

**Breviary (use of Rome), perhaps for Franciscan use
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Central Italy (Abruzzo?), c. 1400-1425**

iii (modern paper) + 451 + iii (modern paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, 1-451, now incomplete and with several quires and leaves bound in incorrect order, including the first leaf which has been transferred to the beginning of the manuscript (see Illustration) (collation i¹ [one leaf transferred to the beginning of the codex] ii-vi⁸ vii⁸ [a leaf missing after f. 42 and a leaf missing after f. 46, with loss of text] viii-x⁸ xi⁸ [three leaves missing after f. 76, with loss of text] xii⁸ [structure uncertain, lacking a leaf after f. 78, a leaf after f. 79, and two other unlocalizable leaves, with loss of text, fragments of two of the leaves with penwork initials still visible are attached to the sewing] xiii-xiv⁸ xv⁸ (two leaves missing after ff. 98 and 100, with loss of text) xvi-xxvi⁸ xxvii⁸ (six leaves missing after f. 191, with loss of text) xxviii-xxix⁸ xxix⁸ (leaves bound in disorder) xxx-xxxi⁸ xxxii⁸ (the middle bifolium after f. 227 is replaced by another bifolium) xxxiii-xxxv⁸ xxxvi⁸ (two leaves missing after f. 256 and f. 262 (the outer bifolium), with loss of text) xxxvii¹ (one leaf inserted, f. 263) xxxviii⁸ (two leaves missing after f. 263 and f. 269 (the outer bifolium), with loss of text) xxxix⁸ xl⁸ xli⁸ xlii⁸ (a leaf missing after f. 301, with loss of text) xliii-lx⁸ lxi⁶ [last leaf of the quire is blank]), horizontal catchwords middle of the lower margin enclosed in ornamental penwork, ruled in plummet (justification 95 x 65 mm.), written in grey ink in a round Gothic bookhand (southern textualis) on 18 long lines, a FULL ACANTHUS BORDER (f. 1), SEVEN two- to six-line ILLUMINATED ACANTHUS INITIALS, one decorated with a peacock in the margin, two- to three-line pen-flourished initials beginning all other texts, the lower margin and last line of text on f. 5 and parts of the lower margins of ff. 137 and 287 excised, some small tears, signs of wear, upper corners on ff. 270-296, 414-445 are stained, text slightly faded on a few pages and the purple pen-flourishing has faded around a few red initials, otherwise in very good condition. Bound in the late twentieth century by Leonard Gustafssons Bokbinderi AB in Stockholm, Sweden, in parchment over wooden boards with yapp edges, fitted cream-colored case (binder's label inside the case). Dimensions 148 x 105 mm.

Now bound out of order, probably to give prominence to the attractive illuminated opening with a full border and painted initial, this Breviary was owned by a Franciscan friar or a member of the secular clergy, not a monk. Localized to Abruzzo, the charming volume opens a window for the study of a very specific region in Central Italy that has been shown to be important in the evolution of Italian painting and liturgy.

PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript was made in central Italy in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, most probably in the region of Abruzzo, to the east of Rome, as is suggested by the style of the illumination (see Illustration below). There is no calendar and more than half the litany is lacking. Nevertheless, in the Sanctorale the offices for the feasts of St. Francis of Assisi, including the vigil (f. 389), the *vita* (*Incipiunt vita beati francisci*; f. 390), the octave (f. 394) and the translation of his relics (f. 304v), and hymns for the feasts of Saints Francis (f. 218), Anthony of Padua (f. 216), and Clare of Assisi (f. 221), as well as the inclusion of Saints Elizabeth of Hungary and Clare in the litany, suggest that the manuscript may have been made for Franciscan use.

The evidence is not, however, conclusive, since not all Breviaries following the use of Rome were Franciscan. We note that the prayer, "Omnipotens sempiterne Deus" on f. 49v following the litany continues with the words "miserere famulo tuo *papa nostro*." This is neither the reading "pontifici nostro" which is characteristic of most Roman Breviaries

according to Victor Leroquais, nor the "ministro nostro" usually found in Breviaries for Franciscan use. Although the *papa* of our manuscript is closer to *pontifici* than to *ministro*, there are exceptions to the *pontifici-ministro* rule, as Leroquais has noted (Leroquais, 1934, I, pp. cvi-vii).

The liturgical division of the psalms indicates that the Breviary was intended for use by secular clergy, canons or mendicants (but not monastic orders; see below, Text). The Offices also have nine lessons as in secular Breviaries rather than the twelve of monastic Breviaries.

2. A few late medieval marginal notes in Latin testify to the manuscript's use (e.g. f. 66v).
3. By the late twentieth century this has made its way to Sweden, where it was by the Leonard Gustafssons Bokbinderi, founded in 1914 by Leonard Gustafssons in Stockholm.

TEXT

Now bound out of order; the reconstructed order of most of the leaves is as follows: ff. 89-98v, 99-126v, 201-203v, 206-208v, 204rv, 143-190v, 81-88v, 2-42v, 43-44v, Ferial Psalter, Canticles, Athanasian Creed; ff. 45-51v, 300-301v, 270-294v, 414-445v, Temporale; ff. 225-227v, 230-256v, 257-269v, 302-413v, 295-299v; Sanctorale; f. 1v, Office of the Virgin, ff. 1, 191-200v, 127-142, 78-80v, 77rv, 228-229v, 52-59v, Common of Saints.

f. 1, Common of Saints, *Incipit commune sanctorum. In natalitijs apostolorum. Ad vesperas. Capitulum*, incipit, "Fratres iam non estis hospites et advene," the Office of the apostles, ends incompletely in the middle of the hymn "Exultet celum," and continues on f. 191;

f. 1v, Conclusion of an office for the Virgin, begins imperfectly, "dicam";

ff. 2-42v, Ferial Psalter, begins imperfectly, "Veniant michi miserationes," psalm 118:77, and continuing through psalm 150. Verses 77-80 of psalm 118 are followed by the hymn "Rector potens verax deus" for the midday office of Sext (preceded by a rubric), after which the psalm continues from verse 81, "Defecit insalutari tuo"; psalm 150, the last psalm, is followed by the Canticles, "Confitebor tibi Domine" (f. 29, highlighted with a 3-line penwork initial), "Ego dixi in dimidio" (f. 29v), "Exultavit cor meum" (f. 30v), "Cantemus Domino" (f. 31v), "Domine audivi auditionem tuam" (f. 33), "Attende celum et loquar" (f. 35), "Benedicite omnia opera" (f. 38v), "Benedictus Dominus" (f. 39v), "Magnificat" (f. 40), "Gloria in excelsis" (f. 40v), "Nunc dimittis" (f. 41), the Apostles's Creed, "Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem" (f. 41), the Nicene Creed, "Credo in unum Deum" (f. 41v) and the hymn "Te deum" (f. 42v, highlighted with a 3-line acanthus initial; it ends imperfectly at the end of f. 42v).

The division of psalm 118 here is evidence that this was copied for secular use. Secular clergy, canons and mendicant orders who followed the liturgical use of Rome sang parts of the long psalm 118 every day, with the verses divided between Prime, Terce, Sext and None. In monastic orders, however, psalm 118 was sung on Sunday and Monday. Verses 81 sqq. were sung at Sunday None.

Bound elsewhere in the manuscript are psalms 12-50 and 54-105 (and parts of psalms 11, 51 and 53) for the nocturnal hours of Matins and Lauds, as well as psalms 114-117 (and parts of psalm 113) for Sunday and Monday Vespers and Prime, and psalm 118:1-76. The missing psalms are psalms 1-11:6, 51:11-53:3 and 106-113:10.

ff. 43-44v, Athanasian Creed, begins imperfectly, "*Neque confundentes personas,*" and is incomplete;

ff. 45-51v, Instructions and prayers for the office of Quinquagesima Tuesday, followed by the litany (f. 46v), concluding with the apostles Peter, Paul, Andrew, James and John; the following leaf is now missing, and concluding on f. 47 with the female saints Mary Magdalene, Agnes, Lucy, Cecilia, Agatha, Catherine, Elisabeth, and Clare;

ff. 52-59v, Leaves from the Common of Saints, with the rubric on f. 52v, *In adversario* [sic] *dedicationis ecclesie* (f. 52v);

ff. 59v-76v, Corpus Christi Office, *Incipit officium sacratissime sollempnitatis Corporis Christi* (ff. 59v-66v); duplex office for Trinity Sunday, *In festo sancte trinitatis fit officium duplex* (ff. 67-77v);

f. 77rv, A leaf from the Common of Saints, beginning, "*Sancti evangelii fratres*";

ff. 78-80v, Common of Saints, continues from f. 142v with the office for confessors-pontiffs, and goes on to that of non-pontiffs, beginning, "*Stolam glorie,*" *In natalitiis confessorum non pontificum* (f. 78v); ends imperfectly, and continues on f. 77;

ff. 81-88v, Quire from the Ferial Psalter, beginning, "*dicant gentes ubi est,*" psalm 113:10-end, psalms 114-117, psalm 118:1-76, ends incompletely (the continuation is on f. 2);

ff. 89-98v, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, beginning, "*[elo]quia domini eloquia casta,*" psalm 11:7 to psalm 21:24, ends imperfectly;

ff. 99-126v, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, beginning, "*et misericordia tua subsequitur,*" psalm 22:6 to psalm 51:11, the last two words "*sanctorum tuorum*" are missing;

ff. 127-142v, Leaves from the Common of Saints, continuing from f. 200v, Office for a martyr, beginning, "*illam quam spiravit deus,*" from the sermon of St Augustine, followed by the Office for several martyrs, *In natalitiis plurimorum martirum* (f. 130v), the Office for a confessor-pontiff, *In natalitiis unius confessoris pontificis* (f. 137v); ends imperfectly and continues on f. 78;

ff. 143-190v, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, continuing from f. 204v, beginning, "*ut viderem virtutem,*" psalm 62:3 to psalm 105;

ff. 191-200v, Leaves from the Common of Saints, continuation of the Office for the Apostles which began on f. 1 recto (originally a verso) with the hymn "*Exultet celum,*" and continuing here with the words "*virtutibus. Ut cum iudex advenerit.*" The hymn is followed by the Offices for the evangelists and martyrs, ending imperfectly, and continuing on f. 127;

ff. 201-203v, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, beginning, "fac et in virtute tua," psalm 53:3 to psalm 56:8, ends imperfectly; the continuation is on f. 206;

f. 204rv, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, continuing from f. 208v, beginning "in conspectu dei," psalm 60:8 to psalm 62:3, ends imperfectly; the continuation is on f. 143;

f. 205rv, One leaf from the prayer "Sancta maria et omnes sancti," continuing from f. 224v; ends imperfectly;

ff. 206-208v, Leaves from the Ferial Psalter, continuing from f. 203v, beginning, "cor meum cantabo," Psalm 56:8 to Psalm 60:8, ends imperfectly; the continuation is on f. 204;

ff. 209-224v, Hymns, beginning imperfectly, "Ut hominem redimeres" with the hymn "Rex, sempiternae Domine" for Low Sunday; including hymn "Tristes erant apostoli" for feasts of apostles between Easter and Pentecost (f. 209v), "Ihesu nostra redemptio" for the Ascension (f. 210), "Veni creator spiritus" for Pentecost (f. 211), "Doctor egregie Paule" for the conversion of St Paul (f. 212v), "En gratitulemur [sic] hodie" (f. 216v), "Laus regi plena gaudio" (f. 217) and "Ihesu lux vera" (f. 217v) for Vespers, the nocturn and Lauds of the feast of St Anthony of Padua, "Proles de celo" (f. 218), "In celesti collegio" (f. 218v), and "Plaude turba paupercula" (f. 219) for Vespers, the nocturn and Lauds of the feast of St. Francis, and "Concinat plebs fidelium" (f. 221), "Generat virgo filias metris matris" (f. 221v) for Vespers and Lauds on the feast of St. Clare; ends imperfectly;

ff. 225-227v, Beginning of the Sanctorale, *Incipit proprium sanctorum de breviario. In sancti Saturnini Martiris oratio*, "Deus qui nos beati saturnine," from St. Saturninus (29 Nov) to St. Andrew (30 Nov), ends imperfectly;

ff. 228-229v, Leaves from the Common of Saints, continuing in the Office for the confessors, with the sermon of St. Augustine, beginning, "faciatis coram hominibus," followed by the Office for the virgins; leaves lacking between ff. 228v and 229;

ff. 230-256v, Leaves from the Sanctorale, continuing, with the Offices for St. Ambrose (7 December, consecration) through the office for St. Matthias (24 February), ends imperfectly;

ff. 257-269v, Sanctorale continues from f. 256v with one or more leaves lacking in between ff. 256v and 257; Office for St. Gregory the Great (12 March) through the office for St. John at the Latin Gate (6 May), ends imperfectly and continues on f. 302;

ff. 270-294v, Leaves from the Temporale, continuing from the Friday after Pentecost through the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, ends imperfectly and continues on f. 414;

f. 295-299, Leaves from the Sanctorale, continuing from f. 413v, although a leaf (or leaves) are missing in between; ends with the office for St. Catherine on ff. 297v-299 (25 Nov); [f. 299v, blank];

ff. 300-301v, Leaves from Temporale, contains the first lesson on Monday following Pentecost, beginning "daret ut omnis qui credit"; a leaf missing after f. 301, then the Temporale continues on f. 270;

ff. 302-413v, Leaves from the Sanctorale, with the Office for the Apparition of St. Michael (8 May) through the office for St. Clement (23 Nov); ends imperfectly, continues on f. 295;

ff. 414-445v, Leaves from the Temporale, with the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost until Advent; ends imperfectly;

ff. 446-450v, *Ordo officii* for Advent, concluding, *Explicit ordo tabularum*; [f. 451rv, blank].

ILLUSTRATION

The four-sided bar border on f. 1 originally marked the beginning of the Common of Saints and was the verso of a leaf in the body of the manuscript. It has been inserted at the beginning of the manuscript to form a frontispiece (the painted border is now on the recto, and the leaf is mounted on a canvas tab). An interlaced boss, typical of central Italian manuscripts from Perugia and Abruzzo, marks the center of the lower border. Pink flowers anchor the lower corners, and the one on the right projects in a three-quarter profile. Acanthus leaves in pink, blue, green and ochre and blue love-knots ornament the border. Acanthus initials announce the following major text divisions: Common of Saints (f. 1), the feast of Corpus Christi (f. 59v), and Matins on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the Ferial Psalter (f. 114, ps. 38; f. 148v, ps. 68; f. 165, ps. 80; f. 180, ps. 97) and the "Te Deum" hymn (f. 42v). There were probably ornamental initials at the beginning of Sunday, Monday and Wednesday Matins in the Psalter, but these leaves are now lacking. The acanthus initials have either burnished gold infill or, as on f. 165, are on gold ground; leaves are blue or pink, modeled in white.

The workmanship and palette suggest a provincial area of production. The decorative repertory is Umbrian, from whence the motifs spread to the nearby area of Abruzzo (as well as Marche, north of Abruzzo). Thanks to recent studies, Abruzzo has emerged as an important region for manuscript production, especially for illuminated liturgical books, a picture that corresponds to what happened throughout the peninsula following the great liturgical reforms of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Francesca Manzari has shown in her seminal work on the illumination in Abruzzo that it is particularly difficult to localize the itinerant illuminators who often worked in the three centers of Chieti, L'Aquila and Teramo. A close stylistic comparison can be made between our Abruzzo Breviary and a Book of Hours painted in the last decade of the fourteenth or early fifteenth century in L'Aquila (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reg. lat. 165; Manzari, 2012, pp. 73-74, 138-139, figs. 49-50, cat. no. 33). The decorative repertory, especially the central bosses and corner anchors, as well as the subdued palette, are similar in the two manuscripts. Also similar are the depictions of birds. The colorful acanthus-leaf tail of the peacock decorating the initial beginning psalm 68 in our manuscript (f. 148v) is similar in spirit to the birds with striped tails in the Vatican Hours (Reg. lat. 165, ff. 138, 141). But even more striking is the close resemblance of the large, rather unattractive claws of the equally strange bird in the Vatican book (Reg. lat. 165, f. 69v).

The scribe of this manuscript drew charming small faces on some of the capital letters (e.g. ff. 63v, 73, 95, 180); a particularly fine curly haired boy inclines from the capital 'A' in "LAuda

anima mea dominum" (f. 26, ps. 145). Experimental letter forms, for example the letter 'I' on f. 130v, have playful terminals, hair-lines and ornaments, adding an unexpected decorative dimension to this manuscript.

Breviaries, which are among the most important liturgical manuscripts surviving from the late Middle Ages, gather between their covers the Divine Office for the entire liturgical year, with each Office composed of hymns, psalms, readings (lessons), capitula and prayers. This portable Breviary is datable and localizable, opening a window for the study of the painting and liturgy of a very specific region at a specific time: Abruzzo in central-eastern Italy in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. It is an excellent manuscript for teaching, especially because its quires and leaves have been bound somewhat chaotically, thus offering students a practical exercise in the reconstruction of the texts, a task that is both challenging and intellectually rewarding. To succeed in establishing the order of the contents as they were six hundred years ago, students would need to acquire thorough understanding of the texts included in a Breviary, while learning how to use this new understanding of the text in parallel with their accrued knowledge of the physical structure of the book.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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