



Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters (Translated Texts for Historians LUP)

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Caesarius was born in 469/70 and served as Bishop of Arles from 502 until his death in 542. Originally trained as a monk at Lérins, he devoted himself as Bishop to an ambitious programme of church reform and Christianization inspired by strict monastic standards of piety. Best known as a preacher, with a corpus of over 250 sermons, Caesarius also founded a monastery whose rule he composed and presided over several important church councils whose canons still survive. The documents included in this volume - most never before translated into English - vividly illustrate Caesarius's career and the social and religious history of Provence at a time of far-reaching political change, during which the region was ruled by a series of Visigothic, Burgundian, Ostrogothic and, ultimately, Frankish kings. The 'Life of Caesarius', written shortly after his death by five clerics of his acquaintance, provides a first-hand record of the Bishop's achievements as pastor, politician and wonderworker. The 'Testament' demonstrates Caesarius's efforts to endow and protect his monastery and in the process furnishes valuable information about diocesan landholdings. The collection of twenty-four 'Letters' sent and received by Caesarius chronicles his relations with fellow aristocrats and bishops and illuminates a wide variety of topics, from penalties for incest to political intrigue among rival bishops. Taken together, these texts shed light on a region and period in which the Christian church, with its leaders, rituals and doctrines, was coming to play an increasingly important role in the daily lives not only of aristocrats and clerics, but also of ordinary men and women.

The volume includes scholarly notes and an introduction.

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Editorial Review

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