

## Books for Priests

More manuscripts have come down to us from the Middle Ages than anything else, but the most visible survivals of the period are the parish churches. The rural landscape of Europe is still dotted with towers, steeples and onion-shaped domes, and it is easy to picture the old arrangement of village houses clustered around a parish church. Anyone entering one of these churches today will see many books: a shelf of hymnbooks by the door, prayerbooks and perhaps a rack of general Christian literature. There may be guidebooks to the building and parish newspapers. By the chancel steps there will probably be a lectern with a large Bible opened for the daily reading. Modern church pews have a ledge where members of the congregation place their books to participate in the service. Books are very visible in churches. In the Middle Ages it would certainly have been different. There were no pews (people usually stood or sat on the floor), and there would probably have been no books on view. The priest read the Mass in Latin from a manuscript placed on the altar, and the choir chanted their part of the daily office from a volume visible only to them. Members of the congregation were not expected to join in the singing; some might have brought their Books of Hours to help ease themselves into a suitable frame of mind, but the services were conducted by the priests.

The local priest was often a man of some status in the village, usually moderately well educated and reasonably articulate. He supervised the spiritual life of the parishioners: he preached the Christian faith, taught reading and writing, visited the sick, prayed in time of tribulation and led the services of thanksgiving, he heard confessions, conducted baptisms, marriages, funerals and burials, and maintained the constant round of liturgical worship.

Most medieval priests probably had a number of manuscripts. The most important were used regularly in church. It is a paradox that, because of the obsolescence of service-books, many liturgical fragments now survive. A Breviary goes out of date quite quickly: as new festivals are introduced and liturgical practices are modified, the old book is discarded. Pages can work loose and tend to fall out of manuscripts handled frequently, and the whole volume becomes unusable and is laid aside. The Reformation caused the disposal of vast numbers of obsolete Romish service-books. Because of

the wear and tear to which liturgical books are subject, they had usually been written on vellum rather than on paper, and discarded sheets of second-hand vellum were always useful. Leaves from medieval service-books were reused as flyleaves and to strengthen the sewing in sixteenth-century bookbindings, and as folders for documents, for patching windows, lining walls, covering jam jars and other domestic uses, and single leaves from medieval Missals, Breviaries and liturgical music manuscripts are really quite common. This chapter will examine these manuscripts, and consider how the priest used them.

First of all, it should be remembered that the church year is based on two simultaneous cycles of services. The first is the Temporal, or Proper of the Time, which observes Sundays and festivals commemorating the life of Christ. It opens with the first Sunday in Advent (the Sunday closest to 30 November) and continues with Christmas (including Epiphany, the Twelfth Day of Christmas), Lent, Paschal Time (from Easter to Ascension eve), and the season of the Ascension (which includes Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, and the Sundays after Pentecost). Christmas, of course, is a fixed feast and is always celebrated on 25 December, whether it is a Sunday or not. Easter, however, falls on the Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox and it varies considerably, thus changing the dates of other feasts calculated from Easter, such as Ascension Day, which is forty days later, and Pentecost, which is seven weeks after Easter. These are movable feasts. The second quite distinct cycle of the church year is the Sanctoral, or Proper of the Saints. This celebrates the feast days of saints, including those of the Virgin Mary, and it opens with St. Andrew's day (30 November). Some saint's name could be assigned to every day of the calendar year. Local observances varied from place to place, and the calendars in liturgical manuscripts classified or 'graded' saints' days according to the importance to be given to them: ordinary days, important or *semi-duplex*, and of

191 Utrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit MS. 402, f. 180r; Missal, northern Netherlands, mid-fifteenth century.

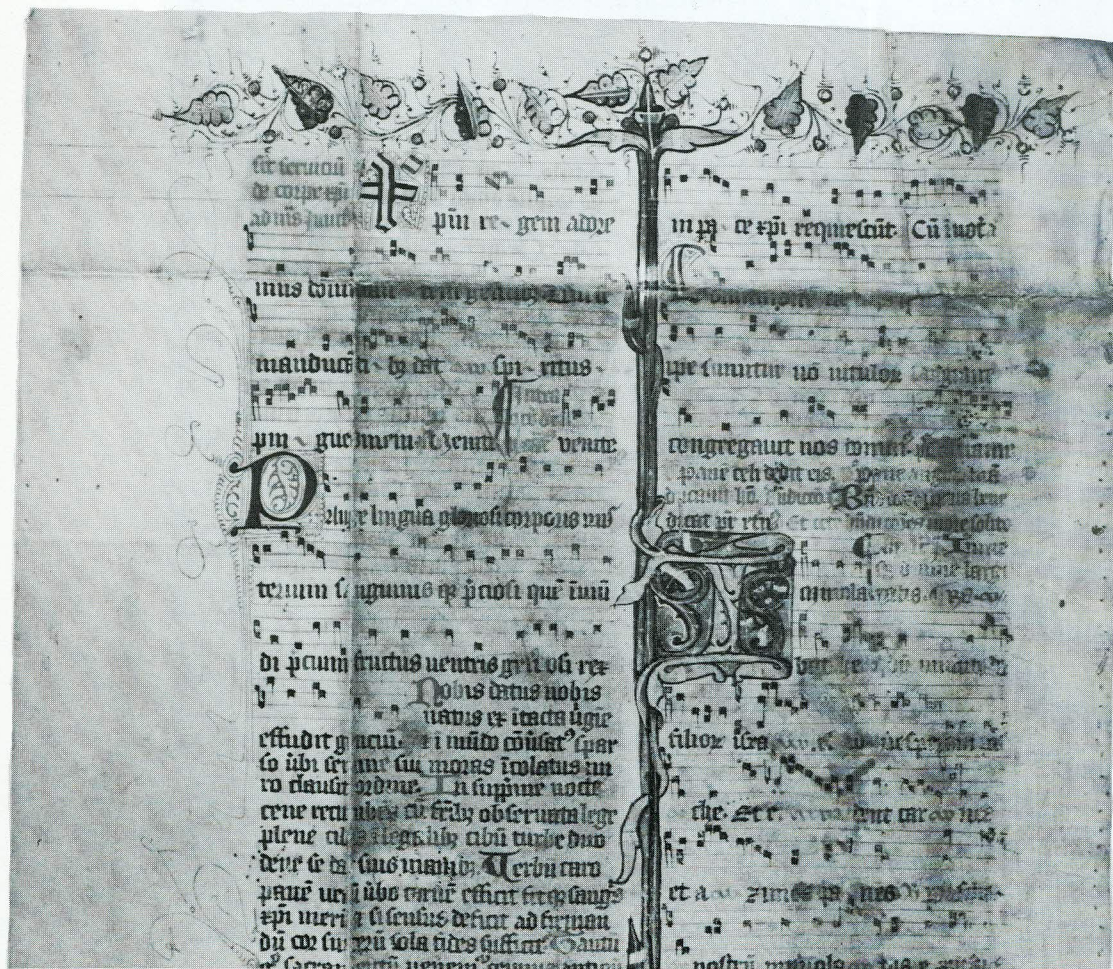
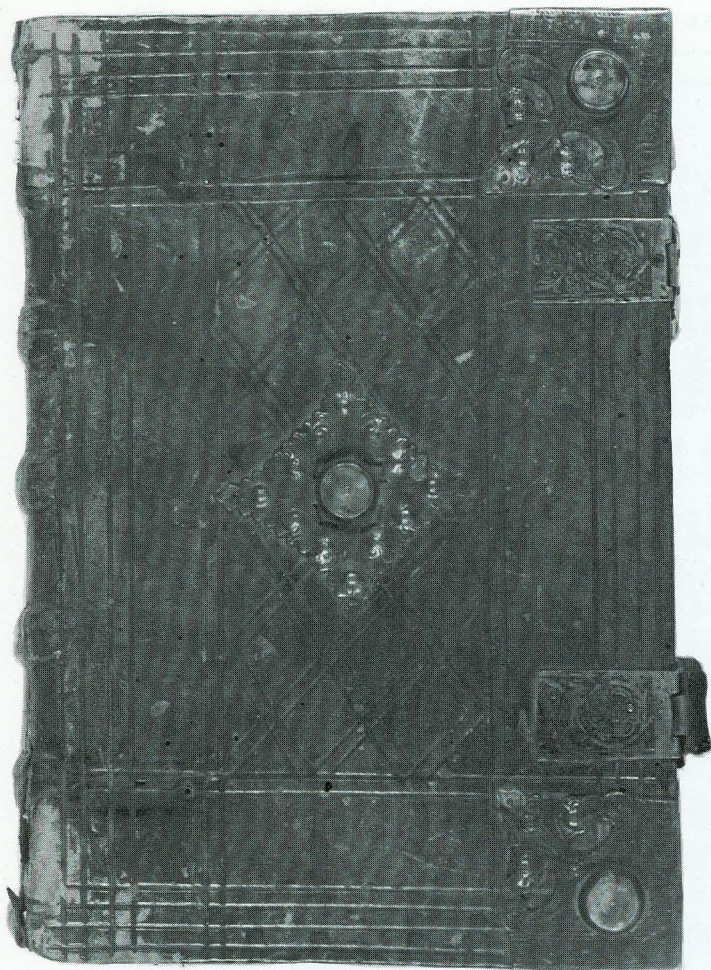
*The opening leaf of the Canon of the Mass in this Dutch Missal shows a priest reading from a manuscript on the altar as an acolyte stands behind with a candle.*



**S** igitur clemen-  
 tissime pater per  
 ihesum xpm fili-  
 um tui domini  
 nostri supplices  
 rogamus ac pe-  
 temus. uti accep-  
 ta habeas et be-  
 nedicas hec **+**  
 dona. hec **+** mu-  
 nera. hec sca **+**  
 sacrificia libata.

In primis que ti-  
 bi offerimus pro  
 ecclesia tua sacra  
 catholica quam  
 pacificare custodi-  
 re. adunare et re-  
 gere digneris. in  
 toto orbe terrarum  
 una cu famulo  
 tuo papa nostro.  
**R.** et antistite nro.  
**R.** et rege nostro.  
**R.** et omnibus  
 orthodoxis. atq  
 catholice et apos-  
 tolice fidei cultori-

**M** bus. **+**  
**M**emento



192 (ABOVE LEFT)  
Oxford, Bodleian  
Library MS. Lat. liturg. d. 11,  
upper cover of binding;  
Missal, Bohemia, mid-  
fourteenth century.

The manuscript has an inscription  
of Johannes, subdean and rector of  
the church of Marsovice, near  
Prague, in 1348.

193 (ABOVE) New York,  
Pierpont Morgan Library  
M. 629, lower cover of  
binding; Pseudo-  
Bonaventura, *Speculum Beate  
Marie Virginis*, etc.,  
Schwäbisch-Gmünd, c. 1470.

This manuscript of theological  
texts and sermons was written out  
by Bartholomeus Scherenbach,  
parish priest at Schwäbisch-  
Gmünd, for his own use. It was  
bound by another parish priest,  
Johannes Richenbach, of  
Geislingen (about 20 miles north-  
west of Ulm), who has stamped  
his name around the binding.

exceptional importance or *totum duplex*. The greatest feasts of the Sanctoral, like the Annunciation on 25 March and Michaelmas on 29 September, are ranked with Christmas Day and Trinity Sunday in the Temporal among the most honoured days of the religious year.

The Sanctoral and the Temporal were kept quite distinct in medieval service-books and sometimes even formed separate volumes. A medieval priest would not confuse them. It should be quite straightforward, in examining a page from a liturgical manuscript, to assign it to one or the other. The Temporal will have the services with headings such as *Dom. ii in xl.* (second Sunday in Lent – or *Quadragesima* in Latin) and *Dom. xiii post Pent.* (thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost), but the Sanctoral will refer to saints' names, *Sci. Hilarii epi. et conf.*, St. Hilary (14 January), *Decoll. sci. Joh. bapt.*, the Beheading of St. John the Baptist (29 August), and so on.

An even more fundamental distinction in the services of the late medieval church is between the Mass and the daily offices. These were completely different in function and in form. The Mass is the communion service or Eucharist, one of the most solemn and important Sacraments of the Church, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper and consisting of consecrating

and partaking of the bread and wine which represent the Body and Blood of Christ. It was celebrated at the altar, and its service-book was the Missal. The Mass is not to be confused with the daily services performed in the choir: Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. We discussed the shortened versions of these offices in the chapter on Books of Hours. They are not sacramental services, but are basically prayers and anthems in honour and praise of Christ and the saints. Their service-book was the Breviary. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, antiquarians used to call any medieval liturgical manuscript a 'Missal' (be cautious therefore of titles added on the spines of manuscripts), and even now cataloguers sometimes confuse Breviaries and Missals. To the medieval mind, this would be unthinkable. The Mass is on an altogether different level from the eight offices, and the words of the service were in quite distinct manuscripts.

Having distinguished the Temporal from the Sanctoral and the Missal from the Breviary, one can see how these would slot in together throughout the church year. On an important feast day in the Temporal or Sanctoral, the priest would celebrate Mass at the altar. Further down in his church he

195 London, British Library, Add.ms. 30337, detail; Exultet Roll, southern Italy, twelfth century.

*Exultet rolls are one of the rarest and most remarkable classes of liturgical manuscript, typical of south-western Italy. They were illuminated scrolls for the chants used on Easter Eve for the service of consecrating the Paschal candle. As the deacon recited the text, unfurling the scroll as he went, so the part that he had read would hang upside-down unrolled in view of the congregation. The text and pictures, therefore, faced opposite ways, the script for use by the clergy and the illustrations for the admiration of their audience.*



194 (OPPOSITE) London, Sotheby's, 26 November 1985, lot 2, detail; leaf from a large noted Breviary, England, early fifteenth century.

*The leaf shows part of Matins on the feast of Corpus Christi. The manuscript was no doubt discarded at the Reformation and this fragment survived as a wrapper around the outside of a bookbinding.*

would usually also recite two or more of the offices, at least Matins and Vespers. The basic shape of these services would remain the same throughout the year but could be adapted according to the progress of the Temporal and the coincidence with the feasts in the Sanctoral. Special prayers could be inserted for the day appropriate within each cycle. Thus, for example, St. Mark's day (25 April) might one year happen to be on the second Sunday after Easter, but in the next year on the Tuesday after the third Sunday after Easter. The liturgy would therefore be different. In this way, the round of services, though fundamentally the same year after year, was capable of considerable variation.

Let us now suppose we are examining a manuscript Missal. A few moments glancing at the rubrics will confirm that it is indeed a Missal, not a Breviary, as it includes headings like *Introitus*, *Offertorium*, *Secreta*, *Communio* and *Postcommunio*, which would not be found in a Breviary. (A Breviary, by contrast, would have headings such as *Invitatorium*, *Hymnus*, *In primo nocturno*, *Lectio i*, *Lectio ii*, *Lectio iii*, *In secundo nocturno*.) The Missal will probably open with a Calendar. It is then likely to contain the Temporal (starting with the Introit, or opening words, 'Ad te levavi animam meam' for the First Sunday in Advent), consisting of the words in each Mass, which vary from day to day: the Introit (sung), the collect or prayer for the day, the appropriate readings from the New Testament Epistles and from the Gospels (with a sung Gradual verse between them), the Offertory or scriptural quotation read or sung before the collection, and the Secret, which is read quietly after the offerings have been received, with the communion verse from the Bible and a short prayer used after the communion. These are all quite short. The Masses itemized in the Temporal repeat these sub-headings over and over again as the section runs through the whole church year from the beginning of Advent to the last of the many Sundays after Pentecost.

The Missal will then have the central core of the Mass itself, more or less in the middle of the volume. This will be the most thumbed section in a manuscript. It is the unchanging part which the priest read at every Mass, inserting the daily variations where appropriate. There will be some short prayers and the Common Preface ('Vere dignum et justum est') and the Canon of the Mass ('Te igitur clementissime pater'; Pls. 191 and 197) and the solemn words of consecration followed by the communion itself. It was sometimes written out in a larger script, perhaps because the priest used both hands for the acts of consecration and would at this point leave the manuscript open on the altar or hand it to an acolyte with the result that he now needed to read it from a greater distance than if he held the book himself (Pl. 201).

The script will then return to the smaller size for the beginning of the Sanctoral which, in the manner of the Temporal just described, gives the variable sections of the Mass for saints' days of the whole year. This takes up most of the rest of the volume. It will be followed by the Common, comprising Masses which can be used in honour of saints not included by name: for an apostle, a confessor bishop, a virgin martyr, several virgins, and so on. If an officiating priest wanted to celebrate a Mass for a local saint not named in the

Sanctoral, he would select the appropriate category from the Common. Finally, a manuscript Missal usually concludes with special sections of votive Masses (against the temptations of the flesh, for travellers, for rain, for good weather, and others for similar special occasions) and probably the Mass for the Dead.

This is a very brief summary, and of course manuscripts differed from each other in their exact contents. The Temporal, like a Book of Hours, might vary according to the liturgical 'use' of a diocese or region. Feasts for different saints followed local veneration. Are Masses for rain rarer in Missals from England than from Italy? Almost certainly. The most solemn part, it must be stressed again, is the Canon of the Mass. It never varied. This is the page where a typical late medieval Missal will now usually fall open of its own accord, partly because the priest needed to read this page every time he used the book and partly because it has the most elaborate illumination in the manuscript and generations of admiring bibliophiles will have sought out this opening first of all. Do not be ashamed to be among them. There will generally be one or even two full-page miniatures. We see the Crucifixion often preceded by a painting of Christ in majesty enthroned in glory between symbols of the Evangelists or presiding over the court of heaven. Often these are splendid pictures, and in the fifteenth century the Crucifixion is sometimes shown with all the crowds and pageantry of a state occasion.

As a generalization (with notable exceptions, like all generalizations), manuscript Missals are not elaborately illustrated. The Canon miniatures are normally the only large pictures in the book. Their subjects symbolize the text: the Crucifixion, the actual sacrifice of Body and Blood, and God the omnipotent Father who (according to the Common Preface) should now be glorified. 'Holy, holy, holy', the priest recites at this point, 'Lord God of hosts – heaven and earth are full of your glory'. The Missal paintings are devotional images representing just this: the glory of God in heaven and the glory of the Son on earth at the most glorious moment of the Crucifixion. Sometimes God is represented holding the orb made of heaven and earth together.

It is very difficult, without getting entangled in theology, to explain the full-page miniatures in a Missal in the traditional terms of art history. Elsewhere we have tried to understand the purpose of illumination in different kinds of manuscript: educative, explanatory, decorative, entertaining, and so forth – all recognizable functions of art and presupposing a medieval reader who uses illustrations as part of the business of reading. But a Missal is a unique kind of book. It is the vehicle for a Sacrament. Pictures cannot be strictly illustrative in a text which, taken on its own terms, is not for the use of a reader as such, but rather to re-create the most holy moment of religious worship. Already this explanation is beyond the framework of secular science and, to those to whom the Eucharist is unfamiliar, it must seem complicated. Perhaps a comparison is possible between Missal paintings and icons. An icon is itself regarded as the holy object it represents. The subject and the medium become indistinguishable in the eyes of the believer. The bread and wine in the Eucharist *are*, at that moment, the Body and Blood of Christ. On an infinitely



196 London, Sotheby's, 26 November 1985, lot 120, detail of f. 9, Missal, Rouen, c. 1430-50.

These miniatures illustrate the opening of the Mass for Easter Day. A blank space has been carefully left by

the illuminator for a coat-of-arms to be inserted in the large initial. At the time of painting either the identity of the patron or the blazon of his arms must have been unknown to the artist.

lower level, the images of Christ on the Cross and of the Father in majesty become part of the presence of God in the Sacrament. At any other time they would just be paintings; but as the priest was reciting the Canon, these miniatures were the subjects of literal veneration. The picture of Christ on the Cross was kissed devoutly by the priest. With the late medieval mingling of spirituality and common sense, artists realized that frequent kissing smudged a fine painting, and so they sometimes illustrated a second much smaller Crucifix or a Cross in the lower margin of a Canon miniature so that it could be physically venerated without damage to the main composition (Pl. 197).

Because the Canon had the richest decoration in a Missal manuscript, it is on these pages that we most often find representations or coats-of-arms of the original owners. One sees medieval priests or laity depicted beside the Crucifixion or in the illuminated margins. Patrons were no more bashful about having their names and portraits inserted in the most holy part of a Missal than they were about being commemorated on a monumental brass before the altar in the chancel of a church, and the same kind of images appear with kneeling figures holding scrolls commending posterity to pray for them. Volume III of Leroquais's *Sacramentaires et Missels*, 1924, describes about 350 late medieval manuscript Missals in

public collections in France: of these, just over 100 contain original coats-of-arms or other explicit indications of the original patrons. It is a high proportion. Though this may not be a statistically random survey, it shows between a quarter and a third of fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century French Missals having been commissioned by individuals who wished to be remembered as donors.

These patrons varied considerably. Many were bishops, and some of the grandest surviving Missals were illuminated for the use of prelates of the Church, the high priests (Pl. 200). However, since episcopal visitations of parish churches included an inquiry as to whether a church had an accurate and usable Missal, a bishop's coat-of-arms in a Missal might simply indicate that he had made up a deficiency himself. It would be a very worthy thing to do. Often the donors were the local priests or the parishioners themselves. One Missal was written by brother Yvo in 1441, according to a note at the start of the Canon (B.N.MS.nouv.acq.lat.1690, f.228r), on the commission of Hugues de St.-Genèse, then vicar of the parish church of Bassan (in the diocese of Béziers, in the far south of France), *'cuius anima requiescat in pace, Amen'*. Another Missal was made in 1451 for presentation by the priest Guillaume Jeudi, rector of the parish church of Notre-Dame d'Olonne (in the diocese of Poitiers), for the commemoration and salvation of his own soul: this is all recorded in a scroll at the foot of the Canon miniature which includes a picture of the donor asking the Virgin and Child to remember him (B.N.MS.lat.872, f.156v). There is a long and complicated inscription at the end of a Missal of 1419, now in Avallon (MS.I, f.257r), recording that it was made by Bernard Lorard in the town of Villaines-les-Prévostés (Côte d'Or) while Jean Odini de Reomo was curate of the church there, and that the parishioners paid Bernard forty crowns for his labours and that, when Bernard himself made a personal contribution to the cost, they awarded him a supply of red wine. The manuscript sparkles with little miniatures of grotesque

animals and faces, and (unusually for a Missal) it has twelve Calendar scenes. It cannot have been simple to make. Probably very local Missals like these were hardly professional products in the normal sense. In a provincial village the priest himself must often have been almost the only person who could write. A Missal made in 1423 for the church of St.-Sauveur, diocese of Aix, is signed by the scribe Jacques Murri, 'clericum beneficiatum' (Aix MS.II, p.829), and another Missal, paid for by the vice-chancellor of Brittany in 1457, was written out by Yves Even, parish priest of the village of Troguéry in the north Breton diocese of Tréguier (B.N.MS.nouv.acq.lat.172, f.266r). Writing books may have helped supplement a clerical stipend. The first of these two manuscripts has many small miniatures but they are not well executed and may have been made at home. A century earlier there is a colophon in a Flemish Missal completed in Ghent in 1366 by Laurence the illuminator, priest of Antwerp (The Hague, Mus. Meerm.-Westr. MS.IO.A.14), and probably the priest both wrote and decorated it.

Next to the Missal, the book which a priest would need most regularly in his church was the Breviary. This too must sometimes have been made by the priest himself. A hastily written Breviary in Brussels (B.R.MS.3452) is signed by the scribe Hugues Dubois ('de Bosco'), priest in the diocese of Amiens, who records on f.156v that he finished copying it from the exemplar owned by Pierre Alou, priest of the church of St-Éloi in Abbeville, in 1464 on 6 November, 'hora secunda post prandium' – at two o'clock, after lunch. A Breviary, as we have seen, was not a book for use at the altar. Its dimensions are often smaller than those of a Missal, and it is usually a squat thick volume or is divided among several small volumes. In medieval England a Breviary was generally called a 'portiforium', a book which a priest carried outdoors ('portat foras'), a term which reflects its convenience of size. The handwriting was often very small. A Breviary comprises hymns, readings, Psalms, anthems and other prayers for the



197 London, Sotheby's, 3 July 1984, lot 52, ff.153v-154r; Missal, Ghent, mid-fifteenth century. A full-page miniature of the Crucifixion faces the opening of the Canon of the Mass in this small Missal made for the Abbey of St. Bavo in Ghent.

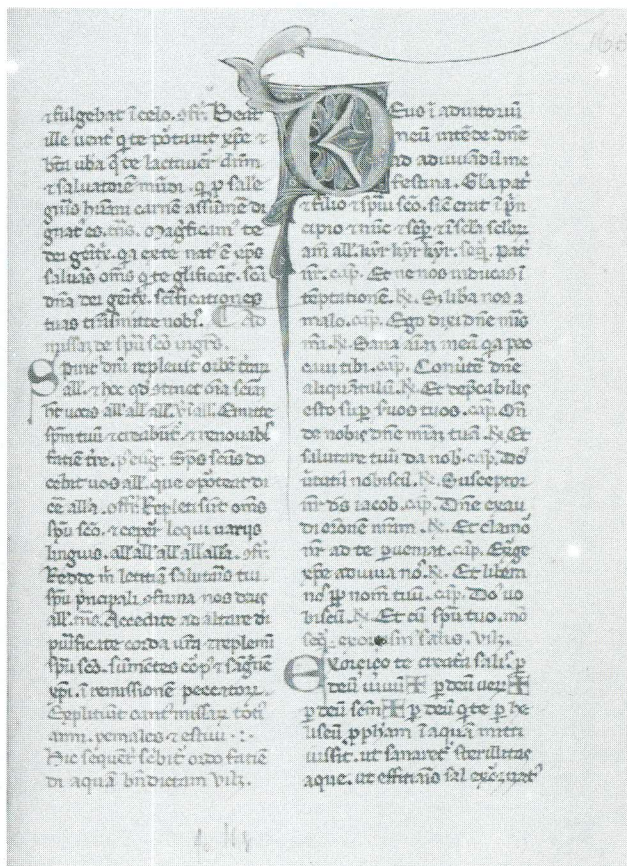


198 Fribourg, Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire, MS.L. 64, Breviary, Switzerland, c. 1400. Some little Breviaries are written in very small script. The medieval owner of this manuscript hollowed out the inside of the original front cover to insert a pair of spectacles.

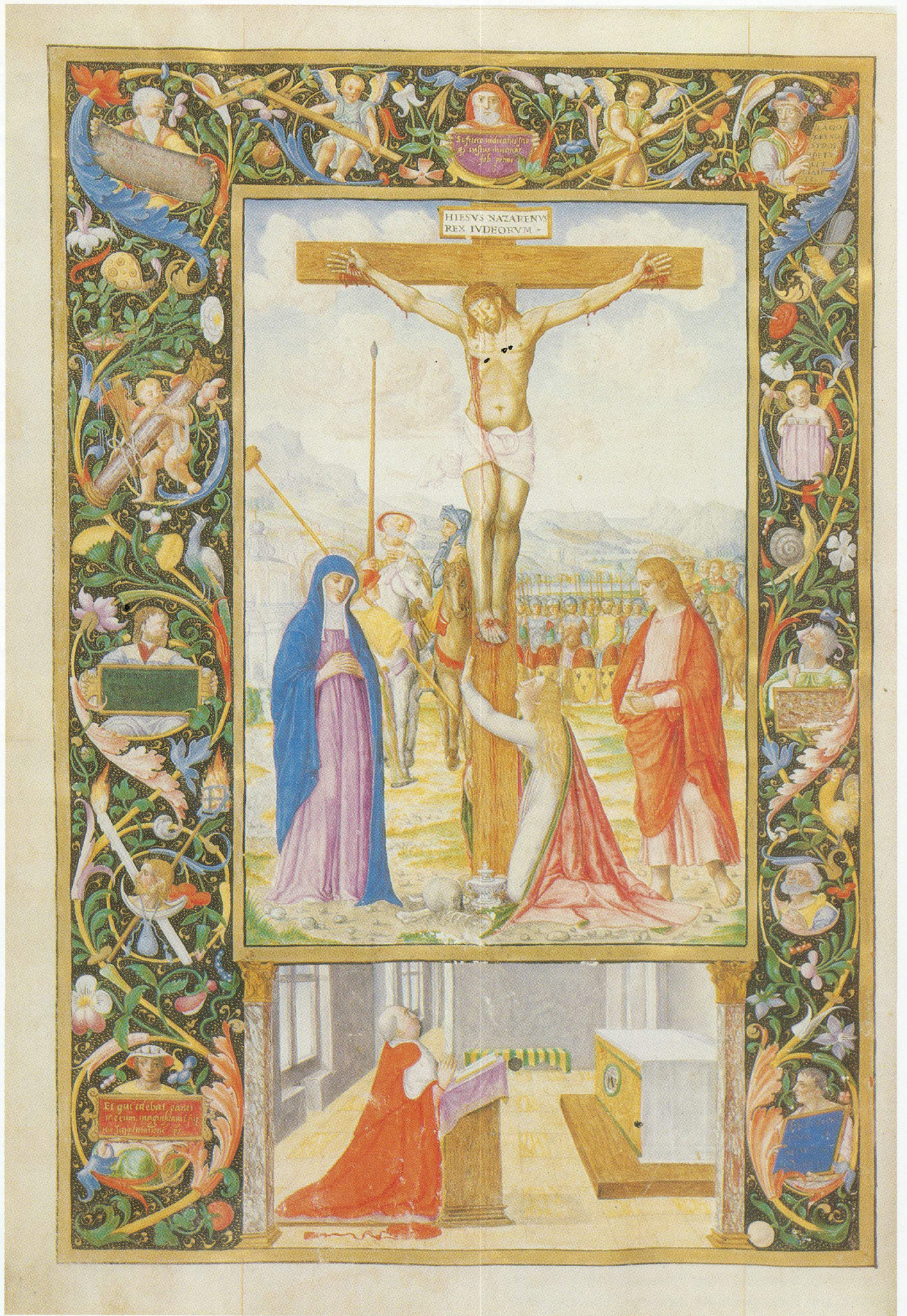
199 London, British Library, Egerton MS. 2865, f. 165r; Breviary, north-east Italy, 1402. The scribe concludes this manuscript (f. 171r) with a long inscription explaining that he is Antonio de Ubertis, beneficed priest at the church of Santa Maria de Valtorta; that he is getting elderly for he is nearly 47 years old and has been priest for 22 years; and that he finished the book on Friday 17 March 1402 in reasonable time and for a sufficient fee.

offices from Matins to Compline and, in the full version, includes the whole Psalter, marked up with rubrics and responses, as well as the appropriate offices to be used throughout the long sections of the Temporal and the Sanctoral.

There is one major problem in considering Breviaries in a chapter called 'Books for Priests'. Not only priests used them. All monks required Breviaries, and some of the finest surviving examples seem to have been used by the laity. Missals are rather different: only an ordained priest could celebrate Mass, and, though many monks and abbots were ordained as well, it is reasonable to consider a Missal as a priest's book even if the priest was also a monk. Many Breviaries, however, were intended simply for monks and nuns, and they, probably more than parish priests, actually read from the volume eight times a day: A priest often recited



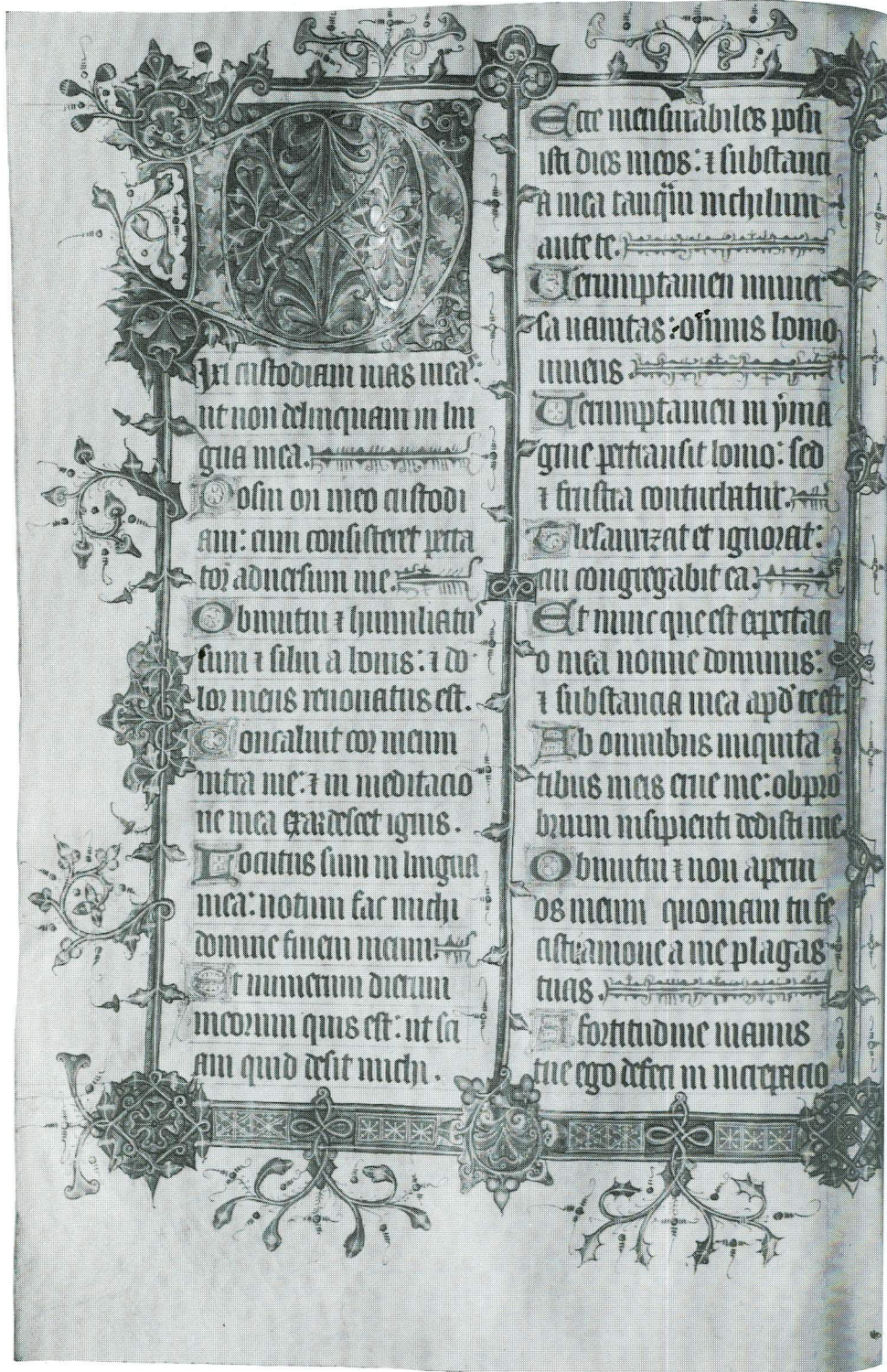






200 (LEFT) London, Sotheby's, 11 December 1984, lot 44, f. 45v; Missal, Rome, c. 1520–21. This vast Missal was illuminated for Cardinal Bernardino de Carvajal (1456–1522), who is shown in prayer in his chapel in the lower margin of the miniature of the Crucifixion, facing the Canon of the Mass.

201 (ABOVE) Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS. 3, single miniature of the Mass of St. Gregory, Bruges, c. 1520–30. One day when St. Gregory was celebrating Mass, the legend recounts, Christ appeared to him exhibiting his wounds and surrounded by the emblems of the Passion. The miniature, attributable to Simon Bening himself (see pl. 164), shows the scene as it might have taken place in the artist's lifetime. The actual page measures  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 4$  inches.



only Matins and Vespers. One distinction between a 'secular' Breviary (that is, one used in a church) and a monastic Breviary is in the number of lessons or readings in the office of Matins. A parish priest or a friar used nine lessons on Sunday and on feast days and three on ordinary weekdays; monks, by contrast, read twelve lessons on Sundays and feast days and three on weekdays in the winter and one in summer. This difference ought to be reflected in the manuscripts themselves,

and the readings are usually numbered *Lectio i*, *Lectio ii*, and so forth, and are not difficult to find. A second method of checking whether a Breviary is monastic or secular is to look through the Calendar. Feast days are 'graded', and so if special honour is given to St. Benedict (21 March), for example, and to the translation of his relics (11 July and probably also 4 December), the Breviary was presumably intended for use by a Benedictine monk. If the Calendar singles out feasts such as

202 (LEFT) Ushaw College, Co. Durham, MS. 8, Psalter, southern England (probably London), c. 1400-10.

*This manuscript belonged in the Middle Ages to the parish church of High Ongar in Essex.*

203 (OPPOSITE) Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Laud. misc. 419, f. 433r; Breviary, northern France (possibly Noyon), c. 1525.

*This is the opening of the Common of the Saints in a large Breviary illuminated for Jean de Hangest, who succeeded his uncle as bishop of Noyon in 1525. He died in 1577.*

St. Bernard (20 August), St. Robert of Molesmes (29 April), St. Peter of Tarantaise (8 May) and Edmund of Abingdon (16 November – he died at Pontigny Abbey), then the Breviary is probably Cistercian. Thus, with the help of a dictionary of saints, it should be possible to say whether a Breviary is Augustinian, Dominican, Franciscan, and so forth. If it was made for a parish church, it is likely to accord special honour to local saints of the diocese, and it may well have an entry in the Calendar for the anniversary of the dedication of the church itself. A nondescript 'Dedicatio huius ecclesie' will be of little help, but the entry 'Dedicatio ecclesie Sancti Stephani Cathalaunensis, Totum duplex' under 26 October in B.N.MS.lat.1269, for instance, localizes that Breviary to the church of St. Etienne in Châlons-sur-Marne.

Breviaries were sometimes illuminated for the laity, especially in the late Middle Ages, and some of the very grandest surviving copies are associated with secular aristocrats such as Charles V of France (B.N.MS.lat.1052), the Duke of Bedford (B.N.MS.lat.17294), Reinald of Guelders (Pierpont Morgan M.87), and Queen Isabella of Castile (B.L.Add.ms.18851). The most famous of all, the Grimani Breviary in Venice (Marciana MS. lat. 1.99), was not designed for Cardinal Grimani (1461–1523), but was bought by him second-hand from Antonio Siciliano, who had been Milanese ambassador in Flanders in 1514. But even these grand books were primarily for use by priests or monks. All princely families had their own private chapels. The splendid Breviaries must often have been chanted by the domestic chaplains rather than by the nobility in person. The aristocrats were the patrons, not the daily readers.

Related to Breviaries are Psalters, and the Psalms arranged liturgically form a principal component of any Breviary. Many parish priests must have owned Psalters, especially in the later Middle Ages when the Psalter often included liturgical elements such as a Calendar, Litany, and the Office of the Dead. About a dozen surviving manuscript Psalters can be specifically associated with English parish churches, and they were perhaps more common in England than on the Continent (Pl.202). There is an interesting contract for the writing of a liturgical Psalter for the use of a priest in York in 1346. In August that year, Robert Brekeling, scribe, appeared before the Chapter at York Minster to confirm his agreement to make for John Forbor a Psalter with Calendar for which he would charge 5s. 6d., and then, for a further 4s. 3d., to write out, in the same script and in the same volume, the Office of the Dead with hymns and collects. Then there are details of exactly how the illuminated initials were to be supplied. Robert Brekeling was to do the work himself. Each verse of the Psalms had to be given a capital letter in good blue and red. The Psalms themselves were to begin with large initials in gold and colours, and each of the seven liturgical divisions had to be indicated with a five-line initial, except for the psalms *Beatus Vir* and *Dixit Dominus* (Psalms 1 and 109 – those used at Matins and Vespers on Sundays), which required initials six and seven lines high. All this is carefully specified in the contract. All large initials in the hymnary and collectar, according to the arrangement, were to be painted in gold and red, except those of double feasts, which should be like the big



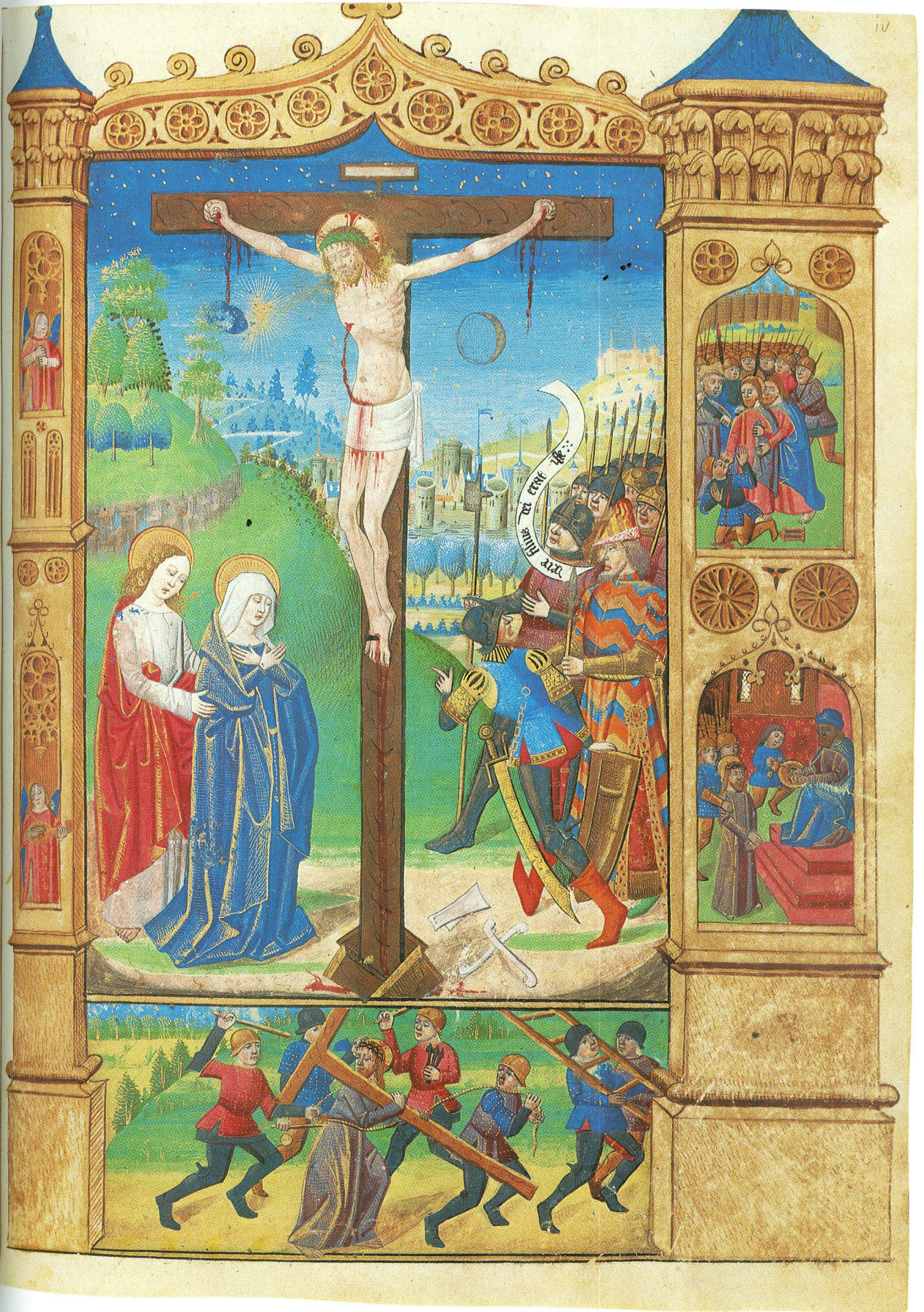
gold initials in the Psalter. For this extra work of illuminating, Robert was to charge an additional 5s. 6d. plus 1s. 6d. for buying the gold. The total comes to 16s. 9d., which was quite a lot of money in the fourteenth century.

A further expense that one sometimes finds in medieval accounts is for the 'noting' of service-books. This means supplying music. Both the Mass and the daily offices contain substantial sections of musical chant. The origins of liturgical music were traditionally said to go back to St. Gregory the Great (d. 604), who is sometimes shown in medieval art being inspired by the Holy Dove to record the principles of 'Gregorian' chant. As there were two main service-books in the medieval Church, the Missal and the Breviary, so there were two corresponding volumes of music. The Gradual contained the musical parts of the Missal; the Antiphoner contained the musical parts of the Breviary. The difference is

204-205 (OVERLEAF) London, Sotheby's, 13 June 1983, lot 20, ff. 111v-112r; Missal, Paris, c. 1480-90.

These full-page miniatures originally preceded the Canon of the Mass (they are now misbound at the beginning of the manuscript); the slight smudging on the face of Christ may have been caused by pious kissing during the recitation of Mass.





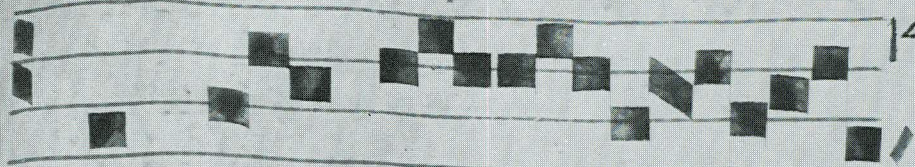
as important as that between the Missal and the Breviary, and the same words in the rubrics will distinguish one from the other: headings such as *Introitus*, *Graduale* and *Offertorium* are found in a Gradual, and *Invitatorium*, *Hymnus* and *Responsum* in an Antiphoner. In its original sense, the Gradual comprised the musical response sung between the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel, and the word derives from the steps ('gradus') where the Epistle was read. It came, however, to mean all the sung parts of the Mass. Similarly, an Antiphoner took its name from the short antiphons, verses sung by one

choir in response to another at the end of a Psalm, but it was taken to include all musical sections of the offices.

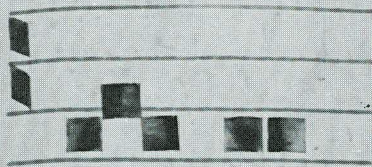
All medieval churches were expected to have a Gradual and an Antiphoner, and all monasteries certainly owned them. There is a fine illustrated manuscript Gradual in Zittau in East Germany (Christian-Weise-Bibliothek MS. A. v) with an inscription recording that it was completed in 1435 for the parish church in Zittau, the Johanneskirche, at the expense of brother Johann Gottfried von Goldberg, the incumbent priest there (1418-39), for whom prayers should be offered and for



206 Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard College, The Houghton Library  
 pms. Lat. 186, f. 101v; Gradual, Rouen, c. 1510-20.  
 This page marks the opening of the Mass for a bishop confessor in the Common, and the initial shows a priest kneeling with his manuscript before a saintly bishop.



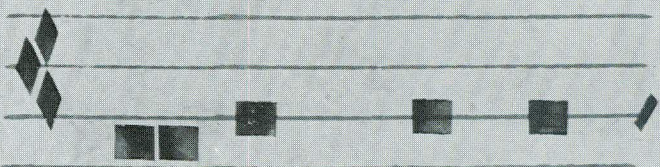
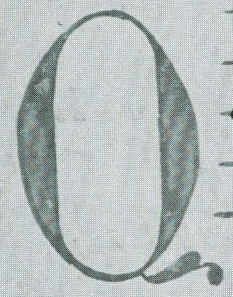
te al le



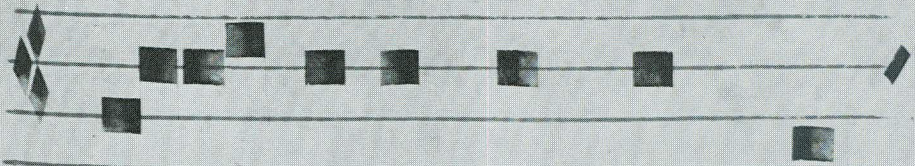
¶ Dominica in octava pasche.

lu ia.

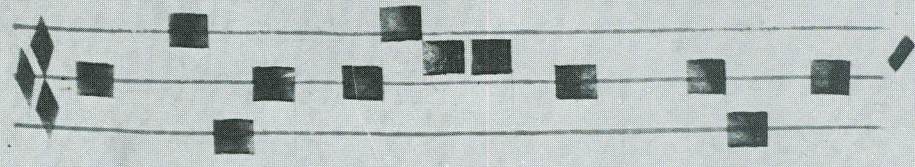
Introitus.



Q. uasi modo



ge niti infantes,



alle lu ia: ca ti

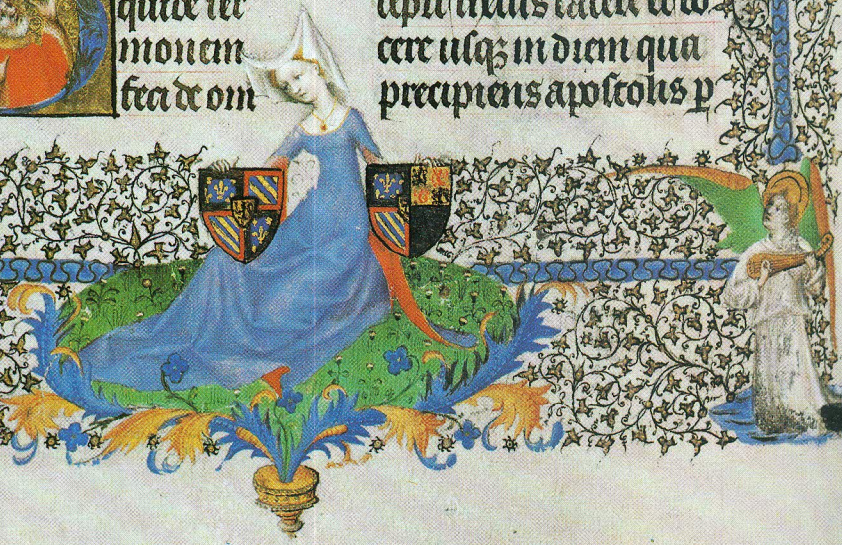
207 Oxford, Bodleian Library  
MS. Lat. liturg. a. 7,  
p. 146; Gradual, Mexico,  
seventeenth century.  
This enormous manuscript  
Gradual was made for a  
church in the Spanish  
colonies in Mexico. It shows  
the Introit for Mass on the  
First Sunday after Easter.

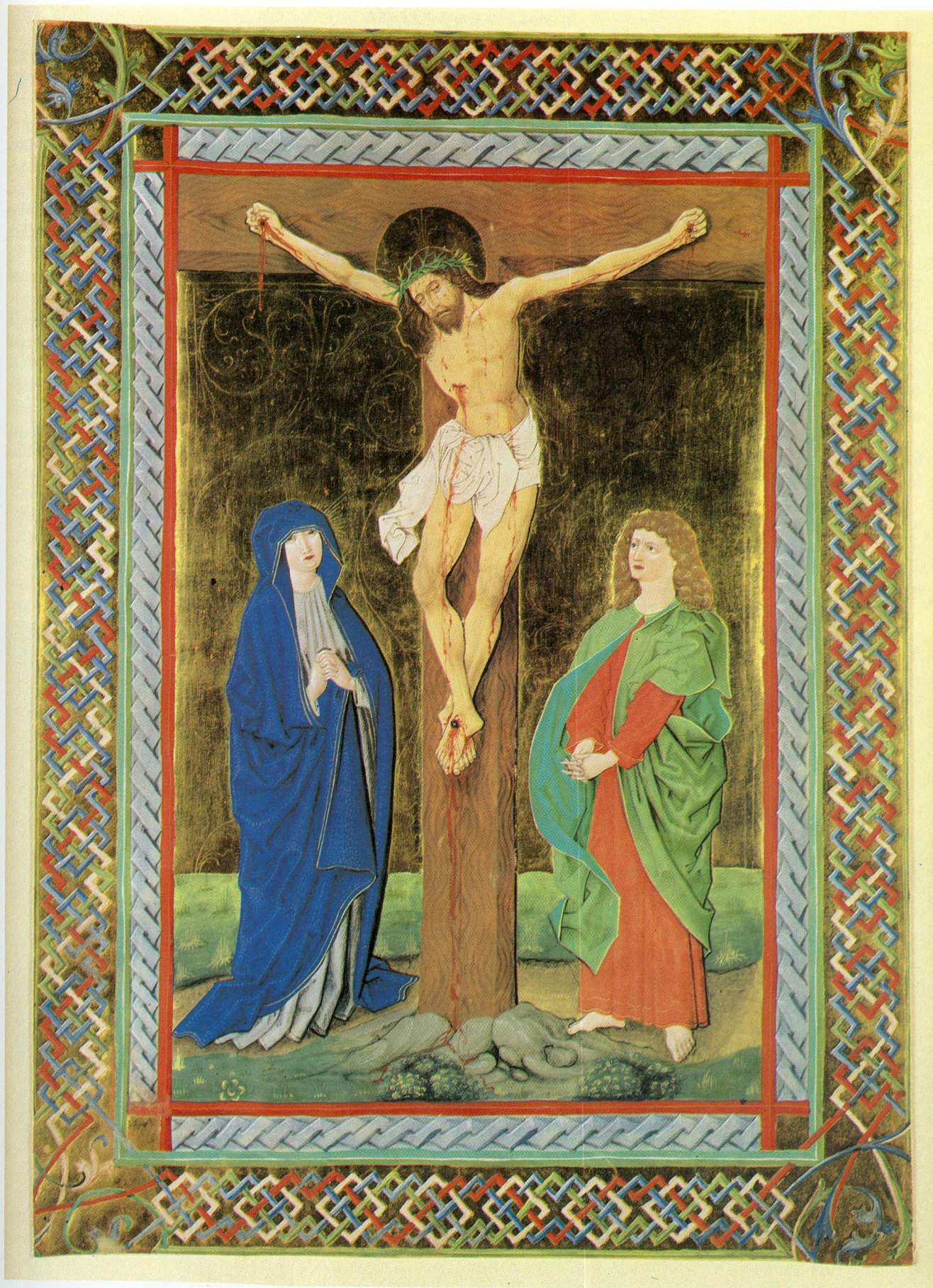




innum  
 quide ser  
 monem  
 fecit de om

nibus o throphile que  
 cepit ihesus facere et do  
 cere usq; in diem qua  
 precipiens apostolis p





208 (LEFT) London, British Library, Harley MS. 2897, f. 188v; the Breviary of Jean sans Peur (1371–1419), Duke of Burgundy, Paris, c. 1415.

*The miniature illustrates the office of the Ascension and shows Christ's feet disappearing into the clouds.*

209 (ABOVE) West Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, min. 14707; cutting from a Missal, Regensburg, c. 1480–90.

*This Canon miniature is attributable to Berthold Furtmeyr, documented in Regensburg from c. 1470 to 1511.*

all benefactors of Christ. Such books must once have been extremely widespread. Examples from southern Europe, Italy, and more especially Spain and Portugal, are among the most common of all illuminated manuscripts, and there are now vast numbers of framed single leaves from these books, often sixteenth- or seventeenth-century (though dealers may claim them to be earlier). They are usually huge in size because a choir would sing from a single manuscript (Pls. 207 and 214). One could possibly guess the size of the choir (or perhaps the darkness of the church) by propping up one of these giant choirbooks and experimenting how many people could in practice read it clearly at once. Partly because of the size and partly because every page of music was different, these were complicated books to set in printed type, and so plain-chant manuscripts were still being handmade in the traditional way in south-west Europe for centuries after the introduction of printing.

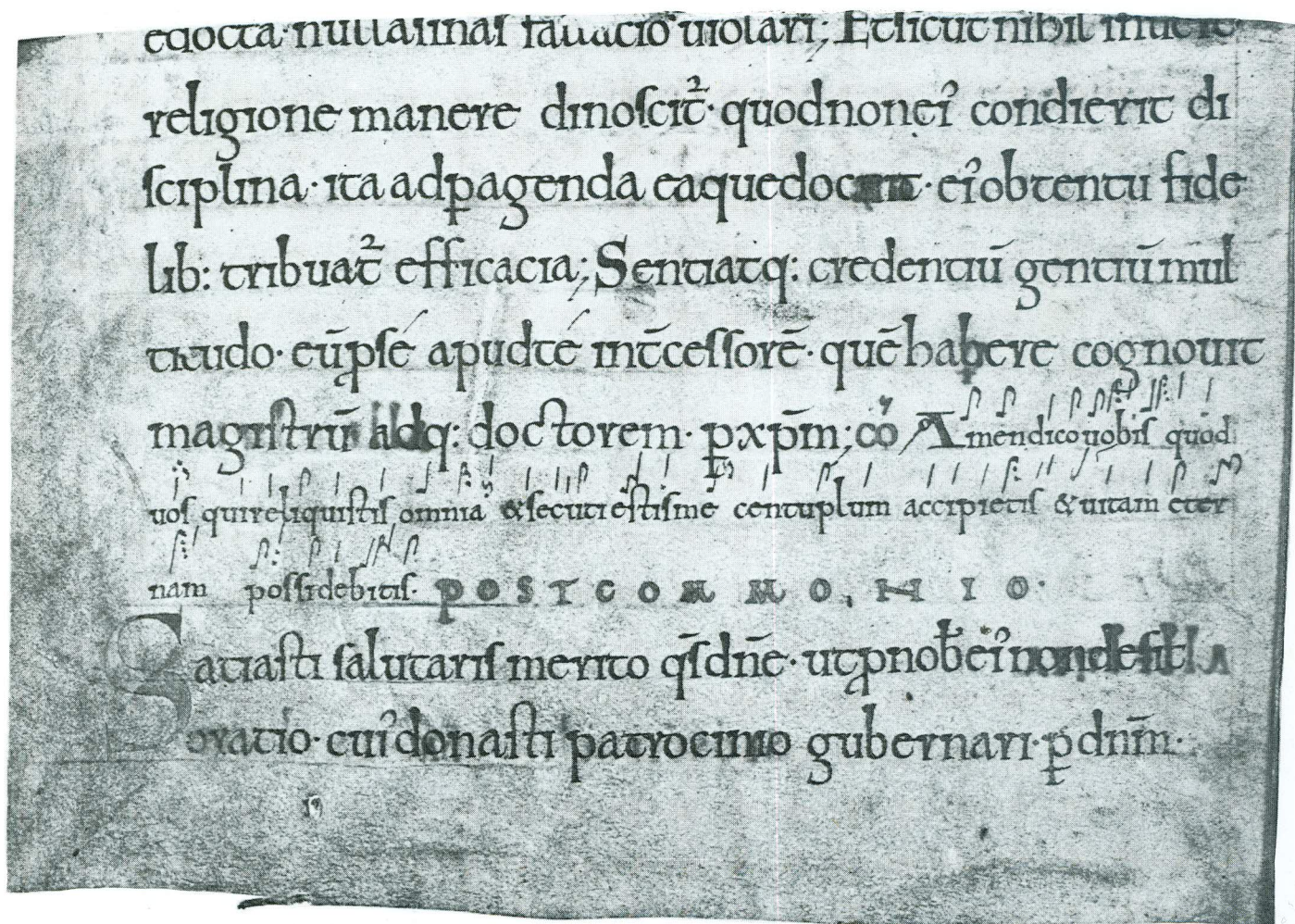
The music was written in black neumes on staves of four or five lines. It is sometimes asserted that the use of a five-line stave indicates a date of later than the fifteenth century: while in

practice this is often true, there are far too many exceptions for it to be an indicator of a manuscript's age. There are examples of five-line staves as early as the thirteenth century. The staves could be drawn with what was called a 'rastrum' (the word literally means a rake), consisting of four or five evenly spaced pens joined like a multi-pronged fork to rule the lines simultaneously across a page. One can see where a rastrum has been used when the scribe has accidentally bumped the implement as he was working and all the parallel lines quiver in unison.

The very earliest manuscript Graduals and choirbooks had no staves at all, and from at least the tenth century simple indications of liturgical music were given by whiskery little neumes written in above the line of text (Pl. 210). Several types of Carolingian notation were used, and some of the best known are associated with St. Gall and Lorraine. In their primitive form, these marks look rather as if a spider had trodden in the ink and wandered across the page. In Germany and the Low Countries these zig-zag marks evolved into more angular shapes with linked vertical tails, and, after the stave

210 London, British Library, Add. MS. 62104, fragment from a Missal, Exeter, mid-eleventh century.

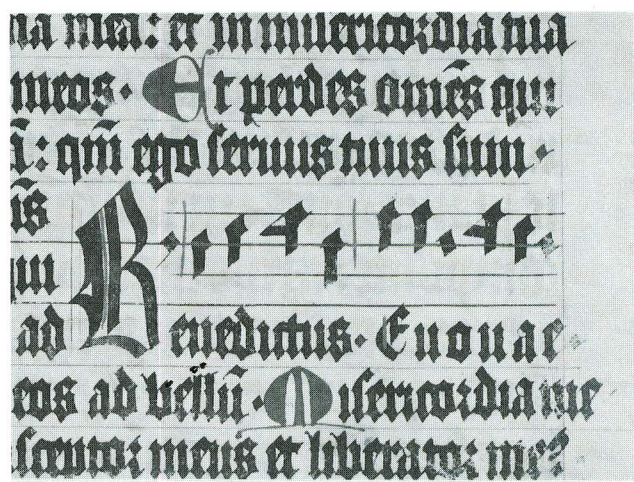
*This half-leaf of a late Anglo-Saxon Missal, recovered from use as a sewing-guard in a bookbinding, has several lines of musical neumes without a stave*



was introduced in the thirteenth century, they resemble clusters of short nails. Because of this resemblance, the distinctive neumes in German choirbooks are known as *Hufnagelschrift*, which means 'horseshoe-nail writing' (Pl. 211). The staves are usually in black ink in German and Netherlandish manuscripts.

In southern Europe, England and France, the stave was usually drawn in red and the neumes are generally without tails. They worked approximately as follows. One of the four or five lines was marked at the beginning of the row with a clef sign to indicate that a particular line was 'c' or 'f'. These clef marks are derived from the form of the alphabetical letters, 'c' being usually written and 'f' something like (or in eastern Europe). Quite simply, then, the notes on or between the lines of the stave are pitched in accordance with this known note: the neume above 'c' is 'd', the neume below it is 'b', and so on. The clefs can shift up and down, even on one page of a manuscript, and the raising and lowering of the clef allows melodies of different range to be written on a stave of only four lines. There are no bar lines. The faint vertical lines in many manuscripts simply indicate the corresponding division of words in the line of text below. A tick at the end of a line is a silent warning to the singer of what is to be the first note on the following line. The spacing of the neumes indicates the length of the note. Neumes spread out across the page are sung slowly. Two neumes close together, or even contiguous, are sung as if quavers. If the neumes are side-by-side , the notes repeat quickly . If a pair of neumes is written vertically , the lower note is sung first . Two neumes joined in their corners thus are sung in descending order . These are the simplest forms in medieval choirbooks. There can be many combinations of neumes, or diagonal lines instead of repeated notes, such as which is . All these can be interpreted in terms of a modern stave, and enthusiastic medievalists, with a good ear and a little practice, can actually sing straight from a page of a medieval choirbook, re-creating for a few moments the sound of a parish church or monastery five hundred or more years ago. It can be enthralling to listen to. Some ancient hymn tunes, such as the *Veni creator spiritus* ('Come Holy Ghost'), emerge from the manuscripts almost unchanged from antiquity.

In addition to a Gradual and an Antiphoner, most medieval parishes would have used other liturgical manuscripts from time to time. The churchwardens' accounts of St. Margaret's church in New Fish Street in London list the books owned there in 1472. Amongst them are six Antiphoners (including 'a gret & a newe Antiphoner covered with Buk skynne . . . of the gyft of sir Henry Mader, preest'), five Graduals, ten Processionals (including two given by the priest, Henry Mader), three Manuals (one from Henry Mader's gift again — they were for occasional services such as baptisms, marriages, and visiting the sick), an Ordinal (directions for conducting the liturgy), four Psalters, and a gratifying number of books for simple instruction in the Christian religion: the *Miracles of the Virgin*, in English, a *Catholicon* (this is Balbus's practical encyclopaedia of religious knowledge), 'a boke called compendium veritatis theologice'



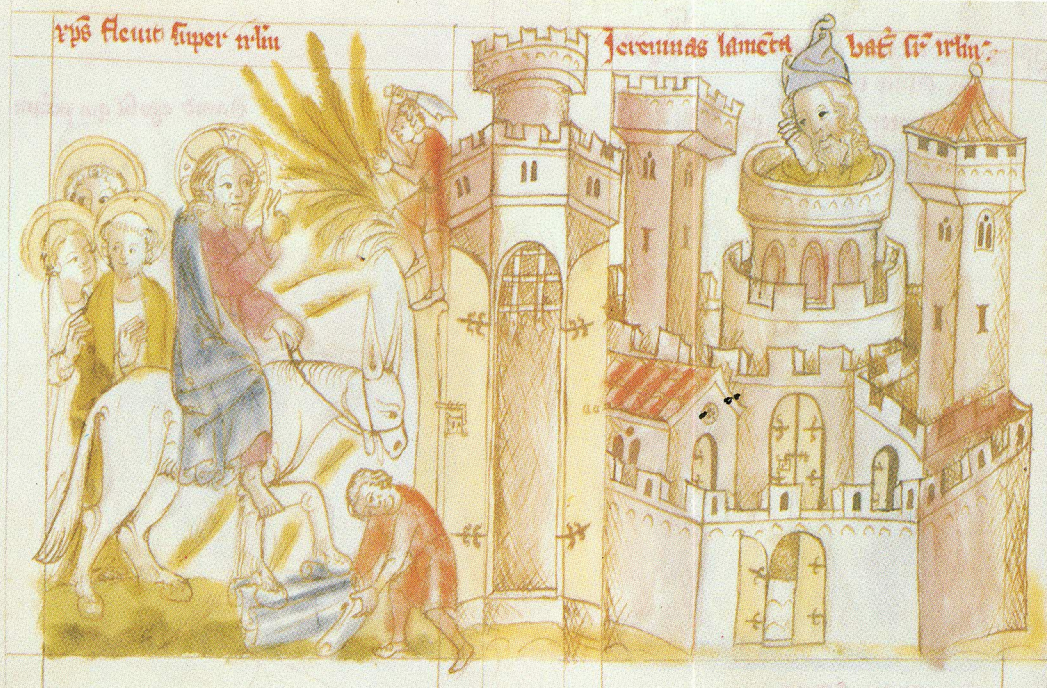
211 London, Sotheby's, 26 November 1985, detail from lot 62; Missal, Rhineland (probably Warburg), first half of the fourteenth century.

This fragment shows the typically German *Hufnagelschrift* neumes.

(presumably the popular handbook by Hugo Ripelinus which opens 'Veritatis theologice sublimitas . . .'), a tract by St. Bernard and the *Prick of Conscience*, both chained in the church, and so forth. The books were not merely for conducting services.

In considering books which a priest would have used, we must not overlook the pastoral side of the parish duties. A priest's occupation included instructing the laity, hearing confessions, comforting the bereaved, teaching Bible stories to children, and preaching and interpreting the Scriptures, and there existed books to assist with all these. They are usually unspectacular. Humble little booklets on matters of practical theology were not as impressive as richly illuminated service-books, but they were probably nearly as common in the possession of priests. There is a modern index of the opening words of medieval treatises on the virtues and vices, the fundamental guides for administering day-to-day religious advice: M. W. Bloomfield, B.-G. Guyot, D. R. Howard and T. B. Kabeale, *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices, c.1100–1500 AD*, published by the Medieval Academy of America in 1979. It cites well over 10,000 surviving medieval manuscripts and more than 6,500 different texts, and it is by no means comprehensive. 10,000 extant volumes is an extraordinary number. For medieval sermons, historians have J. B. Schneyer's monumental nine-volume *Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones*, published from 1968 and listing very many thousands of sample sermons in vast numbers of manuscripts dating from the two hundred years after 1150; no one has yet tackled the task of recording all the sermons and preaching guides for the fifteenth century. The sheer bulk of surviving manuscripts of pastoral theology is really daunting. Not all these manuscripts belonged to priests; perhaps the majority were used by friars, and others by monks and literate laity, but they represent a huge body of grass-root theology in an age when a casual visitor to a church might have thought it bare of books. Two of the most popular handbooks were Raymond of Peñafort's treatise on penance, the *Summa de*



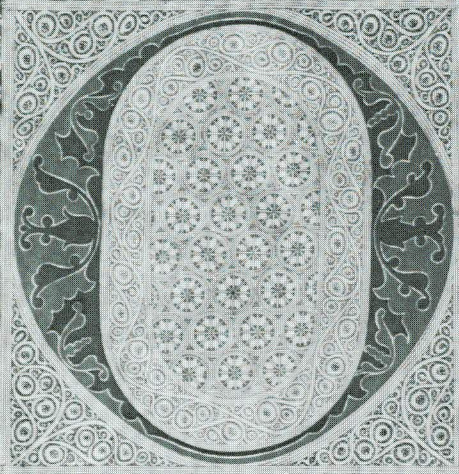


**Capitulum xv**  
 ipse al' audimus qm' dñs mag' dñe e' hñ  
 Coleqñt' andrā q' dñs m' die palmari' fuit p'acta  
 In illa die p'ncipali' in cōtingit  
 Que oī p'tres figuris p'mōstrat' fuit  
 Viles n' ihc amicitia' ur̄m fient  
 Cū laudib' suscept' fuit m'antes de tēplo eieq't  
 P' noñ d' q' ihc viles amita' ftebat  
 Cōpacēs amicitia' de m'ia q' illi munebat  
 Ite flet dñi nū saluatorē nā p'cipis **figura**  
 fuit oī m'lamētacōib' iēnne p'figurac  
 Cū d' ftebat de solacōe ur̄m f'at' p' babilomos  
 Ita ihc d' ftebat de solacōe ur̄m f'at' p' babilomos  
 Sic et nos exēpl' d' ex cōpalli' fte debemus  
 Cū p'ios mōs afflictos ul' affligēdo videmus  
 pl' est cōpati afflicto q' lō cōpalli' erogāe  
 Cū cōpacēs afflicto v' ahq' de se ipō s' dare  
 Cōpati debē tū malef'ōr'ib' nris q' iūmias  
 Exēpl' d' qui epallus ē sine iūmias  
 Impossi' ē illa m'ia d' et grā n' mereri  
 Cū sit afflicto cōpati ex corde et miseren  
 Ecce nōd' ē q' p'ls v' laudib' obuiant  
 Et oī h' p'figurac ē p' regē dāuid **ij figa**  
 Cū p'ls p' necē solē cū laudib' obuiant  
 Et amicitia' laudis n' honore ipi' de amicitia' at  
 Inq' amicitia' ipm' dāuid regi saul' p'fēbant

Et saul mille et dauid x mili' attribuebat  
 Dauid dñm nostrū ihm x' p'figurac  
 C' solā r' dya' adu'sariū ur̄m supant  
 Ite dñs dauid r' x' in die palmari'  
 honore fuit m'ltipli' iocur' su turbadū  
 Quidā olāna fili dāuid acclamabāt  
 Qdā bñdict' qui ve' in noie dñi p'lonabāt  
 Quidā regē isrl' eū asserēbat  
 Qdā eū saluatorē mūdi cōcinebat  
 Qdā cū florib' quidā cū palmis occurrēt  
 Quidā vestimenta sua in via p'f'inguit  
 q' iustice ur̄m visio pacis interpau'  
 P' q' fidel' aīa spūali' designat  
 Adhac saluator n'r oī hor' pacē v' eī  
 Et nos a mo'clū p' cōtrōe' debem' ve  
 Laudes deo clamolis vocib' decantam'  
 Cū in cōfessioe p'cā' nra cū genitib' reatim'  
 famos palmari' ad laude dei m'it' p'ram'  
 Cū cor' nra in lacrimōe d' sapie' castiga'  
 Vestimta nra i'ua ad honore dei p'ferim'  
 Cū tempali' nra erogam' x' paup'ib'  
 Cū florib' dño o'rim' et honorem'  
 Cū m'ie opib' et d'uitis v'itib' nos ornam'  
 Xpm' ihm qui venit in noie dñi bñdicam'  
 Cū p' bñficijs nris deuote s' g'tes dicam'

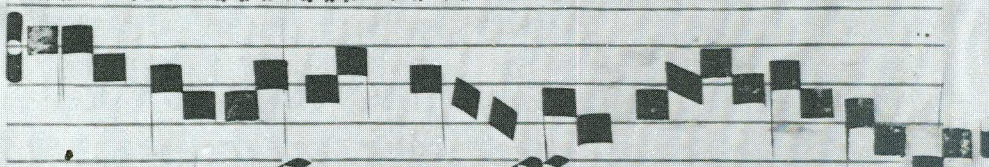
212 (LEFT) London, British Library, Add. MS. 17440, f. 13v; Missal, Ghent, 1483. The dedication miniature of this Missal for St. Bavo's Abbey is dated in the upper border and shows the patron, Willem van Bossunt, being commended to the Virgin and Child.

213 London, British Library, Add. MS. 16578, f. 17v; Speculum Humanae Salvationis, Osterhofen (Bavaria), 1379. This manuscript was written by a priest Ulric of Osterhofen, son of Conrad the public scribe and imperial notary, and was finished on 15 November 1379. It has fifty-three coloured drawings, probably by Ulric himself, including this scene of the Entry into Jerusalem and of Jeremiah lamenting over the city.

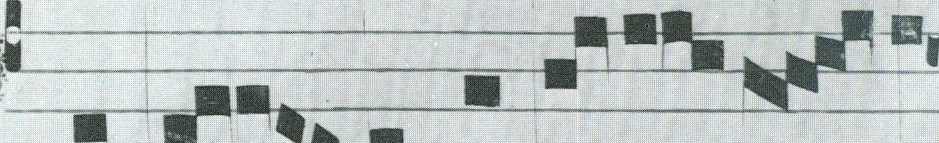


Lux

et decus his



panie sanctissime iaco



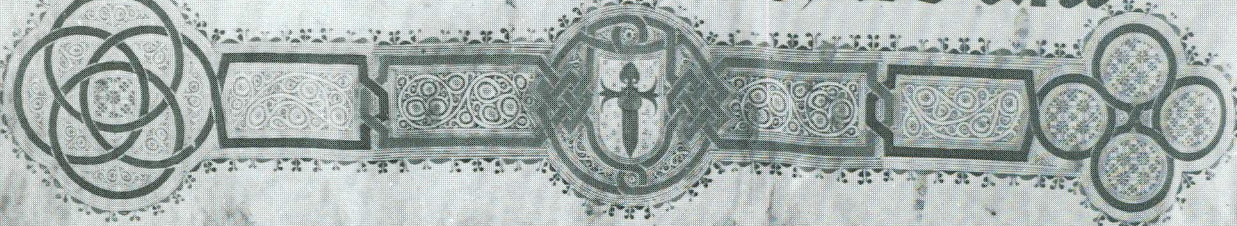
be qui inter apostolos



primatu te nes primus



co um martyrio lau



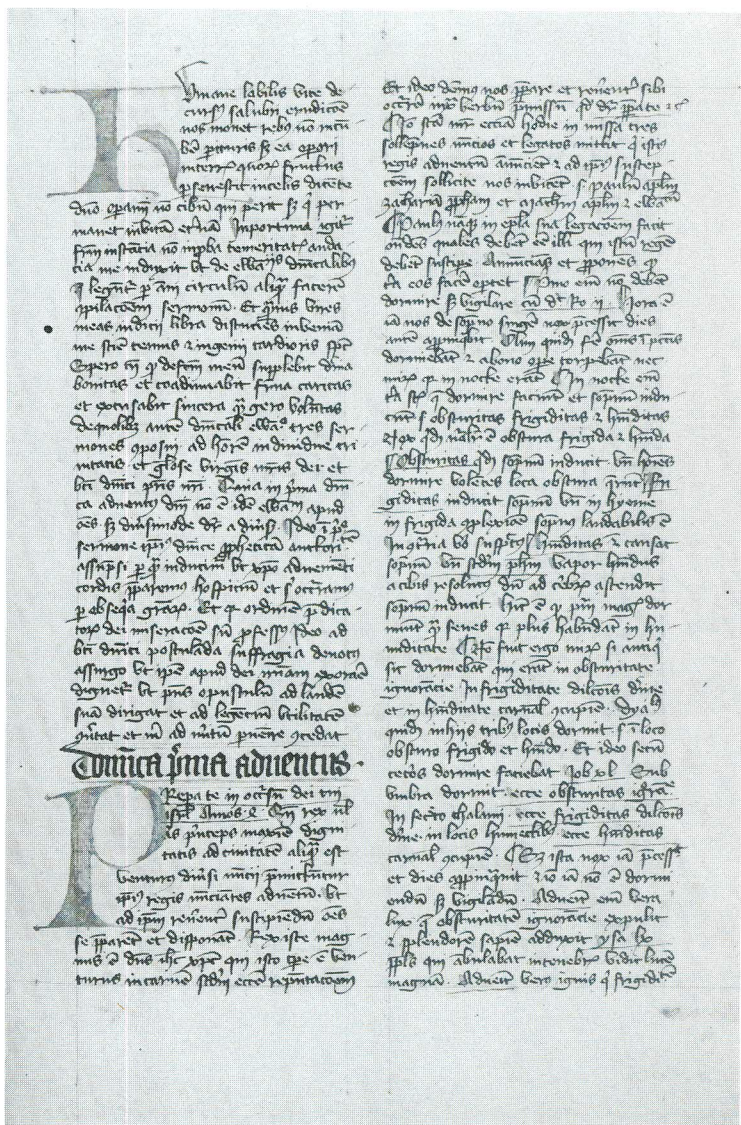
*Casibus Penitentiae*, and Guillaume Pérault on the vices and virtues, the *Summa de Vitiis et Virtutibus*, both written by thirteenth-century Dominicans. One of the thirteenth-century *exempla* (or moral tales for use by preachers) tells how a common woman used to lend out separate gatherings of her copy of Pérault's *Summa* for priests to copy, and thus did more practical good to the parishes of her region (the story says) than the masters of theology in Paris ever did. Especially useful were texts like Guy de Montrocher's handbook for priests, the *Manipulus Curatorum*, Gerson's guide for confessors, the *De Praeceptis, de Confessione et Scientia Mortis*, and the *Compendium Theologicae Veritatis* cited above. At the most basic level, a late medieval priest's teaching of the Scriptures would benefit from using a simple textbook such as the *Biblia Pauperum* (Poor Men's Bible; Pl. 216), an album of Bible stories with pictures and quotations from the prophets, and the slightly later *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (Mirror of Human Salvation; Pl. 213), which has nearly 5,000 lines of doggerel Latin verse explaining how the life of Christ was prefigured by the Old Testament. It survives in over 200 manuscripts, of which about half are illustrated with vigorous and dramatic pictures. It was used like the Doom paintings in churches to teach the life of Christ and the inevitability of the Last Judgement.

A perceptive reader will have noticed that there has been no mention so far in this chapter of the one book found in every parish church today – the Bible. Readings from the Bible form an essential part of a Christian service. They were always used in medieval services, but lessons followed a fixed programme which laid down which passage was to be read on each day. It was often much more convenient for the priest to have these readings in a Lectionary or within the Missal or Breviary than to try to find the appropriate passage in a complete Bible which was not, at this time, divided into verses. Those little thirteenth-century portable Bibles were still in circulation, but their microscopic script is not suited to declaiming from a lectern.

Sometime in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, the lectern Bible began to return into fashion (Pl. 218). It is difficult to know how far this was related to the use of a Bible in church, or for reading during meals in a monastery, or for private study (probably all three, in fact), but it seems to have been a phenomenon of the Low Countries and then later of the Rhineland. From the fourteenth century, the rhyming Bibles in the Dutch language were popular, rather as the *Bible Historiale* was in France, and in the fifteenth century monumental copies of the Dutch vernacular Bible histories were among the finest Netherlandish manuscripts. Nearly forty copies survive, and the two known first owners were both priests: Herman van Lochorst (d. 1438, deacon of Utrecht Cathedral) probably owned B.L. Add. MSS. 10043 and 38122, and Evert van Soudenbalch (canon of Utrecht 1445–1503) owned Vienna ÖNB. MS. 2771–2. Similarly, huge Latin Bibles were being written out in the Low

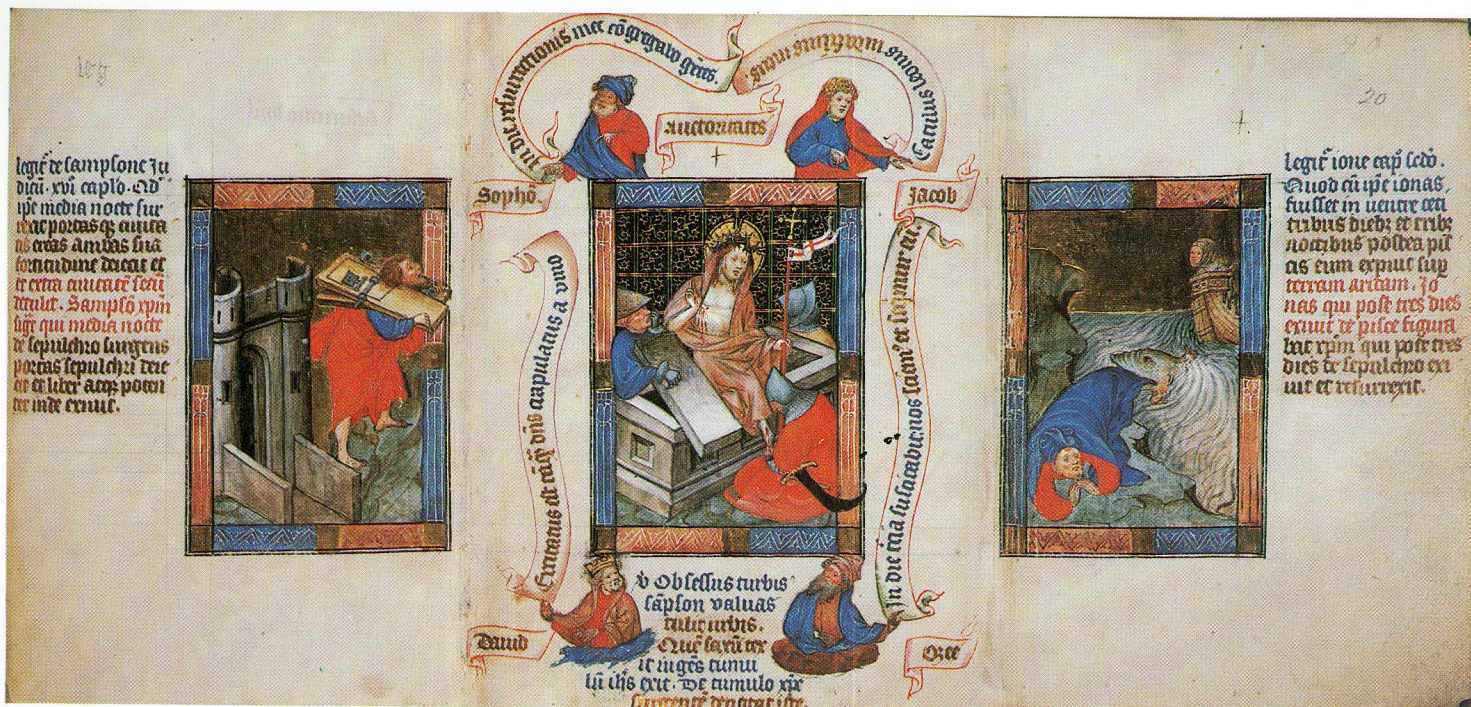
Countries in the first half of the century. A good example is Brussels B.R. MSS. 106–7 and 204–5, a giant four-volume Bible made in Utrecht in 1402–3 by Henricus van Arnhem, presumably a professional scribe since he worked both for the Carthusian Abbey of Nieuwlicht and for Utrecht Cathedral. Another fine copy in two volumes is now in Auckland, New Zealand (Public Library, MS. G. 128–131), written in or soon before 1419. A three-volume copy is in Cambridge (Fitzwilliam Museum MS. 289), illuminated with the arms of Lochorst of Utrecht, c. 1420. In Utrecht University Library (MS. 31) there is a splendid lectern Bible in six volumes written at Zwolle between 1464 and 1476 at the expense of the dean of Utrecht Cathedral. These are all very grand manuscripts, and they are not isolated examples. It is probable that the movements known as the *Devotio Moderna* and the Brothers of the Common Life had something to do with the revival of lectern Bibles. Gerard Groote (1340–84), founder of the movement in the Low Countries, taught a return to the basic teaching of the Bible and initiated a spiritual renewal whose

215 London, British Library, Add. MS. 38021, f. 3r;  
 Jacobus de Voragine, Sunday sermons, Würm, 1421.  
 The manuscript was copied by a priest, Hermann, vicar of Würm,  
 probably for his own use.



214 (LEFT) London, Sotheby's, 8 December 1981, lot 102, f. 1r; Antiphoner, Spain, mid-sixteenth century. The large initial here opens the office for the feast of St. James the Greater (25 July), patron saint of Spain.





216 (ABOVE) London, British Library, King's MS. 5, f. 20r; Biblia Pauperum, Netherlands, early fifteenth century.

The Poor Men's Bible was a simple picture book used to explain biblical prophecies and symbolism. Here the image of Christ breaking forth from the Tomb is paralleled by Samson breaking the gates of Gaza and by Jonah coming out of the mouth of the whale.

217 (LEFT) London, Sotheby's, 11 December 1984, lot 5, single leaf; Missal, Mainz, c. 1450-65.

This fragment of the Canon of the Mass in a manuscript Missal, recovered from use as the wrapper around the outside of a bookbinding, was illuminated by an artist who seems to have been employed by Johann Gutenberg and by his successor Johann Fust to decorate some of the earliest printed books including several copies of the Gutenberg Bible.

218 (RIGHT) Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawl. G. 161, f. 426r; Bible, Austria, 1399. This is a large lectern Bible dated 1399.

credidit et baptizatus fuit salmo  
 erit qm no ad credidit co tempnabz  
 Bigna aut eoo qui crediderit hae se  
 quentur imonne meo demonia cicut  
 liguro loquetur nome spores coll  
 ent Et si mortiferym quid bibent  
 no eis nocet Sup egros manne  
 mponet tbn habet Et dno quidem  
 hno postqua locutus est eis assup  
 tus est m celu Et sedet ad dexere d  
 illi aut pfa pdiamit ubiqz dno co  
 opante et simone cofinanice sequit  
 figme Explat mare: pcepit plogus  
 ba seminu m lucā ewangelizant

**L**ucas antiochensis  
 nacone syrus arte  
 medicus discipulo  
 aplo rmo postea  
 no paulinu secuti  
 usqz ad cofinatio  
 nem eius serues  
 donno fuit sine e

mine Nam neqz uxorem hno magna  
 neqz filios septuaginta annoz t m  
 in bethana plenus spu sco legitur ca  
 ram deserta essent ewnglia p nathm  
 quide m iudea panetū aut m italia  
 sco i fugate spm i arbore palz b sepl  
 em significas i ipse m pncie ante fmi  
 alia esse deserta cu extat ea ordo qui  
 ewngliora disposicio exponat ea ma  
 xime natus laboio fuit ut p greco  
 fide libz om pbacone hantur m autue  
 dei xpi manifesta eet hūanitas ne  
 indurio fabulis atenta m solo legie  
 desidio tenet ne ul heretic fabulis et  
 stultis sollicitatombz seducti era dnt  
 auitate psumpta laborient debm  
 m pncie eum nate psumpta cu eom  
 scribet et m quo elans scribet m dca  
 re cotestano m se completa eet queent  
 ab alio tchoata qm id p bay filij  
 di apperone gnacoo i x implete et  
 repentē apm natus huc ptas p  
 missi t ut r qm tibi demaret m q  
 apphēdo eat p nathan filiu dauid m  
 celu rcurrens m dno gnacoo adms  
 so m dissepabilis dei m se pndiano  
 ut m homibz xpm fmi pfa op' hōis  
 reddere m se p filiu faret qm pdand

prez bmoctbz iter pbebat i r? Cu dice  
 no imico scribendorū aplioz actum  
 ptas imisio dnt ut do m deū plene r  
 filio pdicōis extinto oroe ab ipis aplis  
 fca forte dnoa elocōis nno qplet Ee  
 qz paulis cofinatiois aplicio actibz  
 daet qz dno cont fmmulū recalcitūte  
 dno clausset qz et laqzabz r r qm dnt  
 dnt r si p fca r expedim cuob ut lo  
 fua face m q opate aqcola oporteat  
 pmi deservitbz ff ad vitan' puban  
 emofitate neno tā uolēbz dnt demitē

**M**ulti conati sū  
 ordinarē natū  
 com que i nob  
 complete sunt  
 rerū sicut era  
 d dnt nobis  
 qui ab micio

ipm uiderunt i mstra fmi p mome  
 vifum e et michi asecuto apia pio  
 de omibz diligit exordine tibi scri  
 bere optime theophile ut coltuostar  
 eorum uboz de quibus eruditus es  
 vitanem **I** fuit m diebus heredis  
 regis iudee sacerdos quidam uoie  
 zacharias duce abya et uxor eius  
 desiliabus aaron et nomen eius ely  
 zabeth Erant aut msti ambo ante  
 dnm mcedentes monibus mādatis  
 et iustificatombz dmi sine querela  
 Et no aut illic filius eo qz eet elyza  
 beth stentis et ambo pcessisset i die  
 bus sine **A** fuit aut ai sacerdos fi  
 getur zacharias i ordme uicis sine  
 ante dnm sedm ordmem sacerdotū pce  
 ceit ut mconsum ponet Ingressus  
 m templum dmi et omie multitudo po  
 puli erat omne foris hōm mconsi d  
 paruit aut illi angliu dmi stans ad dex  
 etre altaris mconsi **E**t zacharias  
 uidens turbatus ē et timor irruit sup  
 eum **A**it aut ad illum angliu ne ti  
 meas zacharias exaudita est deprecatio  
 tua et uxor tua elizabeth pariet tibi  
 filiu et uocabis nomen eius iohanne  
**E**t erit gaudm tibi et exultaco tūl  
 ti m natiuitate eius gaudēbz **E**t  
 eum magnus coram dno et vni

vidm  
 qz fusti  
 dntbz  
 p dnt  
 mopt pōmū bā hōc  
 t dnt pnt

mopt lucas vob



uicq; sequeremur si antea cognouisse-  
mus. Sic autē vos de generis nobili-  
tate iactatis: quali nō morū imitatio  
magis n̄ carnalis natiuitas filios  
vos faciat esse sanctorū. Deniq; elau-  
z ysmahel cū de stirpe sine abrahe: mini-  
me tamen in filios reputant. Hys ta-  
liter altercantibz. apostolus se mediū  
interponens: ita partiū dirimit questi-  
ones. ut neutrū eorū sua iusticia salutē  
meruisse cōfirmet: ambos uero p̄pos  
et scienter z grauiter deliquisse: iudeos  
q̄ per p̄uaricationē legis deū inpro-  
rauerunt: gentes uero q̄ cū cognitū de  
creatura creatorem ut deū debuerit ve-  
nerari. gloriā eius in manufacta mu-  
tauerunt simulacra: utrosq; etiā simili-  
ter ueniā cōsecucos. equales esse uera-  
cissima ratione demonstrat: p̄fectim-  
rum in eadē lege p̄ditum z iudeos et  
gentes ad cristī fidem uocandos esse  
ostendet. Quamobrem uicissim eos  
humilians: ad pacem et concordiam  
cohortatur. **Explicat plogus spe-  
nalis. Inquit plogus tertius.**

**Q**uam sunt partis yralie.  
Hij p̄uenti sunt a falsis  
apostolis: z sub nomine  
dñi nostri ihesu cristi in le-  
gem z p̄phetas erant induci. Hos re-  
uocat ap̄tus ad uerā z euāgelicā fidē  
scribes ei a corintho. **Explicat plogus  
Inquit eplā ad Romanos.**

**A**ulus seruus ihesu  
cristi. uocat⁹ ap̄tus  
segregatus in euā-  
gelium dei. qd̄ aīe pro-  
miserat per p̄phetas  
suos i scripturis san-  
ctis de filio suo. qui factus ē ei ex semine  
dauid scdm̄ carnē: qui p̄destinat⁹  
est filius dei in uirtute scdm̄ spiritum

sanctificationis et resurrectione mor-  
tuorū ihesu cristi dñi nr̄i: p̄ quē accipi-  
mus gratiā et apostulatū ad obedien-  
dum fidei in omnibz gētibz pro no-  
mine eius: in quibz estis z uos uocati  
ihesu cristi: omnibus qui sunt roma-  
dilectis dei uocatis sanctis. Gratia uo-  
bis z pax a deo patre z dño nr̄o ihesu  
cristo. Primū quidē gratias ago deo  
meo per ihesū cristū pro omnibz uobis:  
quia fides ur̄a annūciatur in uniuersa  
sa mūdo. Testis enim michi est deus  
cui seruido in spiritu meo in euangelio  
filij eius: q̄ sine intermissione memori-  
am uestri facio semp̄ in orationibus  
meis: obsecrans si quo modo tandē  
aliquando p̄spere iter habeā in uolu-  
tate dei ueniendi ad uos. Desidero enī  
uidere uos: ut aliquid impertiar uo-  
bis gratie spiritualis ad confirmandos  
uos: id est simul consolari in uobis  
per eam que inuicem est fidem uestrā  
atq; meam. Nolo autē uos ignorare  
fratres: q̄a sepe p̄posui uenire ad uos  
et p̄hibet⁹ sum usq; adhuc: ut aliquē  
fructū habeā in uobis sicut z in ceteris  
gentibus. Grecis ac barbaris sapientia-  
bus z insipientibz debitor sum: itaq;  
qd̄ in me p̄mptū ē et uobis qui roma-  
estis euangelizare. Nō enim erubescō  
euangelizari. Virtus enī dei est in salutē  
omni credenti: iudeo primū et greco.  
Iusticia enim dei i eo reuelatur et fide  
in fidem: sicut scriptū est. Iust⁹ autem  
et fide uiuit. Reuelatur enim ira dei de  
celo sup̄ omnē impietate et iniusticiā  
hominū: eorū qui ueritate dei i iniusti-  
tia detinēt: q̄a qd̄ notū ē dei manifestū  
est i illis. Deus enī illis reuelauit. In-  
uisibilia enī ipsi⁹ a creatura mūdi per  
ea q̄ facta sūt intellecta cōspiciunt: semp̄-  
piterna quoq; eius uirt⁹ et diuinitas:

219 London, Lambeth Palace Library MS. 15, f. 16v; Gutenberg Bible, printed in Mainz, c. 1450–55, and illuminated in London.

*The Gutenberg or 42-line Bible is the first substantial book ever printed in Europe. This copy, sent from Mainz for sale in England, so closely resembles contemporary illuminated lectern Bibles that until the nineteenth century it was mistaken for a manuscript.*

characteristics included lay participation in worship, sincerity, and practical study. Thomas à Kempis, author of the *Imitation of Christ*, wrote out a lectern Bible in five volumes between 1427 and 1438 (Darmstadt, Staatsbibl. MS. 324). The Brothers of the Common Life at Deventer made manuscripts professionally, and their fraternity's regulations included a paragraph on the writing of books, giving instructions to show specimens of scribes' hands to potential clients, to make clear contracts before beginning work, and to obtain payment for work done.

It would be interesting to know if there was a correlation between the dissemination of lectern Bibles in the fifteenth century and the books' most essential equipment – lecterns. These too were dispersed across Europe from the Low Countries and Germany. There are extremely few surviving lecterns in parish churches dating from before the fifteenth century, but late medieval examples are relatively common in the Rhineland and in the southern Netherlands (like one in Tournai dated 1483 and another at Chievres near Ath dated 1484). Renier van Thienen of Brussels (fl. 1464–94) was celebrated for making brass lecterns and other church fittings. Fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century lecterns from Dinant and Brabant were used as far afield as Edinburgh, Venice and Sicily. The style of their manufacture in brass is still known as *Dinanderie* after its origin in Dinant in what is now eastern Belgium.

In considering the apparent success of lectern Bibles in north-west Europe in the fifteenth century, one can look briefly at the very first products of the printing press, an invention that has long had a legendary association with the

Netherlands but which was brought into practical realization with movable type by Johann Gutenberg and his partners in Mainz in the Rhineland in the mid-fifteenth century. A fundamental difference between writing by hand and printing (apart from the obvious difference of technique) is that the publisher of manuscripts accepted a commission first and then wrote out a book to order, whereas a printer, making an edition of several hundred copies simultaneously, was obliged to tie up capital in creating a stock which was subsequently marketed. Therefore a printer selected texts which had a certain sale. It is significant to consider what he chose. It will give us an interesting insight into the most secure market for books in the mid-fifteenth century. After experiments with ephemeral pieces, Gutenberg's first major project was a Latin Bible, the celebrated Gutenberg or 42-line Bible (c. 1450–5). It is a typical lectern book in two volumes. Copies were sold across northern Europe, and there are Gutenberg Bibles with original decoration which can be attributed to illuminators in Mainz, Leipzig, Melk, Augsburg, Erfurt, Basle, Bruges (three copies) and London. These books often look exactly like manuscripts, and the Lambeth Palace copy was actually mistakenly described as a manuscript Bible in H. J. Todd's catalogue of 1812 (Pl. 219). Quite clearly, the first printer took sensible advantage of a rich and wide market existing for lectern manuscripts.

Other books from the very earliest years of the first printing press in Mainz include a second lectern Bible, a liturgical Psalter, 1457 (not intended for monastic use but for that of a secular church), Durandus's *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, 1459 (the basic parochial guide to church services), the *Catholicon*, 1460 (we have seen that there was a copy at St. Margaret's parish church in London) and, in the early 1460s, St. Augustine on the art of preaching.

It may well be, to return to the opening of this chapter, that if one were to walk into a parish church in the fifteenth century there would have been few books on view, but to the calculating printers who looked about them, priests and churches were the greatest users of books.



Hic incipit liber primus Aeneidos  
 Virgilii cum glossa Seruiani

220 Milan, Biblioteca  
 Ambrosiana  
 MS. S. P. Arm. 10. scaf. 27,  
 f. 1v; Virgil, Aeneid with  
 the commentary of Servius,  
 Avignon, c. 1325, with  
 frontispiece c. 1340.  
 This is Petrarch's copy of  
 Servius's gloss on Virgil,  
 written perhaps in 1325, stolen  
 from Petrarch in 1326 and  
 recovered in 1338. The  
 frontispiece was illuminated for  
 Petrarch by Simone Martini  
 (1283-1344) who settled in  
 the papal court of Avignon in  
 1339.