John of Cornillon († ca. 1255)

1. Name variants: J. of Mont-Cornillon

2. Places: Cornillon, Liège, Salzinnes

3. Biography: J. is known only from the Vita of Saint Juliana of Cornillon (1192–1258). As a young priest working in the hospice of Cornillon at the gates of Liège, he was Juliana’s confessor (Vita, II, 42). Around 1240, Juliana, who had become prioress, asked him to edit a liturgical office for the Feast of Corpus Christi. He contributed the hymns, antiphons, and responsories (Vita, II, 9). This office was superseded in 1264 by the office written by Thomas Aquinas at the request of Urban IV on the occasion of the extension of the feast to the universal church. In 1242, J. was appointed prior of the Cornillon house by the bishop of Liege. At that time, the bishop issued new statutes for Cornillon, based on the Rule of Augustine (Vita, 2, 23–24). In 1246, he instituted the Feast of Corpus Christi in his diocese. His successor, Henry of Guelders, dismissed J. from his office as prior. After visiting Juliana in exile at Salzinnes near Namur for the last time, J. died and was considered by many to be a saint (Vita, 2, 42). His life’s work was closely linked to that of Juliana.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: J.’s body is perhaps buried in Cornillon, where he died.

b. Liturgical commemoration: 1 Jan (CHALEMOT)

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: –


Jean-Pierre Delville