

= Thomas de Rossey =

Thomas de Rossey (de Rossi) O. F. M. was a late 14th century Scottish Franciscan friar , papal penitentiary , bishop and theologian . Of unknown , or at least unclear origin , he embarked on a religious career in his early years , entering the Franciscan Order , studying in England and at the University of Paris .

He preached and lectured on the Immaculate Conception , and rose to seniority under the patronage of the Avignon Papacy and King Robert II of Scotland , becoming Bishop of Galloway and the only Franciscan to hold a Scottish bishopric . Thereafter he was a staunch advocate of Avignon Pope Clement VII against the English @-@ backed Urban VI , for whom he engaged in partisan preaching and writing , famously challenging any English bishop to settle the issue by single combat .

= = Early years = =

There is not enough evidence to detail Rossey 's early life and career . His name indicates a family origin from Rossie , but many locations have this name , including Rossie in Gowrie , Rossie in Angus and Rossie in Strathearn . On 3 October 1371 , following a request from King Charles V of France and Robert II of Scotland , he received papal permission to take the Bachelor of Theology degree at the University of Paris ; this is his first appearance in contemporary records .

This Papal Bull provides information about his earlier life . He was Scottish , had entered the Order of the Friars Minor (Franciscans) , he had studied the Seven Liberal Arts and Theology at various locations ? including the University of Paris ? and had preached in Paris . It is likely that Thomas had returned to his home country to preach and teach , a custom in the Franciscan Order . In his later writings he claimed to have studied in Paris and to have lived among the English for seven years , obtaining a good " understanding of their character " .

= = Pre @-@ episcopal career = =

Thomas was at the Papal court in Avignon in 1371 acting as proctor for Patrick de Leuchars , Bishop of Brechin , making a payment to the papal chamber . Having obtained his Theology degree , Thomas lectured on the conception of the immaculate Virgin at Paris in 1373 as a Bachelor of Sentences (baccatarius Sententiarum) ; he had previously been appointed by the Chancellor of the university to deliver the summer lectures on the Sentences .

By 1375 Thomas , now vicar general of the Franciscan Order for Scotland , was running out of money . This put the completion of his studies in jeopardy . For this reason , Pope Gregory XI wrote to Walter de Wardlaw , Bishop of Glasgow , authorising Walter (a renowned scholar himself) and other doctors to grant Thomas , if they " found him fit " , a Licentiate and a Doctorate in Theology . Such a grant would enable Thomas to teach legally , allowing him to lessen the burden of his financial problems .

Thomas was at Avignon again in 1375 , but had returned to Scotland between March 1378 and April 1379 when he received a gift of £ 10 from the King of the Scots . By 22 June 1379 , Thomas was once again at the papal court at Avignon . While present , the recently elected anti @-@ Pope , Clement VII , appointed him papal penitentiary " for the English and Irish languages " .

= = Becoming Bishop of Galloway = =

On 15 July 1379 , Clement VII conditionally provided Thomas de Rossey to the Bishopric of Galloway with mandate for consecration should Ingram de Ketenis wish to resign his right to the see . On the same day Thomas and another Scot , Hugh de Dalmahon , were sent to Scotland with 50 florins and with documentary evidence regarding the events leading to the Western Schism , events which allegedly nullified the election of Pope Urban VI .

The Galloway bishopric was vacant because of the death of Adam de Lanark , a death which had

occurred during the vacancy of papal see . Oswald , the prior of Glenluce Abbey , had been elected by the canons of Whithorn to succeed Adam , an election which Urban VI , sometime after 18 April 1378 , supported . This election was not supported by the Scottish @-@ backed anti @-@ Pope Clement VII . Clement instead appointed Ingram de Ketenis , Archdeacon of Dunkeld ; however , Ingram was unwilling to take up the bishopric , and raised objections to his own appointment .

Ingram 's refusal allowed Rossy to take up the bishopric . He was consecrated by 16 July 1380 . Oswald launched an appeal to Clement , but a letter to Thomas dated 29 October 1381 , confirmed this had been rejected . A further letter was sent , as follows :

To the bishops of St Andrews and Dunkeld . Mandate to enquire into the claim advanced by Oswald , claustral prior of Glenluys , O. Cist . , Galloway diocese , to be the true bishop of Galloway in virtue of his election by the chapter of Galloway and subsequent provision made by Urban VI . They are to impose silence on him and to put Thomas de Rossy , provided to the bishopric by Clement VII and duly consecrated , into peaceful possession .

The cancellation of Oswald 's appointment does not appear to have silenced Oswald , who appears active in England , a kingdom which supported Urban VII .

= = Pro @-@ Clementine Thomas = =

As bishop of Galloway Thomas remained a close and highly active supporter of Clement . He preached the cause of Clement before Robert II at Dundee on 2 February 1380 . A military attack by Clementine Scotland on Urbanist England was planned . John Wyclif related that a commission was granted to a Scottish bishop to lead a " crusade " on behalf of Clement into England ; this bishop was almost certainly Thomas de Rossy . Thomas preached sermons in the English marches attempting to win supporters for the cause , and authored a tractate attacking the Urbanist cause along with English support for it .

Although no " crusade " ever took place , around 1384 Thomas sent a letter to the bishops of England . The letter invited Henry le Despenser , Bishop of Norwich , or any other English bishop , to come to a debate with him ; if they preferred , he wrote , they could settle the matter for both countries through single combat . Henry le Despenser was probably addressed because he was known for his love of fighting , and had led a short expedition into France during the summer of 1383 . Despite his keenness to fight another bishop , Thomas de Rossy had apparently refused the offer of combat given by an English priest because of the latter 's lower status .

= = Bishop of Galloway = =

Thomas was the first and only Franciscan to become bishop of a Scottish diocese . Records of the day @-@ to @-@ day activities of Thomas as Bishop of Galloway , however , are thin . One charter survives , dated 16 July 1381 , confirming a grant of the church of Buittle to Sweetheart Abbey . The charter was issued at Kirkchrist in Twynholm parish , and was confirmed by the (Avignon) Pope on 18 October when Rossy himself was present at the papal court . On 31 December , he presented to Pope Clement VII a roll of petitions ? a series of requests ? all of which were granted .

After the death of King Robert II in 1390 , Bishop Thomas along with other prelates of the Scottish kingdom , attended the coronation of the new king . At Scone , on 16 August 1390 , two days after the coronation of Robert III of Scotland , Bishop Thomas gave a sermon ; according to Wyntoun :

The Byschape off Galloway thare , Thomas ,
(A theolog solempne he was) ,
Made a sermownd rycht plesand ,
And to the matere accordand .

= = Death and succession = =

Bishop Thomas was at Avignon again in the mid @-@ 1390s , as attested by record of a series of mundane transactions conducted by him there . On 10 September 1395 , he was granted an indult

to administer his bishopric in absentia , via a deputy ; he is not known to have returned to Scotland . His name appeared in the sources for the last time on 6 September 1397 .

The exact date he died is a mystery , but it was not until 28 May 1406 , that a successor , Eliseus Adougan , was appointed to the see , meaning that Rossy 's death could have occurred anywhere between these dates .

As a friar and a bishop , Thomas could not father legitimate offspring and no partners or bastards are known . His own family background is likewise unknown , though he had a nephew for whom he obtained several papal favours .

= = Theology and writings = =

Thomas de Rossy was a theologian and known as such , though his extant writings are dominated by political invective . He authored two extant tractates and probably at least two others not extant . His *Quaestio de Conceptione Virginis Immaculatae* was a reiteration of some of the arguments for the Immaculate Conception made by Duns Scotus . It was also a refutation of the scholars who had written against it , including Bernard of Clairvaux , Giles of Rome , Bonaventure O. F. M. , Richard Middleton , Facinus de Ast , Robert Cowton O. F. M. , Alexander of Hales and Gregory of Rimini . Thomas ' focus on the Immaculate Conception stemmed from his days in Paris , where he preached in its favour ; it has even been suggested that Thomas was the Friar Minor particularly noted in Paris for his " cavalier treatment of St Bernard " .

Rossy 's second work , the *Tractatus Episcopi Candidae Casae de Regno Scotiae in Facto Schismatis contra Anglicos suos Vicinos* was a defense of Clement VII and an attack on the legitimacy of " Bartolomeo of Bari " (i.e. Urban VI) . It contains a long , detailed account of the events preceding the Schism , an account partially derived from a work of Cardinal Peter Flandrin . In justifying the pontificate of Clement , the *Tractatus* made extensive use of prophecy , especially prophecies attributed to Saint John of Bridlington . The *Tractatus Episcopi* is the work , mentioned above , to which his letter to the bishops of England was appended . In the *Tractatus* he accused the English of supporting Urban solely through hatred of the French .