

Effranata

Sion Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury

As one of the most prominent church leaders in England, Islip is concerned with the reputation of the church. Many people are questioning their faith in God and the church with so many people dying of the plague. The people are questioning why God would allow such a terrible tragedy to happen to them. People are complaining about the local parish priests and Islip has to solve this problem.

May 28, 1350

The uncontrolled greed of the human race would grow to the point that love and compassion would be banished from the bounds of the earth, unless greed's momentum was controlled by the power of justice. Well, the House of Commons has complained that priests who survived the plague (a sign from God that he wanted them to live and serve him) show no regard for the dying. These priests, instead of caring for the **sick and dying souls** (the Catholic church requires), devote themselves to **celebrating anniversary masses and other private services** that earn them more money. This allows them to live extravagantly as they are not content with being paid ordinary salaries but demand for their services excessive wages, and thus they win more profit for themselves in exchange only for their status and little work. . . .

- Like today, the church charged a fee for getting married in the church. This helped pay the cost of the building, the priest, cleaning, and other expenses. The priest got to keep what the church didn't need so these were opportunities for the priest to make some extra money. Caring for the sick would provide no extra income.

Wishing therefore to **rein in the insatiable desire of these priests** (lessen or diminish their desire for wealth). . . we require and exhort you . . . suitably provide before all else for the good governance of parish churches. Only appoint parish leaders who can be found that will care for the souls in that parish. And if anyone who defies you seeks to have himself transferred to **our diocese** (the catholic church was divided into regions in order to govern it. The Archbishop was

in charge of an entire diocese. This would be like states, counties, cities, etc. A diocese is probably close to a state in size) or to the diocese of a fellow bishop, we will order you to make his first and last name known to us through your letters, or to the bishop into whose diocese he has transferred, and inform us of what actions you or your officials have taken against him. For we wish to follow up the actions that you or a fellow bishop has taken against those who come into our diocese, and to execute to the full force of the law the complaints that they have been accused of.