

Hours of Isabella di Chiaromonte, queen of Naples

Italy, Naples, Master of the Hours of Isabella di Chiaromonte, c. 1458–65
Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ 463

ff. 1–12: Calendar: “Ianuarius habet dies xx”.

The choice of saints in the calendar the accords with the Dominican use of the book:

- f. 1v: Translatio sancti Thome de Aquino, in red (January 28);
- f. 3r: Thome de Aquino, in red (March 7);
- f. 4r: Vincentii confessoris ordinis predicatorum (April 5) [a saint whose canonization Isabella promoted];
- f. 4v: Beati Petri martyr, in red (April 29);
- f. 5r: Festum corone domini (May 4) [a feast specifically celebrated by the Dominicans];
Translatio Petri martyr, in red (May 7);
- f. 5v: Translatio dominici confessoris, in red (May 24);
- f. 8r: Beati dominici confessoris, in red (August 5);
Octava beati dominici (August 12).

Of further interest are dates recording personal anniversaries celebrated by the queen:

- f. 7r: Anniversarium omnium sepulorum (July 7);
- f. 9r: Anniversarium familiarium (September 5);
- f. 10r: Anniversarium omnium fratrum (October 10).

ff. 13r–63v: Office of Virgin.

- f. 13r: *Incipit officium beate marie virginis secundum ordinem predicatorum, Ad Matutinum.* V. “Ave Maria gratia plena” (Annunciation).
- f. 23v: *In laudibus.* V. “Deus in adiutorium” (Nativity: Adoration of the Child).
- f. 35r: *Ad primam.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Adoration of the Magi).
- f. 39r: *Ad tertiam.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Resurrection).
- f. 42v: *Ad sextam.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Ascension of Christ).
- f. 46r: *Ad nonam.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Pentecost).
- f. 49r: *Ad vespas.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Assumption of the Virgin).
- f. 56v: *Ad completorium.* “Ave maria gratia plena” (Coronation of the Virgin).

ff. 64r–64v: blank

ff. 65r–77r: Seven Penitential Psalms. *Incipiunt septem psalmi penitentiales. Antyphona.* “Ne reminiscaris domine”. *Ps.* “Domine ne in fuorore tuo” (David sinking in the mire).

ff. 77r– 83v: Litanies.

In the Litanies are included local saints: “Sancte Ianuari” (f. 78v) and “Sancta Agatha” (f. 79v). Besides the name of “Sancte Dominice”, the rubric indicates “bis dicatur” (f. 79r), further underlining the Dominican character of the book.

ff. 83v–85v: Prayers of Dominican character.

- f. 83v: “Protege Domine famulos tuos...”; f. 84r: “Concede quesumus omnipotens deus ut qui peccatorum nostrorum pondere premimur beati dominici confessoris ei patrocino sublevemur.”; “Preces quas tibi domine offerimus intercedente beato petro martire tuo clementer intende...”; f. 84v: “Deus qui ecclesiam tuam beati Thome confessoris tui mira

eruditione clarificas...”; “Omnipotens sempiternus deus qui innumeros iudeorum ac gentilium populos ad agnitionem tue lucis beati Vincentii confessoris tui predicatione venire tribuisti da quesumus ecclesie tue ut eius semper protegatur auxiliis cuius gloriosis miraculis et exemplis illustrare non desinis”; f. 85r: “Ineffabilem misericordiam tuam”; “Pretende domine famulis et famulabus tuis”; f. 85v: “Ecclesie tue domine preces”; Deus a quo sancta desideria”.

f. 86r–86v: blank

87r–96r: Hours of the Cross. *Incipit officium Sancte Crucis valde devotissimum. Ad Matutinum. Versus.* “Domine labia mea” (Man of Sorrows).

f. 96v: blank

ff. 97r–142r: Office of the Dead. *Incipit officium mortuorum.* “Dilexi quoniam” (Monks singing from a lectern behind a coffin).

ff. 142r–144v: Prayers.

f. 142r: Deus venie largitor”; f. 142v: “Deus qui nos patrem et matrem honorare precepisti”; “Fac videre fidelium”; f. 143r: *In Anniversario.* “Deus indulgentiarum domine da animabus famulorum tuorum”; “Deus venie largitor”; f. 143v: “Fidelium deus omnium”; f. 144r: *Pro masculo. Oratio.* “Inclina domine aurem tuam”; f. 144v: *Pro una femina defunta.* “Quesumus domine pro tua pietate”.

Parchment, ff. i + 145 (last one blank, but ruled) + 1, 170 x 124 (90x65) mm.

Collation: 19 gatherings; the first two gatherings of 6 leaves, are followed by gatherings of 8 leaves, except for ix, which has 4 leaves, and xviii, which is an 8 leaf gathering minus 1 single leaf and to which two conjoint leaves have been added (ff. 129–137): i–ii⁶, iii–viii⁸; ix⁴; x–xvii⁸; xviii⁸ – 1 + 2; xix⁸.

There is a stub between 135v and 136r, but there is no text missing: “Precisa est velut a texente vita mea: dum adhuc ordiner // succidit me”. The scribe must therefore have miscalculated the quire and corrected the mistake by eliminating one of the conjoint leaves in the second half of the gathering and adding a bifolium, now numbered as ff. 134–135.

Check this please: two sewing threads visible: between 132 and 133 (center of original 8 leaf gathering), and 134 and 135 (pertaining to addition of those two leaves).

Ruled in plummet for one column of fifteen lines (90 x 65 mm).

Written in a rounded gothic Italian hand; horizontal catchwords.

The different texts are introduced by four large historiated initials in tempera, silver and gold leaf, while the hours within the Office of the Virgin are marked by seven smaller ones.

The hours in the other offices are introduced by decorated letters, the minor subdivisions are marked by *initiales champies*, in gold on blue and purple ground, and every sentence begins with a one-line pen-work initial in blue or gold with red or violet filigree decoration.

The coat-of-arms on the first page of the Office of the Virgin (f. 13r) has been identified with that of Isabella di Chiaromonte (1424–65), impaled with the arms of Ferdinand of Aragon (1431–94), whom

she married in 1443: the crown above it indicates the book's production after Ferrante became king of Naples in 1458.

Binding: 16th century; wooden boards very worn blue velvet; gilded edges.

Provenance: Isabella di Chiaromonte (1458–65); bought by F. Gentili di Giuseppe between 1900 and 1925; inherited by his daughter Adriana Raphael Salem; bought by Mr and Mrs. Ward M. Canaday from Salem, deposited in 1955 and presented in 1964.

Signs of ownership: on front paste-down: small circular orange book-plate “a.r.s.”; Harvard College Library book-plate “The gift of Mr. And Mrs. Canaday”. Drawing of two figures on a boat (?) on the top of the verso of the first fly-leaf (probably an ownership sign of a monastery).

Secundo folio: frebuarius (*sic*) habet dies.

Francesca Manzari

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