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**Book of Hours (use of Rome)
In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Italy (Florence), dated January 1, 1467**

i + 136 + i folios on parchment (flyleaves from a late medieval Italian Choir Book), modern foliation in pencil, 1-136, complete (collation i⁶ ii-xiv¹⁰), horizontal catchwords with ornamentation, leaf signatures in purple ink in the lower margin (now visible only on f. 48 ("f2"), the second leaf of the sixth gathering), ruled in gray ink (justification 78 x 63 mm.), written in gray ink in Italian textualis bookhand in a single column on 17 lines, rubrics in red, capitals touched in yellow, 1- to 2-line initials alternating in red and blue throughout, fine 3- to 4-line initials in red with purple flourishes and in blue with red flourishes begin new texts, with the penwork extending to margins in tendrils of acorns and leaves, slight fading of ink on some pages, smudging and stains, but in overall good condition. Bound in the nineteenth century in Italy in dark brown morocco blind-tooled with small leaves, flowers and acorns, some wear to spine edges and back cover, but in overall excellent condition. Dimensions 130 x 97 mm.

Books of Hours made in Italy are distinct from those in northern Europe. They are often associated with monastic and quasi-monastic institutions instead of with the laity. This one made for an Augustinian nun in the convent of Santa Caterina del Monte (San Gaggio) in Florence is relatively unadorned. It joins others from this active center to help reconstruct a history of female monastic readership. Securely dated and localized manuscripts like this one provide critical indices for charting the development of the book arts, be it script, decoration, or illustration.

PROVENANCE

1. Concludes with a scribal colophon in verse, giving thanks for having finished the task, dated January 1, 1467 (f. 136rv). Liturgical evidence establishes that this was made for an Augustinian nun in Florence. Evidence of Augustinian use is the inclusion of St. Augustine as "Sancte pater" (Holy Father) in the litanies; the feast (28 August) and octave (4 September) of St. Augustine are transcribed in red in the calendar, as are the translation (9 April) and feast (4 May) of his mother, St. Monica. St. Monica also occupies the final position among the virgins in the litanies. The inclusion in red in the calendar of St. Reparata (8 October), patron saint of Florence, and St. Minias (25 October), the first Christian martyr of Florence, as well as St. Zenobius (25 May), the first bishop of Florence, in gray, indicate that the manuscript was made for use in Florence, or its diocese. The two patron saints of Florence, St. Reparata and St. Zenobius are also included in the litanies.

More specifically, liturgical evidence suggests this was made for an Augustinian nun at the convent of Santa Caterina del Monte-San Gaggio in Florence. St. Catherine of Alexandria's name is written in capital letters and touched in yellow in the litany, and her octave (2 December) is also included in red in the calendar, which is quite uncommon. The rare St. Caius is included in the calendar (22 April) and at the end of the martyrs in the litanies. This Augustinian convent was initially founded in the first

half of the fourteenth century as Santa Caterina del Monte, dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria. In 1353 it was united with the Augustinian convent dedicated to the pope, St. Caius. It was an important center of literary activity, in particular for religious works in the vernacular, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Gill, Online Resources; and see below for further details).

2. Sold at Bloomsbury Auctions, London, 9 December 2015, lot 121.

TEXT

ff. 1-6v, Calendar, including the following feasts in red: translation of St. Monica (9 April), St. Monica (4 May), St. Augustine with its octave (28 August and 4 September), St. Reparata (8 Oct), and St. Minias (25 Oct);

ff. 7-43, Hours of the Virgin, use of Rome, ending with variants for days of the week (beginning on f. 31v) and liturgical seasons (beginning on f. 36v);

ff. 43-55v, Hours of the Passion;

ff. 55v-56v, Hours of the Cross;

ff. 57-64, the Seven Penitential Psalms;

ff. 64v-71, Litanies and prayers;

ff. 71-78, Gradual Psalms;

ff. 78-108v, the Office of the Dead, use of Rome (with some small differences to the variants of the Roman use recorded by Knud Ottosen, e.g. lacking the first Response "Credo quod", cf. Ottosen, Online resources). An alternative Response ("Libera me, domine, de morte") was included for a funeral of a friar, "in obitum fratrum". This additional Response was added for occasions when the nuns would sing at the funeral of friar in a male house. The evidence that the manuscript was made for a nun is provided in the discussion below;

ff. 109-131, Psalter of the Virgin;

ff. 131-136v, Hymn attributed to St. Bernard, "Salve mundi salutare..."; [colophon], "Finito libro isto. Referamus gratia Christo./ Qui scripsit scribat et semper cum domino vivat./ Vivat in celis in suo nomine felix./ Anno domini M^o.cccc.lxvij. die i^o in mensis Ianuarii."

Augustinians consist of two main branches: Augustinian canons and Augustinian friars and nuns. Both orders live in community according to the rule of St. Augustine. This manuscript was made for an Augustinian nun. Augustinians were at the center of scholarly and artistic activities in Florence. The convent of Santo Spirito is perhaps their most well-known foundation, which was frequented by preeminent early humanists including Boccaccio and the inventors of the humanist script, Coluccio Salutati and Niccolò di'Niccoli. The convent further increased its importance as an intellectual center after Boccaccio bequeathed his library to it in 1375.

Liturgical evidence, however, links our manuscript to the Augustinian convent for nuns, Santa Caterina del Monte-San Gaggio. (For the history of this convent, see especially Fantozzi Micali, Lombardi and Roselli 1996; Benvenuti Papi, 1987; Gill, Online Resources.) The manuscript provides evidence of special veneration of St. Raphael the Archangel and St. Catherine of Alexandria, whose names are written in capital letters and touched in yellow in the litanies. St. Catherine's octave (2 December) is also included in red in the calendar, which is quite rare. The veneration of the Archangel Raphael fits perfectly the Florentine context, where the subject of Archangel Raphael and Tobias enjoyed great popularity in art after about 1465 (see Achenbach, 1946 and Gombrich, 1972). Especially interesting is the commission made on February 28, 1463, contemporary with our manuscript, for an antependium (altar frontal) with a figure of the Archangel Raphael and "dua Rafaegli gli dipinsi per le monache di Santo Ghagio," two paintings of the Archangel Raphael for the convent of San Gaggio in Florence (Pope-Hennessy, 1987, p. 179). This Augustinian convent was initially founded in the first half of the fourteenth century as Santa Caterina del Monte, dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria. In 1353 it was united with the Augustinian convent dedicated to the pope, St. Caius. The attention to St. Catherine in our manuscript was mentioned above, and in addition the rare St. Caius is included in the calendar (22 April), and at the end of the martyrs in the litanies.

For other manuscripts belonging to the convent, often dated, and the activity of the nuns as both scribes and illuminators, see especially K. Arthur, 2017. See also Scudieri et al., 2003, for a group of San Gaggio books gathered together in an exhibition in the Museo di San Marco. Add to these manuscripts cited: Florence Laurenziana, Ashburnham, MS Ashb. 533.

The Book of Hours was the most popular type of manuscript in Western Europe in the late Middle Ages. Books of Hours contain a collection of devotional texts meant to be used throughout the day for private prayer and were predominantly produced by professional scribes for laypeople. This manuscript is of special interest as a securely dated example, made for the use of a nun, rather than a lay woman. Most surviving examples include illumination; our manuscript is decorated with pen initials and never included miniatures, a valuable (and uncommon) reminder that Books of Hours were copied for all levels of the market.

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