The Jesuits established an early academic presence (Cologne, 1544) in the Empire that accelerated after the mid-1550s. Among their many accomplishments one may not include the contribution of a substantial postil, at least until 1591. Before that year the most they mustered was the short collection by Canisius. It may well be that Jesuit preachers in the Empire and further afield were well enough educated to make do on their own, but, given Jesuit efforts to effect a counter-reformation in Germany, their failure to produce postils immediately after the mid-1550s was something of a conundrum. It took nearly forty years for one of them to release a substantial collection. It was done not by any of the numerous young, active brothers who were preaching and teaching in the later sixteenth century, but by one of their heroes waiting to die. Happily, finally, in semi-retirement in Switzerland, Peter Canisius released his extensive Latin postils in 1591 which, surprisingly enough given his undisputed importance, would be reprinted only once thereafter (1595). Relative to his massively distributed catechisms, Canisius’ postils were a complete and utter failure in terms of print production, just as they have been neglected by most modern historians despite the fact that they number among the only postils available in critical editions. They surely, however, found a place in

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1 The postil may have derived largely from outlines of sermons that Canisius began to deliver in Ingolstadt after 1550, which he still had in manuscript in 1591; cf. Engelbert Maximilian Buxbaum, *Petrus Canisius und die kirchliche Erneuerung des Herzogtums Bayern, 1549–1556* (Rome, 1973), 115. Canisius wrote of his age, health, inability to preach, and the writing of his postils in a letter of August 25, 1591; cf. James Brodrick, *St. Peter Canisius* (1935; Chicago, 1962), 794–6; still the standard biography, this is all the space that Brodrick devotes to Canisius’ postils.

most Jesuit libraries established by 1591 and thereafter in Germany. For his part, the Bishop of Lausanne found them so useful that he released a mandate for all preachers in his diocese to use them for their sermons. That was possible only because the sermons had been printed in Switzerland (although copies were also available at the Frankfurt book fair). The mandate applied to anyone who preached regardless of institutional affiliation: every simple priest, Jesuit, and friar in the diocese. Although two printings for most postillators meant relative obscurity, having a name such as "Canisius" on his title pages guaranteed that his would have a significant if indirect impact in the long run despite their minimal print production.

The postils of the Second Apostle of Germany included everything one expected to see by 1591: a vigorous defense of tradition and Tridentine pronouncements, an acknowledgment of papal primacy, and an insistence upon the legitimacy of anything questioned even slightly by Protestants since Luther. Among the relevant postils Canisius had to hand when composing his own were those of Nausea and Luther; he assuredly knew Wild's. Like most Catholic postillators, Canisius did not bother with the pericopes and their vindication, nor was he concerned about providing anything close to a defense of his postils; these were utterly assumed. He pointed, rather, to the fact that the work was intended for and useful to no one other than Catholic counter-reformation preacher by Hughes Oliphant Old, who cites the catechisms but does not engage any of the postils; Old, The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church, 4: The Age of the Reformation (Grand Rapids, 1998), 190–92.

The first edition of Canisius' de tempore postils was printed in Fribourg in 1591 (VD16 C 719), on the other side of Switzerland from Lausanne but part of the Swiss book distribution network. For this edition at the Frankfurt fair see Die Messkataloge Georg Willers 1564–1592, facsimile reprint ed. Bernhard Fabian, 4 vols. (Hildesheim, 1972–1978), 4: 362. It was the second edition (VD16 C 721) that was more easily had in Germany, although it was not printed in a major publishing center like Cologne or Mainz but in Freiburg i.B.; that it was never printed in places like Cologne is mystifying, again, given the importance of Canisius' other works—especially his catechisms—for German Catholic printers.

* Reported by Brodrick, St. Peter Canisius, 795f.