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**Dutch Prayer Book (Franciscan Use)**  
**In Dutch, manuscript on paper**  
**The Netherlands, Convent of St. Cecilia, Hoorn, c. 1500**

*i + 223 + i folios, complete (collation i<sup>4</sup>, ii-xxviii<sup>8</sup>, xxix<sup>+1</sup>), quire signatures, catchwords (f. 215v, 216v), text block ruled in hard point, neatly written in littera hybrida in brown ink, text copied on 15-20 lines by one hand (justification 105/107 x 69/75 mm.), rubrics in red, texts underlined in red, 1- and 2-line initials throughout in red, 1-line initials stroked in red. Bound in contemporary sixteenth-century limp vellum wallet-style binding made by the Canons Regular of St. Mary called Nieuwlicht in Westerblokker near Hoorn, back sewn on 3 thongs, contemporary single brass clasp (fine overall condition, f. 216 cut horizontally at the top edge, all 3 thongs severed). Dimensions 146 x 113 mm.*

This is an attractive, wholly intact medieval Prayer Book for Holy Week leading up to Pentecost that was made for a female Franciscan Tertiary in a convent in Hoorn. It is in clean condition and preserves its original binding; moreover, it offers an unusually complete record of its origin, including the names of the first owners, the exact cloister to which they belong, and the identity of the binder. Many of the prayers are unedited and otherwise unknown. In addition, here is a rare example of a manuscript that records the sale transaction of an early owner.

**PROVENANCE**

1. According to a note on f. 1r, the manuscript belonged to the convent of female Franciscan tertiaries in Hoorn dedicated to St. Cecilia: "Dit boec hoert toe [Luci wouters dochter in] sinter cecilien convent binnen hoorn ende is ghebonden te nyelicht totten regulieren in blocker buten hoorn int jaer ons heren M ccccc ende [torn]." The name of the owner, the daughter of Luci Wouters, was added to the note, possibly by the owner herself. If so, then she is also the scribe of the manuscript, for this part of the inscription has been added in the same hand.
2. The subsequent owners have added a note of ownership on f. 3r, indicating that Mari Wouters bought the manuscript from Sister [?] Ache Jans, with the permission of her superiors for 5.5 stuivers: "Item dit boeck heeft Mari wouters gecoeft van sr [?] ache jans om sestaelue stuwer mit oerloef [?] van hoer oversten." (Item, Mari Wouters bought this book from sister [?] Ache Jan for five and a half stuivers with permission from her superiors). *Sestaelue* is *zesdehalve*, in other words, 5-1/2.
3. Private European Collection.

## TEXT

f. 1r, note of ownership (see above);

ff. 1v-2v, blank;

f. 3r, note of ownership (see above);

ff. 3v-4v, blank;

ff. 5r-20v, prayer about the Last Supper: rubric, *Vanden avontmael ons beren*; incipit, "Als dan naecte die tyt der passien ende der ontfermherticheit gods...", also appears in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Germ. Oct. 141, ff. 75v-86v, for which see Degering 1925-1932;

ff. 20v-23v, Christ's sermon at the Last Supper, rubric, *Hier beghint dat avontmael des witten donredaghes. Johannes*; incipit, "Voer den feest dach van paesche, want Ihesus wiste dat syn ure..."; f. 22r, *uutganc*, unedited text, also appears in Nijmegen, University Library, Ms. 312, f. 151r-157r;

ff. 23v-24r, rubric, *Des woensdach*; incipit, "Myn kinderen, noch bin ic een luttel mit u...", f. 23v, *uutganc*, unedited text;

ff. 24r-25r rubric, *Philips ende iacops dach*; incipit, "Ende laet u herte niet versaghet wesen ..." unedited text;

ff. 25r-26r, rubric, *Opten pinxter avont*; incipit, "Ende soe wat ghi bidt in minen naem...", f. 26r, *uutganc*, unedited text;

ff. 26r-27v rubric, *Opten pinxteren dach*; incipit, "Ende soe wie mi mynnet die sel myn leringhe houden..."; f. 27r, *uutganc*, unedited text;

ff. 27v-29v, rubric, *Opten apostelen avont*; incipit, "Ic bin die wynstoc, ghi syt die telghen...; *van den apostelen* (f. 28r); *capittel* (f. 28v), unedited text;

ff. 29v-30r, rubric, *Opten sonnendach voer pinster*; incipit, "Wanneer die troester coemt..." Sermon by Jordanus van Quedlinburg about John 15,26 (*Opus postillarum et sermonum de tempore*), for which see Lievens 1958, p. 243;

ff. 30r-30v, rubric, *Opten vierden sonnendach*; incipit, "Ende nu gae ic totten ghenen die mi ghesent heeft..." common homily attributed to the Venerable Bede;

ff. 30v-31v rubric, *Opten derden sonnendach*; incipit, "Ende luttel ende thans en selt ghi mi niet sien..." unedited text;

ff. 31v-32v rubric, *Opten vyften sonnendach*; incipit, "Ende in dien daghen en selt ghi mi niet vraghen ..." unedited text;

ff. 32v-87r, Prayers to be said on Good Friday, structured around the canonical hours, rubric, *Opten passemen avont*; incipit, "Dit heb ic u ghesent..."; f. 45r, rubric, *Te metten tyt*; incipit, "Te metten tide selstu verwerct werden van dinen slaep..."; f. 49r, rubric, *Te prime tyt*; incipit, "Te prime tyt selstu dencken mit droevighe herte..."; f. 52v, rubric, *Te tercie tyt*; incipit, "Te tercie tyt selstu droeflic dencken als onsen heer weder gheleit wert tot pilatus..."; f. 62r, rubric, *Te sexte tyt*; incipit, "Te sexte tyt selstu dencken droeflic hoe onse heer Ihesus lasterlic gheleit wert totten berghe van calvarien..."; f. 71r, rubric, *Te noen tyt*; incipit, "Te noen tyt selstu dencken ..."; f. 75v, rubric, *Te vesper*; incipit, "Te vesper tyt selstu dencken mit droevigher screyender hoe die moeder onse heren..."; f. 77v, rubric, *Te complete tyt*; incipit, "Te complete tyt denck bedroeflic hoe dat Iohannes...," unedited text;

ff. 87r-90r, Prayer to Jesus, rubric, *Een devoet ghebet tot onsen heer*; incipit, "O, here ihesu xpi... ic arme sondighe ende snode mensche bidde di...," common communion prayer, for which see Achten and Knaus 1959, no. 7;

ff. 91r-94v, Prayer to the Virgin, rubric, *Een ghebet van onser vrouwen*, [91v] incipit, "O, gloriose keyserinne der enghelen..." unedited text that also appears in Leiden, University Library, MS LTK 1219, fol. 16v-19r;

ff. 94v-97v, Four reasons Jesus is present at the altar during mass, rubric, *Item, om vier saken coemt onsen [95r] lieven heer daghelix opten outaer inder missen*; incipit, "Item, vier saken vintmen om welken alle daghe onse lieve her coemt inden altaer onder missen...," unedited text;

ff. 97v- Prayer to the Virgin, rubric, *Van onser vrouwe Maria een devoet ghebet* [f. 98r] incipit, "O vrouwe der glorien ende oninghinne der vroelicheit...," unedited prayer, which also appears in Leiden, University Library, MS LTK 2220, f. 152v and at least 11 other manuscripts;

ff. 98r-99r Prayer to the Virgin, rubric, *Een ghebet van Maria*; incipit, "O, alrea heilichste moeder ons here Ihesu Christi, in dinen handen...," prayer also appears in Leiden, University Library, MS LTK 325, f. 319r-320r;

ff. 98r-100v, *Exemplum* from a letter from St. Jerome to the women of Cellencia, rubric, *Jheronimus tot cellenciam*; incipit, "Hi is salich die alsoe wyslike...," unedited text related to one in The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 73 E 19, f. 322r-323r;

ff. 100v-105v, Prayer to Christ's body parts, rubric, *Een devoet ghebet vander passien ons heren Ihesu Christi*; incipit, "O, almachtighe scepper alre dinghen een goedertieren verlosser der menscheliker naturen...," unedited prayer, which also appears in Leiden, University Library, MS LTK 322, f. 123v-126v;

ff. 105v-108v, Prayers to Jesus, rubric, *Een devoet ghebedekyn*; incipit, "O here Jhesu Christim myn heer ende myn god, hoe ommiteliken heb ic mijn tyt...," unedited text;

ff. 109r-131v, Prayers to the Passion, structured around the canonical hours, rubric, *Vander passien ons heren, Te mettentyt*; incipit, "Te mettentyt selstu dencken mit ynnich ynnigher herten...," unedited

text, similar to Leiden, University Library, MS LTK 300, f. 202v-232v;

ff. 131v-175r, short exegetical texts from church fathers, rubric, *Nae een ander sin*; incipit, "Dyn borsten syn beter dan wyn, Bernardus...," unedited text;

ff. 175r-180v, *Exemplum* about two Dominican priests who meet a miller, rubric, *Exempel*; incipit, "Het waren twee priesters van der prediker...," for which see de Vooy's 1926;

ff. 181r-203v, Devotional exercise on the Passion to be read for a week, beginning on Sunday, rubric, *Een devote oefeninghe vanden liden ons heer Ihesu Christi al die weke doer*; incipit, "Op den sonnendach denck hoe hi inden aenstaende ure...," unedited text;

ff. 203v-204v, Prayers to be read when taking the Eucharist, rubric, *Als ghi ten heiligen sacrament selt gaen soe denct dese drie punte*; incipit, "Dat eerste is die ewighe mynne...," unedited text, see Meertens vol. III, pp. 34-57 for related texts;

ff. 204v-219v, Prayers to be said for a dying person, rubric, *Hier beghint een devote bereydinghe ende leringhe voer die stervende mensche die hem vloeyende is tot uut liden ons here Ihesu Christi*; incipit, "Als die priester coemt tot een sieck stervende mensche...," unedited text;

ff. 220r-223v blank

This manuscript contains prayers to be said during Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter), the weeks leading up to Pentecost, the eve and day of Pentecost itself, and prayers to be said when taking the Eucharist and when ministering to someone who is dying. The manuscript was therefore not designed for daily use, but rather for these special occasions. The texts on ff. 5-32v were to be read on specific feast days and Sundays; some of these texts include an "uutganc," or procession, presumably to be read while processing to or from Mass. The prayers to be read on Good Friday and the prayers to the Passion (ff. 109r-131v) are unlike other Offices structured around the canonical hours because they specify what the reader should think about.

The note of ownership on f. 1 demonstrates that the manuscript was owned by the convent of female Franciscan Tertiaries in Hoorn dedicated to St. Cecilia. The daughter of Luci Wouters, the owner, was probably a scribe and resident in the convent. There were six different convents of female Franciscan Tertiaries in Hoorn in the fifteenth century. The Convent of St. Cecilia belonged to the Chapter of Utrecht and was founded in 1402 and operated until the monasteries of Hoorn were dissolved in 1573. The convent of St. Cecilia belonged to the sub-group of Penitents, as indicated in notes of ownership they wrote into a copy of the Old Testament Pericopes they owned (The Hague, KB, MS 133 C 16, f. 210v: "Item dit boec hoert totten convente der susteren in Sunte Cecilien huse tot Hoorn der oerden van penitencien") and a Prayer book with texts by Johannes Brinckerink (Amsterdam, UB, MS I F 29, f. 35v: "Dit boec hoert totten convente der zusteren van sinte Cecilien huys te hoorn der oerden van penitencien"). The present (unrecorded) manuscript is the eighth that can be associated with this convent. They are published in Stoker & Verbeij 1997, no. 692-697, with further references.

The Third Order of the Franciscans, now known as Tertiaries, was designed by St. Francis as a middle ground between the cloister and those other devout, who could not join the First or the Second Order. The date of the founding is generally regarded as 1221. Different regulations applied to the members of the Third Order and perhaps the owning of property, as recorded here, would have been more relaxed for Tertiaries. The Third Order and the Penitents were evidently especially popular in the Low Countries.

The note of ownership on f. 1 is also a record of the manuscript's having been bound by the Canons Regular of St. Mary called Nieuwlicht in Westerblokker near Hoorn. At a later date, someone pasted something over this inscription. When it was later lifted, it caused some discoloration and damage to the inscription, and the exact date of the binding was torn away. However, there is a very similar dated note in another manuscript used by a different convent of Franciscans in Hoorn: Amsterdam, University library, MS I F 14, where the note on f. 163v reads: "Dit boeck hoert toe den susteren van sinte marien convent binnen hoern ende is anderwerf ghebonden inden cloester te nijelicht totten regulieren in blocker buten hoern. Als men screvet MCCCCC ende XIX" (This book belongs to the sisters of the Convent of St. Mary in Hoorn and was rebound by the Canons Regular of St. Mary called Nieuwlicht in Westerblokker near Hoorn in 1519). Apparently, therefore, the Canons Regular in the nearby town of Westerblokker bound manuscripts for several of the female Franciscan convents in Hoorn. Very few fully intact limp vellum bindings such as the one on the present manuscript survive from the Middle Ages.

In addition to the binding, several features of this manuscript are noteworthy from a codicological perspective. Unusual in this manuscript is that the notes to the rubricator are in the inside gutter, for example, on f. 23v-24r. Such notes are usually at the outer and not the inner edge, and were therefore usually trimmed off during binding.

The scribe wrote quire signatures throughout the manuscript, that is, she marked the lower right corner of each recto of the first four folios in each quire. These consist of a letter and Roman numeral combination, such as Ai, Aii, Aiii, Aiiij. For the letters, she used the alphabet as it appeared when alphabets were written out for children to learn, i.e., with two forms of the letter "a" (both a lower case and upper case version), two forms of the letter "r" (one freestanding, the other in ligature), two forms of the letter "s," and so forth.

The sober decoration and Christo-centric prayers reflect the interests of the Franciscans, and more specifically the Order of Penitents to which the Convent of St. Cecilia belonged.

## LITERATURE

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

Bibliotheca Neerlandica Manuscripta

(<http://www.bibliotheek.leidenuniv.nl/collecties/bijzonder/handschriftenarchievenbrieven/bnm.html#database>)

Medieval Manuscripts in Dutch Collections

[www.mmdc.nl/](http://www.mmdc.nl/)