

Papal Letters of Indulgence and a Letter from the Apostolic Camera in favor of the Hospital of San Giacomo degli Incurabili in Rome

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment

Italy (Rome), 1538

i + 8 + i folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, 1-8, complete (collation i⁸), ruled in pale brown ink (justification 170 x 113 mm.), written in brown ink in an accomplished italic script (cancelleresca) on 27 lines, the opening words to the texts in capital letters in liquid gold, one painted foliate initial (c. 7 lines high), ONE HISTORIATED INITIAL (c. 7 lines high), ONE SMALL MINIATURE (c. 7 lines high), TWO PAINTED BORDERS in the upper and side margins decorated with a vase from which emanate curling flower stems against a liquid gold ground, TWO LARGE MINIATURES, two holes through the first document and front cover of the binding with some loss of text (burned with hot wax?), one small hole in the lower margin through the entire document, some stains and signs of use, overall very good condition. CONTEMPORARY BINDING, limp vellum envelope binding, sewn on green cords, several stains and holes on both covers, otherwise is good condition. Dimensions 244 x 174 mm.

The exquisite script and illumination mark this as a deluxe presentation copy of documents issued in favor of the Hospital of San Giacomo degli Incurabili in Rome, one of the most important hospital complexes in that city. Its artist was familiar with illuminations by Vincent Raymond, a famous French illuminator who is documented working for the papal court in Rome from the time of Leo X (r. 1513-1521) until his death in 1557. Works by this master may have been used as our artist's model. This is of special interest as a high-quality illuminated document produced in Rome in the post-Gutenberg era.

PROVENANCE

1. A luxurious presentation manuscript that includes three documents dated January 14, 1531, March 4, 1534, and May 11, 1538. Our manuscript was copied and illuminated in Rome soon after this last document was issued by the Apostolic Camera. The script, illumination, and the structure of the codex indicate that the three texts within the manuscript were copied at one time.

The manuscript was made for the Hospital of San Giacomo in Augusta in Rome, also known as San Giacomo degli Incurabili (St. James of the Incurables), one of the most important hospital complexes in Rome until its (controversial) closure in 2008. It is located near the Mausoleum of Augustus, which accounts for its name *in Augusta*. The Hospital is mentioned toward the beginning of each text, on f. 1, lines 12-13 and f. 3v, line 12: "Archihospitali incurabilium sancti Jacobi in Augusta et Societati Charitatis," and f. 7, l. 19: "Archihospitalis Sancti Jacobi in Augusta." A small miniature of the patron saint of the hospital, St. James the Great, was painted on f. 1.

2. The several contemporary notes in Spanish written in brown ink on the front cover of the binding include the dates of the documents: "1531 1534 y 1538." Below the dates is

written in brown ink: "...del hospital de Stiago de Roma y de M..s a clane..(?)". On the envelope flap of the back cover (which folds inwards and has been cropped) is inscribed in dark brown ink "(...)ado al de Santiago de Roma." There are other inscriptions on the binding, mainly illegible. The name of the Hospital's guardian in the 1530s was Thomas Guerrerio, who may have been Spanish.

3. Private European Collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-3, incipit, "CLEMENS, Episcopus, servus servorum Dei, Universis et singulis Christi fidelibus ... libenter amplectimur per quae pauperum infirmorum presentim incurabilium necessitati et hospitalium conservationi ac animarum saluti salubriter consulitur. Sane quum, dudum felicitis recordationis Leo Papa Decimus praedecessor nostri indulgentias et gratias imaginis Salvatoris ad sancta sanctorum et Sancti spiritus in Saxia de Urbe hospitalium Archihospitali incurabilium sancti Jacobi in Augusta et Societati Charitatis ... [ff. 2v-3], Datum Romae apud Sanctum petrum anno incarnationis dominicae Millesimo quingentesimo trigesimo primo Quartodecimo KLS. January Pontificatus nostri anno Nono";

ff. 3v-6v, incipit, "PAULUS, Episcopus, servus servorum Dei ... per amplius propagentur ac hospitalium et piorum locorum confirmationi pauperum que infirmorum presentim incurabilium subuentioni salubriter consulatur solertius intendamus et in his eiusdem officii partes favorabiliter impartiamur ... Archihospitali incurabilium sancti Jacobi in Augusta et Societati Charitatis ... [ff. 6-6v], Datum Romae apud Sanctum petrum anno incarnationis Dominicae Millesimo Quingentesimo trigesimo quatro Quarto Idus Martii, Pontificatus nostri Anno Primo. B. Motta";

ff. 7-8, incipit, "IN NOMINE SANCTE ET INDIVIDUE TRINITATIS PATRIS ET FILII ET SPIRITUS SANCTI. AMEN. Noverint universi presentes ... Quod nos JACOBUS PUTEUS juris utriusque doctor ... curiae causarum Camerae apostolicae ... [f. 8], Datum Romae in aedibus nostrae solitae habitationis in quibus jura reddi solent sub anno a nativitate Domini Millesimo quingentesimo trigesimo octavo indictione Undecima die vero Quarta mensis Maii, Pontificatus Sanctissimi domini nostri Pauli divina providentia, Papae Tertii Anno Quarto. Praesentibus ibidem diseretis viris dominis Jacobo Appocello et Jo. Jacobo Bucca dictae Curiae notariis testibus ad praemissa vocatis spetialiter atque rogatis."; [followed by an authentication of the act by Filippo Quintili], incipit, "Et ego Philippus Quintilius Curie causarum Cameram apostolice notarium ... et in notam scripsi ideo presens publicum transcripti instrum fideliter scriptum subscripsi et publicani signoque nomine meis solitum signani in fidem premissorum rogatis et requisitus" [On the left, the notarial signature of Philippus Quintilius]; [f. 8v, blank].

The manuscript contains two papal letters of indulgence and a letter of the Apostolic Camera issued in favor of the Hospital San Giacomo degli Incurabili in Rome. The first indulgence letter was issued by Pope Clement VII in 1531; the second was issued by Paul III in 1534, and signed at the end by B. Motta, a scribe working for the pope. It confirms the rights, privileges, and functions outlined in earlier pontifical letters issued by his predecessors, Clement VII and Leo X. The third document, dated May 11, 1538, is a letter issued by Giacomo Puteo (del Pozzo, 1495-1563), general auditor of the Apostolic Camera, future archbishop of Bari (1550) and

Cardinal (1551). Filippo Quintili, a notary of the Apostolic Camera, affirms the accuracy of the document at the end, as was the custom, in a signed autograph paragraph.

Two consecutive Popes, Clement VII (pontificate 1523-1534) and Paul III (pontificate 1534-1549), granted plenary indulgences, rights and privileges to the Hospital. The papal bull published in 1515 by their predecessor, Leo X (pontificate 1513-1521), had promoted the hospital to the rank of Archispedale (a principal hospital). The texts in our manuscript refer to this promotion (ff. 1, 3v, 7). The text also gives the name of the Hospital's guardian, Thomas Guerrerio, doctor in law, notary, and scribe (f. 1v). The Hospital was first administered by the confraternity of Santo Spirito in Sassia, but in 1451 was given to the Congregazione di Santa Maria del Popolo, whose name the papal bull of 1515 changed to Congregazione di Santa Maria del Popolo e di San Giacomo (cf. Morichini, 1872, p. 76).

ILLUSTRATION

The manuscript is decorated with two large miniatures, and on f. 1, an historiated initial and smaller miniature within a border; on f. 3v the text begins with a border in the same style:

f. 1, Historiated initial, Virgin and Child, and small miniature within a laurel frame, St. James the Great, the patron saint of the Hospital,

f. 3, St. Peter holding a key and a book;

f. 6v, St. Paul holding a sword and a book.

The style of illumination in this manuscript may have been influenced by that of Vincent Raymond (d. 1557), an illuminator originating in Lodève, in Languedoc, southern France. Raymond is documented working in Rome for the Papacy from the time of Leo X (r. 1513-1521) and payments to him are recorded in papal accounts for the illumination of liturgical manuscripts for the Sistine Chapel from 1535 to 1549. Our artist may have used works by Vincent Raymond as his model. For example, the figure of God in the miniature representing the Holy Trinity in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 19, f. 138, by Raymond (Online Resources) resembles St. Peter in our manuscript; both are painted with very similar long white curls emanating horizontally from the side of the head and in a small tuft at the top falling on the forehead. Although somewhat more static, the draperies of the figures in our manuscript are also realized in a similar manner, with rhythmic folds and an abundance of white highlights. The art of Vincent Raymond was much appreciated by his contemporaries; the Portuguese artist and biographer, Francisco de Holanda, placed him alongside Giulio Clovio, Attavante, and Simon Bening, and the high level of execution in manuscripts attributed to him, all made for popes, cardinals, and other especially eminent patrons, such as the Duchess of Urbino, Eleonora Gonzaga (see the Book of Hours painted for her before 1543, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 29; Alexander, 1994, pp. 242-244), make an interesting comparison with the illumination in our document.

The Hospital San Giacomo degli Incurabili was founded in 1339 by Pope Benedict XII and was funded by Cardinal Pietro Colonna. In 1515, by a papal bull entitled "Salvatoris Nostri Domini Jesu Christi" (Online Resources), it was re-founded by Pope Leo X to treat patients who were not admitted to other hospitals: the pilgrims, the poor, and especially those suffering from

venereal diseases considered incurable. Incurable patients were rejected by other hospitals, both because of their unpleasant sores and because these diseases were often traced back to forms of social or moral degradation. The Hospital was thereafter to be called "degli incurabili." The bull mentions especially the fight against syphilis as a priority of the Hospital. The expensive treatment for this new disease, which was brought to Italy by the French troops of Charles VIII, was soon offered for free to the patients of the Hospital San Giacomo. The Hospital also treated other incurable diseases, with the exception of endemic diseases such as the plague and leprosy. The papal bull of Leo X also established that part of the Hospital's assets should be dedicated to helping "honest poor girls."

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

"Illuminated Charters"

<https://www.monasterium.net/mom/IlluminierteUrkunden/collection#english>

Papal bull by Pope Leo X, July 19, 1515, re-founding the hospital of S. Giacomo and promoting it to *Arcispedale*

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvatoris_Nostri_Domini_Jesu_Christi

Book of Hours, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 19

<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/ef332a26-e59b-468d-9905-756f72e86071/>

Vincent Raymond (Wikipedia)

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_Raymond

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