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[Rosary] *Vita Christi*, engravings by Master S., text based on the *Rosarium aureum*  
 In Latin, illustrated manuscript on parchment  
 Southern Netherlands, 1516  
 43 hand-colored engravings

iii (parchment) + 43 + iii (parchment) folios on parchment, foliated in ink, top, outer corner, recto, 1-46, but now lacking ff. 3, 24 and 35, glued to paper stubs (collation, all leaves on paper stubs, i-vi<sup>o</sup> vii<sup>o</sup> [7, added at end]), no leaf or quire signatures, text copied on the verso, facing the engravings, with red ruling added as needed, (justification varies from 75 x 42 to 45-40 x 15-10 mm.), copied by three scribes, the main scribe copied the prayers on the verso facing each engraving in a shaky late semi-cursive gothic bookhand, generally in four to five lines, a contemporary added prayers below on several folios in a steadier cursive gothic bookhand, and a later sixteenth-century hand recopied all the text in a firm, legible text script, forty-three colored engravings, described below, text of the first scribe with blue initials, some decorated with green, with red highlights and pen embellishments, text of the second scribe includes red initials, in excellent condition, with some light marginal spotting or darkening, occasionally touching the image slightly, final verso darkened, faint crease across print on f. 21. Bound in early twentieth-century red morocco gilt by Douglas Cockerell (1870-1945), with his monogram, inside back cover; the binding can be dated between 1904-1945, since Cockerell included not only his own monogram, but also the monogram of W. H. Smith and Sons (inside, back cover), with gold tooled red morocco turn-ins, spine with six raised bands, lettered: "The Life and Passion of Christ, by the Master S." Dimensions 105 x 75 mm.

This small volume includes 43 of the 57 engravings from the Life of Christ series by the monogramist known as Master S., the first producer of mass-produced prints in the Southern Netherlands. It is the most complete example of this cycle of prints listed by Hollstein. These engravings were used to form a picture rosary by their first owner in 1516, who supplied prayers to accompany each image adapted from the Golden Rosary. The sterling provenance and fine binding add further interest to the charming volume.

## PROVENANCE

1. These forty-three engravings of the Life of Christ can be attributed to Master S. (named from his monogram "S" found in these engravings), who was active in the Southern Netherlands c. 1520; the evidence suggests that their first owner gathered these images together as a book to form a small devotional picture rosary, adding the text accompanying each image on the facing verso. The text now ends on f. 46v: "Explicit rosarium gloriose virginis marie cum articulis dominice passionis A<sup>o</sup> xvi." Devotion to the rosary was a prominent feature of late medieval piety on the eve of the Reformation, and this type of book would have been suitable for a devout lay person.

2. A subsequent owner in the sixteenth century recopied the prayers; although this may have been simply an act of devotion, alternatively, it may have been inspired by a desire to have these texts in a more legible hand.
3. The volume belonged to the Baron Adalbert von Lanna (1836-1909), Prague; each verso has the Lanna Collection stamp, together with a number supplied in pencil. Recorded there by Hollstein, as acquired by Halle (see F. W. H., Hollstein *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, c. 1450–1700*, Amsterdam, 1949–, volume 13, p. 124). Hollstein describes the manuscript as including plates 14-59, raising the question of whether plates 16, 37, and 48, were once found on ff. 3, 24, and 35, explaining the gaps in the present foliation, which does not include these folios. Although this evidence seems to imply that these engravings were removed in the twentieth century, the textual evidence, discussed below, suggests that they were never present in the volume.
4. Belonged to the noted English collector and philanthropist, Charles William Dyson Perrins (1864-1958); his bookplate, inside, front cover, and then by his niece, Frances Mary Joan Griffith (née Seddon). The volume was bound by Douglas Cockerell (1870-1945) at sometime between 1904-1915, while Cockerell was the binding manager at W. H. Smith and Sons.

## TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION

Note, Engravings are identified with the numbers assigned to them by Passavant and Hollstein; full references to both works listed below.

[I. First Decade] f. 1, Engraving: Flight into Egypt (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 14, Hollstein 30;

f. 1v, incipit, "Quem ad festum transiens dolenter perdidisti . . . , Ave maria";

ff. 1v-2, later hand: incipit, "Aue manus jesu, leua sic confixa manu . . ." [copy of text found on f. 2v]; and "Aue piissima uirgo Maria, quae es aurora splendida, . . . amar<sup>e</sup> morti se tradendo. Amen [copy of text on f. 2v, in the second hand]."

f. 2, Engraving: Christ teaching in the Temple (64 x 42 mm.); Passavant 15, Hollstein 31;

f. 2v, incipit, "Aue manus Ihesu leua sic confixa manu . . . , Pater noster. Aue Maria"; [another hand, contemporary with the first] incipit, "Aue piissima virgo Maria que es aurora splendida stella matutina et aquila uelocissima . . . Qui dignatus est ex te carnem assumere ut nos uiuificaret amare morti se tradendo. Amen."

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

[f. 3rv, omitted];

f. 4, Engraving, The Holy Family laboring in the fields (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 17, Hollstein 33;

[II. Second Decade] f. 4v, incipit, "Quem iordanis flumine Johannes baptisauit ... Aue." [repeated in the later hand below];

f. 5, Engraving: The Baptism of Christ (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 18, Hollstein 34;

f. 5v, incipit, "Quem Sathanas astutiis tripharie temptauit ..., Aue Maria"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 6, Engraving: The Temptation of Christ (64 x 42 mm.); Passavant 19, Hollstein 35;

f. 6v, incipit, "Qui tuo pro oraculo ...; Aue "; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 7, Engraving: The Wedding at Cana (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 20, Hollstein 36;

f. 7v, incipit, "Qui obsessos plurimis ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 8, Engraving, Christ healing the possessed man (63 x 42 mm.); Passavant 21, Hollstein 37;

f. 8v, incipit, "Qui lazarum cum filio ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 9, Engraving: the Raising of Lazaraus (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 22, Hollstein 38;

f. 9v, incipit, "Cuius pedes lachrimis ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 10, Engraving: Christ at the table of the Pharisee (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 23, Hollstein 39;

f. 10v, incipit, "In monte Thabor deforis ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 11, Engraving: the Transfiguration (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 24, Hollstein 40;

f. 11v, incipit, "Cum palmis celebriter ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 12, Engraving: Christ entering Jerusalem (65 x 44 mm.); Passavant 25, Hollstein 41;

f. 12v, incipit, "Sed vesperi turpiter eum vacuum dimiserunt. Ave. Domine Ihesu adiuua nos." [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 13, Engraving: The Dispersion of the Apostles (66 x 45 mm.); Passavant 26, Hollstein 42;

f. 13v, incipit, "Aue vulnus dextri pedis edem mentis pie ledis dum ad eam sepe redis esto nobis spes mercedis. Pater noster. Ave."; [in a second contemporary hand] incipit, "Salue piissima maria que es filia patris ... Amen"; [both prayers repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 14, Engraving: A monk (a Carthusian?) kneeling before the Virgin in a rosary (67 x 44 mm.); Passavant 27, Hollstein 43;

[III. Third decade] f. 14v, incipit, "Qui cum peccatoribus frequentibus ... Aue" [repeated below in the later hand];

Here used in a different position; in the printed version of the *Rosarium aureum*, this is number ten in the second decade.

f. 15, Engraving: the Last Supper (64 x 45 mm.); Passavant 28, Hollstein 44;

f. 15v, incipit, "In cena nouissima pedes suorum ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 16, Engraving: Christ washing the Apostles' feet (65 x 45 mm.); Passavant 29, Hollstein 45;

f. 16v, incipit, "In orto mente anxia ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 17, Engraving: the Agony in the Garden (67 x 44 mm.); Passavant 30, Hollstein 46;

f. 17v, incipit, "Quem viri malefici ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 18, Engraving: the Arrest of Christ (63 x 43 mm.); Passavant 31, Hollstein 47;

f. 18v, incipit, "Coram anna Ihesus presentatur a reprobis iudeis innocenter ceditur. Ave maria. Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 19, Engraving: Christ before Annas (65 x 44 mm.); Passavant 32, Hollstein 48;

f. 19v, incipit, "Vultum cuius turpibus ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 20, Engraving: Christ buffeted (65 x 44 mm.); Passavant 33, Hollstein 49;

f. 20v, incipit, "Quem pilati sedibus ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 21, Engraving: Christ before Pilate (65 x 44 mm.); Passavant 34, Hollstein 50;

f. 21v, incipit, "A iudeis exhibitum, Herodes ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 22, Engraving: Christ before Herod (62 x 42 mm.); Passavant 35, Hollstein 51;

f. 22v, incipit, "Quem indutum purpura ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand, which then adds another prayer], ff. 22v-23, incipit, "O sancta maria mater dulcissima aduocatrix fidelissima commendas tibi diem et horam exitus mei .. Tu es candidum lilium totius puriatis exemplar";

f. 23, Engraving: the Crowning with thorns (63 x 43 mm.); Passavant 36, Hollstein 52;

f. 23v, incipit, "Aue plaga leue plante qua virtutum crescunt ... Pater noster, Ave maria"; [second contemporary hand:] incipit, "Aue piissima virgo maria, que es rubens rosa et super omnem creaturam indumento diuini ... Tu es candidum lilium ... Tu es uiola miri .."; [later had repeats final section of this prayer];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

[f. 24rv, omitted]

f. 25, Engraving: Ecce homo (65 x 44 mm.); Passavant 38, Hollstein 54;

[IV. Fourth Decade] f. 25v, incipit, "Vt reum qum sceleris .... Aue benignissime domine Ihesu"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 26, Engraving: Pilate washing his hands (64 x 44 mm.); Passavant 39, Hollstein 55;

f. 26v, incipit, "Crucis lignum humeris ..., Ave Maria. O Domine Jesu adiuua nos." [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 27, Engraving: Christ carrying of the Cross (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 40, Hollstein 56;

f. 27v, incipit, "Caluarie loco quem vestibus exuerunt ... Reliquam quere patrem, amare morti ne tradas nos"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 28, Engraving: the Disrobing of Christ (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 41, Hollstein 57;

f. 28v, incipit, "Et manus cum pedibus cruci affixerunt. Ave maria. Quos per crucem redemisiti" [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 29, Engraving: the Nailing to the Cross (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 42, Hollstein 58;

f. 29v, incipit, "Pro suis totoribus attente ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 30, Engraving: Christ on the Cross (63 x 43 mm.); Passavant 43, Hollstein 59;

f. 30v, incipit, "Qui latroni omnia peccata dimisit ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 31, Engraving: Christ on the Cross between the two thieves (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 44, Hollstein 60;

f. 31v, incipit, "Qui se relictum ouibus [below, omnibus] dum patri ... Aue [later hand repeats this prayer, and the prayer on f. 32v]";

f. 32, Engraving: Crucifixion with the Virgin of Sorrows (65 x 42 mm.); Passavant 45, Hollstein 61;

f. 32v, incipit, "Qui iohanni te matrem commendavit ..."; [later hand repeats the prayers found on ff. 33v and 34v];

f. 33, Engraving: Christ on the Cross commends the Virgin to St. John (65 x 42 mm.); Passavant 46, Hollstein 62;

f. 33v, incipit, "Qui dum exhaustis viribus ..."; [later hand repeats prayer on f. 34v, in the second hand], incipit, "Saluo piissima Maria fulgida aurora, stella maris, errantium via ...";

f. 34, Engraving: Christ on the Cross being offered the sponge (63 x 42 mm.); Passavant 47, Hollstein 63;

f. 34v, incipit, "Ave latus lanceatur ..."; Pater; Ave. [second contemporary hand] incipit, "Salve piissima maria fulgida aurora, stella maris, erantium via ...";

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

[f. 35rv, omitted]

f. 36, Engraving: the Dying Christ on the Cross with the Virgin of Sorrows (63 x 43 mm.); Passavant 49, Hollstein 65;

[V. Fifth Decade] f. 36v, incipit, "Satelles latus domini ... O pie domine Ihesu adiuua nos. Ave"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 37, Engraving: the Piercing of Christ's side (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 50, Hollstein 66;

f. 37v, incipit, "Mater dei succurre inuocanti te, sicut filio tuo in cruce pendenti astitisti. Ave Maria"; [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 38, Engraving: Lamentation at the foot of the Cross (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 51, Hollstein 67;

f. 38v, Incipit, "Cuius corpus sanctissimum de cruce ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 39, Engraving: Entombment (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 52, Hollstein 68;

f. 39v, Incipit, "Crucis mortem subiens in pace obdormiuit electosque eripiens infernum introiuit. Aue Maria"; [repeated below in the later hand];

Not included in the usual text of the *Rosarium aureum*.

f. 40, Engraving: the Harrowing of Hell (65 x 43 mm.); Passavant 53, Hollstein 69;

f. 40v, Incipit, "Qui propria uirtute a morte resurrexit ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand];

f. 41, Engraving: the Resurrection (63 x 42 mm.); Passavant 54, Hollstein 70;

f. 41v, Incipit, "Super celorum sydera ascendit ... Aue"; [repeated below in the later hand, together with the prayer on f. 42v];

f. 42, Engraving: the Ascension (64 x 43 mm.); Passavant 55, Hollstein 71;

f. 42v, Incipit, "Qui die penthecostes spiritum sanctum apostolis emisit ... Ave"; [prayer on f. 43v, repeated below in later hand];

A variant of the usual text.

f. 43, Engraving: Pentecost (64 x 44 mm.); Passavant 56, Hollstein 72;

f. 43v, Incipit, "Qui te super ethera potenter ... Ave"; [later hand repeats prayer found on f. 44v, and f. 45v, and the beginning of the prayer in the second contemporary hand, f. 45v];

f. 44, Engraving: Christ and the Virgin surrounded by Angels (65 x 42 mm.); Passavant 57, Hollstein 73;

f. 44v, Incipit, "Propter mundi scelera ... Ave"; [later hand continues the text from f. 43v, copied here on ff. 44v-45];

f. 45, Engraving: The Last Judgement (66 x 42 mm.); Passavant 58, Hollstein 74;

f. 45v, Incipit, "Orantibus rosarium aureum tuae matris ... Aue": [second contemporary hand, ff. 45v-46] incipit, "Aue piissima uirgo maria que es stella penetrans ...; Et istud rosarium quod non ut debui sed ut potui confeci tibi ueneranda consolatrix mea ... cito accipito. Amen."

f. 46, Engraving: The Coronation of the Virgin (65 x 42 mm.). Passavant 58, Hollstein 75;

f. 46v, Incipit, "Sub tuum presidium confugimus sancti dei genetrix nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus sed a periculis cunctis libera nos sermp[er] virgo benedicta. Agnus dei. *Explicit rosarium gloriose uirginis Marie cum articulis dominice passionis. A ° xvi.*"

The forty-three engravings in this volume are from a series of small images illustrating the Life of Christ by an engraver active around 1520 in the southern Netherlands known as Master S. (his "S" monogram appears here in almost every print); see F. W. H., Hollstein *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, c. 1450–1700*, Amsterdam, 1949–, volume 13, p. 124. His workshop was productive; Hollstein attributes 459 engravings to him, many of which are the work of his collaborators and pupils. His work was influenced by the engravings of Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, Dirk Vellert and others.

The Master S. and his workshop were the creators of the first mass-produced prints in the southern Netherlands. His prints were used in many contexts and are not infrequently found glued into manuscripts. The engraving of the Baptism of Christ found in this volume, for example, is included in a manuscript prayerbook dated 1530, now Cambridge University Library, Additional MS 3016 (reproduced in McKitterick, 2003, p. 54, fig. 7). The engravings in his Life of Christ series, despite their small size, are extremely detailed and often include numerous figures. These examples have been carefully colored in translucent shades of green, red, blue, with touches of yellow and orange.

The Master S. has traditionally been identified with the Antwerp goldsmith Alexander (Sanders) van Brugsal (d. before 1545), and his works are often catalogued under that name. Alexander, or Sanders, was a prominent citizen, who entered the Antwerp Guild of St. Luke in 1515-16. Recent scholars, however, have underlined that there is no evidence to support this hypothesis (Stock, 1998, p. 196, note 34, and his article in the *Grove History of Art*, listed in Online Resources, below).

The custom of praying the "Ave Maria" or "Hail Mary" dates back as far as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; 150 repetitions of the prayer, for example, were used as a substitute for reciting the Psalms. The rosary in its modern form, however, joins this repetition of the prayer to the Virgin with meditation on the life of the Christ. There is still considerable scholarly debate on the earliest history of rosary devotion, but it is generally agreed that although an example of this new type of rosary probably dates as early as c. 1300, its popularization was due to Dominic of Prussia (1382-1460), a Carthusian monk from Trier. The Carthusians promoted the Rosary among their own houses and in houses of reformed Benedictine monasteries. The Dominicans popularized it among the laity, and it became a prominent form of late medieval devotion, linked to lay confraternities, and giving raise to innumerable different types of rosaries.

The earliest picture rosary was included in a rosary manual printed in Ulm in 1486 and reprinted in at least seven editions before 1503. There was no text included in this rosary, which consisted of three sets of five medallions; each medallion depicted a scene from the Life of Christ, and was adorned with ten roses to represent the recitation of the Hail Mary ten times. Each image, therefore, is linked with ten repetitions of the Hail Mary.

In the picture rosary in the volume discussed here, in contrast, each Hail Mary is linked to a particular image. Its text is based on the *Rosarium aureum*, or the "Golden Rosary," found in many Sarum books of Hours, and other sources (Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum*, no. 19951; printed in *Horae Eboracenses*, 1920, pp. 142-147; the text also circulated in the printed prayer book, the *Hortulus animae*, 1515; transcribed at <http://www.preces-latinae.org/thesaurus/BVM/HortulusRosarium.html>, with English translation). The Golden Rosary is divided into five decades, each consisting of ten repetitions of the Ave Maria, which is linked to a short rhyming prayer describing an event in the life of Christ for meditation. Each decade concludes with a recitation of the Our Father. The illustration of this text thus requires fifty images.

The text included in this volume is based on the Gold Rosary, tailored to fit with the set of engravings. The changes made to the text are, therefore, of particular interest. This volume includes the following meditations found in the printed versions of the Gold Rosary: second decade, meditations 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 (ff. 1v, 4v, 5v, 6v, 7v, 8v, 14v); third decade, meditations 1-10 (ff. 9v, 10v, 11v, 15v, 16v, 17v, 19v, 20v, 21v, 22v); fourth decade, meditations, 2-8 (ff. 25v, 27v, 29v, 30v, 32v, 31v, 33v), fifth decade, 2-8 and 10 (ff. 36v, 38v, 40v, 41v, 42v, 43v, 44v, and 45v). The remaining meditations were supplied from other sources, and some may also have been written for this manuscript.

The practice of using engravings or woodcuts with a handwritten text was not uncommon in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and underlines that our modern tendency to consider manuscripts and printed books as fundamentally different is a fallacy. The study of hybrid books such as this volume has contributed to the work of scholars who study both types of books in one historical context. This volume is of particular interest because it is clear that its creator started with the cycles of engravings, and tailored the text to fit.

An intriguing puzzle is posed by the gap in the foliation in the volume. Folios 3, 24, and 35 are omitted in the foliation, and since Hollstein described the volume as including plates 14-59, it has been suggested that plates 16, 37, and 48, were once present in the volume on these folios. The folios were mounted on paper stubs when the volume was rebound, and therefore the physical collation of the volume cannot solve this problem. However, textually there is nothing to suggest that these engravings were ever present; the text on ff. 2v, 33v, 34v, are suitable meditations for the engravings on ff. 4, 25, and 36. Moreover, the text here is clearly meant to be divided into five decades, each with ten meditations (and accompanying images). The first decade is incomplete, beginning with the Flight into Egypt, which would have been the eighth image, and continuing with text and images for meditations nine and ten (ending with the Pater Noster on f. 2v, and the facing image of the Holy family on f. 4); the text then continues with decades two through five, beginning on ff. 4v, 14v, 25v and 36v, each with ten meditations, and no indication that anything is missing. One can conjecture that the person who foliated the manuscript noticed that engravings 16, 37, and 48 were not included, and erroneously concluded that folios were missing. We can assume, however, that seven engravings that originally were part of the first decade at the beginning of the volume are now missing.

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