

Landuin, Prior of the Grande Chartreuse 1090-1100

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Landuin, prior of the Grande Chartreuse from 1090 until his death on 14 September 1100, was born at Lucca in Tuscany. The documents designate him as "Magister" and he was among the first companions of Saint Bruno at the Grande Chartreuse in 1084. Apparently, he was not ordained, but he played a certain rôle in the adaptation of liturgical books which were available in the primitive Chartreuse.

After the departure of Bruno for Rome, Landuin was confirmed as prior by Pope Urban II in March 1091, when the Grande Chartreuse was placed under the protection of the Holy See. The Chronicle of the early Carthusians, probably compiled by Guigo I, fifth prior of the Grande Chartreuse, records:

Landuinus natione Tuscus, ex urbe Luca, litteris et ipse diuinis et humanis, eruditus annis X rexit domum Cartusiae. Hic cum ad magistrum Brunonem pergeret, ... incidit in manus Guiberti scismatici: quod multum horrebat. Aduersus cuius minas atque promissiones, dolos ac uiolencias, diuina iuuante gracia, modis omnibus perseuerauit inflexus. Quem in suo defunctum errore lacrimabiliter planxit, adeo ut a circumstantibus argueretur quod eum fleret a cuius peruersitate ecclesiam suam Christi bonitas liberasset. Post cuius obitus septimum diem etiam ipse defunctus est, positusque in monasterio sancti Andree ad pedem montis Siraptis, cui uicinum erat castrum, ubi captus in custodia tenebatur.¹

A gloss adds:

Hic Landuinus magne litterature et magne ac rigide abstinentie sibi ipsi uixit austerus, ita ut, etiam graui languoris infirmitate depressus, non posset induci a suis abstinentiis abstinere. M^o igitur et C^o domini anno, uocatus a domino, quasi martyr centesimum fructum a domino creditur accepisse.²

Already weakened by his austerities, he died in the prison of the Antipope Guibert of Ravenna, who called himself Clement III, on the 14 September 1100, near Soracte, ca. 30 kilometres north of Rome, on the return journey to the Grande Chartreuse, after having visited St. Bruno at La Torre to discuss the problems besetting the Grande Chartreuse, particularly with regard to gyrovagues, who were troubling their solitude. Bruno did not wish Landuin to undertake the exhausting journey back to the Grande Chartreuse, - 1400 kilometres on horseback, as he was exhausted during his stay in Calabria, but Landuin insisted. Bruno in his letter to the community of the Grande Chartreuse begged them to practise discretion as regards their superior, so that he might diminish his austerities in view of poor state of health. Otherwise Bruno was very edified by the news he had received regarding his former community:

Cognito rationabilis et vere laudandae disciplinae vestrae inflexibili rigore, ex crebra ac dulci relatione beatissimi fratris nostri Landowini: necnon

¹ André Wilmart, "La Chronique des premiers Chartreux", *Revue Mabillon* 16 (1926), pp. 77-142, here p.123.

² *Ibid.*

audito sancto amore vestro et incessanti studio erga quae integritatis et honestatis sunt,¹

Fratrem vero Landowinum nobiscum detinere volui propter graves et crebras infirmitates suas: sed quia sibi nihil sanum, nihil iucundum, nihil vitale et utile esse sine vobis reputat, non acquieuit, protestans mihi in lacrimarum fonte pro vobis emanante, et suspiriis multis, quanti apud eum sitis et quam perfecta caritate vos omnes diligit. Unde coactionem nullam facere volui, ne laederem eum, aut vos, quos carissimos pro merito virtutum vestrarum habeo. Quapropter fraternitatem vestram sedulo moneo, et submisce atque obnixe precor, ut caritatem quam corde gestatis executione operis in ipsum, utpote in priorem et patrem vestrum carissimum, ostendatis, benigne et provide subministrando quae sibi pro multimoda valetudine sua necessaria sunt. Quod si vobis in hoc humanitatis officio non consenserit, malens periclitari de salute et vita, quam aliquid de disciplinae corporalis rigore omittere, quod prorsus improbandum est - forsitan erubescet ut, qui primus in religione est, in hac parte posterior inueniatur, mutuens ne occasione sui aliquis ex vobis remissior vel tepidior fiat, quod nullatenus formidandum puto - ne huius gratiae expertes sitis, nostram vicem in hoc tantum vestrae caritati concedimus, ut liceat vobis reuerenter eum cogere ad ea quae salutis suae commodastis.²

The letter was probably brought to the Grande Chartreuse after Landuin's death by a laybrother, who had accompanied his prior on his journey to Calabria.

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¹ [Maurice Laporte, ed.], *Lettres des premiers chartreux, Sources Chrétiennes* 88 (1962), p. 82.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 88.

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