

LES ENLUMINURES, LTD
2970 North Lake Shore Drive 11B
Chicago, Illinois 60657

tel. 1-773-929-5986
fax. 1-773-528-3976
chicago@lesenluminures.com

LES ENLUMINURES
Le Louvre des Antiquaires
2 place du Palais-Royal
75001 Paris

tél : 33 1 42 60 15 58
fax : 33 1 40 15 00 25
info@lesenluminures.com

**Breviary (Use of the Cathedral of St. Peter's, Geneva)
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Switzerland, Geneva, c.1425-1450**

i (parchment) + 357 + *i* (parchment) folios, parchment of very fine and even quality, modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner recto, complete (collation, i^{6+2} [ff. 7, 8 blank leaves at end of quire], $ii-x^8 xi^4$ [beginning f. 81] $xii^8 xiii^8$ [-8, following f. 99v, cancelled with no loss of text] $xiv-xliiv^8 xlv^{8+1}$ [1, f. 348, singleton added] $xlvi^1$ [single blank leaf], horizontal catchwords, some with decorative pen flourishes, quires two to forty-five, quire signatures (probably added by binder), on the first leaf of each quire, "b" (quire 2) – "z" (quire twenty-three), followed by "a" (quire twenty-four) – "y" (quire forty-five), written below the top line in a mature gothic bookhand, in two columns, thirty to twenty-eight lines, ruled lightly in lead, with full-length vertical bounding lines, and the top one or two ruled lines full-across; on some folios the bottom and penultimate rules are also full-across; prickings in outer margins on some folios (for example, ff. 44-48), (justification 104-103 x 84-83 mm.), COUNTLESS ILLUMINATED INITIALS WITH BORDERS in three styles, quires one to twenty-one, through f. 163v, seven- to four-line white-patterned pink or blue initials, infilled with small vine motifs and leaves, blue, pink, and green, with touches of orange, on gold, on cusped gold grounds, extending into full-length blue and gold, or pink and gold bar borders, extending into black ink sprays with gold ivy leaves and other motifs, with a few acanthus leaves and flowers in pinks, blue and greens, which form panel borders, either in top and bottom margins, or in the three outer margins, depending on the position of the initial (full borders ff. 1 and 85); ff. 164-240v, and f. 244-end, seven- to four-line white-patterned blue or pink initials infilled with bold foliage in bright orange, green, and blue on gold, on gold grounds, some with notches, edged with black, with gold and pink bar borders, which end at the top in decorative terminals (if space allows), and sprout curling blue, green and pink acanthus leaves at the bottom, which are adorned with gold ivy leaves, flowers and fruits in blue, green, and orange, with decorative hairlines and small circles in black ink; ff. 241v-243, similar initials, extending into gold and pink bar borders, with decorated terminals at the top, and with black ink sprays in symmetrical loops at the bottom, decorated with gold ivy leaves, flowers and leaves; two-line gold initials throughout infilled alternately with white-patterned blue or pink, on grounds of the contrasting color which follow the shape of the initials; two-line KL-monograms in the calendar, with the initial in gold on parted grounds of white-patterned pink and blue; one-line initials within the lines of text, alternately red and blue, red rubrics. Beautiful decorated leather binding, bound in Germany or the Low Countries, s. XVI, in white pigskin, over angled wooden boards, tooled in blind with panel stamps surrounded by three narrow frames formed by single fillets, the first filled with small separate stamps of ivy leaves, and the second and third with floral rolls, panel stamp, front cover, depicts the crucifixion (now somewhat darkened), on the back cover, the Risen Christ, lettered beneath: "Mors ubi aculeus tuus ubi vic[it]"; sewn on five bands, with double linen head and tail bands in a chevron pattern in red, yellow, and blue, spine with five raised bands, the middle three more pronounced, front and back covers both with four brass corner pieces, and clasp and catch fasteners, fastening back to front, straps now missing, gilt edges, see the binding of the same type in P.J.M. Marks, *The British Library Guide to*

Bookbinding. History and Techniques (*Toronto and Buffalo 1998*), p. 44, and ill., fig. 41, on p. 55) (*Overall in excellent condition, ink has powdered on some leaves with slight loss of legibility*). Dimensions 144 x 113 mm.

This is a rare example of a liturgical manuscript from the Catholic Cathedral of St. Peter's in Geneva, which became in the 1530s the adopted church of the great reformer, John Calvin. Most of the manuscripts from the cathedral chapter were dispersed during the Reformation, and very few survive. In addition to the importance of its text, this manuscript is noteworthy for its carefully written script, rich decoration, and fine early Germanic binding.

PROVENANCE

1. Written for the use of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Geneva (rubric, f. 85); the dedication of St. Peter's is listed in the calendar on 8 October; calendar agrees closely with that printed from the Missal dated 1521 from St. Peter's, Geneva printed in H. Grotfend, *Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*. Band 2 (Hannover 1892) 49-52. A date in the second quarter of the fifteenth century is suggested by the fact that the feast of the Transfiguration, approved for the whole Church in 1457, is not included, and the feast of the Visitation was added (observed in Switzerland on 8 July from 1441 or 1445), as well as the style of the decoration.
2. Bound in the sixteenth-century in Germany or the Low Countries;
3. Modern bookplate, back endleaf, verso, in red and white (woodcut?); unidentified.

TEXT

ff. 1-8, Calendar, including Anthony, in red (17 January), Blaise, in red (3 February), Walburga (25 February), Adrian (4 March), Ambrose (4 April), Peter II, Archbishop of Tarentaise (8 May), Mamertus (11 May), Marie ad martires, "quod est festum dedicationis Marie rotunde" (12 May), Claudius (6 June), Visitation, added (here on 8 July; usually 2 July), Divisio apostolorum (15 July), Afra (5 August), Rufus (27 August), Lambert (17 September), Leodegar (2 October), "Dedicatio ecclesie beati p[etri] gebennensis," solemnity, with octave (8 October), and Hymerius (12 November); includes entries detailing events probably drawn from a chronicle; for example, "Adam recessit a domino" (12 February), "Hic fuit factus infernos" (13 February), and "Diluvium hic factum sunt" (17 April); ff. 7-8 blank.

ff. 9-84v, Psalter, canticles, hymns and Litany; psalms in biblical order with antiphons, versicles, responses and prayers, with rubrics indicating the liturgical office, major divisions at Psalms 1 (f. 9), 21 (f. 16v ad primam), 26 (f. 18v), 38 (f. 25), 52 (f. 31), 68 (f. 37v), 80 (f. 45v), 97 (f. 52v), 109 (f. 60v), 114 (f. 62, feria ii ad vespas), 118 [psalm 118 divided into sections, with initials on f. 63v (ad primam), f. 64 (ad terciam), f. 65 (ad sextam), f. 66v (ad nonam)], 121 (f. 68 feria iii, ad vespas), 126 (f. 69 feria iv ad vespas), 131 (f. 69v feria v ad vespas), 137 (f. 71v feria vi ad vespas), 143 (f. 74 sabbato ad vespas); concludes with the Canticles (Gallican Canticles 1-6, Hymn, 7, 8-10 as listed in James Mearns, *The Canticles of the Christian Church, Eastern and Western, in Early and Medieval Times* [Cambridge 1914] 60), litany, beginning f. 82v, with Peter, Maurice, Gervasius, Protasius, Leodegar, and Blaise among the martyrs, and Benedict, Hugh, Anthony, Gallus, Claude, Justus, Dominic, Thomas and Francis among the confessors, monks and hermits, and prayer, "Pie et exaudabilis domine ihesu Christi" [ends top column a, f. 84v, remainder blank];

ff. 85-214v, Temporale from Advent through the twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity Sunday, beginning, *In nomine sancte et individue trinitatis. Incipit breviarium ad usum sancti* [added above line: *p*] *gebenmensis*

...

ff. 215-332v, Sanctorale from Sylvester (31 December) through the Apostle Thomas (21 December); lacks Visitation; f. 310, Office for the Dedication of St. Peter's of Geneva;

ff. 332v-344, Common of Saints;

ff. 344-348v, *Sequuntur officium beate marie virginis*, with changes for liturgical year; includes matins, lauds and Suffrages;

ff. 349-352, Hymns, not noted, capitula and prayers;

ff. 352-355, Office for the Dead, use of Geneva; responsories to the lessons agree with those identified as use of Geneva in Knud Ottosen, *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead*, Aarhus University Press, 1993, 131;

ff. 355-356, Benedictions;

ff. 356-357v, Prayers for Advent and the ferial days in Lent; ending imperfectly, f. 356v, in a prayer for Prime, "Dignare domine die isto//" [Followed by catchword, "Sine p"; f. 357rv blank but ruled].

Written for the use of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Geneva, this manuscript survives as a singular witness to the confrontation between Catholicism and the Reformation in Protestant Switzerland. Including an eclectic mix of styles, the present-day Swiss Reformed Church of St. Peter's was begun in the twelfth century and incorporated two earlier structures into the Gothic monument. Recent excavations have unearthed a lengthy history that dates back to the Roman Empire. From the twelfth to the fifteenth century, the Cathedral enjoyed a position of considerable prominence for the Bishops of Geneva were powerful spiritual and temporal rulers, and Geneva itself was an important trading center in the fifteenth century. Then, in 1536, the Catholic cathedral became the adopted home church of John Calvin (1509-1564), the most important figure of the Reformation after Martin Luther. Calvin preached there from 1536 to 1564, and St. Peter's became the guiding center of Protestantism. Like reformers all over Europe, Calvin's followers stripped Geneva's cathedral of its altars, statues, paintings and furniture. Only the stained glass windows remained.

As a result of this history, very few medieval liturgical manuscripts survive from Geneva. In 1534, at the very beginning of the Reformation in Geneva, the canons of St. Peter's Cathedral sent a large trunk of liturgical books to safety in France; these books were then sent to Annecy. A surviving nineteenth-century inventory lists numerous liturgical manuscripts, including sixty-five complete breviaries. Unfortunately, these books seem, for the most part, to have been lost, and only a few liturgical books from the Cathedral of St. Peter survive. François Huot, in his important discussion

of the liturgy at Geneva, listed only eight surviving medieval breviaries from the diocese; he did not know of the existence of this manuscript (see Huot, p. 94).

Several aspects of the text of this Breviary are unusual and deserve further study. Note that the Temporale begins with Advent, the most common place to begin the liturgical year by the fifteenth century, but the Sanctoriale may reflect other traditions and begins with Saint Sylvester on the 31 December. It is also interesting that the Visitation, which was observed on 2 July throughout the Church beginning in 1389, is not included in the Sanctoriale, and is added to the calendar on 8 July. This variant date also occurs in the calendar of the Breviary printed in Geneva in 1521, published by Grotefend. Finally, the calendar includes entries detailing biblical events, which were probably from a universal chronicle; calendars with these entries of this type are uncommon.

ILLUSTRATION

Although this Breviary was made without historiated initials or miniatures, it is lavishly decorated with more than one hundred and fifty large initials on gold grounds with borders in several styles. Small gold initials are found on every folio. The styles of its decoration suggest that the artists working in Geneva were open to many influences. The opening quires (through f. 163v) are decorated in a style that was common to many manuscripts painted in northern France and the Low Countries during the fifteenth century. The colors are subdued, with blue and pink predominating, and the borders are formed from a maze of black ink sprays, sparkling with gold ivy leaves and other motifs, with a sparse sprinkling of painted acanthus leaves and flowers; numerous manuscripts with this general type of decoration exist; cf. Huntington Library, HM 1049, Northern France (Soissons?), s. XV med, <http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/hehweb/HM1049.html>, and two manuscripts from Sion, Switzerland, in Leisibach, MS 20, 1462, and MS 21, 1455, pls. 16 and 17.

The second or Savoyard style of border with its bolder colors and curling acanthus sprouting small gold leaves and other motifs is certainly less common; the artist of these folios may have been influenced by manuscripts from northern Italy, which show similar mixtures of Italian and French decorative motifs (for examples of this mixture, although quite different in details, see François Avril and Marie-Thérèse Gousset, *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine italienne. 3^e XIV^e siècle, Lombardie-Ligurie*. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Centre de recherche sur les manuscrits enluminés, cat. no. 45, Paris, BnF, MS lat. 5840, and cat. no. 46, Paris, BnF, MS lat. 8028). The scarcity of fifteenth-century illuminated manuscripts from Geneva, undoubtedly partly owing to Geneva's ready reception of Protestantism, makes comparisons difficult and enhances the interest of the present manuscript as a surviving artistic document.

LITERATURE

Battifol, P. *History of the Roman Breviary*, London and New York, 1898.

Huot, François. *Les manuscrits liturgiques du canton de Genève*. (Iter helveticum. Spicilegii friburgensis subsidia, 19), Freiburg, 1990.

Leisibach, Josef. *Die liturgischen Handschriften des Kapitelsarchivs in Sitten*, (Iter Helveticum, Spicilegii friburgensis subsidia, 17), Freiburg, 1979.

Plummer, John. *Liturgical Manuscripts for the Mass and Divine Office*, New York, the Pierpont Morgan Library, 1964

Salmon, Pierre. *The Breviary through the Centuries*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1962.

ONLINE RESOURCES

On Geneva

www.geneva.ch/GenevaHistory.htm

Introduction to liturgical manuscripts: "Celebrating the Liturgy's Books":

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/music/manuscripts/>

The History of the Breviary:

www.newadvent.org/cathen/02768b.htm (Catholic Encyclopedia, "Breviary")

St. Peter's Cathedral

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Pierre_Cathedral