

How the Office of Curates is Ordained of God

John Wycliffe

Roman Catholic · Late Medieval · Treatise

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INTRODUCTION

Written in the final years of Wycliffe's life, after his expulsion from Oxford and retreat to Lutterworth, this tract belongs to the vernacular polemics that gave English Lollardy its voice and supplied the Reformation with much of its anticlerical vocabulary a century and a half early. The complaint is structured as a catalogue of "defaults", curates who chase benefices, neglect preaching, drain English wealth into foreign hands, and lead souls to hell by silence or by substituting human tradition for the gospel. Wycliffe writes in the plain Middle English of a man who has decided the dispute is no longer academic and addresses the king and laity directly over the heads of the prelates he indicts. Expect prosecutorial heat, not meditation: a sustained accusation read aloud, point by point, against a clerical order the author believes has forfeited its office.

From the Manuscript in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

The office of curates is ordained of God; few do it well and many full evil, therefore test we their defaults, with God's help:

I. They are more busy about worldly goods than virtues and good keeping of men's souls

They are more busy about worldly goods than virtues and good keeping of men's souls. For he that can best get riches of this world together, and have a great household, and worldly array, is held to be a worthy man of holy church, though he know not the best point of the gospel. Such a one is praised and borne up by the bishops and their officers. But the curate that gives himself to study holy writ and teach his parishioners to save their souls, and live in meekness, penance, and busy labour about spiritual things, and cares not about worldly respect and riches, is held to be a fool and destroyer of holy church. He is despised and persecuted by high priests and prelates and their officers, and is hated by other curates. This makes many to be negligent in their spiritual cures, and to give themselves to occupations and business about worldly goods. These negligent curates think but little, how dearly Christ bought man's soul with his precious blood and death, and how hard a reckoning he shall make at doomsday

for those souls. They would seem to be out of Christian faith — for they make not themselves ready to come thither, and to answer how they came into their benefices, and how they lived and taught, and spent poor men's goods. For if they had such a faith in their minds, they would begin a better life, and continue therein.

II. Who can excuse these covetous clerks from simony and heresy?

The second default is, that they run fast, by land and by water, in great peril of body and soul, to get rich benefices; but they will not knowingly go a mile to preach the gospel, though christened men are running to hell for want of knowing and keeping of God's law; and certainly here they show, indeed, that they are fully blind with covetousness, and worship false gods, as St. Paul says.

Since they so much love worldly riches, and labour for them night and day, in thought and deed, and labour so little for God's worship and the saving of Christian souls, who can excuse these covetous clerks from simony and heresy? Neither God's law, nor man's law, nor reason, nor good conscience. And let the king and his council inquire how much gold goes out of our land, for purchase of benefices, into alien's hands, and how much is given privately to men in the land. They shall find many thousand pounds.

III. They are angels of Satan to lead men to hell; for, instead of truly teaching Christ's gospel

The third default of evil curates is, that they are angels of Satan to lead men to hell; for, instead of truly teaching Christ's gospel, they are dumb, or else tell men's traditions. Instead of example of good life, they hurt their parishioners many ways — by example of pride, envy, covetousness, and unreasonable vengeance — cruelly cursing for tithes, and evil customs. And for example of holy devotion, devout prayer, and works of mercy, they teach idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, and lechery, and maintaining of these sins, and many more. Since priests are called angels in holy writ, and these curates bring not the message of God, but of the fiend, as their wicked life showeth, they are not angels of God, but of the fiend, as the true clerk Robert Grosseteste wrote to the pope. St. Peter was called Satan by Christ, as the gospel telleth, because he was contrary to God's will, and savoured not of heavenly things; well then are these evil curates so called, since they are more contrary to God's will, and savour less of spiritual things, and the saving of Christian souls.

IV. They dread the pope's law, and statutes made by bishops, and other officers, more than the noble law of the gospel

The fourth error is, that they think more of statutes of sinful men than the most reasonable law of almighty God. For they dread the pope's law, and statutes made by bishops, and other officers, more than the noble law of the gospel. Therefore they have many great and costly books of man's law, and study them much, but few curates have the bible and expositions of the gospel, they study them but little and do them less. But would to God that every parish church in this land had a good bible and

good expositions on the gospel, and that the priests studied them well, and taught truly the gospel and God's commands to the people. Then should good life prevail, and rest, and peace, and charity; sin and falseness should be put back — God bring this end to his people.

V. They practise strife and plea, and gather envy and hate from laymen for tithes

The fifth default is, that they practise strife and plea, and gather envy and hate from laymen for tithes. They leave the preaching of the gospel, and cry fast after tithes, and summon men to account, and by force take their goods, or else curse them seven foot above the earth, and seven foot under the earth, and seven foot on each side, and afterwards draw men to prison as though they were kings and emperors of men's bodies and goods; forgetting wholly the meekness and patience of Christ and his apostles, how they cursed not when men would neither give them meat, nor drink, nor harbour; but Christ blamed his apostles when they would have asked such vengeance, as the gospel of St. Luke teaches. And St. Peter biddeth to bless other men, even enemies, and not to have the will to curse. Paul also teacheth that we should not do evil for evil, but overcome an evil deed by good doing.

VI. They teach their parishioners, by their deeds and life, which are as a book to them, to love and seek worldly glory

The sixth default is, that they teach their parishioners, by their deeds and life, which are as a book to them, to love and seek worldly glory, and to be careless of heavenly things. For they make themselves busy, night and day, to get worldly advancement, and their own worship and dignity in this world, by pleading; and striving therefore. Considering it great righteousness to hold forth and maintain points of worldly privilege, and dignity; but about spiritual dignity, and high degree of heavenly bliss, they will not strive against spiritual enemies; for they strive not who shall be most meek and willingly poor, and most busy in open preaching and private counselling how men shall obtain heaven, as Christ and his apostles did. But they, like moles, remain rooting after worldly worship, and earthly goods, as though there were no life but only in this wretched world.

VII. They teach sinful men to buy hell full dear, and not to come to heaven which is proffered them for little cost

The seventh error is, that they teach sinful men to buy hell full dear, and not to come to heaven which is proffered them for little cost. For they teach Christian men to suffer much cold, hunger, and thirst, and much waking, and despising, to get worldly honour; and a little dirt by false warring, out of charity; if they bring them much gold they absolve them lightly and to think themselves secure by their prayers, and grant them a blessing. *But they teach not how their parishioners should dispose themselves to receive gifts of the Holy Ghost, and keep conditions of charity, doing truth and good conscience to each man, both poor and rich. And if they are poor by the chances of the world, or willingly, by dread of sin, they set them at nought, and say they are cursed, because they have not much muck; and if they*

have much worldly goods, got with false oaths, false weights, and other deceits, they praise them, and bless them, and say that God is with them and blesses them.

VIII. They shut the kingdom of heaven before men, and neither go in themselves, nor suffer other men to enter

The eighth default. They shut the kingdom of heaven before men, and neither go in themselves, nor suffer other men to enter, for they shut up holy writ — as the gospel, and commandments, and conditions of charity, which are called the kingdom of heaven, by false new laws, and evil glossing, and evil teaching. For they will neither learn themselves, nor teach holy writ, nor suffer other men to do it, lest their own sin and hypocrisy be known, and their pleasurable life withdrawn. Thus they close Christ's life and his apostles' from the common people, by the keys of antichrist's judgment and censures; and they make them not so hardy as to say a truth of holy writ against their accursed life, for that shall be held to be detraction and envy, and against charity! Therefore they make the people follow their teaching, their statutes, and their customs, and to leave God's teaching; and thereby lead them blindly to hell, and thus close the kingdom of heaven from them.

IX. They waste poor men's goods on rich furs and costly clothes, and worldly array

The ninth error is, that they waste poor men's goods on rich furs and costly clothes, and worldly array, feasts of rich men, and in gluttony, drunkenness, and lechery. For they sometimes pass great men in their gay furs and precious clothes — they have fat horses with gay saddles and bridles, St. Bernard crieth. Whatever curates hold of the altar more than a simple livelihood and clothing, is not theirs, but other men's.

X. They haunt lords' courts, and are occupied in worldly offices, and do not take care of their parishes

The tenth default is, that they haunt lords' courts, and are occupied in worldly offices, and do not take care of their parishes, although they take more worldly goods for them, than Christ and his apostles. Certainly it is great treachery; for what man durst undertake to keep men who are besieged in a feeble castle by many strong enemies, and then flee into a swineherd's office, and let enemies take the castle and destroy it? Were not this open treason? and would not this keeper be guilty of the loss of the castle, and all men therein? So it is of the curates and Christian souls of which they take care, who are besieged by fiends, when they leave them unkept, and busy themselves in worldly offices and lords' courts. Are not these lords, who thus hold curates in their courts and worldly offices, traitors to God Almighty, since they draw away his chief knights from their spiritual battle, when and where they were most needful for this service.

XI. They attend more to wrongful commandments of sinful men, than to the most rightful commandments of God

The eleventh error is, that they attend more to wrongful commandments of sinful men, than to the most rightful commandments of God. For if the pope or bishop sent a letter to receive a pardoner to deceive the people, by grants of many thousand years of pardon, he shall be despatched; although if there come a true man, to preach the gospel freely and truly, he shall be hindered for wrongful command of a sinful man. And thus they put God's commandment and his rightful will behind, and put sinful man's will and wrong commandments before; and thus for their own worldly profit and bodily ease they stop their parishioners from hearing of God's law, which is food for the soul, and lead them blindly to hell. These are evil fathers who thus cruelly starve their subjects' souls, and drive them to damnation, for the love of worldly muck, or bodily ease, or for dread of wretched antichrists, who are traitors to God and his people.

XII. They despise the principal duty, which is commanded of God to curates

The twelfth error is, that they despise the principal duty, which is commanded of God to curates, and busy themselves about novelties made by sinful men. For they know not to preach the gospel wisely, and they busily learn men's traditions for worldly gain, but not the gospel which Christ, God and man, taught and commanded curates to teach, as to life and death.

XIII. They curse their spiritual children more for the love of worldly good than for breaking God's commands

The thirteenth error is, that they curse their spiritual children more for the love of worldly good than for breaking God's commands. For though a man openly break God's commands, living in pride, in false ways, and in open breaking of the holy day, he shall not be summoned, nor punished, nor cursed by them; but if a man be behind of tithes and other offerings and customs made of sinful men, he shall be summoned, punished, and cursed, though he cannot live out of other men's debts, and find his wife and his children by God's commandments.

XIV. They take their worldly mirth, hawking, hunting, and doing other vanities

They take their worldly mirth, hawking, hunting, and doing other vanities, and subtler wolves of hell to strangle men's souls by many cursed sins. They should draw men from worldly vanities, and teach them the perils of this life, and to think upon their death day, and be a mirror to them to mourn for their sins, and other men's, and for the long tarrying of heavenly bliss, and to continue in holy prayers, and true teaching of the gospel, and espying the fiend's deceits to warn Christian men of them; but now the more a curate hath, the more he wasteth in costly feeding of hounds and hawks, suffering poor men to have great default of meat, and drink, and clothes.

XV. They haunt taverns out of measure, and stir up laymen to drunkenness, idleness, and cursed swearing, chiding, and fighting

The fifteenth is, that they haunt taverns out of measure, and stir up laymen to drunkenness, idleness, and cursed swearing, chiding, and fighting. For they will not follow earnestly in their spiritual office, after Christ and his apostles, therefore they resort to plays at tables, chess, and hazard, and roar in the streets, and sit at the tavern until they have lost their wits, and then chide, and strive, and fight sometimes. And sometimes they have neither eye, nor tongue, nor hand, nor foot, to help themselves, for drunkenness. By this example the ignorant people suppose that drunkenness is no sin; but he that wasteth most of poor men's goods at taverns, making himself and other men drunken, is most praised, for nobleness, courtesy, goodness, freeness, and worthiness.

XVI. They will not give the sacrament of the altar, that is, Christ's body, to their parishioners, unless they pay tithes and offerings

The sixteenth is, They will not give the sacrament of the altar, that is, Christ's body, to their parishioners, unless they pay tithes and offerings, and unless they have paid money to a worldly priest, to slay Christian men. If men doubt of this, let them inquire the truth, how it was when the bishop of Norwich went into Flanders and killed them by many thousands, and made them our enemies. *Little reckon the curates in what devotion and charity their parishioners receive Christ's body, when they openly take them up from God's board, and stir them to impatience, envy, and hate, for a little muck which they claim to themselves.*

XVII. They are blind leaders, leading the people to sin, by their evil example and false deceit in teaching

The seventeenth is, they are blind leaders, leading the people to sin, by their evil example and false deceit in teaching. For though they know not one point of the gospel, nor what they read, they will take a benefice, with cure of men's souls, and neither know how to rule their own soul, nor other men's, nor will learn, nor suffer other men to teach their parishioners the gospel and God's commands truly and freely.

XVIII. They are false prophets, teaching false chronicles and fables to colour their worldly life thereby

The eighteenth is, they are false prophets, teaching false chronicles and fables to colour their worldly life thereby; and leave the true gospel of Jesus Christ. For they love well to tell how this or that saint lived in gay and costly clothes, and worldly array, although it is a great sin. But they leave to teach the great penance and sorrow which they did afterwards, which pleased God, and not their worldly life. And then they make the people think that worldly life of priests, and their vain costliness pleases God. And they make the people believe that a good Christian man, keeping well God's law, shall be damned for a wrongful curse of a worldly priest, who is in a fiend's case. Thus they bring the people out of

Christian faith by their false chronicles and fables, for Christ saith, that men shall be blessed of God, when men shall curse them, and pursue them, and say all evil against them falsely for the love of Christ and his truth; and the people believe the contrary of this teaching of Christ, by the fables and saints' deeds, or lies about saints.

XIX. They assent to pardoners deceiving the people in faith, and charity, and of worldly goods

The nineteenth. They assent to pardoners deceiving the people in faith, and charity, and of worldly goods, for to have part of their gathering, and they, hindering priests from preaching the gospel, for dread lest their sins and hypocrisy be known and stopped. For when there cometh a pardoner to rich places with stolen bulls, and false relics, granting more years of pardon than come before doomsday, for gaining worldly wealth, he shall be received of curates to have a part of that which he getteth. But a priest who will tell the truth to all men, without glossing, and freely, without begging of the poor people, shall be hindered by subtle cavils of man's law, for dread lest he touches the sore of their conscience and accursed life. This pardoner shall tell of more power than Christ ever granted to Peter or Paul, or any apostle, to draw the alms from poor bedridden neighbours, who are known to be feeble and poor, to get it himself, and waste it in idleness, gluttony, and lechery, and to send gold out of our land to rich lords of houses where there is no need, and make our land poor by many ways; hereby the people are more bold to live in sin, and know not they have as much thank and reward of Christ if they do alms to poor feeble men, as he biddeth.

XX. A priest of good life and devout and true preaching of God's law, is despised, hated, and pursued by worldly curates

The twentieth is, that a priest of good life and devout and true preaching of God's law, is despised, hated, and pursued by worldly curates; and a false priest, of worldly life and array, who suffers men to rot in their accursed sins, is loved, praised, and cherished among them; for they say that such a good priest is a hypocrite, and slandereth men of holy church, and hindereth men from doing their devotion to holy church.

XXI. They hide and maintain their sins and other men's by the protection and help of lords

The one and twentieth. They hide and maintain their sins and other men's by the protection and help of lords, that their sovereigns may not correct them, nor compel them to residence. For when there is a vicious curate, he will have letters of kings and lords to dwell in their courts, in worldly offices, and be absent from his cure, that his sovereign dare not correct him. Thus lords are made shields of sin, for a little money, or worldly service of wicked curates.

XXII. Many of them, under colour of learning the gospel, learn statutes made by sinful men and worldly priests

The two and twentieth is, that many of them, under colour of learning the gospel, learn statutes made by sinful men and worldly priests. When they have great benefices, peradventure by simony, and cannot teach their subjects to save their souls, and dare not hold their lemans at home for the clamour of men, they go to the schools and fare well of meat, and drink, and rest, and study with cups and strumpets. Where good priests labour to learn God's law, they go, after a manner, to civil or canon law, but do little good thereat.

XXIII. The wisest among them mispend their skill and understanding in maintaining of sins

The three and twentieth. The wisest among them mispend their skill and understanding in maintaining of sins; as pride, and covetousness of clerks, and oppressing their poor parishioners by wrong customs, for dread of plea *and censure, and maintaining false causes and consistories, for gold; and take pensions of licentious men and women to help them to bathe in their sin as swine in the mire. Thereby, he that can crack a little latin, repeat stories of heathen men's law, and worldly priests' law, and can help to annoy a poor man by contrivances and their chapters, is held to be a noble clerk, and ready and wise, though he knows not how to read a verse in his psalter, nor understand a common authority of holy writ.* Such men despise God's law as though it were no law, and commend their own law and themselves, more than holy writ and Christ and his apostles. This maketh sin and falseness reign, and faith, truth, and charity are fouled and quenched.

XXIV. They put the holy law of God under the feet of antichrist and his clerks

The four and twentieth is, that they put the holy law of God under the feet of antichrist and his clerks, and the truth of the gospel is condemned for error and ignorance by worldly clerks, who presume by their pride to be doomsmen of subtle and high mysteries, proving articles of holy writ, and blindly condemn truths of Christ's gospel, for they are against their worldly life and fleshly lusts, and condemn for heretics true men who teach holy writ, truly and freely, against their sins.

XXV. They choose laws made of sinful men, and worldly and covetous priests, to rule the people by them

The five and twentieth error is, they choose laws made of sinful men, and worldly and covetous priests, to rule the people by them, as most needful and best laws; and forsake the most perfect law of the gospel and epistles, of Christ and his apostles, as not perfect, nor full enough, nor true. For now heathen men's laws and worldly clerks' statutes are read in universities, and curates learn them fast with great desire, study, and cost, but the law of God is little studied or cared about; and less kept and taught. And in this antichrist's clerks say that Christ gave not a sufficient law, or the best, for the ruling of his people, and that worldly clerks and antichrist are truer, and in more charity than Jesus Christ, since their laws are better and more needful for Christian men, than the laws which Christ made! But all Christian men should cry out upon this blasphemous heresy, and fully take the gospel to be their rule, and not set by these new laws but as they are expressly grounded in holy writ, or good reason, true conscience, and charity. For, as St. Paul teaches, Whoever teaches other laws is accursed of God, yea, though he were an angel of heaven.

XXVI. They magnify themselves above Christ, God and man

The six and twentieth. They magnify themselves above Christ, God and man; for they command their subjects that they judge not clerks, nor their open works, nor their teaching, but do according to their teaching, be it true or false. But our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his enemies to judge of him a rightful doom. Also he bade his enemies to believe his works though they would not believe him, and bade men not believe him if he did not the works of his Father. Also Christ bade his enemies bear witness of evil, if he had spoken evil.

XXVII. They are antichrists, hindering Christian men from knowing their belief of holy writ

The seven and twentieth. They are antichrists, hindering Christian men from knowing their belief of holy writ; for they cry openly that secular men should not intermeddle with the gospel to read it in modern tongue, but listen to their spiritual father's preaching, and do after him in all things. But this is expressly against God's teaching. For God commandeth generally, to each layman, that he have God's commands before him, and teach them to his children. And the wise man biddeth every Christian man, that all his telling be in the precepts of God Almighty, and that he have his commandments ever in mind. And St. Peter biddeth Christians to be ready to give reason for their faith, and to teach each man that asketh it. And God commands his priests to preach the gospel to each man; and the wisdom is, that all men should know it, and rule their lives thereafter. Why should worldly priests forbid secular men to speak of the gospel and God's commands? since God giveth them naturally great understanding and great desire to know God, and to love him. For the more goodness they know of God, the more they shall love God, while worldly priests, for their own ignorance, sloth, idleness, and pride, stop Christian men from knowing God, and shut up from him the gifts that God giveth him. None, from the making of the world heard higher craft of antichrist to destroy Christian man's belief and charity, than is this blasphemous heresy that laymen should not intermeddle with the gospel.

XXVIII. They deceive men in doing of penance

The eight and twentieth. They deceive men in doing of penance. For they do not tell the truth how they needs must forsake all falseness or craft in oaths, and all sin, to their knowledge and power. And not wittingly or willingly to do against God's commands, either for lucre, dread, or bodily death; else it is not real contrition, and God will not absolve them for any confession of mouth, or absolution of priests, bulls of pardons, or letters of fraternities, or masses, or prayers of any intercessor on earth or in heaven. They speak much of tithes and offerings in their confession; but little of restitution, and doing of alms to poor men, but of mass-pence and church gains; and thereby the people are brought out of belief, trusting that their sin is foregone for their priests' absolution, though they do not true penance as God himself teacheth. And hereby they magnify their own absolution more than God's forgiveness, for true contrition. When God himself declares that in the hour a sinner hath sorrow for his sin he shall be safe, they would make this word false, saying that he shall not be safe, be he ever so contrite, without absolution money is paid to them.

XXIX. They rob Christian people of the goods of fortune

The nine and twentieth. They rob Christian people of the goods of fortune, the goods of nature, and the goods of grace, by feigned censures of their own laws. For they curse so spitefully if men do not pay money at their liking, which they claim by sinful men's laws, new customs, and devotions, and not by God's law, that no man dare gainsay them in their wrong doing for fear of their curse, imprisonment, and loss of patience and charity. And hereby they make Christian men to hold forth their wrong customs, and man's law, and not to know God's law, and the right way to heaven. Certainly, it was less cruelty to keep men from bodily meat and drink, and make them die bodily, than to keep them from hearing the gospel and God's commands, which are life to the soul. What accursed antichrists are these worldly prelates and curates, who curse men for preaching and hearing of holy scriptures!

XXX. They take not tithes and offerings by form of the old testament, and apportion their income to all priests and ministers needful in the church

The thirtieth. They take not tithes and offerings by form of the old testament, and apportion their income to all priests and ministers needful in the church. Nor according to the form of the gospel, do they take a simple livelihood, given by free devotion of the people, without constraint or curses, as Christ and his apostles did. But by the new law of sinful men, a priest claims to himself all the tithes of a great country, by worldly law, and new censures. And he neither liveth as a good priest, nor teacheth as a curate, nor giveth the residue to poor men as a good Christian man; but he wasteth it in pomp and gluttony and other sins, and hindereth true priests from doing the office enjoined to them by God Almighty. Surely it seemeth that these are not priests after God's law, but after the ordinances of sinful men, to be masters of God, and lords of Christian people, since they never hold the law of God. And as to tithes-taking, they take them by violence, and strong curses against men's goodwill, and make the people out of patience and charity by their pleading, and do not well their spiritual office.

XXXI. That like serpents they serve busily to lords in secular offices for naught; but in the end poison their lords by the venom of simony

The one and thirtieth. That like serpents they serve busily to lords in secular offices for naught; but in the end poison their lords by the venom of simony, which is worse than any bodily poison. And when they have a benefice with cure of souls, they still dwell in worldly offices of lords, and spend poor men's livelihood in riot and gluttony, and suffer Christian men to perish in body and soul, for want of teaching and works of mercy.

XXXII. When lords and commons think they maintain God's priests and his law, they maintain antichrist's priests by their laws and wrong customs

The two and thirtieth. They make lords and commons, by blind devotion and hypocrisy, to maintain worldly clerks, in pride, covetousness, and idleness, and false teaching of antichrist's errors; under colour of freedom, and worshipping of holy church and God's laws. For they care much that lords and commons shall maintain God's servants in (what they say is) his service, and the laws and liberties of holy church; and make new service pleasing to worldly men's ears, and new laws and customs for their own gain, and pride, and leave the holy law which God made for priests. Thus when lords and commons think they maintain God's priests and his law, they maintain antichrist's priests by their laws and wrong customs, and pride and other sins, instead of meekness and other virtues, and to the magnifying of men's laws and the despising of God's laws.

XXXIII. They teach Christian men to maintain men's laws and ordinances, as better and more needful than the holy law of Christ and his ordinances

The three and thirtieth. They teach Christian men to blaspheme God, and boldly to war against him. For they teach Christian men to maintain men's laws and ordinances, as better and more needful than the holy law of Christ and his ordinances. And they declare that if Christian men maintain the multitude of worldly clerks in their new laws, and customs, and liberties, they shall have God's blessing and prosperity, peace, and rest, by so many devout priests, secular and religious, praying, reading, and singing, night and day. And if they will bring priests out of this glorious life and new song, by meekness and spiritual poverty, with busy travail in learning and preaching of the gospel, as Christ and his apostles did, they shall be cursed, and have war and mischief, both in this world and the other. This makes the blind people to war against God and his ordinances, and to pursue his teachers as heretics.

You curates, see these heresies and blasphemies, and many more, which follow from your wicked life and wayward teachings. Forsake them for dread of hell, and turn to good life and true teaching of the gospel and ordinances of God, as Christ and his apostles did, for reward of heavenly bliss. And in confessions, and in other speeches, reprove more the breaking of God's commands, than the breaking of commands of new pilgrimages and offerings; and teach Christian men to turn such vows already made, into better alms, as Christ teaches in the gospel.

O Almighty God, bring curates into holy life, and true teaching after Christ and his apostles.

AMEN

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