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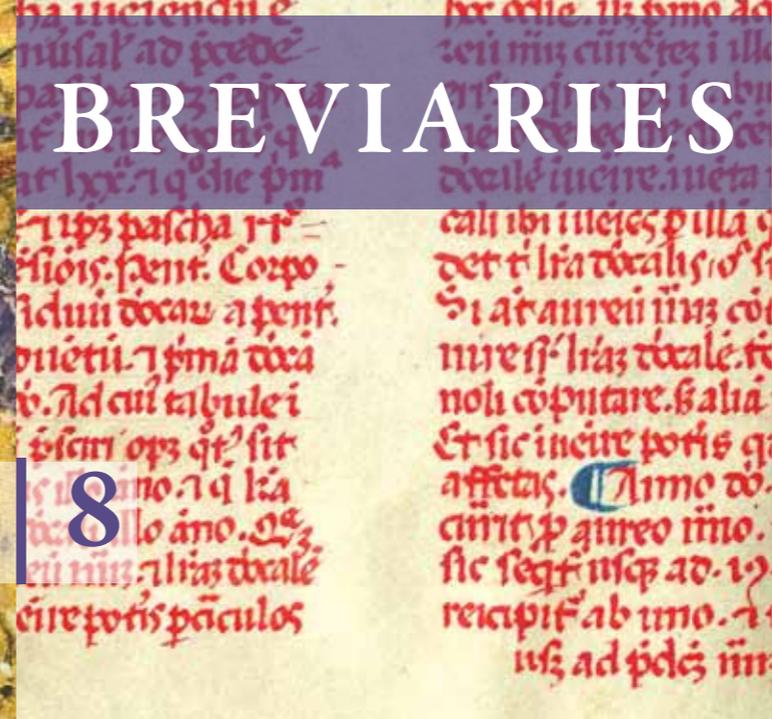
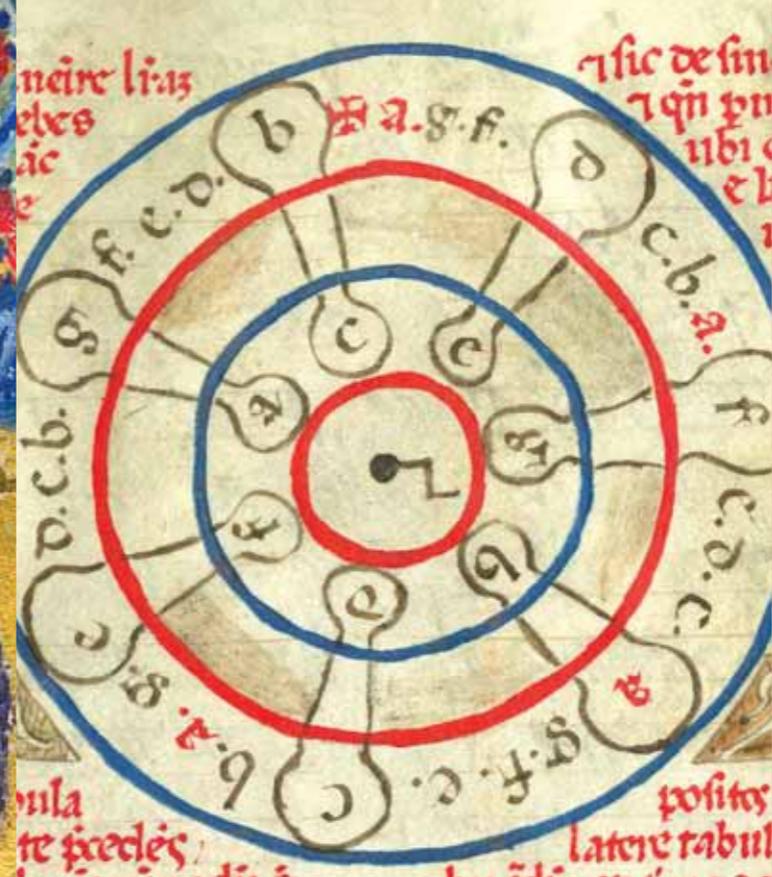
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primer | 8

BREVIARIES

Each volume in the series of “primers” introduces one genre or a problematic of medieval manuscripts to a wider audience by providing a brief general introduction, followed by descriptions of manuscripts, study aids, and suggestions for further reading.

Breviaries are one of the most common types of manuscript surviving from the later Middle Ages. The introduction to this primer provides a general guide to their history and contents. It is followed by examples of Breviaries, both monastic and secular, from across Europe, ranging in date from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. The texts found in manuscript Breviaries, and their order, can vary widely from manuscript to manuscript, a fact that is illustrated here by an innovative chart that provides a visual guide to their contents.

Breviaries are essential sources for experts including liturgical scholars, musicologists, and historians of the medieval church and religious orders. They can, however, be intimidating to non-specialists. This primer aims to make this essential medieval book – one that is often particularly well-suited for classroom use to illustrate the history of the medieval book – accessible to everyone.

primer | 8

general editor Sandra Hindman



Laura Light

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“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing”: Medieval Breviaries

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-17)

Medieval manuscript Breviaries are one of the most common types of manuscript surviving from the later Middle Ages. They are still widely available on the market. As a genre, Breviaries are particularly well-suited for institutional collections and classroom use: many survive in their original bindings; as a rule they are copied in accessible formal bookhands; printed versions of Breviaries are widely available for comparison; and they are localizable and datable through their calendars and liturgical contents. Their association with particular locales and religious orders, and their early bindings, as well as the beauty of their script, penwork initials, and at times, illumination, make them books that are equally well-suited for exhibition and private collections. Breviaries can, however, be intimidating to non-specialists who are unfamiliar with their contents. In this short introduction we hope we can make this essential medieval book more accessible. This is necessarily only a summary; interested readers can find a guide to more comprehensive discussions in the list of Selected Sources.

Breviaries are the liturgical books that include all the texts needed for the Divine Office. The Divine Office (today known as the Liturgy of the Hours) is the daily prayer of the Church, recited (and sung) by priests and other religious, including monks, nuns, canons, and friars. These are the prayers modeled on the scriptural teaching to pray without ceasing (for example, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: “Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all.”). The Office during the Middle Ages was the public prayer of the Church sung collectively in the choir.

(By the thirteenth century, and occasionally earlier, however, there were important exceptions to this. Traveling Franciscan and Dominican friars, for example, often had to say their Office privately.) It is divided into eight hours: Matins (the night Office, said at varying times of the night depending on the order), Lauds (morning prayer, offered at dawn), Prime (the first hour), Terce (mid-morning), Sext (midday), None (mid-afternoon), Vespers (evening prayer, at sunset), and Compline (night prayer before going to bed). The entire Psalter was recited weekly in the Office, and the psalms were accompanied by short texts that were sung, often from the Bible (antiphons, responsories, and versicles), together with Canticles (also biblical), hymns, prayers, and lessons from the Bible, the Church Fathers, and the lives of the saints.

During the Middle Ages, the liturgy varied in different locations and in different religious orders. For the Office, the difference between monastic use (celebrated by the various monks and nuns living according to the Rule of St. Benedict, represented here by the Cistercians, the Benedictine Congregation of Santa Giustina, the Carthusians, and the Celestines, nos. 3, 6, 7, 11), and secular use (celebrated in cathedrals and other churches by priests, canons, and friars, represented here by the Franciscans, Premonstratensians, Dominicans, and Augustinian Friars, nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10) was particularly significant. It is easy to spot the difference between these two types of Breviaries by examining the text of Matins, since monastic Breviaries include twelve lessons and responsories at Matins for major feasts, whereas secular Breviaries include nine lessons and responsories. The distribution of the psalms said daily in the monastic and secular Office was also different, and the decorated initials therefore sometimes differ in monastic and secular Psalters (Hughes, 1982, p. 228).

A small library was needed to chant the Office early in the Middle Ages. The biblical readings were found in Bibles, the psalms in Psalters, the

antiphons and chanted responsories in Antiphonals, hymns in Hymnaries, collects and prayers in Collectars, and other readings in hagiographic and patristic Lectionaries. Most of these books continue to be copied and used within the choir throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. But in the eleventh century, and possibly slightly earlier, one begins to see efforts to collect all these texts into one book, known as the Breviary. Almost all of the earliest Breviaries are monastic, and most include musical notation. It is possible they were an attempt to compile a more convenient and practical book for use within the choir (Huglo, 2016, online), but it is probably closer to the truth to see them as liturgical compendia, used for reference and as exemplars (Van Dijk and Walker, 1960, pp. 32-44, 528-542). Although a minority, some early Breviaries were quite small, suitable for use when a monk was traveling or in the infirmary (many of these are Cistercian, as for example the manuscript formerly *Les Enluminures*, TM 749). In the thirteenth century, the Breviary was adopted by the Franciscans and Dominicans, whose religious life was itinerant by definition, and from this point on, Breviaries were widespread and survive in great numbers, used by monks and nuns from all monastic orders, and by the secular clergy.

Breviaries can contain many different types of texts, arranged in many different orders. This fact, which makes them a challenging book to characterize adequately, is also what makes them so interesting; this is well illustrated even in the small sample of Breviaries described here (see the chart, pp. 2-3). The longest texts in a Breviary are the “proper” texts for the Office, that is, the texts that are particular to specific liturgical occasions. In most cases, these are divided according to the two simultaneous cycles of the liturgical year, the Temporale (or Proper of the Time), Sundays and other feasts celebrating the life of Christ, many of them hinging around the movable feast of Easter, and the Sanctorale (or Proper of the Saints), the fixed feasts of the saints and the Virgin Mary. A third section, the Common of Saints, supplied

texts for saints, generally less important, who were not included in the Sanctorale; it is divided into general categories (for apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and so forth). In addition to the proper texts, many (not all) Breviaries include a Psalter, sometimes a Ferial or Choir Psalter with the psalms either arranged in the order of the Bible or following the order of the Office, accompanied by the antiphons, hymns, and the other texts that were chanted daily regardless of the specific feast (in liturgical terms, these texts are “ordinary” rather than proper), as well as a liturgical calendar. Also often found in Breviaries are additional short cycles of prayers with specific intentions such as the Offices of the Virgin and of the Dead. Many other types of texts can be found in Breviaries, not all necessarily related to the Office; to mention a few examples, the Breviaries described here include the Blessings of salt and water (nos. 1, 3, 5), longer series of blessings (nos. 1, 5, 7), liturgical legislation (no. 1), texts related to the Mass (nos. 5, 8), and computistic material (nos. 6, 8).

Studying the text of Breviaries can uncover unexpected treasures. In 1266, the Franciscan order adopted the *Life of St. Francis* by St. Bonaventure as the officially accepted life, and ordered that all the manuscripts containing earlier *Vitae* should be destroyed. Scholars, notably Jacques Dalarun, have identified rare surviving witnesses of these earlier *Vitae* in Breviaries, preserved for posterity within the protective shell of the liturgy (Dalarun, 2007). An Augustinian Breviary from Alessandria in Northern Italy may include one of the only explicit attributions of a life of St. Nicholas of Tolentino to the humanist poet Maffeo Vegio (1406/7-1458) (no. 10). The *Confessionale* by Annius of Viterbo (c. 1432-1502), preserved in what may be a unique copy in a Ferial Psalter (no. 8), is a youthful work by this colorful character who is remembered today for his skill in forging sources he needed for his historical studies.

Breviaries include the words for both chanted and spoken texts, but they usually do not include musical notation. Nonetheless, as reminders of

texts to be performed, they often must have served as comprehensive books to guide people through the service in choir. When a cleric was traveling or absent from the choir for some other reason, he could say the Office privately using his Breviary. Breviaries, with musical notation or not, were also well suited for use as reference volumes or exemplars (no. 1) (Lebigue, 2012). The function of small portable Breviaries with musical notation, such as an early example from the Premonstratensian Abbey of Leffe (no. 2), is more difficult to explain.

There are numerous studies of the contents and history of the Divine Office. The study of the Breviary as a book, however, has been comparatively neglected (exceptions include Leroquais, 1934, and Gy, 1990). The chart on pp. 2-3 shows at a glance how the choice of texts and the order in which they are arranged varies in the eleven Breviaries described here. Comparative studies of larger groups of Breviaries could certainly teach us even more. Beyond details of liturgical content, are there characteristics that define typical Breviaries from certain religious orders? Can patterns be discerned in the order of the basic contents of Breviaries that originate in different geographical regions, or at different times? (see also Hughes, 1982, pp. 239-242).

The physical characteristic of Breviaries from the Middle Ages are as various as is their contents. They survive in many formats. Some compress the entire Divine Office into a single small, but rather fat volume copied in tiny script on very thin parchment (although some texts, especially the lessons, were commonly abbreviated) (nos. 5, 6). Many of the surviving examples of portable Breviaries were books used by Franciscan and Dominican Friars as they traveled. Other Breviaries are larger (no.1), some very large indeed. Many divide the text of the Office into multiple volumes; during the Middle Ages a common division was into two volumes, one for the winter (no. 2) and a second for the summer (no. 3). A different strategy was to include only certain parts of the Office in

a volume. Diurnals include the texts for the daytime Offices (no. 4); a Nocturnal (also occasionally called a Matutinal), includes only the nighttime Office of Matins (no. 9). Some Breviaries were very expensive, illuminated books (nos. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8); many were formal volumes that were still relatively expensive, but include only colored penwork initials designed more for utility than for show (nos. 1, 3, 4, 11); one can also find occasional examples of less expensive Breviaries copied on paper in informal scripts (nos. 9, 10). Breviaries, as a genre, are often “dirty” books (Rudy, 2010). Their darkened outer corners speak eloquently of their daily use by generations of monks, friars, or clerics (nos. 1, 2, 3). But some survive in almost pristine condition (nos. 5, 7, 8).

As a genre, there are few types of medieval books that exhibit as much variety as do Breviaries. Every Breviary raises questions not only of when and where it was made, but also asks us to think about why it was made, and how it was used. Breviaries are rewarding books to study – each poses questions, but more often than not, careful study of their text and physical details will provide the answers.

Laura Light

Director and Senior Specialist, Text Manuscripts, Les Enluminures

1 ●●●●●●●●

Noted Breviary (Roman Use; Franciscan); Ordinationes (Franciscan Ceremonial); Indutus planeta (Order of the Private Mass); Franciscan Liturgical Statutes, Metz, 1254; Benedictions; and other texts

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment with musical notation

Central or Northern Italy (Umbria?), c. 1260-1300; calendar, c. 1350, and later additions

The Franciscan order (founded in 1209) played a special role in the history of the form and content of the Breviary. Their mission involved frequent traveling to preach the Gospel across Europe, and many Franciscan Breviaries were small, portable books, a format that was widely used for Breviaries of all types in the later Middle Ages and after (nos. 5, 6). They were also an international order, and adopted a uniform liturgy early in their history. Franciscan Use, or Use of Rome, was destined to have a great influence on the subsequent history of the Breviary, since it was the basis for the liturgy mandated by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), and used throughout the Roman Catholic Church until modern times.

This is a fairly large Breviary with musical notation. Liturgical directions, prayers, and some musical texts are copied out in full, but only the opening words (or cues) are provided for the psalms and other readings. It was probably used as a general guide to the contents and organization of the Office, and as an exemplar, rather than as a volume for friars reciting the Office. It includes a number of texts not usually found in Breviaries, such as the *Indutus planeta* (a guide to celebrating a private mass), liturgical statutes from the general chapter at Metz, and liturgical blessings. [TM 785]

DESCRIPTION: 225 folios, missing five leaves, written in a rounded gothic bookhand in 2 columns of 36-22 lines, square notation on red 4-line staves, penwork initials, signs of centuries of use but in good condition, bound in Italy in 15th-century blind-stamped leather over wooden boards, extensively restored. Dimensions 265 x 185 mm.

LITERATURE: Lebique, 2012; James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps, *A Brief Description of the Ancient and Modern Manuscripts preserved in the Public Library, Plymouth*, London, 1853; Van Dijk and Walker, 1960; Van Dijk, 1963.



reduced

Noted Breviary for the Winter Season (*pars hiemalis*) (Premonstratensian)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment with musical notation

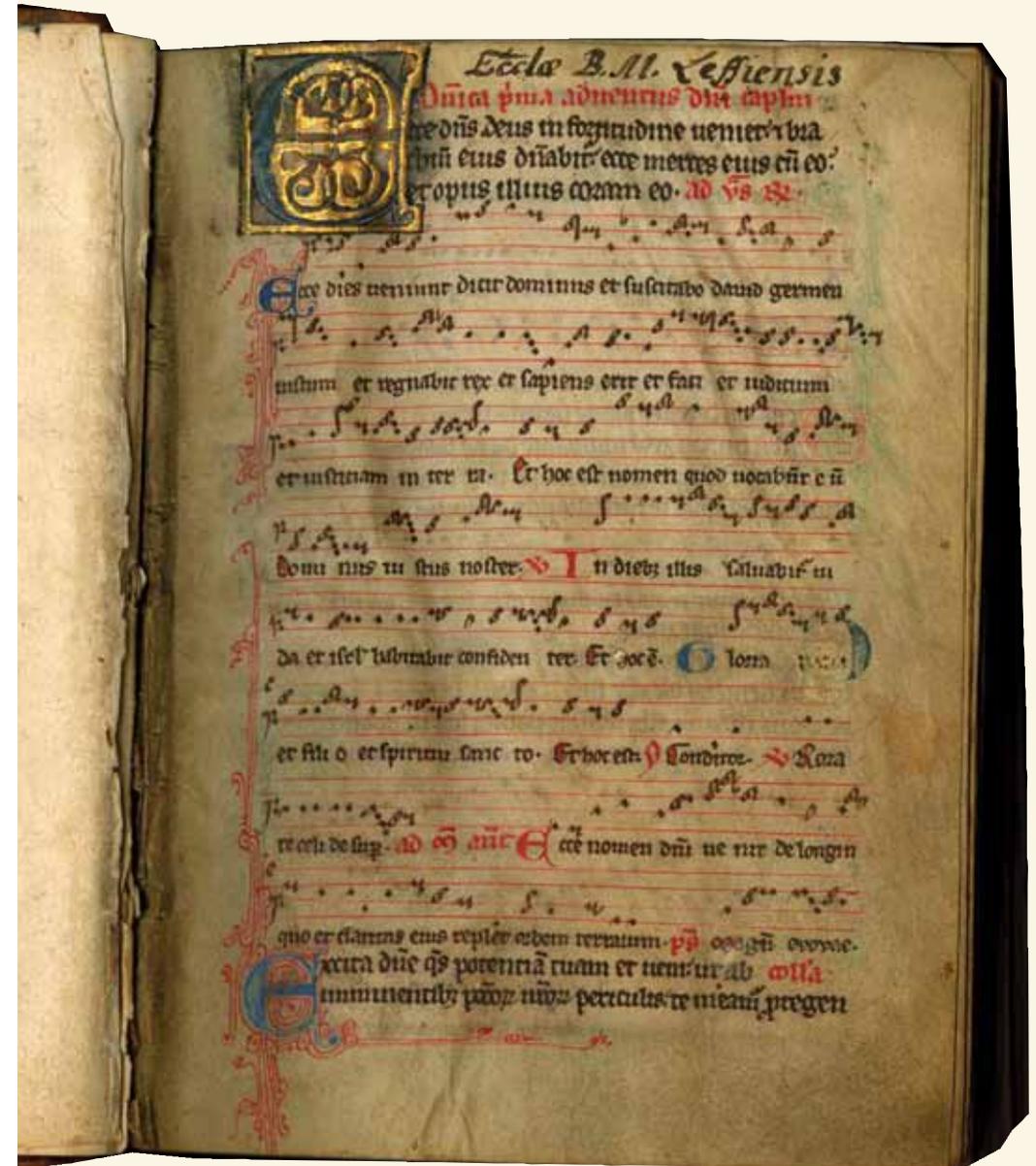
Southern Netherlands, Belgium (Hainaut), c. 1250-1275

This small Breviary from the Premonstratensian Abbey of St. Mary of Leffe in Belgium (the same monastery that is famous today for its beer), includes only the first part of the liturgical year from Advent through the day before Easter. In contrast with the previous manuscript (no. 1), the completeness of the texts and music recorded here is notable. The Premonstratensians were an order of canons founded in 1120 by St. Norbert. They were known for the austerity of their life, and for their devotion to the Divine Office, but they were also active in preaching and pastoral care. How a volume such as this one was used is something of a puzzle. Its small format does suggest that portability was important, but if it was designed for use by canons when they were away from the choir the inclusion of music would have been unnecessary. Perhaps this was used to perform the Office in neighboring churches?

Music for much of the Middle Ages was transmitted orally; the earliest surviving notation dates only from the ninth century. Notation that conveyed pitch by the use of a staff dates from the eleventh century. If you look carefully at the shape of the notes (the neumes) in this manuscript, you will notice that it is different from the square notes that were the most common type of notation in the thirteenth century and later. Musicologists describe this notation, used in the diocese of Reims and the surrounding areas, as Messine, Lorraine, or Laon notation (Hiley, 1993, pp. 347-361). [TM 894]

DESCRIPTION: 276 folios, missing leaves (a quire?) at the end, written below the top line in a gothic bookhand in up to 30 long lines, almost every page with Messine notation on red 4-line staves, penwork initials, six 5- to 3-line polished gold rinceaux initials, initials slightly worn, some soiling, modern binding. Dimensions 152 x 113 mm.

LITERATURE: Ardura, 1995; U. Berlière, *Monasticon belge*, Bruges, 1890, vol. 1, pp. 124-130, vol. 2, p. 185; Hiley, 1993; Lefèvre, 1957.



Breviary for the Summer Season (*pars aestivalis*) (Cistercian)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

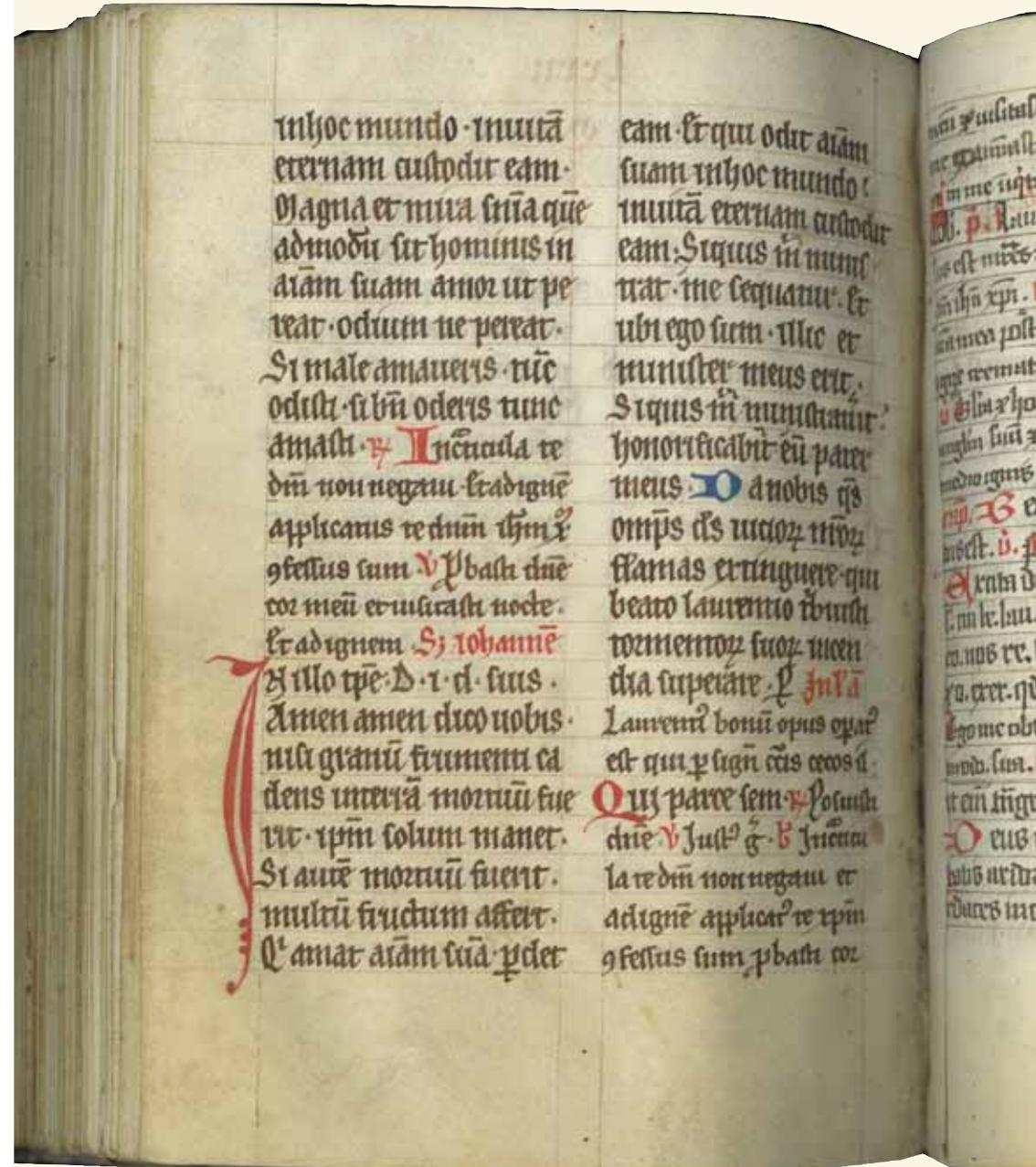
Southwestern Germany (Herrenalb), c. 1260; c. 1320-1330; 1491

Medieval manuscripts often include additions made by later users. This is especially true of liturgical books, since they were usually expensive and consequently tended to remain in use for a long time – often centuries – and their contents had to be modernized to be kept current (nos. 1 and 4 include added texts). The story behind this volume, however, is more complicated. The earliest section was copied c. 1260 judging from the feasts included; early in the fourteenth century, numerous sections were re-written to bring it up to date. In 1491, the cantor of the monastery of Herrenalb, Johannes Zürn, updated the book again, and signed and dated the last page. He is known to have copied eleven other manuscripts, including the beautiful illuminated Herrenalb prayerbook (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS theol. lat. qt. 9).

The care these three scribes took to keep their work harmonious is remarkable, and this does not look like a patchwork volume copied over two centuries. You can see that Zürn even erased passages to make sure his emendations fit seamlessly together with the older sections of the manuscript. The Cistercians were a reform order, founded by Robert of Molesme in 1098. Their liturgy was carefully regulated by the general chapter. They were known for the austerity of their life. Were they also especially frugal in updating their liturgical books? A Cistercian Breviary from Southern France, formerly Les Enluminures, TM 749, was similarly a product of three separate campaigns, in that case extending from the late twelfth into the thirteenth century. [TM 811]

DESCRIPTION: 280 folios, complete, copied by three scribes in gothic bookhands in 2 columns of 23-20 lines, alternately red and blue initials (scribe one), parted red and blue initials (scribe two), red initials, some stains, signs of use, bound in 15th-century German blind-stamped leather over wooden boards, restored, fine condition. Dimensions 170 x 123 mm.

LITERATURE: Heinzer, 2008; N. R. Ker and Alan J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. 4: *Paisley–York*, Oxford, 1992, pp. 160-162.



4 ●●●●●●

Breviary for the Day Offices (Diurnal) (Dominican)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

Southern Germany or Alsace (Upper Rhineland, possibly Strasbourg), c. 1300-1320 (probably c. 1302-1307); with later fourteenth- and fifteenth-century additions

This Breviary includes only the daytime Offices. Omitting the nighttime Office of Matins, with its lengthy lessons, made a manuscript such as this one, which is quite small, and yet copied in a script that is large enough to be easily read, possible. The friar who copied this book felt that its contents needed some explanation: "*Libellus iste qui diurnale dicitur eo quod diurnum officium in ipso contineatur ...*" (This little book, called a Diurnal because within it are contained our daily duties, contains the verses before Lauds for the whole year, both from the Sanctorale and the Temporale ... and further it contains Prime, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline, similarly with the necessary notes (*notulis*) copied in the proper places).

It is illustrated with skillful penwork initials that are full of whimsy – dogs, a dragon, and various hybrid creatures lurk in the border of its pages. These initials and the saints included are characteristic of manuscripts from the Upper Rhine region. An entry added to the calendar that records the death of Dietherichen von Burchein is evidence this Breviary may have been copied for the Strasbourg Dominicans. He appears as a guarantor in a Strasbourg document in 1292, and the presence of his name in the calendar suggests that he was a benefactor that the Dominicans remembered in their prayers. Two important mystical theologians are associated with this Dominican convent in the early fourteenth century, Meister Eckhart, who lived in Strasbourg c. 1314-1320, and his younger contemporary, Johannes Tauler, who studied there. [TM 835]

DESCRIPTION: 337 folios, complete, written in a gothic bookhand in 16 long lines, red, blue, and parted red and blue initials with penwork decoration, slightly cropped, some ink corrosion, staining or smudging, 15th- or 16th-century blind-tooled brown leather binding. Dimensions 160 x 110 mm.

LITERATURE: Ellen Beer, *Beiträge zur Oberrheinischen Buchmalerei in der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Initialornamentik*, Basel, 1959; Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "La bibliothèque d'Unterlinden et l'art de la formation spirituelle," trans. Pierre-Antoine Fabre, in *Les dominicaines d'Unterlinden*, Colmar, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 110-159.





Breviary (Roman Use; Franciscan)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Northern Italy (Verona?), dated 1456

In format and contents, this is good example of a fifteenth-century Franciscan Breviary. It is very small, measuring only 137 x 101 mm. or approximately 5 ½ by 4 inches, but quite lengthy, with 450 folios. It is copied in a small script on thin parchment with as many as thirty lines per page. This format is in fact similar to that of thirteenth-century “pocket” Bibles used by so many Franciscan and Dominican friars. Textually it follows the Franciscan liturgy, or the use of the Roman curia (“*secundum usum consuetudinem romane curie*”) (see also no. 1), a fact that is made explicit on f. 93 where the scribe also added its date, July 17, 1456.

When you look at all the evidence, however, it is a more difficult to describe this simply as a Franciscan Breviary. Why was this book made, and how was it used? It is a luxurious volume, carefully written, with attractive penwork initials and five illuminated pages, including two full borders, stylistically related to illumination in Verona. Moreover, it survives in very fine condition, with remarkably few signs of use – it is very clean. Breviaries, or at least many of them, tend to be “dirty” books, with their bottom corners darkened by the hands of their owners, who used them daily (nos. 1, 2, 3). It was also certainly an expensive book. One border includes a coat of arms (at this point unidentified), perhaps that of the original owner, who might have commissioned this book for use in the family’s private chapel. [TM 517]

DESCRIPTION: 450 folios, complete, written in a rounded gothic bookhand in 2 columns of 30 lines, red and blue penwork initials, three illuminated initials, two historiated initials with full borders, very good condition, some ink faded, modern Italian pink leather binding, elaborate silver clasps. Dimensions 137 x 101 mm.

LITERATURE: Gino Castiglioni and Sergio Marinelli, *Miniatura veronese del Rinascimento*, Verona, 1986; Rudy, 2010; Van Dijk and Walker, 1960; Van Dijk, 1963.



Breviary (Benedictine; Congregation of Santa Giustina)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Northern Italy, Lombardy (Piacenza), c. 1457

In 1427 the Benedictine monastery of San Sisto in Piacenza joined the reform movement known as the Congregation of Santa Giustina. Influenced by the *Devotio Moderna*, as well as by humanist scholarship, the Congregation was a product of the broader movement known as the Observant Reform, one that changed the face of the Church in the fifteenth century – revitalizing lay faith, and resulting in fundamental changes in many monastic orders.

One of the goals of Congregation was to restore regular observance of the Divine Office, and to establish a uniform liturgy in all of its monasteries. San Sisto actively participated, as evident in the gorgeously illuminated set of gigantic Choir Books in fourteen volumes made for the Abbey in the second half of the fifteenth century (now preserved in museums and libraries in the United States and Italy). This tiny Breviary (even smaller than the previous example, no. 5) is a sister volume to these gigantic books. It is a masterpiece of compression. The text is very complete, with extensive rubrics explaining the liturgy. An unexpected touch of whimsy is found in its delightful catchwords decorated with pomegranates, pinwheels, flowers and more. What function did portable Breviaries such as this one play in the monastic life of a learned Benedictine monk in the fifteenth century? It seems likely that by this time they were used to follow the Office as it was sung in choir. [TM 744]

DESCRIPTION: 479 folios, missing text (a quire?) at the end, written in a rounded gothic bookhand in 2 columns of 32 lines, elaborately decorated catchwords, red and blue initials, 4 illuminated initials, one illuminated border, thumbing and damage from damp, 19th-century brown leather binding, rebounded with spine laid down. Dimensions 123 x 94 mm.

LITERATURE: Milvia Bollati, *I corali benedettini di San Sisto a Piacenza*, Bologna, 2011; Collett, 1985; J. Filippone Overy, "Reconstructing the Monastic Choir Books of San Sisto in Piacenza," *Rivista di Storia della miniatura* 14 (2010), pp. 151-162.



Breviary (Carthusian)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

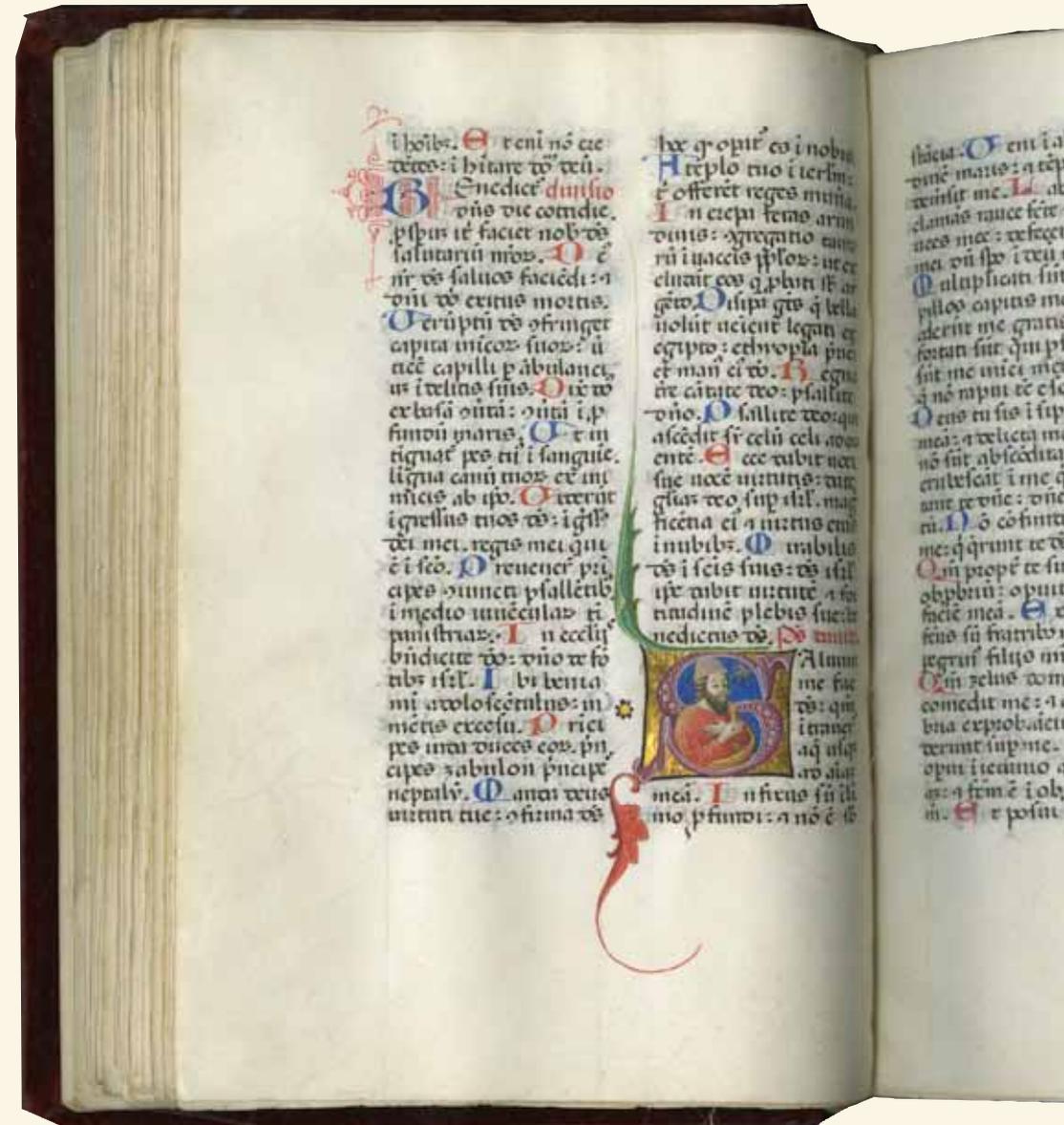
Northern Italy, Lombardy (Milan?), c. 1430-1450

The Carthusians, founded by St. Bruno of Cologne around 1084, were revered for the purity and austerity of their religious life. Carthusian monks spent most of their life as hermits in their own cells, while also living under the rule and discipline of a community. Except on feast days, the only Offices sung in choir were Matins, Lauds, and Vespers. The remaining Hours were recited by each monk alone in his cell.

This is an elegant Breviary illuminated in the workshop of the important Milanese artist known as the Master of the *Vitae Imperatorum*. It was owned early in its history by the Charterhouse of Valmanera (or of Asti) in Northwestern Italy, and possibly made for them. Like the Franciscan illuminated Breviary discussed above (no. 5), it survives in strikingly clean condition. The question of determining its function is complicated by the curious arrangement of its text. Capitula, collects, antiphons and responses, and longer readings are all copied in separate, independent series, rather than being integrated into their usual places within each Office. Even with the careful system of internal references (which use the folio numbers that are original to the manuscript), this would have been an extremely awkward volume to use to say the Office, and it seems likely that it was valued as a record of the correct text of the Carthusian Office, to be consulted as an exemplar and for corrections. [TM 815]

DESCRIPTION: 341 folios, partial contemporary foliation, missing approximately 9 leaves, written in a rounded gothic bookhand in 2 columns of 31 lines, red and blue penwork initials, 14 historiated initials, slight rubbing or flaking of ink, bound in 19th-century crimson velvet over wooden boards. Dimensions 150 x 108 mm.

LITERATURE: Giancarlo Chiarle, "Certosa d'Asti o di Valmanera," *Monasticon Cartusiense*, vol. 4, part 3: *Lombardia Propinqua*, ed. Silvio Chiaberto, Analecta Cartusiana 185, Salzburg, 2011, pp. 243-268; Pia Palladino, "Master of the *Vitae Imperatorum*," *Treasures of a Lost Art: Italian Manuscript Painting of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, New York, 2003, pp. 107-109.





Ferial Psalter with Hymns and Other Offices; ANNIUS OF VITERBO, *Confessionale*

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Northern Italy (Liguria or Lombardy), c. 1487

This is not a Breviary, since it includes none of the proper texts for the Office, but it does include many texts that are often found in Breviaries. It is most accurate to call it a Ferial or Choir Psalter, since we do find the psalms, arranged in the order of the Office rather than in their biblical order, together with antiphons and hymns said each day. It also includes a very complete repertoire of the round of prayers that were said in addition to the Office itself: the Gradual and Penitential Psalms, and the Offices of the Virgin, of the Dead, and of the Cross, as well as a calendar and computistic tables (all texts found in many Breviaries), as well as daily Masses (which would not ordinarily be found in a Breviary).

Most interestingly of all is the final text, a *Confessionale* by the humanist author, Annius of Viterbo (c. 1432-1502), dedicated to Paolo Fregoso, the archbishop of Genoa from 1453 to 1495, who was also doge of Genoa three times. This appears to be a unique copy of a previously unknown text, possibly the presentation copy given by the author to the archbishop. It is written as a guide for the penitent sinner (rather than as a guide for a confessor hearing confession), forming an interesting conclusion to this collection of formal liturgical prayers, and one that allows us to get a step closer to the private devotional life of a Renaissance prelate. [TM 874]

DESCRIPTION: 241 folios, contemporary foliation, complete, written in a rounded gothic bookhand in 21 long lines, red and blue penwork initials, 2 illuminated initials (one historiated), some fading of ink and water-staining, original Italian blind-stamped leather binding over wooden boards. Dimensions 137 x 95 mm.

LITERATURE: Walter E. Stephens, "From Berossos to Berosus Chaldeus: The Forgeries of Annius of Viterbo and Their Fortune," in *The World of Berossos: Proceedings of the 4th International Colloquium on "The Ancient Near East between Classical and Ancient Oriental Traditions," Hatfield College, Durham 7th-9th July 2010*, eds. Johannes Haubold, Giovanni B. Lanfranchi, Robert Rollinger, and John Steele, Wiesbaden, 2013, pp. 277-294.



Breviary for the Night Office (Nocturnal), Winter Season (*pars hiemalis*)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper

Western Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia?) or the Netherlands, c. 1455-1470

The statutes of the Benedictine Congregation of Santa Giustina (no. 6), state that monks were encouraged to copy their own Breviaries. Many (even most) surviving Breviaries, including ours from San Sisto, however, appear to have been copied by professional scribes. This book in contrast, could well have been copied by a priest (perhaps a canon) for his own use, and then corrected by others as it was used. It is copied on paper (as is no. 10), rather than parchment, in cursive scripts rather than in a formal bookhand. Paper was much less expensive than parchment. It was fairly widely adopted for use in books in the second half of the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was a common choice for many types of books, but it was rarely used for liturgical manuscripts. More quickly-written cursive scripts are found often in books after c. 1300, but again, they are not common in liturgical volumes.

This is a relatively small volume that includes only the nighttime Office of Matins for the winter season from Advent up until Easter. Breviaries for Matins are sometimes called Nocturnals (or less commonly, Matutinals). Hidden within its handsome original blind-tooled binding are two leaves from another, much earlier Office book, doubtless from the same region as the later Breviary. The musical notation of these leaves from a later twelfth- or early-thirteenth century Antiphonary is of particular interest as an example of an early form of the specifically German notation known as *Hufnagel* (perhaps West-German notation) on four-line staves (see also no. 2). [TM 790]

DESCRIPTION: 149 folios on paper, watermarks 1447-1469, complete, written in long lines by as many as 5 scribes in 21-36 lines in hybrida and cursive Gothic bookhands, red initials, some smudging and soiling, original blind-tooled leather binding over wooden boards, split along upper joint. Dimensions 144 x 106 mm.

LITERATURE: Hiley, 1993; Erik Kwakkel, "A New Type of Book for a new Type of Reader: The Emergence of Paper in Vernacular Book Production," *The Library* 7th ser. 4 (2003), pp. 219-248.





Breviary (Augustinian)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper with musical notation

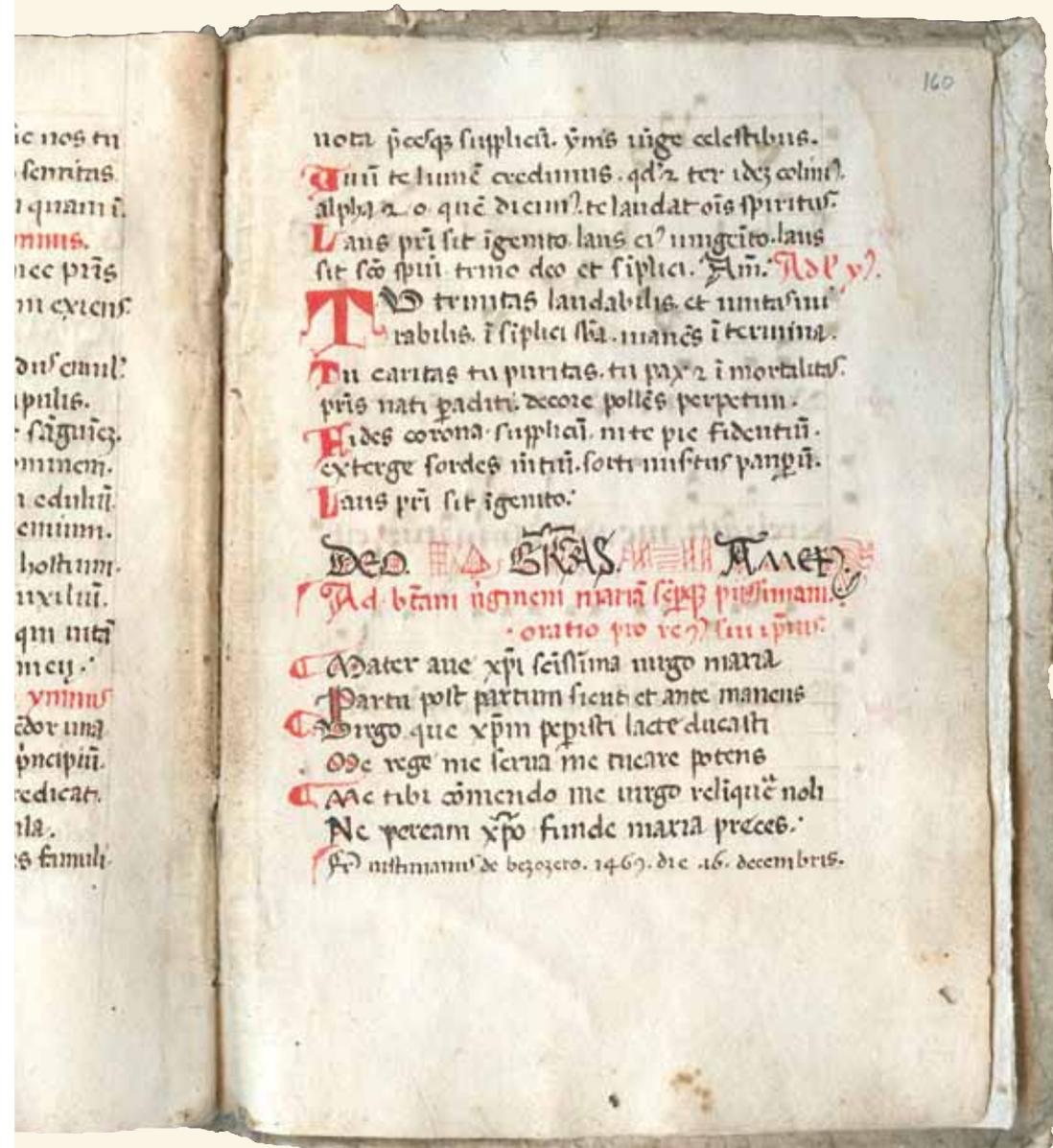
Northern Italy (Alessandria), dated 1469

This attractive, small-format Breviary was copied in 1469 for the use of Iustinianus or Iustinus de Bezozero, an Augustinian friar from the convent of St. Martin's in Alessandria in northern Italy. Brother Iustinianus was probably also the manuscript's main scribe. The roots of the Hermits of St. Augustine (now known as the Augustinian Friars) go back to a number of eremitical groups in Italy in the twelfth century. The order adopted a mendicant lifestyle in the thirteenth century, and their constitutions were approved by Pope Alexander IV in 1256. The Augustinians followed the liturgy of the Papal Court, first used and popularized by the Franciscans (nos. 1, 5). Like the previous Breviary (no. 9), this is an example of a personal volume, copied on paper in an informal script.

The readings for the office of Nicholas of Tolentino, an Augustinian saint canonized in 1446, shortly before this manuscript was copied, are of special interest, since they are described here as an abbreviation made by a certain "Mafeo de Uechio," the "very famous poet and rhetorician." Maffeo Vegio (1406/7-1458) was a churchman, humanist, poet, and educator. He is known today chiefly for his poetry, especially his continuation of Virgil, but he also wrote a number of religious works. This life of Nicholas of Tolentino is unpublished, and although it is known in at least two other manuscripts (neither of them Breviaries), this may be one of the only copies with an explicit attribution to Maffeo. Certainly warranting further research, this text exemplifies the hidden treasures that can be found among the pages of late medieval Breviaries. [TM 380]

DESCRIPTION: 160 folios on paper, complete, written in a running humanistic minuscule in 23 long lines, square musical notation on a 4-line staff, red initials, stains and soiling, early binding (original or 16th-century?) of soft pasteboard covers. Dimensions 153 x 109 mm.

LITERATURE: Alison Knowles Frazier, *Possible Lives. Authors and Saints in Renaissance Italy*, New York, 2005; F. Gasparolo, "Gli Agostiniani in Alessandria," *Rivista di Storia, Arte, Archeologia della Provincia di Alessandria* 7 (1898), pp. 7-30.



Breviary (Celestine)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

Northern France (Marcoussis?), c. 1460-1475(?)

We conclude with our very smallest example, measuring only 83 x 55 mm. (approximately 3 ¼ x 2 inches). Its text is comprehensive; it includes the Temporale, Sanctorale, and Common of Saints for the entire year; the volume almost certainly once began with a calendar. There is no Psalter, but references in its rubrics instruct the book's user to consult a Psalter (or his own knowledge of the psalms). Despite its truly diminutive format, this is a formal book that is copied on parchment in the script known as *bâtarde* – a cursive script elevated into a calligraphic bookhand.

This Breviary was made for the use of a member of the Celestine order, perhaps at the Convent of the Holy Trinity in Marcoussis, outside of Paris. The Celestines were founded in 1254 by St. Peter Celestine (Pietro da Morrone) (1215-1296), a hermit and religious leader who was elected Pope Celestine V in 1294 near the end of his life, only to resign his office after only five months and eight days (the only medieval pope to abdicate). They adopted the Benedictine Rule in 1263. The movement rapidly expanded in Central and Southern Italy. The first Celestine monastery was founded in France in 1300 by King Philip the Fair (r. 1285-1314), and the Order remained a favorite of the French monarchs and their families for centuries. Charles V (r. 1364-1380), Charles VI (r. 1380-1422), Louis of Orléans, and Charles VII (r. 1422-1461), all founded Celestine monasteries, and by the end of the fifteenth century, there were as many as twenty-one houses in France. The Celestines were known for the austerity of their lives, and had close links to the religious reformers Pierre d'Ailly and Jean Gerson (two of Gerson's brothers were Celestine monks).

[TM 820]

DESCRIPTION: 262 folios, lacking two opening quires and one leaf, written in a *bâtarde* script in 22 long lines, red, blue, and parted red and blue initials, excellent condition, early (16th-century?), reversed leather binding over pasteboards. Dimensions 83-85 x 55 mm.

LITERATURE: Orlando Antonini, *Manoscritti d'interesse Celestiniano in biblioteche di Francia*, Deputazione Abruzzese di Storia Patria, Quaderni del Bullettino 16, L'Aquila, 1997; Lemaître, 1999.



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