

Kyriale (music for the Mass)

In Latin and French, illuminated manuscript on paper with musical notation

Southern France, c. 1843-1845

32 + iv, folios on paper, complete, contemporary pagination in brown ink, 2-54 (pages 1, 39, 55-57 are unnumbered), (collation i-ix⁶ x⁶ [-6, one leaf after p. 58, without loss of text] xi⁴), watermarks "INRI" and "BLACONS," ruled in pencil (justification 443 x 280 mm.), text copied in a calligraphic script imitating typeface, nine staves of music and text to a page, music on five-line brown staves, rastrum 21 mm., each letter and musical note outlined in brown ink and filled with a color (red, blue, yellow or green), the different colors of the text lines indicate the two or three-part voices, seventeen initials on ornamented and painted grounds, FOUR ORNAMENTAL BORDERS, NINE WATERCOLOR ILLUSTRATIONS of which six are within borders imitating frames of paintings, one on p. 9 is signed by Jean Barthès, large tear on pp. 53/54, some small stains, otherwise in good condition. Bound in the nineteenth century in brown marbled papers over pasteboard, hinges very worn. Dimensions 505 x 335 mm.

This fascinating, multi-faceted object, witnessing the continuation of the tradition of handwritten liturgical music manuscripts into the nineteenth century (although in this case with polyphony), is important for the history of the book, of liturgical music, and of the Jesuits. A large and deluxe manuscript of choral compositions for the Mass made by the Jesuit Jean-François Barthès (1790-1861), who signed one of the illustrations, the work was almost certainly made for presentation to the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre-Dame de la Compassion, which he founded in Marseille in 1843.

PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript was made in France. The IHS emblem with three nails and the infant Christ holding the Cross (p. 39), attests to its Jesuit origin. The illustration on p. 9 is signed by Jean Barthès, who can be identified with the Jesuit Jean-François Barthès (1790-1861). He was ordained a priest in 1814 and was appointed vicar of the bishopric of Montpellier. In 1817 Barthès left the region and became a Jesuit. He cared for the poor during a cholera epidemic in Moislains in northern France, where he worked as parish priest. After travelling through many cities, he arrived in 1843 in Marseille, where he founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre-Dame de la Compassion.

The style of illustration, as well as the watermark "BLACONS" on the paper, suggest a dating of the manuscript to the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The same watermark can be found in paper used for drawings around 1825-1845 by Grandville (1803-1847).

TEXT

pp. 1-54, [pp. 1-8, Kyrie], *MESSE SUPERIEURE*, incipit, "Kyrie eleison..."; pp. 9-23, [Gloria], incipit, "Et in terra ..."; pp. 23-44, [Credo], incipit, "Patrem omnipotentem..."; pp. 45-49, [Sanctus], incipit, "Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus..."; pp. 50-54, [Agnus Dei], incipit, "Agnus dei...";

p. 55-57, "O salutaris Hostia," the end of the Lauds hymn, "Verbum supernum prodiens" composed by Thomas Aquinas;

p. 58 (verso of the last page of text) and the last four leaves of the manuscript are blank.

A Kyriale is the liturgical volume containing the Gregorian chant settings for the Ordinary of the Mass (that is, chants that are found in every Mass, with very few variations depending on the time within the liturgical year when they are performed). The music for the five texts included here is presented on five-line staves in a variation of square notation, but they are polyphonic, each with two or three different voices copied on separate staff lines, copied in different colors of ink.

ILLUSTRATION

Nine watercolor illustrations (six within frames), of which three tell the story of Joseph, the son of Jacob (pp. 23, 45, 54; as told in Genesis, beginning in chapter 37):

p. 1, Commanding figure of God the Father wreathed in clouds;

p. 9, Pastoral landscape, with peasants and townscapes illustrating "peace on earth among men of good will", signed by Jean Barthès;

p. 23, Joseph's cup is found in Benjamin's sack (Genesis 44:12; the three illustrations from the story of Joseph on p. 23, 45, and 54 are in reverse order);

p. 35, the Resurrection of Christ;

p. 45, Joseph is offered presents by his brothers who do not recognize him (Genesis 43:26), entitled "Joseph étant entré ils lui offrirent leurs présents";

p. 50, Infant John the Baptist with a Lamb;

p. 54, Jacob recognizing the coat of his son, Joseph (Genesis 37:33), entitled below the image "Jacob reconnaît la robe de son Fils"; four brothers tend their flocks in the middle distance as the merchants depart with their camels and Joseph on the horizon;

p. 55, Medallion with the Host, Eucharistic vessels and a Missal;

p. 57, Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by the lance and a sword and surmounted by a cross entwined with the crown of thorns.

In addition to these figurative illustrations, there are seventeen initials and four borders (pp. 17, 38, 39, 48) decorated with a variety of symbolic, floral, and geometric motifs in a range of exuberant colors.

The traditional imagery of the Paschal Mystery (the Resurrection on p. 35, Lamb of God on p. 50, the Chalice and Host of the Eucharist on p. 55, Sacré Cœur in a cul-de-lampe at the end of the manuscript on p. 57) are interspersed with the Old Testament story of Joseph. The choice is fascinating. Joseph, the eleventh son of Jacob, went through great trials after his jealous brothers conspired to kill him. He would later become the second-most important man in Egypt after the Pharaoh, and his story thus offered hope to persecuted Catholics over the centuries. Echoes of

Joseph's story can be found in the life of Jean-François Barthès. His childhood was marked by the ravages of the French Revolution; coming from a very Christian family, he grew up in fear of persecution. Later as a priest and as a Jesuit, he continued to face danger, but refused to go into exile and lived in hiding. Like Joseph who rose to a position of great authority, Barthès became a religious leader in 1843 and founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre-Dame de la Compassion.

The manuscript belongs to a long tradition of hand-made Choir Books with calligraphic text (sometimes transcribed using stencils) illustrated with bucolic biblical scenes or decorated with naturalistic wreaths and arrangements of flowers; the script here is modelled on typeface and is the product of a very skilled scribe; in contrast with many earlier examples of this type of hand-made musical manuscript, the script here does not appear to have been made by stencils. Compare the very fine examples from the preceding centuries, in both cases stenciled: Gradual-Antiphonary dated 1719 attributed to Jean-Pierre Rousselet (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 8831); and the Gradual-Antiphonary made in 1684-1686 for Louis XIV (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 8828).

The Spaniard Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus in 1540. The Jesuit members of this congregation engage widely in evangelization, education, intellectual research, cultural pursuits, and minister in hospitals and parishes. The Jesuits were suppressed by 1767 and restored in 1814. There followed a period of tremendous growth with numerous Jesuit colleges and universities established in the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries.

LITERATURE

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Seguin, J.-P. *L'image de piété en France: 1814-1914*, Paris, 1984.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Jean-François Barthès (Wikipedia)

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Fran%C3%A7ois_Barth%C3%A8s

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Lat. 8831 (Gallica)

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b52507494s>

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Lat. 8828 (Gallica)

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b550073187>

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