

The printers of subsequent breviaries, recognizing that the feast did not belong to the Universal Church of Rome, assumed it to be a specifically Carmelite one. It was copied in the printed Carmelite breviaries of 1490, 1495, 1504, etc. The feast was never officially authorized by the Carmelite Order.

Its inclusion in this manuscript dates the book as after 1480 and shows that somewhere in the transmission of the text a manuscript has been transcribed from a printed book.

September 16 *Joachimi patris virginis marie – duplex* – The feast of Joachim did not become 'duplex' until 1498 when it was chosen by the General Chapter of the Carmelites at Nîmes. Its inclusion here, in the handwriting of the original scribe, would not necessarily prove that the Book of Hours post-dates 1498 but it does strongly suggest it. The other limit for the manuscript is the ownership inscription dated 1511 (16v).

The main text of a Book of Hours is the Office, or 'Hours', of the Virgin. While the arrangement of psalms and prayers within this office is basically the same in all manuscripts there exist certain variations within the different manuscript texts of the Office. When generations of scribes copied books in a particular district there tended to grow up distinctive variations peculiar to the diocese or interest behind that Book of Hours. This was known as the 'use' of a Book of Hours. A careful study of these 'uses' was prepared by F. Madan and published in the *Bodleian Quarterly Record* in 1920.¹⁶ In this he identifies four characteristics distinctive of a Book of Hours of Carmelite Use all of which features are to be found in the present manuscript. The Hour of Prime contains the antiphon *Assumpta est* and the capitulum *Ab initio* (60v and 61r) while the Hour of None contains the antiphon *Pulchra es* and the antiphon *Sicut cinnamomum* (66r).

Following the Office of the Dead in this Book of Hours are various series of prayers. Amongst these is to be found the famous Carmelite hymn, the *Flos Carmeli*, (leaf 98r). It is preceded by two lines blank and followed by a page and a half left blank. In this manuscript the hymn reads:

*Flos Carmeli vitis florifera
Splendor celi virgo puerpera
Singularis.
Mater mitis sed viri nescia
Carmelitis da privilegia
Stella maris.*

And beneath it:

*Ora pro nobis virgo pia.
Dum fluet unda maris curretque per ethera Phebus, vivet Carmeli
candidus ordo monti.*