

Breviary (Augustinian Use)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper, with some musical notation

Northern Italy, Alessandria, 1469

ff. i (paper) + 160 + i on paper, watermarks (watermarks, Tête de boeuf, with a flower above, and triangular motif below; Briquet 14872, Brescia 1434-5, and 14872, Brescia, 1457-1460; cf. also Briquet 14878, Bavaria, 1468 and 1470, and Briquet, 14879, Brescia, 1470 and 1472; Piccard, online archives, 70284, no place, 1465), modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner, recto (collation, i-xvi⁴⁶), no catchwords or signatures, horizontal rules in ink, with single full-length vertical bounding lines in lead, (justification, 103-102 x 70 mm.), written below the top line in a running humanistic minuscule approaching cursive in twenty-three long lines, by as many as three scribes, with changes of hands as follows, ff. 1-137v, 137v-152, 152-160; f. 160v, was added in a slightly later hand, musical notation on a four-line staff, red rubrics, one- and two-line red initials, slight water stains, top, outer, margin, on the opening folios, ff. 121-136, bottom outer margin soiled through use, ff. 151-152, darkened, but overall in excellent condition with fine margins. Early binding, possibly original or sixteenth-century, of soft pasteboard covers on two hemp cords, which enter the covers from the outside of the spine, smooth spine, lettered "Commune sanctorum," front cover, "Preces pia," in good condition, with slight tear on spine, and some cracking in the gutter between the quires. Dimensions 153 x 109 mm.

This attractive, small-format, paper Breviary was copied in 1469 for the use of Iustinianus or Iustinus de Bezozero, an Augustinian friar from the convent of St. Martin's in Alessandria in northern Italy. Brother Iustinianus was probably also the manuscript's main scribe. The unpublished readings for the Office of Nicholas of Tolentino (canonized in 1446) deserve further study, especially since they are here attributed to a certain "famous poet," Mafeo de Vechio (Maffeo Vegio).

PROVENANCE

1. The manuscript concludes on f. 160, "Frater Iustinianus de bezozero. 1469 die 16 decembris," and includes a contemporary ex-libris note on f. 1, "Sancti Martini de Alexandria ad vsum fratris Iustini de bizozero, fr. b. d. I. V. G." Clearly, the manuscript was copied in 1469 for, and perhaps by, Brother Justinianus, who was a friar at the convent of St. Martin's in Alessandria in Northern Italy in Piedmont. Bizzozero was a proper name found in northern Italy at this time (see Ulysse Chevalier. *Répertoire des sources historiques du moyen âge*, Paris, A. Picard, 1894-1907, listing two fifteenth-century clerics from Milan with this last name). The watermarks and script support an origin in northern Italy. The manuscript includes Offices for Nicholas of Tolentino, O.E.S.A., canonized in 1446, and the Transfiguration, generally observed from 1457, confirming that 1469 can be accepted as the date of the manuscript.

The text includes numerous feasts observed by the Augustinian Hermits: the calendar includes Paul the first Hermit, 10 January, William the Great, 10 February, translation of Augustine, 28 February, translation of Monica, 9 April, Monica, 4 May, conversion of Augustine, 5 May, Nicholas of Tolentino, 10 September, and the translation of Augustine, 11 October; on f. 67, Augustine is called "our most holy father"; the litany includes Augustine ("pater") and Nicholas of Tolentino.

The Augustinian House of St. Martin's in Alessandria dates from an earlier college of Canons that became an Augustinian foundation in 1264; it reached the peak of its influence and importance in the fifteenth century; see Gasparolo, 1898, pp. 7-30.

2. Belonged to Harry A. Walton Jr. of Covington, Virginia; his manuscript A-8 (stamp in purple ink, inside front cover); see C. U. Faye and W. H. Bond. *Supplement to the Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, New York, The Bibliographical Society, 1962, pp. 518).

TEXT

ff. 1-9v, Calendar with major feasts in red, including Paul, the first hermit, in red, 10 January; Anthony Abbot, in red, 17 January; William the Great, in red, 10 February; Faustinus and Jovita, 15 February; translation of Augustine, in red, 28 February; Thomas Aquinas, 7 March; translation of Monica, in red, 9 April; Monica, in red, 4 May; added in black, "Gotardi," 4 May; conversion of Augustine, in red, 5 May; Visitation, in red, 2 July; Marina, 17 July; Mary Magdalene, in red, 22 July; Festum nivis, in red, 5 August; Transfiguration, in red, possibly added, 6 August; Simplicianus, archbishop of Milan, in red, usually 13 August, here on 14 August; Nicholas of Tolentino, in red, 10 September; translation of Augustine, in red, 11 October; Gallus, 16 October (the calendar generally follows the calendar of the Papal Court printed in van Dijk, *SMRL*, pp. 365-384, cited below, with the addition of feasts pertinent to the Augustinian order, and later feasts).

ff. 10-47v, Common of Saints from one apostle to a virgin not a martyr; concluding f. 40v, with the Dedication of a Church, followed by the changed office on major feasts of the Temporal from Easter to Pentecost;

ff. 47v-86v, Offices beginning with Sundays in Advent, f. 50v, Nativity of Mary, f. 53v, Conception of the Mary, f. 55v, Visitation, f. 58, Festum nivis, f. 60, Transfiguration, f. 67, "*In festo sanctissimi patris nostri Augustini*," f. 72, Monica, "*matris sancti patris nostri Augustini*," f. 76, Nicholas of Tolentino, lessons begin f. 77v, incipit, "*Nicolaus ex piceno ortus fuit ex opido quod sancti angeli uocatum est ...*," ending, f. 86v, "*... vir nicolaus tot et tanta egit opera. Laudamus extollimus et benedicamus qui est magnus et potens et admirabilis. Per omnia secula seculorum, Amen. Explicit ystoria vel legenda beatissimi nicolay de tollentio ordinis fratrum beremitarum sancti augustini abbreviata per mafeum de uechiis poetarum et rethoricum famosissimum*";

ff. 86v-122v, Ferial Psalter with hymns (not noted), antiphons, versicles, responses, and prayers (not in biblical order);

ff. 123-128v, Seven Penitential Psalms and Litany, including "Pater Augustini," and Nicholas of Tolentino;

ff. 129-137, Office of the Dead, use of Rome (see Ottosen, 1993, pp. 134-135, and 269-273), followed by Psalms;

ff. 137-149v, Noted texts for funerals, followed by noted texts for Holy Week, including the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the Prayer of Jeremiah, and "Ierusalem, ierusalem convertere ...";

ff. 149v-152, Daily offices for Prime, Sext, and None, ending with readings in honor of the Virgin;

ff. 152-160, Hymns, not noted, for the major feasts of the Temporal, concluding with Trinity Sunday;

f. 160, Prayer to the Virgin, incipit, "Mater aue christi sanctissima uirgo maria, partu post partum sicut et ante manens ... Ne peream christo funde maria preces. [below in a smaller script:] Frater iustinianus de bezozero. 1469. die 16 decembris";

f. 160v, Noted texts from the Passion, added in slightly later hand, "Hely, Hely lamazabatam..."

Breviaries include the text of the Divine Office, prayers said throughout the day and night by members of religious orders at the offices of Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. The texts included here do not constitute the complete prayers needed to say the Office, but are rather a selection, including a calendar, a Psalter (arranged according to the order of the Office, rather than in biblical order), and offices for some of the most important feasts of the liturgical year, the Office of the Dead, and an interesting section of noted texts for funerals and Holy Week. The manuscript was made for the use of brother Iustinianus of Bezozero, who was likely also the main scribe, and it is thus of particular interest to see what texts he selected.

The readings for the office of Nicholas of Tolentino, ff. 77v-86v, an Augustinian saint canonized in 1446, shortly before this manuscript was copied, are of special interest, since they are here described as an abbreviation made by a certain Mafeo de Uechio, the "very famous poet and rhetorician," according to this manuscript. Maffeo Vegio (1406/7-1458) was a churchman, humanist, poet and educator. Born in Lodi of distinguished parents, he studied at the University of Pavia. He is known today chiefly for his poetry, especially his continuation of Virgil, but he also served as secretary of Papal Briefs, entered the priesthood, and ultimately the Augustinian Order, and wrote a number of religious works, including a life of Bernardinus of Siena.

The office for Nicholas of Tolentino is taken from his *Vita et officium beati Nicolai Tollentinatis* (the text is found among other writings by Maffeo in BAV, Ottob. Lat. 1253, but without an attribution; see Frazier, 2005; another copy exists in Berlin, SB Theol. Lat. qu. 257, ff. 117-119, a manuscript containing a number of theological texts of interest to the Augustinians, also from a House of Augustinian Friars in northern Italy, c. 1460, without an attribution, and possibly with a variant ending). It is very unusual to have an attribution of this sort in a Breviary (and this may be one of the only explicit attributions of the text to Maffeo Vegio). This text was not recorded in the *Bibliotheca hagiographica latina*, and it is not one of the well-known lives of the saint; see Henry Fros, "Inédits non recensés dans la BHL," *Analecta Bollandiana* 102 (1984), p. 365, and Gerard Achten, *Die Theologischen Lateinischen Handschriften in Quarto der Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin*, Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 1979, pp. 188-189. This text certainly deserves further study.

This Breviary was made for Augustinian use. The roots of the Hermits of St. Augustine (now known as the Augustinian Friars) go back to a number eremitical groups in Italy in the twelfth century, but the Order adopted a mendicant lifestyle in the thirteenth century. After the approval of their constitutions by Pope Alexander IV in 1256, the Order grew quickly and founded many houses throughout Europe. Throughout the later Middle Ages, they were known for their learning. The Augustinians followed the liturgy of the Papal Court, first used and popularized by the Franciscans, as evident in the Calendar and Office of Dead included in this manuscript.

LITERATURE

Battifol, P. *History of the Roman Breviary*, London and New York, 1898.

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Ottosen, Knud. *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead*, Aarhus, 1993.

Salmon, Pierre. *The Breviary through the Centuries*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1962.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Briquet Online (Kommission für Schrift- und Buchwesen des Mittelalters der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften)
http://www.ksbm.oeaw.ac.at/_scripts/php/briquet.php

Piccard Online
<http://www.piccard-online.de/ergebnis1.php>

The Augustinian Hermits
www.newadvent.org/cathen/07281a.htm (Catholic Encyclopedia, "Hermits of St. Augustine")

and www.augnet.org (Order of St. Augustine, with extensive history,
<http://augnet.org/default.asp?ipageid=554>)

Associazione Storico-culturale S. Agostino
<http://www.cassiciaco.it/ITA/Default.htm>

Introduction to liturgical manuscripts:

"Celebrating the Liturgy's Books"

www.columbia.edu/itc/music/manuscripts

The History of the Breviary

www.newadvent.org/cathen/02768b.htm (Catholic Encyclopedia, "Breviary")

"The Roman Breviary" (text of modern Roman Breviary in Latin and English, with historical introduction)

www.breviary.net

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