

Portable Breviary (Augustinian Use)

In Latin, manuscript on parchment

Northern France, Paris?, c. 1460-80

Parchment (thin and well-prepared), i (parchment) + 95 folios, modern foliation in pencil, top, outer corner, misfoliated with an unnumbered leaf after f. 30, (collation i^s ii⁴ (ff. 9-12v, bound out of order) iii^s iv^s (-6, following f. 25, with loss of text) v^s (4, unnumbered leaf after f. 30; -6, after f. 31) vi-viii^s ix^s (-8, following f. 64, with loss of text) x^s (-1, before f. 65, with loss of text) xi-xii^s xiii^s (-8, following f. 94, with loss of text), horizontal catchword, partly trimmed, f. 27v, no signatures, written below the top line in a gothic bookhand in two columns, thirty-two lines, ruled lightly in ink (?), with the top two and sometimes the bottom two horizontal rules full across, single full-length vertical bounding lines, (justification 107-104 x 73-71 mm.), TWO ILLUMINATED INITIALS, ff. 6v and 18, 4- to 6-line pink and blue initials on square polished gold grounds, edged with black, infilled with vine and leaf tendrils in pink and blue, with touches of green, and with a bar border in pink, blue and gold, extending from the initial, now mostly trimmed away, offset on f. 7, suggests border once continued into a three-quarter border with ivy-leaf decoration, three 4- to 6-line parted red and blue puzzle initials, ff. 41, 42 and 46, with red and blue pen decoration, countless 2-line initials, alternately red and blue, with pen decoration in the opposite color, 1-line initials, alternately red and blue, red rubrics, liturgical directions underlined in red, some majuscules within the text filled with yellow wash. Some sections of the manuscript are now missing and one quire is bound out of order (see below), the three outer margins of the leaves with painted initials have been trimmed, leaving text and initial intact, but removing the border decoration, otherwise in very good condition. Bound in modern brown velvet, gilt edges. Dimensions 150 x 104 mm.

Only fragments of this Augustinian Breviary are preserved here. Included are parts of the Psalter, Hymns, parts of the Common of Saints, and the Office of the Dead and Hours of the Virgin. Originally it probably also included a calendar, and Offices for the Year, arranged according to the Temporale and Sanctorale. The two remaining illuminated initials indicate that this was likely once an illuminated manuscript of considerable elegance.

PROVENANCE

1. Liturgical evidence and the style of the decoration suggests that this manuscript was copied in northern France, possibly Paris, c. 1460-80; it includes the feast of the Transfiguration, made mandatory for the whole Church in 1457. Although it is dangerous to argue from negative evidence, the absence of Nicolas of Tolentino (canonized 1446) from the litany tends to support a date in the third quarter of the century. Made for the use of Augustinian Hermits; St. Augustine is included twice in the litany (the second time as referred to as "pater"); litany also includes St. Paul the First Hermit and Augustine's mother, St. Monica.
2. Dealers notes in three hands, back pastedown.

TEXT

ff. 1-50, Psalter in biblical order with liturgical directions, antiphons, responsories, hymns (not noted) and collects, now bound out of order and incomplete; the second quire, ff. 9-12v, includes Psalms 43-51 (from Tuesdays at Matins), beginning and ending imperfectly; quire one,

ff. 1-8v, with Psalms 54-66 (from Wednesdays at Matins), and Psalm 68, f. 6v, the beginning of Thursdays at Matins, marked by an illuminated initial, concludes with Psalm 72:9, which is then continued in quire three, f. 13; missing leaves following ff. 26 and 31 doubtless once included illuminated initials for Psalms 97 (Saturday at Matins) and 109 (Vespers, feria i); concludes with canticles;

ff. 50v-52, Litany including Augustine twice, Benedict, Paul the first Hermit, Francis, Anthony, Dominic, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt and Monica; prayers which follow use masculine forms;

ff. 52v-62v, Hymns, not noted, for the Temporale and Sanctorale (both rather brief); Temporale begins with Advent and continues through Corpus Christi; Sanctorale begins with the Conversion of Paul and concludes with Katherine, followed by the Dedication of a Church and Augustine;

ff. 62v-64v, *De specialibus antiphonis laudum que ponuntur ante nativitatem domini fiat sicut in subscriptis tabula continetur*, ... [Parisian tables of ferial antiphons before Christmas; see van Dijk, 1963, 401-408]; followed by benedictions, ending imperfectly;

ff. 65-85v, Common of Saints, beginning imperfectly;

ff. 86-89, Office of the Dead, use of Rome;

ff. 89-95, Hours of the Virgin, use of Rome, ending imperfectly.

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. This Breviary was made for Augustinian use; the constitutions of the Augustinian hermits were approved in 1256 by Pope Alexander IV. The Augustinians followed the liturgy of the Papal Court, first used and popularized by the Franciscans. Although it survives in a fragmentary state, and most of its decoration has been removed, it must have been a very fine illuminated manuscript from Northern France, possibly Paris.

ILLUMINATION

Two illuminated initials, ff. 6v and 18, marking the beginning of the Psalms for Thursdays and Fridays at Matins, respectively (Psalms 68 and 80). The style of the initials suggests the manuscript was decorated in Northern France, probably Paris, in the third quarter of the fifteenth century; offsets on f. 7 and ff. 31v and 25v (folios before leaves which are now missing) suggest the style of the borders consisted of small gold balls or ivy leaves set into black vine tendrils; compare the initials and borders of British Library, Burney MS 209, copied in 1463, probably in Paris, or the Book of Hours, British Library, Sloane MS 2726, Northern France, c. 1460-80 (see "The British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts" <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts>).

The style of the pen decoration includes boxes around the initials with scalloped motifs and wispy pen tendrils often terminating in straight lines and with tiny circles or dots and squiggles; very similar initials are found in British Library, Landsdowne MS 450, a Missal from Paris, c. 1460-80 (see online catalogue, cited above).

LITERATURE

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

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

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

van Dijk, S.J.P., ed. *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy: The Ordinals of Haymo of Faversham and Related Documents, 1243-1307*, 2 vols. Leiden, 1963.

van Dijk, S. J. P. and J. Hazelden Walker. *The Origins of the Roman Liturgy. The Liturgy of the Papal Court and the Franciscan Order in the Thirteenth Century*, Westminster, Maryland, 1960.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The Augustinian Hermits

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07281a.htm> (Catholic Encyclopedia, "Hermits of St. Augustine)

and <http://www.augnet.org> (Order of St. Augustine, with extensive history)

Introduction to liturgical manuscripts:

"Celebrating the Liturgy's Books"

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/music/manuscripts>

The History of the Breviary

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

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

<http://www.breviary.net>

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