

Topic Page: [Lanfranc](#)

Definition: **Lanfranc** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Italian theologian. A Benedictine monk, his priory at Bec, Normandy, was a centre for European scholars in the 1040s. As a counsellor of William I (the Conqueror), he became Archbishop of Canterbury (1070-89).

Summary Article: **Lanfranc**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(lăn'frăngk), d. 1089, Italian churchman and theologian, archbishop of Canterbury (1070–89), b. Pavia. At first educated in civil law, he turned to theology and became a pupil of Berengar of Tours. After teaching in Avranches, Normandy, he went to Bec (c.1040), where he founded an illustrious school and became prior (c.1043). Among his pupils were St. Anselm and perhaps Pope Alexander II. In 1049, Berengar impugned Lanfranc's orthodoxy, and Lanfranc, successfully clearing himself, attacked Berengar in turn. Some 10 years later Lanfranc wrote the treatise *De Corpore et Sanguine Domine* [concerning the Body and Blood of the Lord], which, though ineffective as a rebuttal of Berengar's writings on the Eucharist, set forth ideas that became influential in the Middle Ages. He was closely associated with Duke William of Normandy (later William I of England) and probably helped secure papal recognition of the duke's marriage and the papal blessing for the conquest of England. In 1070, William replaced Stigand as archbishop with Lanfranc, who accepted only on the direct command of the pope. Thereafter king and archbishop worked closely together in matters of both church and state. Lanfranc replaced English abbots and bishops with Normans (a course often denounced but quite essential to any reform), reduced the archbishop of York to subjection to Canterbury, legislated against clerical marriage and concubinage, built churches, reformed ecclesiastical finance, established ecclesiastical courts, strengthened the monasteries, and removed the bishoprics from small towns to important cities. Occasional friction between church and state caused no quarrels until the reign of William II. Lanfranc had favored young William, and crowned him, but the archbishop was deeply displeased by the king's arbitrary actions, and trouble was averted only by Lanfranc's death.

See Gibson, M. , Lanfranc of Bec (1978).

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Lanfranc. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lanfranc>



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