

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art
Bulletin

Winter 1985/86





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MEDIEVAL CHURCH TREASURIES

Margaret English Frazer

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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Cover: *Statuette-reliquary of Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child* (fig. 57)

Inside front cover: *Detail, page from a manuscript* (fig. 48)

THE MAGNIFICENT Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of medieval Europe are among the glories of Western civilization. Soaring monuments of stone, mortar, and brick, they were the very embodiment of the medieval church's spiritual strength. Man's faith was also expressed eloquently in the decorations and furnishings created for these buildings—sculptures, wood-carvings, radiant stained-glass windows, and precious objects made for the celebration of the liturgy.

These sacred objects, often of the finest and rarest materials (gold, silver, and precious stones or gems), were essential to the celebration of the Mass. They also constituted a principal part of the church's portable wealth—its "treasure"—and therefore were locked away, when not in use during the service, in chests and cabinets within rooms called treasuries. Only a few medieval treasuries have preserved their original rich collections. Many were sacked during war and their contents carried off as booty. In more recent times, holdings were dispersed when monasteries were dissolved or churches closed. It is fortunate indeed that some three hundred liturgical works of art have found their way into the collections of the Metropolitan's Medieval Department and The Cloisters, where they dazzle us today with their sumptuous materials and fine craftsmanship.

The seventy works illustrated in this *Bulletin*, written by Margaret English Frazer, Curator in the Department of Medieval Art, were chosen for their exceptional quality. The presentation is not chronological; instead, the objects are discussed in groups, according to their liturgical prominence. Of primary importance are the vessels of the Eucharist—the chalices, patens, pyxides, and other implements used to administer the bread and wine of the Sacrament. Equally fine secondary liturgical objects such as censers, lamps, crosses, corpora, and croziers could also be housed in the treasury. Service books, often resplendent with jewellike illuminations, make up another category of a church's treasure. A section has been devoted here to reliquaries, believed to contain tangible evidence of the Christian faith in the form of relics of Christ, the Virgin, and saints. Reliquaries proliferated in a wondrous and sometimes curious variety of shapes, from the large statuette of Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child shown on our

cover to the humbler shoe reliquary, fashioned to hold what was thought to be a fragment of a foot bone of Saint Margaret of Antioch, to the fine gold monstrance believed to contain a tooth of Mary Magdalene encased in rock crystal.

Three of the Metropolitan's galleries are devoted to the art of church treasures. The earliest material is found in the corridor to the south of the Museum's main staircase. This collection of Early Christian and Byzantine art, among the finest in the world, includes objects from the so-called Cyprus, Albanian, and Antioch (fig. 1) treasure troves as well as numerous bronze lamps (fig. 27) and ivory and enameled icons (figs. 13, 38). The Medieval Treasury Room, situated between the Sculpture Hall and The American Wing, houses a much larger collection of Western European objects ranging from one of the two surviving Limoges enamel tabernacles (fig. 8) to numerous statuettes and reliquaries of precious materials from the Romanesque through the Late Gothic period. The third gallery is found at The Cloisters in Fort Tryon Park. Although smaller in size than the treasury at the 82nd Street building, it contains such extraordinary works of art as the Bury Saint Edmunds cross (fig. 31), the Saint Trudpert chalice, paten, and straw (fig. 2), and a flabellum, or liturgical fan (fig. 14).

The Museum's holdings of liturgical objects were formed largely through the substantial gifts of several great private collections. J. Pierpont Morgan created a fabulous collection of church objects in the early twentieth century that was donated by his son to the Metropolitan, principally in 1917. The Cloisters building and collections were made possible by gifts from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and family beginning in 1925. In the last twenty years, the scarcity of medieval liturgical objects and the large sums needed to buy them have limited acquisitions but the collection continues to grow through judicious purchases and generous gifts from benefactors, and the Museum's galleries represent not only the splendor of the medieval church and its treasuries but its lasting power to fascinate and enthrall.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

INTRODUCTION

THE PHRASE “medieval church treasures” summons up visions of locked and sealed rooms filled with gold and silver plate, and old wooden chests overflowing with coins. In many cases such images are not illusory. The wealth of a church was based not just on its land holdings but also on the value of its liturgical furnishings, which included stationary objects like altars and chancel screens and readily portable works like chalices, patens, book covers, and reliquaries, all made of the most precious materials. Cultivation of the church’s land produced revenue in coin, while gifts from patrons provided objects for the service. In even the smallest churches, the “treasure” of money and objects had to be stored in a secure location—the treasury, which was usually within easy reach of the church’s sanctuary, where the liturgical vessels were in frequent use.

Our knowledge of the contents of these medieval church treasures comes from inventories, contemporary histories, and chronicles that have survived the vicissitudes of time. The *Liber Pontificalis* (*The Book of the Popes*), which consists of biographies of the bishops of Rome compiled from the sixth century on, is filled with invaluable information on Roman churches and their possessions. The care and pride with which the altar implements, reliquaries, and church furnishings are described in chronicles of later churches—like that of the abbey of Saint Benedict of Monte Cassino, in Campania, Italy, or Abbot Suger’s book on the consecration of the church of Saint-Denis, the burial church of the kings of France—reveal the magic wrought on man by rich objects throughout the Middle Ages. The sheen of their gold and silver surfaces, the glow of their coral, chalcedony, and agate bowls, and the flash of their jeweled decoration, which caught the light of the innumerable candles and lamps in the church, not only caused pleasure to the eye but also uplifted the soul toward God, according to such Neoplatonic theologians as Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite. In the twelfth century, for example, his theology appealed particularly to Suger, the abbot of the French monastery of Saint-Denis, who identified Dionysius with Saint Denis, the apostle to Gaul. The abbot described the effect of the jeweled altar of his monastery’s church in the following terms:

Thus, when—out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God—the loveliness of the many colored

gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues: then it seems to me that I see myself dwelling, as it were, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven; and that, by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner.

Laying up treasures of liturgical vessels and other precious objects in temples long preceded the advent of Christianity. The desire to seek divine favor, to render thanks for prayers answered, and to celebrate publicly one’s wealth and good fortune have been prevalent emotions in mankind. In the ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, temples and sanctuaries were filled with cult objects made from the finest of materials. Our word “treasury” is derived from the Greek *thesauros*. *Thesaurioi*, or treasuries, were built in the Greek city states in such venerable sanctuaries as Olympia and Delphi. Many wonderful objects were deposited in them, like the marvelous chest of cedar, ivory, and gold dedicated by the sixth-century Corinthian tyrant Kypselos in the temple of Hera at Olympia, which was ornamented with a virtual encyclopedia of mythological figures. The Temple of the Jews at Jerusalem also attracted a vast treasure of liturgical objects. In time, both the pagan Greek treasuries and that of the temple in Jerusalem were despoiled by conquering Romans. The booty from the latter, for example, found its way to the emperor Vespasian’s Temple of Peace in Rome, where it was kept in a separate area and remained intact until the barbarian invasions.

The nascent Christian communities in the Mediterranean world, initially poor but increasingly prosperous, followed the pagan custom in providing endowments for the upkeep of their cult buildings, for their clergy, and for liturgical objects required for the service. Even before the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313, at which time the emperors Constantine and Licinius guaranteed freedom of religion to all their people, prosperous Christian churches were established in houses that had been renovated to suit the new cult.

One of the most famous church houses in the mid-third century was discovered during the excavation at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates



River. Its baptistery walls were decorated with paintings of Adam and Eve, some miracles of Christ, and the visit of the women to the tomb of the risen Christ. None of the vessels used in the service at Dura survive. The possessions of a prosperous church house at Cirta, the capital of the North African province of Numidia Cirtensis, are recorded, however, in the official proceedings of a magistrate's court of the confiscation of the church's property under Diocletian in A.D. 303. The church house had several rooms in addition to the sanctuary, including a library and a *triclinium*, or dining room, where the communal meal, *agape*, was probably held and from which the following objects were taken: two gold and six silver chalices, six silver cruets, a small silver basin, two large chandeliers, seven small bronze lamps and their holders, eleven bronze lamps with their chains (presumably for suspension), thirty-eight curtains, and a large quantity of clothing, probably for distribution to the poor. A silver chest and lamp were found hidden behind a vessel in the library. The books, however, were missing from

their cupboards. Called "the writings of the law" by the magistrate who sought them, they were deemed far more important than the chalices by both the authorities and the Christians. At the demand of the Roman officials for the missing property, one book was produced the next day, but it seems to have taken more time and the arrest of the church's subdeacons to retrieve the seventy-two books that the "readers" of the church had hidden in their houses.

With the reign of the emperor Constantine the Great (A.D. 306–37), the fortunes of the Christians changed radically. Although Constantine's adoption of the Christian faith was not officially acknowledged, his actions speak to his conversion. In 312 he defeated his rival emperor, Maxentius, at a battle just north of Rome thought to have been won under the sign of the cross, and a year later, in the Edict of Milan, he assured all citizens freedom of religious practice. His early patronage of the Christian church, however, was cautiously conducted. He built the Basilica of the Savior (now San Giovanni in Laterano) on his imperial property just inside the Roman city

On special occasions the precious relics and liturgical vessels of a medieval church's treasury were carried in religious processions. These facing manuscript leaves from a sumptuous French book of hours, a devotional ordering of texts for private use, depict such a procession in A.D. 590 to celebrate the end of a plague that had decimated the Roman population. Pope Gregory the Great is shown leading townspeople, plague victims, and clerics around the walls of Rome. According to legend, Saint Michael appeared atop the Castel Sant'Angelo and by sheathing his blood-stained sword signaled the end of the plague. French, early 15th century. Tempera and gold leaf on parchment, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. From the Très Riches Heures de Jean, Duc de Berry, fols. 71v–72r. Musée Condé, Chantilly. Photographs courtesy of Giraudon/Art Resource, New York

walls, where it did not compete with the great pagan sanctuaries of the inner city. The furnishings with which he endowed it are recorded in *The Book of the Popes*. They were truly on an imperial scale and set the standard against which future Christian sanctuaries were to be judged for centuries to come.

Chief among Constantine's donations to this first, lavish church was a ciborium of hammered silver erected in the apse over the main altar. It had on its front a five-foot-high statue of the enthroned Savior, as well as statues of the twelve apostles, all of them wearing crowns. On the back, looking toward the apse wall, the Savior was shown again, enthroned and flanked by four angels. The silver of the ciborium weighed two thousand and twenty-five Roman pounds (about 1,519 U.S. pounds). From it and elsewhere in the apse, whose vaulted ceiling was covered with gold, hung great golden crowns carrying oil lamps in the shape of dolphins. Constantine also set up seven silver altars and provided for the service seven golden and sixteen silver patens, seven goblets of pure gold and one, weighing over twenty Roman pounds, of coral mounted in gold and set with gems. He also donated twenty silver goblets, two gold pitchers weighing fifty Roman pounds and twenty smaller ones, and, to complete the service, forty gold and fifty silver smaller chalices. Ten-foot-high brass candlesticks decorated with figures of the prophets were set up in front of the altars. The chalices, patens, and pitchers were used for the celebration of the Eucharist and probably also for the offerings of wine and bread that were brought to the church by the faithful for the service.

This wealth of liturgical vessels had to be stored somewhere in the church. Unfortunately, little contemporary documentation has survived to indicate where in the Lateran basilica these objects were kept. As at the church house at Circa, however, the vessels were probably stored in chests and cupboards in a separate room within easy reach of the sanctuary, perhaps in the church's sacristy. About a century later, at the church of Hagia Sophia, or Holy Wisdom, in Constantinople, a separate cylindrical structure that may have served as a treasury was erected at the northeast corner. It was so termed in a seventh-century text describing the return there of the liturgical fans, patens, chalices, and other sacred vessels after Communion in the church, newly rebuilt by the emperor Justinian.

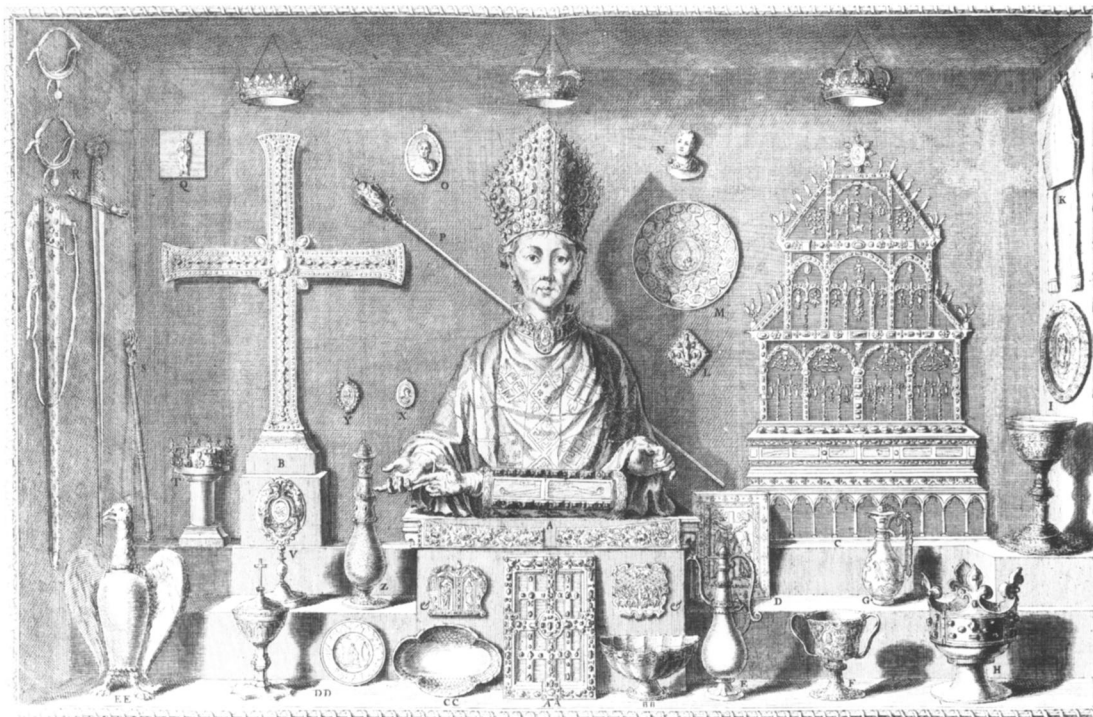
A chest filled with relics and reliquaries from the Early Christian to the Gothic period was found in the altar of the pope's private chapel in the Lateran palace early in this century. According to its inscriptions, it was made for Pope Leo III (795–816). Several of the reliquaries are

listed in the inventories that were drawn up intermittently for the Lateran basilica and were used in the services there.

Inventories were essential for keeping track of the church's possessions and assets. The church of San Marco in Venice, for example, has eighteen inventories that were drawn up between 1283 and 1845. A number of objects, especially reliquaries, appear on all the lists, but each inventory mentions many works that were not found earlier, testifying to the church's increasing wealth through the ages. Furthermore, some of these inventories mention the discovery of a chest or cupboard that previously had been neglected and in which "new" treasures were discovered.

The prominence given to relics and reliquaries in the inventories of San Marco reflects their crucial importance to the life of the church. San Marco was built to house Mark the Evangelist's body, which was brought from Alexandria to Venice by two Venetian merchants in the early ninth century. The present eleventh-century basilica was the largest, and last, of the three churches built to house Mark's body, following in the tradition of Old Saint Peter's, which the emperor Constantine constructed over the apostle's tomb in Rome. It was not essential that a church house the body of a saint, but it was desirable to enclose some relics in the altar or to bury them in the foundations. Around the year 400, for example, Paulinus of Nola had inscribed in the apse of his church at Nola, Italy, a poem that mentions relics of the True Cross (believed to be that on which Christ was crucified) and of apostles and saints that had been placed beneath the altar.

Such yearning for tangible evidence of the Christian faith was related to the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Throughout the Early Christian period and the Middle Ages, Christians traveled long distances, often under great hardship, to visit sites in the Holy Land or to worship at the tomb or before the cult image of a miracle-working saint in Europe. So many pilgrims visited the Constantinian basilica of Saint Peter's in Rome, for example, that soon hostels and then entire districts, like that of the Anglo-Saxons, grew up around the church to accommodate them. The church at the tomb of the apostle James at Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain also drew numerous pilgrims, bringing prosperity not only to Spain but also to the communities along the route, like Sainte-Foy of Conques, France. The body of this famous saint was stolen by the clerics of Conques from the neighboring town of Agen in the ninth century. Some of her relics were placed in a cult statue, through which prayers of the faithful



This early eighteenth-century engraving illustrates the contents of the cupboards in the treasury of Saint-Denis. The objects range from the so-called Screen of Charlemagne (C, upper right) to the jeweled crown of Jeanne d'Evreux, wife of Charles IV, that was used for the coronation of French queens (T, lower left). (Jeanne's book of hours is in *The Cloisters Collection*.) The incense boat of Saint Eloi is depicted in the left center foreground (CC) and Eleanor of Aquitaine's ewer is to the left on the shelf above (Z). From Dom Michel Félibien, *Histoire de l'abbaye royale de Saint-Denis en France, Paris, 1706*, pl. 4

were transmitted to the saint. Hers was a powerful image even to the skeptical Bernard of Angers, who wrote a book of her miracles following his visit to Conques in the early eleventh century. The Cathedral of Cologne, which sheltered the famous Shrine of the Three Kings, drew pilgrims to Germany; the church that housed the body of Saint Maurice d'Agaune, to Switzerland; and that of Saint Thomas Becket, to Canterbury, England. Becket's own pilgrimage route was the setting for Chaucer's famous *Canterbury Tales*.

These churches prospered from pilgrims' donations and royal patronage. The latter was particularly helpful to Abbot Suger in his rebuilding of the church of Saint-Denis. He added a new west façade to the Carolingian nave and a new choir, and he combined the tomb of Saint Denis and his companions Rusticus and Eleutherius with the altar and its tabernacle, where, from at least the thirteenth century, the crowns of the French kings were suspended. Suger zealously refurbished old liturgical vessels, such as the incense burner of the sixth to seventh century attributed to Saint Eloi, and acquired new ones, like the agate chalice at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. He was also quick to adapt gifts to the service of the church. When King Louis presented Suger with a crystal vase, the abbot had a mount made for it so that the vessel could be used at the altar and placed this inscription on its base: "As a bride Eleanor gave this vase to King Louis, Mitadolus to her grandfather, the king to me, and Suger to the Saints."

The treasures of the church, like the treasures

of the temples in an earlier era, were prime targets for pillage, on the one hand, and, in a world without banks, for large-scale loans to princes and kings on the other. Many churches were looted during the Sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410 and by Muslim raiders in 846. The enormous booty gained during the conquest of Constantinople by the armies of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 included precious materials stripped from church furniture and numerous ecclesiastical vessels. The devastation caused by the invaders not only wrought havoc with the government of the cities but also destroyed the local economies. Churches and monasteries were required to surrender their treasures in time of famine to feed the poor and in time of war to support the local prince.

In addition to these incursions into a church's riches, neglect took its toll. Nevertheless, some splendid treasuries survive, such as those of San Marco in Venice, the Cathedral of Aachen, the church of Sainte-Foy of Conques, and of several churches in Zadar, on the Dalmatian coast, including its cathedral, which are now housed in the old Benedictine convent. Numerous other churches have also retained a few of the wonderful objects from their formerly large collections.

In modern times European and American museums have also become rich repositories of objects from medieval treasuries. In Europe the collections have as their foundation former royal possessions or works of art from churches that were closed because of fire, revolution, or simply shifts in modern populations. In America, especially at The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

the collections of objects from medieval church treasuries are based largely on generous gifts of private collectors, such as J. Pierpont Morgan, whose holdings ultimately also derived from dispersed royal and ecclesiastical treasuries. Al-

though the Museum's objects have been separated from their original contexts, they conjure up the variety, wealth, and luminous splendor of the objects that were crowded into the churches and into their treasuries in the medieval period.

A view of the north end of the recently installed Medieval Treasury at The Metropolitan Museum of Art shows many of the objects that are discussed and illustrated in this Bulletin. In the cases in the foreground, for example, are such late medieval liturgical works as the reliquary of Saint Christopher (fig. 57) and the Spanish altar cross (fig. 32).



The treasury of the royal chapel (now the cathedral) at Aachen, Germany, still contains objects that were made during the reign of the emperor Charlemagne in the ninth century, such as the ivory diptych with scenes from the life of Christ in the first case to the left in this photograph of the treasury's lower floor. Subsequent rulers further enriched the collection with such objects as the jeweled cross, made ca. 1000, with a gem on its base depicting King Lothair (r. 855–69) in the case at the back left and the large reliquary casket made for the coronation of Frederick II Hohenstaufen in 1215 and extensively reworked in modern times. Treasury of the Cathedral of Aachen. Photograph by Klaus Herzog



PRINCIPAL LITURGICAL OBJECTS

AMONG THE MOST important items in the church treasuries that survive today or that are known through deeds of gift or intermittent inventories are vessels that were used for the service of the church. Chief among them are the cups, or chalices (sometimes with their straws), ewers, and cruets that contained the eucharistic wine and the patens, or plates, and small boxes, pyxides, that held the sanctified bread. Without these vessels the Communion of the clergy and con-

gregation could not take place. They were made in many different materials, depending on the wealth of the church or of its patrons. Terracotta, glass, and base metals were used, but examples generally have not survived because of their fragility. More costly and durable media like silver, gold, or valuable hardstone such as chalcedony and sardonyx were preferred out of a desire to do honor to God by serving the consecrated wine and bread, the Blood and Body of



1. Formed in the late Roman manner from a simple inner bowl overlaid with elaborate figural openwork, this magnificent chalice was believed to have been made for a church in Antioch until that attribution was recently proven incorrect. The chalice, which was made for a church elsewhere in Syria, is one of the most elaborately worked Christian liturgical vessels that survives. Its rich imagery depicts Christ as earthly teacher and resurrected savior accompanied by his apostles. Byzantine, late 5th–early 6th century. Silver, partly gilt, h. 7½ inches, diam. 6 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1950 (50.4)



2. This set of chalice, paten, and straw, made for Saint Trudpert's monastery near Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, portrays Christ Enthroned, who joins his apostles in a lively discussion within the arcades of the chalice's cup. Below, Old Testament scenes on the foot prefigure the events in Christ's life depicted on the knop. The paten's imagery juxtaposes the sacrificial offerings of Abel and Melchizedek with those of Christ, who holds the sacraments, and Saint Trudpert, who brandishes his palm of martyrdom. Inscriptions on the set underscore the theme of salvation through Christ and the Eucharist. German (Freiburg im Breisgau), ca. 1235. Workshop of Master Johannes. From the monastery of Saint Trudpert near Freiburg im Breisgau. Silver, partly gilt, niello, gems; h. chalice 8 inches, diam. paten 8³/₄ inches, l. straw 8¹/₂ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1947 (47.101.26–29)

Christ, in chalices or on plates of the purest materials. Even before the peace of the church under Constantine (A.D. 313), seemingly small Christian communities like that at Circa had gold and silver chalices, patens, ewers, and spoons for the Eucharist. Documents such as *The Book of the Popes* clearly reveal first the emperor's and then the bishops' responsibility in furnishing and renewing liturgical objects, particularly the principal vessels employed in the Eucharist. These objects—along with reliquaries and furnishings (church furniture, like altars or chancel screens)—formed the “treasure” of the early churches.

The Christian Eucharist derived from the gospel accounts of the Last Supper, the Passover meal that Christ shared with his disciples before his betrayal and Passion. According to the Gospel of Saint Matthew (26:26–28): “Christ took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: Take ye and eat. This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many unto remission of sins.” As recounted in the Acts of the Apostles, this supper became the model for the gathering of the faithful at a communal meal after Christ's death and Resurrection.

By the second century a morning service had developed that was separate from the evening meal, and in the course of time houses were converted into churches for this eucharistic service and for the baptism of new members. How soon a group of vessels was set aside solely for the Communion of the faithful cannot be determined, but by the third century the altar service for the celebration of the Communion at the church house at Circa seems to have been extensive. Most important were the chalice and paten for the serving of the wine and the bread. Many examples of both are listed in Constantine's gifts to the Lateran basilica and Old Saint Peter's in Rome. To receive the offerings of bread and wine that the faithful brought to the church, there were also large ewers and plates, perhaps set out on offertory tables. Smaller jugs or cruets were used to mix water with the wine, and boxes, either circular or square, were also made for the storage of the consecrated bread that had not been consumed during the service.

No examples of these early vessels from before the sixth century have survived. At that time wars and invasions of nomadic tribes into the territory of the old Roman Empire, stretching from England to the Near East, forced the abandonment of churches and in some cases the burial of their treasures. Among the most im-



portant of these hoards are troves of liturgical vessels found in Syria at the beginning of this century. The objects from this treasure are divided among the Louvre and several American museums, including the Metropolitan. One of their most impressive pieces is the so-called Antioch Chalice (fig. 1), whose elaborate workmanship is a product of late Roman taste. An openwork cage of silver gilt worked with imagery of Christ and his apostles seated within a grapevine scroll encases a simple silver cup. Christ is depicted both as teacher and risen Lord in the company of his immediate followers. This eucharistic imagery of salvation is characteristic of chalice decoration throughout church history. Its didactic message, drawn from the gospel, expresses the meaning of Christ's Incarnation and offers to his followers the possibility of redemption through the Communion.

The elaborate design and execution of the Antioch Chalice suggest that it was made as the principal vessel of a set of chalices of simpler design like those from other finds in Syria. In the list of the emperor Constantine's gifts to the Lateran basilica a distinction is made between the jeweled coral chalice weighing twenty Roman pounds and the seven gold and twenty

silver ones that weighed ten and fifteen pounds respectively. The coral chalice, like the Antioch Chalice, may have served as the principal vessel among smaller chalices used for distribution of wine to the faithful.

The Antioch Chalice displays the basic form used for Christian chalices throughout history. Its cup is raised on a stem that is decorated with a molding, called a knop, and set on a sturdy foot. But within this standard, medieval chalices display many variations. A thirteenth-century chalice with its paten and straw (fig. 2) from the abbey of Saint Trudpert near Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, and now in The Cloisters Collection, shares with the Antioch Chalice a cage-cup design and a sense of *horror vacui*, evident in its overall decoration of Old and New Testament imagery set in dense rinceaux. The two chalices are also of approximately the same height and diameter. Their designs, however, are extremely different: the large cup and short foot of the Antioch Chalice contrast with the much shallower bowl and taller stem of the medieval work. The Saint Trudpert chalice held much less wine than the Antioch Chalice, probably because from the ninth century on, the Communion was considered more and more sa-

3. Stylized acanthus and a wreath design decorate the body and neck of the simply formed ewer (inside right) found with a treasure trove of Christian and barbarian art in the vicinity of Vrap, near Durazzo, Albania. The inscription around the neck refers to the holy water the vessel contained, while monograms on the base give the name of Zenobius, the donor. The enameled cruet (right) and the pair of silver Late Gothic ones (left and inside left) performed similar functions but are clearly products of different cultures. Ewer: Byzantine, 7th–8th century. Silver, partly gilt, h. $9\frac{3}{16}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1704). Enameled cruet: French (Limoges), 13th century. Champlevé enamel on copper, h. $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1947 (47.101.39). Silver cruets: German (Lübeck), 1518. By Hans Plate. Silver, partly gilt, h. $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.218,219)

cred, and fewer and fewer Christians partook of the bread and wine except on major feast days like Christmas and, especially, Easter. They allowed the priest to take Communion on their behalf. The chalice's paten therefore is also quite small and was made to fit on top of the chalice, as was often the custom in the medieval church. The third, much smaller implement made as part of the Saint Trudpert set was the straw, called a *fistula*, with which the wine was drunk from the chalice. Sometimes pairs of straws survive. The straw was used to prevent any possibility that even a drop of the wine, the Blood of Christ, be accidentally spilled.

The increasing sanctity of the Eucharist in the minds of the priests and of the faithful, and the consequent reluctance of the congregation to take Communion, also prompted a dramatic decrease in the size of other eucharistic vessels—for example, the ewer and its successor, the cruet. Compare, for example, a seventh- to eighth-century silver-gilt ewer found in Albania (fig. 3, inside right) with the richly decorated French thirteenth-century cruet from the enamel workshops of Limoges (fig. 3, right). The former has a capacity of about one quart, the latter of about one-half cup. Even smaller is a very fine pair of silver cruets (fig. 3, left, inside left) made in Lübeck, Germany, in 1518 and labeled on their lids "water" and "wine."

4. *Miracle scenes, which symbolized salvation through Christ, were commonly portrayed on ivory pyxides. In addition to storing the eucharistic bread, this box showing the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes may have served in distributing the bread to the faithful at the close of the service, as is recorded in some Early Christian texts. Byzantine, 6th century. From the church of San Pedro de la Rua at Estella, Spain. Ivory with copper-gilt mounts, wood; diam. 4½ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.34)*



Despite the changes in the size of these vessels, their function mandated a certain similarity of form and decoration. The shape of the container for the Host, however, varied widely. The most common form was the circular pyxis used to store the sanctified bread throughout the Early and the Late Middle Ages. The Early Christian and Byzantine collection at the Metropolitan Museum contains a number of examples. Among the finest is an ivory box (fig. 4) that is decorated with a relief of Christ performing the Miracle of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, imagery most appropriate to the box's function. The circular shape was supplemented by a variety of other pyxis forms. Especially captivating is a dove (fig. 5), which was suspended above the altar, evoking the presence of the Holy Ghost. In the Late Middle Ages a new form called a monstrance was introduced, in response to an increase in devotion to the consecrated Host that led in turn to a change in the liturgy in which the priest elevated the Host for the congregation to see and adore. Figure 6 presents a very fine late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century German or Flemish monstrance. Its Flamboyant Gothic upper structure, multi-storied and pinnacled, is filled with images of the Baptism and Crucifixion of Christ, the Virgin, and saints, above a central oculus, within which an angel holds aloft a crescent moon that supported the sanctified wafer. This *mise-en-scène* rests upon a much simpler, tall base by which the priest held the monstrance high, either at the celebration of the Eucharist or in procession during the Feast of Corpus Christi.

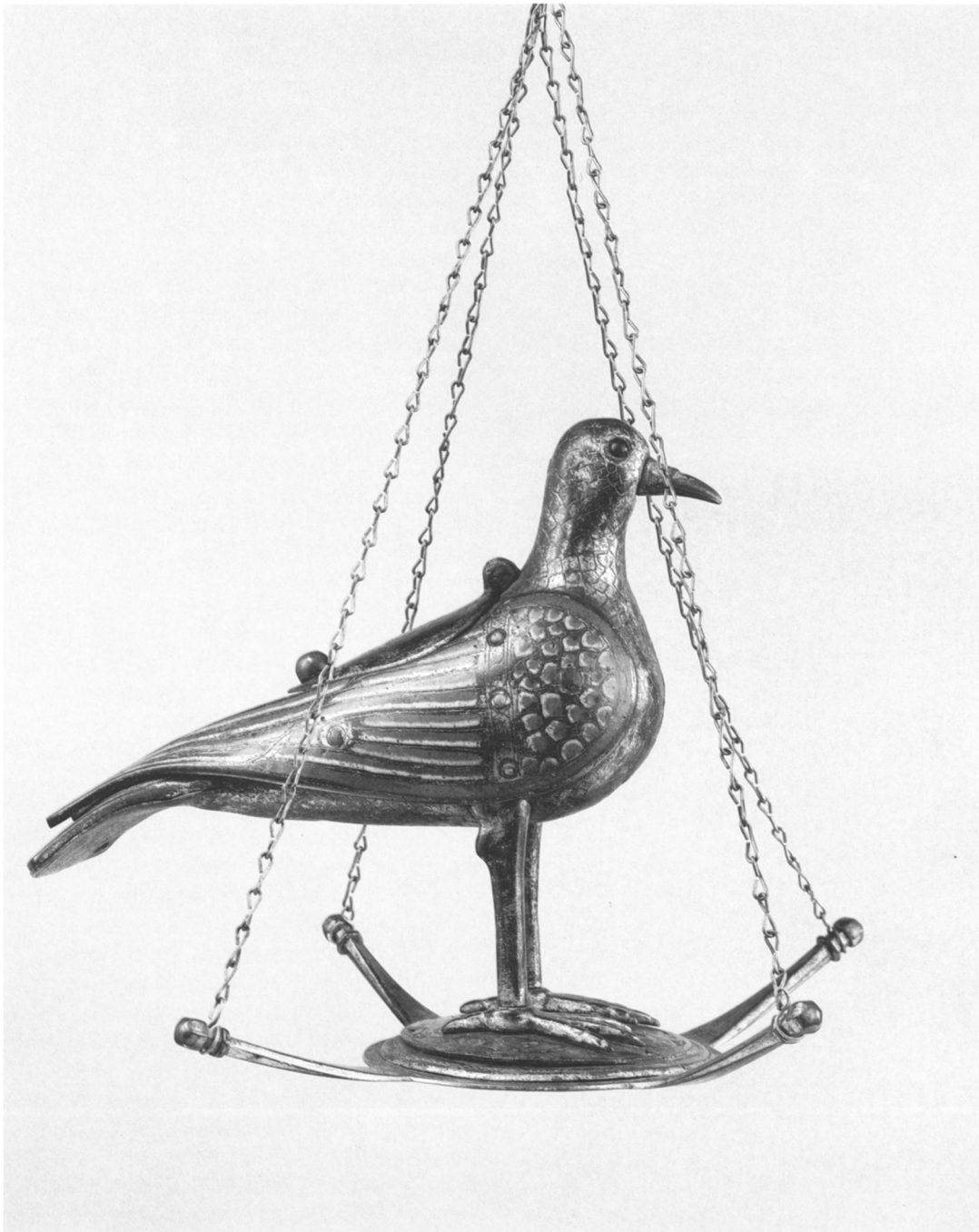
Whereas the function of the pyxides and chalices that we have discussed is clear, that of other liturgical objects such as the tabernacle in the Medieval Treasury Room (fig. 8) is more difficult to unriddle. It is shaped like a gabled house and is richly decorated on the exterior with images of the Virgin and Christ and on the inside with cycles of scenes representing the Crucifixion and the events following Christ's Resurrection, such as the visit of the Virgin and Mary Magdalene to the empty tomb or Christ pulling Adam from Hades. Only one similar tabernacle is known from the medieval period. It comes from the Cathedral of Chartres and is also illustrated with scenes from the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. These tabernacles were probably kept on the altar, where they may have served as receptacles for the chalice and pyxis when the vessels were not in use during the service. Such an important object may have been used for a more dramatic purpose during the major feasts of Easter Week; it has been suggested that the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was symbolized by placing the sanctified bread

covered with a “shroud” inside this tabernacle. On Easter Day, the shrine would have been opened—all parts of this tabernacle swing out to form a two-dimensional tableau—to celebrate Christ’s Resurrection. This and similar liturgical reenactments of events from the Gospels were an integral part of the religious life of a church in the Middle Ages.

Changes in the format of the Christian service throughout the medieval period, as well as changes in artistic taste, affected the design of even the most conservative of liturgical vessels. Those that were considered not suited to the needs of a given period might be melted down to provide the material for more useful or up-to-

date works. If the vessel were of particular importance, because of the character of its maker or donor or because it belonged to a famous church, it would be kept in the church’s treasury and brought out for use on feast days and other important occasions. Although the abbey church of Saint-Denis suffered great deprivations throughout its history, a few of the vessels that Suger had made, like his chalice, ewer, and vase, survived not only because of the beauty of their workmanship but also because of the character of the famous abbot.

Medieval liturgical vessels were also preserved as symbols of military might and conquest. Many chalices and reliquaries that were



5. Quite a few liturgical objects in the shape of doves survive from the Early Middle Ages. Most are thought to have been containers for the Host, like this fine example, whose modern mount and chains indicate how it was suspended over an altar. Its brightly colored *champlevé* enamel is characteristic of many objects made in the area of Limoges, in south central France, which was famous for its prolific enamel and metalworking ateliers. French (Limoges), early 13th century. Enamel on copper, partly gilt, h. 7⁵/₈ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.334)

6. Gothic craftsmen often adopted the richly decorated Flamboyant style of cathedral buildings to liturgical objects like this monstrance, which displayed the Host in the central oculus. Images of the Baptism and Crucifixion of Christ, the Virgin in Glory, and saints fill the architecture. German or Flemish, late 15th–early 16th century. Silver gilt, h. 24³/₈ inches. The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.226)



looted from the palaces and churches of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204–61) and the Latin occupation of the city were placed in the treasury of San Marco in Venice as emblems of victory rather than being melted down like so much of the other booty from that imperial city. Although many pieces have been lost from the San Marco treasury over the centuries, enough remain to give us a sense of the glories of the liturgical furnishings of the Byzantine churches and imperial chapels in Constantinople during the Middle Ages.

The eucharistic service in which the chalice, paten, ewer, and pyxis were used developed from the accounts of Christ's Last Supper that were recorded in the four Gospels. They contain the unique accounts of Christ's birth, teaching, miracles, death, and Resurrection and thus constitute the most important of the Christian texts—the "writings of the law," to adopt the words of the magistrate who confiscated the books from the church house at Circa. This dependence of religion on a text had ancient precedents, of course, particularly in Judaism. So important was the gospel book, that it was the only object allowed on the altar in the Early Christian church. The mosaics of the fifth-century dome of the Baptistry of the Orthodox in Ravenna, for example, show gospel books open on altars as emblems of the New Law. During mass, the gospel book was taken from the altar and carried in solemn procession to the pulpit by the deacon who was to read from it. Subdeacons swinging censers and acolytes holding torches or candles accompanied the holy book to and from the altar during the Early Middle Ages.

So important a manuscript demanded a precious binding. Several silver relief plaques (figs. 9, 10) with images of the apostles were found with the so-called Antioch Treasure and may have served this purpose. Those showing the figures of Peter and Paul, Christ's Apostles to the Jews and the Gentiles, depict the apostles standing under richly decorated ceremonial arches with peacocks, symbols of resurrection, in their spandrels and a eucharistic vine scroll around the border. The symbols of the four evangelists were also popular as book decoration; an example is the Museum's ninth-century German or North Italian ivory plaque (fig. 11), where the Apocalyptic beasts fill the quadrants formed by a cross, at whose center is the Lamb of God. In two book covers (figs. 12, 13) that come from the Cathedral of Jaca in Spain, two eleventh-century ivories depicting the Crucifixion, one Spanish and the other Byzantine, are set within jeweled and filigree mounts.



7. A small but nonetheless imposing tripartite tabernacle, decorated with the Virgin and Child flanked by two kneeling male saints, is depicted in this fourteenth-century manuscript illumination. Set at the back of the altar, the tabernacle is shown open with the chalice and paten placed in front of it. A priest holds the Host in his hands at the moment in the Eucharist when the bread is believed to change into the Body of Christ. Italian (Florence), third quarter of the 15th century. Tempera and gold leaf on parchment, $16\frac{3}{8} \times 19\frac{1}{16}$ inches. Gift of Louis L. Lorillard, 1896 (96.32.8)

8. This very large early thirteenth-century tabernacle was made in Limoges. Its principal elements—the doors and central interior panel—are decorated with separately cast figures showing Christ and the Virgin in Majesty, Christ's Deposition from the cross, and scenes that occurred after the Lord's Resurrection. All other surfaces are covered with flat enameled images of additional post-Resurrection scenes. Although the colors have lost their original vibrancy (the tabernacle was found buried at Plumejeau in Chevres near Cognac, France), they are vivid enough to allow the modern viewer to appreciate how impressive this tabernacle must have been when seen by the congregation seated in the nave of the unknown church for which it was made. French (Limoges), first half of the 13th century. Enamel on copper, partly gilt, w. (when open) 33 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.735)





9, 10. These two silver relief plaques with images of Saint Paul, apparently reading from an open book (fig. 9), and Saint Peter holding a cross-staff (fig. 10) were found with the chalice (fig. 1) and two other covers (one of which [47.100.36] is in the Metropolitan's collections) that depict pairs of unidentified saints. The plaques are thought to have served as covers for sacred books—in the case of

Peter and Paul, perhaps for editions of their epistles. The vine scrolls growing from the center of the lower border end at the top in a cross. Birds perch on branches, from which hang birdcages, which perhaps symbolize the soul constrained by unbelief. Byzantine, 6th century. Silver, originally partly gilt; h. $10\frac{5}{8}$ inches (fig. 9), $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches (fig. 10). Fletcher Fund, 1950 (50.5.1,2)



11 (opposite page). Half-figures of the four beasts of the Apocalypse—which constantly give glory, honor, and thanks to God, according to the Book of Revelation (4:6–9)—are framed by the arms of a cross on this beautifully carved book cover. As representatives of the four evangelists, they surround the Lamb of God at the center of the cross, perhaps in imitation of Saint John's vision, in which the beasts are described as being "in the midst of . . . and round about the throne." German or North Italian, probably 9th century. Ivory, h. $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.38)





12, 13. These book covers are closely related to each other in format, in the setting of the gems amidst tightly scrolling filigree rinceaux, and in the inclusion of ivories (one Spanish and one Byzantine) of the Crucifixion at their centers. Their different widths, how-

ever, indicate that they were not made as the front and back covers of the same book but perhaps as "twin" covers of the fronts of two liturgical manuscripts. The Spanish ivory figures on the narrower cover (fig. 12) are set on a silver ground that bears a



raised Latin inscription reading "Jesus the Nazarene" and "Felicia the Queen." The latter, who died in 1083, may have been the consort of Sancho Ramírez, king of Aragon and Navarre. Covers: Spanish; ivories: Spanish (fig. 12) and Byzantine (fig. 13);

11th century. From the Cathedral of Jaca in Spain. Silver gilt, ivory, and gems on a wooden core; $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ inches (fig. 12); $10\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ inches (fig. 13). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.33,134)

SECONDARY LITURGICAL OBJECTS

MANY LITURGICAL IMPLEMENTS other than the primary eucharistic vessels were used in the celebration of the Mass. They, too, were stored in the sacristy, when in current use, or in the church's treasury.

A flabellum (fig. 14), or liturgical fan, made in the Rhineland around 1200 and now at The Cloisters, is a particularly fine German example of an object that first served a practical function, that of keeping flies from the Eucharist. All that remains of the fan is the head, which originally was set in a long shaft by means of the elongated triangular flange at its base. The surface is richly

ornamented with concentric bands of silver-gilt, jeweled, and enameled friezes decorated with stylized acanthus-leaf, scroll, and palmette patterns. A central boss opens to reveal a compartment for a now-lost relic. The fan was held by a subdeacon who stood behind the altar while the bread and the wine were being prepared for distribution at the Eucharist. Whether he actually waved it cannot be established. Considering this reliquary-fan's fragility, one assumes that it probably served as a replacement for the peacock-feather fans that were originally used. Peacock-feather fans were still recorded in church



14. This flabellum, or liturgical fan, comes from the collections of the State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, where its companion piece still remains. Byzantine to late medieval illustrations depicting the Communion of the apostles often show flabella being used in pairs or even in larger multiples. German (Rhineland, perhaps Cologne), late 12th century. Gilt bronze, champlevé enamel, silver, glass gems, diam. 11½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1947 (47.101.32)



15. The well-worn censer (left), incense boat (center), and censer lid (right) bear witness to the regular use of incense in the medieval Christian service. The form of the censer lid imitates the architecture of a church within city walls. The incense would have been placed in its missing lower bowl, and the smoke would have escaped through the church's windows. Censer: French, 13th century. Champlevé enamel on copper, partly gilt, h. 7½ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1950 (50.7.3a,b). Incense boat: French, 13th century. Champlevé enamel on copper, partly gilt, l. 4 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.126). Censer lid: Mosan, mid-12th century. Bronze gilt, h. 4⅞ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1979 (1979.285)

inventories in the Late Middle Ages; they were employed during the pontifical masses at Saint Peter's, for example.

The burning of incense during religious rites goes back at least to the Babylonian civilization. Its Christian use surely evolved from that of the Romans, who employed it in the cult of the dead and burned it on the altars of gods such as Bacchus. It was an integral part of Jewish religious life as well. The High Priest, for example, offered incense to God within the temple's Holy of Holies. The earliest references to it in the Christian rite, usually in connection with burial of the dead, occur about the fourth century. In both Eastern and Western rites, however, the use of incense rapidly expanded to suit many occasions during the service. For example, deacons carrying censers and acolytes carrying torches often preceded the bishop in his procession from the church's entrance to its altar and at his exit at the end of the service. Furthermore, when the deacon went from the altar to the pulpit to read the gospel, he was accompanied by both the torch bearers and the censuring subdeacons. In the later Middle Ages, the altar was also censured during the service. Incense was used in other contexts as well. Pope Sergius (687–701), for example, had censers placed before three golden images of Saint Peter in Old Saint Peter's.

Of the Byzantine censers that have been found on the sites of a number of churches in the

Mediterranean world, a few are of silver but the majority are of less expensive materials like bronze or copper. The censers in the collections at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Cloisters date from the Romanesque and Gothic periods. A colorful enamel censer (fig. 15, left) made in the prolific workshops of Limoges in the thirteenth century displays a standard medieval design of a bowl raised on a splayed foot topped by a perforated lid, through which the aromatic smoke escaped. The incense was often kept in a boat-shaped vessel that could be opened from one side like the contemporary vessel with dragon-headed handles (fig. 15, center).

Whereas this censer and the incense boat are decorated with traditional rinceau and animal designs, the lid of another censer that is at The Cloisters (fig. 15, right) may imaginatively recreate in miniature the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The lower four arches might represent the *tympana* of the city's gates, behind which rises a centrally planned cross-shaped church. Old Testament imagery within the arches prefigures the sacrifice of Christ on the cross for the salvation of man and suggests the eucharistic bread and wine on the altar, which were censured before Communion. The censer's architectural decoration reflects a traditional design, which again can be seen, this time in its Gothic form, in a silver censer in the Metropolitan's Medieval Treasury (fig. 16) from the



16. A masterly knowledge of the silversmith's art is demonstrated by this beautifully wrought censer made in Germany in the early fifteenth century. The complex Gothic design of superimposed stories of openwork windows is complemented by the slender chains with which the censer was swung during the service at the Cathedral of Basel in Switzerland, in whose treasury it is recorded as early as 1477. German (upper Rhineland), early 15th century. Silver, h. 32 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.360)

17. Scenes from the Passion and Resurrection of Christ are depicted above those of his Infancy on this early ivory holy-water bucket, or situla. This view shows part of two adjacent registers of scenes. On the left, a soldier raises a whip with which to scourge Christ. On the right is the Crucifixion with the sun and moon above the arms of the cross. Longinus pierces Christ's side with his spear and Stephaton holds up the sponge of vinegar for Christ to drink. The Baptism of Christ is portrayed in the lower compartments. Copper-gilt inlays decorate the situla's raised ivory borders. German (lower Rhineland), 10th century. From the church of Saints Peter and Paul at Kranenburg. Ivory, bronze gilt, glass inserts; h. 8½ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.45)

18. The holy water was drawn from a situla by means of a whisk or by an aspergillum, like this Late Gothic example from The Cloisters Collection. The water filled the aspergillum's pierced circular head and was sprinkled through its perforations over the altar and congregation before Communion, usually upon the singing of Psalm 50, verse 9 ("Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be cleansed . . ."). French, 15th century. Copper gilt, silver, amber, champlevé enamel, l. 9¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1958 (58.137)

Cathedral of Basel in Switzerland. The Gothic censer preserves the original chains by which it was swung during the service and the loop that was used to raise the lid for replenishing the incense.

Another vessel connected with ritualistic cleansing and exorcism is the holy-water bucket, or *situla*, and its sprinkler, or *aspergillum*. Holy water was sprinkled over the altar and congrega-

tion before the celebration of Communion at the main mass on Sundays. The practice is recorded as early as the ninth century. The Museum possesses a very beautiful ivory *situla* (fig. 17) that was made in the tenth century in the lower Rhine region of Germany. The *aspergillum* in figure 18 was made much later. The *situla* was once in the treasury of the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul at Kranenburg, Germany. Its unbroken width indicates that the ivory is a cross section of a large elephant's tusk. The *situla*'s walls are divided into two lateral registers filled with panels showing scenes from Christ's Infancy, Passion, and Resurrection—fitting subjects for a container of the redemptive holy water. The carving displays small, vibrant figures that, in their tense movements, convey the tragedy of the events they enact. The bucket was carried by a bronze handle, and bronze-gilt lozenges and triangular inlays decorate the raised ivory bands that divide one scene from another. Originally richly gilded, these mounts carried into the Middle Ages the ancient love of the contrast between the mellow ivory and the glittering gold.

Ivory, a popular material for combs of the wealthy classes, was also used for liturgical combs. Usually double-edged with one row of wide teeth and one of narrow, these objects were employed during the ritual robing of a priest before he celebrated the Mass. A painting at The Cloisters (fig. 20) shows the investiture of Saint Augustine as bishop of Hippo, North Africa. On the floor in front of the saint, who is being crowned with the miter, are implements used in the celebration. To the right, an acolyte holds a comb as well as two cruets on a book. A comb in the Metropolitan's Medieval Treasury Room (fig. 19) also must have served a liturgical function. It is decorated at its openwork center with the images of four stags (one or two of which look more like bunnies than stags) confronting a Tree of Life, a Christian image of salvation that was particularly popular in the Romanesque and Early Gothic periods. The comb's large size—it is a foot in length—points to its symbolic liturgical function rather than to its secular use.

Another type of ivory object from the medieval period, an oliphant, is also preserved in churches and in their treasuries. Its liturgical function, however, remains obscure, since its shape, like that of the comb, is adapted from that of an object used in everyday life—in this case, the hunting horn. The Metropolitan Museum has several magnificently carved examples in the Medieval and Islamic departments. One early example (fig. 21), thought to have been made in the twelfth century in Italy, is carved with the Lamb of God and displayed eagles, and may well



17



18



19



20



21

19. The image on this liturgical comb—stags flanking the Tree of Life, which grew in the Garden of Eden—commonly denoted salvation through Christ in Early Christian and medieval art. The comb was used for a variety of rituals, including the robing of a priest, as shown in the adjacent painting (fig. 20). The Tree of Life imagery, however, was also associated with baptism, and this comb may have been used during the ritual preparation of a baptismal candidate. French or Italian, 12th–13th century. Ivory, h. 12 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1955 (55.29.3)

20. A number of medieval paintings depict sacred events inside a church. In this detail, showing a scene from Saint Augustine's life, the Father of the Church receives the regalia of his bishopric of Hippo. Acolytes hold liturgical vessels that are not dissimilar to some in this Bulletin—for example, the two silver cruets (fig. 3), the censer (fig. 16), the incense boat (fig. 15), and the comb (fig. 19). Flemish, ca. 1490. By the Master of Saint Augustine. Oil on wood, 54¼ × 59 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1961 (61.199)

21. The eagles, birds, griffins, and other fantastic beasts displayed on this oliphant have both heraldic and religious connotations. The eagles, for example, were often symbols of rulers. They also suggested the age-old theme of resurrection and thus were an appropriate accompaniment to the image here of the cross-bearing Lamb of God in Paradise. The metal mounts with rings were used for carrying the horn and for hanging it, perhaps over an altar. Italian, 12th century. Ivory, l. 17 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.218)



22



23

22. This sacred box for holy oils, called an olearium, uses architectural elements in a fanciful design of crocketed, tiled roof, dentelated base and cornice, and corner colonnettes. The four crouching lions forming the feet of the casket guard its sacred contents. French, 15th century. Silver, partly

gilt, h. 4⅜ inches. Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1947 (47.150.2)

23. The plaque depicting Christ meeting his disciples on the road to Emmaus and then dining with them inside the walls of the city may have been part of an olearium. The decorative animal and floral motifs in-

cised and originally inlaid with gold on the frame contrast with the undulating high-relief surfaces. This ivory is one of the finest surviving examples of the inventive art of the Carolingian period. Carolingian, ca. 860–80. Ivory, l. 9¼ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1970 (1970.324.1)



24. The beautiful portable altar illustrated may have been commissioned for the collegiate church in Brunswick, Lower Saxony, that was dedicated to the Virgin and Saints John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul as a gift of the church's founder, Countess Gertrude. The patron saints are recorded in the inscription in niello on silver around the porphyry panel set into the top surface of the altar. Figures in relief of Christ, the Virgin, angels, apostles, and other saints decorate the sides. Most of the figures stand under brilliantly enameled arches, surrounded by the altar's heavily jeweled borders. German (Hildesheim), ca. 1045. Gold, cloisonné enamel, gems, and pearls on an oak core, l. 10½ inches. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of the John Huntington Art and Polytechnic Trust

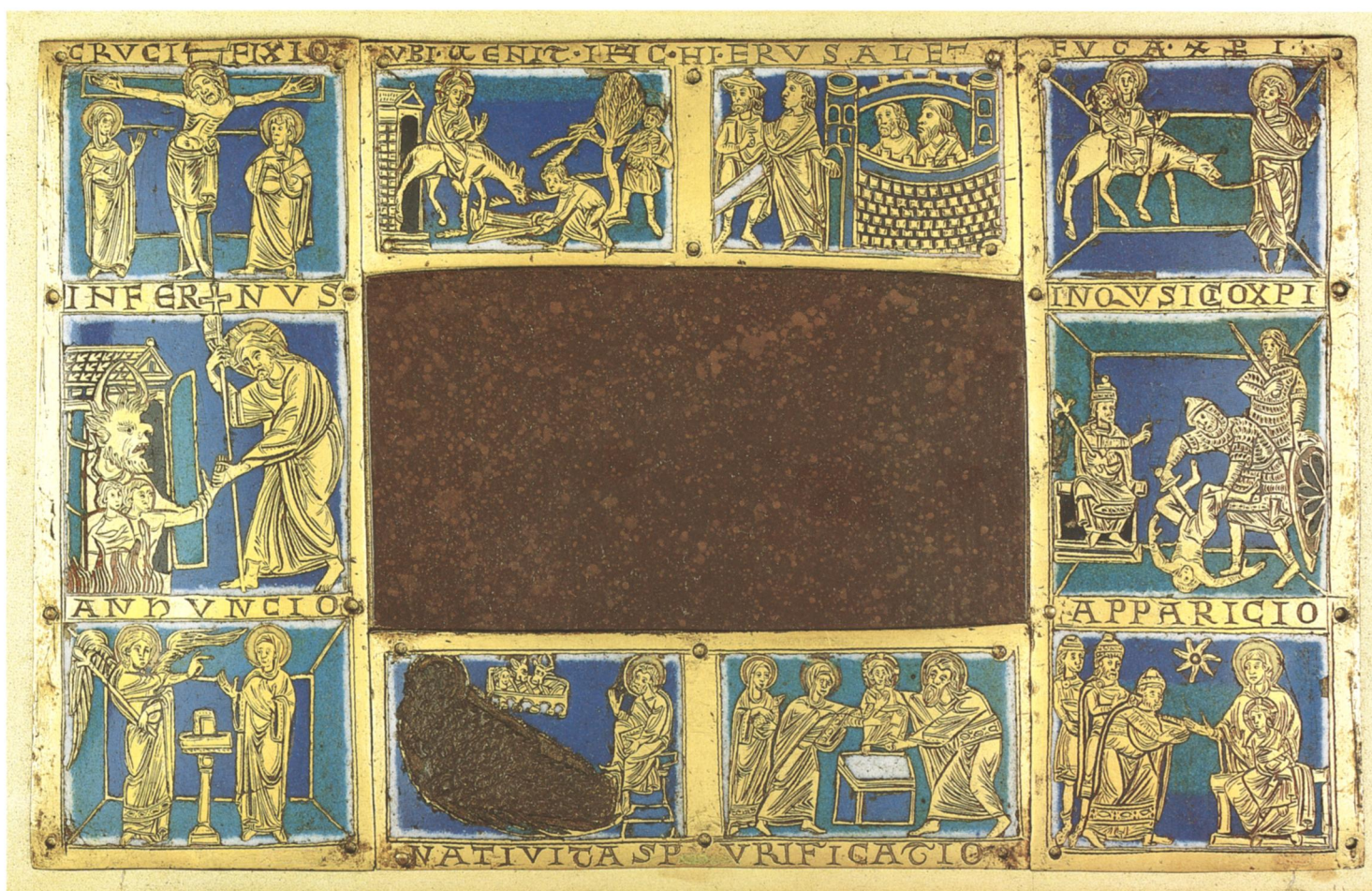
have been used in the service as a horn or reliquary, or for some ceremonial function.

The act of anointing was an important part of Christian religious ritual, and from the medieval period on, small vials of holy oils were stored in containers called *olearia*. Some, like a fifteenth-century French silver casket (fig. 22), are fitted inside with three mounts to avoid spillage of the precious oils. One was used for baptism, a second for confirmation, and a third for extreme unction. A very beautiful ivory plaque (fig. 23) that is carved with scenes of Christ on the road to Emmaus and dining with his disciples may have served as one side of an *olearium*. The oils also had other functions in the church—for example, at the consecration of a new bell or an altar. The oils were prepared and blessed only once a year on the Thursday of Holy Week, and thus their storage for the following twelve months was carefully regulated.

The holy oils were kept in cases that allowed ready transportation since they were administered not only in the presbytery and the baptistery of a church but also at sickbeds. Other liturgical vessels, like the chalice, paten, cruet, and pyxis, were also carried to the sick, to soldiers on military campaigns, or on missionary voyages. The itinerant priests and missionaries also took with them a consecrated altar. It could be a special panel of cloth like the *antimension* used in the Greek and Eastern churches or a panel of stone, usually set in a rectangular wooden box and called a portable altar, employed in the West. Like church altars, they often contained relics. Saint Willibrord (658–739), for example, brought with him to Germany an altar containing a fragment of the True Cross and of the *sudarium*, or towel, that was

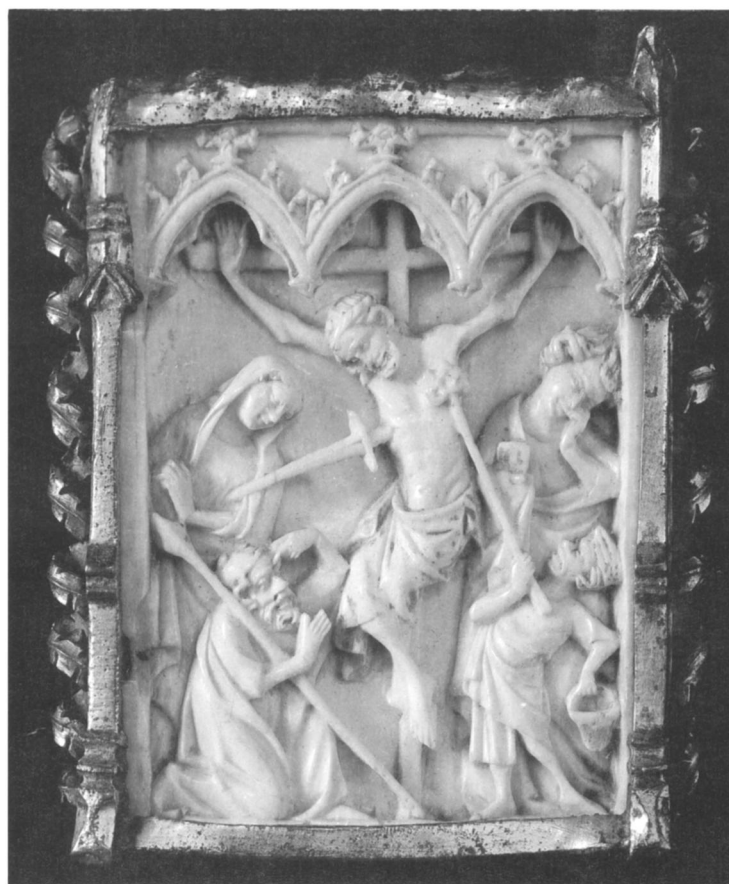
believed to bear the miraculous image of Christ's face (the Veronica). When Saint Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne (635?–687), was reinterred at Durham in 999, the portable altar that he had used during his life was placed in his tomb. Four very fine enamel plaques in the Metropolitan Museum's treasury (fig. 25), probably made in Cologne in the third quarter of the twelfth century, may come from a portable altar. As they are reconstructed here, the enamels would have framed a rectangular slab of stone, perhaps porphyry, to form the top of the altar in an arrangement similar to that of a complete altar from the so-called Guelph Treasure (fig. 24), now in the Cleveland Museum of Art.

As the liturgy of the Christian church developed during the Late Middle Ages, traditional vessels were sometimes replaced by others that served a similar function but accommodated changes in the liturgy or pious habits of the clergy and congregation; the monstrance for the Host and the monstrance reliquary are two examples (see figs. 6, 61). In addition, some new liturgical objects were introduced, such as the *pax* (meaning "peace"). Its use derived from the kiss of peace, which was an important form of salutation dating from the apostolic age. "Salute one another with a holy kiss" is the way in which the apostle Peter closed his First Epistle. The Early Christian service included a prayer of peace, which in the Eastern rite preceded or followed the offerings but in the West came just before Communion. In the Gothic period, the kiss of peace began to be transmitted from the priest to his assistants and to the congregation through a kind of icon, the *pax*, decorated with religious imagery. A small fourteenth-century South German ivory carved with the Crucifixion



25. These four enameled plaques have been reconstructed to form the top of a portable altar, on which they would have framed a rectangular slab of semiprecious stone, probably porphyry. They depict scenes from the Life of Christ, concentrating primarily on his Infancy, Passion, and Resurrection, fitting imagery for an altar on which the Eucharist, symbolic of the Lord's sacrifice, is celebrated. German (probably Cologne), third quarter of the 12th century. Champlevé enamel on copper, partly gilt; l. larger plaques 6½ inches, l. smaller plaques 5½ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.410–13)

26. The small format of this plaque showing the Crucifixion suggests that the ivory was made for private devotion before it was reused in the seventeenth century as a pax. South German, 1360–70. Ivory, silver gilt, h. 3¾ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1970 (1970.324.9)



was converted for use as a pax in the seventeenth century (fig. 26). Its imagery of the sorrowing Virgin, Saint John, Stephaton, and Longinus was well suited to the emotional ceremony of kissing the pax just before the liturgical sacrifice at the altar.

A most important element in the mystery of the Christian service is light. Christ described himself as the Light of the World, and the new churches were illuminated, partly for practical and partly for mystical reasons, in many different, dramatic ways. Without such modern inventions as the electric light, churches were built to make good use of natural light sources. Old Saint Peter's had large windows opening down the nave above the roofs of the side aisles, and at the emperor Justinian's Hagia Sophia, the huge central dome was ringed with windows and the nave walls pierced by wide arched openings. Nonetheless the enormous space enclosed by the church's walls also needed artificial light, especially at night, to allow for the orderly conduct of the service. The list of Constantine's donations to the Lateran gives an indication of

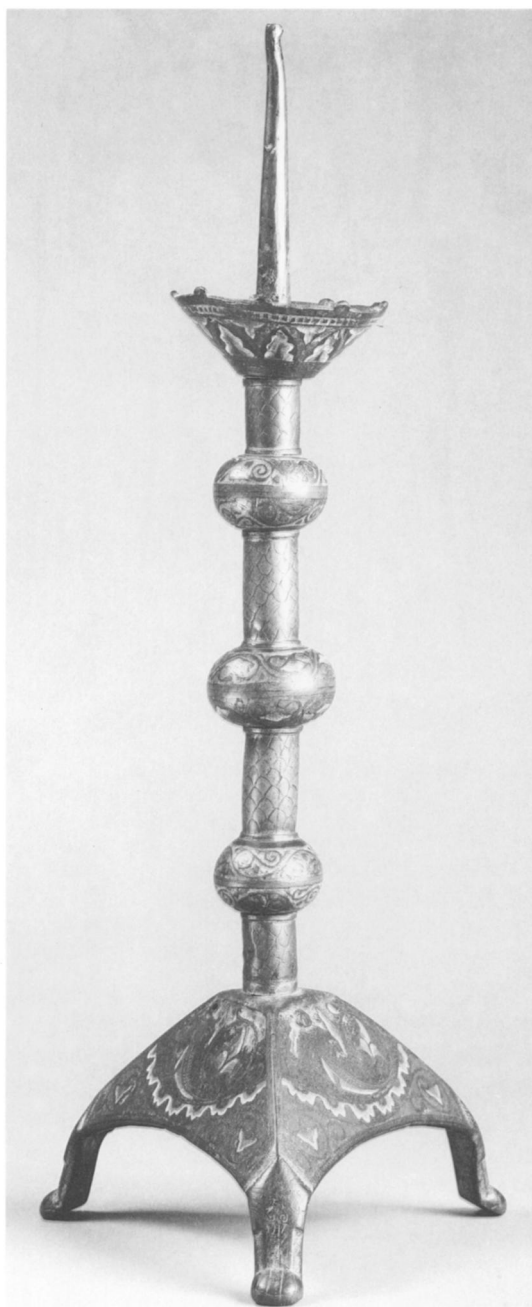
these light sources in the Early Christian period. Large candlesticks stood on the floor on either side of the altar, and huge crowns of light were hung from the altar ciborium and from the arches of the nave arcades. These crowns held as many as eighty oil lamps, and their silver surfaces reflected even more light. In Hagia Sophia, numerous lamps, whose light was increased by the use of reflectors, swung on great chains suspended from the dome over the nave. The base of the dome itself was ringed with lamps, and "trees" of lights stood on the choir screen. At ground level smaller lamps were suspended from brackets on the walls and columns throughout the church, and lamps were ranged down the length of the building.

The Metropolitan Museum's Early Christian, Byzantine, and medieval collections include a number of lamps of different shapes and sizes that are modest versions of these grand lighting schemes. They include a lamp on a stand (fig. 27, left), many portable lights of different designs, including one in the shape of a griffin (fig. 27, top), and part of a tree light (fig. 27, right),



27. The forms of ancient pagan lamps were often adapted to Christian use. The finely cast griffin (top), for example, was given a cross on its side. It could be suspended by a chain or placed on a lamp stand like the lamp with the scrolling handle at the left. The six-branched tree lamp (right) may have been set also on a stand or hung as a chandelier. Its cross is incised with images of Saint Stephen at the center, surrounded by the Virgin and Child, Saint Peter, Saints Cosmas and Damian, and Saint Paul. Griffin lamp: Byzantine, 6th century. Bronze, l. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Klejman, 1962 (62.7.1). Lamp and stand: Byzantine, 6th century. Bronze, 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Fletcher Fund, 1961 (61.114.1a). Tree: Byzantine, 6th–7th century (base modern). Bronze, brass, h. 13 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1974 (1974.150)

28, 29. The candlestick (fig. 28) is richly ornamented with a scale pattern on its stem, rin-
ceaux on its knops, and sirens on its foot. Its original blue
tones have discolored. Still bright and gleaming, however,
is the altar lamp (fig. 29), a
Late Gothic example of a form
of church illumination noted in
the earliest records. The tradi-
tion of continuously burning
lamps in sanctuaries goes back
to biblical times. Fig. 28:
French, 13th century. Copper,
champlevé enamel, h. 15½
inches. Gift of J. Pierpont
Morgan, 1917 (17.190.345).
Fig. 29: Italian (Venice), late
14th–early 15th century. Cop-
per gilt, enamel, h. 16⅞ inches.
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan,
1917 (17.190.827)



28

which was attached later to another Christian symbol, a hand holding a martyr's cross.

None of the lamps mentioned so far seem to have been placed on the altar. Records indicate that by about the tenth or eleventh century two candlesticks were kept on an altar and, later, as many as seven pairs. Whether the enameled pricket candlestick (fig. 28) in the Medieval Treasury of the Metropolitan Museum served this function can only be speculated. Its height of fifteen and a half inches would make it suitable for such a position. Altar candlesticks, however, had to be supplemented by the general illumination produced by the lights hanging above the altar. That function may well have been fulfilled by the Venetian late fourteenth-



29

early fifteenth-century hexagonal lamp (fig. 29), notable for its finely wrought arcades with beautifully cast figures of prophets and saints.

Crosses also were a relatively late addition to the altar. In the Early Christian period large crosses were included in the decoration of domes or apse vaults of the church, and smaller bejeweled crosses were carried in procession. In the mosaic panels of the apse of San Vitale in Ravenna (fig. 30), the archbishop Maximianus, walking in front of the emperor Justinian and holding a cross, approaches the church. In the medieval and later periods the seven station churches in Rome each had a richly decorated cross, which its deacons carried in pomp to the location of a particular festival service—for



30. San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy, was founded in the time of Archbishop Maximianus by the emperor Justinian and his formidable consort, Theodora. In this mosaic from the church's apse, the emperor, who never visited Ravenna, is shown carrying a paten, Maximianus, a jeweled cross, and his deacons, the gospel book and a censer. On the opposite wall another mosaic panel, not shown here, depicts Theodora entering the church with a marvelous chalice. Thus the founders furnished their church with liturgical objects without which the service could not take place. San Vitale, Ravenna. Photograph courtesy of Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich

example, Christmas at Santa Maria Maggiore.

The late twelfth-century cross (fig. 31) in the treasury at The Cloisters, probably from the abbey of Bury Saint Edmunds in England, most likely was made as an altar cross rather than as a processional cross. Now missing is the corpus of Christ. The complex imagery on the cross centers on the promise of salvation through Christ's sacrifice. Another twelfth-century cross, in the Medieval Treasury Room, comes from the church of San Salvador de Fuentes, near Villaviciosa in Oviedo Province (fig. 32). It bears the name of Sanccia Guidisalvi, who may have been its artist or its patron. This cross, however, may have been removed from its base and slotted into the shaft of a staff for use in processions. A later medieval example of an altar cross from Spain (fig. 33) that could also be carried in processions is decorated with silver-gilt reliefs of Christ and saints on the front and symbols of the evangelists placed on the arms around a central image of the Lamb of God on the back. The evangelist symbols originally were enameled. The cross is attached to a tall base that is ornamented with pierced windows and decorative buttresses in the same Late Gothic style as that of the censer from the Cathedral of Basel (fig. 16).

The Metropolitan Museum possesses a number of fragments of crosses that were considered of sufficient artistic and sacramental worth to be saved and stored, probably in church treasuries. The architectural shape of an early bronze stand (fig. 34, right) recalls that of the censer lid (fig. 15, right). Two other stands, in the Medieval Treasury, may have been made to hold crosses. One, of particularly fine workmanship, shows

Saints Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory standing on dragons' heads (fig. 34, left). They hold up shell-shaped platforms on which three angels sit reading from books inscribed with the church fathers' names. The composition epitomizes the mixture of religion and fantasy in High Romanesque art.

The Medieval Treasury also has a large collection of corpora of Christ that have been separated from their now-lost crosses. Many are exceptionally fine and rare and for that reason were preserved even though they could no longer function in their original context. The two illustrated here, a Romanesque work in copper gilt from Germany (fig. 35) and a beautiful



31. This famous cross, often associated with Saint Edmund's abbey at Bury, England, is decorated with eight scenes from the Old and New Testaments on the front; the Lamb of God, symbols of the evangelists, and eighteen prophets holding scrolls with their prophecies appear on the back. The detail (at the left) of the Lamb of God at the crossing of the arms on the back parallels similar images on two Spanish crosses (figs. 32, 33). English, late 12th century. Walrus ivory, traces of paint, h. 22 5/8 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1963 (63.12.127). Photographs by Mario Carrieri, courtesy of Olivetti





32. Like a number of medieval processional crosses, this forceful work, which is dedicated to the Savior, contains a relic that was placed in a compartment above Christ's head and sealed with a crystal cabochon. At the ends of the arms, Mary and John mourn Christ's death; at the top, an angel swings a censer; while below, Adam rises from his grave on Golgotha. On the reverse side of the cross, symbols of the four evangelists (Matthew's is missing) surround the Lamb of God. The figural decoration is formed from sheets of silver worked in such high relief that all heads but Christ's and the Virgin's have broken off. Nonetheless, the bold strength of the cross's imagery is arresting. Spanish, first half of the 12th century. From the church of San Salvador de Fuentes, near Villaviciosa in Asturias (now Oviedo Province). Silver, partly gilt, gems, crystal, h. 23¼ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1406)

33. Adam rising from his tomb is also found on a much later Spanish processional cross. Christ in Majesty, the Virgin, Saint John (now missing), and the pelican in her piety are shown on the front and the Lamb of God and symbols of the evangelists on the back (illustrated). The figures were originally worked in translucent enamel, a technique that unfortunately does not withstand well the passage of time. The effect of candlelight on the richly decorated surface must have impressed the congregation of the church in north-eastern Spain for which the cross was made. Silver marks from the town of Daroca in Aragon are stamped in several places on the cross, including the knop with its pierced Late Gothic arcades. Spanish (Aragon), mid-15th century. Silver, partly gilt, traces of gilt and enamel (now lost) over walnut wood, h. 36½ inches. Gift of Ella Brummer, in memory of her husband, Ernest Brummer, 1982 (1982.363.1)



34. The towerlike structure of the bronze stand (far right) is typical of Early Christian and Byzantine bases for portable crosses, although its simple form is much less fanciful than that of most surviving examples. Western European artists, on the other hand, were particularly fond of combining religious imagery with fantasy, as seen in the finely wrought Romanesque cross stand (right). In an appealing composition, angels read from the writings of the Fathers of the Church, who stand below on the base's dragon-headed feet. The artist's creative imagination is also evident in the grand sweep of the angels' wings, which disguise the hollow for the cross. Tower stand: Byzantine, possibly 11th–12th century. Said to come from Istanbul. Bronze, h. 4¹⁵/₁₆ inches. Purchase, Mrs. Charles F. Griffith Gift, 1962 (62.10.8). Stand with angels: Mosan, 1150–75. Bronze gilt, w. 5¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.106)



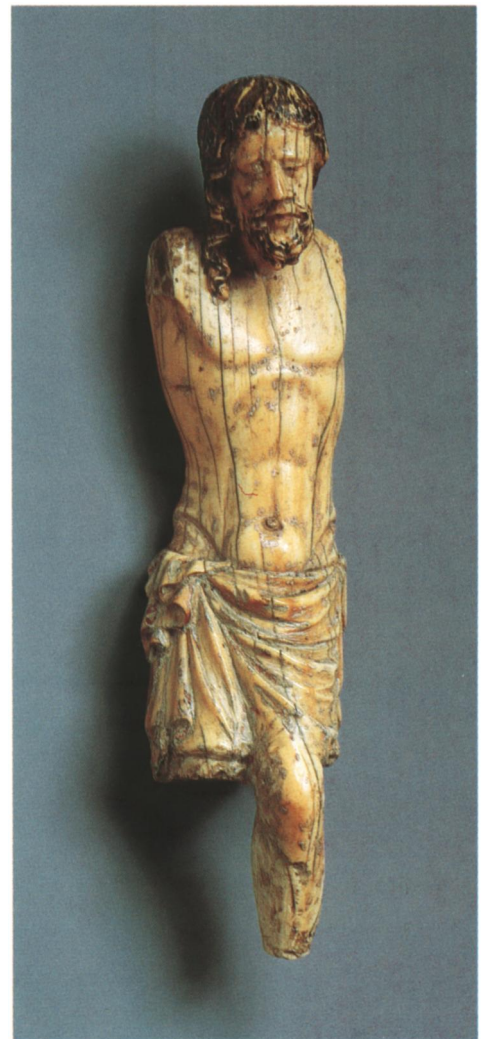
French Early Gothic ivory (fig. 36), display very skillful craftsmanship and sensitively portray the dignified pathos of Christ on the cross.

In the Byzantine church, icons, like crosses, were set up on stands and carried in procession on feast days. The Museum has seven enamels (fig. 38) from the frame of a Georgian icon of the archangel Gabriel. Although the frame and icon have been lost, an old photograph (fig. 37) conjures up the sparkling majesty the images must have conveyed to the community of monks of the Georgian monastery of Djumati, for which the icon was made.

A final important category of liturgical object is that of the bishop's crozier. Quite a few croziers have survived from the medieval period: some were handed down from bishop to bishop; some were preserved because of their fine quality; and many were buried in their owners' tombs. These pastoral staffs adapted their form from that of shepherds' crooks, since Christ—and, therefore, his bishops—characterized themselves as shepherds of the Christian flock. The materials used depended on the wealth of the bishopric. The decoration, how-

ever, changed according to the iconography and style popular in a particular period. Surviving croziers are usually of ivory or metal. In some only the crook at the top of the crozier was made of precious material; in others the entire staff was intricately decorated. Three croziers in the Museum's collection, two French examples (figs. 39, 40) and an Italian one (fig. 41), end in dragons' heads. The crook of fig. 40 encloses a figure of Saint Michael slaying the dragon. The late Italian ivory crozier (fig. 41) combines the Lamb of God with painted images of saints or prophets on the foliate frame of the head. The shaft of a crozier could also be richly carved, as on a recently acquired piece at The Cloisters (figs. 42, 43). Christ and the Virgin and Child Enthroned flanked by archangels are shown in its upper two registers; a depiction of what may be the investiture of a bishop decorates the registers below.

35, 36. The two corpora of Christ are masterpieces of the German Romanesque and French Gothic periods respectively. The copper-gilt example (fig. 35) is extraordinarily accomplished in the precision of its modeling and the rendering of the complicated folds of Christ's loincloth. The Early Gothic ivory (fig. 36), by contrast, stresses the stillness and peacefulness of the dead Christ, freed from the agony of crucifixion. It has a lyrical quality that is enhanced by the warm color of the ivory with its remains of the original paint. Fig. 35: German (possibly Rhineland), mid-12th century. Copper gilt, h. 8 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.209). Fig. 36: French (probably Paris), ca. 1230–50. Ivory, with traces of polychromy, h. 6½ inches. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Maxime L. Hermanos, 1978 (1978.521.3)





37, 38. These enamels (fig. 38), from the monastery of Djumati in Georgia are among the finest made during the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries in the Byzantine empire. They may well have been commissioned by a Georgian ecclesiastic from a workshop in Constantinople or have been sent as a gift from some high Greek official to Georgia, where they were used on the frame of a large icon of the archangel Gabriel, as seen in an old photograph (fig. 37). The detail (right) shows Saint

Luke, who appears on the right side of the icon. Georgian copies of the enamels were made to decorate a companion icon of Saint Michael that still survives in the Museum of Fine Arts, Tiflis, Georgia. Fig. 37: From N. P. Kondakov, *Geschichte und Denkmäler des Byzantinischen Emails: Sammlung A. W. Swenigorodskoï*, Frankfurt am Main, 1889–92. Fig. 38: Byzantine, late 11th–early 12th century. Enamel, gold, diam. of each 3¼ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.670–78)



39, 40. The imagery of a dragon is found on three croziers illustrated on this and the opposite page (figs. 39–41). The two works shown below were made in France. The restrained decoration of the ivory crozier head (fig. 39), with its graceful acanthus-leaf ornament that complements the stylized dragon's head (its original freestanding statuette is missing), contrasts with that of the more richly worked enameled piece (fig. 40), in which the patterns of the dragon's scales and spine provide a fierce frame for Saint Michael, who spears the dragon in the center. Open-

work dragons also ring the crozier at the knop, while on the shaft three dragons frame the more traditional floral imagery. Fig. 39: French, late 12th–early 13th century. Ivory, h. 6½ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.232). Fig. 40: French (Limoges), late 12th–early 13th century. Champlevé enamel on copper, partly gilt, h. 12⅞ inches. The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.289)

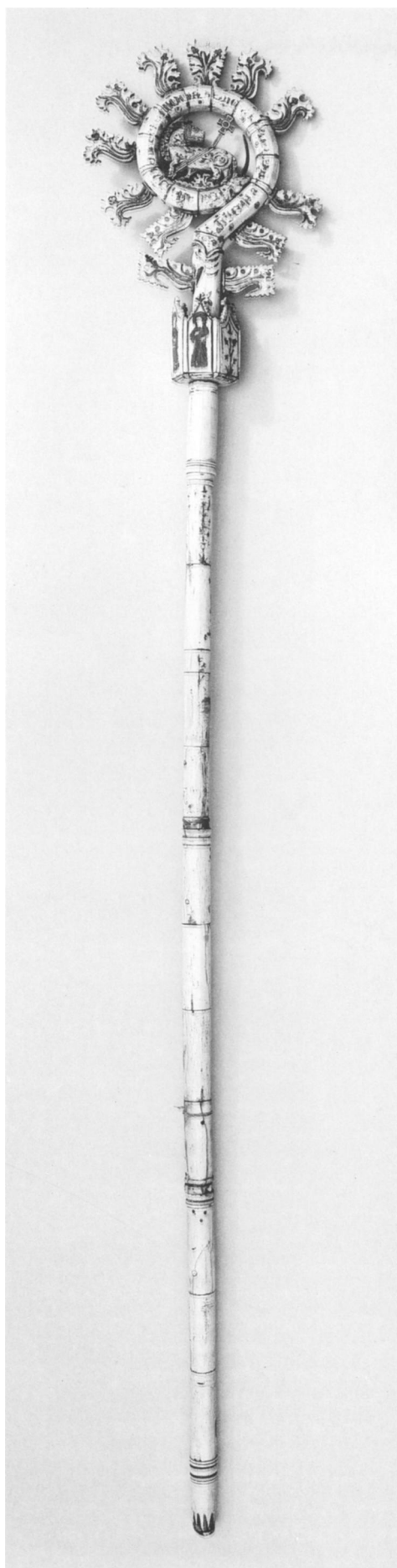


39



40

41. The decoration of this crozier is conceived in quite a different mode, one that is in tune with its northern Italian, Late Gothic origin. The volute of the head emerges gently from a dragon's mouth but terminates in the tongue of a more ferocious monster. Within is a stern Lamb of God. Large crockets painted with flowers spring from the volute. A towered "wall," which replaces the customarily circular knop, is decorated with images of four saints between two floral panels. The archangel Gabriel's words to the Virgin announcing the conception of Christ decorate the front and back surfaces of the volute. Flowers are also painted on the shaft, which unscrews into four sections. A fifth piece may be missing, since croziers of this period tended to be very tall. North Italian, early 14th century. Ivory, polychromy, h. 5 feet, 1 inch. The Cloisters Collection, 1953 (53.63.4)



41



42



43

42, 43. Also richly decorated is a segment of a crozier's stem (two views shown), whose imagery, developing from the bottom to the top, begins with the installation of a bishop. The two central bands depict rejoicing angels, who mediate between the earthly scene below and the celestial visions above. There the Virgin and Child are enthroned while Christ, in a mandorla that teems with tiny figures of the elders of the Apocalypse, over- sees the world. Probably English, first half of the 12th century. Ivory, h. 11¼ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1981 (1981.1)

SERVICE BOOKS

THE ART OF BOOK ILLUMINATION was never so magnificently practiced as during the Early Christian period and the Middle Ages. A fine balance was struck between the magnificent forms of the letters of the text and the illustrations that decorated it. The latter ranged in scale from ornamental initials at the beginnings of chapters or even paragraphs (figs. 46, 47) to full-page pictures of episodes in the life of Christ that were described or just alluded to in the text (figs. 44, 45). Many different books, ranging from bibles and gospel books to accounts of saints' lives, were illustrated. Service books, which were written as guides for the conduct of the liturgy, were not considered embodiments of the word of God and, accordingly, placed on the altar like the gospel book, but they were often richly illuminated. In our modern age of printing technology, it is difficult to imagine how arduous it must have been to make and write these books, let alone to illustrate them. Not only was the copying trying, but the task of finding the right model to copy and confirming that its text was accurate was time-consuming. Alcuin the Englishman, one of the emperor Charlemagne's chief scholars and advisors, for example, spent many years in assuring that correct texts were produced for the church's use throughout the Carolingian Empire. When a text was also richly illuminated, its importance and worth multiplied, making its survival more likely.

The Metropolitan has never actively collected manuscripts on a large scale because of the rich collections at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. The Museum does have a few fine examples that were purchased or accepted as gifts because of their handsome illuminations.

The sacramentary, which was the priest's primary service book for the conduct of the Mass in the Early Christian and early medieval periods, is not represented in the Museum's collection. Just four years ago, however, the Medieval Department acquired a full-page illumination of the Crucifixion from a missal, the expanded service book that replaced the sacramentary in the thirteenth century (fig. 44). It was made in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, probably in Paris, and exhibits many of the finest characteristics of its school. The twisted body of Christ on the cross dominates the illumination. Below, Adam rises from his sarcophagus in the hill of Golgotha and clasps the cross's stem, while

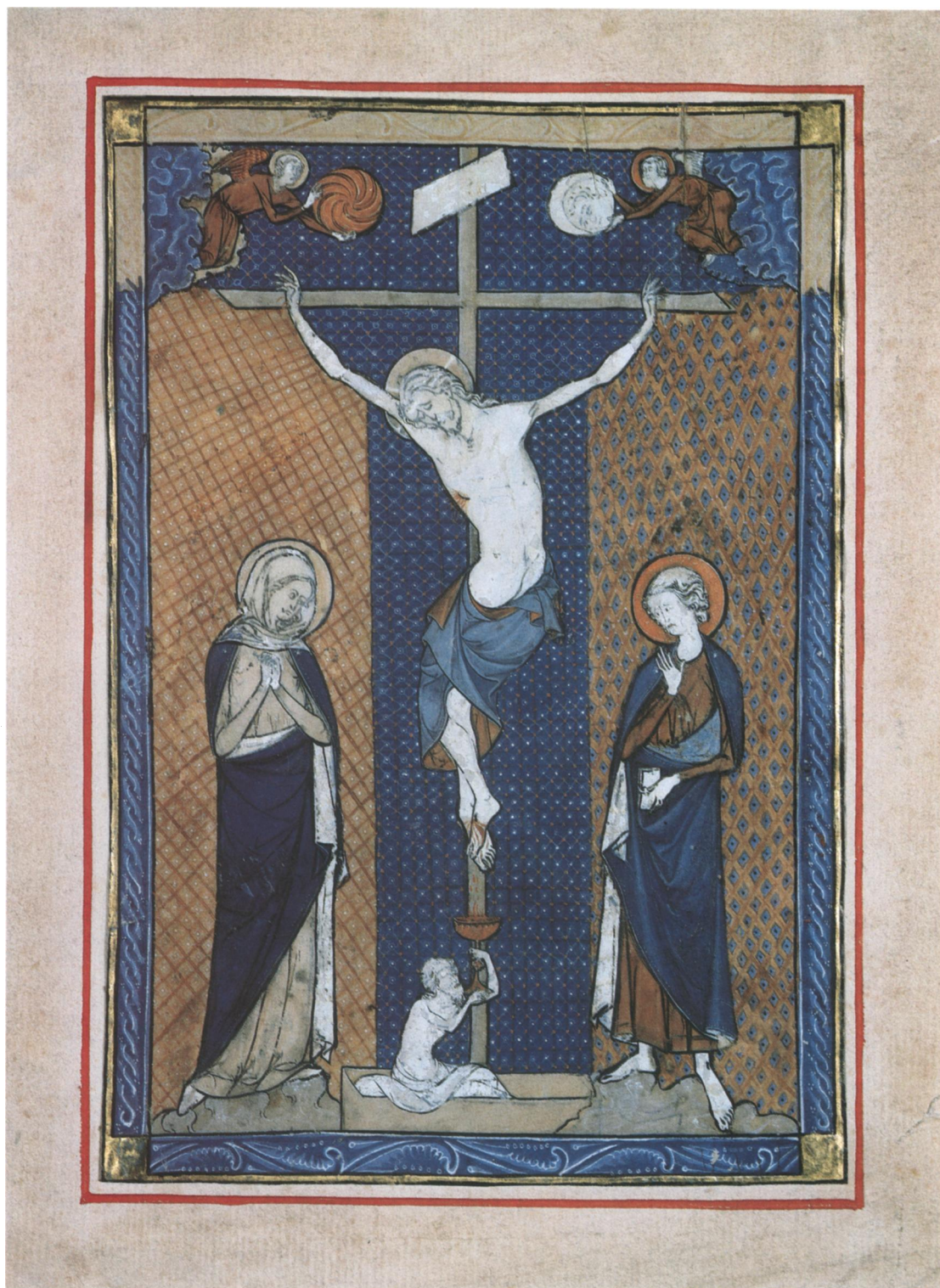
above, angels carry symbols of the sun and moon. On either side of Christ, the Virgin and Saint John lament his sacrifice. The formal, restrained emotion of the illustration is complemented by the rich, textilelike background, against which the figures are placed as in a tableau, emphasizing the regal timelessness of Christ's sacrifice on the cross and of the Lord's redemptive powers.

One of the finest liturgical manuscripts in the collection is a portion of a psalter prefaced by an illustrated calendar and three pages of scenes from the Passion of Christ. It comes from the abbey of Fontevrault in France and was made for a royal English patron. The scenes illustrated in figure 45 depict Christ's prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane and his subsequent arrest. Their compositions of densely packed, active figures are set in landscapes that, in the nervous forms of trees and plants, enter into the drama.

Music and choral responses have always been an integral part of the Christian service. During the preparation and celebration of the Mass, a trained choir, called the *schola cantorum*, usually sang appointed texts, which were gathered in a book called the antiphonary. As time went on, this book was joined to the prayers, like the Alleluia chant, that were formerly sung by the congregation but were now assigned to the choir; the expanded book was called the gradual. The customary large format of these songbooks allowed for an unusually grand and stately decoration, with the page laid out in bars of musical notes and the text written below. Sometimes the books were also magnificently decorated with figural initials. One example of exceptional quality (fig. 46) was written and illuminated at Ferrara in the fifteenth century by Cosimo Tura and members of his school. The initial *A* illustrated is a work of the famous master. The Museum also possesses a miscellany of single leaves from antiphonaries and graduals—among them, a page with an illustration of a bishop saint at an altar (fig. 7) and a splendid sheet with a richly gilded illustration of the Assumption of the Virgin by Nicola di ser Sozzo (fig. 47).

An illumination (fig. 48) decorating a single page of an unidentified Italian manuscript of the fourteenth century, although it is not a masterpiece, sheds light on the books associated with services other than that of the Mass. The leaf is headed by an illustration of a betrothal or

44. This beautiful illumination of the Crucifixion, along with its pendant image of Christ in Majesty (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England), may have decorated the text of the canon of the Mass in a missal. Its richly ornamented, fabric-like background and its delicate drawing style relate it to the finest school of contemporary manuscript production in Paris. French, ca. 1270. Tempera and gold leaf on parchment, $8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Purchase, Bequest of Thomas W. Lamont, by exchange, 1981 (1981.322)



marriage scene, and below is the beginning of the fourth book of the text of the marriage service, surrounded by a scholium, or commentary, densely written in the margins.

Whether these richly decorated books were kept in the church's sanctuary, its treasury, or the library—all were possible—depended to a great extent on the character of the establishment. A large and prosperous church like San Marco kept its books in current use in the sac-

risty. Others were kept in the treasury until their ultimate transferral in the nineteenth century to the Marciana Library. On the other hand, the books given by Henry II to the Cathedral of Bamberg in Germany seem to have been kept with the reliquaries and liturgical vessels in the treasury throughout the history of the church. Only in modern times were some of these transferred to the state library and the treasury of the Residenz in Munich.



45. Although only a few illuminations survive from this English psalter, they are in excellent condition. The mannered yet lively poses of the figures are matched by the abstracted, animated forms of the landscape. The interest in line and evocative movement is characteristic of English drawing style throughout the medieval era. English, ca. 1260. From the abbey of Fontevrault in France. Tempera and gold and silver leaf on parchment, h. 11 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.24.4)

46. Dramatic action that is characteristic of northern Italian style animates this marvelous illustration of the Assumption of the Virgin from a fifteenth-century gradual. The clarity with which the figures are portrayed and their expressive faces, complemented by the strong, hard-edged depiction of the dragon-ornamented initial A, have caused this and another miniature from the same manuscript to be attributed to Cosimo Tura, the well-known artist who worked in Ferrara in the second half of the fifteenth century. The text begins "Assu[m]pta est Ma[ri]a in [coelum gaud]e[n]t angeli laude[n]t[es] et benedicunt Dominum . . .". Italian (Ferrara), 15th century. By Cosimo Tura. Tempera and gold leaf on parchment, 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 12 inches. Rogers Fund, 1911 (11.50.1)



1213/2



I speci
o sim sicut co
lumbam ascē
dentem desup riuos aqua riu
cunis inextima bilis odor
erat nuntius inuestimentis
eius Et sicut dies uermi

47. The Assumption of the Virgin fills this beautifully painted initial V on a page of a very large antiphonary. Dressed in rich white robes embroidered with gold, the Virgin is carried to heaven in an aureole of light by a choir of angels. In the miniature she seems to hover above the earth and her tomb, which is illustrated in sharp perspective. The illumination is attributed to a fine Sienese artist, Nicola di ser Sozzo. Italian (Siena), ca. 1334–36. Tempera and gold leaf on parchment, 22 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Gift of Louis L. Lorillard, 1896 (96.32.12)

48. This delightful miniature illustrates the opening of the fourth book of the service of betrothal and marriage in an Italian manuscript of the early fourteenth century. The prospective bride and groom kneel in front of a tonsured priest, to whom they are presented by four relatives or friends, among them a Franciscan monk on the right. Commentary on the text is written in the margins of the page. Italian (perhaps Tuscany), early 14th century. Tempera, ink, and gold leaf on parchment, 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Gift of Harry G. Friedman, 1955 (55.18.3)



RELIQUARIES

TODAY, AS IN THE PAST, perhaps the most eye-catching and startling objects in a church's treasury are the reliquaries. Like the chalices and patens of the Eucharist, they were often made of precious materials and studded with jewels. Unlike those liturgical objects, however, reliquaries did not have to be confined to the functional shapes of utilitarian vessels. They came in a wide variety of designs, ranging from small boxes to large-scaled containers in the shape of the enclosed relic, which was often part of a saint's body. Indeed, this element of surrealism was probably cultivated because of its emotional effect upon the faithful. The relics housed were often small particles of a much larger whole, so that several or even many could be enclosed in a single container. The most important relics were those of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and other Early Christian martyrs. As early as the mid-fourth century, there is mention of the relics of the True Cross encased in rings and worn around the neck.

By the fifth century, a large part of the cross of Christ was kept at the Constantinian church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, where a pilgrim named Egeria saw it during the services of Holy Week. Like many intrepid pilgrims of the Early Christian age, Egeria spent two and a half years on a voyage from either Spain or France to the Holy Land, where she was deeply moved by the mystery of the services she attended and by the richness of church architecture and the splendor of its decoration. Particularly vivid in her account of the pilgrimage is her description of gathering with other pilgrims to kiss the relic of the True Cross. It was taken from its silver-gilt reliquary by the bishop of Jerusalem, whose deacons, according to Egeria, carefully watched the pilgrims, since sometime earlier a man had taken a bite from the cross to carry away as a precious relic. Egeria also visited other churches founded by Constantine in the Holy Land, including the church at Hebron on the plains of Mamre, where Jewish and pagan shrines already existed. There three angels perceived by Christians as being trinitarian had appeared to Abraham.

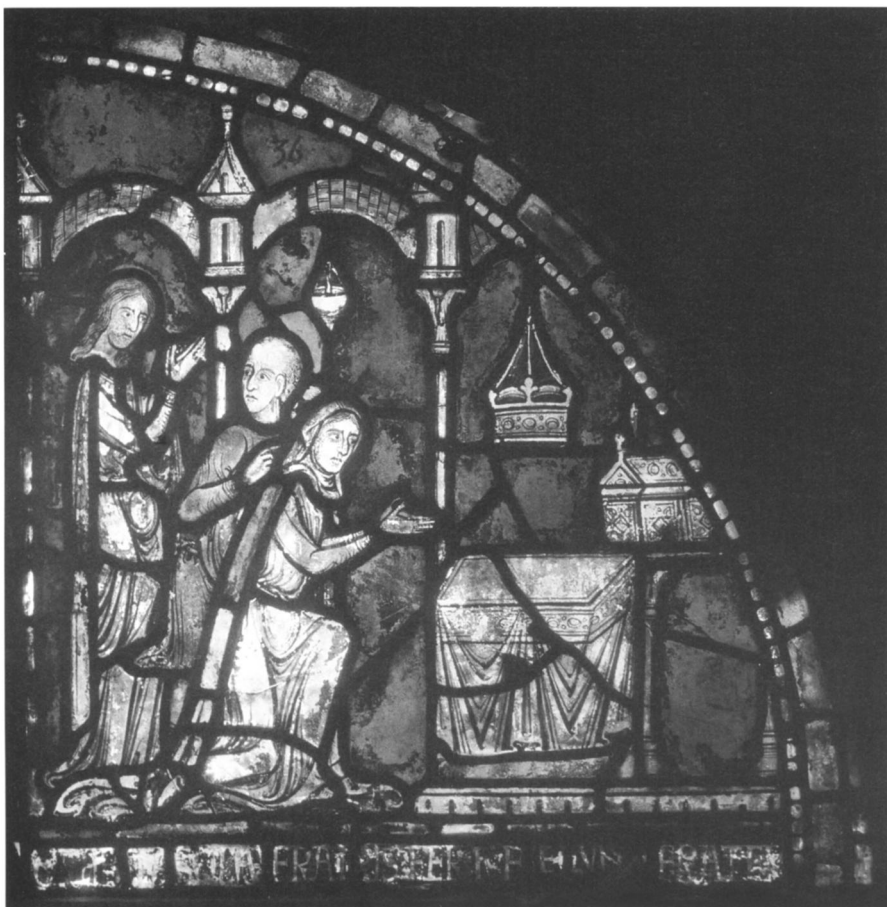
These and many other Christian sanctuaries continued the pagan custom of providing mementos for pilgrims. At the Christian shrines a variety of objects were offered, including tokens stamped with the image of the saint honored and

flasks that were filled with soil from the site or oil from the lamps that burned in the sanctuaries. They were made in a variety of materials ranging from gold to pressed clay, so that no matter how rich or how poor the pilgrim, he was able to take back a memento of his trip, which had been made sacred through contact with the holy shrine.

The burial sites of apostles and martyrs were also early honored by markers, then by small chapels, and finally by large churches like that of Saint Peter's. Constantine directed that the Vatican Hill be partially leveled so that the church's apse would rise directly over Peter's tomb, which had been marked by a small aedicula in the third century. By the late sixth century, the number of people who came to worship at Saint Peter's was so great that the apse of the church was raised, probably by Pope Gregory the Great, and a grilled window by which the faithful could view the apostle's *tropaion* (or trophy) was created. Later accounts in *The Book of the Popes* described the commemorative monument's setting amid splendid gold and silver lamps and icons. In France the body of another saint, Martin of Tours, rested in the crypt of his fourth-century church, built in the cemetery in which he was buried, until the late sixth century. At that time his body was brought up to the apse behind the altar, where it was placed under a canopy of honor with lamps and candles suspended and standing all around. Pilgrims approached the tomb from an atrium that was built behind the apse wall. The tomb was covered with a cloth, or *pala*, which the infirm touched in the hope of being cured. According to Gregory of Tours, the cure sometimes was effected by the saint only after the infirm person had resided there for several years.

Even if a church had no physical connection with an important Christian site, its founders sought relics to give legitimacy and worth to the foundation. Paulinus of Nola, for example, collected relics of apostles and saints for the altar of his new church at Nola in the late fourth century (see p. 5). Although the record of the inscription that he placed in the church's apse does not mention whether the relics were put into a container before being placed under the altar, the custom at other churches seems to have been to place relics in a reliquary that was usually fashioned from precious materials. One of the most

49. The stained-glass segment depicts worshipers kneeling in prayer in front of a reliquary casket raised on a beam behind an altar. The scene presumably takes place in Canterbury Cathedral, for this work from the last quarter of the twelfth century belongs to that church's magnificent choir windows. Photo courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



beautiful reliquaries of this period is a silver casket that was found with three leaden boxes under the main altar of the Church of the Apostles (later San Nazaro Maggiore) in Milan. A sixth-century silver box in the Vatican was found to contain relics when it was discovered buried in a church's foundation at Henchir Zirara in Algeria (see *The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1983, no. 35).

By the ninth century reliquaries were set on church altars, formerly reserved for gospel books. As the reliquaries grew in size and in sumptuousness, other sites were found for them. Saint Thomas Becket's sarcophagus was set up behind the main altar of Canterbury Cathedral on a high base, and a number of reliquaries were fastened to the beams above the various altars of the church by chains (see fig. 49). Since there were often many altars in a church, each was usually dedicated to a different saint, whose relics it contained, and the liturgy of the services was adapted to include prayers at some or all of them. Pilgrims, following either a priest or the text of a guidebook, would visit each site in a church. Anthony of Novgorod, for example, visited Constantinople in 1201 and wrote a diary of his trip in which he listed not only his itinerary of the chapels and relics within the

great church of Hagia Sophia but also his tour of other Constantinopolitan churches, including the church of the Virgin of the Lighthouse containing the treasure of the imperial palace of Boucoleon. The palace's collections of relics and precious objects were renowned throughout Christendom and provided an important part of the booty of the Fourth Crusade. Although Western medieval sovereigns like Charlemagne built up vast treasures, the Byzantine emperors far excelled them in this enterprise. Thus, Saint Louis of France (1214–1270) spent an enormous amount of money buying many relics, including the Crown of Thorns and a part of the True Cross, from the Latin emperor of Constantinople. For them he built the largest reliquary ever made—the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

The True Cross was certainly one of the most important Christian relics, since from earliest times the sign of the cross was the emblem for the Christian community. According to legend the True Cross was found by Constantine's mother, Helena. It was on land owned by Helena that the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme was built in Rome by her son Constantine and her grandsons, who endowed it with a relic of the cross encased in gold and jewels. The largest part was kept at the church of the Holy Sepulcher, where Egeria saw it. Its importance as a Christian talisman caused the Persians to carry it to Ctesiphon after their conquest of Jerusalem in 614. The Byzantine emperor Heraclius, however, retrieved it for Jerusalem in 630 and then, in the face of Arab invasions, carried it to Constantinople for safekeeping. Throughout the history of the Middle Ages, therefore, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome were the centers for the dissemination of the relic. The relic of the True Cross, usually encased in a luxuriously decorated box, was carried in procession and held aloft by the priest from the pulpit on the Feast of the True Cross, celebrated on September 14.

Over eleven hundred reliquaries of the True Cross are known. They are found in church treasuries, in museums, or are known through descriptions in surviving texts. One of the earliest examples is a finely made small casket (fig. 53, right) in the Medieval Department, probably from the Byzantine empire, judging from its inscriptions and the fine quality of its translucent enamels. The sliding lid, which is decorated with a Crucifixion in enamel, has four scenes from the life of Christ on its underside. It draws back to reveal five interior compartments for relics laid out in the shape of a cross. This precious reliquary was probably kept in at least one other container, for it was often the custom to house a relic in a series of interfitting boxes,

A large, ornate wooden box with a gabled lid, decorated with medieval-style paintings of saints and angels. The lid features a central scene with a white animal and two angels. The sides are decorated with portraits of saints, including one labeled 'MARIA' and another 'MARCIANUS'. A smaller, similar box is shown in the foreground.

50–52. Precious relics frequently were placed in a series of interfitting reliquaries of different materials. Of these three boxes found at Zana-Vartepe, near Varna, Bulgaria, the outer (fig. 52) is made of finely polished marble, the intermediate (fig. 51) of silver, and the innermost (fig. 50), which contained the relic, of gold and gems. It is thought that the gold box may have

been made for secular use in the late fourth or early fifth century and employed in the sixth in this set. Fig. 50: Byzantine, late 4th–early 5th century. Wood, gold, gems, garnet inlay, l. $2\frac{5}{16}$ inches. Figs. 51, 52: Byzantine, 6th century. Fig. 51: Silver, l. $4\frac{5}{16}$ inches. Fig. 52: Marble, l. $8\frac{3}{16}$ inches. National Museum, Varna, Bulgaria

53. The lid of the smaller enameled reliquary of the True Cross shown here depicts Christ alive on the cross, flanked by mourning figures of the Virgin and Saint John. Busts of apostles, church fathers, and saints adorn the box's lid and sides. The clarity and richness of color reveal a skilled preparation of the enamel, but the awkward rendering of the figures and inscriptions, as well as the intrusion of one color upon another, points to a less able artist. Consequently this early and rare reliquary has been variously dated from the eighth to the tenth century, and proposals for its place of manufacture range from Italy to the Holy Land. The beautiful enamels that have been reconstructed to form the larger reliquary display a love of rhythmic decoration and a refinement of color that are characteristic of early medieval *champlevé* enameling. In this view, vivid images of censuring angels flanking the hand of God are depicted above Christ, the Virgin, and Saint Martin. Saint Paul holding a book appears on the left short side. Smaller reliquary: Byzantine, probably 9th century. Cloisonné enamel on gold; silver, partly gilt; niello; l. 4 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.715). Larger reliquary: Northern Spanish or southern French, late 11th century. *Champlevé* enamel on copper gilt; as reconstructed, w. $\frac{7}{4}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.685–87, 695, 710, 711)



54. The Mosan area in present-day Belgium was famous in the eleventh and twelfth centuries not only for its excellent enameling but also for its mastery of the techniques of niello on silver, filigree, and beading. The appliqué plaques (detail, above) on the borders of the sleeve of this arm reliquary are among the best examples of these arts to survive. The imagery seems to be closely connected to the service of Communion and to the character of the bishop saint for whose relic the arm reliquary was probably made. Mosan, 1220–30. Sleeve: silver over oak; hand: bronze gilt; appliqué plaques: silver gilt, niello, gems; h. $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1947 (47.101.33)



55. Saint Juliana is depicted in this reliquary bust that holds a fragment of her cranium. As a young woman, Juliana was martyred for her faith during the fourth century in Nicomedia, and thus she is shown with golden hair, peaches-and-cream complexion, brown eyes, and pert, red lips. She even has a dimple in her chin. This individual "likeness" of the early saint, for whom little factual information exists, deliberately seeks to bring Juliana to life in the worshiper's consciousness, since the saint was believed to act on behalf of the faithful through her image. Italian, ca. 1476. Made by a Roman master named Guglielmo. From the convent of Santa Giuliana in Perugia. Gesso over copper, copper gilt, tempera, h. 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1961 (61.266)

56. The cult of Saint Margaret of Antioch was much more widespread than that of Saint Juliana. Particularly popular in the eastern Mediterranean countries, her cult spread rapidly in the West from the twelfth century on, perhaps because of the devotion of returning Crusaders. Her apocryphal adventures with a dragon are depicted on this leather reliquary in the form of a shoe believed to contain a small piece of a bone from her foot. French, 14th century. Brown leather (cuir bouilli), tooled and embossed, paint, iron gilt (lock), l. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1947 (47.101.65)

the smallest of which contained the actual relic and was made of the most precious material. Such a set of three reliquaries was found near Varna, Bulgaria (figs. 50–52).

The sarcophagus shape, appropriate to funerary art, remained a common form for reliquaries. A reconstruction of a very fine enameled box (fig. 53, left) in the Museum's Medieval Treasury reveals that it was of this type. Its rare late eleventh-century plaques were made either in northern Spain or in southern France, early in the development of the type of champlevé enameling that would become extremely popular during the Middle Ages. Christ Enthroned, flanked by Saints Martialis and Mary Magdalene, is depicted on the front; symbols of the four evangelists are shown on the back. Images of Peter and Paul decorate the end of the casket, which may have held relics of several of these saints, since the inclusion of multiple relics in a single container was not unusual.

Other reliquaries in the Metropolitan's collection adopt their shape from the character of the relic contained. A large number represent arms, presumably because each sheltered a fragment of an arm bone of a particular saint. Among the three arm reliquaries in the Metropolitan Museum's collection, one fine example (fig. 54), probably made in the area of the Meuse River around 1220–30, is now in the treasury at The Cloisters. Its jeweled and nielloed decoration typifies the finest workmanship of the period in this area of great artistic creativity. Characteristic of an arm reliquary is the richly bordered sleeve, worked to show the folds of the vestment as it clung to the unknown saint—presumably a priest or bishop shown in the act of raising his hand in blessing. Two small rectangular openings cut into the wooden core beneath the silver exterior originally held the relics. Also characteristic of the period is the alternation of jeweled and nielloed silver plaques, most of which display floral or animal ornament. Two of the

plaques, however, depict censuring angels who may signify the subdeacons who censed the bread and wine at the time of consecration during the preparation of the Eucharist. A third (detail) shows a bell ringer, perhaps the acolyte who rang hand bells to signal the moments of transformation of the bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood. Above the bell ringer is a third angel, who appears to carry the Host in his draped hands. This imagery may refer to the saint's most important function as a bishop or priest officiating in his church at the Eucharist. A prominent place in the imagery is given to Saints Peter and Paul. Peter holds his customary cross, keys, and book, but Paul carries a model of a church, which is an attribute often connected with the founding of a basilica—in this case perhaps the church built by the bishop saint whose arm reliquary this was.

Reliquaries in the shape of human busts were equally popular. The Museum's collections have two of these reliquaries. The earliest, in the main building's treasury, is a bust of Saint Yrieux that comes from the abbey church of Attane, France, which was founded by the saint in the sixth century. Its original wooden core still survives inside a jeweled silver casing. The second (fig. 55), a very fine sculpture of the fourth quarter of the fourteenth century, depicts the Early Christian martyr Saint Juliana and comes from the convent founded in her honor in Perugia, Italy. Curiously, the head is shaped from an earlier copper reliquary head of a man, which was covered with a thick layer of gesso and then shaped and painted in the image of the young martyr of Nicomedia, Bithynia (now Izmit, Turkey). According to the fragmentary inscription of the reliquary's base, the head was made in Rome by an artist named Guglielmo (William). The history of the relic in this beautiful head is well documented. The fragment of Saint Juliana's cranium first belonged to the monastery of Saint Dominic in Perugia, but at the request of Gabriella, abbess of Saint Juliana's monastery, it was transferred in 1376 to the convent in Perugia. The tabernacle in which it was originally shown at the convent is now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia.

A reliquary of Saint Margaret (fig. 56) in the shape of another extremity of the human body, the foot, is also displayed at The Cloisters. It is formed on a wooden core, covered with embossed-and-painted leather images of the life of this most popular early martyr.

The Metropolitan's statue reliquary of Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child on his shoulder (fig. 57) is made of partly gilded silver and stands almost two feet high. Its relic, probably of the saint, was placed in the now-empty



box set in front of the statue's pedestal rather than hidden in the sculpture itself like the relics of the Saint Juliana and the arm reliquary at The Cloisters. The box was probably covered by a crystal sheet through which the contents could be viewed. This direct presentation of the relic to the donor and worshiper is characteristic of the growing religious fervor of the later Middle Ages, as is the dramatic juxtaposition created by the active pose of Saint Christopher and the serene, remote figure of the Christ Child who stands on his shoulder.

Three of the Metropolitan Museum's reliquaries of Saint Thomas Becket (1118?–1170), archbishop of Canterbury, were all made within a few decades of his murder at Canterbury Cathedral. In this short period of time, Becket's tomb became the destination of one of the most important pilgrimage routes in Europe. Relics of the saint were sought eagerly from the very time of his death. Figure 59, left, shows one of the earliest reliquaries made to honor Saint Thomas: a casket that contains the relic of his blood, according to an inscription accompanying an illustration of his burial on the back of the nielloed silver box. An angel is shown carrying the soul of the saint to heaven on one side of the lid and Saint Thomas's martyrdom is depicted on the other. Angels, together with acanthus ornament, appear on the casket's two short ends. The box is crowned by a glass cabochon set over red-colored foil. The beautiful metalwork was probably executed by an artist working in England shortly after the murder of Becket in the cathedral. The interior of the reliquary is divided into two parts, a fact that prompted speculation that this reliquary contained the two vials of the saint's blood that the philosopher John of Salisbury, who was chief minister and secretary to Becket, gave to the Cathedral of Chartres in 1176, just six years after the saint's murder.

A second, equally early, reliquary of Saint Thomas's blood (fig. 59, right) in the Museum's collection was made in the form of a pendant. Bishop Rainaud Batoniorum, probably Reginald Fitz Jocelin, bishop of Bath from 1174 to 1191, had it made for Margaret, queen of Sicily, who died in 1183. Despite the pendant's small size, the reliquary held a particle of the murdered archbishop's blood-soaked robes and shoe, according to the inscriptions. A third reliquary (fig. 60) containing relics of Becket and other saints was recently acquired for The Cloisters. It is a sturdy copper box raised on animal-shaped feet and incised with images of Christ and of saints who were honored at Canterbury Cathedral. This box still retains the ring by which the container may have been secured to one of the beams in a chapel of the cathedral.



57. This imposing statuette-reliquary of Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child was made in the silversmith shops of Toulouse, France, as its hallmarks, stamped on the hem of the saint's cloak and on the statue's base, clearly show. The now-lost relic, presumably of Saint Christopher, was placed in the small box on the statue's base rather than hidden inside the statuette as had been the custom in earlier times; the box was probably covered with crystal, through which the relic could be clearly seen by worshippers. The reliquary, in an excellent state of preservation, reveals not only the exceptional skill of the late medieval French silversmiths, but also their pleasure in juxtaposing large areas of silver with bright flashes of gilding. French (Toulouse), ca. 1400. From the church of Castelnaudary, near Toulouse. Silver, partly gilt, h. 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.361)

58. Small ivory and bone plaques carved with figures from classical literature and heraldry decorate this fine tenth-century Byzantine casket, which may have been made as a jewelry box. Later, perhaps in the wake of the Crusaders' conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the box was brought to the church of Saints Peter and Paul at Kranenburg, Germany, where it probably served as a reliquary, since this was the fate of similar Byzantine ivory caskets in the West. Byzantine, 10th century. From the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul at Kranenburg, Germany. Ivory and bone with traces of gilding, l. 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.237)

Not all reliquaries were made expressly to hold their relics. Sometimes a precious container that had been used for quite a different purpose was reused as a reliquary. Such is the history of a rectangular box (fig. 58) decorated with imagery drawn from classical literature and myth. Made in the Byzantine empire in the tenth century, the box could have been either purchased by a Latin visitor to Constantinople or stolen as plunder following the sack of the city in 1204. In the West, it was eventually given to the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul at Kranenburg and was later purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan in the early part of this century. The Metropolitan Museum possesses several of these Byzantine caskets, which may have served as jewelry boxes for members of the nobility.

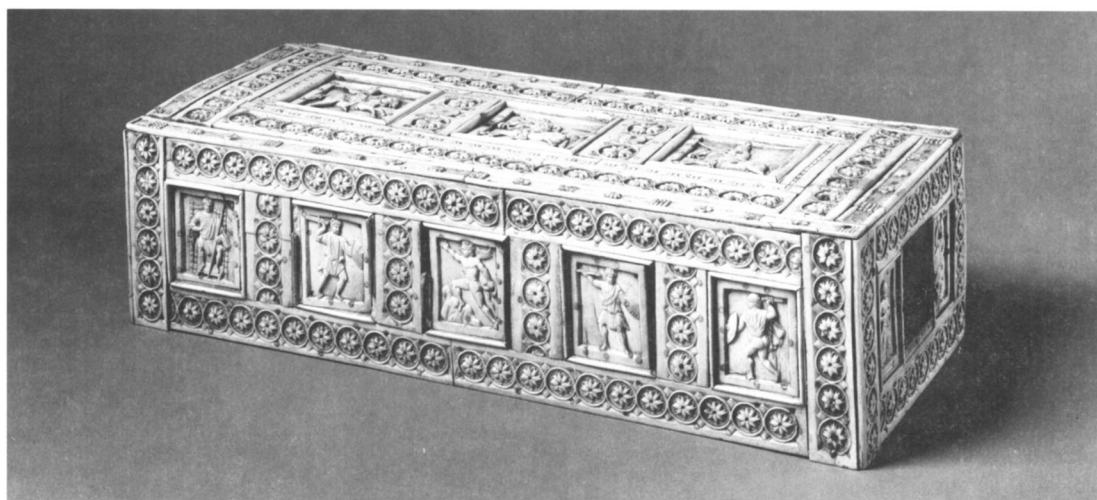
Two reliquaries from the Medieval Treasury that are decorated with gold-painted glass images (*verre églomisé*) represent the Late Gothic period in Italy. One (fig. 61), probably made in Florence in the late fifteenth century, is described as containing the tooth of Saint Mary Magdalene. The relic is encased in a crystal almond-shaped container that is fixed in an openwork turreted shrine set on a chalice-like base. From the crown of the shrine rises a late fourteenth-century glass disk depicting the Crucifixion on one side and the Nativity (detail) on the other. This type of reliquary clearly imitates a monstrance of the Host that was held aloft during the celebration of the Eucharist. The tooth reliquary must also have been elevated for viewing and probably was carried in procession during feast days.

The same painted-glass technique was used for a diptych icon (fig. 62). Scenes of the Nativity and Crucifixion are depicted on the interior. They are framed by symbols of the evangelists and images of saints, whose relics are enclosed under glass panels, inscribed with identifying texts. The relatively small size of the reliquary,

as well as its intricately ordered subject matter, indicates that it may have been used for devotion at home or in private chapels founded by wealthy patrons within the church proper.

The Communion vessels, altar equipment, service books, and reliquaries that fill this *Bulletin* are some of the finest surviving works of medieval art, and their relation to the rest of the collections in the Medieval Department and at The Cloisters is reflective of life and society in the Middle Ages. The works discussed here are displayed in the Museum's galleries with a large number of secular objects, including silver-gilt drinking cups, hardstone ewers in metalwork mounts, aquamaniles, ivory boxes decorated with scenes of medieval romance, and even gaming pieces. This combination of religious and secular vessels was not uncommon in medieval treasuries. Often, especially in royal foundations like Saint-Denis, imperial regalia joined the liturgical vessels, and in the treasury of San Marco hardstone drinking vessels and jewels were locked away in chests. Trunks of coins are also recorded; the money at the abbey of Saint Benedict at Monte Cassino in Italy, for example, was "borrowed" by a local duke to pay for armaments during an unsuccessful war.

Moreover, the treasuries of the Medieval Department and The Cloisters should not be viewed as segregated from the architecture, sculpture, paintings, and tapestries that are displayed in the adjacent rooms. The reliquaries, crosses, censers, *situlae*, and books kept in medieval treasuries were carried in procession by the clergy, robed in richly embroidered vestments, amidst the splendor of brightly colored sculpture, frescoes, and tapestries adorning the church's walls. Indeed, the treasury objects described in this *Bulletin* take their place among the most glorious creations of medieval artists and craftsmen.



59, 60. The proliferation of Thomas Becket's relics shortly after his murder in Canterbury Cathedral is evidenced by the three reliquaries shown on these facing pages. Two early examples made in precious materials are the small box decorated with scenes of Saint Thomas's martyrdom (fig. 59, left) and the gold pendant, called a phylactery (fig. 59, right), that was made for

Queen Margaret of Sicily before her death in 1183. On the latter, the queen receives the relics of Thomas's blood-soaked robes, belt, and shoe from a bishop, probably the pendant's donor, Reginald Fitz Jocelin, bishop of Bath. The large copper casket (fig. 60) was made about thirty years after the saint's death in 1170, perhaps for one of the chapels in the cathedral (compare fig.

49). It is decorated with images of Christ and thirteen saints, whose relics it may have contained. Silver casket (fig. 59, left): English, ca. 1173–76. Said to have been found in Sicily. Silver, partly gilt, niello, glass gem, h. 2¼ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.520). Pendant (fig. 59, right): English, ca. 1174–76. Gold, crystal, l. 2 inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer

Bequest, 1963 (63.160). Fig. 60: English, ca. 1200. Copper gilt, l. 10 inches. The Cloisters Collection, 1980 (1980.417)







61. This monstrance-reliquary, containing a tooth of Saint Mary Magdalene set atop an iron pin and encased in crystal, is crowned by a disk with a superb example of reverse painting on glass (*verre églomisé*). The figures in the Nativity (detail, above), as well as those in the Crucifixion on the other side of the disk, were executed by drawing with a stylus on the gilded glass surface; the glass was then set in a metal mount and the darker surface beneath was revealed through the drawing. Monstrance: Italian (probably Florence), late 15th century. Disk: Italian (possibly Tuscany), last quarter of the 14th century. Silver gilt, rock crystal, *verre églomisé*, h. 22 inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.504)





62. The devotional diptych above is also made in verre églomisé with the central panels showing the Nativity and the Crucifixion. Around them are symbols of the evangelists and busts of saints, whose relics, identified by small labels, are encased in the small compartments that frame the cen-

tral images. Among the saints shown are John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, Francis, Louis, Elizabeth, and Clare. Italian (Umbria or the Marches), late 14th century. Wood, rock crystal, glass, verre églomisé, h. 6¾ inches. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.982)

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Back cover: Censer (fig. 16)

Inside back cover: Altar lamp (fig. 29)



