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Canon of the Mass, Ordo, with miscellaneous prayers for private devotion
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
[Northern or Northwestern ? France, c. 1490-1500]

38 folios, mostly in quires of four leaves (i 2 [original blanks], ii⁸, iii 6 [missing 2 folios, i and ii, between ff. 9 and 10, perhaps 1 with illustration], iv-vi⁸, vii² [original blanks]), written in brown ink in a bastarda bookhand on 16 long lines ruled in red (justification 120 x 67 mm.), rubrics in red, line endings in red and blue on liquid gold grounds, 1- and 2-line initials in liquid gold on red, brown, and blue grounds with liquid gold foliate infill, 3 LARGE ILLUMINATED INITIALS (ff. 10, 20, 23v) in blue with white tracery, on red grounds with liquid gold tracery, burnished gold ground with floral and fruit infill, 1 FULL BORDER (f. 10), of blue and liquid gold acanthus, with floral and foliate decoration, of geometric form, 2 bracket borders of the same type (ff. 20, 23v), in good condition, with wide margins. CONTEMPORARY BLIND-STAMPED BINDING of brown calf, in three vertical columns, decorated with stamps of fleur de lis, ermine, and four-petal flower, the central column and the outer frame composed of lattice-work (close to *Gid*, nos. 111 and 619), on half-boards, sewn on four thongs, spine rebacked, nineteenth-century label pasted on the spine "Canon de la messe et les prières. . . manuscrit dit du 15^e siècle," binding scuffed and worn at the corners, but stamps clear and in fine condition, flyleaves (now cut down) from a thirteenth-century Canon Law manuscript of Italian origin. Dimensions 187 x 137.

In a fine contemporary French blind-stamped binding and with attractive illumination, this modest manuscript combines texts rarely found together but instead typically occurring in three different types of books, a Ritual, a Missal, and a Book of Hours. About the size of a Book of Hours, the present manuscript thus witnesses the convergence of lay and ecclesiastical devotion at the end of the Middle Ages that resulted in the transformation of conventional religious texts.

PROVENANCE

1. The writing, style of initials and border decoration, and the binding are French, the presence of the fleur de lis and ermine possibly pointing to an origin in

northern France (Paris-Rouen) or Brittany. The geometric borders and the illuminated floral initials conform with works from the last two decades of the fifteenth century, especially the geometric bracket borders and their acanthus leaf decoration.

2. The signature of an earlier owner (f. 1) is now erased.
3. Private Collection, USA (not in de Ricci and Bond).

TEXT

ff. 1-2, Rubric, *Incipit ordo vestimentorum*; incipit, "Indue me Domine vestimento salutis ...; explicit, "consequi possim tuam gratiam. Per Dominum nostrum." (f. 1, *Ad cingulum*, , *Ad amictum*; f. 1v, *Ad stolam*, *Ad manipulum*; f. 2, *Ad casulam*);

ff. 2-18v, Canon of the Mass, Rubric, *Ad introitum misse*; incipit, "Et introibo ad altare"; f. 9v, the Apostle's Creed, incipit, "Credo in unum deum patrem ..." f. 10, the beginning of the *Te Igitur*, signaled with a large painted initial, perhaps once facing a miniature of the Crucifixion; ending with rubric, *finita missa ...*;

ff. 18v-20, beginning of the Gospel of Saint John, Rubric, *Initium sancti evangelii secundum iohannem*; incipit, "In principio erat verbum ... gratie et veritatis" followed by an antiphon, response, and ending with a prayer, "Protector in te sperantium ...";

ff. 20-23v, Prayer *Obsecro te*, introduced by an illuminated letter O and a bracket border;;

ff. 23v-25v, Prayer, *O intemerata*, introduced by an illuminated letter O and a bracket border;

ff. 25v-38v, Miscellaneous Prayers, "O bone Jesu per tuam misericordiam"; f. 26v, "Deus qui de indignis dignos facis"; f. 28v, "Omnipotens et misericors Deus"; f. 29v, "Obsecro te angele spiritus"; f. 30v, "Gratias tibi ago Domine"; f. 31v, "Te jam crucem adoramus"; f. 32v, "Sancta Maria inclita mater"; f. 33, "An te conspectum tue divine majestatis"; f. 34v, then a prayer for close relatives *Pro parentibus et amicis*. Oratio, "Toto corde effectus"; f. 35, *Pro papa*; "Nichilominus deprecor te"; f. 36, *Pro benefactoribus*. Oratio, "Immensam clementiam tuam"; f. 36, *Pro inimicis ecclesie sancte*, "Diissime Deus meus, f. 37, "Pro iudeis ...", "Omnipotens Deus meus placent oculis tuis"; and f. 38, *Pro animabus patris et matris parentum et amicorum defunctorum*, "Rogo te clementissime et eterne."

ILLUSTRATION

There are 3 large illuminated initials (ff. 10, 20, 23v) and 3 borders, 1 full border (f. 10) and 2 bracket borders (ff. 20, 23v).

Both the illuminated initials and borders are types found in Parisian manuscripts in the 1490s to 1500. Compare manuscripts attributed to the workshops of the Master of Jacques de Besançon and the Master of Robert Gaguin (Avril and Reynaud, pp. 262-265. For the initials, see also a model book of similar initials, ascribed to "Paris, c. 1500" in Baltimore (The Walters Art Museum, W. 200; Randall, pp. 643-44).

LITERATURE

Avril, F. and Nicole Reynaud, *Les Manuscrits à peintures en France 1440-1520*, Paris, Flammarion, 1993.

Denise Gid, *Catalogue des reliures françaises estampées à froid (XV^e-XVI^e siècle) de la bibliothèque Mazarine*, 2 vols., Paris : Édition du C.N.R.S., 1984.

Randall, Lilian M. C. *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, vol. 2, *France, 1420-1540*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press with the Walters Art Gallery, 1992.

Online Resources

Celebrating the Liturgy's Books: Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in New York City

<http://www.columbia.edu/ccnmtl/services/manuscripts/liturgy.html>