

Héribert Rosweyde, *A Reminder for Reverend Father Louis 'Thuart*, Trans. W.L. North from the Latin edition in Maurice Coens, “Héribert Rosweyde et la recherche des documents,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 83 (1965), 50-52.

*Héribert Rosweyde, S.J. (1569-1629) is regarded as the founder of the Bollandist movement (even though it does not bear his name) because it was he who first submitted to the Society of Jesus in 1603 a plan to publish the texts of saints' lives in their original form rather than rely solely on later reworkings of the lives. His plan was approved and he pursued manuscripts containing saints' lives or materials on the saints in many libraries in northern France and the Netherlands. In the brief letter below, Rosweyde enlists the support of Father Louis Thuart ca. in his hunt for manuscript witnesses to the Lives of the Desert Fathers. It bears witness to the importance of friendship, religious, and scholarly networks to learn of and access materials.*

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I would like you to see to three things [when you are] among the manuscript libraries of the monasteries.

1. That the catalogue of manuscript books be copied.
2. If there is a manuscript copy of the *Lives of the Desert Fathers* or the words and deeds of the Elders, I would like to request the use of it for a month or two because I now have the *Lives of the Fathers* nearly ready for press.<sup>2</sup> But there is a book that I desire which is commonly titled *Lives of the Fathers* and attributed to Dom Jerome (although incorrectly).<sup>3</sup>
3. If some manuscript copy turns up of a martyrology, whether of Bede, or Usuard,<sup>4</sup> or Ado,<sup>5</sup> or someone else or even one without an author's name, I would like to ask for the use of it for a month or two.

Very good health to the reverend Lord [Abbot] of Epternach, and the same to the Reverend Lord Prior. And if [the libraries] have the *Itinerary* of the holy Willibrord<sup>6</sup> in manuscript (as I think that I have read somewhere), I would like to request the opportunity to inspect it.'

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<sup>1</sup> Venerable Bede (†735) was a Northumbrian monk and polymath who composed, among many other works, a martyrology.

<sup>2</sup> H Rosweyde will publish his edition of the *Lives of the Fathers* in 1615, and so this note seems to have been written just before this.,,

<sup>3</sup> Rosweyde here refers to Saint Jerome.

<sup>4</sup> Usuard (†875), a monk and author of a martyrology.

<sup>5</sup> Ado (†874), a monk and author of a martyrology used by Usuard.

<sup>6</sup> No itinerary has been attributed to Willibrord. As M. Coens suggests, Rosweyde himself notes that his memory may be fuzzy about this work, and it is likely that he did read about an “itinerary” but confused its real author, Willibald, who wrote the *Hodoeporicon*, with another English missionary and saint Willibrord..