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Sacerdotalism and Sainthood in the Poetry and Life of John Donne: "The Canonization" and Canonization

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In "A Valediction forbidding mourning," the speaker enjoins his beloved not to be overtly passionate at his leave-taking: "T'were prophanation of our joyes / To tell the layetie of our love" (lines 7-8).[1] In classifying others as the laity, the speaker by implication characterizes himself and his beloved as sacerdotal or priestly. While most commentators recognize the trope of sacerdotalism in this brief passage from "A Valediction forbidding mourning," no one, to my knowledge, perceives a similar conceit in "The Canonization."

In what follows, I will examine sacerdotalism in "The Canonization," almost always interpreted as a poem about sainthood. My argument concerning "The Canonization" will occur in three stages: an innovative interpretation of the poem's title, commentary on the claustration of the lovers, and a discussion of the lovers in the context of sacerdotalism. Thereafter and more briefly, I will contend that the conceit of sainthood, which has dominated commentary on "The Canonization," actually informs two other works by Donne—the epitaphs that he composed for Ann More, his wife who died in 1617, and for himself. My twofold argument, sacerdotalism in "The Canonization" and sainthood in the two epitaphs, will provide a unique interpretation of one of the best-known of the Songs and Sonets and an innovative understanding of the spousal relationship of John and Ann More Donne. In short, critical interpretation of the poetry will be coupled with a revised outlook on the biography.

The title of the poem, "The Canonization," has etymological significance. From the Greek, the word "canon" signifies the rod of straightness—"that which was measured or against which another could be measured; hence, in the derived sense, a rule or order of arrangement, and thereafter, the 'order of priests' and 'clergy' in general." In particular, the title "canon" when first used in the Middle Ages signified the ordered life of cloistered clergy residing within the precinct of a cathedral or collegiate church. Since the Reformation, canons in the Church of England serve chiefly in a cathedral chapter under a dean, who discharges the duties assigned to him by the bishop. As a matter of fact, Donne as dean of St. Paul's for ten years oversaw the canons involved in the administration of the cathedral and the conduct of its services. Though canons were not monastic, they nevertheless abided by a rule or "canon" of common life, took vows, or made solemn promises. They were included in the list or "canon" of clergy who acquired their "living" from the treasury of the bishop. In some instances they were on the list or "canon" to nominate candidates for the episcopacy or to participate in the election of the bishop.[2] Accordingly, I am contending that the speaker in "The Canonization" is a canon, one who holds an ecclesiastical office or dignity akin to a vicar, prebend, parson, curate, friar, rector, nun, prioress, and the like. Furthermore, the title of Donne's poem, while identifying the speaker, is a shorthand statement of his way of life. Having been consecrated or "canonized," he functions under a prescribed rule that informs virtually all elements of his life and "living."

As a corollary of my argument, I contend that the speaker's beloved is a canoness. The OED indicates that in ecclesiastical history, the title of canoness designates a member of a college or community of women living under a rule or "canon," a woman holding a prebend or canonry in a female chapter. Various ecclesiastical histories indicate that the communities of canonesses, also dating back to the Middle Ages, followed the customs of the various houses of canons. As female counterparts of canons, the canonesses lived in convents, observed the Divine Office, and led a life of asceticism and discipline, such as fasting and abstinence and maintaining periods of silence. There was little

distinction between them and nuns.[3] Viewed from this perspective, the title of the poem signifies that the lover and his beloved live under canon law or ecclesiastical edict, pray the canonical hours, and wear canonicals—namely, religious attire prescribed for indoor and outdoor use and for the various liturgical services.

If the title of Donne's poem resonates with the multiple significance that I have suggested, then the second stage of my argument, concerning the claustration of the lovers, will unfold naturally. Numerous separate houses were founded for canons and canonesses throughout England, flourishing before and after the Reformation, especially in conjunction with the great churches—St. Paul's, Lincoln, Chichester, Hereford, Salisbury, York, Lichfield, Wells, and Exeter. More to the point, however, are the double houses for canons and canonesses in the same community, each house with its own cloister and living accommodation, though the men and women met together in the church.[4] For canons and canonesses in separate houses or in double houses, the cloister struck a balance between the solitary life of the hermit and the public life of a parish priest, whose assignment was to minister to the spiritual needs of the laity.[5] Because the cloister, when contrasted with the parish house, was restrictive (in effect, off limits to the laity), it was often called a hermitage, the very term used in Donne's poem—"one anothers hermitage" (line 38). Indeed, "hermitage," which the OED defines as a secluded place, at times barred, screened, or veiled (but not necessarily a solitary dwelling), may refer to the interaction of the speaker and his beloved, canon and canoness, in parts of the cathedral church—whether the sanctuary, a chapel, an oratory, or a particular altar—reserved only for the religious and not to be frequented by the laity. Or the reference may be to the illicit interaction of the speaker and his beloved in a cloister or a living accommodation reserved for exclusive use by canons, on the one hand, or by canonesses, on the other.

Building on the preceding account, the third stage of my argument will situate the lovers of "The Canonization" in the context of sacerdotalism. Because the laity had ready and easy access to parish churches, whose clergy served them, their interaction with the reli-

gious assigned to a cathedral chapter was limited. One such contact did involve requests by the laity that the religious of a cathedral chapter remember their intentions during prayers or include their intentions in the rite of Holy Communion as prescribed in *The Book of Common Prayer*. At certain points in the rite of Holy Communion, the celebrant and the religious in attendance, when the particular liturgy was in a location reserved only for them, would affirm the intentions of the laity and even "pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in [sic] earth."[6] The laity provided stipends along with their requests, invoking the religious to pray on their behalf to the Lord and to the saints. At times, a rich benefactor donated substantially to a cathedral chapter, thereby invoking the religious, most notably the canons and canonesses, to pray for his or her intentions or to include these intentions in a liturgy.[7]

In "The Canonization," the speaker guides the laity to invoke him and his beloved ("thus invoke us," line 37) for such purposes. And the prayers by the celebrant during the rite of Holy Communion, as well as by the religious who may have participated in the liturgy, iterate the word "beseech" (often in the phrase "we beseech") to express the intentions of the laity. Donne himself glosses the word "beseech" in one of his sermons, likening it to "besiege." In doing so, he intends to highlight how prayers resemble the means of assault from emplacements near an objective. The personnel in those emplacements, called "trenches" in Donne's sermon, apply unremitting pressure during an ongoing military siege; and at the throne of the Lord, if not encircling it like besiegers, are the beseechers whom we call the community (or communion) of saints, the members of the Church Triumphant.[8] Not to be overlooked is the fact that the intercessory role of the sacerdotalists occurs in that part of the rite of Holy Communion comparable to the Canon of the Roman Mass.

This intercessory role of the sacerdotalists is reflected in "The Canonization," wherein the laity will invoke the speaker and his beloved to "[b]eg from above" (line 44). In the context that I have outlined, such a phrase signifies that the hierarchy suggested in the poem—the laity, the sacerdotalists, the saints—demarcates the as-

cending levels heavenward or the gradual stages of proximity to the throne of the Lord. In this hierarchy, the sacerdotalists "[b]eg from above," mediating between the laity below and the saints above. That is to say, the sacerdotalists beseech the saints to besiege, in turn, the Lord. The process of beseeching the saints is a litany, comprised of supplications by the sacerdotalists and responsorial affirmations by the laity when the liturgy is open to them. Likewise pertinent are the options whereby intercessory prayers may be "said or sung" as hymns, liturgical practices to which "The Canonization" refers: "And by these hymnes, all shall approve / Us *Canoniz'd* for Love" (lines 35-36).[9] Invoked and thereby "approved" by the laity—i.e., accepted and designated as intercessors—the sacerdotalists may say or sing the petitions to the saints.

One might argue that in Donne's poem the canon and canoness, when invoked by the laity, will pray to the holy men and women in the canon of saints. Or to put it another way, the canonized intercessors will pray to the canonized saints. A textual variant—"[b]eg from above / A patterne of your love!" (lines 44-45)—wherein "our" is an alternative for "your" sheds light on the interpretation that I am proposing. The words "your" and "our," nearly homophonous in Donne's era, suggest that "patterne of . . . love" applies to the sacerdotalists and to the laity. The word "pattern" consistently appears in Donne's sermons as a synonym for the word "example"—"God proceeds by example, by pattern." And Donne the sermonist informs the faithful: "God proposes to thee in his Scriptures, and otherwise, Images, patterns, of good and holy men to goe by."[10] Donne the sermonist also enjoins the people to walk "in the contemplation of their [the saints'] example."[11] Accordingly, the saints project the pattern and provide the example for the sacerdotalists and the laity alike, the former more sublimated than the latter in the hierarchy that ascends heavenward, especially in relation to love and loving. From "rage"—actually a form of Eros or cupidity characteristic of the laity in "The Canonization" (line 39)—the love between the sacerdotalists has become refined to agape, a form of "peace" (line 39), a contemplative experience. Ultimately, when welcomed into the communion of saints,

the loving soul interacts with the Lord in a beatific experience, the consummate "holy rest," as Scripture calls it.

Enriching the sacerdotalism that informs "The Canonization" are the figures of the eagle and the dove, almost invariably correlated with the opposite traits of masculine aggressiveness and feminine gentleness. The eagle and the dove, associated with such traits, appear in sermons where Donne speculates on the soul's encounter with the Lord: "whether [one] shall see God as a Dove with an Olive branch . . . or as an Eagle . . . ."[12] Also important in the sermons is Donne's awareness of the complementary relationship of these different birds, whose physical features when conjoined will produce, in effect, two-in-one: "God hath given you the wings of Doves, and eyes of Eagles to see him now."[13] If, however, these images and their respective, though complementary, traits are interpreted as sacerdotal, then the liturgical vestments or the canonicals in Donne's era come into play. During the reign of Edward VI, an inventory of the "plate, jewels, and vestments" in St. Paul's Cathedral indicates that expensive fabrics and even silver-colored fur were used for liturgical attire. The amice of a Minor Canon, for instance, was made with fur or at times with wool. The inventory itemizes and describes the fabrics, colors, and designs of copes, surplices, albs, and the like.[14] Among the copes are the following: some of red velvet decorated with eagles, several distinguished by a splayed eagle; others of white damask with eagles; and a few of white damask decorated with the Holy Ghost or a dove. Another item is a "hanginge of whight damaske powderedd with the holye gost and richelie made with nedellworke in the myddes with curetines of whight Sarcenett."[15] And in the same inventory one notes the recurrent figures of the eagle and the dove on vessels, basins, metal candlesticks, and waxen tapers, as well as on various ornamental furnishings used in Holy Communion and other liturgies.

In the foregoing account, striking features include the similar setting and like appearance of two very different birds, the eagle and the dove, depicted on fabric or carved in precious metal. For instance, both birds appear against white damask on some copes; the splayed eagle resembles an upright dove with wings extended; and the eagle is

red on some vestments, the color of the fiery dove at Pentecost. The resemblance or oneness that I am highlighting between two very different birds typifies a viewpoint dating back to the Middle Ages. Two manifestations of this viewpoint—the one from art, the other from poetry—will make the case. Adolphe Napoleon Didron describes an ivory coffer from the tenth century on which the Holy Spirit is carved "in the form of an eagle, which it resembles in size." And he cites an early ninth-century poem by Ermold le Noir, who recounts a scene that a priest witnessed one evening in the Cathedral of Strasbourg. A large bird described as a composite of an eagle and a dove, but also likened to a phoenix, illuminated the cathedral, "which was filled with light like that of the sun." The "source of those dazzling streams of light" was the bird, at once an eagle, a dove, and a phoenix, outstretched across the altar until matins, when it soared out a window and traveled heavenward.[16]

Conventional in Christian art and literature, the foregoing features—the setting of the cathedral, the sacrosanct place of the altar, the presence of a sacerdotalist, the resemblances between the eagle and the dove, and the relationship of those birds to the phoenix—all provide a context for the speaker's remarks in "The Canonization":

> And wee in us finde the'Eagle and the dove.
> The Phoenix ridle hath more wit
> By us, we two being one, are it. (lines 22-24)

In effect, the canon and canoness in the poem wear or have worn canonicals decorated with eagles and doves, interrelated, if not interchangeable, figures; participate in a liturgy whose accouterments and trappings are marked by similar figures; pray in a sacrosanct place illuminated by waxen tapers and metal candlesticks, both with liturgical decorations. As they mediate between earth and heaven and beseech the saints above on behalf of the laity below, the speaker and his beloved in Donne's poem execute their ministry of sacerdotalism, serving as exemplars of holiness on earth and as aspirants to sainthood in heaven.

At least seven other allusions contribute to the sacerdotal context of "The Canonization." First, the physical maladies of the speaker may typify the venereal disease contracted by some canons who defamed themselves because of promiscuous relationships with women; another possibility is that the maladies may have been contracted in ministering to the sick, for two of London's renowned teaching hospitals—St. Thomas's and St. Bartholemew's—owe their origins to canons. Second, the imperative in the poem—"Observe his honour, or his grace" (line 6)—referring perhaps to the sovereign and bishop, respectively, glances at the appointment of canons by the bishop or by the king in cases when the diocese was without a prelate. Third, the imperative—"Contemplate" (line 8)—may allude to canons and canonesses as contemplative mystics, roles for which they were renowned. Fourth, the poem's reference to the destruction of crops through natural castastrophes--heavy rains or cold weather (lines 12-13)—may glance at speculation in the corn exchange, a common practice of canons whose financial investment succeeded or failed because of vicissitudes in the climate; or the reference may be to canons who actually maintained farms. Fifth, the litigiousness (line 17) to which "The Canonization" refers may describe the antagonistic relationships between canons and laity, documented by numerous lawsuits. Sixth, the word "legend" (line 30) may refer to *legenda*, which are codes of canon law, associated with council and synods dating back to the Middle Ages. Seventh, the word "reverend"—"you whom reverend love" (line 37)—is an ecclesiastical title that suggests the sacerdotalism of the speaker and his beloved, a title to be used as the laity are invoking them to function as intercessors.[17]

What the foregoing interpretation of "The Canonization" implies, I will now explicitly declare—the tone of the poem is satiric or parodic. In contrast to numerous commentaries, however, the poem does not attack the idea of sainthood, the Roman Catholic procedure for the conferral of sainthood, or the practice of venerating and petitioning members of the Church Triumphant. Rather, the poem's speaker and his beloved embody the sacerdotal abuses of the Church of Rome or, more probably, their vestigial presence in the Church of England. In

Ignatius His Conclave Donne epitomizes the very argument that I am making: "And the *Canons* themselves are with us sometimes glorious, in their mitres and pontificall habits."[18] In this context the word "canons" pertains to ecclesiastical edicts codified as canon law and, in the Church of Rome, fraught with authority tantamount to Holy Writ; and the glorious attire is veritable metonymy for prelatical and religious ostentation, vainglory, and the arrogation of power. What Donne forthrightly attacks in *Ignatius His Conclave*—a church and its religious still tainted by, or not fully purified of, Catholicism—he wittily satirizes in "The Canonization."

While it is not the prevailing conceit in "The Canonization," sainthood or the Church Triumphant, to which the poem does refer, is the stage above sacerdotalism in the ascent heavenward. Accordingly, the figures of the phoenix, the eagle, and the dove in "The Canonization" manifest the role of sacerdotalists who transmit petitions from earth to heaven—from the laity to the saints at the throne of God. The same figures project the aspirations of sacerdotalists and laity alike to become saints—to be translated heavenward and to be welcomed into the Church Triumphant. Such aspirations, while laughable as they pertain to the lover and his beloved, are laudable when manifested in poems—the epitaphs that Donne composed for his wife and for himself—whose earnest and plaintive tone contrasts with the wit and satire of "The Canonization." Despite their gravity, the epitaphs employ or imply the same figures—the phoenix, the eagle, and the dove—to convey earnest aspirations toward sainthood and to recount a spousal union that contrasts strikingly with the relationship of the lover and his beloved in "The Canonization."

In the epitaph for his wife, which was incised on a monument at Ann's burial site in St. Clement Danes church, Donne "commits her dust to be united with dust in a new marriage (may God bless it) in this place." The trope that Donne employs—the burial of husband and wife together in a site likened to a marriage bed and in a union sanctified by God—is conventional.[19] But the use of the phrase "cineribus cineres" suggests the dust or ashes of incineration, immolation, or consumption by fire. In fact, the epitaph describes Ann's "dire fever," which was

consumptive, but the larger significance is Donne's continuing spousal fervor for Ann after her death.[20] Larger than that, however, is the implication that husband and wife, having been commingled as ashes and dust, will be re-created together afterwards. At the General Resurrection and from their commingled ashes will emerge two beings, each of which is two-in-one at the very onset of eternity. Unlike Adam and Eve, who were created successively, husband and wife at the General Resurrection will be re-created simultaneously, each an integral and integrated part of the other. In its reference to incineration and ashes, Donne's epitaph for his wife glances at the legend of the phoenix, which signifies an apocalyptic rebirth and reunion, a regenesis under the hand of the Lord, a sanctified conjugal relationship at which the Lord officiates on the threshold of eternity, and a mutual induction of husband and wife into sainthood.

While Donne's deanship of St. Paul's presumably negated the plans for common burial with his wife, the epitaph for himself, nevertheless, complements what he wrote for Ann. The epitaph, moreover, acquires enhanced significance because of the particular monument where it is inscribed. The monument at Donne's burial site in St. Paul's serves as a virtual tableau of the last days of his life. In his study and with charcoal fires nearby, Donne stood atop a wooden urn, carved at his request by a craftsman. With the exception of his face, he wrapped himself in a funeral shroud. Facing the East, but with his eyes shut, he requested that a painter depict him in this attitude. The monument at St. Paul's is a sculpture in white marble of this painted image, which Donne kept by his bed and on which he meditated until death. When, therefore, the epitaph composed by Donne is allied to the painted and sculptured images of him shrouded and atop an urn, while he anticipates the rising sun, his transition from layman to sacerdotalist and his aspiration toward sainthood are manifested through the explicit or implied, not to mention interrelated and interchangeable, figures of the dove, the phoenix, and the eagle. First, the epitaph refers to "the influence and impulse of the Divine Spirit" that guided him into "Holy Orders," cites the "dust" (the Latin is "cinere") that his remains have become, and heralds the glorious sun rising in the East, under which Donne will be raised and toward which he will ascend.[21]

The concluding figure to which I will refer is the urn—the one atop which Donne posed for the portrait, the image of himself on which he meditated as he lay dying. In his *Devotions* Donne furnishes the most concise gloss of the figure: " . . . for the Lord's hand made me of this dust, and the Lord's hand shall recollect these ashes; the Lord's hand was the wheel upon which this vessel of clay was framed, and the Lord's hand is the urn in which these ashes shall be preserved. I am the dust and ashes of the temple of the Holy Ghost, and what marble is so precious?"[22] The urn is at once the hand of the Lord and his handiwork—the working and overworked arm of the artificer and the wrought artifact of his labor. In effect, Donne, anticipating his death and decomposition, stands atop an urn, a receptacle large enough to contain the dust and ashes of his remains. But that urn, which signifies the remains of Donne in the hand of the Lord, will be the site of another creation. Unlike his first creation, the regenesis of Donne will be a virtual birth at the threshold of eternity and an induction into a berth among the community of saints. When one contemplates that the dust and ashes of Donne are to be born again in order to be borne heavenward, then his translation from layman, through sacerdotalist, and into sainthood will be fulfilled.

Expectedly, "The Canonization" provides a complementary perspective on this same figure: "As well a well wrought urn becomes / The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs" (lines 33-34). Whereas a grandiloquent monument, perhaps made of marble (to which Donne refers in *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*), is a suitable site for the ashes of a worldly person, an urn befits the ashes of an aspirant to magnanimous sainthood, especially when the urn signifies the hand of the Lord. That hand worked to beget the creature, works to collect its dust and ashes after death, and will rework them yet once more. In the great fire of 1666 that destroyed St. Paul's Cathedral, of all the tombs and monuments only John Donne's survived intact.[23] The shrouded effigy atop an urn depicts Donne who stands and waits for his regenesis from the hand of the Lord.

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Notes

[1] Donne's poetry is quoted from *The Complete Poetry of John Donne*, ed. John T. Shawcross (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1967).

[2] See *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. ed., gen. ed. J. J. Douglas (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1978), p. 188; *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History*, ed. Jerald C. Brauer (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 156; *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed., ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 230; *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, Vol. 1, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, trans. Andrian Walford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 141; *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, Vol. A-E, ed. Paul Kevin Meagher, Thomas C. O'Brien, and Consuelo Maria Aherne (Washington, D. C.: Corpus Publications, 1979), pp. 616-617; J. C. J. Metford, *Dictionary of Christian Lore and Legend* (Thames and Hudson, 1983), p. 59; John R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Church of England* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham, 1954), pp. 69-70 and *Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1946), pp. 18-23, 246-248; Frederick Crossfield Happold, *Everybody's Book About the English Church* (London: Faber & Faber, 1953), pp. 70, 75-76; the "Statutes of the Realm," in J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution, 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); *A History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, ed. W. R. Matthews and W. M. Atkins (New York: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1957), pp. 17-23, 29-30, 51-55, 86-89, 276-277, and passim; and Guy Mayfield, *The Church of England: Its Members and Its Business*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), esp. pp. 39-40 and 199. For Donne's supervision of canons at St. Paul's, see R. C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), esp. pp. 389-392.

[3] Brauer, p. 156; Douglas, p. 188; Metford, p. 59; Meagher, O'Brien, and Aherne, p. 614; Moorman, *Church Life*, pp. 246-49 and *A History of the Church of England*, p. 70.

[4] Moorman, *Church Life*, pp. 19-21, 247 and *A History of the Church of England*, p. 17; Meagher, O'Brien, Aherne, p. 614; Brauer, p. 75.

[5] Moorman, *Church Life*, p. 246.

[6] *The Book of Common Prayer 1559: The Elizabethan Prayer Book*, ed. John E. Booty (Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1976), p. 253. See also Alexander Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament*, rev. C. S. C. Williams (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1960), p. 142.

[7] Moorman, *Church Life in England*, p. 247.

[8] *The Sermons of John Donne*, Vol. VII, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953), p. 306.

[9] *The Book of Common Prayer 1559*, p. 265.

[10] Potter and Simpson, IX, 76.

[11] Potter and Simpson, VI, 285.

[12] Potter and Simpson, VIII, 123.

[13] Potter and Simpson, VII, 347.

[14] *St. Paul's Cathedral in the time of Edward VI: Being a Short Account of its Treasures from a Document in the Public Record Office*, ed. John Orlebar Payne (London: Burns & Oates, n.d.), pp.xii-xiii, xvi, xxi and nn., xxiv, 6-7, 12-14, 17-18, and 20-21. See also William P. Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 183-211 for commentary on vestments and liturgical images in the reign of Elizabeth I; and Matthews and Atkins, p.70.

[15] Payne, p. 20.

[16] Adolphe Napoleon Didron, *Christian Iconography*, trans. E. J. Millington (1851; rpt. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965), I, 462-463 and nn.

[17] See Brauer, p. 75; Moorman, *Church Life in England*, pp. 21-22 and nn.; Matthews and Atkins, pp. 62-65.

[18] *John Donne: Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*, ed. John Hayward (London: Nonesuch Press, 1936), p. 382.

[19] *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, Vol. 8, ed. Gary A. Stringer et al (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 435.

[20] Stringer, pp. 186-191, 435-437. For a detailed study of Donne's epitaph for his wife, see M. Thomas Hester, "'miserrimum dictu': Donne's Epitaph for His Wife," *JEGP*, 94 (1995): 513-529.

[21] For the Latin epigraph, English translations of it, critical commentary, and an account quoted from Izaak Walton of Donne's posing in a funeral shroud, see Stringer, pp. 192-195, 438-445.

[22] *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1965), p. 9.

[23] Matthews and Atkins, p. 156.