

Reviews

Manuel de prière à l'usage des Pénitents blancs de Montpellier. Montpellier: Confrérie des Pénitents blancs de Montpellier, 2011. Pp. 82 ISBN 978-2-917-212226 (paperback) n.p.

This little book is a modern reference guide for the brothers of the still-active confraternity of the white penitents in the French city of Montpellier, put together by its current officers.

After a short one-page introduction, the manual begins with a modernization of the seventeenth-century booklet *Les Saints devoirs de l'Âme devote*. This booklet was an adaptation of monastic exercises and prayers for the layman that was adopted as a guide to the spiritual obligations of members of the confraternity in the seventeenth century. It details spiritual exercises and prayers for different parts of the day and for different occasions.

The second section is a guide to confraternal ceremonies, detailing the reception of novices, the manner and order of processions, and procedure to follow when in church. The third and longest section is a listing of the confraternity's feast days, each one with a brief description of its origin and a topical prayer. A chronological list of fixed feast days, beginning with the Immaculate Conception on 8 December, is followed by moveable feasts. The next section provides prayers for various occasions and then the book ends with some very brief lives of saints. The feast days and saints range from the ancient to the relatively recently established.

Given that confraternal scholars so often work with documents from organizations that are long defunct, it is refreshing to encounter a living reference book from an active confraternity that incorporates elements from every era of the society's existence.

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Panzarino, Rocco and Maria De Mola. *San Francesco da Paola, Santa Maria della Salette: due chiese una confraternita a Fasano*. Martina Franca (TA): Artebaria edizioni, 2015. Pp. 254 + 273 colour ill. ISBN 9788-8-8967-1136-1 (paperback) € 33.

This volume presents the spiritual and secular history of the *Confraternita di Santa Maria della Salette e di San Francesco da Paola* founded in Fasano

(Italy) in 1873, its two churches, and the confraternity's place in the cultural and religious life of Fasano.

The first chapter contains a detailed history of the principal physical space occupied by the confraternity. In 1667 a small church was erected on the south-west edge of Fasano. In 1683 a Fasanese soldier set up a hospice of the Minim Order there, and a monastery was subsequently established in 1716. The space was later enlarged and rendered multi-functional. In the early nineteenth century the church became a cemetery and the monastery a hospital, leading to the unique architectural construction we see today. In learning about the restructuring of the original space over time, the reader is made aware of the significance of the contemporary architectural complex: it is a physical manifestation of the cultural and social transformation the city experienced in the early modern and modern period.

Chapter two examines the hagiography of St Francis of Paola and provides a description of the Marian apparition in La Salette-Fallavaux, France (1846). Deeply committed to his religious vocation and possessing keen prophetic intuition, St Francis of Paola (b. 1416) established a hermetic order at age twenty. In 1506 the religious foundation received official approval by Pope Julius II and came to be known as the Minims or Order of Minims. The Order quickly spread through Europe, appearing in Fasano at the end of the seventeenth century. However, as Panzarino and De Mola reveal, devotion of St Francis of Paola is documented in Fasano as early as 1600. Devotion of the Madonna of La Salette arrived in the late nineteenth century, when Father Ignazio Guarini, dean of the church of St Francis of Paola in Fasano, introduced the cult to his parishioners after having visited the shrine in France.

Chapter three examines how devotion to St Francis of Paola and to the Madonna of La Salette is incorporated in the religious observance, operation, and organisation of the confraternity. The chapter provides detailed information on the confraternity's inventory of devotional objects and its ceremonial culture. The fourth chapter, in turn, is largely concerned with the construction of the church of the Madonna of La Salette. Although the parish was originally headquartered in the church of St Francis of Paola, urban development in Fasano in the 1970s resulted in the construction of a church in the south part of the city (1986) that functions as both a spiritual and secular community space.

Those with an interest in the history of religious art will find chapter five to be most appealing. Here, Panzarino and De Mola provide an exhaustive examination of devotional art in the church of St Francis of Paola, which features works by Leonardo Antonio Olivieri (1689–1752) and Diego Bianchi di Manduria (1683–1767). The chapter also explores the church's architecture: a single nave construction with eight side

chapels, each of which is examined individually. These are followed by an examination of the main altar, the cupola, and the parish hall. Chapter five looks at the artistic and cultural value of the decorative stonework and painting in the church while simultaneously contextualising its religious iconography and ornamentation within the larger framework of church decoration in Italy, thus moving the study beyond its local context.

This volume is an excellent chronicle of the spiritual and secular history of the confraternity and its two churches. Though the study is largely focused on the modern period, it is a fine example of the wide-ranging impact a confraternity can have in shaping the cultural, social, and artistic identity of a city over time.

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Thelen, Emily S. (ed.) with the collaboration of Susie Speakman Sutch. *The Seven Sorrows Confraternity of Brussels. Drama, Ceremony, and Art Patronage (16th–17th Centuries)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2015. Pp. xi, 168 + 22 b/w ill. ISBN 978-2-5035-5333-7 (paperback) Euros 45.

The Confraternity of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin in Brussels was part of the rapid expansion of a new devotion throughout the Low Countries in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It both benefitted from the support of rulers and the highest echelons of local society, and at the same time had an enormous mass membership (reaching 6000 within its first year of activity). It was founded by a Chamber of Rhetoric (a literary association), and its leaders included some of the city's leading writers and artists.

Many confraternities have been studied for their patronage of art, music, or literature, but it is notable to find a study that explores a single confraternity's relationship to all three of these arts together. Confraternities touch on a wide range of specializations that are all too often examined separately. This collection of essays brings together scholars from various disciplines and eras to examine the association's relatively rich documentation from many angles. This approach not only enables fruitful comparison between its artistic, musical, and literary activities, but also encourages examination of the relationship of this artistic production to other areas of study, including religion, politics, society and economics.

After a brief introduction and chronology of the confraternity, the first two chapters examine in depth two particularly rich but complex