

Die Priesterbruderschaft St. Salvator zu Straubing. Studien zu ihrer Geschichte, eds. Paul Mai and Karl Hausberger. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg, 11. Regensburg: Verlag des Vereins für Regensburger Bistumsgeschichte, 2001. ix, 259 pp., 16 ill. ISSN 0945-1722.

This volume celebrates the more than 700 year history of the clerical confraternity of St. Salvator in Straubing. Although this volume concerns a confraternity for the clergy, it makes abundantly clear that St. Salvator includes and appreciates its significant lay membership. Founded in the middle of the thirteenth century, the confraternity survived the challenges of the Reformation, the Thirty Years War, the secularization process of the early nineteenth century and the Second World War. Today, St. Salvator continues to provide spiritual service for its members, commemorative services for the community's deceased, and support for charitable endeavours at home and abroad.

The contributions to this volume touch on various aspects of the confraternity including: its historical origins and development; its art-historical significance; the economic life and social composition of the community. The volume begins with four essays that give the historical context of the confraternity. G. May details the legal history of the confraternity in church law, whereas Johann Gruber, Roman Deutinger and Stephan Deutinger provide historical essays that outline St. Salvator's local and regional historical context and development from the Middle Ages to 1650. Though the essay format cannot do justice to the complexity of the historical developments over this period, the authors do offer a good deal of information and do include references to materials that should prove helpful to researchers interested in further work in these areas.

The other essays in the collection deal with much more specific historical questions. Margaret Wagner-Braun discusses the economic situation of the confraternity in the mid-nineteenth century, whereas Ulrich and Herbert Lehner examine its membership structure from 1702 to 1945. Hermann Riedel sketches the reconstruction efforts of the confraternity's church, St. Veit, from the Middle Ages to the late Baroque. For his article, Ludwig Mödl presents the theological basis and purpose of the confraternity, drawing on the historical developments from the Council of Trent and its response to Reformation criticism of confraternities. Alfons Huber outlines the confraternity's holdings of art-historical significance, whereas Dorit-Maria Krenn discusses the holdings, history and challenges of the confraternity's archives.

The variety of approaches in this volume is both a weakness and a strength. Readers might wish for a more unified and thorough treatment of the confraternity's history. On the other hand, the various perspectives, the references, and the two contributions dealing with the holdings of the confraternity offer a broad spectrum of issues and materials for those interested in further reading and research on this particular confraternity.

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