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## “To the honour and worship of Almighty God and his saints:” Lay Patronage at All Saints’ Parish Church, Bristol

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### Abstract

Countless objects across England were destroyed, leaving comparably few traces of late medieval art, architecture, and religious practice for examination today. Written documents, however, were not an active target of the Reformation. In some cases they are the best resource available for understanding and imagining the appearance, importance, and role of parish churches in the late medieval era. They provide glimpses of very personal relationships between the laity and the churches they used, and help to discern some of the ways in which benefactors could actively shape the interiors of these buildings to assert their authority within the community, and obtain prayers for salvation after death. Additionally, the laity helped form the congregation’s sensory perception of the Mass through donations of objects that engaged sight, touch, and sound. This will be demonstrated through the use of primary source texts written in fifteenth century English and accompanying modern translations of those texts, surviving artistic and architectural elements, and secondary interpretations of medieval documents. Original fifteenth century wills, churchwarden accounts, and inventories can be extremely thorough and difficult to follow; therefore, this research requires careful close reading of a high volume of documents spanning decades. Constructing a visual narrative based solely on written word is challenging, yet ultimately rewarding in cases in which a church’s religious art objects do not survive. Doing so can lead to significant revelations about the realities of late medieval religion.

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The Parish Catechism, Lesson 03: The Public Worship of Almighty God. "For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles: and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to my name a clean oblation. For my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." (Malachias 1:11 ). 20. What is worship? God set aside one day, The Lord's Day, for His special worship. The apostles and the early Christian Church chose Sunday to be the Lord's Day because on Sunday Christ arose from the dead and on Sunday the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles. 23. Do Non-Catholics have an obligation to worship God on the Lord's Day? All people are commanded by the Third Commandment to worship God on the Lord's Day. Saint Philip and Saint James's Day. O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord: Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for "Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints" O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and Charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Encouraged by this thought, I implore you to obtain for me (request). O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours.