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Boniface of Lausanne

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Boniface of Lausanne (* c. 1182 – † 19 Feb 1261)

1. Names: B. of Brussels

2. Places: Brussels, Paris, Cologne, Lausanne, La Cambre (Ter Kameren) in Elsene near Brussels, Liège, Utrecht, Cambrai

3. Biography: B., son of a noble family from Brussels, studied theology in Paris and taught there from 1222 until 1229. He was deacon at St. Gudile's church in Brussels (1216), teacher at the cathedral school in Cologne, and bishop of Lausanne (1231–1239), a diocese beset by long-lasting conflicts. He faced resistance as a bishop because of his measures to reinforce clerical celibacy and protect the see's legal standing. He fostered a Dominican foundation in Lausanne. After his forced resignation, initially refused by the pope, he lived for a time in Liège, Utrecht, and Cambrai. From 1243 onwards he resided in the female Cistercian abbey of La Cambre. B. was buried in the abbey's church. He was beatified in 1603 and canonized in 1702. It is uncertain whether he made monastic vows.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: B.'s relics were transferred from La Cambre to the Église Notre-Dame de la Chapelle (Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-ter-Kapellekerk) in Brussels. The abbey's church still has a reliquary with his remains, and an abbey chapel is devoted to him.

b. Liturgical commemoration: 19 Feb

c. Patronage: B. is the patron saint of Bonifatiuskerk in Elsene (1849).

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: Vita (13th c.) in a MS from La Cambre; another vita (c. 1427–1487) is preserved in MSS from Rooklooster (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Series Nova (Fidei-Komm), MS 12706–707 = Johannes Gielemans, *Hagiologium Brabantinorum*, fol 156–159v) and Korsendonk, both convents of canons regular of the Order of St Augustine. The AS mention the MSS from La Cambre and Korsendonk, but it is uncertain where they are currently kept.

6. Literature: De B. Bonifacio episcopo Lavsanensi Camerae ivxta Brvxellam in Belgio, in: AS, Februarii 3, Antwerpen 1658, 149–159; A. SANDERUS, Chorographia Sacra Brabantiae 1, The Hague 1726, 564; A. SIMON / R. AUBERT, Boniface de Bruxelles. Évêque de Lausanne, Brussels 1945; F. DE RYCKMAN DE BETZ / T. DE MASIÈRES / G. DANSAERT, L'Abbaye cistercienne de La Cambre, Antwerp 1948, 42–50; J.-D. MOREROD, 'Boniface (saint)', in: Dictionnaire historique de la Suisse, https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/fr/articles/018468/2004-05-03/, [27.07.2021]; 'Boniface of Brussels (1181-1260)', in: P. F. STATE, Historical Dictionary of Brussels 2nd ed., Lanham 2015, 64–65.

7. Illustrations: Reliquary of Bonifatius in the Église Notre-Dame de la Chapelle (Lieve-Vrouw-ter-Kapellekerk) in Brussels; stained glass window in Saint Peter's Church of Uccle; engraving on a prayer card from the Trappist abbey in Westmalle (Ruusbroecgenootschap, Collectie heiligenprenten, Cisterciënzer groep V, reeks 10).

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