

Vernacular Miscellany including the Lord's Prayer; Twelve Articles of the Faith; Ten Commandments; Sermon on the Mount and other Biblical Passages; Excerpt from THOMAS A KEMPIS, *De imitatione Christi*; and two prayers in verse by CLÉMENT MAROT In French, decorated manuscript on parchment France, (Northeastern?), dated 1559

60 + i (paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, lower outer recto, 1-61, including the paper flyleaf (collation i¹⁰ ii-vi⁸ vii¹⁰), decorative ruling in brown ink with two concentric sets of double vertical and horizontal bounding lines (justification 70-72 x 45 mm.), text written in dark brown ink in a diminutive, calligraphic bâtarde script in twenty-five lines a page, red rubrics, one-line brown parafhs, rubricated running headings framed by decoration in brown ink for the Calendar (ff. 2-7v), one-line red initials, two- to three-line framed and decorated initials drawn and shaded in brown ink, head pieces and tail pieces consisting of scrolls and delicate foliage drawn and shaded in brown ink, ten twelve-line frames, presumably for miniatures that were never executed (ff. 8, 17v, 18, 26v, 27, 36v, 37, 46, 47v, 57v), text lacking at the bottom of f. 60 on account of the loss of the bottom of the leaf, the bottom of f. 60 is now patched from the bottom of the paper flyleaf (f. 61), otherwise in very good condition. CONTEMPORARY BINDING of dark brown calf blind-tooled and blind-stamped with two concentric rectangular frames and five leaves stamped at the corners of the inner frame and within it over pasteboard with four raised bands, with some losses of leather along the corners and fore-edges of both boards and at the top and bottom of the spine. Dimensions 127 x 83 mm.

Copied and decorated to exhibit the calligraphic skill of its scribe, this collection includes French translations of excerpts from the Bible and the *Imitation of Christ* (unidentified in published sources), as well as prayers in verse by Clément Marot, a French humanist and spokesperson for religious reform. Dating just before the outbreak of religious wars in France, it was probably copied for a Catholic believer with sympathies for the teachings of the reformers. Although complete, it appears to have been designed to include miniatures that were never executed.

PROVENANCE

1. There seems to be little doubt that this was copied in 1559, since the year 1559 is found inscribed on the scrollwork adorning an ascender on f. 46. The inclusion of a number of saints local to modern-day Northeastern France and Belgium – including Saint Aldegonde of Maubeuge (30 January), Austreberta of Pavilly (10 February), Pepin of Landen (21 February), Ranulf of Arras (27 May), Medard (8 June), and Gobain (20 June) – suggests that this book was made for use somewhere in this region.
2. Private Continental Collection.

TEXT

[f. 1, blank; f. 1v, blank, but ruled]; ff. 2-7v, Calendar in French, with one or more saints listed for nearly every day and with some feasts (including those highlighted in red) typical of the composite Parisian calendar (see Online Resources), but with saints local to Northeastern France and Belgium (see Provenance above);

ff. 8-15, incipit, "Donnez vous garde veilliez et priez car vous ne scaues quand le Seigneur viendra. *Luc xiiij*" [paraphrase of Mark 13:33, 35]. Apres que les disciples eurent prie a Jhesus

Christ quilz les volsist enseigner a prier il leur dist en ceste maniere ... Mais quant vous vouldres prier dictes ainssy"; f. 3, [Paternoster] incipit, "Nostre pere qui es es cieulx ... mais deliure nous du maling. Amen"; f. 3, *Lamine Chrestienne parle a dieu*, incipit, "Nostre pere tu es au ciel et nous tes enfans sommes icy sus la terre ... que en lhonneur de ta verite tu nous donneras tout cecy par ta grande misericorde et clemence";

A French prose translation of the Paternoster preceded by a prefatory passage on the manner in which Christians should pray (adapting Jesus's remarks in Matthew 6 that precede the Paternoster in Matthew 6:9-13) and followed by a dialogue between the soul and God that is structured around the seven petitions of the Paternoster.

f. 15r-v, *Senssiault les .xij. articles de la foy*, incipit, "Je[?] croy en dieu le pere tout puissant ... Et la vie eternelle. Amen";

f. 16r-v, *Senssiault les .x. commandements de dieu*, incipit, "Je suis le Seigneur vostre Dieu qui vous ay thire de Egipte ... ne aulcune chose quy soit a luy"; f. 16v, *Christ*, incipit, "Tu ne desireras point car le soing de ce monde et la tromperie des richesses oppresse la parolle tellement quelle deuient inutile";

ff. 16v-17, [Clément Marot] *Priere deuant le repas*, incipit, "Souuerain pasteur et maistre ... Ung corps subiect a nourristure"; f. 17, *Aultre priere apres le repas*, incipit, "Pere eternel qui nous ordonnes ... Ainssy soit il";

These two verse prayers are the work of Clément Marot (1496-1544), a celebrated French humanist poet who was for a time a member of the royal household of Francis I and who enjoyed the patronage and protection of the educated and accomplished Marguerite de Navarre. Marguerite shared Marot's reformist sympathies and both were connected to the evangelical "Cenacle of Meaux." In keeping with his Protestant leanings, Marot is well-known, among other things, for his translations of the Psalms into French and his contribution of many of these translations to John Calvin's Genevan Psalter. Written as *chansons*, both of the prayers here were set to music by the prolific Flemish composer Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c. 1510-1555/56). They were printed in Marot's *Oeuvres* (first printed in 1538; see f. 280v in the digitized 1546 edition). They were also included with musical settings in some editions of the Genevan Psalter (for example, the 1562 edition printed in Caen) and without musical settings in collections of prayers and instructional material like the *Tresor des prieres, oraisons et instruction chrestiennes pour prier et invoquer Dieu en tout temps* (Lyon, 1572). Marot also produced French verse settings for the Paternoster, Twelve Articles of Faith, and the Ten Commandments, all present within this volume (see above), though not in Marot's verse renditions, which were also published in his *Oeuvres*.

ff. 17v-18, *Voicy ie enuoyray mon angel ... Exodi xxiiij Cap.* [Exodus 23:20]; f. 18, *Soyez misericordieulx comme vostre pere est misericordieulx. Luc vi* [Luke 6:36];

ff. 18v-26, *Le[?] Sermon de Christ en La montaigne*, incipit, "Des huyt beatitudes et bonnes œuures. Expliccacion daulcuns commandementz ..."; f. 18v, *Soyz parfaictz comme vestre pere celeste est parfaict. Math. v. vi. et .vij.* *Chapitre.*"; f. 19, incipit, "Et quandt il veidt les multitudes il monta en la montaigne ... et non pas comme les Scribz et Phariseens";

A direct translation of Matthew 5-7, the three chapters that recount the Sermon on the Mount. A collation of this translation with French biblical translations extant at the time indicates that

this particular translation is closest to that found in an edition of the New Testament printed in 1552 in Antwerp, *Le Nouveau Testament de Nostre Seigneur Iesv Christ* and based on the translation of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples.

ff. 26v-27, *Soyes parfaictz ainssy que vostre pere celeste est parfaict. Math. v^e. [Matthew 5:48]; f. 27, Lu. ix. [Luke 9:23] Mat. vi. [Matthew 16:24] Mar. viii^e [Mark 8:34]; f. 27, *Sy aucun veult venir apres moy quil renye soy mesme et porte tous les iours sa croix et mensuyue;**

ff. 27v-34v, [Thomas à Kempis, translated excerpt from *De imitatione Christi*] incipit, "Jesus Christ a bien a present pluisseurs amateurs de son royaulme mais bien peu en ya quy desirent a porter sa croix ... Dis luy doncq en te prosternant et priant humblement";

Translation of Book Two, Chapters 11 and 12 of Thomas a Kempis, *De imitatione Christi*. This immensely popular late medieval devotional handbook (first composed around 1418) had been translated into French by 1447 and was first printed in Toulouse in 1488 (*Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* M46850). Copies of this earliest printed version are quite rare. The version here bears some resemblance to a slightly later printed translation, *Internelle consolation*, that was first printed in the fifteenth century (Jehan du Pré printed an edition in Paris around 1486) and became immensely popular in the first half of the sixteenth century. This popularity may be attributed to the translation's simplifications and revisions, all of which enhanced its appeal for the lay believer.

ff. 34v-36, *Oraison*, incipit, "O Seigneur dieu ie nay deseruy aultre chose de moy mesme sinon de estre chastie et de endurer et ne suys point digne de recepuoir de toy le moindre confort du mondre ... Le Seigneur chastie ceulx quil ayme et corrige tous enffans quil recoyt. *Prouerb .iij.* [Proverbs 3:12] *Heb .xij.* [Hebrews 12:6] *Apoca. iij^e*";

f. 36v, *Ia ne me aduiegne que ie me glorifie synom en la Croix de nostre Seigneur Ihesus Christ. Gallatas .vi.* [Galatians 6:14];

ff. 37-45v, *Les Sept Psaulmes penitenciales de Daudid En angoisse et tribulation*, incipit, "*Psalme .vi. Domine ne in furore tuo arguas. Seigneur ne me reprens point en ta fureur et ne me chastie point en ton ire ... Et destruierras tous ceulx qui traueillent mon ame car ie suis ton seruiteur*";

ff. 45v-57, *Vraye exhortacion a tous Chrestiens du dernier Jour du Jugement des signes qui prederont de la resurection des mortz de la transmutacion de ceulx qui pour lhors seront encoire viuantz aueucq pluseurs aultres bons enseignementz le tout extraict de lescription Saincte*; f. 46, *Je te souuiengne de ton createur es iours de ta ieunesse deuant que le tamps daffliction viengne. Ecclesiastes xij^e. [Ecclesiastes 12:1] Au Lecteur Chrestien*, f. 46v, incipit, "Veu et considere Lecteur Chrestien que bien scauons selon le tesmoingne de lescription sainte ... adonnez a oraison resisteros nous facilement a nostre aduersaire le diable et le surmonterons"; f. 47v, *Acquiers iustice pour toy deuant le iugement et preus medicine deuant la maladie ... Eccl. xviii [Ecclesiasticus 18:20]; f. 48, Du iour du Jugement Resurection des mortz de la derniere sentence surtouttes chair et des signes ausquelz loy. polra conquoistre que le iour du Seigneur sapproche*, incipit, "Les Disciples de christ estans esmeuz de limfirmite de la chair pour scauoir le dernier iour du Seigneur ... pourtant soyez longanimez iusques a la venue du Seigneur. *Icy finent les signes qui preceront le iour du ingenient*; f. 53v, *Icy sensient comment le iugement se fera et comment ceulx quy seront encoire viuantz sur la terre seront transformetz*, incipit, "Mais freres nous voluns que vous scaces que ceulx qui dorment quelz sont mortz ... Nous serons tous constituez deuant le siege iudicial"; f. 55, *Comment Christ viendra au iugement et coment il le commencera donant a vng chascun selon quil auera faict*, incipit, "Quant le filz de Ihome viendra en sa maieste et tous ses anges aueucq luy ... Mais que puissions ainssy viure que puissions

euitre lire de dieu et apres cest vie paruenir a la vie eternelle avec Jesu Christ que est benict
eternellement. AMEN”;

ff. 57v-60v, *Vne vraye confession des peches tres necessaire a vn chascun Chestien [sic] a son Salut*, incipit,
“Seigneur et pere celeste tres misericordieulx regarde ie te prie ... et vng vray Dieu a quy soit
honneur gloire louenge et domination es siecles des siecles. AMEN” ; [f. 61, blank but ruled].

The French contents of this elegant manuscript combine prayers with many of the basic tenets of Christian faith, offering, as expressed within the manuscript, “enseignementz tresutilz a tous chrestiens [teachings useful to all Christians]” (f. 18v). Not only the Articles of Faith and the Ten Commandments, but the Paternoster, the Seven Penitential Psalms, and the confessional formula with which the book concludes all offer guidance in the efficacious confession of sins and in living and praying according to Jesus’s teaching. In some significant respects, this manuscript’s contents mark a departure from those of medieval prayer books, particularly in the inclusion of numerous passages from the Bible. Alongside a translated extract from the popular late medieval devotional manual, *De imitatione Christi*, a series of biblical verses and some longer extracts from the Bible – all translated into French prose – offer the reader guidance grounded in the words and example of Jesus. None of these translations have been identified in published sources, and they deserve further study. Had they been completed, the miniatures would have offered a means of visually marking the major transitions between the larger texts within this book as well as images to accompany the rubricated Bible verses found beneath nearly all of them.

The vernacular character of this book, and particularly its inclusion of biblical passages in French, attests to the influence of humanist and reform-minded biblical translators in the early sixteenth century. In 1523, the French humanist and theologian Jacques Lefèvre d’Etaples, part of the reformist “Cenacle de Meaux,” had published a translation of the New Testament into French drawing chiefly on the Latin Vulgate but also on the Greek New Testament. Though it met with resistance from faculty of theology at the University of Paris who pushed to have it burned and though a 1525 parliamentary edict banned translations of the Bible in France, Lefèvre’s New Testament was a commercial success in the decades that followed. In this manuscript, the account of the Sermon on the Mount, a translation of Matthew 5-7, derives from a revision (see *Le Nouveau Testament*, 1552) of Lefèvre’s translation, an authorized version of which was printed in Antwerp in 1530. The versified French translations of the Psalms (the first of which was published in 1531) by Clément Marot, himself connected to the “Cenacle de Meaux,” met with similar censure and similar popular success.

This book was produced just before the outbreak of religious wars in France, triggered by a 1562 massacre of Huguenots in Northeastern France. Made at a time when the Protestant Huguenot movement was subject to persecution, but was nonetheless gaining ground, this book combines contents typical of medieval Books of Hours and Protestant books of prayer and instruction. Though it appears to have been produced for the use of a Catholic – as suggested, for example, by the calendar of saints and the presence, in the final text, of the confession, “Je nay pas obei aux superieulx et Prelatz [I did not obey superiors and prelates]” (f. 58v) – the prevalence of translated biblical verses and passages and of two short prayers written by Marot, who was eventually forced to flee France on account of his Protestant sympathies, suggests a reformist influence. Indeed, during the wars of religion that engulfed France in the second half of the sixteenth century, the opening words of the second of these two prayers, “Père éternel,” would become a means of designating Huguenots, who, unlike Catholics, favored Marot’s French prayer over the Latin prayer that had preceded it (see Bost, 1929).

The two poems of Marot included within this manuscript, verse prayers to be said before and after a meal, enjoyed popularity comparable to that of his Psalms; as noted above, they were included in the Genevan Psalter and in printed primers and other collections of prayers and religious instruction that were printed for avowedly Protestant audiences, as well as for readers who did not embrace this identity openly. Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard's study of "recueils de piété d'apparence hybride" (2009, p. 150) – prayer books and primers printed in Lyon during this period that encompass both orthodox and heterodox contents – reveals ways in which material geared for Protestant readers was sometimes downplayed or disguised in books that might thus pass as Catholic. A similarly close examination of this manuscript's contents alongside those of these printed books could offer further insight into the religious inclinations of its earliest readers.

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