overall contexts of the relevant manuscripts might have been enlightening. The latest of the lives he has studied was composed about 1186 (Herbert's), and this first layer, so to speak, of Becket hagiography expands, indeed almost explodes, in succeeding decades, through and beyond the great occasion on July 7, 1220, when the martyr's body was translated to the magnificent shrine in the newly rebuilt cathedral. A treatment of that expansion, of the same high quality as the present work and perhaps by Staunton himself, would be most welcome.

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The Privilege of Poverty: Clare of Assisi, Agnes of Prague, and the Struggle for a Franciscan Rule for Women. By **Joan Mueller**. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006. x + 192 pp. $40.00 cloth.

Joan Mueller seeks to correct what she perceives as a problematic lacuna in the contemporary historiography of the early Franciscan movement—the lack of "historically consequential" women's voices and experiences (3). Mueller's book, an effort to reveal the Franciscan sisters' contribution, relies for source material on papal letters addressed to monasteries associated with Clare and on the four letters that Clare wrote to Agnes of Prague between 1234 and 1253. Mueller uses these sources to chronicle the political struggles and negotiations undertaken by Clare of Assisi and Agnes of Prague in the forty-one years between Clare's 1212 vow of obedience to Francis and the official papal approval, in 1253, of a Franciscan rule for women, the Rule of Saint Clare.

Mueller begins her study by positing an atmosphere of "sexual complementarity" (13) that, she believes, thrived in thirteenth-century Italy. She argues that the Italian religious life of this time fostered an "essential partnership" (16) between Franciscan friars who sought shelter, food, and healing, and the local women religious who provided such things in return for pastoral care. After the death of Francis and the growth of the Franciscan movement, the friars began to acquire more permanent monastic structures and provisions; no longer requiring women's services, the friars began to see the women as burdensome and no longer provided for their pastoral needs, thus leaving in a crisis situation the multitudes of Italian women inspired by evangelical poverty. Mueller then shows that, at this point, Cardinal Ugolino stepped in to protect various communities of Italian penitential women by absorbing them all under a set of constitutions (the "Ugolinian formula"), subjecting them to the Benedictine Rule, and placing them directly under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See. He wished the sisters to have ecclesiastical stability and thus endowed them with property holdings, capable of receiving rents and tithes that provided a stable income. This did not jibe with Clare's vision of a distinctively *Franciscan* vocation. Here Mueller's literary strengths truly shine—her very sensitive reading of the sources yields insight into Clare's deliberate cultivation of an emphatically Franciscan identity.

Mueller is keen to show that Gregory *needed* the leadership and spiritual reputation of Clare in order to promote his monastic reform for women and to continue to incorporate and regulate women's communities in the Ugolinian federation. Aware of this need, Clare wielded great political acumen in negotiating a papal exemption to ensure her community's dedication to

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radical poverty. This was the privilege of poverty, which freed Clare and her sisters from being compelled to accept possessions. Even after this small victory, Clare continued to fight for a Franciscan Rule for women because she so desired to associate her community with Francis as its founder. Clare's friendship with Agnes of Prague, sister to King Wenceslas I of Bohemia, would prove to be an asset in her mission to garner papal approval for a Franciscan rule for women. In her story of the making of this rule, Mueller is particularly apt at highlighting the key role of international politics—specifically the precarious position of Gregory's Papal States, which were under threat from the aggrandizing Emperor Frederick II who sought to unite all of Italy under German rule. Against his advance, Gregory sought an alliance with Wenceslas, who acquiesced only when, in 1238, the pope granted his sister's request for the privilege of poverty for her monastery of Prague.

When Gregory IX died in 1241 and was replaced by Innocent IV, Agnes wrote to the new pope asking for a Franciscan Rule for women. After a series of denials on the part of the papacy and a series of refusals on the part of Agnes and Clare to accept the Benedictine Rule and landed resources, Innocent finally agreed to negotiate a solution. He appointed Cardinal Rainaldo to work with Clare "to compose a Rule that would recognize unendowed Franciscan women in law" (114). The Rule established "the Order of Poor Sisters that Blessed Francis founded." At the heart of her Rule, Clare defined exactly what she meant by living in poverty—"specifically by not receiving or having possession or ownership either themselves or through an intermediate person, except as necessity requires for the integrity and proper seclusion of the monastery" (117). This would ensure that, among Clare's succeeding sisters and abbesses, there would be no misinterpretation of her ideal of poverty the way there had been in the case of the Franciscan men after the death of Francis.

Mueller's stated methodology in constructing this story is to follow closely "the sources themselves," which focus rather exclusively on cultivating "the one thing necessary" to Franciscan life, the privilege of poverty (ix). In this, Mueller is terrifically successful. We have here a very complete story of how Clare and Agnes agitated first to garner the privilege of poverty to live precisely as Francis and Christ had lived, and then how they used this privilege as a stepping stone on the road to gaining papal approval of a Franciscan Rule for women. Even with these successes secured, however, Mueller's narrative remains focused on the ways in which women responded to male legislation and male models for female spirituality and proper female religious life. I often wondered if Mueller's goal of demonstrating women's contribution to shaping early Franciscan history might have been better served had she shifted her focus from the legalistic compromises struck between Clare and Agnes and their male superiors to their vision of a correctly lived Franciscanism. I feel as if the implications of Clare's thought could have been drawn more fully. For example, Clare's insistence on the lived experience of poverty was based in an incredibly sophisticated sense of Christology; it was grounded in her belief that, to enter into a loving relationship with Christ (or with anyone else for that matter), the individual had to assume the material human conditions of Christ, that is, the conditions of being poor and downtrodden. Mueller shows that Clare's theology of poverty is what today we would call "social consciousness" (106); but it seems crucial to me to note that, for Clare, the social *was* the spiritual. Clare thus

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gives voice to a theology of mutuality that is strikingly similar to the doctrines of later Spiritual Franciscans such as Jacopone da Todi (b. 1236) and Ubertino of Casale (b. 1259). Is it possible that they borrowed from Clare? This would seem to demonstrate a remarkably profound example of Franciscan women's influences on the shaping of the Order. But perhaps this is to get ahead of the game—this is precisely the kind of work Mueller's book demonstrates must be undertaken now in order to correct our understanding of early Franciscan history. Mueller has identified an omission in the early history of the Franciscan movement, she has indicated the richness of the sources with which scholars can begin reconstructing that history, and, with *The Privilege of Poverty*, she has made a successful first step in that direction, demonstrating with clarity and precision Clare's vision of community and her passion for Franciscan identity.

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Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240–1570. By **Eamon Duffy**. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006. xiv + 202 pp. $35.00 cloth.

Eamon Duffy's newest book, *Marking the Hours*, lends new meanings to the definition of a "used book." In the history of medieval prayer, Books of Hours were among the most widely used Latin devotional texts. Their popularity is attested to by the large number, almost 800, of extant manuscripts. Thousands of printed texts were also produced from the late fifteenth century to the 1570s. These book were regularly consulted as devotional aids marking the liturgical "hours" of Matins, Prime, Vespers, and so on, allowing more laity access to this aspect of monastic piety. Books of Hours also typically contained about one-third of the Psalter, as well as indulgences, prayers to the Virgin, and other sets of prayers.

In addition to their widespread popularity as spiritual guides for daily use, these books were put to use by generations of readers as places to record and store other information. Birth and death dates, poems, charms, reminders to pray on the anniversary of deaths, various prayers, and other jottings were written in blank spaces. As Duffy notes, he is interested in tracing "a history written quite literally in the margins" (x). Manuscripts, early printed texts, and paper itself were precious commodities. No reader of late medieval and early Tudor texts is surprised by the doodles and marginalia of contemporaries. Yet the personal character of much information indicates that Books of Hours were for many families the "go to" place for saving intimate information for more than one generation. In this regard they were akin to treasured family Bibles in later centuries.

Books of Hours have previously been highly valued by collectors for the beauty of their lavish ornamentation, images, and presentation. The elegance of many of these volumes is incontestable. Often illustrated with vibrant colors, some had jeweled covers and others included elegant miniatures of the patroness or patron who commissioned them, as well as elaborate images of favorite saints. These volumes were initially owned by the elite and carried or held in a sleeve as a sign of piety. While the cost declined significantly when printing enabled ownership by middle-class Tudor citizens, the care for presentation, images, and other embellishments did not diminish regular use

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