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Godfrey of Clairvaux

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Godfrey of Clairvaux († 8 Nov 1166)

1. Name variants: Godfrid, Geoffroy of Langres, G. of La Roche-Vanneau

2. Places: Cîteaux, Clairvaux, Fontenay, Langres

3. Biography: G. was descended from the lords of La Roche-Vanneau near Fontenay and was a distant relative of Bernard of Clairvaux; he entered Cîteaux with him in 1112. In 1115, G. moved to the newly founded abbey of Clairvaux with Bernard. In 1119 he became abbot of Fontenay but later returned to Clairvaux, where he was prior and one of Bernard's close confidants since 1126/27. After a conflict about the bishopric of Langres, G. was elected bishop there in 1139. In this office, he remained committed to the Cistercians. He lived with two Cistercian monks in Langres and confirmed possessions of Clairvaux in many charters. Like Bernard, G. promoted the Second Crusade, preaching for it in Dec 1145 in Bourges at the court of King Louis VII. He participated in the crusade from 1147 to 1149. In later years, he was commissioned by various popes to conciliate ecclesiastical disputes. G. resigned as bishop in 1163 and returned to Clairvaux. There, he had a chapel built on the spot where Bernard had died. G. himself died at Clairvaux.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: G. is buried in the church of the abbey of Clairvaux in front of the altar beside four other bishops. His tomb was opened in 1751 (VEYSSIÈRE, *La tombe découverte*, 25).

b. Liturgical commemoration: 8 Nov (ZIMMERMANN, *Kalendarium Benedictinum* 3, 280)

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: On seals, Godfrid is depicted as a typical bishop of his time, sitting *in regalia* and carrying a crosier and a closed book.

5. Fontes: Epp. S. Bernardi 142, 169, 170, 317, 380; Vita prima, lib. I, 67, 82, II, 109, 124, IV, 161, 167, 188, V, 203; Fragm. Gaufridi, I, 300; Vita secunda, cap. XX, 502D; Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Clairvaux, nr. 12, 14–19, 21, 26, 30f., 34, 38–92; John of Salisbury, *Historia Pontificalis*, cap. 24, 54–56; Anonymi vera narratio foundationis prioratus Sanctae Barbarae in Algia, 502; Eudes de Deuil, *La Croisade de Louis VII*, lib. I, 21, II, 29, III, 42, IV, 47, 49, 51.

6. Literature: Bibliotheca Sanctorum, VII, 87f.; DHGE 20, 554–556; A. ZIMMERMANN, *Kalendarium Benedictinum* 3, 1933, 280; H. J. WURM, *Gottfried, Bischof von Langres († 1165). Ein biographischer Versuch als Beitrag zur Geschichte des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Würzburg, 1886; G. CONSTABLE, *The Disputed Election at Langres in 1138*, in: *Traditio* 13 (1957), 141–147; C. B. BOUCHARD, *Sword, Miter, and Cloister. Nobility and the Church in Burgundy, 980–1198*, Ithaca (N.Y.) / London, 1987 396–397; M. G. NEWMAN, *The Boundaries of Charity. Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform, 1098–1180*, Stanford, 1996, 26, 78–79, 134, 148–151, 154, 174, 213; L. VEYSSIÈRE, *Le personnel de l'abbaye de Clairvaux au XIIe siècle*, in: *Cîteaux* 51, 2000, 109–110; L. VEYSSIÈRE, *La tombe découverte à l'abbaye de Clairvaux en 1820, est-elle celle de Guillaume de Joinville, archevêque de Reims († 1226?)*, in: *Bibliothèque de l'École de chartes* 164, 1, 2006, 5–41; H. RHODES, *The Crown and the Cross. Burgundy, France, and the Crusades (1095–1220)*, Turnhout, 2020, 215; J. LUTHER, *Reformer und Vermittler. Bischöfliche Gruppenbildungen und Vernetzungen im burgundischen Raum, 1032–1156* (forthcoming).

7. Illustrations: There are at least two preserved images of G. on seals:

Auxerre, Archives départementales de l'Yonne, Ad 89 - H 1406-20, 1139/63, (<https://archivesenligne.yonne.fr/archive/exposition/voir/8/13088>);

Ibidem, Ad 89 - H 1506-2, 1157

(<http://www.sigilla.org/empreinte/geoffroy-roche-vanneau-ad-89-h-1506-2-7553>).

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