

The 'popular' interest in 'Celtic Christianity' is, in Bradley's words (p. 189), driven by 'romantic nostalgia and wishful thinking' and, more prominently in earlier revivals, by 'denominational point-scoring'. But if Christianity is concerned with truth, then surely Christians ought to be casting very cold eyes on any 'Celtic Christianity' which we learn about in such suspect ways.

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Gallia pontificia. Répertoire des documents concernant les relations entre la papauté et les églises et monastères en France avant 1198, I: Diocèse de Besançon. By Bernard de Vregille, René Locatelli and Gérard Moyse. (Regesta Pontificum Romanorum.) Pp. 372 incl. 7 maps. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998. DM 178. 3 525 36034 7

This is the first volume in what will be a major series. Exploiting a very large number of archives and collections, de Vregille, Locatelli and Moyse have tracked down all extant papal letters and charters sent to the diocese of Besançon before 1198, along with letters from members of the Curia, conciliar decisions relating to Besançon, reports from papal judges delegate, and the rare letters that survive from the inhabitants of the diocese to the Curia. Following in the main the format worked out by Paul Kehr for *Italia pontificia*, the editors have divided their material into sections concerned with the archbishopric, the cathedral chapters, the various abbeys and colleges of seculars, the monastic orders, both male and female, the military orders, and finally individuals who attracted papal attention. Each section is preceded by a brief but lucid historical introduction in French, well-illustrated by maps showing the distribution of possessions or houses across the diocese. The editors have then printed a summary in Latin of each document under the name of the abbey or monastery to which it refers; this necessitates some repetition, since many charters or judgements affected more than one house. The source for each document and its date are given in French, with references to recent historiography and additional editorial comment where necessary; known forgeries are clearly marked. In sum, the volume is well organised and clearly set out. It sheds intriguing if flickering light on about 800 years of Christian history in an area through which popes and pilgrims regularly journeyed on their way to or from the Great St Bernard Pass, where Columbanian, Cluniac and Cistercian monasteries flourished in turn, along with many other lesser orders, where the relative weakness of imperial control may explain to some extent the frequency of papal legations. The attacks on Besançon by a noble of Charles the Fat, the lengthy quarrel between the canons of St John and those of St Stephen over which was the original cathedral chapter, the disputes over possession of salt works, the confusion caused in the diocese by the actions of Frederick Barbarossa's antipopes, are among other incidents that should attract more attention from historians now that they can draw on this useful volume. It augurs well for the standing of the series as a whole.

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