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Gradual (Franciscan Use)

**In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment with music
Northern Italy (Ventimiglia), c. 1500-1525**

Now bound in two volumes, [volume one] ii (modern parchment) + 229 + ii (modern parchment) folios, on parchment, original foliation in red roman numerals, as follows: 1-144 + five unfoliated leaves + 145-224, (collation, volume one, i-xvii^s xviii^s [through f. 144] xix^a [+ one leaf after 4; all unfoliated] xx-xix^s); [volume two] ii (modern parchment) + 136 + ii (modern parchment) folios, on parchment, original foliation in red roman numerals, as follows: 1-136 (collation i^s [beginning again with f. 1] ii-xvii^s); volumes one and two: horizontal catchwords, middle lower margin, in a formal hand, usually flourished, some trimmed, some leaf and quire signatures remain in volume two, with a letter designating the quire, and an Arabic numeral, the leaf (a few annotations, possibly signatures, in volume one), written in a formal round liturgical gothic bookhand, with liturgical directions in a smaller script, with eight lines of text and eight four-line staves per page in volume one, and nine lines of text and nine four-line staves in volume two, square musical notation, ruled very lightly in light brown ink with 47 lines, volume one, and 53 lines, volume two, which are then used for the musical staves, relined in red ink, and the formal liturgical text, which is written between the middle of three ruled lines (very faint), with each minim occupying the entire line, and ascenders and descenders extending above and below, double full-length vertical bounding lines, inside and out, in red ink, (justification, volumes one and two, 194-190 x 130-128 mm.), major feasts begin with large, attractive large red and blue parted initials, equivalent to two lines of text and two musical staves, infilled with simple leaves on curling stems, in red, blue or violet on a ground of yellowish brushed gold forming the design with the negative space, with contrasting pen flourishes forming a box around the initials, surrounded by large beads, extending into imaginative pen-work borders, all full-column, and some extending into the bottom or top and bottom margins, with red and blue, or red and violet vines and floral motifs, with cross hatching and touches of powdered gold or green; similar parted red and blue initials, equivalent to two-lines of text and one staff, infilled and with red and purple or red and blue pen decoration, in volume one without borders, but in the second volume with short pen-work borders; smaller initials, alternately red and blue, with decorative void spaces within the initial, equivalent to one-line of text and music, usually with pen decoration, alternately red and blue, initials, occupying the space between the staves, filled and with contrasting pen decoration in violet or red, sometimes with touches of brushed gold, which form a box around the initial and often end with short looped motifs; decorative cadel-initials following colored initials, highlighted rather messily in green wash, red rubrics and liturgical directions, red folio numbers; in excellent condition throughout apart from cockling (front flyleaf partially detached, volume two); a few scuff-marks, front and back covers. Bound in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century in light brown morocco in London by Ramage (binder's ticket inside front cover), parchment doublure with turn-ins decorated in gilt, spine lettered in gilt, "Antiphonale and graduale ad usum ecclesie romanum," gilt edges. Dimensions (volumes one and two) 238-235 x 168 mm.

A Gradual contains the text and music for the Mass. This manuscript, now in two-volumes, covers the entire liturgical year, and includes both the Proper and Ordinary chants. It was made near the beginning of the sixteenth century for a House of Observant Franciscans in Ventimiglia, near Genoa. In contrast to many late medieval Choir Books, this is a rather small-format manuscript, characterized by elegant script and musical notation, as well as by skillful pen initials, many with distinctive and very attractive borders.

PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript was made for Franciscan Use (the feast of St. Francis begins, "In festo beatissimi patris nostri Francisci," and the feast of his Stigmata, as well as those of Bernardinus and Anthony of Padua, are also included), very likely for the Convent of the Annunciata in Ventimiglia in northern Italy, a House of Observant Franciscans (see Moorman, 1983, 504). This is supported by the seventeenth-century ownership notes in volume one (see below), and by the fact that it is very similar to MS 34, an Antiphonal, and to MS 37, a Gradual, both still in Ventimiglia in the Biblioteca Aprosiana, with ownership notes dated 1579 (based on available images www.commune.ventimiglia.it/aprosiana/manoscritti; MS 35, an Antiphonal with the same ex-libris note, may also be similar; also listed in Baroffio, 1999, 295). Note that the feast of St. Lawrence (10 August) is a major one in the manuscript; Lawrence was the titular head of the Cathedral of Genoa, and Ventimiglia was in the diocese of Genoa. Following the death of St. Francis in 1226, the Franciscan order grew rapidly in both numbers and prestige. As the Order developed, serious questions arose about the interpretation of St. Francis' teachings on absolute poverty. Observant Franciscans argued for a very strict interpretation of their founder's rules. This branch of the Order was especially strong in Italy, and numerous Observant Houses were founded in the later Middle Ages, including the Convent of the Annunciata in Ventimiglia. The script and decoration of the manuscript support a date in the early sixteenth century. Liturgical evidence tells us that it must date after 1482; Litany (volume one) includes St. Bonaventure, canonized in 1482, and other Feasts in the sanctoral and litany include St. Bernardinus, (canonized in 1450; observed in Franciscan liturgy, 1451), and the Transfiguration (1458). Since the evidence suggests this manuscript was made for the Convent of the Annunciata, it must date after the House's foundation. Moorman suggests that it was founded in 1509 (see above), but other sources suggest dates as early as 1470 (see "Il convento dell'annunziata:" www.fortedellannunziata.it/la_storia_convento.htm).
2. Ownership notes, f. 1, added, bottom margin, seventeenth century: "Del convento della Anonciata di Vintimiglia" and f. 55, also in volume one, probably the same hand: "Perinet ad Conventum [V]entimelii."
3. London, Sotheby's, July 11, 1960, lot 122; resold, London, Sotheby's, December 12, 1966, lot 213; resold, London, Christie's, July 16, 1969, lot 45.
4. Private Collection, Europe.

TEXT

Vol. I:

ff. 1-107v, Temporale, from the first Sunday in Advent through Good Friday;

ff. 108-144v, and five following unnumbered leaves, Ordinary Chants, ff. 109-110v, Litany, ff. 108-110v, including Gregory, Martin, Augustine, Louis, Bonaventure, Francis, Anthony, Bernardinus, Dominic, Clare and Elizabeth; ff. 113-129, thirteen settings of the Kyrie, and Agnus Dei; ff. 129v-134v, two settings of the Creed; ff. 134v-144v, Sequences for Christmas, Easter, Sundays in Eastertime, Holy Spirit (Pentecost with Octave), Holy Spirit (another text), and Corpus Christi, which concludes on the verso of the unnumbered leaf following f. 144v; [five unnumbered leaves, beginning on the verso] Creed, "Cum appropinquaret domino hierosolimam ..," "Cum audisset populus," "Gloria laus et honor ...," and "Ingrediente domino in sanctam civitatem ... cum ramis";

ff. 145-224, Easter through the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost (with liturgical directions for the twenty-fourth Sunday), including Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi; [f. 224v blank].

Vol. II:

ff. 1-18, Ordinary Chants, beginning with the Asperges, including Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei, followed by three settings of the Creed;

ff. 18-52, Sanctorale from Andrew through Clement, including Bernardinus, Anthony of Padua, Transfiguration, Lawrence, Stigmata of Francis, and Francis;

ff. 52-99, Common of Saints;

ff. 99-107v, Votive Masses including the Consecration of a Church, the Virgin Mary, Advent through Christmas, Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and "In agenda mortuorum";

ff. 108-122, Sequences including those for the dead, for angels, for the Virgin, "Ave gratia plena ..." and "Ab arce sidera lux descendit ...," for Anthony of Padua, "Hodie lux diei celebris in matri dei memoria ...," John the Baptist, "Elisabeth zacharie magnum virum ...," Clare, "Laetabundus clare cleri psallat chorus ...," the Assumption, "Aurea virga prime matris ...," Francis, "Surgit victor virtualis hic franciscus triumphalis ...," and the Stigmata of Francis, "Cordia pia infammantus dum francisci celebrantur stigmatum ...";

ff. 126v-132, Office for Holy Thursday (the Mandatum or Foot washing);

ff. 132v-136v, Hymns, "Alma mater redemptoris...," "Ave regina celorum ... (Chevalier, Repertorium hymnicum, 2070)," "Regina celi ... (Chevalier, RH 17170)," "Salve regina misericordie ... (Chevalier, RH 18150)," "Quam pulchras et docora ... (note Francis and Clare in red, f. 136)," "Celorum candor splenduit ... franciscus, Pane turba pauperula ad patrem."

Graduals include the sung portions of the Mass; these include texts that are proper to the Feast (the Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, which is replaced by the Tract during penitential seasons, Offertory

and Communion), as well as Ordinary chants, that are included in every Mass (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei and *Ite Missa est*). The text of Ordinary chants did not vary, although the music did. In this Gradual, Ordinary chants are found in two places, in the middle of the Temporal in volume one, before Easter, and at the beginning of the manuscript before the Sanctoral in volume two. The placement of the first group of Ordinary chants echoes the organization of the Missal, where the Canon of the Mass is commonly in the middle of the volume before Easter. This manuscript ends with Office chants for Holy Thursday and a series of Hymns, material not usually found in Graduals. The Franciscans adopted the liturgy of the Papal Curia in the 1240s, and their liturgical forms subsequently influenced the liturgy of the whole Church.

This is a well organized volume, which includes folio numbers in the original hand. Folio references allowed the scribe to avoid duplicating texts. It is in an unusually small format for a Choir book of this date, perhaps because the Convent of the Annunciata owned another larger series of Choir books for the Mass and Office (judging from the descriptions and photos available; see above; now Ventimiglia, Biblioteca Aprosiana, MSS 34, 35, 36, and 37; MS 36 does not include the 1579 ex-libris note discussed above; MS 38 is also an Antiphonal, but later in date).

DECORATION

The quality of the pen-work initials and borders in this manuscript is very high. Every page contains skillful small initials, and the largest initials with borders are quite striking. The colors are fresh and vivid, including bright red, royal blue, and violet, with touches of yellowish brushed gold and green wash. The style of the pen-work borders, with curling stems in red and blue, and simple oval leaves, interspersed with floral motifs, echo the type of floral vine initials found in some Northern Italian manuscripts from the fifteenth century (compare Otto Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford* [Oxford, 1970], no. 802, pl. lxxxiv, no. 806a, pl. lxxv, and no. 840, plate lxxvi.).

LITERATURE

Baroffio, Giacomo, ed. *Iter liturgicum italicum*, Padua, CLEUP, 1999.

Chevalier, Ulysse. *Repertorium hymnologicum*, Louvain, 1892-1912; Brussels, 1920-21.

Harper, John. *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy*, Oxford, 1991.

Moorman, John. *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origin to the Year 1517*, Oxford, 1968.

Moorman, John. *Medieval Franciscan Houses*. Franciscan Institute Publications, History Series, 4, New York, 1983.

Palazzo, Eric. *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, translated by Madeline Beaumont (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1998).

Plummer, John, *Liturgical Manuscripts for the Mass and Divine Office*, New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1964.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

History of the Convent of the Annunziata:

www.fortedellannunziata.it/la_storia_convento.htm ("Il convento dell'annunziata")

Introduction to liturgical manuscripts: "Celebrating the Liturgy's Books":

www.columbia.edu/itc/music/manuscripts

The Franciscan Order:

www.newadvent.org/cathen/06217a.htm (Catholic Encyclopedia)

"The Medieval Mass and its Music";

www.the-orb.net/encyclop/culture/music/orbdyer.htm

"Gradual"

www.newadvent.org/cathen.06715a.htm (Catholic Encyclopedia)

Michel Huglo, "Gradual," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy

www.grovemusic.com