



Spotlight

Flowers are Flourishing in our Book of Hours (use of Cambrai, c. 1520)

DR. JÖRN GÜNTHER · RARE BOOKS AG
Manuskripte und seltene Bücher

info@guenther-rarebooks.com
www.guenther-rarebooks.com





Book of Hours,
use of Cambrai
Manuscript in Latin and
French, illuminated in the
circle of the Master of
Charles V.

Southern Netherlands,
Cambrai,
c. 1520

With 14 large and 52 smaller
miniatures, most with fine
border decoration in the
Ghent-Bruges style of
illusionistic painted flowers,
fruits, and animals.

Vellum,
115 x 80 mm,
222 leaves

A number of Flemish Books of Hours have splendid border decoration including fine flowers that often have a symbolic meaning not always known to us today. Please feel free to identify these yourselves....

Aquilegia coerulea - Columbine



Lillium candidum- White Lily

Coronation of the Virgin Mary surrounded by lilies and other white flowers – symbols of purity. Strawberries stand for righteousness and perfection.



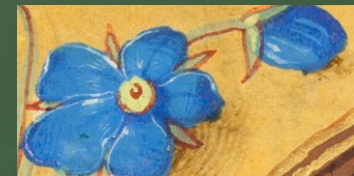
Agrostemma githago –
Corncockle



f. 17v: St John writing on the
island of Patmos

Book of Hours,
Southern Netherlands, Cambrai,
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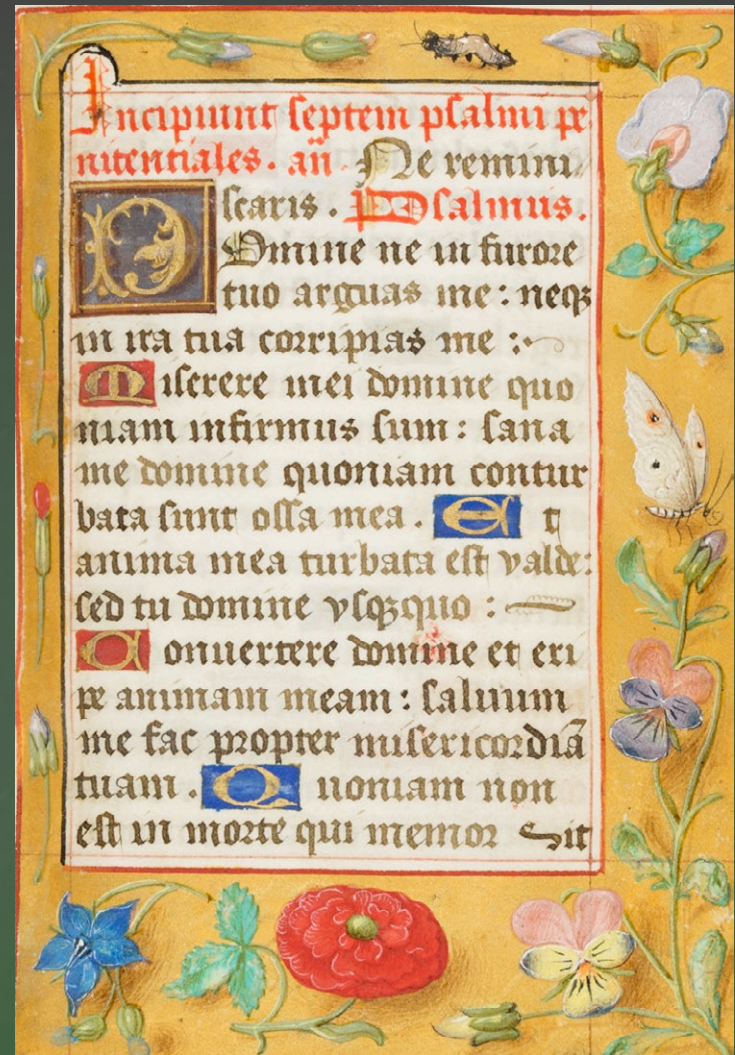
Centaurea Cyanus - Cornflower
Dianthus - Carnation





f. 49v: Annunciation to the
Shepherds,
Book of Hours, Southern
Netherlands, Cambrai,
c. 1520

A blue iris, pink and red carnation,
and a primrose



ff. 72v-73r: David in Penitence at the Seven Penitential Psalms,
Book of Hours
Southern Netherlands, Cambrai, c. 1520



ff. 209v-210r: Adoration of the Holy Sacrament
 by a pope, emperor, bishop, and layman.



Obsacro
te angele mei
custos cui e
go ad promi
dendum com
missus sum
et custodien
dum a deo:

ut custodias me indefinenter
et protegas: visites et defendas
me ab omni periculo et incur
su diaboli: vigilantem ac dor
mientem: nocte et die et horis
continuis ac momentis con
foue me et tuere me ubicunq
iero comitare mecum: repelle
a me per virtutem dei omnes



f.185r: Patron with guardian angel at
Obsecro Te, Book of Hours,
Southern Netherlands, Cambrai,
c. 1520





f. 57r: From caterpillar to
butterfly

Book of Hours, Southern
Netherlands, Cambrai,
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Digitalis – lady's glove



Incipiunt vigilie mortuorum.
Ad vesperras. ant. Placebo. ps.

Office of the Dead: It is unknown where
 or when, but all meet their fate,
 including kings (f. 93r).

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Rosa rossa – red rose
 Another symbol of the Virgin – which
 led eventually to the creation of the
 rosary

← Office of the Dead, including
Nine Lessons (ff. 93r-140v).

Lesson 1: Expulsion of Adam and Eve
from paradise, *Parce mihi domine* (Job 10,1,
Spare me o' Lord, f. 105r)



Lesson 2: Eve nursing, Adam weaving a basket →
 background: Cain and Abel, *Tedet animam meam vite mee*
 (Job 7, 17, My soul is wary of my life, f. 106v)





f. 113v: Mercy between Birth and Death at Lesson 5 (text: Job 14,1),
all in a 'two- storey' room

f. 107v: Funeral service at Lesson 4, *Responde
mihi. Condemnatus sum, Answer me! I am
condemned.*





His mi
 vt in m f
 me: et abscondas
 transeat furor t
 tuas michi temp
 corderis mei. **P**
 tius homo rur si



Spiritus meus atte
 nuabitur: dies mei
 breuiabuntur: et solum mi
 chi superest sepulchrum:
 Non peccavi: et in amaritu
 dinibus moratur oculus me
 us. **L**ibera me domine et po

f. 114v Lesson 6: Souls in
 Purgatory ...and appoint me
 a time when thou wilt
 remember me?

f. 121v Lesson 7: Last rites: a
 man on his deathbed
 between devil and angel
 ...Deliver me, o' Lord, and put
 me next to you



f. 123r Lesson 8:

Job, tormented by the
devil, is visited by his
wife and friend.

*Miseremini mei saltem
vos amici mei* (Job 19:
21)... Have pity on
me, at least, my
friends....

Lily of the valley.



Ignis habet spem: si
 precisum fuerit rursus
 virebit: et rami eius pullulant.
 Si senuerit in terra radix eius
 et in pulvere mortuus fuerit
 truncus illius: ad humorem
 aque germinabit et faciet coma.

f. 124r Lesson 9: *Mundus* (a man with the globe of the earth in his hands), *caro* (a voluptuous woman), *demonia* (devil).

Demonia, diversa movent prelia... the world is (like the devil and the flesh) man's most treacherous enemy.

Quare de volua (vulva) eduxisti me ... why did you bring me out of the womb (Job 10:18-22)



The nine lessons of the Office of the Dead with citations from the Book of Job may seem full of doom and gloom, but they helped the medieval devout to earn a place in the afterlife near God in heaven, and thus made life on earth lighter.

This Book of Hours brought – to those who held it in their hands – the consolation that Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints helped in moments of need. Support is also inferred by the union of nature and beauty, as depicted in the margins.

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Mary, mother of all,
crowned in heaven,
saintly and pure, like
the symbolism of the
white flowers...

Can you identify
more flowers?
Do you know more
about what they
symbolise?
Please send us your
thoughts to
[info@guenther-
rarebooks.com](mailto:info@guenther-rarebooks.com)





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