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## Missal (use of Rome)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Lombardy, (?Milan) c.1430

iii + 240 + iii folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, 1-240, (collation i<sup>8</sup> ii<sup>8+2</sup>, [lacking 2] iii-vi<sup>10</sup> vii-xi<sup>8</sup> xii<sup>2+1</sup>, stub visible xiii-xvi<sup>8</sup> xvii<sup>4</sup> xviii<sup>10</sup> xix<sup>12</sup> xx-xxvii<sup>10</sup>) f. 18 excised during production but never replaced, horizontal catchwords decorated in ink, some signatures in far lower right, ruled in drypoint (justification 92 x 78 mm) in two columns of either 26-7 lines or 31 lines, written in black ink by at least two scribes both copying in very small (2-3mm) southern textualis, 2-line initials in red and blue, one 8-line puzzle initial in blue ink and reserved parchment (f. 161), TWO HISTORIATED INITIALS in red, blue, green, rose, white and gold with foliate extensions along margins depicting David in prayer (f. 1) and the Crucifixion (f. 102), ff. 23 and 233 small tear with loss in lower margin, other very small corner tears affecting 5 folia towards the end, initial and final two leaves with mainly marginal spotting, last two quires water-stained, a few pieces of text abraded affecting legibility, some folia slightly spotted and marked some stains and signs of use, edges and some leaves worn with use, overall in good condition. Later endpapers, bound in the early nineteenth century in calf with gilt-tooled borders by Birdsall of Northampton, rubbed, corners repaired and gilt spine rebacked preserving printed label on front pastedown, edges worn but otherwise in good condition. Dimensions 167 x 118 mm.

Put simply, Missals provided a foundation for medieval western Christianity. Yet, for this very reason, large Missals employed at medieval altars wore out, and relatively few remain in complete condition today. The striking aspects of this Missal are its small size, ready to be carried for use by a friar, or used at a portable altar, and its completeness. The volume is further distinguished by two fine historiated initials showing familiarity with the works of Master of the Vitae Imperatorum active in Lombardy around. 1430.

## PROVENANCE

1. By the fifteenth century the Roman liturgy was increasingly used beyond the Italian peninsula. However, the style of the two illuminated initials, together with the southern features of the script suggest this volume was both manufactured in Italy, and intended for Italian, and perhaps Franciscan, use. Saints Ambrose, Anthony, Francis, Dominic, and Clare all appear in an otherwise rather spare litany (f.95v). Bernardino of Siena, however, added to the Franciscan liturgy in 1450, does not. While not pocket-sized, this Missal remains small enough to carry easily and would suit the friars' peripatetic mission. In a similar way, its humble decoration might suggest a gift for a friary that would not break their vows of poverty. The Franciscans famously employed Roman liturgy with little variation in their Missal, and this volume might therefore have also had other owners in the medieval period.
2. According to a note on a fly leaf (f.ii, "Hoc Missale Romanum Saecali XIV. Codicern manuscriptum, qui in Bibliotheca Abbatis Celotti olim qui everat, mihi don. decl. Hen. Drury anno salutis 1821. Gulielm. Thornton Harroviae. Cat. P. XL" [This fourteenth-

century Roman missal manuscript codex was in the library of Abbot Celotti and was given to me, William Thornton of Harrow by Henry Drury in 1821. Shelfmark P. XL”), this volume was owned by Abbé Luigi Celotti (1759-1843), an Italian art dealer and collector of illuminated manuscripts, leaves, and cuttings, who arrived in England and sold manuscript codices and leaves for about a decade from the 1810s into the 1820s. This is perhaps the volume with the matching incipit, “Missale secundum consuetudinem Romanae curiae” included in lot 303, or part of one of the other miscellaneous lots of Latin manuscripts that Celotti sold from the Canonici and Saibante collections in February, 1821.

3. Whether at that auction or earlier in a private sale, the Missal passed to Henry Drury (1778-1841), rector of Fingest, Buckinghamshire and master at Harrow School from 1820, and a renowned book collector, whose manuscripts were sold at auction in 1827. This Missal escaped that sale, as Drury had already given it to William Thornton of Harrow in 1821 (f. ii), a quick turnaround consonant with a book acquired in a mixed lot.
4. The volume was listed in a Sokol Books sale in 2012, Catalogue 61, Lot 57 and again in 2018.
5. Private Collection

## TEXT

ff. 1-101, *Incipit ordo missalis secundum consuetudinem Romanae curiae*, Temporale, feasts from the first Saturday in Advent until Easter; f. 101v blank;

ff. 102-160v, Canon of the Mass, *Te igitur*;

ff. 105-60v, Temporale from Easter Week-Twenty-fourth Sunday after Corpus Christi;

ff. 161-204, Sanctorale, from the Vigil of St. Andrew (29 Nov.) to St. Katherine (25 Nov.);

ff. 204-240v, Common of the Saints, followed by votive masses.

## ILLUSTRATION

f. 1, an 11-line historiated initial in red, blue, green, rose, white and gold with foliate extensions along margins depicting David praying to God, depicted as rays of light.

f. 102, a 7-line historiated initial in red, blue, green, rose, white and gold with foliate extensions along margins depicting the crucified Christ, with the T beginning the *Te igitur* forming the cross on which Christ is nailed.

These small initials with simple, foliate extensions suggest a northern Italian origin for the volume, either further west in Milan, or perhaps east as far as Padua, or Venice. The initials surely demonstrate awareness of the work of the Master of the Vitae Imperatorum, as seen for example in Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.332. For further examples of similar iconography, see Oxford Bodleian Library, MS D’Orville 21 (Milan), and the foliate sprays in

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. Class. D. 8 (Padua), and the very similar Canon. Class. Lat. 259 (Venice). It might be noteworthy that Celotti sold a substantial number of the Venetian Jesuit Matteo Luigi Canonici's collection to the Bodleian, including Canon. Class. Lat. 259 (Eze, 2010).

Together with the prayers of the Divine Office, medieval Christianity centered on a daily round of masses, during which the priest sang a wide range of prayers, read from scripture, and importantly, initiated the principal mystery of transubstantiation, where the bread and wine miraculously transmuted into the body and blood of Christ. Missals provided crucial instructions for priests and enabled masses to be said for nearly any possible occasion, including the full liturgical year, and the annual cycle of saints days. Moreover, Missals contained not only the words that the priest needed to say, but instructions for the many gestures he had to make: raising the chalice, kissing the cross, kneeling and censing, asperging, and many other activities. Thus, Missals are deceptively complex, condensing a truly enormous amount of information into a volume the size of a novel.

The present volume offers a glimpse into this daily liturgy from fifteenth-century northern Italy. It may be Franciscan, as the Franciscans employed the widely used Roman liturgy to facilitate their travelling mission. There is no calendar to help guide us in this volume, but the spare litany includes a range of saints to which the Franciscans were devoted: Francis himself, of course, but also Saints Ambrose, Anthony, Dominic, and Clare, Francis's sister (f. 95v). An association with the friars may help explain the interesting balance of the volume's decoration. It bears just two historiated initials, marking two major divisions of the text. Indeed, Missals invariably included a Crucifixion image of some kind, as the priest was required to kiss it during the mass. The rest of the volume is starkly plain, with ink initials lacking any decorative flourishing at all. This page design may relate to the vow of poverty taken by Franciscans, but it could also reflect a less humble interest in the new, humanist book design of this period. If it is Franciscan, then it joins a very few examples of the Franciscan Missal in North America.

## LITERATURE

Anon. *Saibante and Canonici Manuscripts. A Catalogue of a Singularly Rare Collection of Manuscripts on Paper and Vellum...the Whole Are in Fine Condition and Brough to This Country by the Abbé Celotti, Sotheby's Catalogue for 26 February, 1821.*

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Van Dijk, S. *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy: The Ordinals of Haymo of Faversham and Related Documents (1243-1307)*, 2 vols, Leiden, 1963.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

"Liturgical Books," <https://liturgical.columbia.edu/>

Liturgia Latina <http://www.liturgialatina.org/>

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