***Being Roman Catholic Before the Reformation:***

***What Art and a Will Can Teach Us***

How we usually tell the story of the Reformation….

Another starting point: a story of ordinary people *before* the Reformation via Ann Spensar’s will.

The seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic church enfold everyone’s lives, from peasant to king, and from the cradle to the grave and beyond. (Rogier Van Der Weyden, *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*)

 Baptism

 Why Ann was called Ann, and what this tells us about pre-Reformation beliefs and practices… (Giotto, *Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate*)

 The importance of the Virgin Mary via a statue and a painting (Michelangelo, *Pieta;* Raphael, *Sistene Madonna*)

 The centrality of the Mass

 Confirmation and Confession

The Mass:

 Key aspects of the theology of the Mass

 What it was like to attend and receive Mass

 Why the Mass mattered - for the living and the dead

 Purgatory

Other aspects of attending worship before the Reformation:

 What you would see in the church or cathedral

 What you mostly couldn’t read, and mostly wouldn’t hear

 Two more sacraments: marriage and ordination (neither of which Ann Spensar received)

Other aspects of Roman Catholic life - how the practices of the faith and the rhythms of the church year shaped individual and communal life.

Extract from Ann Spensar’s Will

*In the name of God Amen. The 8 day of December, the year of Our Lord God 1508. I Ann Spensar, maid, of the parish of St Clement, Cambridge, being of whole mind and good memory, make this my testament and last will in the manner following. Firstly I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, Our Blessed Lady and all the company of heaven, [and] my body to be buried in the churchyard of St Clement’s…Also, I will there be 30 masses for my soul done in St Clement’s church the day of my burial…Also I will that Nicholas Clynt, my scholar, have a year’s service to sing for my soul [and] my father and mother…as soon as he is priest. Also I give to the Fraternity of Jesus to be prayed for in the beadroll by the priest…3s 4d. Also I bequeath towards the glazing of a pane in a window…3s 4d…*

 The final sacrament: extreme unction / last rites

Doctrines and practices that Ann’s will takes for granted (and that the Protestant Reformers loathed).

Some other catalysts for the Reformation that Ann probably knew nothing about.

Being careful to hear both sides of the Reformation story.