

**Carthusian Ordinarium for the Mass and Office**  
**In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper**  
**Southern France (Méounes-les-Montrieux), November 15, 1544**

*i (modern paper) + 96 + i (modern paper) folios on paper, watermark: a cross on a mount (unidentified), modern pagination in black ink, 1-187 (excluding 111, two unpaginated pages between pp. 105 and 106, last two leaves are unpaginated), complete (collation i-xii<sup>s</sup>), no catchwords or signatures, ruled in red ink (justification 116 x 69 mm.), written in brown ink in a gothic cursive bookhand in a single column on 25 lines, rubrics in red, 1- to 2-line initials in red, large decorative brackets in red that enclose the text on 4 to 6 lines, slight water damage on the first leaves, some stains and signs of use, otherwise in very good condition. Modern half binding in cream-colored parchment over pasteboards, marbled papers on covers, pastedowns and flyleaves, five raised bands on spine, in excellent condition. Dimensions 145 x 90 mm.*

This handbook for the Carthusian liturgy for new priests was copied at a Carthusian charterhouse in Southern France and is securely dated in the scribal colophon at the end of part one. It is a manuscript about the Mass and Divine Office, setting forth the rules that governed the complex liturgical life of a Carthusian monastery. The information it contains is thus very different than the contents of much more common liturgical manuscripts like Missals or Breviaries. How widely this text was disseminated within the Carthusian Order remains a question for further research.

## PROVENANCE

1. In the colophon on p. 136, the scribe gives the date of completion for the first text on November 15, 1544 and the place where he copied the manuscript: "Deo gracias hac die xv novembris 1544 per <Palmi?> in monte rivo." The date 1544 is also given on p. 94. The second text on pp. 140-187 was written soon thereafter, probably in the same year, as indicated by the homogeneity of the script, as well as of the codicological unit.

The charterhouse of Montrieux (in Latin, *mons rivus*), in Southern France, located in the commune of Méounes-les-Montrieux, north of Tolon, and about an hour away from Marseille, was the eighth house of the Carthusian Order, founded in 1137. The fortunes of the monastery varied through the years, suffering severely from the plague in 1348, the monks were expelled after the revolution in 1792, returned in c.1843, only to be exiled again in c. 1903, returning finally in 1928. Francesco Petrarca's brother, Gherardo, became a monk there in 1342. It is still an active monastery.

The Carthusian use of the manuscript, specified in the opening rubric, is also evident throughout the book; including, for example, on p. 94, instructions for Mass on the feast of St. Bruno of Cologne; on p. 97, a note about the *Credo* on the feast of St. Hugh of Lincoln, the twelfth-century French Carthusian monk who was made prior of Witham and later bishop of Lincoln.

2. On the front pastedown is the bookplate of Ludovic Froissart (d. 1977): "Ex-Libris L. Froissart" with a scene of a knight on horseback before a village and a stretch of land.
3. Modern booksellers's marks on the verso of the front flyleaf.

## TEXT

pp. 1-136, incipit, "*Incipit ordinarium in orationibus et non nullis occurrentibus in missis conventualibus et privatis in cartusia compilatum pro novis sacerdotibus ad pleniorum ipsorum informationem ... Et anniversarium perpetuum per totum ordine hoc est nomen suum scribendum in calendariis conventualibus domorum ordinis; Deo gracias hac die xv novembris 1544 per <Palmi?> in monte rino*"; [a later hand added, "Triginta et octo circiter annos ante novam Collectionum Statutorum ordinis"; pp. 137-139, blank];

pp. 140-187, *Incipiunt regule generales in officio divino observande secundum ordinem cartusiensium. Et primo, incipit, "Quando in tot anno ... In quo tempe dicuntur diebus dominicis tres prime lecciones. feria secunda secunde. feria nulla tercię";*

[Two unpaginated leaves, originally blank, following p. 187], List of contents, added later (perhaps at the same time as the pagination; in the nineteenth century?), indicating a selection of the most important feasts, Offices and parts of the Mass, found mainly on pp. 94-143. It begins with the most important feast, that of St. Bruno of Cologne, the founder of the Carthusian Order, canonized in 1514, "De festo S. Patris nostri Brunonis."

Carthusian Ordinarium for the Mass and Office. The text does not appear to simply restate information found in the Carthusian statutes related to the liturgy. It also differs from that of the later Carthusian Ordinarium printed in 1582, as part of the New Statutes (see discussion below). For example, the chapter concluding on p. 136 in our manuscript discusses the same topic as chapter 39, "De monachatus" (discussing Masses and Psalters said for the dead), of the 1582 Ordinarium (see pp. 135-137 in printed text), but the contents and wording differ.

The text in Bnf, nouv. acq. lat. 3237, copied c. 1520 in Italy, probably in Milan, and illuminated by Gian Giacomo Decio for the Carthusians at Pavia (Online Resources) is related to the text in our manuscript; the beginning of the text in both manuscripts is identical, although the BnF manuscript does not include the text on the Office, but instead includes actual Mass texts with music, not found in our manuscript. A detailed comparison between these two manuscripts, and the identification of additional copies of this text in manuscript, and perhaps in print, offer interesting avenues for further research.

The text in this manuscript begins, "In ordinarium in orationibus ... in missis conventualibus et privatis in cartusia" (Here begins the *ordinarium* to the prayers of the Carthusian Mass, both conventual and private). What is an "ordinarium"? The term ordinary, *ordinarium*, in liturgy has two meanings. It refers to the relatively invariable texts of the office regardless the day on which the service is celebrated. (Before 1570, the invariable parts of the Mass were the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei). The ordinary or *ordo* of the Mass also describes how and in what order liturgical texts and rituals are employed during the Mass. Here, it is used in this latter sense. It is not itself a liturgical manuscript like a Missal or Breviary that contain the texts sung and spoken during the Mass and Office. Modern liturgical scholars would probably

call it an "ordinal" (Lebigue; Online Resources). Our text specifies that it was intended to be a handbook for new priests, who must have found this manual a very helpful guide through the complexities of the liturgy.

The Carthusians lead a solitary, contemplative life in community, being one of the most austere religious orders with perpetual closure, almost absolute silence, frequent fasting, and complete abstinence of meat. The austere way of life is reflected in their sober liturgy. Bruno of Cologne and his companions founded the order in 1084 in their search for God in solitude in the Chartreuse Mountains. Initially they followed the Rule of St. Benedict, and for Mass they followed the use of Grenoble, as Bruno had been led to the Chartreuse by St. Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble. To achieve greater solitude, modifications were introduced into the monastic routine, prayers, and the Mass and Office. In 1127, Guido, the fifth Prior of the Chartreuse, wrote the "Consuetudines," the Customs. In 1259 the rule, known as the *Statuta Antiqua*, was promulgated, fixing the liturgical texts and rites; a third edition, the *Statuta Nova*, appeared in 1368. The Carthusian Statutes were updated again 1509 (*Tertia compilatio*), and in 1510, Johannes Amorbach printed an edition that included all the statutes to date (Hogg, 1989; Online Resources).

From the 1520s onwards a number of Carthusian houses were lost due to the Reformation. Our manuscript was made in the atmosphere of renewal and strengthening of the Church to meet this challenge, known as the Counter-Reformation. New Statutes, *Nova collectio statutorum*, were published in 1582 (Online Resources). A note in our manuscript makes reference to them: below the colophon giving the completion year of 1544 on p. 136, a later scribe wrote, "triginta et octo circiter annos ante novam collectionem statutorum ordinis" (about 38 years before the new statutes of the Order). The change in 1582 is especially interesting for understanding the context of our manuscript. Hitherto directions concerning the liturgy and the discipline had both been included in the statutes, but the new statutes divided these elements into two separate books. The life and government of the Order were described in the statutes, and all liturgical material was consigned to a separate book known as the *Ordinarium*, which describes all rites and liturgy of the Order. The text in our manuscript differs from the text of this later *Ordinarium*, but our manuscript should be seen as an early forerunner of this book.

## LITERATURE

Brogden, T. "The Carthusian liturgy," *Magnificat: A liturgical quarterly* 2:12 (1940), pp. 5-11.

Online,

<https://www.liturgicalartsjournal.com/2021/06/the-sources-and-shape-of-carthusian.html>

Clark, J. "Carthusian Legislation in the Sixteenth Century as reflected in the 'Chartae'," *Amo te, sacer ordo Carthusiensis*, ed. by F. Timmermans, F. Hendrickx and T. Gaens, Leuven, 2012, pp. 117-132.

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[http://www.cartusiana.org/sites/default/files/Clark\\_Carthusian%20legislation%20in%20the%2016th%20century.pdf](http://www.cartusiana.org/sites/default/files/Clark_Carthusian%20legislation%20in%20the%2016th%20century.pdf)

Harper, J. *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians*, Oxford, 1991.

Hogg, James. *The Evolution of the Carthusian Statutes from the Consuetudines Guigonis to the Tertia Compilatio*, Analecta Cartusiana 99, Salzburg, 1989, vols. 1-2.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Chartreuse de Montrieux

<http://www.chartreux.org/fr/maisons/montrieux/index.php>

Chartreuse de Notre-Dame de Montrieux le Jeune, Méounes les Montrieux

<http://randojp.free.fr/0-Diaporamas/Chapelles/Chapelles5.html>

Jean-Baptiste Lebigue, "Initiation aux manuscrits liturgiques"

<https://cel.archives-ouvertes.fr/cel-00194063/document>

Jean-Baptiste Lebigue, "Liturgical documents: French Ordinals," May, 2009

<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00390061/document>

Bnf, NAL 3237, copied c. 1520 in Italy, probably in Milan, and illuminated by Gian Giacomo Decio for the Carthusians at Pavia

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84528388/f4.item>

*Statuta ordinis cartusiensis*, ed. Gregor Reisch, Basel, Johann Amerbach, Johann Froben and Johann Petri, 1510 (VD 16, G-4071)

<http://dl.ub.uni-freiburg.de/diglit/statuta1510/0001>

*Ordinarium cartusiense, continens novae collectionis statutorum eiusdem ordinis partem primam . . .*, Paris, 1582

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=s6g5AAAAcAAJ&pg=GBS.PP2>

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