1. Introduction

The conventional view of the eleventh-century ecclesiastical reformers is of men who were, in the words of Colin Morris, "not much interested in ordinary people" but rather in definitions of clerical status and ecclesiastical authority.¹ From Leo IX (1049-54) onwards, leading reformers, including Peter Damian (+1072), Cardinal Humbert (+1061) and Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII, 1073-85), were intent on ensuring the purity of the life of those clergy who administered the sacraments, inveighing against clerical marriage and simony, rather than regulating the behaviour of their flock.² In so far as they considered the laity it was either to condemn them for the alienation of church property as robbers whose hands "are so smeared with the glue of devilish tenacity that once they have acquired property in any way they refuse to surrender it", or to call on them, as Gregory VII did, to boycott the services of sinful clergy.³ Widespread

concern with educating both the parish clergy and the laity in the practices and doctrines of the Christian faith is, instead, generally attributed to the pastoral revolution which swept the thirteenth-century Church in the wake of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Following the injunctions of that Council, the ecclesiastical authorities, in the shape of the bishops and the new mendicant orders, put considerable effort into educating both the parish clergy and, equally importantly, the laity in the practice and doctrine of their faith. Diocesan statutes bear testimony to episcopal efforts to inculcate high pastoral standards in their clergy, whilst Lateran IV, as the first ecumenical council to enjoin annual confession and communion on the laity as an essential part of all Christians' duties, helped popularise model sermons and *summae confessorum* as both mendicants and the established clergy endeavoured to instruct their laity in their faith through the pulpit and confession. One of the purposes of this paper is not to deny the significance of this medieval pastoral revolution, but rather to demonstrate that earlier churchmen took the demands and delivery of the pastoral ministry seriously, and that certain anonymous early eleventh-century Italian churchmen, in particular, were interested in the pastoral needs of 'ordinary people'.


4 For example, Morris, *Papal Monarchy* (see above, n. 1), pp. 489-96; R.N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe c. 1215-c. 1515* (Cambridge, 1995); also André Vauchez, "The Pastoral Transformation of the Thirteenth Century", in his *The Latty in the Middle Ages. Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, eds. and trans. D.E. Bornstein and M.G. Schneider (Notre Dame, 1993), pp. 95-106, who nevertheless is aware that an absence of evidence may have led historians to underrate the significance of the post-Carolingian period, ibid., pp. 96-97.