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Serlo of Savigny

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Serlo of Savigny († 1139)

1. Name variants: –

2. Places: Cérisy-le-Forêt, Clairvaux, Savigny, Furness

3. Biography: S. became abbot of Savigny in 1140. He was a follower of the earlier abbot Godfrey and had entered Cérisy-le-Forêt with him, then followed him to Savigny in 1113. Perhaps because he found it difficult to hold together the growing Savigniac congregation, particularly its English communities, S. petitioned the Cistercian General Chapter to accept the whole Savigniac congregation into the Cistercians in 1147. Savigny was placed into the filiation of Clairvaux. Bernard of Clairvaux sent Thibaud from Clairvaux to be prior under S. at Savigny and instruct the monks of Savigny in Cistercian customs. After the General Chapter of 1147, S. hoped to stay at Clairvaux, but when no suitable replacement was forthcoming, Bernard sent S. back to Savigny, where he remained until 1153. In this year he retired to Clairvaux where he died in 1158. S. left behind a series of sermons. During his abbacy, fifteen abbeys were added to the Savigny congregation.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: In 1184, his remains were returned to Savigny, where he was venerated as “blessed.” There are no remaining relics today.

b. Liturgical commemoration: 10 Sep (PASCUAL 2019, 307)

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes. There is no vita. Victor De Buck (in the AS) includes most of the written sources.

6. Literature: Seven Unpublished Works. Serlo of Savigny and Serlo of Wilton, ed. and transl. L. C. BRACELAND, Collegeville 1988; AS, Octobris 8, Brussels 1853; H. FEISS / M. O'BRIEN / R. PEPIN, *The Lives of Monastic Reformers*, 2: Abbot Vitalis of Savigny, Abbot Godfrey of Savigny, Peter of Avranches, Blessed Hamo, Collegeville 2014, 26–31; M. STANDAERT, Serlon de Savigny, in: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 14, Paris 1990, 661–666, with an excellent bibliography including articles on his sermons by M. PIGEON; A. WILMART, *Recueil des discours de Serlo, Abbé de Savigni*, in: *Revue Mabillon* 11 (1922), 26–38; F. R. de PASCUAL, *Nuevo Menologio Cisterciense*, 2019, 307–308.

7. Illustrations: –

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