

Ferial Psalter with Hymns and Other Offices; ANNIUS OF VITERBO, *Confessionale*  
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment  
Northern Italy (Liguria or Lombardy), dated 1487

*i* (contemporary parchment) + 241 folios on parchment, contemporary foliation in Arabic numerals in red ink, upper outer rectos leaving the first ten folios unnumbered: 1-25, [26], 27-122, [123], 124-224, 226-230, 233-234 (back pastedown foliated as 235), with gaps in foliation reflecting replaced or canceled leaves, modern foliation in pencil, lower outer rectos of the first ten folios, 1-10, complete (collation i<sup>4</sup> ii<sup>6</sup> iii<sup>10</sup> iv<sup>8</sup> v<sup>10</sup> [-8, +8; f. [26] has been tipped in on the stub of a canceled leaf] vi-xiv<sup>10</sup> xv<sup>10</sup> [-5 +5; f. [123] has been tipped in on the stub of a canceled leaf] xvi-xx<sup>10</sup> xxi<sup>8</sup> [+2 and 3; added bifolium ff. 180 and 181] xxii<sup>4</sup> xxiii-xxiv<sup>10</sup> xxv<sup>8</sup> xxvi<sup>6</sup> [-5; f. 225 canceled with no loss of text] xxvii<sup>10</sup> [-5 and 6; ff. 230-231 removed for use as front pastedown, with no loss of text; 9 and 10 (ff. 235-236) now back pastedowns], quires iii-xxi, xxiii-xxv have horizontal catchwords, lower center versos, many framed by pen decoration, ruled faintly in lead with full-length horizontal and vertical bounding lines, prickings in lower margins (justification 84-85 x 57 mm.), written in dark ink in an elegant Italian gothic rotunda hand in two different sizes on twenty-one long lines, red rubrics, guide letters for initials, one-line blue or red versal initials, two-line KL- initials in blue with red and purple pen decoration, two-line red or blue initials with contrasting pen decoration in purple or red marking the beginnings of Psalms and other texts (with initials of the same kind but lacking pen decoration on ff. [26] and [123]), three- to five-line red or blue initials with more elaborate contrasting pen decorations in the same colors marking major textual divisions, TWO ILLUMINATED INITIALS of five lines in mauve with white highlights, one with foliate infill (f. 1v) and one inhabited, with King David, crowned and bearded, shown in profile, half-length in a red robe, his hands clasped in prayer, on a blue background (f. 2), both initials on burnished gold grounds with green foliate extensions and burnished gold bezants, careful corrections by scribe (see especially ff. 120 and 132v-133), two leaves tipped in (ff. [26] and [123]), presumably to replace leaves with errors, some additional correction in a different hand (see f. 91), some fading of ink (see especially ff. 119 and 120v) with no loss of text, slight waterstaining in edges of margins, small smear on f. 60v, slight worming of first and final few folios, otherwise in excellent condition with clean, white margins. CONTEMPORARY NORTHERN ITALIAN BINDING of brown leather, blind-tooled and –stamped with several concentric rectangles formed from triple fillets and repeated patterns of circles and lozenges, on wooden boards, spine with three raised bands, traces of single fore-edge clasp (now missing) on both boards, pastedowns added later in a skillful repair, edges gilt and gauffered, some wear to edges and hinges of boards and spine, modern cloth-covered box. Dimensions 137 x 95 mm.

Impeccably preserved in an original binding, this deluxe illuminated Psalter is followed by a confessional manual that appears to be a unique survival of a text by Anniius of Viterbo. It offers a fascinating link between two colorful figures of the Italian Renaissance, a brilliant forger of antiquities (Annius of Viterbo) and one of his supporters, the doge and archbishop of Genoa (the dedicatee Paolo Fregoso). Copied during the author's lifetime, this beautiful volume may even have been presented as a gift from author to patron.

## PROVENANCE

1. Evidence of liturgical contents, script, and decoration is consistent with this book's production in Northern Italy in the final two decades of the fifteenth century, almost certainly produced in 1487, the year singled out on f. [1]v for the calculation of the dates of Easter and other moveable feasts. Certainly, the manuscript was completed

after the 1481 canonization of Berard of Carbio and his companions, Peter, Otho, Accursius, and Adjutus (16 January), as their feast is included in the Calendar.

This was very likely made for use in Genoa for a patron with a name beginning with "F." While the volume's Calendar includes saints venerated across different regions of Northern Italy, it features a particularly dense concentration of saints venerated in Genoa, including Torpes of Pisa (29 April), Valentine of Genoa (3 May), Syrus of Genoa (7 July), and Romulus of Genoa (13 October). And there is a second reason to suspect a Genoese connection. The final text, Annius of Viterbo's *Confessionale*, was written in Genoa for an important Genoese patron, Paolo Fregoso, very shortly before this book was produced (see below, in Text). Since the *Confessionale* does not appear to have circulated widely, this may also indicate that the book was commissioned for use in that city. One of the volume's prayers, possibly unique, includes the initial "F" where we might expect the placeholder "N" for *nomen* (or even the intended owner's name). Could it be that this manuscript preserves the presentation copy of the *Confessionale* and that the book was made for Paolo Fregoso himself?

The distinctly Northern Italian decorative style on display in the illuminated and pen-decorated initials also point to origins in Liguria, or in nearby Lombardy. The elaborately pen-flourished initials, executed with great grace and skill, that ornament almost every page resemble initials found in other fifteenth-century Northern Italian books, notably Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 332 (Lombardy, c. 1430); Les Enluminures, TM 815 (Lombardy, possibly Milan, c. 1430-1450); London, British Library, Harley MS 2986 (Northern Italy, possibly Genoa?, c. 1425-1475); and Les Enluminures, TM 629 (Venice, c. 1470). Moreover, the palette of the two illuminated initials, their delicate highlighting in white, their foliate extensions, and the bust-portrait of King David in the second initial are all consonant with Lombard book illumination of the fifteenth century, as reflected in the two Lombard examples above, as well as in the cuttings that make up London, British Library, Additional MS 18196, ff. 71-77 (Lombardy, c. 1490-1510), notably ff. 71-73.

2. An inscription on f. 234, "Mathei beati Marie Deitas benignæ dignare Pietas," written in a fifteenth-century humanist script, was likely added by an early owner of the book. A nearly identical inscription survives on the recto of the first page of a fifteenth-century copy of Dante's *Inferno* (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Zanetti 57), formerly part of the library of prominent Venetian Jacopo Contarini da San Samuele (d. 1595).
3. The small painting on parchment (95 x 38 mm.) pasted on the recto of the parchment flyleaf depicts an angel with a halo in gold leaf, and is probably a nineteenth- or early twentieth-century Neo-Gothic emulation of medieval style, added after the inside of the binding was reinforced with its current pastedowns (all of which were formerly foliated leaves within the same manuscript).
4. A twentieth-century printed slip pasted on the front pastedown, likely cut from a French catalogue, identifies this manuscript erroneously as an Evangeliary.
5. A small slip pasted on the back pastedown bears the numbers 18 and (circled) 10.

## TEXT

f. [1]v, [Directions for reading a facing table using the golden number and dominical letter for a given liturgical year] incipit, "*Ratio ad inueniendum pasca et septuagesima etc. ... M° cccclxxxvij Pro aureo numero vj*";

f. [2], Accompanying table giving the dates of Septuagesima Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Easter, and the feasts of Ascension and Pentecost, as well as the number of Sundays following Pentecost in different liturgical years;

f. [2]v, [Directions for using two facing tables to determine the dates of Carnival and Resurrection Sunday (i.e. Easter)] incipit, "*Ad inueniendum diem Carnispluij ... et littera .a. significat mensem aprilis*";

f. [3], Accompanying table giving the dates of Carnival for the years 1447 through 1541;

f. [3]v, Accompanying table giving the dates of Resurrection Sunday for the years 1447 through 1541; [f. [4]rv, blank];

ff. [5]-[10]v, Calendar combining many important Franciscan, Dominican, and Augustinian feast days (but lacking feasts central to each Order's liturgy), as well as a number of saints venerated in Northern Italy, particularly Genoa, including Torpes of Pisa (29 April), Valentine of Genoa (3 May), Syrus of Genoa (7 July), and Romulus of Genoa (13 October);

ff. 1-142v, Ferial Psalter, *Ordo psalterij secundum morem et consuetudinem romane curie feliciter incipit, Inuitatoria subscripta dicuntur singula singulis dominicis diebus a secunda dominica post epiphaniam usque ad septuagesimam et a kalendis octobris usque ad aduentum domini, Inuitatorium, incipit, "I. Venite exultemus domino. Iubilemus deo salutari nostro ... V. Domine exaudi orationem meam. R. Et clamor. Deinde dicitur oratio. Uisita*";

This Psalter presents the Psalms arranged according to their recitation in the Divine Office over the course of a week, here from Sunday Matins to Compline. Larger initials mark major divisions, including the first of several hymns for Matins (f. 1v), the hymn for Terce (f. 113), and Psalms 1 (f. 2; Sunday Matins), 38 (f. 49; Tuesday Matins), 52 (f. 59v; Wednesday Matins), 68 (f. 70v; Thursday Matins), 80 (f. 85v; Friday Matins), 97 (f. 96v; Saturday Matins), 109 (f. 121; Sunday Vespers), and 121 (f. 126; Tuesday Vespers).

It is clear from these divisions that this book was intended for secular rather than monastic use. As a Ferial Psalter, it also presents the unchanging texts of the Divine Office, the invitatories, hymns, canticles, antiphons, versicles, responsories, short readings, and prayers that accompany the chanting of these Psalms throughout the day.

ff. 143-163, Hymns, *Incipiunt hymni per totum annum. Dominica prima in aduentu domini. Ad vespervas hymnus, incipit, "COnditor alme syderum eterna lux credentium ... paradisum introire translati in requiem. Gloria et honor dep usque quo. Vt supra*";

Hymns, not noted, for the Temporale (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Passion Sunday, the octave of Easter to the feast of the Ascension, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, and Corpus Christi), the Sanctorale (the conversion of Paul, Peter's chair, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, Mary Magdalene, Peter's Chains, Transfiguration, Assumption, Michael, and All Saints), the Commons of Saints (apostles, a martyr, multiple martyrs, confessor, confessor who is not a pope, virgins), and for the dedication of a church.

ff. 163v-164v, *A feria .iiij. cinerum usque in cenam domini et nullo alio tempore: ante inchoationem[?] matutinarum absolute incipitur canticum graduum in feriali officio. Psalmi semper dicuntur sedendo. Orationes uero et uersi, flexis genibus, incipit, "Ps. Ad dominum cum tribularer ... Oratio. PRetende domine famulis et famulabus tuis dextram celestis auxiliij: ut te toto corde perquirant et que digne postulant consequi mereantur. Per christum dominum nostrum. R. Amen. Postea dicitur officium sancte marie";*

The Gradual Psalms (119-133) with versicles, responsories, and prayers to be said during Lent before Matins. The person who added contemporary foliation has given many cross-references in the margins in Arabic numerals to the folios where the same Psalms appear in the Psalter.

ff. 164v-172v, *Incipit ordo officij beate marie uirginis. Ad uesperas, incipit, "A. Dum esset rex in acubitu suo nardus mea dedit odorem suauiter ... Resurrexit sicut dixit alleluya. Ora pro nobis deum. Alleluya";*

Hours of the Virgin, use of Rome, with Vespers, Compline, Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, and None, followed by variants for weekdays, Advent, Christmas, and Easter. Cross-references in the margins to the folios where the same Psalms appear in the Psalter.

ff. 173-178v, *Incipit officium in agenda mortuorum. Ad uesperas absolute incipitur, incipit, "A. Placebo domino in regione uiuorum ... Ps. De profundis. Cum. Requiem eterna. V. A porta inferi etc. Vt supra. Oratio";*

Office of the Dead, use of Rome. Cross-references in the margins to the folios where the same Psalms appear in the Psalter.

ff. 178v-184, *Incipiunt septem psalmi penitentiales, incipit, "Antiphona. Ne reminiscaris. Psalmus. Domine in furore tuo arguas me ... V. Exaudiat nos omnipotens et misericors dominus. R. Amen";*

Seven Penitential Psalms, followed by the Litany. Cross-references in the margins to the folios where the same Psalms appear in the Psalter.

ff. 184-186, *Sequens antiphona dicitur ab octaua penthecostes usque ad natiuitatem beate marie uirginis, incipit, "Salue regina misericordie uita dulcedo et spes nostra salue ... In te domina speraui non confundar in eternum";*

Marian antiphons to be chanted throughout the year, followed by a Marian hymn.

ff. 186-187, *Si quis infrascriptos decem versus omni die deuote dixerit perire non poterit et diem obitus sui quarto die ante presciet, incipit, "O bone yhesu. ILumina oculos meos ne unquam obdormiam in morte ... Per christum dominum nostrum. Amen";*

The Seven Verses of Saint Bernard, expanded to ten (one of the standard seven is presented as two and two other verses have been added) and followed by versicles, responsories, and a prayer.

ff. 187v-188, *Oratio sancti anselmi uato[...?] deuota*, incipit, "DOmine deus meus si feci ut essem reus tuus ... Qui uiuis et regnas in unitate spiritus sancti deus. Per omnia secula seculorum. Amen";

A prayer attributed to Saint Anselm.

ff. 188-192, *Incipit officium sancte crucis. Ad matutinum*, incipit, "Versus. DOmine labia mea aperies ... ut qui pro me passus es amoris ardore sis mihi solatium in mortis agone. Amen";

Office of the Holy Cross.

f. 192rv, *Oratio dignissima in forma confessionis*, incipit, "Defende me domine per lignum et pretium iustissimi sanguinis tui ... et eternum gaudium cum omnibus sceptris tribuas per te yhesu christe. Amen";

We have not found this prayer attested elsewhere. As this was likely not used as widely as the other prayers in this volume, there are several facets of this prayer that may tell us something about this book's creation or use. Not only does it feature masculine forms, but where we might expect a placeholder "N" (for *nomen*, Latin for "name"), the initial "F" appears instead. The prominence of Franciscan saints in the prayer – notably Francis, Bernardino, and Clare – may indicate its use by a Franciscan or by someone close to the Order.

ff. 193-208v, *Incipiunt misse infra ebdomadam, Et primo missa de trinitate*, incipit, "IN nomine patris et filij et spiritus sancti ... *Euangelium secundum iohannem*. In principio erat uerbum etc. *ut supra sicut in missa de trinitate*";

Mass for each day of the week including the Mass of the Trinity for Sunday, the Mass of the Faithful Dead for Monday, the Mass of the Angels for Tuesday, the Mass for Sins on Wednesday, the Mass of the Holy Spirit for Thursday, the Mass of the Holy Cross for Friday, and the Mass of the Virgin for Saturday.

ff. 209-223v, *Confessionale Magister iohannis uiterbiensis elicium et questionibus disputatis de malo et ex secunda secunde beate Aquinis thome. Ad magnificum Capitaneum Fregosinum. De campo Frego*, incipit, "OMnis diligens confessio dicitur que consistit in tribus: uidelicet in contritione confessione et satisfactione ... sed omni die assuescere alicui bono opere ad perseuerandum in operibus sanctis. Amen"; [ff. 224rv, 226-230v, 233rv, blank but ruled; f. 234, blank but for later fifteenth-century inscription; f. 234v, blank but ruled].

This appears to be a unique copy of a heretofore unknown text, perhaps a presentation copy for the text's dedicatee. Identified in the rubric as the *Confessionale* of Joannes Annius Viterbiensis (better known as Giovanni Nanni or Annius of Viterbo), this short confessional manual is not mentioned in any of the literature on this author, and we have not been able to identify any other copies in circulation.

A Dominican scholar and historian, Anniius of Viterbo (c. 1432-1502) is best known as “the inventor of scientific forgery” (Stephens, 2013, p. 280). In his 1498 *Commentaria super opera diversorum auctorum de antiquitatibus loquentium* (*Commentaries on the Works of Various Authors Discussing Antiquity*), for example, Anniius brought together a collection of purportedly historical sources on his home city of Viterbo, sources ranging from authentic ones that he had adapted to total fabrications. The present text was almost certainly written much earlier in his career, which began with his joining the Dominican convent of Santa Maria in Gradi around 1448. He went on to study at Santa Maria Novella, in Florence, and he received his master’s in theology at Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, in Rome. In 1471 Anniius moved to Genoa. There he taught grammar and preached at the local Dominican convent, San Domenico, where he was appointed prior in 1474. In Genoa, Anniius enjoyed the patronage of Paolo Fregoso, also known as Paolo di Campofregoso (1427-1498), to whom the present text has been dedicated. Anniius’s career in Genoa ended in 1489, after his stance on the Immaculate Conception angered the Dominican hierarchy, at which time he moved back to Viterbo and embarked on his subsequent career as antiquarian and forger. In spite of his earlier reversals within the Order, however, he would eventually rise through the ranks to become Master of the Sacred Palace under Alexander VI (*seddit* 1492-1503).

Judging from the dedication of this confessional manual, Anniius must have written it during his time in Genoa and his association with Fregoso, who served both as Archbishop of Genoa (1453-1495) and three-time doge of Genoa (May 1462, 1463-1464, 1483-1488). In 1480 Fregoso took on two additional positions when he was appointed cardinal (a title he would hold until 1495) as well as admiral of a papal fleet, which fought alongside the fleet of Ferdinand I of Naples to take Otranto back from the Ottomans. Anniius’s dedication seems to have been written at the time of Fregoso’s appointment to the fleet or in the years following, as he refers to Fregoso as “magnificum capitaneum.” Thus, this text was likely written between 1480 and Fregoso’s expulsion from Genoa, in 1488.

Annius’s *Confessionale* was clearly intended for a penitent (Fregoso, presumably) preparing to confess his sins, rather than as a guide for priests administering the sacrament. Anniius addresses his reader in the second person and structures the text in a very practical, straightforward manner around three of the four parts of the sacrament: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Notably, the fourth part of the sacrament, absolution, is excluded from the text, probably because it is the province of the priest hearing confession rather than the penitent confessing sins. The confession section is by far the longest, encompassing a discussion of the seven deadly sins and the ten commandments. As indicated in the opening rubric, Anniius draws heavily on Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica* as a source.

With its emphasis on the experience of the penitent, not the confessor, this is an intriguing text to find at the back of a deluxe Ferial Psalter, accompanied by other texts – notably hymns, Penitential Psalms and Litany, and the Offices of the Virgin, the Dead, and the Cross – that play an important role in the recitation of the Divine Office. The distribution of Psalms in this book is evidence that it might have belonged to a friar or member of the secular clergy; this final text suggests strongly that the book was made for the private use of its owner, whether he was a member of a mendicant order or, more likely, an important lay or clerical patron – possibly Paolo Fregoso himself.



The chanting of the psalms lay at the heart of the Divine Office, the prayers said throughout the day and night by members of the secular clergy and religious orders at the offices of Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Each week the entire Psalter was recited during these services. Ferial Psalters (also called Liturgical Psalters or Choir Psalters) include the psalms, here copied in the order that they are recited during the Office rather than in biblical order, together with other texts chanted daily during the Office, including antiphons and hymns, thus providing a complete repertoire of the ordinary texts for the Office. With a few exceptions, this volume does not include the "proper" texts for the Office (texts that change according to the varying cycle of the liturgical year, the feasts of saints, and other liturgical occasions found in Antiphonals and Breviaries.)

Relatively small in size but rich in adornments, this was certainly a book made for an important patron's personal, private use. In light of its deluxe production and the absence of feasts that would definitively connect it with one of the mendicant orders, this manuscript (copied in accordance with secular rather than monastic liturgical custom) was quite probably made for a lay or clerical patron. It is tempting to speculate that this patron belonged to the circles of Annius of Viterbo or Paolo Fregoso – or, indeed, that it was Fregoso himself. Fregoso could be the intended referent of the initial "F," almost certainly indicating the name of the book's intended user in one of the volume's prayers. There is good reason, moreover, to believe the book was made for use in Genoa (see Provenance above). Furthermore, this book was produced within the decade in which it is most likely that Annius wrote his *Confessionale* – and while he enjoyed Fregoso's patronage. Since this text does not appear to have circulated widely, the present manuscript could certainly preserve a copy of Annius's original – or even the original itself. This handsome volume will certainly reward further study of its decoration and its contents.

## LITERATURE

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#### ONLINE RESOURCES

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