to write in forms that were easily accessible to women. The epistolary format is one that was likely familiar to most women[43] and easy for a public that was generally uneducated to decipher and follow. Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena all use this form. Brief biographies of Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena are given at this point to facilitate an understanding of the lives of these women.

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Catherine of Siena was born Caterina di Iacopo di Benincasa in Siena, Italy in 1347, the year that the Black Plague swept through Europe. She was the twenty-fourth of

[43] Joan M. Ferrante's pioneering study of women and letters has imparted greater insight into this topic. Of her initial investigation into this area she states: "I expected…to find only a small number of formal documents which would not reveal much about the correspondents. Instead I found over twelve hundred letters in printed sources alone,

twenty-five children born to a wool-dyer and his wife, Giacomo and Lapa Benincasa. As a child, Catherine dedicated her life to God against the will of her family (particularly her mother, who wanted Catherine to marry). Her devotion and resolution were such that she eventually overcame her mother's objections and became a member of the Mantellate,[44] a group of Dominican laywomen in Siena (Capua 19-35). For several years after joining the Mantellate, Catherine remained in her family home under a vow of silence. This period ended in 1367 when she experienced a mystical union with Christ and became sponsa Christi (Petroff 240). At this point she felt God leading her into public ministry. From 1367 until her death in 1380, Catherine worked with the sick and needy, advised friends and acquaintances, and eventually entered the public arena by advising two popes, campaigning for the end of the "Babylonian captivity" of the papacy, and decrying the

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most of them from men to women but many from women to men and even some from women to women" (3).

[44] The Mantellate was a group of third order Dominican women (lay sisters) who wore the white tunic and black mantle of the Dominican Order. Catherine was reportedly the first virgin allowed to enter the Mantellate. Most members were mature widows; and since the third order was not cloistered, the group feared for Catherine's protection.

Great Schism (Scott, "Urban Spaces" 105). Catherine died in 1380 at the age of thirty-three.[45]

Soon after Catherine's death, Raymond of Capua, her confessor and future Master General of the Dominican Order, began his campaign to have her canonized.[46] Part of this process included writing her Vita, which he began in 1385. According to Karen Scott, Capua

> sought Catherine's canonization to give spiritual legitimacy to several pressing causes of the 1380s and 1390s: the observant reform of the Dominicans and the reunification of his order and the Church separated by the Schism.
>
> ("Mystical Death" 139)

The process of Catherine's canonization began in the late fourteenth century, but would not conclude until the late fifteenth century. In 1461 Catherine was canonized by Pius II. According to Bonniwell, her canonization:

However, due to her sober nature, her dedication, and her disfigurement from smallpox, Catherine was finally allowed to join (Petroff 239).

[45] Some modern scholars believe that Catherine's death was caused by a severe case of anorexia nervosa. For a detailed discussion of religious women's eating habits and the incidence of anorexia nervosa or bulimia, see Bell, Holy Anorexia and Bynum, Holy Feast 194-207.

[46] Raymond of Capua became Catherine's confessor in 1374 until her death in 1380. He became Master General of the Dominican Order in 1380, soon

> was one of the greatest blessings that God could have bestowed upon the Order at that time; for it gave a mighty impetus to the work of reform begun so valiantly in the face of such disheartening odds by Catherine's confessor, Raymond of Capua. This was especially true of those convents of nuns, which were not at all disposed to accept the reform movement. (262)

Since Catherine of Siena was canonized during Constanza de Castilla's priorate, Constanza was very familiar with her. She was so familiar, in fact, that she mentions Catherine in the opening prayer to her Libro de devociones y oficios. The fact that Catherine was a member of the same order as Constanza must help to account for the connection between them. In addition, Raymond of Capua's use of Catherine as a spiritual example for the reform of Dominican convents both in Italy and elsewhere would have made her even more familiar to Constanza.[47]

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after Catherine's death, and held that position until his death in 1399.

[47] The first examples of Catherine's work, as well as the Legend maior that Capua wrote about her life, were not published in Spain (nor, according to Huerga, were they even translated into Spanish) until 1511. Alvaro Huerga details the various strains of catherinism in the

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Teresa de Cartagena (born c. 1415) was not a Dominican although she was, like Constanza, a fifteenth-century Castilian nun. Details about Teresa's life and background are sketchy. All that is known for certain is what Teresa says about herself in her two works, Arboleda de los enfermos [Grove of the Infirm] and Admiración operum Dey [Wonder at the Works of God]. The most complete information comes from the incipit to Admiración operum Dey, which reveals both her name and that she was a nun. However, the order with which she was affiliated is omitted (Cartagena, Arboleda 111). The other personal information that Teresa reveals is that she studied in Salamanca (Arboleda 103) and that she suffered from deafness from a young age (Arboleda 38).

Iberian Peninsula. He does not, however, discuss the circulation of any manuscripts of Capua's Legenda or of Catherine's works. Since the work of reform had already begun in Spain in the second half of the fifteenth century, it is possible that the works primarily used to push that reform (Capua's Legenda maior and Catherine's own literary works) were already available, at least to some extent (perhaps in manuscript form). Even if the works themselves were unavailable, it is likely that stories about Catherine were fairly well known. However, at this point there is no evidence that these works were disseminated in Spain prior to the early sixteenth century. In addition, there is little evidence in Constanza's writings that she was directly influenced by Catherine's writings. This topic will be developed further in upcoming

Though Teresa mentioned nothing concrete about her family or their identity, it is commonly believed that she was from a family of Jewish conversos (Jewish converts to Christianity).[48] Though it had been long suspected that Teresa was a member of the powerful Cartagena/Santa María family from Burgos, in 1952 it was proven that such was indeed the case by Francisco Cantera Burgos, who uncovered mention of a nun named Teresa de Cartagena in her uncle Alonso de Cartagena's will. Since the name, time period and place of residence all correspond to the information that Teresa gives in her works, it is now commonly accepted that Teresa de Cartagena the author was indeed a member of that preëminent late medieval conversa family (Seidenspinner-Núñez, Introd. 8). Teresa's grandfather, originally named Selomó ha-Levi, was rabbi in Burgos, where he "presided over Spain's largest community of Jews and established the foremost school of rabbinical studies in

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chapters. For more information about Catherine of Siena's influence in Spain see Alvaro Huerga.

[48] Teresa's affiliation with the Cartagena/Santa María family was established in 1952 by Francisco Cantera Burgos, when he was researching the family for his study Alvar García de Santa María y su familia de conversos: historia de la judería de Burgos y de sus converses más egregios. His identification of Teresa has never been contested.

the Iberian Peninsula" (Seidenspinner-Núñez, Introd. 4). After he converted to Christianity, he was baptized with the name Pablo de Santa María, and eventually became Bishop of Burgos, the city where he had previously presided as rabbi (Seidenspinner-Núñez, Introd. 4). Like Teresa, several of Pablo's other descendants also had careers in the Church.

Although it is not known to which order Teresa belonged, because of her repeated mention of and devotion to Saint Francis it is commonly assumed that she was Franciscan.[49] The dates when Teresa wrote her treatises are unknown. It is estimated that the first, the Arboleda de los enfermos, was written sometime between 1450 and 1470, and that the Admiración operum Dey was composed sometime after that (Rivera Garretas 280). The date of Teresa's death is also unknown. Although both Teresa and Constanza, who were both Castilian nuns, were of different lineage (Teresa may have been a conversa and Constanza de Castilla was of a pure or "old Christian" lineage), both women came

[49] This assertion is contested by Rivera Garretas, who believes that the question has not been adequately addressed nor the assertions adequately supported (Rivera Garretas 278).

from powerful families. In addition, Teresa and Constanza were both Castilian nuns.

Aside from their shared religious vocations these three women all cultivate the use of the epistolary format. Constanza de Castilla's original prayers mimic the epistolary format that she used in the one letter that has been definitely identified as hers. In other words, Constanza's writings, like those of Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena, are directed to a specific individual (or specific group) and composed in a narrative style in order to impart information and make a request. These characteristics are common to both letters and prayers. The following chapter will examine the epistolary style from its origins through the Middle Ages and then examine how Constanza's original works conform to and/or transform this style. The structures of these works are important because of their intimacy and availability to their audiences. The epistolary format was very useful in expressing the individual piety that was spreading through Europe in the pre-reformation era. This format was probably the most personal, intimate, and spontaneous genre

that was available to writers of that time period. Women in the Middle Ages were a particularly difficult audience for literature because they were undereducated. Even the majority of those that were able to read were likely not accustomed to reading complex works. The epistolary format offered an adaptable, familiar, personal, and easy to follow structure.

Chapter 2

Constanza de Castilla: The Ars Dictaminis

The art of letter writing, also known as ars dictaminis, has its roots in classical rhetoric and, more specifically, in classical oration. Early sources of dictaminal doctrine considered the letter "as a species of oration" (Camargo 19). As a result, "the illusion of an oration was sustained through their standardized format, a modification of the six-part Ciceronian oration, and through the practice of reading letters aloud in public" (Camargo 19). The letter, then, was seen as "half of a conversation or dialogue between the sender and the addressee, and it involved a quasi-presence and quasi-speech between the two" (Constable, Letters 13).

During the eleventh century, the medieval technique of letter writing was influenced significantly by Alberic of Monte Cassino (d. 1105). Alberic's dictaminal scheme has a rigid, five-part structure which consists of: the salutation, the exordium, the exposition, the request, and the conclusion (Colish 176). The salutation (salutatio) includes a greeting that shows the relationship between the

writer and the addressee. The exordium (captatio benevolentiae) is intended to put the addressee in a receptive frame of mind through the use of an appropriate quote or moral sentiment. In most works the captatio introduces the humility topos. The exposition (narratio) contains the main idea of the letter or the reason for which it was written. The request (petitio) is made based upon the situation or needs presented in the narratio. The letter then concludes with a brief section (conclusio) in which the author expresses gratitude to the addressee in advance for fulfilling the request (Colish 176).

Although these are the five sections that make up a letter in the ars dictaminis tradition, women in the Middle Ages tended to transform the genre to varying extents. In their book Dear Sister: Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre, Karen Cherewatuk and Ulrike Wiethaus discuss the flexibility of the epistolary genre "in regard to authors, topics and audiences" (3). Cherewatuk and Wiethaus relate this flexibility to the various reasons for which women wrote: for teaching, influencing politics, maintaining relationships, exploring emotions, or conveying simple

messages (3). Although literate medieval women wrote letters fairly extensively, they followed the ars dictaminis less strictly than did literate men. Cherewatuk and Wiethaus surmise that this transformation of the epistolary genre can be traced to a general lack of access among women to the schools in which the ars dictaminis was taught (6). As a result, "although some women writers participated successfully in the male-dominated world of the ars dictaminis, the majority of medieval women produced their letters outside it" (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 8). Cherewatuk and Wiethaus identify two factors that allowed women to write in the epistolary form while not strictly following the ars dictaminis structure. They are:

> the discovery of the vernacular as a written means of communication,[50] which moved the epistolary discourse away from the centers of learning, and the emerging role of women visionaries as legitimate figures of authority for the laity. The use of both the vernacular

[50] The ars dictaminis was a Latin tradition. Therefore, all true adherents to the ars dictaminis tradition would have been written in Latin.

> and the visionary mode brought into being new ways of writing and using letters. Barred from public performances as teachers, theologians, and pastoral counselors, visionary women could sublimate these roles in part by writing letters. (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 9)

These two scholars conclude that "medieval women transcended and refashioned male categories of the letter to suit their specifically female intentions" (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 13).

Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena wrote in the vernacular and employed rhetorical strategies associated with the ars dictaminis structure. While Constanza wrote prayers, Catherine wrote letters and Teresa wrote treatises, nearly all of the works under consideration contain a salutatio, captatio benevolentiae, narratio, petitio, and conclusio, following the common epistolary structure. Although the works by these three women do not always exhibit the traditional structure of the letter (some omit either the narratio or the conclusio), it was not always necessary to include all

five sections of the traditional ars dictaminis in order to produce a complete letter; sections were sometimes omitted depending on the specific purpose of each individual letter.[51]

Epistolarity in Constanza de Castilla: the Letter

Though only Catherine of Siena wrote a corpus of letters, the works of each of the women studied here can be said to follow the basic epistolary structure. Constanza de Castilla's prayers are the works here whose adherence to the epistolary form might be most questioned.[52] Since they are prayers that she wrote for inclusion in a prayer book, their resemblance to Catherine's letters or Teresa's treatises might not seem evident at first glance. However, the connection between prayers and the dictaminal form has been observed in recent years. Boswell, in his examination of the captatio benevolentiae, notes that two medieval

[51] The "Rationes dictandi" states that some letters omit the narratio, while others omit the conclusio, and that a salutatio with either a narratio or a petitio alone can constitute a complete letter (21). Camargo notes that the petitio and conclusio are often combined (23).
[52] The structure of Constanza's prayers has never been examined. It is, however, of importance in the understanding of her work and thus is treated in my study in great detail.

treatises on prayer (De Modo Orandi by Hugh of Saint Victor [1096-1141], and Scalae Meditationis by Wessel Gansfort [1419-1489]) include sections nearly identical to the captatio of the letter. Boswell notes that "these two treatises suggest an interesting connection between the Ars dictaminis and other materials found in works on prayer and meditation" (Boswell 151). While letters are intended to address other people, and prayers are intended to address God, both are types of personal and intimate discourse. Since we do have a letter that Constanza wrote, we can compare the structure of that letter to the structure of her prayers in order to see if they are similar.

The letter in question[53] was written by Constanza on February 16, 1465 (around the time she composed the Libro de devociones y oficios).[54] Constanza directs her letter to the guardian of St. Diego's body,[55] and relates the events

[53] This letter is the only of Constanza's letters to be definitely identified as hers. It is included in St. Diego de Alcala's process for canonization and was published by Núñez in the July-Auguest 1915 edition of the Archivo Ibero-Americano.

[54] A translation of the complete text of this letter can be found in Appendix 2.

[55] St. Diego (known in English as St. Didacus) was a Franciscan lay brother who died in Alcalá de Henares on November 12, 1463. He was known for his miraculous ability to cure the infirm (Donovan 1). This reputation apparently survives his death as is evidenced by Constanza's letter. St. Diego was canonized by Sixtus V in 1588 (Donovan 1).

of a pilgrimage that some of her nuns made to Alcalá de Henares to be healed by St. Diego's remains. The structure of the letter is the traditional ars dictaminis style with a few internal changes. It begins with the simple salutatio "Rdo. Padre Guardian" ["Reverend Father Guardian"]. Traditionally, the salutatio reflects "the writer's status and relationship to the addressee," (Colish 176) and is usually more elaborate. The "Rationes dictandi,"[56] for example, gives a model for the salutatio for a letter from a teacher to his student:

> N---, promoter of the scholastic profession, wishes N---, his most dear friend and companion, to acquire the teaching of all literature, to possess fully all the diligence of the philosophical profession, to pursue not folly but the wisdom of Socrates and Plato. (14)

When compared to this model, Constanza's salutatio is quite simple. The lack of adjectives and other terms referring to the priest's superiority, as well as the lack of any information about the author, further distance Constanza's

[56] The "Rationes dictandi" (1135) is an anonymous treatise detailing the

salutatio from the tradition.

Constanza's salutatio is followed by the captatio benevolentia, which was traditionally used to gain the favor of the addressee and to "prepare him for the message or request that followed in the narratio and/or petitio" (Camargo 22-23). In the typical ars dictaminis, the writer gains the favor of the addressee "by the writer's reference to himself, to his opponent, to his reader, or to the occasion" (Baldwin 221). The captatio often contained a quotation from scripture, a proverb, or the use of a modesty or humility topos (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 5).[57] The captatio benevolentiae in Constanza's letter is a reference to the occasion:

> porque es gran pecado el desconocimjento [en] los que reciben beneficios, e mucho mayor error callar las marauillas de nuestro Señor, vos certifico ser verdad cinco mercedes que nuestro Señor ha obrado en cinco personas desta casa, por méritos del bien auenturado fray Diego, a fin que

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divisions of the ars dictaminis.

[57] The term captatio benevolentiae has, to some extent, become a synonym for the humility topos. However, I use the term in its original sense

> las fagades authorizar por scriuano...
>
> (Castilla, Carta 127)
>
> [since ignorance in those who receive blessings is a great sin, and it is an even greater sin to silence the marvels of our Lord, I certify to be true five mercies that our Lord has worked in five people of this house, because of the merits of the blessed fray Diego, with the intention that you authorize them to be written...].

Constanza's version of the captatio does not include the topos of modesty, a quotation from scripture, or a proverb, but instead makes a statement about the occasion and God's mercies and sets the scene for the narratio.

The narratio is the longest portion of Constanza's letter. This section consists of the descriptions of the five nuns who visited St. Diego's tomb, their ailments, and their miraculous cures. For example, Constanza describes the illness and cure of one of the nuns in the following words:

> Vna niña mi sobrina anuía tres meses e medio que

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as a "capturing of the goodwill" of the reader. The humility topos is

> padecía dolencia continua, de la qual creyamos que fallecería. Desesperada de su vida la embié [ahí], e por virtud de nuestro Señor vino sana de todas sus pasiones. Esta se llama Doña Isabel. (Castilla, Carta 127)
>
> [My niece[58] suffered continuous pains for three months, from which we thought she would die. Desperate for her life I sent her there, and by the virtue of our Lord she returned healed of all her afflictions. Her name is Doña Isabel.]

Constanza's narratio follows fairly closely the tradition according to which the narratio consists of a statement of the issue that "should be concise, transparently clear, and plausible" (Baldwin 222). The event that preceeded the writing of this letter was the healing of Constanza's niece. Because of the success of this healing, Constanza is encouraged to make a request.

Following the narratio is the petitio, or the request made of the addressee. The petitio in this letter is a

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only one of a number of strategies used in the captatio benevolentiae.

[58] Several of Constanza's close female relatives joined her convent during her lifetime and afterwards.

request that the guardian of St. Diego's tomb allow five other nuns from Constanza's monastery to have access to the tomb:

> Agora yo embio cinco dueñas, cada vna con passiones viejas, cada vna, que non puede fazer obediencia. Yo vos pido de singular gracia que vos, señor, mandedes que ellas cumplan su devoción e lleguen a essa santa reliquia.
>
> (Castilla, Carta 127)
>
> [Now I send five ladies, each one with chronic problems, each one unable to kneel. I request from you the singular grace that you, sir, allow them to complete their devotion and to see the holy relic.]

According to Marcia Colish, the request is the most important part of the letter and follows as a logical deduction from the circumstances related in the narratio (176). Constanza's request for more nuns to be allowed access to (and, presumably, healing from) the relic is based on the fact that the other nuns had received healing from that same relic. Therefore, Constanza's petitio in

this letter follows the tradition of the ars dictaminis.

The conclusio of this letter is very brief: "Nuestro Señor vos dé buen fin" ["May our Lord grant you a good end"] (Núñez 127). We might assume that Constanza also signed the letter in some manner. However, since the letter is preserved as part of St. Diego's canonization process, it is likely that some of the conclusio might have been deleted. This happened fairly frequently when letters were included in other documents, or were compiled into cartularies, as when Catherine of Siena's letters were sometimes truncated to omit the practical affairs and leave only the spiritual sections (Constable, Letters 40).

The study of the sections of Constanza's letter allows us to define some of the characteristics of Constanza's epistolary style; she follows the general epistolary structure, but her salutation is brief and does not contain much information about herself or the recipient of the letter. An examination of Constanza's original prayers reveals that they possess a structure similar to the one she employs in her letter.

Epistolarity in Constanza de Castilla: Libro de devociones y oficios, the Opening Prayer[59]

The opening prayer on the life and passion of Christ is the longest section of Constanza'a prayer book, the Libro de devociones y oficios, comprising approximately 1/3 of the total work.[60] This section is an opening prayer in which Constanza presents herself and her work to both the reader and to God. By analyzing this prayer it is possible to probe Constanza's individual spirituality. Although the ideas Constanza expresses in the opening prayer are certainly not original ones, she expresses them in an original manner.[61] The prayer is made up of forty-four prose chapters of varying length, each of which present some aspect of Christ's life or passion. Each chapter begins with one of two phrases: "Ihesu, miserere mei"

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[59] For a complete translation of Constanza's original prayers, see Appendix 2.

[60] The next longest section of the Libro de devociones y oficios is only 1/2 the length of the opening prayer, and most other sections are less than 10% the length of the opening prayer.

[61] The fact that this prayer, as well as the other original prayers are original compositions is emphasized by Constanza and is reexamined by both Ana María Huélamo San José and Ronald Surtz. Constanza states that she "composed" ("conpuso") this prayer and several others (3, 90). Huélamo San José discusses the meaning of the term "componer" and determines that these works are, indeed, composed by Constanza (144-147). Surtz also discusses the terminology and accepts Huélamo San José's assertion that Constanza wrote these sections herself (45).

["Jesus, have mercy on me"] or "Ihesu, parçe michi" ["Jesus, spare me"]. Both of these phrases are, as Ronald Surtz notes, characteristic of prayers and litanies (62). Each of the forty-four chapters is an individual prayer based on some aspect of Christ's life or passion. In other words, the entire opening prayer is actually a composite of smaller prayers. Both the entire opening prayer and the individual prayers follow the basic epistolary structure with some changes. My discussion of the opening prayer will thus be two-fold. First, I will examine the overall structure of the opening prayer (the macro-structure) then I will examine the structure of the forty-four individual prayers (the micro-structure).

Constanza intended that her original prayers be recited by the nuns at Santo Domingo el Real. This is evidenced by the fact that she included these prayers in a prayer book (that is, a book designed to be used by the nuns in their daily devotions), and in the incipit to the opening prayer in which Constanza states that she hopes to be granted some of the devotion of the people who recite her prayer ("ruega a quantas personas la rezaren que le den

parte de su devoción") (Castilla, Libro 3). Evidently, the entire opening prayer was to be used regularly by the nuns. Constanza states, again in the incipit, that "Dévese dezir esta oración ante de la comunión" ["this prayer should be said before communion"] (3). This statement seems to imply that the opening prayer was intended as a part of the daily devotions of Santo Domingo el Real. Its placement as the first section of Libro de devociones y oficios (followed immediately by offices of the hours and the Mass) seems to support this idea.

The text of the opening prayer is based on the life and passion of Christ. Each section recalls some event of Christ's earthly life, which Constanza uses as a pretext to request some virtue from Christ. More attention is given to Christ's passion than his life; only chapters one through eight deal with Christ's life before the passion, while chapters nine through forty-four deal with some aspect of the passion. In addition to her portrayal of the events of Christ's life, Constanza invokes the memory of a saint in nearly every chapter in order to present her requests to God. She starts each chapter remembering the

sacrifices Christ made on her behalf, follows by confessing her sin, and finishes by asking Christ to grant her a virtue that she needs as He granted the same virtue to a certain saint.

This prayer begins with an incipit that contains what can be identified as the salutatio and captatio benevolentiae of the prayer's macro-structure:

> Esta oraçíon que se sigue conpuso uno soror de la orden de Sancto Domingo de los Predicadores, la qual es grant pecadora. E ruega a quantas personas la rezaren que le den parte de su devoción. E suplica a Nuestro Señor que la faga partiçionera de sus mereçimientos. Dévese dezir esta oración ante de la comunión. (Castilla, Libro 3)
>
> [A sister, who is a great sinner, of the Order of Preachers of St. Dominic, composed the following prayer. She beseeches that all those who pray it will grant her part of their devotion. And she beseeches that our Lord make her a participant of their worthiness. This prayer should be said

before communion.]

Although this incipit is not addressed to any specific person, it does contain information about the author. This differs from the salutatio of her letter because of the incipit's function as an introduction to the work. The salutatio of Constanza's letter only includes the name of the letter's recipient. The incipit of the opening prayer only includes information about the author and the work that she wrote. Although this incipit (which functions as a salutatio) differs from her other salutatio, in the ars dicataminis tradition both types of information were common in the salutatio.[62] The rest of the opening prayer's incipit makes up the macro-structure's captatio benevolentiae. According to Baldwin, the captatio benevolentiae (also known as the exordium) engages the reader's sympathy "by the writer's reference to himself, to his opponent, to his reader, or to the occasion" (221).

[62] Though Constanza's letter refers only to the recipient of the letter, here she refers only to herself. The traditional ars dictaminis form can be seen in Constanza's prayer book in the letters between the Virgin, St. John and Ignatius of Antioch which she translates. The salutatio in these letters mentions both recipient and author: "Cristifere Marie, suus Ignacio salutem" which Constanza translates as "A María que a Christo trajo, el su Ignacio" or "To Mary who bore Christ, from your Ignacio" (Castilla, Libro 101).

Constanza refers to herself ("la qual es grant pecadora"), her reader (both God and her implied readers) ("e ruega a quantas personas la rezaren que le den parte de su devoción. E suplica a Nuestro Señor que la faga partiçionera de sus mereçimientos"), and the occasion ("Dévese dezir esta oración ante de la comunión"). By referring to herself as a "great sinner," Constanza is showing the reader her humility; by referring to the "devotion" and "worthiness" of her implied readers, Constanza is showing her respect for them; by referring to God's ability to make her a participant in the worthiness of others, Constanza is showing His omnipotence and mercy; and by referring to the occasion when the reader would recite the prayer, Constanza simultaneously puts her prayer into the context of the daily devotion and implicitly makes her prayer a part of that devotion.

The narratio of the opening prayer's macro-structure is made up of the forty-four individual chapters of the prayer. The story narrated in this macro-structure is that of Christ's life and passion. Each chapter narrates individual events of Christ's life and passion, beginning

with Mary's conception of Christ in chapter one and ending with Christ's ascension in chapter forty-four. The narratio, in addition to narrating these events, also sets up the prayer's petition. Because Christ suffered all these things, Constanza can make requests of Him.

The petitio of the prayer's macro-structure can be found at the end of chapter forty-four:

> Señor, yo tu esclava te suplico, Dios Spíritu Sancto que eres lux soberana, que alinpies mi entendimiento de la tiniebla en que estó e inflames mi coraçón de tu deseo. E me des contrición, temor e tremor para te reçebir con aquella reverençia, humildat, linpieza que cunple a mi salvación. Así mesmo te suplico que enbíes tu graçia sobre todas las dueñas deste monesterio e acreçientes sus virtudes e les des buena fin, pues sabes tú el grant defecto mío commo soy nigligente en su regimiento, nin soy digna nin capaz para las castigar por pobreza de sçiençia e juizio. Tú, Señor, cunpliendo lo que en mi fallesçe, te plega ordenar a ellas e a mí a tu

> serviçio. (Castilla, Libro 35)
>
> [Lord, I your slave beseech You to cleanse my understanding from the darkness that I am in and to excite my heart to Your desire, O God, Holy Spirit, who is sovereign light. Grant me contrition, fear and trembling to receive You with reverence, humility and cleanliness as corresponds to my salvation. I also beseech You to send Your grace on all the ladies of this monastery and to increase their virtue and give them a good end, since You know my great defect that I am negligent in ruling them, nor am I worthy nor capable of correcting them because of my poverty of knowledge and judgement. Lord, fulfilling what is lacking in me, I pray that You order them and me to Your service.]

Constanza, as always concerned with the nuns under her care, makes requests, not only for herself, but also for her nuns ("las dueñas deste monesterio"). Since the nuns would have also recited this prayer, they would have

presumably inserted their own petitions at this point.[63]

The prayer on Christ's life and passion concludes with the following words:

> Yo, Costança, confiesso ser tanto grave peccadora, llena de grandes peccados e sin ninguna virtud, que non soy digna de recebir ninguna gracia de las por mí suplicadas. Por tanto, con la humildat que puedo, suplico a todos los santos e santas nonbrados en esta oración que vos plega ofreçer vuestros trabajos e muertos por mí, suplicando a Nuestro Señor que por vuestros méritos le plega oír mis peticiones e faga comigo misericordia segunt su voluntad. (Castilla, Libro 37)
>
> [I, Costança, confess that I am a grave sinner, full of great sins and without virtue, that I am not worthy of receiving any of the kindnesses that I have requested. Therefore, with all the humility that I can, I beseech all of the saints

[63] All of Constanza's prayers are generic enough to allow her nuns to use them for their own benefit. Those prayers that do contain more specific personal information could still have been easily changed to fit the needs of each specific nun.

> named in this prayer to offer your works and deaths for me, beseeching to Our Lord that for your merits He might hear my petitions and grant me mercy according to His will.]

In addition to serving as a conclusion to the prayer, this passage, like the traditional conclusio of a letter, also implies the fulfillment of the previous request (Baldwin 222). Constanza has made several requests that she hopes and expects to be fulfilled through the intervention of the saints. Because of her own unworthiness, Constanza adds the weight of the saints' merits to her petition. This, she believes, will convince God to grant her mercy. Constanza's protestation of unworthiness is common to the captatio benevolentiae. However, Constanza includes capatio benevolentiae throughout the petitio and conclusio rather than in a separate section. This is not unusual. It is a method for the author to gain the reader's goodwill by appearing humble, and is not always restricted to one particular portion of the letter.

The micro-structure of the opening prayer is very similar and also follows the epistolary form fairly

closely. Each individual chapter is, in itself, an individual prayer. Each prayer begins with the salutatio "Ihesu, miserere mei" ["Jesus, have mercy on me"] or "Ihesu, parçe michi" ["Jesus, spare me"]. Both of these opening invocations are characteristic of prayers (Surtz 62). At the same time, they also serve as the salutatio of the micro-structure because, in addition to identifying the "addressee" of the prayer, they identify Constanza's need for mercy. However, as in Constanza's letter, she is never overtly identified in this salutatio. In this case, the lack of specificity as to who is reciting the prayer is probably deliberate, and is fairly common in prayers that were intended for recitation. By not inserting herself at this point, Constanza gives the prayer greater flexibility to be prayed by others.

The captatio benevolentiae of each micro-prayer is a short phrase used to gain Christ's goodwill. Each micro-prayer's captatio begins with the word "por" ("because"), just as in the letter. Constanza reminds Christ that she can approach Him with prayers and petitions by virtue of some trial that He suffered. For example, in the second

chapter of the opening prayer, Constanza is authorized to make her request "por virtud del tu sancto nasçimiento" (Castilla, Libro 4) ["by virtue of your holy birth"]. All of the micro-prayers use some event of Christ's life as a captatio. Beginning with Christ's incarnation, going through His life, and ending with the arrival of the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension, Constanza uses all of the major events of Christ's life in order to gain His goodwill and to remind Him of the purpose of His life and death.

The narratio of each micro-prayer continues the narration of the events of Christ's life and sets the stage for the request made in the petitio. In chapter two of the opening prayer, Constanza writes:

> Señor, pues por mí tu esclava te plogo nascer en logar tan pobre et desechado, yo te adoro Dios et omne excelente puesto en el pesebre sobre seno resfriado chiquito en poca ropa enbuelto entre dos alimañas. (Castilla, Libro 4)
>
> [Lord, I adore You, God and excellent human, since for me Your slave it pleased You to be born in such a poor and ignoble place, wrapped in a

> few cloths, and placed on your small, cold chest between two animals in the manger].

Constanza's narratio, like the traditional narratio of a letter, consists of a statement of the issue which is "concise, transparently clear, and plausible" (Baldwin 222). The narration itself is of vital importance in these epistolary micro-prayers because each event narrated leads into the following petition.

The petitio of each micro-prayer is presented as "a logical deduction from the circumstances related in the exposition [or narratio]" (Colish 176). As such it flows directly out of the narration. In the above-cited chapter two, Constanza's petitio states:

> Señor, yo te suplico, por el tu nascimiento sancto, que alinpies mi coraçón de todo odio e rencor e me des virtud de caridad ordenada que la yo obre commo sancto Domingo, nuestro padre.
>
> (Castilla, Libro 4)
>
> [Lord, I beseech you, because of your holy birth, to cleanse my heart of all hatred and rancor and to grant me the virtue of ordered charity so that

I might work as our father, saint Dominic.]

Just as in the epistolary format, Constanza's petition flows directly from the narration of each particular micro-prayer. The narratio sets up the situation and the petitio makes the necessary request.

Nearly all of the virtues that Constanza requests are virtues that had previously been granted to one of the saints. Most of the micro-prayers use this as the conclusio. In the previously cited chapter in which she requests cleansing from hatred, for example, she enjoins "ordered charity," "que la yo obre commo sancto Domingo, nuestro padre" ["so that I might work as our father, saint Dominic"] (Castilla, Libro 4). The fact that "ordered charity" was a virtue granted to saint Dominic raises Constanza's expectation that her petition might be granted. Thus, like the traditional conclusio of a letter, this conclusio implies the "satisfaction of whatever expectations have been aroused" (Baldwin 222). Constanza's opening prayer clearly follows the epistolary structure in both its macro-structure and its micro-structure. Constanza's other prayers can also be examined for elements

of the epistolary structure.

Epistolarity in Constanza de Castilla: the Other Prayers

Constanza's other original prayers (both to Christ and to Mary) also follow the basic epistolary format, although the other prayers to Christ lack a narratio.[64] All of the prayers to Christ have similar salutatio, addressing Christ as "Señor Dios poderoso, Ihesu Christo Redemptor" ["Powerful Lord God, Christ Jesus Redeemer"] (Castilla, Libro 81), "Señor" ["Lord"] (90, 98), and "Señor mi Dios" ["Lord my God"] (108). The captatio benevolentiae for these prayers are also similar to those of the opening prayer. Some remind Christ of what He suffered for her. For example, Constanza states: "por tu preçiosa sangre redimiste mi ánima, Señor, por tu abondosa clemençia, ave merçet de mí" ["by your precious blood you redeemed my soul, Lord, because of your kind clemency, have mercy on me"] (Libro 81). Others focus more on Constanza and her weaknesses:

[64] As has been noted previously, a work could still be considered part of the epistolary genre even without a narratio.

> yo, Costança, tu esclava, conosco que mi sinpleza es grande. E la grosería mía es fuerte porque confiesso ser mucho morante e sin virtud. Creo mis obras ser defectuosas. (Castilla, Libro 90)
>
> [I, Constanza, your slave, know that my simplemindedness is great. And my rudeness is strong, because I confess that I am very lazy and without virtue. I believe that my works are defective.]

As in her letter and opening prayer, Constanza never relates her gender to her humility; it is the humility of a sinner before her God, not that of a woman of deficient understanding due to her gender. The use of an ungendered humility is relatively uncommon in medieval women's writing. Because of the scope of the topic, it will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

Like the opening prayer, the petitio of the other prayers to Christ request some virtue or spiritual benefit from Christ. She requests the mercy to live and die in faith (Castilla, Libro 81), that Christ make her a participant of the merits of the people that pray the

prayers (90), and for forgiveness (99). The conclusio are also similar to those of the opening prayer and the letter. In some she submits herself to the correction of the Church (Castilla, Libro 81, 90), or places herself in God's hands (109).

Constanza also wrote two prayers to Mary. These prayers take the traditional form of enumerating the joys and sorrows of the Virgin. These two prayers also follow the dictaminal form. The joys, like the opening prayer, are composed of a macro-structure and a micro-structure, both of which follow the epistolary format. The macro-structure's salutatio, like that of the opening prayer, does double duty as an incipit. This incipit identifies both the recipient of the prayer, the Virgin, and the author of the prayer, Constanza, identified as "la dicha soror" ["the aforementioned sister"] (Castilla, Libro 82). The captatio benevolentia in this work's macro-structure is combined with the petitio. Constanza refers to herself as "indigna esclava tuya" ["your unworthy slave"] (Castilla, Libro 83). The narratio consists of the actual fifteen joys with each joy related to some aspect of Christ's life.

Although they are Mary's joys, Christ's life is the primary narration upon which the fifteen joys are based. As in the opening prayer, it is Christ who is of utmost importance. In the petitio of this marian prayer's macro-structure Constanza requests that Mary free her from her enemies and that she serve as mediator between Christ and Constanza (Castilla, Libro 84). The structure of Constanza's joys differs from those of other authors in that they follow the epistolary format and that they focus more overtly on Christ.[65]

Each of the fifteen individual joys (the micro-structure) is also in the epistolary format. The salutatio of each of these shorter prayers to Mary is usually simply "Señora María."[66] The captatio benevolentia is simply "por el gozo que tú reçebiste" ["for the joy that you received"]. Constanza reminds the Virgin of the joys that

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[65] Though the Marian letters do not have a separate conclusio, it is not strictly necessary for every work in the epistolary format to have all five of the divisions. The "Rationes dictandi" states that some letters omit the narratio, while others omit the conclusio, and that a salutatio with either a narratio or a petitio alone can constitute a complete letter (21). Camargo notes that the petitio and conclusio are often combined (23).

[66] The salutatio of the first joy is more extensive: "Señora santa María, madre de Dios, reina de los ángeles, abogada de los peccadores..." ["Holy lady Mary, mother of God, queen of angels, advocate of sinners..."] (Castilla, Libro 82).

she [the Virgin] had experienced so that she would be moved to grant Constanza's requests. The narratio consists of the event of Christ's life that brought Mary joy. The petitio is a demand for the Virgin herself; a demand that she act as Constanza's advocate. Though these micro-prayers are brief and do not contain a great deal of information, they do have the essential epistolary structure, albeit changed to fit Constanza's needs.

The other prayer to Mary, the seven sorrows of the Virgin, is composed in much the same format as the macro-structure of the joys. The salutatio of this prayer once again identifies the Virgin as the recipient of the prayer, and Constanza ["la dicha soror"] as the author. Constanza addresses the Virgin simply as "Señora." In the captatio benevolentiae, once again combined with the petitio, Constanza refers to herself as "indigna sierva tuya" ["your unworthy servant"] (Libro 85). The narratio consists of the sorrows[67] themselves with each sorrow again being based on an event of Christ's life. In the petitio Constanza

[67] Though identified as "seven sorrows" in the incipit, there are actually nine, as Constanza recognizes in the explicit.

requests that the Virgin hear her prayers and to free her from the dangers of life (Libro 85). She concludes by recognizing that the Virgin reigns with God and can, therefore, fulfill her requests (85).

Though Constanza's prayers are not letters they follow the traditional epistolary form that was popular in the later Middle Ages as well as the format that Constanza used in her letter to the guardian of St. Diego's tomb. According to Cherewatuk and Wiethaus, "the letter was a genre that appealed both to women who were formally attached to the church through vows and those who were not" (3). The epistolary format was adaptable for a wide variety of purposes, was familiar to women (even those that were not educated), was structured and easy to follow, and was personal and intimate. In addition, as is evident in its consistent usage in the Church from the days of Saint Paul, the epistolary format was effective in the spread of an evangelical message. For these reasons this structure would be a good choice for an author that wanted her message to reach other women. In order to establish a contextual framework for the study of Constanza's work, the

following chapter will focus on the use of the epistolary structure in Catherine of Siena's letters and Teresa de Cartagena's treatises. It is my intention to illustrate the degree to which their work shows certain structural similarity to that of Constanza's prayers. The structure used gives form to their expressions of individual piety.

Chapter 3

Epistolarity in the Works of Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena

Catherine of Siena

The fact that Constanza's original prayers (both in the macro-structure and in the micro-structure) follow the epistolary format demonstrated in her letter makes these prayers particularly comparable to Catherine of Siena's letters and Teresa de Cartagena's treatises. Catherine of Siena, like Constanza, was a Dominican.[68] She was a prolific writer whose works include prayers, letters, and a treatise entitled Libro della divina dottrina: volgarmente detto Dialogo della divina provvidenza (The Dialogue). The works by Catherine that most closely resemble Constanza's are her letters, for, unlike Constanza, Catherine never intended that her prayers be written down, that is, they were never intentionally dictated -- rather they were recorded by her disciples as she spoke them (Noffke 3). As

[68] Catherine was a member of the third order of Dominicans while Constanza was of the second order. The first order was made up of friars, the second of nuns, and the third of lay women.

such, the structures of Catherine's prayers are much more free-flowing and oral in nature. In comparison, Constanza's prayers are much more carefully and intentionally structured. Catherine's letters have the most in common structurally with Constanza's original prayers, since they also follow the basic epistolary structure. In addition, Catherine's letters, like Constanza's prayers, were intended to draw the reader closer to God on their individual spiritual journeys. Catherine's letters are for the instruction and edification of the recipient. Constanza's prayers are for the spiritual growth of the nuns in her convent.

All of Catherine's letters begin in a similar manner. The salutatio opens with something similar to "In the name of Jesus Christ crucified and of gentle Mary" (Siena, Letters 55). It follows with a greeting to the letter's recipient who is generally referred to as "brother," "sister," "father," "mother," "daughter," or "son in Christ Jesus" (for example, in letter nine, Catherine addresses Frate Bartolomeo Dominici as "My very loved and dearest brother and son in Christ Jesus" [Siena, Letters 55]). In

general, Catherine's salutatio are much more complete than Constanza's.

The captatio benevolentiae of Catherine's letters are also pretty uniform. She gains the recipient's goodwill with some permutation of the words "I Caterina, servant and slave of the servants of Jesus Christ, am writing to you in his precious blood" (Siena, Letters 106). Following this introduction she makes reference to the virtues that she desires for the recipient. Catherine uses a form of the modesty trope (by referring to herself as "servant and slave") in the captatio. This is similar to the "esclava de Dios" ["slave of God"] that Constanza uses so frequently in her opening prayer. However, neither Catherine nor Constanza use their gender as part of the captatio benevolentiae, a theme that I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapter.

Catherine's narratio, like Constanza's, consists of a description of Christ's life or incarnation together with the implications of that life for the individual Christian. For example, again in letter nine, Catherine states:

> I tell you, my dearest son, no soul could look at

> God becoming a man, running to the shame of the holy cross, and shedding his blood so profusely, and not draw near, enter in, and be filled with true love. (Siena, Letters 55)

Catherine, like Constanza, sees Christ's humanity and subsequent sacrifice as the driving force behind the human desire to acquire virtue. While this was not unusual in Christian discourse of the Middle Ages, Constanza and Catherine focus more obviously on Christ's humanity than on any other aspect of His identity. This theme will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

The narratio sets up the petitio, in which Catherine exhorts the recipient of the letter to some virtue. Since Christ lowered himself to become human and to suffer indignities and death, Catherine posits that the recipient should desire to become virtuous. Like Constanza's prayers in which she uses Christ's suffering as a justification to request virtues, Catherine uses Christ's suffering to remind the recipient of her letter that he or she should strive to be virtuous:

> Start being brave about everything, driving out

> darkness as well as spreading light. Don't look at your weakness, but realize that in Christ crucified you can do everything. (Siena, Letters 55)

The repetition of Christ's suffering reminds the reader that Christ's sacrifice is made possible because of His humanity. Again the humanity of Christ plays a central role in both Constanza's and Catherine's work.

The conclusio of Catherine's prayers are all essentially uniform. She exhorts the recipient to "keep living in God's holy love" and sends greetings from other people (usually other lay sisters) (Siena, Letters 56). Presumably, if the person receiving the letter were to keep living in God's love, then the petitio, which was made for the reader's moral improvement, would then be fulfilled.

Catherine of Siena and Constanza de Castilla, as we have seen, exhibit several similarities in their respective works. Both refer to themselves as "God's slave," both use Christ's life, incarnation, and passion to set up the petition of the letter or prayer, and both request virtue either for themselves or for others. The primary

structural difference between Catherine and Constanza's works occurs in the salutatio. Catherine's salutatio is consistently more extensive than that used by Constanza in her prayers.

Teresa de Cartagena

Teresa de Cartagena's Arboleda de los enfermos [Grove of the Infirm] and Admiración operum dey [Wonder at the Works of God] both follow the previously mentioned epistolary format to some degree. Although the Arboleda has primarily been seen as a consolatory (or auto-consolatory) treatise,[69] and the Admiración has traditionally been viewed as a defense of her right to write, they each demonstrate epistolary characteristics.[70] Both works are addressed to a "virtuosa señora" who is not mentioned by name in the Arboleda, but is identified as

[69] Both Deyermond (39) and Cammarata (41) relate the Arboleda de los enfermos to Boethius' De consolationes Philosophiae and the tradition of consolatory treatises that arose from that work. Ellis describes the Arboleda as an auto-consolation designed to serve as an example to other people suffering from infirmities (43). Seidenspinner-Núñez also notes that it is the only extant consolatio written from a woman's perspective (2).

[70] Mary Elizabeth Frieden has also examined the epistolarity of Teresa de Cartagena's works and notes that, although Teresa's works are not classified as letters, "they are hybrid forms, reflecting the blending

Doña Juana de Mendoza[71] in the Admiración. Unlike in the other works studied here, in both the Arboleda and the Admiración Teresa combines the salutatio and the captatio benevolentiae. In the Admiración, for example, she states: "Acuérdome, virtuosa señora, que me ofresçi a escreuir a vuestra discreción" (Cartagena, Admiración 111) ["I remember, virtuous lady, that I offered to write at your discretion" (Cartagena, Writings 86)].[72] Her salutatio in both works is rather brief, giving no hint of the particular relationship between Teresa and the lady to whom she addressed her letters. In the brevity of her salutatio, Teresa's technique resembles that of Constanza.

The captatio benevolentiae of Teresa's works are more extensive and reveal some interesting differences when

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of genres that often occurred in the Middle Ages" and that treatises were often written in epistolary form (1-2).

[71] The identity of the "virtuous lady" in the Arboleda is not specified. Therefore it is impossible to be certain of her identity. However, Teresa uses the same epithet to address Doña Juana de Mendoza in the Admiración. Because of this it has long been assumed that she was also the addressee of the Arboleda. Juana de Mendoza was the wife of Gómez Manrique (1412-90), who "was a leading political figure and protector of conversos in Toledo, a major poet at the courts of Juan II and Enrique IV, and author of religious dramas. His wife, Doña Juana Teresa de Guzmán was lady-in-waiting to the infanta Isabel, princess of Portugal" (Seidenspinner-Núñez 86).

[72] The Arboleda has a similarly combined salutatio and captatio: "Long ago, virtuous lady, the cloud of temporal and human sadness covered the borders of my life..." (Cartagena, Writings 23).

compared to Constanza's and Saint Catherine's works. In the Arboleda, the captatio consists primarily of a description of Teresa's deafness, the spiritual benefits that this physical impairment has allowed her, and some scriptural quotations. The captatio of the Admiración also makes use of Biblical quotations to gain the reader's goodwill. Two things differentiate Teresa's captatio from Constanza and Catherine's. First of all, Teresa makes use of gender-based modesty tropes. In the Arboleda, Teresa states:

> E como la baxeza e grosería de mi mugeril yngenio a sobir más alto non me consienta, atreuiéndome a la nobleza e santidat del muy virtuoso Rey e Profeta llamado Dauit, comyençо a buscar en su deuotísymo cançionero, que "Salterio" se llama, algunas buenas consolaçiones.
>
> (Cartagena, Arboleda 38)
>
> [And since the lowliness and grossness of my womanly mind do not allow me to rise higher, aspiring to the nobility and sanctity of the very virtuous king and prophet David, I begin to look

> in his most devout songbook called the Psalter for some good consolations.[73]
>
> (Cartagena, Writings 24)]

In the Admiración, Teresa makes several references to her "entendimiento flaco e mugeril" (Cartagena, Arboleda 112) ["weak womanly understanding" (Cartagena, Writings 86)]. Though both Constanza and Catherine use some form of the modesty trope in their captatio, neither relate their weakness or humility to their gender, preferring instead to relate it to their generic status as sinners.

Another difference with respect to the works of Constanza and Catherine is that in the Admiración Teresa makes use of an additional means of justifying her act of writing. Teresa states to Doña Juana de Mendoza that she writes "a vuestra discreción" (Cartagena, Arboleda 111) ["at your discretion" (Cartagena, Writings 86)]. Teresa thus distances herself from the responsibility of writing the work (although she did write the book, she did not write it of her own will, but at the request of another). This strategy of distancing herself from responsibility for

[73] All translations of Teresa de Cartagena are by Dayle Seidenspinner-

the work is a strategy that medieval and early modern women writers frequently used. Hildegard of Bingen, for example, wrote at the behest of God Himself.[74] Teresa of Ávila used a double authorizing strategy of declaring that she writes at the request of both God and her confessor.[75] However, neither Constanza nor Catherine felt the need to justify their writing in this way, a topic that I will explore further in the next chapter.

Teresa's narratio are also very self-revealing. The Arboleda, which was written before the Admiración, reveals Teresa's struggle with deafness and how this affliction enabled her to become a more spiritual and Christ-like person. She devotes nearly fifty-five pages to the description of her personal journey.[76] The intellectual and

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Núñez.

[74] Hildegard stated: "But this omnipotent God in His mercy deigned to anoint with oil the poor little woman through whom this writing is published, because she lived without any confidence in herself, nor had she any knowledge of the composition of the writings, which the Holy Spirit proposed for the instruction of the Church, and which seemed as it were the walls of a great city." (Bingen 156)

[75] Teresa of Ávila (d. 1582) combined both types of authorization for her autobiography when she asserts that she wrote it "at the command of her confessor" but that "the Lord...has long desired that it should be written" (Ávila 21).

[76] For a discussion of the autobiographical nature of Teresa de Cartagena's Arboleda de los enfermos, see Seidenspinner-Nuñez, "Interpretive Essay" 117-123 and Howe 135.

spiritual depth of this narration apparently gave rise to some controversy that led Teresa to write the Admiración. In the Admiración, Teresa states:

> Muchas vezes me es hecho entender, virtuosa señora, que algunos de los prudentes varones e asy mesmo henbras discretas se maravillan o han maravillado de vn tratado que, la graçia divina administrando mi flaco mugeril entendimiento, mi mano escriuió. (Cartagena, Arboleda 113)
>
> [Many times, virtuous lady, I have been informed that some prudent men and also discreet women have marveled at a treatise that, with divine grace directing my weak womanly understanding, was written by my hand. (Cartagena, Writings 87)]

Apparently, some of those who had read the Arboleda did not believe that a woman was capable of writing a treatise of such depth and spiritual understanding.[77] Teresa explains that she was able to write the Arboleda with God's help,

[77] Deyermond notes that, if one is thinking in a European context, it should not have been surprising that a woman wrote such a work. However, in a Hispanic context it would have been much more unusual since Spain had not produced a Hildegard of Bingen, Elisabeth of Schönau, Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe or any other known woman writer or visionary (41).

even though writing is "no acostumbrado en el estado fimíneo, mas solamente en el varonil" (Cartagena, Arboleda 115) ["not customary in the female condition, but only in the male" (Cartagena, Writings 89)]. The entire narratio of the Admiración is an explanation of how God worked through her to produce the Arboleda. Rather than protest that women do possess the intellectual capability necessary for writing, Teresa uses the argument that an all-powerful God can use even a weak woman to write for Him (Cartagena, Arboleda 115).

The petitio of the Arboleda and the Admiración are fairly standard. In the Arboleda, after describing what she has learned because of her afflictions, Teresa exhorts the reader (the infirm in this case) to request virtues in prayer rather than requesting the removal of their afflictions. Because:

> quantos pedimos salut e no pedimos paçiençia, no sabemos qué pedimos, pues dexamos lo más por lo menos, y lo çierto por lo dubdoso. Ca más vale vn día de pasçiençia perfeta que no diez años de salud corporal, la qual es la menos çierta coas

> que en esta vida tenemos, ca ella y nuestro beuir es lo que más presto y con pequeño açidente se corronpe y acaba. Asy que si pedimos salud y oluidamos pasçiençia, no sabemos qué pedimos... (Cartagena, Arboleda 101)
>
> [those of us who ask for health and not for patience do not know what we request, for we give up the best for the worse and the certain for the doubtful. For one day of perfect patience is worth ten years of physical health, which is the least certain thing that we have in this life, for quickly and through some slight mishap our health and our life may be destroyed and end. Thus if we ask for health and forget patience, we do not know what we ask... (Cartagena, Writings 79)]

The exhortation of the reader to seek virtue appears to be a petitio that is often seen in women's writing, as is evidenced by its appearance in all three of the authors studied here.

The petitio of the Admiración is slightly different.

In the Admiración Teresa composes a defense of her own authority and ability to write, showing that God can use any tool that He wants in order to get His message across. As a result, the petitio of this work is for the reader to acknowledge God's wonders and blessings:

> E la misericordia en nos faziendo dinos de ser prevenidos e corejidos en esta vida presente, e la graçia en alunbrando nuestros entendimientos, que la conoscamos e reconoscamos e nos conuertamos a Dios, ca benino e misericordioso es. (Cartagena, Admiración 141)
>
> [And let us acknowledge His mercy in deeming us worthy of forewarning and correcting in this present life, and His grace in illuminating our understanding so that we may know and recognize His blessing, and let us turn to God, for He is gracious and merciful. (Cartagena, Writings 112)

Here Teresa draws the reader's attention from the secondary matter of who wrote the treatise back to the main point: knowing and understanding God. Therefore, her critics should not criticize her for writing since she is only

doing that which God has instructed, but should instead heed the message that God is delivering through her.

The conclusio in each of Teresa's works includes the expectation that, if the reader seeks virtue, he or she will find God. In the Arboleda the search for virtue leads to God, as Teresa states:

> C'asy la santa y perfeta pasçiençia tiene, segund dixe, fundada su casa sobre las quatro virtudes cardinales e sube por esta escala derecha a las teologales, las quales nos guían derechamente al Señor de las virtudes, el qual es Amador de las pasçiençias, Salud verdadera de los enfermos y glorioso Reposo de los trabajados, a quien sea honor y gloria para syenpre jamás. Amén.
>
> (Cartagena, Arboleda 108-09)
>
> [Thus holy and perfect patience has its dwelling, as I said, founded upon the four cardinal virtues and climbs its stairway leading directly to the theological virtues that guide us straight to the Lord of virtues, who is the Lover of patience, true Health of the infirm, and glorious Repose of

> the afflicted, to whom be all honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (Cartagena, Writings 85)]

As Teresa explains, if the reader searches out virtue then God will grant it. It is interesting that, although the Arboleda is not a prayer it does conclude like one. This additional association between the epistolary form and the prayer again demonstrates that they are closely related.

The conclusio of the Admiración is similar in that it also contains an affirmation of God's mercies to grant virtue and understanding to both the sinner and the saint:

> E pues, maravilloso es Dios en los santos suyos, ca Él da virtud y fortaleza; e maravilloso es Dios en los pecadores suyos, ca Él da misericordia e graçia para sostener e sofrir, e los nuestros males para reconosçer los sus grandes bienes. E avn para lo saber e loar e recontar a las gentes, quien a devoto deseo e sed aquexada de aprender e saber saludable çiençia, venga a la escuela de Dios de las pasçiençias e reciberá a el Señor, Pan de Vida e de

entendimiento, e agua de sabiduria saludable le dará a bever e cogerá agua en gozo de las fuentes del Saluador. E dirán en aquel día: "Confesad al Señor e ynvocad al su santo Nonbre, quod est beneditum in saecula saeculorum. Amén."
Deo graçias por sienpre jamás. (Cartagena, Arboleda 141)

[And thus God is wonderful with His saints, for He gives them virtue and fortitude, and He is wonderful with His sinners, for He gives us mercy and grace to sustain and endure and our misfortunes to recognize His great blessings. And in order to know and praise and recount this to the people, whoever has a devout desire and a pressing thirst to learn and acquire healthful learning, let him come to God's school of patience and he will receive the Lord, Bread of life and of understanding, and He will give him to drink the water of healthful knowledge, and he will joyfully get water from the wells of our Savior. And they will say on that day, "Confess

> to the Lord and invoke His holy name, quod est beneditum in saecula seaculorum. Amen."
>
> Thanks be to God forever and ever.
>
> (Cartagena, Writings 111)]

As Cartagena explains, if the reader comes to God, he or she will gain virtue and/or a greater knowledge and understanding of God's mercies. The conclusio of the Admiración also ends like a prayer, which further strengthens the parallel between epistolary discourse and that employed in prayers.

Further consideration of Constanza's Libro de devociones y oficios, Catherine's letters, and Teresa's treatises reveals another similarity between Constanza's prayers and the epistolary format used by Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena, that is, the presence of multiple implied readers that differ from the specified recipients of the narrative. The epistolary genre in the Middle Ages was rarely perceived as a private communication between two people. Because of the difficulty of writing and physically transporting a letter, and due to widespread illiteracy, letters had a vital role in the Middle Ages as

public documents used to impart important information. Most reading was done aloud and, as Constable notes, "legere and audire were more or less synonyms in the Middle Ages" (Letters 54).[78] As a result, medieval letters were usually not intended for one person alone, but were frequently read aloud among groups of people and passed around. Letters in the Middle Ages, by their nature, reflect "the need for an audience, an audience that may suddenly expand when that document is confiscated, shared, or published" (Altman 187). Like medieval letters, Constanza's prayers were also intended to be read by certain implied readers, that is, the nuns of her monastery. Constanza's prayers differ from other types of literary works in that they would not be read once or twice and then put away and forgotten, but would be recited, probably memorized, and used daily. Similarly, a letter from a beloved mentor or spiritual leader would have been passed around, read a number of times, and shared with others. Therefore, the epistolary format is thus the most

[78] Walter J. Ong also discusses the issue of orality in the Middle Ages. He states that "manuscripts were commonly read aloud or sotto voce even when the reader was alone" (1).

similar to that used by Constanza in her prayers.

Catherine of Siena was also well aware that her letters would probably be read by (or to) people other than the addressee. In her letters she greets a number of people with whom she knows the addressee will have close contact and probably share the letter. Catherine's letters were, in fact, collected into books that were circulated at the time of her canonization process, and it is surmised that Raymond of Capua used the letters (along with Catherine's other writings and the Legenda maior that he wrote about her) to support his push for reform within the Dominican Order. The internal evidence that Catherine expected her letters to reach a wider audience than their addressees can be found in numerous prayers. For example, in a letter addressed explicitly to frate Bartolomeo Dominici, Catherine alternates between addressing a "very loved and dearest brother and father" (Siena, Letters 82), and a wider audience of "oh dearest and very loved brothers" (83). The type of letters that she composed, letters of instruction and encouragement, were often clearly intended for a wider audience. Though they do

include some personal information specifically for the recipient, most of the teachings included would have been appropriate for a variety of audiences.

Teresa de Cartagena's works were also obviously intended for a readership beyond the explicit addressee. Though addressed to Doña Juana Mendoza, the Arboleda was obviously read by other people, since the reactions of these other readers spurred her to write a defense of the Arboleda in the Admiración. We do not know exactly who these other readers were. We do know that Teresa refers to them as "prudentes varones" ["prudent men"]. Since Juana de Mendoza's husband was active in the literary and courtly life of Juan II's court, we might assume that the work had some circulation within the court. We also know that in the Arboleda she addresses many sections to the infirm. In addition, by writing a defense of her own authorization to write, she presumably expected the Admiración to also be circulated among those that had disparaged her first work.

Catherine, Constanza and Teresa all wrote a large portion of their works using an epistolary format or epistolary formulas. Though originally a format based in

the Latin tradition and taught almost exclusively at male centers of learning (universities), medieval women had access to letters and as early as the twelfth century were beginning to adapt and transform the format to meet their individual needs. The epistolary genre was flexible "in regards to authors, topics and audiences" and women could use it for their own purposes (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 3). In addition, this genre had an intimacy and immediacy that would have been attractive for women desiring to give voice to their individual piety. Catherine of Siena used her letters to influence politics, teach her disciples, admonish the wayward, and impart information. Constanza de Castilla used her prayers for her personal spiritual growth and the growth of the nuns in her convent. Teresa de Cartagena used her treatises as her only method of communicating with the outside world. The fact that all of these women used some permutation of the traditional epistolary format contributes to validating the comparisons of them. In the following chapters I will further examine the themes common to these authors and the authority with which they write. These comparisons will help reveal more

similarities among the three writers in relation to their spirituality and the extent to which they participate in the "feminization of Christianity."

Chapter 4

Themes Common to Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena

Although Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena employ the epistolary format, it should be noted that this structure was very common among writers of the Middle Ages. In order to define more clearly the similarities that exist among the works of these three writers this chapter and the following will examine the main themes present and the authority of their voices. An analysis of the manipulation of these themes by the three women will demonstrate the extent to which they were involved in the feminization of Christianity, and an analysis of the manner in which they authorize their works will provide further insight into the methods that these women used to claim for themselves the right to write.

Themes

In order to examine the similarities in the themes that these authors discuss, it is first necessary to

ascertain the nature of those themes. To that end, the following two sections will first enumerate and examine the themes that are most evident in Constanza de Castilla's original works: the humanity of Christ as bridge between God and humanity; Christ's love for humanity; methods of spiritual growth; the dangers of the world; and the authority of their voices. The works of Catherine of Siena and Teresa de Cartagena will then be studied to determine similarities in the treatment of these themes.

Humanity of Christ[79]

CONSTANZA DE CASTILLA

While one might expect that a woman who wished to make Christianity more accessible to other women would focus on the Virgin as a role model, this is not the case. The role of the Virgin Mary in Constanza's prayers stands in contrast to her role in many other medieval Spanish literary and religious works. While many works of medieval Spanish literature (such as the Cantigas de Nuestra Señora by Alfonso X and the Milagros de Nuestra Señora by Gonzalo

[79] By the term "humanity" I refer to Christ's physical human body.

de Berceo) depict the Virgin as a divinely perfect figure worthy of worship, Constanza does not elevate the Virgin in the same manner. In fact, the Virgin is not as centrally important in these prayers as one might expect in light of this popular medieval tradition of Marianism. Mary's role as Christ's mother gave her influence over her son. As a result, Mary's primary role in medieval spirituality was that of mediatrix between God and humanity. In contrast to this tradition, Constanza does not see the necessity to go through the Virgin to get to Christ. In the intimate communication of her prayers Constanza speaks directly to Him. Mary enters into Constanza's prayers inasmuch as she is the mother of Christ, witnessing the events of His life and passion and suffering the loss of her child. Surtz recognizes that, even in her prayers to Mary, Constanza focuses on "the moments in the Virgin's life that are most intimately related to her son's humanity" rather than on the Virgin herself (53). Constanza's decision not to use Mary in her traditional role as mediatrix in these prayers accentuates Constanza's vision of women and their role both in the Church and in society. Because of Christ's

sacrifice, Constanza and other women are able to speak directly to Him rather than relying on a mediator.

Rather than focusing on the one quasi-divine female figure in all of Christianity, Constanza de Castilla's original prayers all have the humanity of Christ as the major theme. Her opening prayer focuses quite explicitly on Christ's life, with particular attention devoted to His passion and death. Constanza's focus on Christ was not a new idea. It was, in fact, rather common in the Middle Ages to focus on Christ.[80] However, it was not entirely commonplace in medieval Spain. According to Alan Deyermond, devotion to Christ became more common in Spain in the latter half of the fifteenth century with the spread of Christian reform movements. Before this time, "the lives of saints and the miracles of the Virgin Mary are almost the only subject for religious narrative in [Spain]" (196). This began to change with the spread of Church reform, which was fairly generalized throughout Europe in

[80] For a detailed discussion of the rise of devotion to Christ in His divinity (through the twelfth century) and subsequent devotion to Christ in His humanity (twelfth century through the reformation), see Constanble, Three Studies 145-248).

the late Middle Ages.[81]

While devotion to Christ's humanity was not new and had been increasing in prominence from as early as the eleventh century (Constable, Three Studies 179), as a theme it received increased attention during the religious reforms of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. As the prioress of an important Dominican monastery, Constanza would have been very familiar with the general air of ecclesiastical and spiritual reform that was permeating Europe during this time period. Indeed, nearly all of the religious orders were undergoing some type of change, and the Dominican order was no exception. Although the

[81] Some of the major ecclesiastical reforms that reached Spain during this time were the devotio moderna, which is often considered proto-protestant, and the reforms of the individual orders. The devotio moderna, whose major work is Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ (c. 1424), was a Bible based movement that focused on Christ to the near total exclusion of Mary. This movement began in Germany in the fourteenth century and spread throughout Europe. However, as Keith Whinnon has noted, there is no record of it having reached Spain until around 1496 (Whinnom 46). If this is indeed the case, then the devotio moderna could not have exercised any influence on Constanza's work. The reform movement that seems to be most similar thematically to Constanza's work is the Franciscan reform. The Franciscan reform began in the thirteenth century and reached Spain in the mid-1400's. Like Constanza's work, this reform, while similar to the devotio moderna in that it focused attention on the figure of Christ, still gave an important role to the Virgin. The vast majority of Spanish literary works in the fifteenth century that form part of the life of Christ genre were in fact written by Franciscans (Menéndez Peláez 421). However, as has been shown previously, devotion to Christ was an

Franciscan Order was more commonly known for its Christocentrism in the Middle Ages, the Dominican Order also revered the person of Christ. In fact, Saint Dominic himself "reportedly carried with him at all times a copy of the Gospel of Matthew, because of his devotion to the humanity of Christ" (Emery and Wawrykow 1). In spite of this devotion, medieval Dominican literature rarely produced examples of the life of Christ genre and is generally considered more theocentric than Christocentric. This is not to suggest that Constanza would necessarily have been influenced by another order. The individual piety that had spread throughout Europe and was invigorated by both the mendicant orders and by lay spiritual movements had a Christocentric element. In addition, from its inception the Dominican order was devoted to contemplation as one of the highest virtues (Hinnebusch, The History 119). Constanza must have spent much of her life in contemplation of Christ and of the Christian life. Therefore, while her work may not echo the direct influence of any specific reform it is likely shaped by the upsurge

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integral part of the type of individual piety that was spreading

of individual piety and its renewed focus on Christ.

While the general focus of Constanza's opening prayer is on Christ's life and passion, many chapters contain a more detailed focus on Christ's physical humanity. She identifies this humanity as a "vestidura de omne" ["suit of humanity"] taken from the Virgin's "entrañas" [literally "entrails" or "innermost parts"] (Castilla, Libro 3). Christ's humanity is "feminine" in that He inherited His earthly body from His mother, His only human parent. The idea that Christ's humanity is inherited solely from Mary is continued throughout Constanza's prayers. Constanza refers to Christ's body as: "la vestidura que della tomaste" ["the suit that You received from her"] (Castilla, Libro 20). This "feminized" vision of Christ is a common theme both in Constanza's work and in works written by other medieval women. As Rosemary Radford Reuther notes in Women and Redemption, mothers of the medieval Church, such as Hildegard of Bingen and Julian of Norwich:

> evoked the Wisdom tradition of female-identified divine immanence. They identified Christ's

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throughout the Church in the late Middle Ages.

> incarnation with female vulnerability and so feminized Christ's body. Through these ways of including the female, they inserted female metaphors into the description of Christ and God. (192)

Constanza, in her feminization of Christ, is in the company of other medieval Church women who were discovering a new way to conceive the divine, that is, a way that included women rather than excluding them.

In other chapters, while not explicitly reiterating that Christ took His humanity from Mary, Constanza continues to emphasize Christ's humanity. She sees Christ's suffering as a gift to humanity: "plógote padesçer fanbre e sed, ansí commo omne verdadero por mayor mérito quesiste ser tentado del enemigo" ["it pleased You to suffer hunger and thirst since You wanted the enemy to tempt You, like a true human, for the greater good"] (Castilla, Libro 6). This humanity is connected in every instance to Christ's suffering. In chapter thirteen of the opening prayer, Constanza states that Christ, "commo omne" ["as a human"], feared death and felt lonely (Castilla,

Libro 10). Later on, she again states that "commo omne padeçías tan fuertes e soberanos dolores que non ay coraçón que pensarlos pueda" ["as a human You suffered such strong and supreme pains that no heart can imagine"] and that "fueste sacrificado por nos commo omne verdadero" ["You were sacrificed for us as a true human"] (Castilla, Libro 18-19). The frequent references to Christ's "gloriosa umanidat" ["glorious humanity"] (Castilla, Libro 23) and "sanctíssima humanidat" ["holy humanity"] (33) further emphasize the importance of Christ's humanity in Constanza's spirituality. In addition to these explicit references to Christ's humanity and its origin, Constanza also makes repeated reference to Christ as "omne" ["human"], or as "Dios e omne" or "Deus et homo" ["God and human"].

Christ's humanity continues to play an important role in Constanza's other original prayers. In one of these sections she lists the works that she composed and states that she wrote all of them in "memoria de tu encarnación e pasión" ["memory of Your incarnation and passion"]

(Castilla, Libro 90).[82] The first of the original sections to follow the opening prayer is the supplication that follows Constanza's Spanish version of the Hours of the Nails. This supplication is a brief, simple prayer in which she begs for God's mercy and strives to follow the fourteen articles of faith identified by St. Thomas Aquinas in his Summa Theologica. The fourteen articles of faith (or revealed doctrines) are found among the creeds of the Church and are composed of two sets of seven articles. One set deals with Christ's divinity and the other with his humanity. Through her mention of these fourteen articles, Constanza once again underscores the equal importance of Christ's humanity and divinity.

The next original section follows several Latin texts, including a prayer, the Athanasian Creed, and the Magnificat with liturgical responses. Much of this section reads like a creed:

> Creo por coraçón puro, e por boca acabada confiéssolo ser verdadero Dios e omne mi Señor

[82] The sections that Constanza states that she wrote in memory of Christ's incarnation and passion are: the prayer on the life and passion of Christ (opening prayer), the Hours of the Nails, and the fifteen joys and seven sorrows and litany of Our Lady (Castilla 90).

> Ihesu Christo, fijo del Padre perdurable e de la virgen madre, precio de la redempción de la mi ánima. (Castilla, Libro 99)
>
> [I believe with a pure heart and I confess with a faultless mouth that my Lord Jesus Christ is the true God and human, son of the everlasting Father and of the virgin mother, price of the redemption of my soul.]

Once again Constanza pictures the dual nature of Christ as "God and human." Constanza believes that Christ's human suffering allows Him to understand all that humans experience. She perceives Christ's suffering as a way for humans to approach the Divine. She recognizes the personal significance of this when she asks for forgiveness based on the "virtud de la tu santa passión" ["virtue of your holy passion"] (Castilla, Libro 99). She acknowledges that it was His flesh ("carne") that suffered for her and that cleanses her. Therefore, devotion to Christ's humanity enables her to make a direct connection with Him.

Constanza also places a great deal of focus on

Christ's humanity in her prayers to Mary.[83] In fact, although the "gozos" and the "angustias" are explicitly devoted to the Virgin, Constanza's versions seem to focus primarily on Christ's humanity and on the Virgin only as ancillary to Christ. Constanza does not show the excessive devotion to the Virgin that was common in the Spanish Middle Ages, rather she shifts the focus to Christ.[84]

In her version of the "gozos," Constanza de Castilla describes Christ in terms of both His humanity and His divinity. As in her prayers to Christ, Constanza describes Him as literally taking on His humanity from Mary, and frequently refers to Christ in these "gozos" as "Dios e omne." In fact, this is Constanza's most frequently used manner of referring to Christ in her "gozos." While this

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[83] Constanza's prayers to Mary are in the form of "joys" (or "gozos") and "sorrows" (or "angustias"). The enumeration of the Virgin's joys and sorrows were common in the Middle Ages. Constanza's use of this traditional form is not unusual. However, since she is using a traditional form, these prayers to the Virgin are, strictly speaking, adaptations rather than original works. Though the particular "joys" and "sorrows" included in Constanza's work are not unique in content, the way that she elaborates them is.

[84] Compare, for example, the depiction of the Virgin found in the "Cantigas de Nuestra Señora" by Alfonso X, the "Milagros de Nuestra Señora" by Gonzalo de Berceo, or in any of the fourteenth or fifteenth century Joys of the Virgin or Sorrows of the Virgin written by Fray Íñigo de Mendoza, Fray Lope del Monte, or the Marquess de Santillana in Poesía mariana medieval. In these works it is Christ who is virtually ignored.

was a common way of referring to Christ, Constanza uses it with such frequency that it clearly has special meaning for her. Constanza's reason for using this terminology so often may be understood more clearly when examined in light of her other methods of referring to Christ. The two other ways of referring to Christ, which are employed more than any other types of references to Christ in Constanza's "gozos," are "Fijo de Dios" and "tu fijo." Constanza's references to Christ as "Son of God" and "your [Mary's] son" reveal that she is relating to Him both as God and as human. Christ's divinity equates Him with God; His humanity makes Him accessible to humans. Therefore, while His divinity gives Him power, His humanity makes Him the perfect channel to connect humans with the Divine.

Another particularly interesting element of Constanza's version of the Conception is that she states explicitly that Christ's humanity was fashioned from Mary's womb. Constanza uses these words to refer to Mary's womb: "santas entrañas," "sagrario del tu vientre," and "tálamo de tus entrañas" (Castilla, Libro 82). These terms are all indicative of His humanity. The word "entrañas" literally

means "entrails" which is, in itself, a very earthy term and suggests the deepest part of the human flesh. Constanza connects this aspect of Mary's humanity with Christ when she emphasizes that "dellas tomó [Cristo] vestidura de omne" ["from (the entrails) Christ took on a suit of humanity"] (Libro 83). Hence Contanza explicitly states that Christ's humanity came from His mother. The topic of Christ's humanity is continued with the further identification of Mary's womb as a "sagrario del tu vientre" ["sacristy (or ciborium) of your belly"] (83). A "sagrario" is a word in Spanish that has two meanings. The first translation of "sagrario" is "sacristy," which is the part of a church where the vestments and robes are kept. The vestment contained in the Virgin's womb is that of Christ's humanity. Therefore, the Virgin's womb is a room that contains Christ's humanity. The other meaning of "sagrario" is "ciborium." The ciborium is the covered cup or chalice used to hold the host for communion. Based on the doctrine of transubstantiation, the host is Christ's flesh. Consequently, the Virgin's womb is also a sacred container of Christ's humanity. The last word Constanza

uses to depict Mary's womb is "tálamo." Christ proceeded out of the "tálamo de tus entrañas" ["marriage bed of your entrails"] (82). The word "tálamo" means "marriage bed," which implies the union of the male and female for the purpose of procreation. If the end result of this procreation is Christ, then the masculine and feminine participants would be God, the Divine, and Mary, the human. This brings us back to the "feminization" of Christ, and therefore, of Christianity. According to proponents of the feminization of Christianity, women had their very flesh in common with Christ and as a result were capable of a special unmediated connection with Him.

The fact that Constanza focuses more of her attention on Christ rather than Mary supports Caroline Walker Bynum's findings that medieval women often looked to Christ, rather than to Mary, as a role model.[85] Although Mary was considered worthy of veneration, it was, perhaps, her very perfection that negated her potential status as a role model for women. Because Mary's experience was so removed

[85] See Caroline Walker Bynum, "...And Woman His Humanity," (259), Holy Feast and Holy Fast (253), and Jesus as Mother (130).

from that of other women, "Mary's distance from [all women] was equal to her distance from Eve" which "thus served to emphasize the proximity of Eve's sinful nature to that of all women" (Ihrie 378). While one might assume that a nun such as Constanza would relate strongly to Mary's perpetual virginity,[86] she actually related more closely to Christ's humanity, perhaps because Christ suffered human emotions and physical torments just as a nun might have. All of Mary's suffering was vicarious through the torment of her son. For Mary even childbirth was without pain and she would never suffer death. Therefore, the Virgin would not be able to understand anything that an "average" woman might suffer.

Like the "gozos," the examination of the depiction of the Virgin in the "angustias" also suggests that Constanza was less focused on the Virgin. The examination of Christ's role in the "angustias" reveals some differences

[86] Mary's perpetual virginity and that she conceived and gave birth without pleasure or pain were accepted as Church doctrine in 431. This doctrine is one of the four articles of faith that comprise Mariology. The other three articles of faith are: Mary's divine motherhood (also accepted in 431 at the Council of Ephesus); the Immaculate Conception which declared Mary free from Original Sin (accepted officially in 1854, but hotly debated in the late Middle Ages); and the Assumption of her body into heaven, whereby she did not suffer death (officially

from the same theme in the "gozos." First of all, in contrast to her version of the "gozos" (where she uses a number of titles for Christ), in the "angustias" Constanza only refers to Christ as "tu fijo." Whereas in the "gozos" Constanza repeatedly emphasizes both the humanity and divinity of Christ through her use of the phrase "Dios e omne," in the "angustias" she focuses explicitly on His humanity through His fleshly relationship with Mary. This is likely due to the fact that the "angustias" are primarily related to the physical connection between Christ and Mary. Since Christ shares Mary's flesh, Mary feels Christ's pain. Because of this connection, it is natural that Constanza links Mary and Christ by repeating that Christ was Mary's son. This connection between Christ's humanity and that of His mother, which was made explicit in the "gozos," is enhanced in the "angustias."

The final original section of the Libro de devociones y oficios is Constanza's death supplication. This text seems to have been composed at the same time as the rest of the prayer book. It therefore appears to be a prayer

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accepted in 1950, but a popular belief throughout the Middle Ages)

written in anticipation of her death, and one that Constanza hoped would be said, perhaps, at that time.[87] In this section, she once more focuses on Christ's humanity and incarnation. In this prayer, Constanza offers Christ's human suffering as payment for her own sins: "ofresco en pago de mis debdas los crueles dolores que sufriste en la cruz, estando descoiuntado e enclavado con tres clavos" ["I offer the agonies that You suffered on the cross, where you were disjointed and nailed with three nails, as payment for my sins"] (Castilla, Libro 109). The focus on Christ's suffering and death is natural given that this prayer was probably intended as Constanza's supplication on the day of her death.

Constanza's use of Christ's humanity as her primary theme is important because it shows how she related to Christ. She came to Christ as an individual fully known and understood by Him. He knew what she suffered and

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(Ihrie 376).

[87] There is no indication that this section was written separately from the other sections. It is possible that the separate sections were written at different times and copied and compiled at a later date into the Libro de devociones y oficios. However, as Constanza was already advanced in age at the time that she probably wrote this book, it is logical that she would have been thinking forward in anticipation of her impending death.

understood it as only a fellow sufferer could. Paradoxically, Constanza also came to Christ as an individual who knew Him. Though knowledge of the Divine is difficult, if not impossible, Christ was also human and, therefore, accessible to Constanza. The fact that Christ's accessible humanity was inherited from His mother means that Christ was accessible for women because of His "femininity." This implies that, in a sense, Christ is more accessible to women. Ideologically, this "feminization of Christianity" enabled women such as Constanza and her nuns to have access to Christ in a way that was not available to men. It should be noted that the womanChrist model, the idea that women could, through their femininity, experience a unique imitatio Christi not available to men, is not explicitly developed in Constanza's prayer book. Since Constanza was writing for women who were enclosed in a convent and removed from the world, she apparently saw no need to state explicitly that women had special access to Christ because of their gender. However, the implications of the womanChrist model are present in Constanza's overwhelming focus on Christ's

feminized humanity, which makes Him more approachable and accessible to women.

CATHERINE OF SIENA

The theme of Christ's physical humanity is also one of the preeminent themes of Catherine of Siena's work. Antonia Lacey reports that:

> [f]or Catherine incarnation, not the resurrection, was the centre of her theology; not least because of her understanding of Christ's assumption of human bodiliness in order to feed and save the world. Since the Church's early theology believed that at conception the child took its substance from the mother, the mater(ial) of her womb, and since Christ took his flesh from Mary, many mystics[88] argued that he therefore clothed himself in female fleshliness. (Lacey 339)

Catherine's focus on Christ's humanity is evident in all of her works. In The Dialogue (between God and the soul) God

[88] While Constanza was not a mystic, she, as well as other non-mystic female authors, also embraced the figure of Christ clothed in female flesh.

himself introduces this idea with the words:

> [t]he clay of humankind was spoiled by the sin of the first man, Adam, and so all of you, as vessels made from that clay, were spoiled and unfit to hold eternal life. So to undo the corruption and death of humankind and to bring you back to the grace you had lost through sin, I, exaltedness, united myself with the baseness of your humanity. For my divine justice demanded suffering in atonement for sin. But I cannot suffer. And you, being only human, cannot make adequate atonement...
>
> Yet I really wanted to restore you, incapable as you were of making atonement for yourself. And because you were so utterly handicapped, I sent the Word, my Son; I clothed him with the same nature as yours—the spoiled clay of Adam—so that he could suffer in that same nature which had sinned, and by suffering in his body even to the extent of the shameful death of the cross he would placate my anger.

(Siena, The Dialogue 51-52)

She goes on to examine this idea more completely with an entire section entitled "The Bridge," in which God tells the soul that Christ is the bridge between humanity and divinity:

> When my Son was lifted up on the wood of the most holy cross he did not cut off his divinity from the lowly earth of your humanity. So though he was raised so high he was not raised off the earth. In fact, his divinity is kneaded into the clay of your humanity like one bread. Nor could anyone walk on that bridge until my Son was raised up. This is why he said, "If I am lifted up high I will draw everything unto myself."
>
> (Siena, The Dialogue 65)

In this passage, Catherine expresses the idea that Christ himself bridged the chasm between humanity and divinity.

Catherine's letters and prayers also demonstrate the importance that she placed on Christ's humanity. In words that would be nearly duplicated by Constanza almost a century later, Catherine described Christ as "clothing

himself in the coarseness of our humanity" (Siena, Letters 150), and states that He was "engrafted into Mary's flesh as a seed is sown in the earth" (Letters 117). Catherine also repeatedly refers to Christ in her letters as the "God-Man" or "God and human"[89] which Constanza again parallels with her "Dios e omne."

Christ's blood is also a particular element of Christ's humanity to which Catherine feels an affinity. Many of her prayers begin with the words "I Caterina, servant and slave of the servants of Jesus Christ, am writing to you in his precious blood" (Siena, Letters 73) or something very similar. Bertini recognizes that Christ's blood serves as a leit-motif that dominates Catherine's work (180). For Catherine, Christ's blood is an important part of His humanity. It serves as a constant reminder of Christ's sacrifice for the sinner.

Much like Constanza de Castilla, Catherine's focus on Christ's humanity makes Him more accessible. Given the medieval association of masculinity with spirituality and

[89] Catherine uses this specific manner of referring to Christ in nearly 1/3 of her letters and in several of her prayers. Most other letters and prayers use one of her other references to Christ as "incarnate Word" or as one who "lowered himself to your humanity."

femininity with humanity, it would appear that Catherine, like Constanza, was implicitly associating Christ with the feminine. This identifies Catherine, as well, as a proponent of the feminization of Christianity.

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Unlike Constanza and Catherine, Teresa de Cartagena barely touches on the theme of the physical humanity of Christ. The only references to Christ refer to His suffering, which of course comes about as a result of His humanity. Teresa, for example, tells the infirm individual that he should heed St. Augustine's exhortation to contemplate Christ on the cross (Arboleda 86). She also refers to Christ's suffering and of following Him in her suffering (Arboleda 138). However she never makes direct reference to Christ's physical humanity as do Constanza and Catherine. This seems unusual, at least on the surface, given that Teresa is presumed to have been a Franciscan. During this time period, the Franciscan Order, represented in Spain by authors such as Íñigo de Mendoza and Sor Isabel de Villena produced a number of works on the life of Christ. Teresa de Cartagena, however, shows little

evidence of being influenced by this genre. She is more focused on her personal suffering and how that suffering helped her grow.

As a deaf woman, Teresa de Cartagena was in an unfortunate position. She appears to have felt discriminated against and rejected by both men and women because of her deafness. It would appear that perhaps even her family and friends rejected her. Teresa focuses at various points on the theme of familial abandonment. She claims that:

> Los plazeres que en él son del todo nos habor[r]esçen, la salut nos desanpara, los amigos nos oluidan, los parientes se enojan, e avn la propia madre se enoja con la hija enferma, y el padre abor[r]esçe al hijo que con continuas dolençias le ocupare la posada. (Cartagena, Arboleda 63)
>
> Worldly pleasures despise us, health forsakes us, friends forget us, relatives get angry, and even one's own mother is annoyed with her sickly daughter, and one's father despises the son who

> with chronic affliction dwells in his home.
>
> (Cartagena, Writings 46)

Although Teresa was able to speak, she expresses no desire to talk to the hearing, even though they could have understood her, for "speech without hearing is worth nothing and only increases one's torment" (Writings 27). Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez recognizes that, for Teresa:

> the loneliness of being a female artist would only be exacerbated by her deafness; with regard to attendant alienation from male predecessors and need for sisterly precursors and successors, Teresa's deafness cut her off from the oral female subculture (women's songs, proverbs, convent chatter) and thrust her into the dominant culture of male letters. ("Interpretive Essay" 113)

Teresa's focus, then, is on communicating with the infirm, that is, the group with whom she felt the most affinity. As a result, she shows no apparent need to feminize Christianity by focusing on Christ's humanity. Instead she makes Him more accessible to any sufferer, male or female.

CONCLUSIONS

While it was fairly popular in the late Middle Ages for men to follow Christ as the ideal example of masculinity, it was also becoming more and more popular for women, and particularly for nuns to look to Christ, rather than to other women such as the Virgin or other female figures in the New Testament, as an example of femininity (Bynum, "...And Woman His Humanity" 259). These nuns tended to focus on the humanity of Christ in order to underscore His femininity. Christ received His human flesh from Mary and His divine spirit from God. Therefore, according to medieval ideology, his flesh was "feminine" and his spirit was "masculine." For this reason, masculinity was often associated with spiritual qualities and femininity with fleshly qualities. Although the Virgin was an example of a "spiritual" woman, she was unique in that she was free from Original Sin. For this reason, she was not an accessible role model for women. Thus, nuns often looked to the flesh of Christ (quite literally his femininity). As Surtz observes, "women were far more likely to identify with Christ and, specifically, with his

suffering humanity than with his mother" (52). By concentrating on Christ's suffering and His Passion, medieval women like Constanza de Castilla and Catherine of Siena identified with the fact that Christ was like them (Bynum, Jesus as Mother 130). Caroline Walker Bynum recognizes that:

> To women, the notion of the female as flesh became an argument for women's imitatio Christi through physicality. Subsuming the male/female dichotomy into the more cosmic dichotomy divine/human, women saw themselves as the symbol for all humanity. (Holy Feast 263)

This gave rise to the womanChrist model described by Barbara Newman. Constanza de Castilla and Catherine of Siena take part in this, at least implicitly, by focusing on Christ's physical humanity. Thus their individual piety was focused on approaching the Divine through contemplation of devotion to the human Christ. The decision to focus on the feminine humanity of Christ, a man, rather than on the more obvious femininity of His mother or one of the other women of the Bible, does not negate the importance of women

in the early and medieval Church. On the contrary, the female figures of Christianity are clearly important to all three of these women and are often mentioned in their works. Nevertheless, the preeminence of Christ's femininity, at least in Constanza's and Catherine's spirituality, shows that they view Christ as the ultimate "female" role model that all women should follow. Teresa's individual piety, on the other hand, is focused more on approaching the Divine by taking advantage of her infirmities.

Christ's Love for Humanity

In addition to a devotion to the physical humanity of Christ (which Constanza and Catherine express much more thoroughly than Teresa), these women also share an interesting connection to the humanity, or humaneness, of Christ. All three of these women view Christ's love for humankind as the motivating factor behind His becoming human. All of them also see Christ's love not only as a way to connect with the Divine, but also as a way to connect with their own humanity and with the humanity of

others. Each woman, however, focuses on a different aspect of Christ's love, choosing an aspect which resonates more with her personal condition.

CONSTANZA DE CASTILLA

As has been determined, Constanza de Castilla is expressly concerned with Christ's physical humanity, which she describes as a "vestidura de omne" ["suit of humanity"] that He received from His mother (Castilla, Libro 82). In addition to this physicality, however, Constanza is also deeply affected by and devoted to Christ's love for humanity. The facet of Christ's love which Constanza emphasizes the most is that of the humility He showed in becoming human for us. Several times throughout her prayers Constanza praises Christ for His humility, recognizing that Christ humbled Himself by becoming human ["plogo a ti, verbo de Dios, tanto humillarte a vestir tan pobre vestidura" (Castilla, Libro 3)]. She also acknowledges that Christ's humility is an example for all Christians of how to treat each other: "dando enxenplo a nos con humildad de rodillas te pusiste a lavar los pies de tus deçiplos..." ["as an example to us with humility You

kneeled and washed Your disciples' feet"] (Castilla, Libro 7). Even in those prayers that do not explicitly mention Christ's humility, Constanza emphasizes that the events that Christ suffered were of His own will, by stressing that it pleased Him ("te plogo") to suffer these horrible, painful and humiliating events for her.

It is interesting that Constanza should focus on Christ's humility as the outstanding proof of His love. Constanza, more than the other women studied here, would have known the advantages afforded by high rank. As the granddaughter of a king and close friend (and relative) of the reigning monarchs of her day, she would have had a more intimate understanding of the benefits of power and privilege (in the human realm at least). This may have afforded her a deeper appreciation for what Christ gave up for the sake of humanity.

Constanza has two interesting and almost contradictory reactions to Christ's humility. The first reaction is that Christ's humility inspires humility in Constanza. She initially mentions this in the first chapter of her opening prayer: "yo suplico a ti por la grandeza de la tu humildat

que me libres del pecado de sobervia" ["I beseech You, by the greatness of Your humility, that You free me from the sin of pride"] (Castilla, Libro 3). She returns to this humility throughout her prayers to humbly make her requests of Christ ["omilmente suplico a tu clemençia..." (Castilla, Libro 90)]. Since Constanza was not only writing these prayers for herself, but also for the nuns of her convent, she is therefore implicitly trying to spread humility among her nuns as well. At the time that Constanza wrote her prayer book, her convent was undergoing some changes in personnel. Discipline among the nuns in Constanza's convent was becoming more lax as nuns who had died from the Plague had to be replaced with nuns who were less suited to religious life. It may be that Constanza sensed a need for renewed humility in order for the discipline among the nuns to remain at the level necessary for the spiritual health of the convent. Whatever the reason, Constanza focuses on Christ's humility as an example of His love, an example that she and all of her nuns should follow.

The second, and more paradoxical, result of Constanza's focus on Christ's humility is that she gains a

sense of pride (or self-respect) from Christ's loving humility. Christ's humility arises from the fact that He willingly gave up heaven to become human. Since He had become a human clothed in feminine flesh, Constanza sees this as something of a vindication of femininity. As a result of this vindication, Constanza never relates her humility to her femininity. Her humility is based on the fact that, as a human, she can never reach God herself. But God, in the figure of Christ, humbled Himself in a form similar to hers to make that connection possible. Constanza, through her prayer book, also attempts to spread this self-respect to the nuns of her convent. Though they should be humble, they should also respect themselves as members of God's creation and not feel humbled by their gender.

Therefore Constanza sees Christ's humility as an example for herself and her nuns. They should humble themselves and serve others, just as Christ humbled himself and washed the disciples' feet. This humility is not just a way to connect with Christ, but also a way to improve relations with other people through humble service modeled

on that of Christ himself.

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Catherine of Siena, like Constanza, also views Christ's love as a way to connect with other humans. While Constanza focuses primarily on Christ's humility as a facet of His love, Catherine focuses on that love itself. She sees that love in Christ's willingness to face death on the cross for humanity. In fact, He not only willingly faced death, but He "ran like one in love to the shameful death on the cross" (Siena, Letters 87). In addition to His embracing of the cross, it was Christ's love that held Him to the cross, and not the nails themselves (Siena, Letters 73).

Christ's actions not only inspire an inward, reflexive piety, but they also require an outward, evangelistic piety. Catherine expresses this clearly in her letters in which she encourages the spread of Christ's love:

> Love yourself not selfishly but for God's sake. Love other people not for their sake but only for the praise and glory of God's name. Love God not for your own sake, for your own profit, but love

> him for his sake, because he is the highest Good and worthy of being loved. (Siena, Letters 76-77).

Christ's love inspires love of self, love of others, and love of God. Catherine's devoted love of God and of others is inspired by Christ's love. She closes nearly all of her letters adjuring her readers to "keep living in God's holy and tender love." This evangelistic zeal is an integral part of Catherine's spirituality.

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Though Teresa does not focus as much on the figure of Christ as do Constanza and Catherine, Christ's suffering sacrifice underlies her Arboleda de los enfermos. Though Teresa makes no direct reference to Christ's suffering in the Arboleda, she does make indirect reference to it with the following description of her own suffering: "Las que llamaua pasyones agora las llamo resureçiones" (Cartagena, Arboleda 43) ["What I used to call my crucifixion, I now call my resurrection" (Cartagena, Writings 29)]. By referring to her suffering in terms of crucifixion (or "pasyones," which can also mean "passion") and

resurrection, she is relating her suffering to that of Christ. As a result, she takes Christ's suffering as the ultimate example of His love for her, and His patience in that suffering as the ultimate example of how she should react to her own suffering. She makes this even more explicit in the Admiración when she describes the reason behind her writing the Arboleda:

> E quando escreuí aquel tractado que trata de aquesta yntelectual Luz e sobredicha çiençia, la qual es alabança e conoçer a Dios e a mí misma e negar mi voluntad e conformarme con la voluntad suya, e tomar la cruz de la passion que padesco en las manos del entendimiento interior, e yr en pos del Saluador por pasos de aflición espiritual, e manificar a Dios por confisión de la lengua, dando loor e alabança al su santo Nonbre, recontando a las gentes la ygualeza de la su justiçia <de> la grandeza de su misericordia, e la manifiçençia e Gloria suya. (Cartagena, Admiración 138)
>
> And I wrote that treatise that deals with this

> intellectual light and the lesson that I learned, which is to praise God and to know God, and to know myself and to deny my will and conform it to His will; and to take in the hands of my inner understanding the cross of suffering I endure, and to follow my Savior in the footsteps of spiritual affliction; and to exalt God through to confession of my tongue, giving laud and praise to His holy name, recounting to the people the fairness of His justice, the greatness of His mercy, and His magnificence and glory. (Cartagena, Writings 109)

Teresa therefore wrote the Arboleda to express what God had taught her about her own suffering (that she should be patient and learn from it).

CONCLUSIONS

Constanza, Catherine and Teresa all learn lessons from Christ's love (although each woman focuses on a different aspect of that love) and attempt to share what they have learned with others. In this we see an example of each woman's individual piety in both its reflexive and

evangelistic forms. Constanza focuses on Christ's humility, which both teaches her to be humble, and gives her a sense of self-respect. Catherine focuses on Christ's love itself, which teaches her to love herself and to love others. Teresa focuses on Christ's patience in suffering, which teaches her to be patient in her own suffering. These lessons, in addition to drawing these women closer to Christ, also draw them closer to other people as they try to share what they have learned. All of these women see Christ's love as the central motivating factor behind their own spiritual growth and their desire to assist in the spiritual growth of others.

Chapter 5

Other Themes

Spiritual Growth

CONSTANZA DE CASTILLA

As I have demonstrated, Constanza focuses on Christ's humanity as a bridge that guides her and her nuns directly to the Divine. Constanza nurtures this avenue of spiritual growth both in herself and in the nuns of her convent by writing a prayer book for their collective use. Through her writing, she was both emphasizing the importance of daily prayer, which was always a part of a nun's life, and the way in which it should be conducted. The act of prayer is itself one of the essentials of spiritual growth. By creating a book that could lead her nuns in this spiritual exercise, Constanza endeavored to lead them to a more spiritually mature path.

In addition to the act of prayer, the content of Constanza's prayers also emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth. Each prayer contains a request for deliverance from vice and for virtue in its suplicatio

section.[90] Gaining virtue can only be achieved by overcoming the corresponding vice: "yo te suplico me des virtud de abstinençia e me apartes del pecado de la gula" ["I beseech you to grant me the virtue of abstinence and remove from me the sin of gluttony"] (Castilla, Libro 22). Therefore, the supplication of each prayer details some way to attain spiritual growth.

Constanza, as author/supplicant not only requests virtue for herself, but also requests virtue for her nuns: "te suplico que enbíes tu graçia sobre todas las dueñas deste monasterio e acreçientes sus virtudes e les des buena fin" ["I beseech you to send your grace upon all of the ladies of this monastery and increase their virutes, and grant them a good end"] (Castilla, Libro 35). Upon reciting the prayers, the nuns of Constanza's monastery would not only be blessed by Constanza's prayers on their behalf but would also be praying for the increase of their own virtue. These prayers are, therefore important, not only as a spiritual discipline, but also as a way to overcome vice and weakness and to grow more like Christ.

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[90] Refer to chapter 2 for a more detailed description of Constanza's

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Catherine also encourages spiritual growth in her writings. Her letters are encouragements to others to grow spiritually in order to be more like Christ. Like Constanza, Catherine sees spiritual growth in the Christian journey. She implores the reader: "let us follow in His footsteps, driving out vice by virtue" (Siena, Letters 124). She also notes that virtues are learned through vices:

> see [for another example] how humility is learned because of pride. When we see ourselves pestered by the vice of pride we humble ourselves, recognizing that we *are* sinful and proud.[91]
>
> (Siena, Letters 219)

This idea is developed throughout Catherine's writings.

Another method of spiritual growth in Catherine's view is the love of God simply because He is God, not for what He does. She admonishes:

> love him not in view of any advantage you may get

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supplications.

[91] See also pages 38-39 of Catherine of Siena, The Dialogue.

> from him, not for fear of the suffering he might make you bear, but only because he is supreme and just and eternally good. (Siena, Letters 113)

Love of God is the beginning of all spiritual growth, for the person that does not love God will not seek to be virtuous.

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Teresa de Cartagena's journey of spiritual growth comes about as a result of her personal suffering. She wrote her Arboleda: "a loor de Dios e espiritual consolación suya e de todos aquellos que enfermedades padesçen" (Cartagena, Arboleda 37) ["in praise of God and for her own spiritual consolation and that of all those who suffer illness" (Cartagena, Writings 23)]. For Teresa, suffering (rather than overcoming vice) is the path the virtue. She claims this path for herself and admonishes other sufferers to do the same:

> Con éstos me razono, y a éstos sólo<s> amonesto<s> que sus dolençias e pasyones amonestan a ser tristes y atribulados. Porque sy todos vsemos de la tribulación e tristeza humana

> que procuremos con devota y sana entinción la espiritual alegría, porque podamos dezir con el Apóstol: "Libe[n]tor gloriabor, etç." (Cartagena, Arboleda 61)
>
> [I address and admonish only the sick, sad and sorrowful with their ailments and suffering, so that, indeed, we may all use our tribulation and human sadness to procure spiritual joy with devout and healthy intention, and we may say with the Apostle, "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities."] (Cartagena, Writings 45)

While those that do not suffer are not prohibited from gaining virtue, sufferers more easily gain this virtue if they understand the reason for their suffering and take spiritual advantage of it.

CONCLUSIONS

None of these three authors differentiates between men and women when it comes to attaining spiritual growth or personal piety. They recognize both as necessities for all Christians, and each, in her own way and with varying degrees of success, attempts to train others in both

disciplines. These women differ from many medieval male authors in that they do not recognize any vices as particular to women, or as more "female" than "male." The possible exception to this is Teresa de Cartagena. Teresa focuses more on growth through suffering than on growth through prayer and effort. Since infirmity knows no gender barriers, her instruction on spiritual growth necessarily applies to both men and women. However, Teresa recognizes many more gender differences than do Constanza and Catherine, using various humility tropes that are gender related.[92] Therefore, it would appear that Constanza and Catherine are more involved in making spiritual growth accessible to women, while Teresa focuses on making it accessible to the infirm. Hence, Constanza and Catherine are more involved in feminizing Christianity while Teresa is involved in Christianizing infirmity, insofar as she makes spiritual growth and Christianity more accessible to the infirm.

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[92] Teresa makes frequent reference to the "lowliness and grossness" of her "womanly mind" (Cartagena, Writings 24) and her "coarse womanly judgement" (74). Constanza and Catherine, on the other hand, never relate their humility to their gender. The closest that either comes to a similar gender-based humility is when Catherine uses the term

Dangers of the World

CONSTANZA DE CASTILLA

The next theme developed in Constanza's original works is that of the dangers that surrounded her. Constanza mentions dangers that are both spiritual and physical.[93] Even in the opening prayer, these dangers often seem incongruent with the life of a nun. For example, one of the first spiritual dangers that Constanza recognizes is that of "las conversaciones dañosas a mi ánima e de los negoçios del mundo en que me yo ocupo" ["the conversations that are harmful to my spirit and the worldly business that troubles me"] (Castilla, Libro 8). While most nuns remained within the convent and therefore did not have the type of contact with the outside world that could adversely effect their spiritual lives, in her role as prioress Constanza maintained ties with the outside world. Since Constanza was not required to remain in the convent, she conducted business in the royal court and was thus much

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"effeminate" to denote weakness (Siena, Letters 103). However, neither she nor Constanza claim weakness or sinfulness based upon their gender.

[93] By the term "physical" danger, I mean danger that is posed by other people; not necessarily dangers that will affect the women's spiritual lives, but those that might affect their physical lives.

more exposed than most nuns to outside influences of a secular nature. For example, at the royal court she undoubtedly made a wide circle of acquaintances, both male and female. She therefore probably received a good deal of exposure to contemporary social customs and literary ideals (particularly at the court of Juan II).[94] Instead of withdrawing completely from the world into the contemplative life, Constanza was required by her position and by her heritage to inhabit two worlds: the convent and the court. Her desire for the spiritual growth and contemplation available in the convent must have at times seemed threatened by her duties as prioress and as member of the royal family.

In other sections of the opening prayer, Constanza appears to face opposition on a more physical level. She mentions that the suffering and pain for Christ's sake are both "corporales commo espirituales" ["corporeal and spiritual"] (Castilla, Libro 12). Regarding the physical dangers, she asks Christ to "me des graçia que yo perdone

[94] Juan II was known as a patron of the arts, particularly of literature, and had convened a "literary court" comprised of many of the most well-known writers of the era.

de coraçón a todos los que me injuriaren, egualmente bivos e muertos perdonando" ["give me grace to forgive in my heart all that injure me, both living and dead"] (20), and "me libres del pecado de vengança" ["free me from the sin of vengeance"] (26). Constanza seems to indicate here that not only did she have enemies, but that they had harmed her to the extent that she was having trouble forgiving them. The fact that she uses the masculine "los" to refer to her enemies reveals that at least one of her enemies was male (if all were female then she would have used "las"). She goes on to ask for freedom from her "enemigos vesibles e invesibles e de todas sus falsas ymaginaçiones, arterías, sotilezas, asechanças engañosas e lazos mortales" ["visible and invisible enemies and all of their false imaginings, craftiness, artifices, deceitful intrigues, and mortal snares"] (Castilla, Libro 29). The men with whom Constanza would have been in closest contact were the friars attached to her convent, which might suggest that some of these friars frowned upon Constanza's power and autonomy.[95] By

[95] In fact, it was not uncommon during the period of the Dominican reform for the order to appoint a reformed member of the order to a non-reformed monastery in the hopes that the reform would spread naturally (Hinnebusch, The Dominicans 36). If this were the case in

examining the sections of Constanza's original prayers that deal with the opposition that she faced, we can tentatively conclude that Constanza had some enemies whose power she was unable to totally escape even within the convent walls. While it could be inferred, based on the lack of documents criticizing or chastising her, that Constanza was a generally uncontroversial figure, the fact that she worries about retaliation from her enemies seems to suggest that she was perhaps not always considered harmless.

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Catherine of Siena, like Constanza, also describes dangers that are spiritual and physical. Regarding the spiritual dangers that separate the soul from God, Catherine admonishes her readers that:

> we cannot achieve this perfect conformity with Christ without complete detachment from conformity with the world. The world is opposed to God and God to the world: they have nothing in common. (Siena, Letters 51)

The world, then, is to be despised and worldly pleasures

Constanza's monastery, the conflict to which Constanza refers could

avoided; "we shall laugh off the world and all its pleasures, considering them corruptible and worse than dung" (Siena, Letters 68). Since Catherine was a lay sister (rather than a nun) we might assume that her closer contact with the world made this even more difficult.

Catherine, like Constanza, recognizes that the dangers of the world are not solely spiritual. Physical dangers and enemies are present as well. These enemies are "constantly fighting against us" (Siena, Letters 96), and "are always on the watch to harass us" (151). One wonders what type of dangers Catherine might have faced. We know that one potential danger was posed by powerful detractors who disapproved of a woman with such great influence. Jo Ann McNamara has noted that Catherine "was not immune to witchcraft charges when her public profile became uncomfortably high" (454). Raymond of Capua records some of her detractors' accusations in Catherine's Vita. She was, at various times, accused of deception (Capua 156-58), seeking attention -- particularly with regard to her fasting (157-59), and even losing her virginity (142),

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conceivably be based in pressures to reform Santo Domingo el Real.

among other things. Karen Scott notes that "it was Catherine's freedom of movement and 'affable' social manner that made her particularly vulnerable to scandal and gossip" ("Urban Spaces" 108). Catherine herself wrote letters to her critics. Letter 19, for example, is addressed to a religious person in Florence who had criticized Catherine for "her extreme fasting" (Siena, Letters 78). Catherine did her best to set this critic at ease by assuring him that she tried to eat regularly and that she frequently prayed for the grace to be able to eat like other people (79). Unfortunately, her inability to eat likely led to her premature death.[96]

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Teresa de Cartagena also discusses the dangers of the world, both spiritual and physical. In the Arboleda de los enfermos she describes her deafness in the following terms:

> [Q]uando miro esta mi pasyón en los tenporales negoçios, véola muy penosa y de grandísima angustia, mas quando aparto el pensamiento de las

[96] Some modern scholars believe that Catherine's death was caused by a severe case of anorexia nervosa. For a detailed discussion of religious women's eating habits and the incidence of anorexia nervosa or bulimia, see Bynum's Holy Feast 194-207.

> cosas ya dichas, recojéndole a mi propio seno, e veo la soledat que me haze sentir, apartándome de las negoçiaçiones mundanas, llámola soledat amable, soledat bienaventurada, soledat que me haze ser sola de peligros males e aconpañada de seguros bienes, soledat que me aparta de cosas enpeçibles e dañosas al ánima e avn al cuerpo no muy prouechosas. (Cartagena, Arboleda 40)
>
> [When I look at my suffering in temporal terms, it seems very painful and anguished, but when I turn my thought from these concerns, drawing it unto my breast, and I see the solitude that my suffering imposes, separating me from worldly transactions, I call it a kind solitude, a blessed solitude, a solitude that isolates me from dangerous sins and surrounds me with sure blessings, a solitude that removes me from things harmful and dangerous to both my body and soul.] (Cartagena, Writings 26)

Teresa sees her affliction as a blessing that protects her from the dangers of "worldly conversations" (Cartagena,

Writings 29).[97] She writes the Arboleda so that other infirm people will be able to see the spiritual benefits of their affliction.

The physical dangers of the world are more implicit and subtle in Teresa's work than in that of Constanza or Catherine. While the Arboleda focuses on spiritual dangers, the Admiración was written in response to a worldly danger, that is, criticism from those who did not believe that she had written, or was even capable of writing, the Arboleda. Teresa defends herself against these allegations by proclaiming that God could enable her to write such a work:

> Aquél que dió yndustria e gracia a Iudit para fazer vn tan marauillosa e famoso acto, bien puede dar yndustria o entendimiento e graçia a otra qualquier henbra para fazer lo que a otras mugeres, o por ventura algunos del estado varonil no sabrían. (Cartagena, Arboleda 120)

[97] Constanza also sees danger in worldly conversations and asks that Christ turn her away from these dangerous conversations ("me ariedre de las conversaciones dañosas a mi ánima...") (Castilla 8). In Teresa de Cartagena these conversations took place in her youth, prior to her deafness and her entry into the convent. In Constanza they appear to be ongoing.

> [He who gave the skill and grace to Judith to accomplish such a marvelous and famous act can well give ingenuity or understanding and grace to any woman to do what other women and perchance some of the male condition might not know how to do.] (Cartagena, Writings 93)

As Teresa asserts, in spite of her supposed "dark and womanly ignorance" (Cartagena, Writings 105), God gave her the ability to overcome that ignorance and to write her treatises.

CONCLUSIONS

Their treatments of the theme of the dangers of the world reveal commonalities and differences among the works of these three women. Constanza de Castilla and Catherine of Siena face the physical dangers of the world from positions of power. Women were frequently accused of excessive worldliness and gossiping. One of the primary reasons for the cloistering of nuns was to "protect" them from themselves and their own worldly natures. However, neither Constanza nor Catherine was strictly enclosed. This probably led to increased suspicion and criticism of

their actions since it was assumed that "women [were] unable to preserve their virtue...unless they [were] properly 'cloistered' in their homes or in monasteries" (Scott, "Urban Spaces" 108). Catherine and Constanza both confront these stereotypes, not by denying them, but by admitting that these were dangers that everyone should avoid and pray about. Through this admission, they were able to neutralize potential criticism and show that they were involved in God's work.

Teresa, on the other hand, does not face criticism from a position of power, but rather from a position of humility. She invokes the power of God to explain that, while she is weak and unworthy, God is all-powerful and can work through "inferior" vessels. This difference may be due to the fact that Teresa, as an ordinary nun (and a deaf one, at that), had little political power. The fact that she was likely cloistered in her convent also accounts for the fact that she seems to have faced less criticism than did Catherine and Constanza.

Authority of Voice

The theme of the dangers of the world is closely related to the manner in which each of these women authorizes her work. Since women were restricted from teaching, any activity that could be construed as teaching was subject to scrutiny and condemnation. Most medieval women writers were criticized at some point in their careers for doing things that were not "proper" for women. In order to offset such criticism and to give their works credibility, women writers often used authorizing strategies. Hildegard of Bingen, for example, wrote at the behest of God Himself.[98] Teresa of Ávila used a double authorizing strategy of declaring that she wrote at the request of both God and her confessor.[99] Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena all use slightly different authorizing strategies.

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[98] Hildegard stated: "But this omnipotent God in His mercy deigned to anoint with oil the poor little woman through whom this writing is published, because she lived without any confidence in herself, nor had she any knowledge of the composition of the writings, which the Holy Spirit proposed for the instruction of the Church, and which seemed as it were the walls of a great city" (Bingen 156).

[99] Teresa of Ávila (d. 1582) combined both types of authorization for her autobiography when she asserts that she wrote it "at the command of

CONSTANZA DE CASTILLA

The question of authority is never one that Constanza de Castilla raises in her Libro de devociones y oficios. As the prioress of an important monastery and a member of the royal family, Constanza was accustomed to power. The fact that the audience for her prayer book was comprised of her nuns could, perhaps, account for her apparent disregard of any need for outside authority to write. Unlike many medieval women writers, Constanza never claims that God told her to write her prayer book. Neither does she claim that any male instructed or encouraged her to write. She apparently took it upon herself to write this prayer book in order to fulfill a perceived need in her community.

Rather than focusing on herself and her need for external authority, Constanza centers her attention on two things: the redemptive work of Christ as consummated in His passion, and His incarnation in the body of Mary, that is, His feminized humanity. These two events give Constanza both her authority and her identity as a subject (Muñoz Fernández 145). Christ's sacrifice allows the

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her confessor" but that "the Lord...has long desired that it should be

sinner access to the Divine. His feminized humanity allows a certain amount of feminine priority in understanding His passion and experiencing a compassio. Constanza uses both of these events to claim for women an avenue of access to God.

In addition to the authority granted her through the actions of Christ, Constanza also gains authority through the structure of her prayers. Ronald Surtz argues that Constanza's pseudo-dialogic form (which stems from what I describe as the epistolary nature of the structure of her works) gives her complete control over the content of the prayers. She can create her own authority because she composes both the questions and the answers (Surtz 55). Constanza, therefore, becomes, in a sense, the channel of communication with the Divine for her community.

Constanza's commitment to her community can be seen in her prayers. She strives to improve the spiritual life of her nuns through prayer and by encouraging their individual connections to God. Her authority to offer and author these prayers is never questioned. Neither Constanza nor

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written" (Ávila 21).

her nuns need the mediation of a priest to access God; they have direct and individual access to Him. Nor do they need male-authored prayers to guide their petitions to God. Constanza apparently felt that her words were sufficient for this purpose. The nuns in her convent, used to following her direction and trusting her authority, would have used her prayer book without question.

CATHERINE OF SIENA

Because of the popularity and widespread dissemination of Catherine of Siena's works, the question of her authorizing strategies must address two areas: the authority that she was perceived to have by those in power within the Church and the authority that she claimed for herself. As Thomas Luongo notes, Raymond of Capua, Catherine's confessor and author of her Vita, interprets her authority as deriving from two sources: her position as a virgin (having transcended normal feminine "weakness") and her role as the "mouthpiece of God" (Luongo 89). Catherine's authority could, therefore, be proclaimed in spite of her gender:

> Because of her virginity and her extreme ascetic

> practices, particularly as regards food, she could have been seen as having liberated herself from the normal sexuality of the body to become an almost androgynous symbol of holiness.
>
> (Lacey 333)

Therefore, in the eyes of the Church, Catherine's transgression into a field normally not open to women could potentially be excused based on the fact that she had overcome her female weakness.

Another justification of her public role as advisor/teacher/writer was Catherine's position as the mouthpiece of God. In Catherine's Vita, Raymond of Capua records that, during her mystical ecstasies, God commanded Catherine into a public life and ministry; a ministry that Catherine did not desire for herself. According to Capua, in one of these ecstasies, Catherine questioned God, saying:

> how can I, wretched and frail as I am, be of use to souls? My sex, as you know, is against it in many ways, both because it is not highly considered by men, and also because it is not

> good, for decency's sake, for a woman to mix with men. (108)

God responded to Catherine's questions by saying:

> to confound their arrogance, I will raise up women ignorant and frail by nature but endowed with strength and divine wisdom. (Capua 109)

Capua is therefore able to define Catherine's authority as deriving both from her near-male perfection and from God's mercy in using her as a receptacle of His message. However, taking Capua's interpretation of Catherine's authority at face value is rather simplistic, for:

> [b]y accepting as natural the terms in which Catherine was represented, [we] cannot appreciate how her authority was constructed, nor can [we] account for Catherine's own participation -- whether by complicity or subversion -- in the establishment of her authority. (Luongo 90)

If we blindly accept Capua's definition of Catherine's authority, we ignore the manner in which Catherine herself constructs that authority.

Catherine's own words reveal that she never questions

her right to address and instruct both men and women. In her cartulary, Catherine repeatedly addresses men of high position in the Church hierarchy, including the pope himself. Yet she never seems to recognize that for her, a woman, to so address a man in authority is highly irregular. In her letters to the pope, Catherine repeatedly deals with political issues and even scolds the pope for being out of God's will.[100] Her letters to Raymond of Capua are similar in that Catherine serves as advisor, mentor, and corrector. In letter 70 Catherine refers to Raymond as a "son given to me by that sweet mother Mary" (220). She then advises him not to "yield to weariness or confusion, no matter what may trouble your spirit" (Siena, Letters 220).

In her earliest letter to Raymond (letter 31), Catherine uses an interesting strategy for establishing her authority in regards to her femininity. Though Raymond

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[100] In one such letter she admonishes the pope:

> I hope, by God's goodness, my venerable father, that you will snuff this [love of self] out in yourself! I hope you will not love yourself selfishly, nor your neighbors selfishly, nor God selfishly...
> (Siena, Letters 167)

In other letters Catherine advises the pope to return the papacy to Rome (see for example letters 64, 69, 71, etc, in Siena, Letters).

viewed her authority as coming from her near-masculinity, Catherine, in turn, sees that:

> Raymond in some sense must be feminized, and thus Catherine appeals to the notion of imitatio Christi... Catherine extends to her male reader the opportunity for conversion by experiencing, through suffering and affection, Christ's 'femininity'. (Luongo 102)

Therefore, while Raymond sees in Catherine a quasi-masculinity due to her virginity and ascetic life, Catherine sees in Raymond a quasi-femininity that is necessary for him to be like Christ.

TERESA DE CARTAGENA

Going one step beyond Teresa de Ávila's double authorizing strategy, Teresa de Cartagena uses a triple authorizing strategy. First of all, she states to Doña Juana de Mendoza that she writes "a vuestra discreción" (Cartagena, Arboleda 111) ["at your discretion" (Cartagena, Writings 86)]. As Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez notes, this strategy fulfills two rhetorical functions:

> it takes responsibility from Teresa, since she is

> ceding to a request to write rather than initiating the act of writing of her own accord, and the inscribing of an accessible and receptive female reader facilitates communication to a more general audience. ("Interpretive Essay" 114)

Seidenspinner-Núñez goes on to recognize a second strategy that Teresa uses to authorize her work, which consists in citing male authorities (i.e. Job, King David, St. Augustine, Peter Lombard) within her work ("Interpretive Essay" 114-15). The third authorizing strategy that Teresa uses is that of claiming divine authority. She explains that, even though women's understanding "is not as perfect as men's," "He who could infuse the understanding of men with knowledge can thus infuse the understanding of women, even though our understanding may be imperfect..." (Cartagena, Writings 90). Therefore, since God has chosen to use her in spite of her imperfections, Teresa has the right to author these texts.

CONCLUSIONS

Constanza de Castilla and Catherine of Siena both have an internal sense of authority. This is natural given the

power that they wielded in their daily lives. Neither seems to recognize a need for justifying her literary activities. On the contrary, both appear to expect their works to be well received and their instruction to be heeded. Teresa de Cartagena, on the other hand, had no particular authority. As a result, she needs to establish her authority externally. She uses several strategies to attain this goal.

The level of authority that Constanza and Catherine exhibit reveals to other women that women could hold positions of power within Christianity. The female readers of Constanza and Catherine's works would not only have perceived that these women wrote with an unusual level of authority, but also would likely have noted that these two women saw no need for external, male authorization. Their authority came directly from Christ in His suffering, feminine humanity. This would have made other Christian women more aware of the possibilities for them within the Church, and made Christianity more accessible to them. Teresa de Cartagena, since she does not have the same level of personal authority, must construct her own. She bases

it in her individual connection with God. However, her constant need to justify herself as a writer essentially reinforces the idea that only in extreme circumstances can and should a woman write.

Conclusion

Through careful analysis of Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena's works, it becomes clear that Constanza and Catherine are both more involved in the feminization of Christianity than Teresa. Constanza and Catherine's involvement in the feminization of Christianity is evident in the similarities between the form and content of their works. By examining the similarities between Catherine and Constanza, and by underscoring how these two authors differ from Teresa, the strategies that each woman used to accomplish a feminized Christianity are revealed. These strategies apparently arose out of the commonalities between the socio-religious circumstances of these two women.

All three women express an individual piety that can perhaps be seen as "pre-reformation" in content. This piety is based on a sincere and active devotion to Christ. However, in the analysis of the epistolary format in which all three of these women write we began to see a convergence in the strategies used by Constanza and Catherine. Teresa's treatise is, in a sense, a more

overtly literary work. Catherine, at least in her letters, is engaged in direct one-to-one or one-to-several communication which is, by its nature, quasi-private. In a similar manner, Constanza's prayers are quasi-private communications between Constanza (or her nuns) and God. Teresa's treatises, though they expressed a similar personal piety which had become fairly common in the late Middle Ages, initially enjoyed a wider and more diverse readership (as is evidenced by the criticism it received) than did Catherine's letters or Constanza's prayers. This may be due to the fact that she addressed her treatises to doña Juana de Mendoza, the wife of Gómez Manrique.[101] Although Teresa uses the epistolary format, Mary Elizabeth Frieden notes that the Admiración appears in some ways to be more of a hybrid of the ars dictaminis and the ars praedicandi (56-77). Thus Teresa substantially alters the epistolary format by transforming her works into treatises, thereby making them both less intimate and less intellectually accessible to unsophisticated readers. This is significant because most women were not highly educated.

[101] Gómez Manrique was a poet and dramatist who had many contacts in the

Therefore, her longer and more complex treatises would have been more difficult for the undereducated to read and follow. In addition, since Teresa's expressed purpose of consoling the infirm is undermined by the fact that she neither addresses nor sends her treatise to the infirm, her work was not physically accessible to its supposed audience. It does express her individual piety, but it probably did not increase the individual piety of its intended audience.

Constanza and Catherine, on the other hand, follow more closely the standard epistolary structure. The relatively informal nature of their works allows the unsophisticated reader immediate access to the ideas presented therein. They also either address and send their works to the intended audience, or know that their intended audience will be in close contact with their works. The physical and intellectual accessibility of these works to their readers contributed to the dissemination and incorporation of Constanza and Catherine's ideas in the lives of women. Constanza and Catherine were able to

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literary world.

contribute to women's spirituality and thereby make Christianity more accessible to women by writing spiritual works that women could and did use for their own spiritual gain. While all three authors utilized the vernacular[102] to express themselves, only Catherine and Constanza's works seem to have reached large female audiences and can be presumed to have affected the lives of these women.

The themes discussed by these three authors reveals a similar dichotomy that groups Constanza and Catherine on one side and Teresa on the other. Though all three women are deeply affected by Christ's love for them, and express the desire to spread that message to others, Teresa focuses more on the personal implications of Christ's love and less on what it means for others than do Constanza or Catherine. Because of Teresa's consistent inward focus, her work does not have the universality of Catherine and Constanza's texts. Although she claims to want to assist the infirm in

[102] In his seminal study on medieval literacy and orality, Walter Ong recognizes the existence of a "cultural diglossia" in medieval Europe in which Latin was used for some purposes (particularly official purposes) while the vernacular was used for others (4-5). He goes on to identify Latin as a textual, literary language and the vernaculars as primarily oral languages (5 and 7). Although by the later Middle Ages the vernacular languages were developing literatures, the vernaculars were still used more by women (particularly in the Church).

understanding and accepting their infirmity, her work probably reached few of those she wanted to help. Teresa describes her Arboleda as an auto-consolatory treatise, whose purpose is to console Teresa in her own infirmity; "she wrote this work ... for her own spiritual consolation" (Cartagena, Writings 23). It does reveal the individual nature of her spirituality, but it lacks the strong outward element of Constanza and Catherine's writings. Catherine and Constanza focus both inwardly on improving themselves and outwardly on improving the spirituality of others by focusing on Christ's feminine humanity as an avenue for communication with the Divine, on His love as a reason for spreading that message to others, on methods of spiritual growth, and on avoidance of the dangers of the world. In this way they make Christianity more personal and attainable to their women readers.

There are several possible reasons for the similarities between Constanza de Castilla and Catherine of Siena. The first of these is the possibility that Constanza was familiar with and directly influenced by Catherine's work. Although this may have actually

occurred, there are some facts that cast doubt on this possibility. First of all, there is no proof that Catherine's work was disseminated in Spain prior to 1511.[103] Although Raymond of Capua used Catherine's reputation for holiness to promote the reform of the Dominican Order, it seems that her own works were slower to disseminate than was the Legenda Maior that Raymond wrote about her life. In addition, there is also a lack of direct borrowing of terminology from Catherine in Constanza's writing. Although both authors deal with many of the same topics, Constanza conspicuously does not use catherinian terminology. One instance where we might expect such borrowing of terminology if there had been a direct influence is the theme of Christ's humanity. Catherine carefully develops this theme by using the symbol of Christ as a bridge between the human and the Divine. Constanza, though she develops the same idea, never refers to Christ as a bridge. Her development of this idea is evident, for example, in her version of the joys of Mary, when she

[103] Álvaro Huerga identifies the arrival of catherinian works in Spain. The Legenda maior by Capua arrived first (translated in Castilian in 1511). Catherine's works arrived shortly thereafter, with the letters and prayers being translated into Castilian in 1512 (394).

states: "el verbo de Dios desçendió del cielo, e se ençeró en tus santas entrañas, e dellas tomó vestidura de omne en su propia virtud por salvar a nos" ["the word of God descended from heaven and enclosed Himself in your holy innermost parts, and from them took on a suit of humanity to save us through His own virtue"] (Castilla 82). She again stresses the importance of Christ's humanity when she states: "ofresco e pongo entre ti e mis debdas tu sancta encarnación e todas las penas que padesçió tu humanidat por mí, Señor" ["I offer and place Your holy incarnation and all of the pains that Your humanity suffered for me between You and my sins, Lord"] (Castilla 108). Although she was clearly familiar with Catherine and with her life, Constanza never uses the terminology that was so prevalent in Catherine's works. It is, therefore, unlikely that Catherine's works directly influenced Constanza.

A second possibility for the origin of the similarities between Constanza and Catherine is the fact that both were women of considerable political and religious power. Constanza's political power came from her position in the royal family. She was very close to the

various monarchs who ruled during her lifetime.[104] She was also the prioress of one of the most influential and important Spanish convents of her day, and thus had some religious power (although primarily over women). Constanza's religious power grew out of her political power in that she was likely appointed to her position as prioress in part because of her ties to the royal family. Catherine, on the other hand, was not from a powerful family. Her religious power derived from her holiness and her special connection to God. Her political power grew out of her religious power. Since she was so holy and since she spoke on behalf of God, she was able to influence politics and politicians as a spiritual advisor. Therefore, while Constanza's power began as political and spread to religious spheres, and the opposite occurred in the case of Catherine, they both wielded more power than the average woman. The fact that both of these women were powerful might account for some of the similarities between their works, particularly the similarities in the authority

[104] These monarchs include Constanza's cousin Queen Catherine of Lancaster, Kings Juan II and Enrique IV and their wives. See chapter 1 for more information on Constanza's relationships with these people.

with which they both write. However, it does not account for other similarities, particularly those of content, such as the importance placed on Christ's humanity, the method of attaining spiritual growth, and the lack of association between femininity and negative attributes.

The final possible reason for the similarities between Constanza and Catherine is that both were Dominican. Although Catherine was a member of the third order (a lay sister) and Constanza was a member of the second order (a nun), they were both exposed to the same liturgy and the same religious teachings. This similarity is, in my opinion, the one fact that accounts for the majority of the parallels between the works composed by these two women. Repeated, daily (or near-daily) contact with the liturgy and theology of the Dominican Order would have meant that these women would have internalized many if not all of the beliefs espoused by the Order. The internalization of these beliefs would have led these women to think in similar ways, and would have caused many of the similarities of beliefs.

The theory that the particular religious order women

belonged to plays a vital role in the strategies that those religious women used in order to make Christianity more accessible to themselves and to other women is supported by comparing the results of my study with Carolyn Walker Bynum's study Jesus as Mother. Although Bynum does not specifically examine the role that women's religious affiliation plays in defining their feminization of Christianity, she does include the thirteenth-century nuns of Helfta in her study.[105] These nuns were nominally Cistercian,[106] not Dominicans. However, the monastery at Helfta soon came under the spiritual care of the Dominican Order and "by the late thirteenth century its confessors were Dominican" (Bynum, Jesus 175). Several of the Helfta nuns who wrote texts did so on the advice of their Dominican confessors. The three nuns of Helfta that Bynum examines in detail are Mechtild of Magdeburg,[107] Gertrude of

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[105] The fact that these writers were from thirteenth-century Germany while Catherine was fourteenth-century Italian and Constanza was fifteenth-century Spanish shows that similarities between these authors were more likely based in influences of a particular religious order than in any other potential reason.

[106] The monastery at Helfta was founded for a group of nuns who intended to follow the Cistercian rule. However, "the house was never incorporated into the Cistercian order" (Bynum, Jesus 174-75).

[107] Mechtild of Magdeburg was actually a Beguine, and later a Dominican tertiary who came to Helfta late in life (Ranft 74). Her confessor was

Helfta (also known as Gertrude the Great), and Mechtild of Hackeborn. The themes that these women expounded upon correlate closely to those of Catherine and Constanza. One of their primary themes is a familiar one, that is, Christ's humanity. As in the cases of Catherine and Constanza, for these three women "the point of Christ's humanity is that Christ *is* what we are: our humanity is in him and in him it is joined with divinity" (Bynum, Jesus 191). The fact that Christ took on a human body inherited solely from His mother creates a unique bond between Christ and women. The nuns of Helfta, along with Catherine and Constanza, relate to Christ's feminine humanity because in it they see a way for themselves to connect with the Divine.

Another way in which the Helfta writers are similar to Constanza and Catherine is that they rarely, if ever, raise the issue of their gender.[108] This is particularly true of Gertrude of Helfta and Mechtild of Hackeborn who "have

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Heinrich of Halle, a well-known Dominican who had been a student of Albertus Magnus (Howard 154).

[108] Mechtild of Magdeburg is more conscious of her gender, perhaps because she received a fair share of criticism for daring to speak out against the abuses that she saw within the Church. In fact, in several

little awareness of themselves as female in a negative sense: they do not use weak women or unclean women as symbols of their own sinfulness" (Bynum, Jesus 191). These two, like Constanza and Catherine, have a "lack of a negative sense of the female and the equation of male with authority" (Bynum, Jesus 191-92). Since Christ is, in a sense, feminine, and Christ is perfect, then femininity cannot be associated with evil.

It seems logical that the nature of a particular religious order would have been a great influence on the feminization of Christianity given that the women involved in this movement were primarily women with religious vocations who would have been immersed daily in the spirituality of their order. This is an important area for further study. More research needs to be done in order to determine if the theory that women of similar religious backgrounds use similar strategies to feminize Christianity holds true and, if so, to determine what strategies are characteristic of the different religious orders. By determining the role that women's religious affiliation

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instances Mechtild uses the masculine pronoun to refer to herself

plays in the strategies that these women use, we can begin to put these women back in their spiritual contexts which will enable us to establish a framework for examining each order's "woman-friendliness" and for determining the theological roots of the gender strategies that each woman uses.

Through an examination of the works of Constanza de Castilla, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa de Cartagena, it can be seen that certain feminization of Christianity strategies, and perhaps even the very movement to feminize Christianity are more closely related to certain religious orders and not necessarily based on an author's individual piety. Teresa de Cartagena, a Franciscan, was not particularly involved in the feminization of Christianity even though she did portray an individual piety. This is evident in several aspects of her work. First of all, her works were not particularly intended to encourage women's spirituality, but were written for her own consolation and to encourage the infirm. Secondly, they were probably less intellectually accessible to most women because of their

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(Howard 154-55).

more complex format. Thirdly, Teresa's works show evidence that she consistently associated her femininity with negative attributes and that she never associated any benefit to her femininity. Constanza and Catherine on the other hand were very active in encouraging women's spirituality (Constanza in writing prayers and praying for the nuns of her community, Catherine in writing letters to exhort women to further spiritual growth). These two women wrote works to and for other women in a form that women (even the less educated ones) would find readily understandable and familiar. In addition, they refused to associate femininity with negative attributes and with their own humility because they see in Christ's feminine flesh the justification of the female state and the opportunity for women to experience God directly. Since both Constanza and Catherine were steeped in Dominican spirituality, it is reasonable to assume that this spirituality influenced the way that they believed. This suggests that the Dominican Order was particularly open to the ideas that would bring about the feminization of Christianity. Only by examining the works of these three

women side-by-side have we begun to put them back into their socio-religious circumstances and understood what may have shaped their views of women's roles in Christianity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

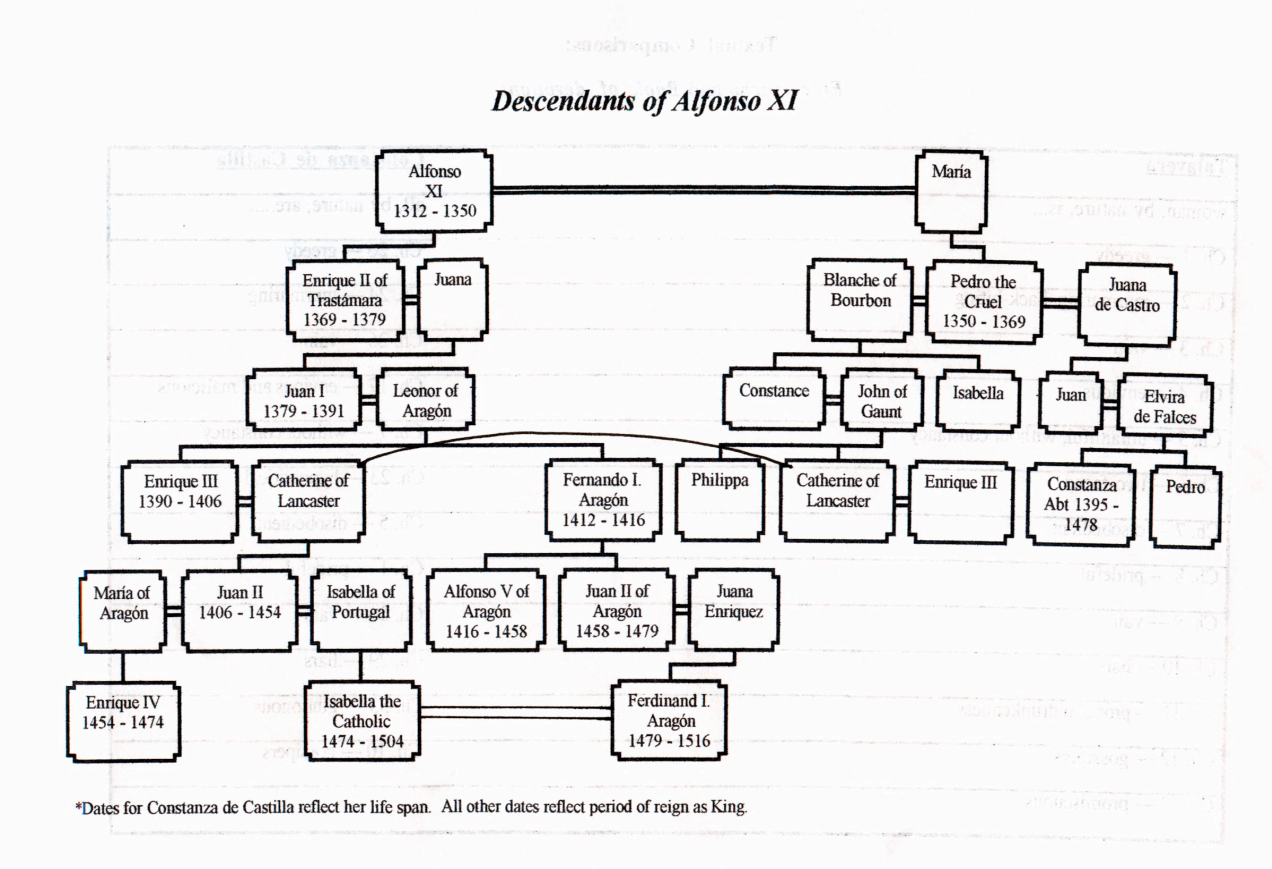


Figure 1: Constanza de Castilla's Family Tree



Figure 2: Photograph of Constanza's tomb. (Archeological Museum in Madrid.)



Figure 3: Close-up of photograph of Constanza's tomb. Notice the book resting on her heart.

Appendix 2

Translation: A Letter written by Constanza de Castilla

"Reverend Father Guardian, since ignorance in those that receive blessings is a great sin, and it is an even greater error to silence the marvels of our Lord, I certify to be true five mercies that our lord has worked in five people of this house, because of the merits of the blessed fray Diego, with the intention that you authorize them to be written, I want to declare: a girl, my niece, suffered continuous pains for three months, from which we thought she would die. Desperate for her life I sent her there, and by the virtue of our Lord she returned healed of all her problems. She is named Doña Isabel.

One of my ladies that went with her, who is named Mari Meléndez, suffered from sciatica; since she arrived at his tomb until today it has not returned.

Of the three nuns that visited the blessed body the other day, Sister Catalina Cardiela spent more than three years without the use of her right hand and arm, since she returned she crosses herself and eats with her own hand.

Another sister, Mari López, had a terrible headache, and while keeping vigil in the chapel the worm left her

ear, and she entrusted herself with great fear to the blessed one, and the worm that she had in her hand he himself returned to her ear as before.

Another sister, named Juana Fernández, had all of the limbs of her body imprisoned by gout, and she suffered very acute pains, and at times she could not eat with her hands, and she did not move from a place without help; upon her return, she entered the monastery with a freedom of movement like she had ten years ago, she received it by the great blessing of God.

Now I send five ladies, each one with chronic problems, each one unable to kneel. I request from you the singular grace that you, sir, allow them to complete their devotion and to see the holy relic. You well know, your reverence, that it is the service of our Lord. In the things that I could fulfill I write with judgement.

May our Lord grant you a good end.

From Madrid, the sixteenth of February.

Translation[109]: The Opening Prayer on the Life and Passion of Christ[110]

The following prayer was composed by a sister who is a great sinner of the Order of Preachers of St. Dominic. And she beseeches that all those who pray it will grant her part of their devotion. And she beseeches that our Lord make her a participant of their worthiness. This prayer should be said before communion.

First chapter

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the virtue of Your holy incarnation, when it pleased You to descend from the bosom of the Father to the sacristy of the Glorious Virgin, taking on, in her innermost parts, a suit of flesh, remaining imprisoned there nine months. Lord, since it pleased You, Word of God, to humble Yourself for me by dressing in such a poor form, I beseech You, by the greatness of Your humility, that You free me from the sin of pride which I, through my own fault, fall into often.

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[109] I have not translated the longer Latin quotations or the Biblical quotes here as they are liturgical texts and thus outside the scope of this study. I have translated some shorter phrases (primarily titles for Christ) that occur occasionally in the text of the prayers.
[110] Found on pages 3-37 of Wilkins edition of the Libro de devociones y oficios.

And give me the virtue of complete humility so that I recognize my great wretchedness as a gift. *Quia ego sum pulvis, cinis, vermis et non homo, opprobrium hominum et abieccio plebbis.*[111]

Second chapter

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the virtue of Your holy birth, when You powerfully glorious emerged from the closed virginal womb, You gave us God and human to liberate us from the obligation of death. Lord, I adore You, God and excellent human, since for me, Your slave, it pleased You to be born in such a poor and ignoble place, wrapped in a few clots and placed on Your small, cold chest between two animals in the manger. Lord, I beseech You, by the holy birth that You cleanse my heart of all hatred and animosity and grant me the virtue of ordained charity that I may act as did St. Dominic, our father.

Third chapter

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the virtue of the holy name Ihesu that You were named on the eighth day when it pleased You to be circumcised as a sinner, yet being God

[111] There are numerous spelling errors in the Latin sections. I have

and human, Your precious blood spilled for our redemption, You shed tears of pain from the new wound that You received fulfilling the law to which You were not obligated. Lord, since You suffered so tenderly for me, Your slave, I beseech You to grant me the grace that Your name Ihesu may be written on my heart as it was on the heart of St. Ignatius.

Fourth chapter

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the virtue of Your holy presentation made in the temple by your mother, the Virgin, forty days after your birth, she fulfilled the law that You were not required to fulfill. She offered You to the hands of Simeon the Just who so desired to see You, knowing that You were the promised Messiah. And after he saw You, he received You with great reverence, joy and devotion saying: "*Nunc dimictis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace.*" Lord, I beseech You to fulfill my worthy desires as You did to this righteous one.

---

included them here as they occur in Constanza's manuscript.

Fifth chapter

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the obedience that You showed the first year of Your birth when the Glorious One and Joseph went with You to the land of Egypt for fear of Herod; where for seven years You lived in exile, a pilgrim, poor, timid, unappreciated, ashamed; in the days of Your journey, both coming and going, You suffered fatigue, hunger, thirst, cold and heat, being very young and fragile, the Glorious One being a delicate maiden, and poor Joseph being old. Powerless, lacking the necessary provisions, You passed through the harshness of the desert. Lord, since it pleased You to flee the mortal king for me, I beseech You, by the greatness of Your power, that You remove my obdurity that inhibits my service to You, just as You Yourself brought the Israelites out of the power of Pharaoh. And give me the virtue that I fulfill Your commandments and those of my order so that I might be obedient to You, as was St. Peter when he went to Rome to die on a cross.

Chapter VI

Ihesu, spare me, for the holy sacrament of baptism that You received when You sanctified the waters of the River Jordan and gave them regenerative properties, the Holy Spirit descended upon You in the form of a dove. The Father's voice told You: "*Hic est filius meus dilectus in quo michi bene conplaciut.*" And St. John, filled with fear, did not dare to touch You, prostrating himself at Your feet with great reverence, knowing that You are God said: "*Sanctifica me, Salvator*." Lord, I beseech You to cleanse my spirit of its many stains, and to cast from my heart all carnal filth and grant me the virtue of complete cleanliness, as You granted to St. James the Just because I take joy in You.

Chapter seven

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the trial that You passed through when for forty days and nights You fasted in the desert without eating or drinking, away from the sight of Your mother, finally it pleased You to suffer hunger and thirst since You wanted to be tempted by the enemy, like a true human, for the greater good. And You, King, defeated

him through Your own power, and disdained that one that had been thrown out of heaven by Your order. Lord, since it pleased You to suffer these trials for me, I adore You, God and human, victor in the desert, and I beseech You to grant me the virtue of firm steadfastness so that I might always defeat the temptations of the enemy and of the world and of the flesh, just as You freed the three young men from the flames of the furnace.

Chapter VIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the virtue of the very powerful, excellent and marvelous works that You did, the great trials that You suffered in the 33 years that You lived in the world. Lord, by the virtue of Your own works, I beseech You to remove from me the sin of idleness that reigns in me and continually hinders me from Your work, and direct me to serve You with diligence as did St. Joseph and St. Martha.

Chapter IX

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the duty that You took upon Yourself the Thursday of the supper, when as an example to us of humility You kneeled and washed Your

disciples' feet, and afterwards with warm-hearted love You instituted the holy sacrament of Your glorious body in memory of Your sacred passion. And You gave plenary power to the priests to consecrate it. And You ordered spiritual food to all of the faithful that worthily receive You so that they might have You in this life both in memory and in company. Lord, I humbly beseech You, who justifies sinners, to cleanse and justify me as You know is necessary for me according to my many grave errors, the greatness of my sin, and the great coldness and separation from You that is in me, as You did in St. Catherine of Siena. Since I, grave sinner, am not worthy to receive You nor to lift my eyes before Your holy majesty, and knowing my many sins I confess: *Peccavi et super numerum arene maris, multiplicata sunt peccata mea, et non sum digna videre altitudinem celi, pre multitudinem iniquitatis mee quoniam irritavi iram tuam et malum coram te feci.*

Chapter X

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the pain with which You took leave of Your disciples the Thursday after the supper, very troubled and anguished with fear of death,

You separated Yourself from them. You prayed to the Father saying: "*Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem*." Lord, for me Your slave You were compelled to be alone and anxious on the Mount of Olives, I beseech You, since You are eternal life, to give me grace so that I desire to die for Your love and that I turn away from the conversations that are harmful to my spirit and from the business of the world that troubles me, as You turned St. Paul from persecuting Your christians.

Chapter XI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the merit of the virtuous prayer that You prayed when with great humility You kneeled, Your holy face upon the ground, and with great agony and affliction of the flesh You said: "*Pater, si posible est transeat a me calix iste*." Lord, since for me Your slave You suffered such great fear, I beseech You to grant me the virtue of strength in the fearful hour of my death and when my spirit will be placed in close battle because of various temptations of the devil. And I pray that You turn away from my mind all doubts and evil thoughts in which my wayward nature can dwell, *ca propter*

peto cum David: Illumina occllos meos ne umquam obdormiam in morte; ne quando dicat inimicus meus: Prevalui adversus eam.

Chapter twelve

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the terrible trial through which You passed when, upon thinking of the death You would have to suffer, You sweated drops of blood being afflicted by the battle of the flesh and the spirit. You, powerful King, were victorious saying: "*Pater, non sicut ego volo set sicut tu*." Lord, since for me Your slave You suffered such supreme fear, I beseech You, by the virtue of that precious blood that You sweated for me, to console me when my spirit is in conflict and confusion because my evil works will be declared before You, my own conscience will accuse my deeds and my enemies will call on You to bring me to justice. Lord, in that hour I pray that in Your mercy You will show Yourself as pious God and human to me, as You did to St. Catherine the martyr when You visited her in jail and healed her wounds.

Chapter XIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the trial that You suffered when, with the fear of death and as a human feeling alone, You awoke the disciples saying: "*Non potuitis una ora vigilare mecum? Vigilate e orate quonium tribulacio proxima est et non est qui adiuvet.*" This You said to them, my Lord, begging them to accompany You so that Judas, who was gathering armed men to capture You, meek Lamb, might not find You alone. Lord, since for me Your slave it pleased You to suffer such strict solitude, I beseech You, in the hour when my strength falters and my heart is pierced with the pain of death, that by Your grace You visit me and You awaken my soul and not let it sleep in sin; that when I must pass through this valley of tears that I not be obstinate or persist in any error, but awaken in fervor and in Your love to go to You my Savior, for You are life, and do not delight in the destruction of the evil ones.

Chapter XIIII

Ihesu, spare me, for the trial that You suffered when with sovereign obedience You aligned Your will with God's,

You could say: "Father, the salvation of human lineage is necessary *quod unus moriatur homo pro populo ne tota gens pereat,* You want me to pay for their sins, Your sentence will be executed in me, I accept it. And I ask You to help me and not forsake me in this conflict so that I might be the victor and reconcile Adam and his children with You. *E non mea voluntas set tua fiat*." When the prayer was finished, the angel Your servant comforted You with great reverence. O immortal and loving King, I adore You, conqueror of the flesh who obeyed death to give me life. My Lord, because of this harsh sentence that You fulfilled for me Your slave, I beseech You to align my will with Yours as You aligned Yours with the will of the Father. And in my last hour, when I see the fearful sight of my enemies that will bring conflict against me for the grave sins that I committed in times of great fear, since You are powerful, that I might say: *Factus es michi, Domine, mi refugium et Deus meus in adiuctorium mee.*

Chapter fifteen

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the trial You suffered when, with warm-hearted love You offered and gave Yourself

to the Jews that came to capture You. And to fulfill our redemption, everlasting King, You approached them, and calling Judas a friend You lowered Your excellent head and gave him Your precious mouth (a que te diese paz). And You said twice to the Jews: "*Quem queritis ego sum.*" And for the defense of Your own You said: "*Si ergo me queritis sinite hos abire.*" Blessed are You, powerful Lord, that You offered Yourself to death for me, I beseech You, *que numquam cessem querentibus te,* to grant me the virtue that my heart always be tied to You all of my life as was St. John in the acts and torments that he suffered to the tomb.

Chapter XVI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the trial You suffered when the Jews dishonorably arrested You at the hour of matins, furiously and without courtesy they put a rope around Your neck and tied Your hands behind You. With all cruelty they pulled out Your hair, and some pulling from behind and others from ahead they took You to the priest Annas' house, and in front of him they accused You of many wrongs. Then his servant Malchus, whose ear You healed, slapped Your face so hard that it made a loud noise and

bruised Your face, saying: "*Sic respondes pontifici?*" And You, King of Heaven, with a feeling of great pain said: "*Si male locutus sum, testimonium perhibe de malo; si atem bene cur me cedis.*" Blessed are You, my Lord, eternal God, that suffered this for me Your slave. Therefore, Lord, I beseech You to grant me virtue to suffer for Your reverence and love all afflictions and pains and trials both corporeal and spiritual as St. Lawrence suffered the fire being placed on the grate over the live coals.

Chapter XVII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the loneliness that You suffered when You were abandoned by Your disciples and You saw the power of Your enemies that persecuted You with slander, mockery, numerous cruelties and false testimonies. Lord, since You suffered this for me Your slave, I beseech You to grant me virtue to always cease to offend You because of Your reverence and love, and cleanse my heart from the sins of envy and malice, in which I easily fall, and confessing I say: "*Peccata mea, Domine, sicut sagite infixa sunt in me, set antequam vulnera generent in me sana me, Domine, medicamento penitencie, Deus.*"

Chapter XVIII

Ihesu, spare me, just as You forgave St. Peter who denied You three times, yet You contemplated him with eyes of mercy, thus I similarly beseech You to contemplate me with eyes of mercy since I have often denied You and committed grave offenses because of my evilness. Since I too have failed to keep Your faith and hope, I confess knowing my many errors: *Tribularem si ne sciren misericordias tuas, Domine, qui dixisti: "Nollo mortem pecatoris set ut magis convertatur e vivat," qui cananeam et publicanum vocasti ad penitenciam, Magdalen remisisti peccata multa et Petrum lacrimantem sucepisti misericors Deus.*

Chapter XIX

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the dishonor You suffered when the Jews insultingly took You to the house of Caiaphas, pushing You this way and that, beating You, and blaspheming You with great reproach. And he [Caiaphas] asked You if You were the Son of God. And since You, with great humility, answered: "*Ego sum*," he maliciously tore Your clothing saying: "*Blasfemavit.*" And with his

approval they spat in Your face, that is *gloria santorum*, they pulled out Your glorious hair; some hit You in the neck, others slapped You in the face, which is *refeçio angelorum*, saying: "*Profetiza quis est qui te percusit.*" Lord, since You suffered this for me, I beseech You to grant me the virtue of complete patience so that I may suffer all of the insults, hurts, jeers for You, as You granted strength to the apostle St. Thomas when he was disemboweled, and free me from the sin of ire and from all cruelty by the merits of St. P[]um and St. Feliciam.

Chapter XX

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the anguish that You suffered at the hour of prime when Pilate, against justice, gave false sentence for which You were whipped. Lord, I beseech You to free me, Heart of Mercy, from the darkness which fills my mind. And grant me grace to judge justice and right as is pleasing to You; and if it be necessary, that I die for Your truth and justice, as did St. John the Baptist.

Chapter XXI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the punishments that You suffered when You received the crude beatings with great pain, Your body stripped, wounded with fearful and cruel wounds giving Your precious blood by which You fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "*Quis est iste qui venit de Eoden, tinctis vestibus de Bosrra?*" Lord, since for me Your slave You suffered this, I adore You and I beseech by the merit of these wounds, that You deaden all of my bad thoughts and that You grant me complete faith as You did the thief on the cross.

Chapter XXII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the dishonor that You received when Pilate ridiculed You by making You dress in purple as a human without wisdom, and by placing on Your head a crown of sharp thorns that pierced Your holy brow, fulfilling the prophecy of King Solomon: "*Filie Iherusalim, venite et videte regem coronatum.*" And to reproach You more they covered Your splendid face with a cloth *Dei Patris*. And making fun of You as You knelt they said: "*Ave, rex Judeorum.*" And they hit You with a cane

so many times that they stupefied You and split open Your excellent head. And not content with these cruelties, with loud voices they cried out: "*Crucifige, crucifige eum.*" And You, good Ihesu, so tormented, very humbly suffered it all for me Your slave who does not deserve it. Therefore, Lord, I beseech You, with all the humility that I can, to grant me virtue so that with due reverence I adore You when I see Your form on the altar and I delight in that vision. Like St. Thomas the doctor, I adore You and contemplate Your works.

Chapter XXIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the obedience that You worked when, after Pilate asked You false questions, with hypocrisy he washed his hands knowing Your innocence. Afterward, with fear of Caesar, he passed the sentence that You be crucified, such a harsh sentence that You obeyed with pleasing will in order to fulfill our redemption. Lord, since for me Your slave You denied Yourself, You, the creator, being obedient to the creature, I beseech You to free me by Your powerful hand from the sin of hypocrisy and all falsehood that gives death to the soul, as You freed

St. Peter from the waters of the sea.

Chapter XXIIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the fatigue that You suffered carrying the heavy cross on Your shoulders, that did not keep Your enemies from punishing You more. And they accused You of falsehood, calling You thief, evildoer, enemy of God, You, being the true God, suffered this for me Your slave. Lord, I beseech You to grant me virtue that my tongue be clean of all murmuring, and that my ears be deaf to the words that cause me to sin, and to hear Your praises and the divine offices with diligence. *Gloria, laus et honor tibi sit, rex Christe, redemptor nostre, filii David.*

Chapter XXV

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the great weight You suffered seeing Your grief-stricken mother coming after You, full of pain leaving the city of Jerusalem. You heard her cries, knowing that she was disturbed and anguished. Seeing You in the power of Your enemies, who were taking You to Your death on the cross between two thieves, the grieved Lady hastened crying and sobbing to get to You. Lord, feeling her pain, Your heart was grieved with a

sorrow so great that You fell to the earth, as a human weakening of natural strength, tired of many torments and pains that You had withstood without any rest all the night and day. Thus tormented with the natural love of a child, to console her You turned Your face to her; You spoke to the women that accompanied her: "*Filie Iherusalim, nolite flere super me.*" And the sad mother, when she saw Your wounded body, Your darkened, spat upon face, Your thorn-crowned head, Your bruised cheek, Your down-cast eyes, she did not recognize You so she could have asked the Jews: "What man is this that You take to kill with such haste and shame?" And they responded: "Woman, what do you ask? ¿Don't you recognize this man to be your son Ihesu that they call our king?" The Lady could have said: "Sirs, let me approach to see if it is Him, for of my son it is written: *Speciosus forma pre filiis hominum.*" And since they did not let her approach You, her heart was tormented with pain without measure. Lord, since for me Your slave it pleased You to suffer so much and to torment You mother, I beseech You by Your love to give me a good end.

Chapter XXVI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the shame You suffered when You were stripped and left nude before all of the village, Lord, since for me Your slave You gave Your body to their punishment and Your clothes to be cast for lots, I beseech You by Your complete poverty, to grant me grace that I might despise all superfluous riches for Your sake. And free me from the sins of covetousness and vanity so that I cast off the superfluous clothing and adornment of vanity by which I offend You, and that I recognize my rejected wretchedness bestowed upon me by my nature, and what I am and what I will return to, and that I follow You, good Ihesu, in poverty of spirit as did the apostles.

Chapter XXVII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the multiple pains that You, Lord, suffered at the hour of sext when the Jews, full of cruelty, crucified You, merciful Ihesu, not respecting Your excellence, the executioners put You on the cross and lowered it into the ground. And You, *rex mirabilis, Deus et homo*, You fulfilled the commandment without any obstinacy. Quickly You turned You back to the cross,

offering Yourself for us You would say: "*Pater, adiuva me; factus sum obediens usque ad morten propter filios Adami.*" You opened Your royal arms; You extended Your holy hands which they nailed. And then they fell upon you, my redeemer, like hungry dogs. One took Your right hand; he nailed it. Another took the left and pulling it with great force, dislocated Your arms and back. Others took Your holy feet without mercy; they pulled until they dislocated Your holy legs. And with three strong nails and vigorous strokes of the hammer, they pierced and folded Your hands and feet on the cross by Your will. And the cross being driven into the ground, You were lifted high so that the common people might know how Your enemies took complete vengeance on You. Be glorified and praised, my Lord, that You showed in that hour such charitable powerlessness, being God all-powerful. You, Lord, my Savior, Bishop consecrated on the altar of the cross, with supreme patience, Your mouth clenched, Humble Lamb, You were sacrificed for us as a true human. Wounded, broken, disjointed, nailed, You cried tears of pain from the terrible wounds that You suffered, because You were folded

on the wood, stretched, weakened from human substance fulfilling the prophecy of David: "*Fixerunt manus meas et pedes meos, dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea.*" And thus martyred, lamenting with great pains, You said to the Father: "*Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid me derelequisti?*" With strong affliction as a human that suffered with pains so strong and supreme that no heart can imagine, although the divinity that is part of You strengthened You and never left You. Lord, since for me Your slave it pleased You to be a martyr, suffering pains on the cross that exceeded all of the suffering of the martyrs, I adore You, God and human, hung suffering on the cross. And I beseech You, by the reverence of the grave pains that You suffered from the three nails, to give me the virtue to fulfill the three vows that I promised You, as St. Helen fulfilled them.

Chapter XXVIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the pain that You suffered from the wounds in Your hands and feet, by the breaking of Your flesh, skin, and veins, by the contraction of the nerves, by virtue of the running blood, *fons pietatis*, that it pleased You to give so abundantly and

without scarcity for me, although only a drop could save the entire world. Lord, I beseech You, for the excellency of Your five wounds, that You condescend to me the five virtues that I need, which I lack: clear devotion, knowledge of my sins, perfect contrition for them, true confession of the tongue, and complete satisfaction to work until my end, as St. Mary of Egypt.

Chapter XXIX

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the dishonor and great punishment that You suffered when You, creator of the world, were hung on the cross by two nails, Your body stripped and displayed between two thieves. As an evildoer You were mocked and blasphemed by those who said: "*Va qui destruis templum Dei, si rex Isrrael est, desçendat nunc de cruce.*" Lord, since for me Your slave You suffered so many insults, I beseech You to control my tongue that it praise You and not offend my neighbor, and cleanse it from all lies so that I might do Your will.

Chapter XXX

Ihesu, spare me, for the example that You gave us, praying for those that hurt You when You said: "*Pater,*

ignoce illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt", Lord, I beseech You to give me grace to forgive in my heart all that injure me, both living and dead. I revoke all the contrary things I think or say. And I beseech You to pardon them just as I want to be pardoned by You, since I gravely offend You by my malice, ignorance, weakness, and inattention, since I am a great sinner.

Chapter XXXI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the mercy that You showed by forgiving the thief, telling him: "*Hodie mecum eris in paradiso*," Lord, I beseech You that it please Your clemency to pardon me, since You know that I do not know how to call You or know You with the faith that this thief called You. But, just as I am, worthy of eternal death, I believe that Your mercy is no less today for me than it was for him. Lord, remember that I am Your servant, stamped with the sign of Your cross, and I confess Your faith.

Chapter XXXII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the very intimate pain that You suffered taking leave of Your beloved mother, who with anguish and pain You contemplated with grave sorrow

that lacerated Your heart, as it did the one that You so loved, lamenting You showed her the wounds that You had in the body that You received from her, desiring to say: "Lady mother, behold here is your son that you conceived of the Holy Spirit, and without pain as a virgin you gave birth. And you know that I was always humble and obedient to you. And now you see my great shame that I do not deserve. I entreat you, for my love, be strong and have patience, the hour is approaching in which I must die. I commend you to my Father that He console you until the third day that I am apart from you. I commend you to St. John, my disciple, take him as a son." *E adversus ad dicipulum dixisti: "Ei, ecce mater tua."*

And Your sorrowful mother, her arms opened, her body bent, obeyed Your commandment, her head inclined, with her hand she made the sign of the cross over You, but she could not respond because her tongue was silenced. Her spirit was deadened, her heart was made a ball of pain at the foot of the cross when she saw Your nude body being nailed and heard the vigorous blows of the hammer that pierced Your hands and feet. She saw how Your body was hung on two

nails, how the blood ran abundantly from Your wounds, how Your body and face were so deformed that no human mind could know them, how You were mocked and blasphemed. And she heard Your loud and tearful clamor to the Father, saying that You were forsaken by Him. Full of pain, she wanted to speak to You and draw near to You; but she did not have the strength nor the sense to do it. She received the blood that ran from You with great reverence. And watching You with great love, her heart was lacerated, pierced by a sharp sword, her soul anguished to such a degree that the Lady received a martyrdom of pain, because she felt the torments that You received along with You, as if of one flesh with You. And her pain multiplied to You pain upon pain.

E posumus credere that St. John, Your beloved disciple that was present at all of the torments that You received, he suffered such a great pain that he would lose his senses, pull out his hair, hit himself on the face and chest with repeated cries and abundant tears, to such a degree that on that day he was a martyr. The Magdalene with surpassing love, two sisters of the Glorious One with

a natural kinship, Martha compelled by kindness, all with great love and pain tore out their hair; lacerated their faces, arms, hands and chests; with sharp cries they bitterly mourned the cruel and dishonorable death that You were suffering, fearful that the Glorious One would give her own soul that same day.

Lord, since for me Your slave, who does not deserve it, it pleased You so much to suffer, and that Your mother, Queen of Heaven, that same day was martyred a supreme martyrdom, I beseech You, for the outcry that You sent to the Father and for the martyrdom that the Virgin Your mother passed through, I pray that You grant her to me as advocate in my life and death, that she be my intercessor.

Chapter XXXIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the bitterness You suffered when in pain You said "*Siçio,*" and they gave You a mixture of gall and vinegar, *fons ortorum, puteus aquarum vivençium*. Lord, since You are so good and it pleased You to suffer thirst for me, I beseech You to give me the virtue of abstinence and separate me from the sin of gluttony into which I fall, and make my heart worthy of

feeling the pain of Your passion to contemplate, feel, and mourn the pain that You suffered as did St. Francis.

Chapter XXXIIII

Ihesu, spare me, by virtue of the words that You, Ihesu, eternal life, said with the oppression of death at the hour of nones: "*In manus tuas, Domine, comendo spiritum meum.*" In that moment Your holy spirit was separated from Your holy body. I truly believe that Your divinity was always with You on the cross and in the sepulchre and descended to hell with Your spirit. Lord, since for me Your slave You desired to die, being eternal God, I adore You true living God and I beseech You, by the excellence of the merits that You deserved in the thirty three years of Your glorious humanity, and for the reverence of the death that You suffered for me, I pray that You pardon me from all of the sins that I have committed against You, against my soul, and against my neighbors since I learned to sin to the present moment. And in order to attain it I reverently say: "*Domine Ihesu Christe, Filii Dei unigeniti, pone passionen, crucem et mortem tuam inter iudicium tuum et animam meam, nunc et in*

ora mortis mee largiri digneris. Qui vivis, et.

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison, Domine, miserere. Christus Dominus factus est obediens usque ad morten. Qui passurus advenisti propter nos. ***P.*** *Christe eleison.* ***¥*** *Qui expanssis in cruce manibus traxisti omnia ad te secula.* ***P.*** *Christe eleison.* ***¥*** *Qui prophetice promisisti: ero mores tua, o mors.* ***P.*** *Christe eleison. Domine, miserere. Christus Dominus factus est obediens usque ad mortem et cetera. Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison. Domine, miserere. Christus et cetera. Credo in Deum Patrem, et cetera.*

Supplication

Most excellent Lord, dying on the cross You were the victor, and I offer You as many praises as I can, just as the angelic spirits praised You with the joy of our redemption saying: *Gloria in exçelsis Deo, et in terra et cetera. Bendiçio et claritas, sapiençia et graçiarum accio, honor, virtus, et fortitudo Deo nostro in secula seculorum, amen. Graçias agamus Domino Deo nostro. Dignum et iustum est, vere dignum et iustum est, equm est salutare nos tibi semper et ubique gracias agere. Domine sante,*

Pater omnipotens, eterne Deus, per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Supplication

Lord, since You loved sinners so much that it pleased You to redeem them on the cross, I, Costança, Your unworthy slave, adore You and bless You with all my understanding, memory and will, with the heart and the tongue, with all the powers that You gave me, I submit to You, I give You infinite praises and thanks for the death that You received for me. And I beseech You, with the most humility that I can, to receive my soul and my body, all of which I offer You according to what You gave me so that You fulfill in me Your complete will, just as creator in its creature, and that You guide me in Your service for whatever course You know is most beneficial for me, even if it be unpleasing to me. Lord, do not contemplate my laziness and forgetfulness nor my boldness and the ingratitude with which I turn away from You, not wanting to think or know Your benefits and favors which You continually give me like a blind, sick lamb, that walks alone without a shepherd, that is You, Ihesu, my redeemer; that You know that because of my pride

and vanity I have committed many mortal sins, I have broken Your commandments and I have never fulfilled the vows that I promised in perfection. I sinned with my five corporal senses committing with them perversities and numerous errors as is clear in Your sight. And You, my Lord, see that I often fall into dangerous snares and into the lake of death by my own great fault, and because of my powerlessness I cannot lift myself from them if Your hand of mercy does not lift me and the chain of Your love does not force me out of my laziness and harshness. Lord, as a mourner that is in danger, I beseech Your clemency that You soften the hardness of my heart and dedicate it to Yourself, and make it fit for Your grace since You are so powerful. *Crea in me cor mundum et espiritum rectum innova in viçeribus meis.* Otherwise I will remain wounded and dead. *In Deo, Domine, reminiscere miseracionum tuarum.*

And do not forget or abhor this worm of vile material that offers herself to You and submits as captive, and throws herself at Your feet like the Magdalene, asking for Your mercy and pardon. *Domine, miserere michi pecatriçe;* since for my defect I do not ask it with so much repentance

and contrition as she did, Lord, the disgrace is mine. You alone are the one that pardoned her. Although my poverty and blindness is great, with great necessity I call You doctor so that You remember that for Your clemency You created me in Your image and You brought, alleluia, the law of grace to life in this religion without my deserving. And now I perish full of sin with many numerous and heavy stains. Lord, since You were human and know the weakness of our sick flesh, You do not marvel at my inconstancy, because You know that I am conceived, born and raised in sin. My nature is inclined to sin, cowardly and lacking in all good things. Since, Lord, You behold my dangerous afflictions, heal me, see my needs and help me. Do not hope in my non-existent virtue and strength; You know that I cannot serve You without You. I truly believe: *Quod si vis potes me sanare.* Lord, I do not ask for riches nor days of life nor other temporal goods, but that You pardon me, as the Magdalene, so that I not be cast among those that do not bless Your holy name, that such as I am, I desire to bless You forever no matter where my soul is.

Chapter XXXV

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the wound which was made in Your side when You, true pelican, consented that Longinus open You with a lance and blood and water flowed forth, Lord, I beseech You to free me from the sin of vengeance, for which the Jews gave You such a harsh death. Censuring them the temple of Your body says: "*Popule meus, quid feci tibi aut in quo te costristavi? Responde michi. Quia eduxi te de terra Egipti, parasti crucem Salvatori tuo? Agios o Theos. Agios isquiros. Agios athanatos, eleyson ymas. Santus Deus. Sanctus fortis. Sanctus et inmortalis, miserere nobis. Wuia eduxisti per desertum quadraginta annis, et magna cibavi te, et introduxi in terram satis optimam, parasti crucen Salvatori tuo? Agios. Sanctus. Quid ultra debui facere tibi, et non feci? Ego quidem plantavi te vineam meam especio[si]ssimam et tu facta es michi nimis amara, aceto namque mixto cum felle sitim meam potasti, et lançea perforasti lactus Salvatori tuo? Agios. Santus.*"

Chapter XXXVI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, for the solitude that Your mother felt when she saw You dead, and wanting to lower You from the cross, she had no one to help her nor a tomb in which to place You, so embarrassing was Your poverty. And as the Glorious One implored to Our Lord to provide that which is necessary, then came Nicodemus and Joseph; they offered themselves to do her command and they brought all of the necessary items. They helped St. John lower You holy body; at the hour of vespers they placed You in the arms of the Virgin, Your mother. She received You with great reverence. Lord, since for me Your slave it pleased You for the Glorious One to pass through such great pain, I adore and bless You in her arms. *Benedictus es, Domine Deus patrum nostrorum, et laudabilis et gloriosus in secula. Et benedictum nomen glorie tue quod est sanctum et laudabile et gloriosum in secula. Benedictus es in templo sancto glorie tue. Et laudabilis. Benedictus es super tronum sanctum regni tui. Et laudabilis. Benedictus es super sceptrum divinitatis tue et laudabvilis. Benedictus es quia ambulas super penas ventorum. Et laudabilis.*

Benedicant te omnes angeli et sancti tui. Laudabilem et gloriosum in secula. Gloria Patri. Laudabili et glorioso in secula. Sicut erat. Et laus et honor et potestas et inperium. Benedictus es, Domine Deus patrum nostrum. Et laudabilis.

Chapter XXXVII

Ihesu, spare me, by virtue of the last service that Your mother the Virgin did for You when she covered Your glorious head with the shroud and anointed Your glorious body with precious ointment and wrapped You in a sheet, with great love and reverence she kissed Your holy mouth. And, though nauseated, St. John and the Marys kissed Your feet, taking leave of Your presence. And they helped put [Your body] in the sepulchre at the hour of compline, in order to fulfill Your work and so that You rest from Your labor in peace. Lord, since for me Your slave You desired to be buried in an earthly tomb belonging to someone else, I adore You and I beseech You to arrange my death for me. *Bendicite omnia et cetera.*

Chapter XXXVIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the faith that the Glorious One had in the three days that Your holy body was in the tomb, awaiting Your resurrection, and the comfort she gave Your disciples that were sad and fearful. Lord, I, Your slave, beseech You, by the excellence of the Glorious One's heart, to free me *ab omni inquinamento pecati, ignorancie, fragilitatis, et malicie quod est peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum*. And grant me complete hope in You so that I might die confessing Your faith, as St. Peter the martyr when he received martyrdom.

Christus factus es pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem.

P. *Mortem autem crucis.*

Prayer.

Respice quesumus, Domine, super hanc famulum tuam, pro qua Dominus noster Ihesus Christus non dubitabit manibus tradi nocençium et crucis subire tormentum.

O powerful cross, I adore you because you were worthy have Our Redeemer suffer upon you; you are blessed, wood that was the punishment of the Son of God and instrument of our redemption. O glorious cross, make me worthy to know

your excellence and to delight myself in praising you as did St. Andrew, so that you always be my guard, and free me from my visible and invisible enemies and all of their false imaginings, craftiness, artifices, deceitful intrigues, and mortal snares. O holy cross, for you I ask mercy to the One that was crucified on you that He give me the hour of my death as a shield between me and my enemies when earnestly they accuse me of faults and they want to steal away my soul to take it with them to the place where there is no redemption. Virtuous cross, for the victory that God achieved on you, free my soul from their power. *Salve, cruz preçiosa que in corpore Christi dedicata es et ex menbris eius tanquam margaritis ornata. Sucipe me pro amore illis qui pependit in te magister meus Christis. O cruz inenarabilis. O cruz inextimabilis. O cruz laudabilis que per totum mundum refulgens non me dimitas eramtem sicut ovem non abentem pastoren. O cruz fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis, nulla silva talem profert fronde, flore, germine: dulce lignum, dulces clavos, dulce pondus sustinens.*

Hymn

Vexilla Regis prodeunt,
fulget crucis misterium,
quo carne carnis Conditor
suspensus es patibulo.

Quo vulneratus insuper
mucrone dire lancee,
ut nos lavaret crimine,
manavit unda sangine.

Impleta sunt que concinit
David fidelis carmine
dicendo nacionibus
regnavit a ligno Deus.

Arbor decora fulgida,
hornata Regis purpura,
electa digno stipite
tam sancta menbra tangere.

Beata, cuius brachiis
secli pependit precium,
statera facta corporis,
predanque tulit tartaris.

O crux, ave, spes unica,
hoc passionis tempore
auge piis iuticiam,
reisque dona veniam.

Te, suma Deus Trinitas,
collaudet omnis spiritus,
quos per crucis misterium
salva, rege per secula, amen.

Antiphon

Super omnia ligna cedrorum tu sola excelsior in qua vita mundi pependit, in qua Christus trihunphavit, et mors mortem superavit in eternum per signum crucis.

Prayer

Omnipotens senpiterne Deus, qui humano generi ad inmitandum humilitatis exenplum salvatoren nostrum carnen sumere et cruçen subire fecisti, concede propiçius ut et paciencie ipsius habere documenta et resurectionis consorcia mereamur. Per eumdem.

Chapter XXXIX

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the powerful work that You accomplished when Your soul descended into hell and by Your word You broke the doors, You visited the holy fathers and cheered them with Your presence, and brought them out of the darkness in which they had been. Lord, I, Your slave, beseech You, by the virtue and love of the Glorious One, to free my soul so that it not be cast into the deep lake of hell, although I often deserve it.

Beneditus Dominus, Deus Isrrael, quia visitavit et fecit redempcionem plebi sue.

Canticum angelorum.

Te Deum laudamus, et cetera.

Lord, for this mercy that You performed to those that were in limbo, I beseech You to have mercy on all of the souls that are in purgatory, especially those of my father and mother, of my lord the king Don Pedro, and of my lady the queen Doña Catalina, and of my lady Doña María, and of all those whom I have charge over, all of the souls that suffer. And I pray for the reverence of Your passion to remove them from their suffering and take them to glory.

Chapter forty

Ihesu, spare me, by the resurrection when in Your own virtue You powerfully left the tomb like a strong lion, glorious rising sun of justice, it pleased You to appear and console Your Glorious mother who desiring to see You said: "*Esurge gloria mea; esurge psalterium et citara.*" You indeed said: "*Esurgam diluculo.*" And You, Lord, appeared to her with great splendor, the banner of Your victory in Your right hand, You said: "God save You, queen of heaven, be happy that I defeated the cross and freed the sinners from the power of Satan. I arose, You will live

with me in glory forever. Very beloved mother, behold and see here the holy fathers that bless You and give You thanks, because I redeemed them with the flesh that I received from You." The Virgin happily and reverently adored You saying: "*Gloria tibi, Domine, qui surexisti a mortuis, Deus meus es tu et confitebor tibi, Deus meus es tu et adorabo te, quia convertisti plantum michi in gaudium michi et circundisti me leticia. His est dies quam fecit Dominus, exultemos et letemur in ea.*"

Lord, I beseech You, by the joy that You gave to the Glorious One with Your presence, give me grace, so that I follow, bless and praise You with diligence. *Christus resurgens ex mortuis iam non moritur, mors illi ultra non dominabitur quod enim vivit Deo.* ***¥*** *Dicite in nacionibus.* ***P.*** *Quia Dominus regnavit a ligno.* ***Prayer.*** *Deus qui odierna die per Unigenitum tuum eternitatis nobis aditum devita morte reserasti, vota mea que perveniendo aspiras ecciam ajuvando prosequere. Per eumdem.* ***Antiphon.*** *Regina celi, letare, alleluia. Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia. Resurexit sicut dixit, alleluia. Ora pro nobis rogamus, alleluia.* ***¥*** *Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genitrix.*

P. *Ut digni.* ***Prayer.*** *Oremus. Graciam tuam quesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, angelo nunciante, Christi Filii tui incarnacionem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem ad resurectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eumdem.*

Lord, I ask for mercy that You console and aid the people that are in tribulation. Especially those in my charge and whom I love. Give them grace that they live and die in true penitence. And especially I beseech You, by our lord the king Don Enrique, that You strengthen them in virtue and increase their lives and free them from betrayal and increase his kingdom.

Chapter XLI

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the joy that the Marys had at the sight of the angel, informed of Your resurrection, and St. James the lesser when he saw You resurrected, and the Magdalene when You appeared to her in the garden and You said: "Mary." And she with great happiness responded: "Master and Lord," knowing that You were the one who had forgiven her sins and completed her in grace. And with joy she said to Your disciples: "*Resurexit Christus spes mea,*

preçedet vos in Galilea."

Chapter XLII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, as You forgave St. Peter and consoled him with Your presence when he was sad and crying over his sin, Lord, I Your slave beseech You to give me the grace to bitterly mourn all of my sins like him. And I ask You for the mercy to remove from my heart all doubts against Your faith and all bad thoughts, as You removed doubt from St. Thomas when he placed his fingers in Your wounds and was confirmed in the faith. And Lord, gladden my heart in Your works, as Your disciples were gladdened at Your resurrection.

Chapter XLIII

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by virtue of the solemn ceremony that You performed, forty-four days after Your resurrection, when You took leave of the Virgin and Your disciples: gloriously and powerfully Your holy humanity and virtuous divinity ascended to heaven. In Your infinite virtue You left the right hand of God the Father with God the Holy Spirit, three people in one God as I believe, adore and confess. And I wait for that day of judgement

when You will come and judge the living and the dead, God and human. Lord, I, Your slave, beseech You to judge me on that day according to who You are and You own condition and not according to my works, by the virtue of Your beloved heart. And for the merits of the Virgin do not remember my sins.

Hymn

Eterne Rex altissime,
Redemptor et fidelium,
quo mors soluta deperit,
datur trihunphus gratie.

Scandens tribunal dextere
Patris, potestas omnium
collata est Ihesu celitus,
que non erat humanitus;

Ut trina rerum machina
celestium, terestium
et infernorum condita
flectat genu iam subdita.

Tremunt videntes angeli,
versa vice mortalium:
culpat caro, purgat caro,
regnat Deus Dei caro.

Tu esto nostrum gaudium,
qui es futurus premium,
sit nostra in te gloria,
per cunta semper secula.

Gloria tibi, Domine,
qui escandis supra sidera,
cum Patre, Sancto Spiritu,
in sempiterna secula. Amen.

Antiphon

O Rex glorie, Domine virtutum, qui trihunphator hodie super omnes celos ascendisti, nec derelinquas nos orphanos, set micte promissum Patris in nos Spiritum veritatis, alleluya. ***¥.*** *Elevata est magnificencia tua, alleluya.* ***P.*** *Super çelos, alleluya.* ***Prayer.*** *Conçede quesumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui hodierna die Unigenitum tuum redenptorem nostrum ad celos acendisse credimus, ipsi quoque mente in celestibus habitemus. Per eumdem Dominum.*

Chapter forty-four

Ihesu, have mercy on me, by the advantageous work that You did ten days after Your ascent, when the Holy Spirit descended with a great sound and tongues of fire upon the Glorious One and the apostles and excited and comforted them. Lord, I Your slave beseech You to cleanse my understanding from the darkness that I am in and to excite my heart to Your desire O God Holy Spirit who is sovereign light. And grant me contrition, fear and trembling to receive You with reverence, humility and cleanliness as corresponds to my salvation. I also beseech You to send Your grace on all of the ladies of this monastery and to

increase their virtue and give them a good end, since You know my great defect that I am negligent in ruling them, nor am I worthy nor capable of correcting them because of my poverty of knowledge and judgement. Lord, fulfill what is lacking in me, thus I pray that You command them and me to Your service.

Hymn

Veni, Creator Spiritus,
mentes tuorum visita,
inple superna gracia
que tu creasti pectora.

Qui Paraclitus diceris,
dopnum Dei altissimi,
fons vivus, ignis, caritas
et spiritalis uncio.

Tu septiformis gracie,
destre Dei tu digitus,
tu rite promisum Patris,
sermone ditans gutur[a]:

Hostem repellas longius,
pacemque dones protinus,
ductore sit te previo,
vitemus omne noxium.

Ascende lumen sensibus,
infunde amorem cordibus,
infirma nostri corporis
virtute firmans perpeti.

Per te sciamus da Patrem,
nogscamus atque Filium,
te utriusque Spiritum
credamus omni tenpore.

Sit laus Patri, cum Filio,
Sancto simul Paraclito,
nobisque mittat Filius
carissima Santi Spiritus. Amen.

Prose

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, et emitte celitus luçis tue radium. Veni, Pater pauperum, veni, dator munerum, veni, lumen cordium. Consolator obtime, dulcis ospes anime, dulce regrigerium. In labore requies, in extu tenperies, in flectu solacium. O lux beatisima, reple cordis intima tuorum fidelium; sine tuo numine nichil est in omine, nichil est innoxium. Lava quod est sordidum, riga quod est aridum. Sana quod est saucium. Flecte quod est frigidum. Rege quod es devium. Da tuis fidelibus in te confidentibus sacrum septenarium. Da virtutis meritum. Da salutis exitum. Da perenne gaudium. Amen.

Antiphon

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium et tui amoris in eis ignem ascende, qui per diversitatem ligarum multarum gentes in unitatem fidei congregasti. **¥**

Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur. ***℣.*** *Et renovabis facien tere.*

Deus, qui corda fidelium Sancti Spiritus illustracione docuisti, da nobis in eodum Spiritu recta sapere e de eius semper consolatione gaudere. Per eiusdem.

I, Costança, confess that I am a grave sinner, full of great sins and without virtue, that I am not worthy of receiving any of the kindnesses that I have requested. Therefore, with all the humility that I can, I beseech all of the saints named in this prayer to offer your works and deaths for me, beseeching to Our Lord that for your merits He might hear my petitions and grant me mercy according to His will.

Supplication that follows the Hours of the Nails[112]

Lord, powerful God, Jesus Christ Redeemer, who by your precious blood redeemed my soul, Lord have mercy on me because of your abundant clemency. Grant me Grace and virtue that I might live and die in your holy faith, believing, confessing, and affirming well and completely the fourteen articles as they pertain to my salvation. I, from this time forward, protest, revoke, annul, and contradict all to the contrary that happens and is said and passes through my heart and mind by whatever artifice. When it does so happen, I attribute it to my weakness and the persuasion of the enemy. I submit myself to the correction of the holy mother Church as a true Christian.

[112] Found on page 81 of Wilkins edition of Constanza's manuscript.

Joys of the Virgin[113]

These fifteen joys of the glorious virgin saint Mary are for the number of the fifteen steps that Our Lady climbed in the temple, that represented these same joys. The aforementioned sister arranged them in order to have the Virgin as an advocate.

The first. Lady saint Mary, mother of God, queen of the angels, advocate of sinners, I ask you for mercy because of the great joy that you received when the word of God descended from heaven, and confined Himself in your holy entrails, and from them He took on a suit of humanity in His own virtue to save us. Lady Mary, by virtue of this first joy, I beseech you to ask Him, based on your love, to order my life, my works and my death to His service and my salvation.

Second. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy you received in the nine months that you carried the Son of God enclosed in the sacristy of your belly without any pain.

Third. Lady Mary, I ask you for the great joy and sweetness with which you birthed the Son of God.

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[113] Found on pages 81-84 of Wilkins edition of Constanza's manuscript.

Fourth. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received when you saw the Son of God in front of you our great one in the form of His servant, emerging from the marriage bed of your entrails by His own virtue, God and human, dressed in your flesh, beautiful above all the sons of Adam. And you, with great faith, reverence and devotion, adored Him as your true God.

Fifth. Lady Mary, I ask for the joy that you received seeing yourself to be mother of God and human, virgin mother delivered without pain.

VI. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with the angels that came to praise your son, and with the milk that was found in your breasts, given by the Holy Spirit, with which you suckled your creator.

VII. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with the Son of God, treating Him like a child, wrapping him up, swaddling him, nursing him, caressing him, lulling him, and kissing him like a real mother.

Eight. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with the three kings that came with great faith from distant lands in search of your child, God and human, to

praise Him and make an offering to Him.

Nine. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with your son, God and human, when you discovered Him in the temple after having lost Him for three days. And you searched for Him with infinite labor and pain.

Ten. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with your son, God and human, when He returned to you from the desert after fasting for forty days and nights and defeating the temptations of the enemy.

XI. Lady Mary, I ask you for the multiple joys that you received with the Son of God in this world, speaking with Him and hearing his holy doctrine, and seeing the virtuous works that he did, since he was powerful God. And with pure humility he was under your orders and commands as your true son.

XII. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received on the hour that your son appeared to you, God and human, resuscitated by His own virtue made freed from among the dead, He visited you and consoled you with love.

XIII. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received when you saw your son ascend to heaven in His own virtue,

God and human, dressed in the same flesh that He received from you.

XIIII. Lady Mary, I ask you for the joy that you received with the Holy Spirit when it descended upon you and the apostles in the figure of tongues of fire.

Fifteen. Lady Mary, I ask you for the complete and perfect joy that you received the hour when your body and soul were lifted to heaven and exalted above the choirs of angels, seated at the right hand of God the Father who created you, with whom you live and reign forever.

Supplication. Lady, I Costança, your unworthy slave, pray these fifteen joys, and ask your grace by reverence of the joys, have mercy on me in all of my tribulations, afflictions, and needs. Don't abandon me, abhor me or scorn me. By your virtue, remember that my redeemer was born from you for my sins. Because of this reward given to you, I ask that at the hour of my death you be my p[ ]a and defender, that you free me from my enemies, and from their temptations and powers, and that you grant me grace and the virtue of firm faith and hope in the wounds and the death of my Lord Ihesu Christo so that my soul departs my

body in peace.

Protestation. Moreover, most merciful Lady, I beseech your magnanimity that you calm my powerful judge, your son, and that you ask Him, on behalf of your love, not to judge me in justice nor to remember my iniquities or the great debts that I owe him; by virtue of your worthiness, by excellence and virtue of the redemptive pains, wounds and death He received for me, beg Him to forgive me my sins and to show Himself as merciful God and human to me although I am a terrible sinner. God and human I believe Him to be; God and human I confess Him to be; God and human I affirm Him to be. I declare, revoke, and annul every word or thought or imagination that says differently and attribute it to my weakness or to the working of the enemy. And I submit myself as a true Christian to the correction of the mother holy Church.

Seven Sorrows of the Virgin[114]

The seven sorrows of Our Lady the Virgin Mary. The aforementioned sister arranged them.

Blessed be your heart, Lady, that suffered pain upon the circumcision of your son Ihesu. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that was troubled when you heard the prophecy of Simeon the patriarch.

II. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that was troubled by the death of the innocents. And for fear of Herod, you took your son to Egypt.

Third. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that suffered great pain and sickness for three days when you searched for your son in Jerusalem. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that suffered loneliness, being apart from the presence of your son for forty days and nights when He fasted in the desert.

IIII. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that was pierced with pain when you heard that your son was imprisoned, spat upon, wounded, whipped, pricked with thorns, condemned to death on the cross, and when you saw it [the cross] placed upon His shoulders.

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[114] Found on pages 84-85 of Wilkins edition of Constanza's manuscript.

Fifth. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that was torn open at the foot of the cross when you saw your son nailed, hung upon the tree, mocked, blasphemed, wounded and afflicted. He told you: "*Mulier, ecce filius tuus*." Blessed be your heart, Lady, that was full of pain when you held your dead and wounded son in your arms. Blessed be your heart, Lady, that suffered great pain when you left Him, our Savior, in his sepulchre.

Lady, I Costança, your unworthy slave who with devotion prays your nine great sorrows, beseech you by your mercy and by the reverence of your sorrows to hear my prayers, to free me from the spiritual and corporal dangers of this life, so that by your worthiness I might take part in your joys, where you always reign with God, amen.

Prayer that follows the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary[115]

Lord, I Constanza, Your slave, know that my ignorance is great. My coarseness is strong because I confess that I am very lazy and without virtue. I believe that my works are defective. I humbly beseech Your mercy that if anything that I have written in this book, from the prayer on Your life and passion, to the Hours of the Nails, to the ordering of the Hours of Your Incarnation, to the Fifteen Joys and Seven Sorrows and litany of Our Lady, that You, Lord, do not contemplate anything but my desire to praise and serve You. I confess that my mind is not elevated enough to examine it, nor my heart capable of preserving it, nor my tongue worthy to utter it because of my great defect. Therefore, Lord, if I placed any principle or misspoken word or in any manner I erred, I attribute it to the ignorance and carelessness that has such a large place in me. But if it is that something is less-than-well said, which to this point has not come to my attention, as a faithful Catholic I revoke and annul it from now for all eternity. And I submit myself to the correction of the

[115] Found on page 90 of Wilkins edition.

Holy Church. I beseech You, in the memory of whose incarnation and passion I composed the aforementioned things, to make me a participant of the merits of the people that pray it, so that in this world You might be praised and in the other world we might be consoled with Your glorious vision, amen.

Prayer that follows several Psalms and Liturgical readings in Latin[116]

I believe with a pure heart and I confess with a faultless mouth that my Lord Jesus Christ is the true God and human, son of the everlasting Father and of the virgin mother, price of the redemption of my soul. Life of my pilgrimage, for whose love I have the holy Catholic faith. Lord, because of my weakness in many disgraces I offended You. And I disturbed Your great authority. And You, pious and merciful One, You give mercy to all that call upon Your holy name Jesus. Therefore, most pious Lord, I beseech You by Your great mercy and by the virtue of Your holy passion that You would desire to forgive me, a sinner, Your servant. *Qui cum Deo Patre in unitate.*

God save You precious flesh of Jesus Christ, which suffered for me. Cleanse me inside, holy flesh. Deep blood of Jesus Christ, because of you, let my understanding be cleansed and purified in a true manner, to which is sung: Hosannah. Grant me Your life when the time of Your wrath arrives.

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[116] Found on page 99 of Wilkins edition.

To you, pious Lady, I commend myself. Holy Mary, mother of God, true holy virgin without sin, be my strong faith on the last day.

I adore you, worthy truth hidden in that white figure. My heart has a great affection for you because by contemplating you all dies, vision, taste, touch. But only by hearing I truly believe all of the things that the Son of God said because there is nothing truer than His word. On the cross was hidden only His divinity; in you is hidden the divinity and humanity. I believe and confess all, and I ask that which the penitent thief. I do not see the wounds as St. Thomas did, but I confess that You are my true God. Always make me believe in You with hope and love. Oh memorial of the death of the Lord, o bread that gives life to humanity, give life to my soul so that it lives for You. Give it Your sweet savor. Oh pious pelican, Lord Jesus Christ, cleanse me with Your precious blood the flowing of which can save all the world, and can make us all sinless. Oh Lord Jesus Christ, who I now see as husband, when will be completed in me that which I desire so that I may see You revealed in the blessed

eternal glory? Amen.

Supplication on the day of my death[117]

Because the end of my life approaches, it is necessary to give account.

I, Constanza, confess to You, Lord my God that I am a grave sinner who wasted my life doing bad things. I transgressed Your will to do mine. I repent of all the sins that I committed. I beseech You, Jesus Christ my Lord, to give me the grace to die believing and confessing Your holy faith completely. Lord, if Your will is to take me today or tonight, I offer and place Your holy incarnation and all of the pains that Your humanity suffered for me between you and my sins, Lord, because of the great defect that is in me since I should feel pain and contrition upon seeing the terrible offenses that I did to You, and not recognizing the many great benefits that Your powerful hand did for me, a worm without worth. To Yourself, Jesus, I offer the agonies that You suffered on the cross, being disjointed and nailed with three nails, as payment for my sins. Lord, remember that the price of my soul is Your holy blood that abundantly poured from five

[117] Found on pages 108-109 of Wilkins edition.

parts of Your body with fearful and great pain, until You were required to give up Your spirit Lord Jesus, I place Your own merits between me and Your wrath. In no other manner do I argue with Your judgement. It is true that I deserve damnation. I believe it, I confess it, and I fear it. I beseech You with all the humility and reverence that I can to contemplate the sentence that my sins deserve according to Your greatness and Your great mercy, Jesus, my redeemer and judge, mediator, God and human.

Vita

Mary Elizabeth Baldridge was born in Pippa Passes, Kentucky on June 13, 1972. She lived in Pippa Passes throughout her formative years. She attended elementary school at Caney Elementary and high school at Knott County Central where she graduated in 1990. She then attended Berea College from 1990-1994 where she graduated with a B.A. in Spanish. From there she attended graduate school at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she received an M.S. in Communications in 1996, an M.A. in Spanish in 1999, and a Ph.D. in Modern Foreign Languages in 2004.

Mary is currently working as an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee.