

Breviary (Celestine Use)
In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Northern France, Marcoussis?, c. 1460-1475(?)

262 folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, upper outer rectos, 1-262, lacking two opening quires and the opening leaf of the first quire, else complete (collation i^s [-1, with loss of text] ii-xiv^s xv^s [-7 and 8, with no loss of text] xvi-xxxiii^s xxxiv² [-2, with no loss of text]), quire and leaf signatures visible, but partially cropped, lower inner rectos, quires ii-x, xvi-xxxiii, horizontal catchwords visible, but partially cropped, lower center versos, quires i-xiv, xvi-xxvii, xxix, xxxiii, ruled in brown ink with full-length horizontal and vertical bounding lines, prickings lower margin (justification 60 x 38-39 mm.), written in dark brown ink in a tightly compressed bâtarde script on twenty-two long lines, rubrics written or underlined in red, one-line paraphs in blue or red, guide letters for initials, one-line versal initials in red or blue, two-to three-line initials in red or blue, three- to six-line parted initials in blue and red, some correction and marginal annotation in the scribe's hand, now cropped, slight rubbing and smudging on some pages, otherwise in excellent condition. Bound in early (sixteenth-century?) pale reversed leather over pasteboards, traces of fore-edge clasp on both boards, spine with three raised bands, traces of paper labels on spine, upper headband and leather along upper spine loose, slight worming and soiling. Dimensions 83-85 x 55 mm.

Fashioned for the personal use of a medieval monk, this charming and extremely diminutive Breviary would have been essential to his observance of the Divine Office. Despite its small size, this volume presents a staggering amount of text in a clear and skillful, if heavily compressed, script. Clearly produced for use in a Celestine house at a time when the Celestines were greatly favored by the French monarchy, this volume should shed valuable light on liturgical observances of that Order in late medieval France.

PROVENANCE

1. Script and decoration point to this Breviary's origin in France in the third quarter of the fifteenth century; the inclusion of the feast of the Transfiguration (6 August) in the Sanctorale indicates that this manuscript must have been copied after 1457, when that feast was ordered by Pope Callixtus III, thus an estimated date of c. 1460-1475.

The book was specifically made for Celestine use. Large decorated initials in the Sanctorale highlight three important duplex major feasts specific to the Celestine calendar, namely the feast of the order's founder, Pietro da Morrone (19 May); the feast of the translation of the relics of Pietro da Morrone (15 February); and the dedication of the church (10 October). Even beyond these integral feasts, the contents of this volume's Sanctorale consistently indicate that this book was made for the use of a Celestine community in France. In fact, the saints' feasts listed in this volume's Sanctorale are identical (give or take a few common feasts) to those listed in the calendar of a sixteenth-century Celestine Chapter Book (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 10171) made for the the Couvent de la Sainte-Trinité in Marcoussis, just outside of Paris. Many of these are actually Southern Italian saints found in other Celestine manuscripts. Their inclusion in these and other French Celestine manuscripts can be explained as the result of transmission from earlier

Celestine liturgical books produced in Italy, particularly in the region of Abruzzo, where the Order has been based from its foundation to the present (for a fuller discussion of this calendar and these feasts and how they compare to Italian Celestine calendars, see Lemaitre, 1999, pp. 45-72).

The fidelity of this calendar to earlier Italian exemplars means that relatively few feast days are relevant to determining for which French Celestine house this Breviary might have been made. Particular to the present manuscript and the Marcoussis manuscript are several saints with special veneration in France, including Polycarp (26 January), Austreberta (7 February), Martial of Limoges (7 July), Louis (25 August), Gregory of Tours (17 November), and Eligius (1 December). These do not point conclusively to a diocese of origin, but we can be fairly certain that this book was produced for one of the thirteen Celestine houses in Northern France at the time. Marcoussis is a likely candidate, given the striking similarity of this volume's Sanctorale to the Marcoussis Calendar. The prominence of Anthony the Great (17 January; 12 lections) in the Sanctorale may also point to a Marcoussis provenance; the founder of the Marcoussis convent (see below, in Text) presented the house with a relic of that saint, itself a gift from Saint-Antoine-l'Abbaye (Lemaitre, 1999, p. 25). That said, further examination of the present manuscript alongside other French Celestine manuscripts will be necessary to determine this book's place of origin.

2. A later owner inscribed a monogram, beginning with the letter L, on the inside of both covers, as well as ff. 1 and 262v.
3. A note on the rear pastedown was added around one of these monograms: "262 feuilles de velin / et s'en [sic] miniat[ures]." Another note, likely from a later owner, has been effaced on the front pastedown.
4. A faint date in the lower margin of f. 262, "17 auriil 1780," indicates that this manuscript was still in French hands in the late eighteenth century.

TEXT

ff. 1-117, beginning imperfectly, *//tus orbi subuenis cursu decliui temporis. Illumina nunc pectora tuoque amore concrema audito vt preconio sint pulsa tandem lubrica ... terram palmo concludis exaudi nos domine in gemitibus nostris. Superscripte ante dicuntur ad Matutinum vsque ad aduentum domini. Sciendum quod hystorie quae in kalendas mutantur ... specialiter rubrica habeatur*"; [f. 117v, blank but ruled];

Temporale from the first Sunday in Advent (beginning imperfectly in the middle of a hymn, "Verbum supernum prodiens") to the twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Larger, parted initials mark the feasts of Christmas (f. 12), Easter (f. 78), the Ascension (f. 89v), Pentecost (f. 94), the Trinity (f. 98), and Corpus Christi (f. 100v).

ff. 118-206, *Incipit proprium sanctorum vbi notandum quod si plura festa trium lectionum de minoribus continue fuerint. In secundis vesperis totum officium fit de precedenti vsque ad capitulum et tunc a capitulo in antea fit de sequenti cum commemoratione precedentis festi nisi precedens festum habeat proprium officium quia tunc firet ante commemoratione de sequenti. Andree apostoli duplex minor. In vigilia ad vesperas antiphona, incipit, "Cum*

peruenisset ... *Saturnini et Sisinnij martirum. Oratio.* Deus qui nos beatorum saturnini et sisinnij martirum tuorum concedis natalicijs perfrui eorum nos tribue meritis adiuuari. Per”;

Sanctorale from the feast of Andrew (30 November) to the feast of Saturninus and Sisinnius (29 November). Larger, parted initials mark the feasts of Andrew (f. 118), the Conception of the Virgin (f. 121), the Purification of the Virgin (f. 128), the translation of Pietro da Morrone (f. 132), Benedict (f. 136v), the Annunciation (f. 140), Pietro da Morrone (f. 153v), the Nativity of John the Baptist (f. 161v), the Assumption (f. 180), the Nativity of the Virgin (f. 186v), and All Saints (f. 198), as well as for the dedication of a church (f. 193).

ff. 206-262v, *Incipit commune sanctorum. Et primo in natali apostolorum. Ad primum vesperum. Antiphona,* incipit, “Hoc est preceptum ... qui profert de thesauro [s]uo nova et vetera. Amen.”

Common of Saints, with larger parted initials marking the commons of apostles (f. 206), a martyr (f. 217), multiple martyrs (f. 224), a confessor (f. 235v), and a virgin (f. 252v), as well as additional lections from Gregory I for the commons of apostles (f. 214v) and many martyrs (f. 230v), additional lections from John Chrysostom for the commons of many martyrs (f. 233) and a confessor (f. 247), additional lections from Fulgentius (f. 244) and Maximus (f. 250) for the common of a confessor.

This charming, diminutive volume presents a Celestine Breviary in compact form. Breviaries contain the complete text of the Divine Office, encompassing a program of readings, prayers, hymns, canticles, and psalms arranged according to the canonical hours of the Divine Office (Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline). As this is a Celestine Breviary, it follows monastic rather than secular use in its inclusion of four, rather than three, lections for each nocturn of Matins, so that there are twelve readings for Sundays and major feasts.

A very small, carefully emended volume, this Breviary was certainly made for personal use rather than for public reading. Furthermore, lacking many of the texts common to Breviaries, it was made to answer a very specific purpose – and was quite possibly intended for use in conjunction with at least one other volume. Present here are the proper texts for the Temporale, Sanctorale, and Common of Saints for the entire year; it is now incomplete at the beginning, and may have once begun with a calendar. There is no Psalter, and references in the rubrics indicate an expectation that the book’s user consult a Psalter (or his own knowledge of the psalms) to supplement this volume’s coverage of the texts to be chanted in the Divine Office. Examination of this manuscript alongside the holdings of French Celestine monasteries should shed more light on the ways in which this tiny Breviary might have been used in conjunction with other books in a Celestine house’s library (for a partial list, see Antonini, 1997; this list includes eight Breviaries, all in Paris).

A Benedictine congregation, the Order of the Celestines owes its name and foundation to Saint Peter Celestine, or Pietro da Morrone (1215 – 19 May 1296), later Pope Celestine V (*sedit* 1294). Pope for five months and eight days, Celestine V is remembered as the only medieval pope to abdicate. Dante in his *Inferno* levels harsh words at Celestine V: “I saw and recognized the shade of him / Who by his cowardice made the great refusal ...” (*Inferno*, III, 59-60). Before becoming pope, Pietro da Morrone retreated to live as a hermit in a cave on the Monte

Morrone, and in 1263 his foundation adopted the Rule of Saint Benedict by Pope Urban IV; the new Benedictine congregation was definitely organized in 1275. The movement rapidly expanded in Central and Southern Italy. Meanwhile, King Philip the Fair of France (r. 1285-1314) introduced the Order in France around 1300. The mother house of the French branch of the Order was endowed in Paris by King Charles V (r. 1364-1380), who was particularly supportive of the Order. Two of his sons, Charles VI (r. 1380-1422) and Louis of Orléans, and one of his grandsons, Charles VII (r. 1422-1461), would subsequently found Celestine houses in France as well. Largely thanks to French royal patronage, by the end of the fifteenth century, the Order had as many as twenty-one houses in France. Despite this royal favor, this new Order was known throughout this period in France for its austerity, in keeping with the values of its founder. The Order was known also for its association with several important reformers of the fifteenth century, including Pierre d'Ailly and Jean Gerson (two of Gerson's brothers were Celestine monks).

This Breviary may have been made for use at the Couvent de la Sainte-Trinité in Marcoussis, which was founded by Jean de Montaigu (1363-1409), superintendent of finance to Charles VI of France, shortly before his death; its church was consecrated in 1408 by the Archbishop of Sens, brother of the founder, and in the presence of Jean, duke of Berry. We do not know for certain why Jean de Montaigu opted to found a Celestine house, but his protector, Charles VI, had founded a Celestine houses at Amiens, and the Order had close ties to the notaries and secretaries of the Kings of France. The Marcoussis house's buildings were burned in 1562 during the wars of religion and, after the suppression of the Celestine Order in France in the late eighteenth century, what remained of them was given over to the Marquis de Salperwick, who reserved the main buildings as a home. There are at least fifty-three manuscripts known to have belonged Marcoussis, at least fifty of which are housed in European libraries (for the full list, see Lemaitre, 1999, p. 35, n. 9).

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