The question asked in the title is: 'Why are there so few saint plays?' The assumption is that there were only a few, but we cannot be sure that this was the case. Only about 10 per cent of the records are extant, with a real weakness in parish records (as a quick look at Lawrence Blair's *List of Churchwardens' Accounts* indicates), and hence it is risky to make sweeping judgments, especially since there is every indication that saints were popular in visual display of various kinds, including pageants, processions, and, apparently, plays. It will not serve very well to deny the designation of 'saint play' in all instances for which the texts and records fail to make their nature clear. Such a practice is not applied to references to biblical plays when the texts are not extant (and the number of these cited in the records is also relatively small). Further, the hypothesis that some kind of saint 'game' was involved – for example, in cases like the St Christian play in the Little Park outside Coventry in 1505 – would demand that we have specific evidence for such communal recreations. To be sure, we are dealing with flexible terminology but I would not want to be guilty of bending such terminology all in one way to fit the preconceived notion that 'there [were] so few saint plays'.

In the traditional religion of the late Middle Ages, saints were a continual presence both visually and through their relics, which were deposited in every church in England. Living in the past, they nevertheless were understood to be available in the present and in the hour of one's death – and to be seen in glory by those admitted to bliss. They were made visible in sculpture, wood carvings, wall paintings, glass paintings, and illuminated manuscripts. Images of them in these media were devotional, in which case they were venerated and had candles placed before them, or they were mnemonic, focusing commonly on the cause of martyrdom. The moment of the saint's martyrdom was inherently dramatic, since it generally contained within itself the story most relevant to his or her function as a mediator among mortals. We have every reason to believe that in England as in France saint plays, though not necessarily on the scale of the Digby Mary Magdalene or even the Conversion of St. Paul from the same manuscript, were a popular genre. Exactly how popular we may never know.

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