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Franciscan Breviary (use of Rome)
In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Central Italy, Umbria (Perugia), c. 1456-1470

i + 540 folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil on the first ten leaves, 1-10, followed by eighteenth- or nineteenth-century foliation in black ink from the beginning of the Temporale until the end, 1-528 (including 164bis, 205bis, 285bis, 309bis and 435bis, and omitting foliation of ff. 296, 298 and 359), lacking a quire of 10 leaves between the penultimate and final quires (lost before the leaves were foliated), otherwise complete (collation i-xli¹⁰ xlii⁸ xliii-liv¹⁰), horizontal catchwords with ornamental decoration, ruled in brown ink (justification 81 x 57 mm.), written in dark brown ink in gothic bookhand (round Italian textualis) in two columns on 31 lines, rubrics in red, paragraph marks in blue, capitals touched in yellow on ff. 101-207, 3- to 6-line initials alternating in red and blue, two puzzle initials in red and blue (four lines, f. 46v; six lines, f. 163), two large initials in red with blue penwork (ten lines, f. 1, six lines, f. 200v), some small stains and signs of wear, a few wormholes on the first leaves, otherwise in very good condition. EARLY BINDING, fifteenth or sixteenth century, of dark brown calf over pasteboards, blind-tooled with 3-line fillet, cork-screw motifs and in the center of each board two large leaves, pastedowns are leaves recycled from a contemporary Choir Book; the binding was restored in modern period with new head- and tailbands, linen added under leather around spine and the first and last quires strengthened at their gutters with cloth tape and reattached to the book block; lacking two thongs that were originally attached to the boards to hold the book shut, leather worn in places, but in overall good condition. Dimensions 106 x 82 mm. (text block c. 70 mm. thick).

In its early binding and very small, but very thick (almost as thick as it is wide), this attractive Umbrian Breviary was copied in a tiny script by a skilled scribe. Although modern historians often think of this type of portable volume as answering the needs of travelling mendicant Friars, this Breviary was owned by a Franciscan nun. An early note identifies her by name: Sister Scholastica. Certainly made for use in the diocese of Perugia, it is possible it was made for the nuns of the prestigious Convent of Sant'Antonio of Padua.

PROVENANCE

1. Made for a Franciscan in Umbria in central Italy, most probably a Franciscan nun in Perugia, c. 1456-1472. All feasts of greatest importance for Franciscan liturgy are included in the calendar and ranked at the highest level, transcribed in red and inscribed *duplex* (reflecting the fact that these feasts had their antiphons doubled): St. Francis, *dies natalis* (4 Oct), octave (11 Oct), translation (25 May) and the feast of the Stigmata (17 Sept), St. Anthony of Padua, *dies natalis* (13 June), octave (20 June) and translation (15 Feb), St. Bernardino of Siena (20 May; canonized in 1450), St. Clare of Assisi, *dies natalis* (12 Aug), octave (19 Aug) and translation (2 Oct), St. Elizabeth of Hungary (19 Nov), St. Louis of Toulouse (19 Aug), and St. Louis IX, King of France (26 Aug; Patron of Franciscan Tertiaries). Saints Bernardino, Anthony, Francis, Clare and Elizabeth are also included in the litanies; Clare and Elizabeth occupy the final positions among the virgin martyrs, emphasizing their importance to the Franciscan nun who owned the book. Hymns for the feasts of the Stigmata of St. Francis and the feast of St. Clare are included at the very beginning of the book (ff. 9v-10), and Offices are provided for all

important Franciscan feasts in the Sanctorale (see below).

The inclusion of the office for the Feast of the Transfiguration, established by Pope Calixtus III in 1456, allows dating the manuscript after this date (ff. 525-528). The feast of St. Bernardino, canonized in 1450, is present in the calendar May 20th, but the feast of his translation, celebrated by the Franciscans from 1472, is lacking, suggesting a date before then. The blank folios intended for his Office, ff. 347v-350v, are noteworthy, and may allow this manuscript to be dated even more closely.

A contemporary inscription written in Italian on the front flyleaf is evidence that this Breviary was used by nuns, specifically a nun by the name of Scholastica, who was very likely the original user of the manuscript: "Memoria como Io suora scolastica començay li psalmi dela indulgentia" (Remembrance of how I, sister Scholastica began the psalms of indulgence). It seems possible that Sister Scholastica, who owned our manuscript, could have been one of the nuns at the Convent of Sant'Antonio of Padua, to the west of Perugia (further discussion, below).

We can be certain that this Breviary was intended for use in the diocese of Perugia. This is indicated by the inclusion in the calendar of the feasts of St. Herculanius (d. 549), the martyr bishop and patron saint of Perugia, his *dies natalis* (1 March) and his *passio* (7 November). While the *dies natalis* of St. Herculanius was celebrated also in the nearby Assisi, the *passio* feast appears to have been limited to the diocese of Perugia (Welch 2015, p. 196). The calendar also includes the feast of St. Cerbonius (10 October), bishop of Piombino, a town on the coast, west of Perugia. There are no Offices for these local feasts in the Sanctorale, but this is not uncommon for Perugian manuscripts. Anna Welch has observed that the inclusion and special highlighting of the feast of St. Herculanius in the calendar "did not necessarily result in an individualized Office" (Welch, 2015, p. 177).

2. There are several contemporary notes in the margins, and some twenty lines of contemporary or slightly later pen trials on f. 347.
3. An erased signature on f. 10v in a nineteenth-century(?) hand (illegible).
4. A marginal note "VI" in purple felt pen in the inner margin of f. 285 probably made in the twentieth century.

TEXT

ff. 1-6v, Calendar, discussed in detail in Provenance, above, including the following feasts: Translation of Anthony of Padua (15 Feb); Herculanius (1 March); Bernardino of Siena (20 May; canonized in 1450); Translation of Francis (25 May); Anthony of Padua, *dies natalis* (13 June), and octave (20 June); Clare of Assisi, *dies natalis* (12 Aug), and octave (19 Aug); Louis of Toulouse (19 Aug); Louis IX, King of France (26 August); Stigmata of Francis (17 September); Translation of Clare of Assisi (2 Oct); Francis, *dies natalis* (4 Oct), and octave (11 Oct); St. Cerbonius (10 Oct); Herculanius, *passio* (7 November); and Elizabeth of Hungary (19 Nov);

ff. 7-9, Parisian table of the ferial antiphons before Christmas (1263);

ff. 9v-10, Two hymns for the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, a hymn for the feast of St. Clare, and the first lesson from a sermon by St. Augustine for the Vigil of the Epiphany;

Following f. 10v, the foliation begins again with f. 1:

ff. 1-210v, incipit, "*Incipit ordo breviarii secundum consuetudinem romane curie. In primo sabbato de adventu. Ad vesperas. Capitulum. Fratres scientes quia hora est...*";

Temporale from the first Saturday in Advent until the fourth Sunday in November.

ff. 210v-217, Readings from the Minor Prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, followed by a long rubric on celebrating Advent, Invitatories for the year from the first Sunday after Epiphany until Advent, and two hymns;

ff. 217-299, Ferial Psalter, secular use, complete with psalms 1-150 in their numerical order with hymns, antiphons, versicles, responsories and capitula. Psalms begin with 3-line initials, with the exception of nine 6-line initials that single out the first psalm at Matins for each day of the week and the first psalm at Sunday and Monday Vespers (Ps. 1, 26, 38, 52, 68, 80, 97, 109, 114), and 4-line initials that bring attention to the first psalms at Vespers on the remaining weekdays. The Psalter is followed by the canticles *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*, the Apostles's Creed, *Gloria in excelsis Deo* and *Te Deum laudamus*;

ff. 299-301v, Litanies, followed by prayers, including saints Bernardino, Anthony, Francis, Clare and Elizabeth; Clare and Elizabeth occupy the final positions among the virgin martyrs;

ff. 302-347, Sanctorale, from the office for St. Saturninus of Toulouse (29 Nov) to the Office for Sts. Nereus et Achilleus (12 May), including the Offices for the translation of the relics of St. Francis (ff. 351-353v). Other Franciscan offices include those for the feast of the translation of St. Anthony, with nine lessons (ff. 326-327v),

ff. 347v-350v, Blank;

These seven pages were left blank for the office for St. Bernardino of Siena, but the text was never transcribed. In the lower margin of f. 347 a note by the scribe indicates this intention: "*hic ponatur off(iciu)m sci bernardini.*"

ff. 351-485, Sanctorale, continues from the office of St. Pudentiana (19 May) to the Office for St. Catherine (25 Nov); including the Offices for the feasts of St. Francis: his vigil, including his *vita*, his *dies natalis* feast and octave, and the feast of his Stigmata, with nine lessons (ff. 435v-435bis; ff. 443v-464); the translation of St. Clare, with nine lessons (ff. 441v-443v), and the feast of St. Elizabeth, with nine lessons (ff. 478-482), marked by a 6-line initial;

ff. 485-513v, Common of Saints;

ff. 513v-517v, Office of the Virgin Mary;

ff. 517v-520, Office of the Dead, use of Rome, fragmentary (lacking a quire between ff. 518 and 519);

ff. 520-521v, *Incipit ordo ad faciendum aquam benedictam dominica prima Adventus et omnibus dominicis diebus per annum...*;

ff. 522-525, Office for the Holy Trinity;

ff. 525-528, Office for the feast of the Transfiguration of Jesus; [f. 528v, blank].

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 manuscript records information about the celebration of liturgical feasts within a Franciscan community in Umbria.

Our manuscript might have been made for one of the nuns at the Convent of Sant'Antonio of Padua, near Perugia. The community of the nuns of Sant'Antonio was recognized by Pope Eugene IV in 1436, and in 1455 they were subjected to the authority of the friars of the Convent of Monteripido, under whose spiritual guidance they remained until 1482 (see "Sant'Antonio da Padova" in Online Resources). Perhaps our Breviary was copied at Monteripido; the script is professional and very well executed. The fine penwork ornamentation in blue ink decorating the first initial also suggests that it was painted by a professional (f. 1). This initial "F" is outlined with very fine parallel lines, with the long stroke of the letter emphasized with cusping forms, spikes and small circles, and the cavities of the letter are decorated with geometric and vegetal forms against dark background. The penwork of this first initial is clearly different from the style of the penwork found elsewhere in the book, which, although contemporary, was very likely painted inhouse by the nuns who used the manuscript (e.g. f. 200v).

If our manuscript was made for one of the sisters at Sant'Antonio, it was very likely commissioned soon after 1455. The association of the nuns with the friars of Monteripido in 1455 was followed by great activity and works that were commissioned for the beautification of the convent, including the magnificent *Annunciation* altarpiece by Piero della Francesca, financed with help from the Municipality of Perugia (see "Polittico di Sant'Antonio," Online Resources). A leading member of the Sant'Antonio community at the time was Sister Ilaria, the daughter of Braccio Baglioni, the first lord of Perugia. She entered the convent in 1462 and became its "Ministra" in 1467. Our manuscript was owned by, and very likely made for Sister Scholastica, who made a note on its front flyleaf, that she had begun praying the psalms of indulgence. The Church had attached indulgences to a number of psalms; reciting, for example, the psalms *De profundis* (Ps. 130) or *Misere* (Ps. 51), or any of the gradual or penitential psalms granted the faithful a partial indulgence.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

"Nunneries in Perugia"

http://www.keytoumbria.com/Perugia/Nunneries_%28Other%29.html

"Sant'Antonio da Padova"

http://www.keytombria.com/Perugia/S_Antonio_da_Padova.html

"Monteripido: Storia del convento"

<https://www.casamonteripido.it/convento/>

"Polittico di Sant'Antonio":

http://www.culturaitalia.it/opencms/museid/viewItem.jsp?language=it&case=&id=oai%3Aculturaitalia.it%3Amuseiditalia-work_15748

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