

Ritual: Texts for Preparing a Catechumen for Baptism, for Baptism, for Anointing the Sick, and for Extreme Unction

**In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Northern Italy (Padua?), c. 1300-1350**

i (paper) + 24 + i (paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, 1-24, (collation i-iii^s), ruling in faint ink (justification 162 x 115 mm.), written in grey ink in a round Gothic bookhand (Italian textualis) on 17 long lines, later additions on 27 lines on f. 24rv, one very fine five-line pen-flourished 'puzzle' initial in red and blue, many fine one- to two-line pen-flourished initials alternating in red and blue, pen-flourished crosses alternating in red and blue for the sign of the Cross, leaves thumbed from frequent use, otherwise in very good condition. Bound in the sixteenth century in brown calf, a central blind-tooled rectangle is decorated using a roll with a trefoil branch motif, within which are foliage corner-pieces and centerpieces of the Christogram "HIS," with the ascender of 'h' forming a cross, three raised bands on the spine, leather fastening straps attached to covers, binding restored. Dimensions 210 x 168 mm.

In its early binding, this slim, portable manuscript, copied in large, clear script and carefully decorated with pen-flourished initials, contains the texts for services that a parish priest would need when ministering in his community. Rituals for the Sacraments to be recited for both men and women are included (female forms are added in interlinear gloss). It thus offers crucial insight into the day to day liturgical life of the Church in the Middle Ages.

PROVENANCE

1. The form of the script and style of the pen-flourished initials suggest the manuscript's origin in northern Italy in the first half of the fourteenth century. Notably, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Justina, patron saint of Padua, occur in the litanies (f. 11; St. Anthony barely legible below St. Benedict). The scribe's phonetic spellings confirms production in northern Italy. He at times employs a "tailed c" for the letters c, s, and z, for example in the words "Exorcismus," "exorciso," and "baptizari" (f. 11v, lines 5 and 6, f. 12v, line 2). In Piedmont, Lombardy, Padua, Venetia and Emilia, 'c' followed by an 'i' or 'e' was pronounced 'z'.
2. Additions show continued use through the fifteenth or early sixteenth century; the beginning of the Gospel of St. John was added on f. 24 in the later fourteenth or fifteenth century; subsequently in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century text for the Visitation of the sick was added on f. 24v.
3. In the seventeenth or eighteenth century the manuscript had arrived in francophone hands, when the (erroneous) title "Formules et prières pour cathéchiser les hérétiques" was written on the verso of the front flyleaf.
4. Probably in the nineteenth century, "N^o 97" was written on the front cover in black ink.

TEXT

ff. 1-11, [Ordo for preparing a catechumen for baptism, concluding with litanies], *Incipit ordo ad catecuminum faciendum. Cum venerit infans ante ianuam ecclesie interroget presbiter ... et dicat masculus est vel femina et quod nomen debet habere, incipit, "Si qui catecuminus est secedat ... "*; f. 2v, [Exorcism], *Exorcismus, incipit, "Exorçiso de omnis spiritus immunde ... "*; f. 3, [Prayers], *Oratio, incipit,*

"Deus qui perdita reperas ..."; *Alia oratio*, incipit, "Domine deus celi et terre maris ..."; f. 4, [Blessing of salt], *Benedictio salis*, incipit, "Exorçigo te creatura salis in nomine Dei ..."; f. 8v, *Hic venit inter cancellos cum ipso puero et dicat presbiter*, incipit, "Ora electe flete ..."; f. 9, [Exorcism addressed to the Satan], *Ad abrenuntium oremus*, incipit, "Nec te lateat sathanas inminere ..."; f. 10, Litanies (including St. Anthony of Padua and St. Justina of Padua), *De vide fiant letanie super aquam*;

ff. 11v-13, [Ordo for baptism], *Sequitur ordo ad baptismum*. *Oremus*, incipit, "Exaudi nos omnipotens deus et in huius aquam substantiam ..."; [Exorcism], *Exorcismus*, incipit, "Exorçigo te creatura aquae in nomine dei ..." f. 12v, *Interroga nomen infantis*, incipit, "Famule dei .t. vis baptigari. R. Volo. Et ego te baptigo ..., Amen." *Sub trina mersione. Deinde fac signum crucis de crismate in vertice eius cum pollice et dic. Oremus*, "Deus omnipotens et pater domini nostri ihesu christi qui te regeneravit ex aqua ...";

The letter 't' (instead of 'n') inserted to indicate the moment when the celebrant should pronounce the name of the baptized.

f. 13-17, [Ordo for the anointing of the sick], *Incipit ordo ad unguendum infirmum*. *Oratio*, incipit, "Adesto domine quesumus humilitatis nostre obsequiis ...; [The introductory prayer is followed by texts for anointing different parts of the body: head, *Ad capud* (f. 13v), eyes, *Ad oculos* (f. 13v), ears, *Ad aures* (f. 13v), nose, *Ad nares* (f. 13v), lips, *Ad labia* (f. 14), chest, *Ad pectus* (f. 14), shoulders, *Ad scapulas* (f. 14), hands, *Ad manus* (f. 14v), feet, *Ad pedes* (f. 14v)]; ff. 14v-16, [prayers], *Oremus*, incipit, "Benedictio dei patris cum angelis suis sit ..."; ff. 16-17, [prayer], *Oratio*, incipit, "Domine ihesu christe qui es salvatio et redemptio nostra qui es vera salus et medicina ..."; f. 17, [prayer], *Oratio*, incipit, "Concede nobis domine famulis tuis ut orantes ...;

f. 17-24, [Ordo for Extreme Unction, beginning with litanies], *Incipit ordo quando anima egreditur a corpore. Primo fiant letanie ...*; f. 19v, [prayers], *Alia oratio*, incipit, "Misericordiam tuam domine sancte pater omnipotens eterne deus pietatis affectu rogare ..."; f. 20, incipit, "Proficiscere anima sancta de hoc seculo ..."; f. 21v, incipit, "Tibi domine creatori et factori omnium rerum ..."; ff. 21v-22v, [Absolution], *Absolutio que fit a presbiteris secrete*, incipit, "In ea potestate vel auctoritate fidentes quam dominus noster ihesus christus beato petro apostolo suo ..."; ff. 22v-23, [Blessing of the ashes and cilice (a hair shirt), both signs of penance], *Benedictio cineris et cilitii*, incipit, "Deus qui non mortem sed penitentiam desideras peccatorum ..."; f. 23, [Exorcism], *Exorcismus*, incipit, "Exorçigo te cinis in nomine dei patris omni t potentis ..."; ff. 23-23v, [Blessing of the cilice], *Benedictio cilitii*, incipit, "Benedic domine hoc cilitium quod famulus tuus pro humilitatis ..."; ff. 23v-24, *Tunc aspergatur cuius super cilitium et ponatur super infirmum vel defunctum*, incipit, "Induat te dominus vestimento salutis a qui nobis ut humilitatis ostenderet ...";

f. 24, [The beginning of the Gospel of St. John added in the late fourteenth or fifteenth century], *Initium sancti evangelii secundum Iohannem*, incipit, "In principio erat verbum ... [John 1:1-14]."

The beginning of St. John's Gospel was often considered to have special apotropaic powers.

f. 24v, [Ordo for visiting the sick added in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century], *Ordo visitationis R.*, incipit, "Dominum patriarche"; *Antiphone*, incipit, "Ecce sacerdos magnus ..."; ...

Oremus, incipit, "Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui facis mirabilia [sic] magna solus ...";
incipit, "Confiteor Deo omnipotenti beate Marie semper virgini"

The liturgy of the medieval church included more than the celebration of the Mass and the Divine Office. Indeed, the importance of the church in the life of most ordinary believers, then and now, was probably linked to the administration of the sacraments that underline everyone's life, from Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, to Death and Burial. The earliest sources for texts of this sort are the *Ordines romani* from the seventh and eighth century (Andrieu, 1931-1961), but the texts were copied throughout the Middle Ages in many different types of liturgical manuscripts, added to manuscripts for the Mass and Office, in Missals, Sacramentaries, Collectars, Processionals, Pontificals, or gathered together in collections we can loosely call a Ritual (*Rituale*, in the Middle Ages sometimes called a *Manuale* or *Pastorale*). (A comprehensive and standardized Ritual did not exist in the Middle Ages, and instead dates from the Roman Ritual published in 1614).

This slim, portable Ritual contains the services that a parish priest would need most frequently when ministering in his community: texts are for preparing a catechumen for baptism, officiating the sacrament of baptism, as well as the anointing of the sick and the dying. Small independent liturgical volumes, known as *libellus* or "little books," such as this one could be easily carried along by a priest when he needed to perform specific rites (Gy, 1991; Palazzo, 1993, pp. 187-194). Such booklets were often kept unbound or in lightweight parchment wrappers during the Middle Ages. Liturgical *libelli*, such as the Ritual described here, are important witnesses of liturgical practice as they describe in detail the form of the celebration. In this manuscript the text is particularly easy to read due to the large, clear script, as well as the near absence of abbreviations. Feminine forms are given as interlinear gloss.

LITERATURE

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