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SAINT AUGUSTINE, *Regula regula Sancti Augustini episcopi* [Rule of Saint Augustine]  
In Latin, manuscript on parchment  
[Germany, Bavaria], dated 1562.

9 ff., complete (i<sup>o</sup>, single quire with outer leaves of paper, upper and lower), written in dark brown ink on 28 long lines (justification 117 x 190 mm.) In a rounded, elegant calligraphic hand, dated 1562 (f. 8) ruled, in drypoint, rubrics in red, capitals stroked in red, blue paragraph marks, trefoil line endings, alternating 4-line initials in red and blue, 8-line opening initial in pink and blue with white tracery, in excellent condition. CONTEMPORARY BINDING of pigskin, blind stamped with a series of rolls, representing, vegetal decoration; scenes from the Bible, including Adam and Eve, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection; a series of medallions and shields, which bear the initials FZ (compare Weale, p. 184, binding from Augsburg, dated 1564; and Haebler, A.1), traces of ties, on the upper cover in two frames references in ink "Regula Sancti Augustini Episcopi" and "Anno MDLXII," in excellent condition. Dimensions 288 x 187 mm.

Dated manuscript of the Rule of Saint Augustine, bound in fine contemporary pigskin signed by F.Z (Friedrich Ziegler), a binder most likely from Augsburg. Wholly intact, the present manuscript, testifies to the surprising continued production in manuscript of a text long available in printed editions and the persistence of Catholicism in an area deeply influenced by the Reformation.

#### PROVENANCE

1. Probably copied and bound in Bavaria, most likely in Augsburg, based on the decoration of the large initial on f. 2. The binding can be localized in Augsburg c. 1562. On the career and surviving production of F.Z., see Haebler I, p. 510-512, who records only four signed bindings. While our binding has stamps wholly suited to its monastic provenance, other bindings by F.Z. portray Luther and Melanchthon.
2. Still used within a monastic community in the seventeenth century, when the texts on becoming a novice and the profession of faith for a canon were added on blank folios at the beginning and end, supplementing the Rule.

## TEXT

ff. 1-1v: "De novitiis incluendis et quae ceremonia adhibenda sint. Statuto die, quo novitius est induendus...-...avedat ad sacram Communionem." Written in brown ink in a later hand (likely seventeenth century), this passage provides the text for the ceremony necessary to become a novice (the same hand appears on ff. 8-9v).

ff. 2-2v, The Purpose and Basis of Common Life; rubric: *In Christi nomine incipit regula Sancti Augustini episcopi*; incipit: "Capitulum primum. Ante omnia fratres dilectis...-...cuius Dei templum facti estis";

f. 2v-3v, Prayer, "Capitulum secundum. Oracionibus instate horis et temporibus...-...egere quam plus habere";

ff. 3v-5, Moderation and Self-Denial; "Capitulum tertium. Non sit notabilis habitus...-...prepositi vel presbyteri gravius emendetur";

ff 5-6v, Safeguarding Chastity, and Fraternal Correction; "Capitulum quartum. Vestes vestras in unum habeatis...-...custodia sunt que poscuntur";

ff. 6v-7v, The Care of Community Goods and Treatment of the Sick; "Capitulum quintum. Lites nullas habeant fratres...-...inter vos debet esse dilectio";

ff. 7v-8, Asking Pardon and Forgiving Offenses; "Capitulum sextum et ultimum. Preposito tanquam patri obediatur...-...in temptacionem non inducatur. Amen. Explicit regula sancti Augustini episcopi. 1562";

ff. 8-9v, On the profession of faith of a canon; "Quibus ceremoniis et orationibus persolvatur professio. Statuto die, quo novitius facere debet professionem...-...avedat ad Sacram communionem. Finis."

Saint Augustine (354-430) is one of the greatest of the Western Doctors of the Church. Converted to Christianity and baptized along with his only son by Saint Ambrose in 1387, Augustine was ordained in 391. He became bishop of Hippo in North Africa in 395, an office he held until his death. His enormously influential writings include the *Confessions* (c. 400), the *City of God* (c. 413-26), and the *Retractions* (428), in which he registered his final thoughts on his earlier writings.

Predating the *Rule of Saint Benedict*, the present short text is regarded as the oldest monastic rule in the Western Church. It was written about 400 for the community which Augustine established on the grounds of his house at Hippo. As its core it takes the injunction from Acts of the Apostles (4:32) that the community must live in harmony "intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart." Prayer, chastity, care and treatment of the sick, pardon and forgiveness are central precepts of the rule. Unlike later rules that were associated at their origins with a specific monastic order, this rule was not. However, Augustine's rule greatly influenced all subsequent monastic rules, including that of Saint Benedict. His rule was adopted by the Augustinian Hermits in the thirteenth century.

The first incunable edition is 1479 (*Apologia religionis fratrum ... Augustini, cum Regula...*, Rome, F. de Ciquinis, H-C, 16086), and it exists in many modern editions and translations (PL, 32, 1377-84; Verheijen, and Clark).

## LITERATURE

Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California, Press, 2001, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Clark, Mary T, ed. *Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings* (The Classics of Western Spirituality), Paulist Press, 1988. (English translation).

Haebler, Konrad. *Rollen und Plattenstempel des XVI Jabrhunderts [...]*, 2 vols., Leipzig, Otto Harrassowitz, 1928.

Lawless, G., O.S.A., *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987.

Verheijen, Luc, ed. *La Règle de Saint Augustin*, Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes, 1967 (Latin edition).

Weale, J. *Bookbindings and Rubbings of bindings in the National Art library*, London, 1898-1894.

## Online Resources

Latin version of the Rule of Saint Augustine  
<http://www.ulb.ac.be/philo/scholasticon/bibliotheca.html>

English translation of the Rule of Saint Augustine  
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/1534/ruleaug.html>

Saint Augustine homepage (life, writings, translations)  
<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine.html>

Augustine's writings and manuscripts  
<http://www.augustinian.villanova.edu/writings/index.html>

On the Augustinian Order:  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07281a.htm>