

The Feast of the Conception of the Virgin in the Crown of Aragon in Liturgy, Thirteenth to Fifteenth Century (Part I)

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Abstract

This article will review the principal Marian feasts in calendars and offices in use in the Crown of Aragon between the 13th and 15th centuries. It will do so after building a corpus of manuscript and incunable liturgies, held in public libraries and Cathedral archives, examined and transcribed over a period of twenty years. Its objective is to trace the development of the Conception feast in the Crown of Aragon between the 13th and 15th centuries, placing its relative importance as a major or minor feast in contrast with other Marian feasts. Because the Conception feast was introduced during the Middle Ages on 8 December, it merits particular attention and will be distinguished from the Expectation or December Annunciation feast, also called the Conception feast (18 December), with which there is often confusion. In the first part of the article, the Conception feast in its variants celebrated in the dioceses will be examined. In a second part of the article the Conception feast as celebrated by the religious Orders will be examined.

Keywords

Religious Orders and the Conception feast; Crown of Aragon; 13th and 15th centuries, manuscript and incunable liturgies



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RESUMEN

Este artículo pondera las principales fiestas marianas en los calendarios y oficios vigentes en la Corona de Aragón entre los siglos XIII y XV a partir de un corpus de manuscritos litúrgicos consultados en las bibliotecas catedralicias y públicas, revisados y transcritos por el autor a lo largo de un período de 20 años. El objetivo que propone es trazar el desarrollo de la fiesta desde el siglo XIII al siglo XV, así como la relativa importancia de cada una de ellas como fiesta mayor o menor. Como fiesta que se introducía en la Edad Media se prestará atención a la fiesta de la Concepción de la Virgen (8 de diciembre), distinguiéndola de la que la fiesta de la Expectación o de la O (18 de diciembre), con la que muchas veces se confunde. En una primera parte del artículo se examinarán las fiestas celebradas en las diócesis de la Corona de Aragón. En una segunda parte, se examinarán la fiesta de la Concepción que se celebra en las órdenes religiosas que prosiguen sus propias costumbres litúrgicas a fin de poder compararlas con la costumbre de las diócesis.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Fiesta de la Concepción de la Virgen y órdenes religiosas; Corona de Aragón, siglos XIII-XV, manuscritos e incunables litúrgicos

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1 Introduction

There has been a great deal of scholarly interest in Peninsular Marian liturgies since the nineteenth century, beginning with the hymns (Dreves and Blume 1886-1922); Anglès Pàmies (1931 and 1961); Frías (1954); Szövérfy (1998); Twomey (2008a and 2019); Peinado Guzmán (2012); Disalvo (2013)) and, within that body of work, attention has been drawn to aspects of the Conception of the Virgin Mary, a feast disputed among Schoolmen from the twelfth century onwards, Europe-wide, and only gradually established in individual dioceses. Up until the Council of Trent (1558), with the Church's move to elimination of local autonomy in the name of centralized eradication of heresy, there had been no attempt to regularize practices and dioceses had had a free hand to develop offices according to their own taste and requirements. From 1570, standardized Roman missals and breviaries were obligatory, meaning that many older breviaries were destroyed. In some dioceses, it was common practice for such liturgical books to be burnt (Cabano-Díaz 1994: 40). Given that the debate over the Conception feast began only in the twelfth century, with the letters exchanged between Nicholas of St Albans (dates coetaneous with Bernard of Clairvaux), an eager supporter of the English Church's celebration of the Conception feast and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), spread of the disputed feast began slowly to be adopted, following England's early advocacy (Lamy 2000: 38-42; Twomey 2008: 23-24). Furthermore, twelfth-century liturgies in the Crown of Aragon revealed that none contained the Conception office or included the feast in their calendar.¹ What is more, the "Epistolario" in Huesca Cathedral suggests that the feast began to be added to calendars sometime after the book of epistles had been copied in the early thirteenth-century.² Evidence therefore suggests that, even in the early thirteenth century, there was still no firm basis for celebration of the Conception feast in the Peninsula.

This article is based on primary research carried out in Cathedral archives and in public libraries in the Crown of Aragon during a period between 2003 and 2023, in which the steps of Jaime Villanueva (1803-1852) were retraced to those Cathedrals belonging to the Crown of Aragon. The Cathedral and libraries included in the study are those with relevant manuscripts dating from the twelfth century and these were selected with the aid of the catalogue of liturgical manuscripts prepared by José Janini and José Serrano (1977-1980). Their catalogue enabled Cathedral and public libraries which possess liturgical books of the relevant period to be identified.³ In effect, this meant that some Cathedrals, like Jaca, were not included. It meant that some unlikely public libraries, such as public library in Tarragona with its rich holding of Cistercian manuscripts from nearby disbanded monasteries, were.

In both 2008 and 2019, my monographs were published which examined how traces of the liturgies could be found in Marian literature in both Castile and Aragon. Each monograph was constructed around major themes. This article, in many senses, provides the background

1. See, for example, the twelfth-century liturgies: "Prosario-tropario", Tortosa, Arxiu Capítular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 4; "Missale parvum", Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 71.

2. See "Epistolario", Huesca, Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 6, which has the Conception feast added in the margins at the relevant point in the proper of saints (fol. 140r).

3. For this reason, the limits of the study were fixed at the thirteenth century.

information on which each book was built, although it was not published at the time.⁴ The volume of research on which the monographs had their foundation was not fully presented in them, because the aim of each book was to look at themes in Marian devotion, in particular those centred on aspects of the Conception (Twomey 2008b) and on Marian space (Twomey 2019).

In the case of this article, a narrower focus than that of the 2019 monograph, which addressed all medieval Marian feasts, has been adopted with a focus on the liturgy of the Conception of the Virgin which was in development in the Middle Ages. An overview of the earliest evidence of the Conception feast beyond Spain's borders, including in Ireland and England, is given by José Antonio Peinado Guzmán (2012: 76-81). Peinado Guzmán discounts some early mention of the Conception as referring to the Expectation feast but does record some references to the celebration of the feast in the thirteenth century at Ripoll and Santiago (Peinado 2012: 86, 88).

The Conception is the most interesting of the feasts of the Virgin because it was changing, as theologians in the Middle Ages sought to understand how it could be permissible. It was precisely between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries, when different theological developments and different Diocesan priorities, began to be reflected in the liturgy. The Conception feast was the point of departure for the entire research fieldwork on which this article draws, later widened to include a range of Marian feasts and, therefore, it seemed a valuable place to begin this article. It is expected that, in future publications, other Marian feasts and their liturgies will be addressed.

The term liturgy is, in itself, a complex one, originating from the Greek *leiturgia* and meaning the work of the people or for the people (Panizo 2013: 29). It is now exclusively used for the celebration of the services of the Church. In the period under consideration, however, liturgies also included instruction books for how offices should be celebrated, such as Books of Custom and Practice (*Consueta or Consuetudines*) or how processions should be carried out on feast days (*Processionales*). The decision to include a wide range of liturgical books, beyond an initial expectation of studying only breviaries, became apparent very early in the fieldwork period (2003-2004). As I set out in the monograph (Twomey 2019), the range of manuscripts consulted was expanded to add supplementary books, each ordered according to the calendar of feast days: Books of Custom and Practice (*Consuetudines*), Sacramentaries, Missals, Epistolaries, Gospel Books, and Processionals, and the same range is therefore the basis of the 134 liturgies identified and consulted for this article. To this end, a corpus of liturgies containing some reference to the Conception office was established.⁵ Each liturgy was personally consulted and transcribed and, in those cases where it was permitted, photographed. This corpus includes all available liturgical books from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, excepting those liturgies which were not in fit condition to be examined or those which could not be accessed, or could not be moved to be consulted.⁶

The first part of the article will now examine the situation in each of the dioceses. From the available evidence, which is in its nature based on extant liturgies, it will determine the nature of celebrations and offer insights into the practice adopted at different points during the period of

4. A brief initial study of Conception liturgies in the Peninsula is found in Twomey (2008a: 11-22) but that short chapter was intended to set the scene for a study of some of the major Conception themes in liturgy and poetry. It does not identify liturgies specific to the territory of the Crown of Aragon.

5. As explained in Twomey (2019), it was not possible to visit one Cathedral archive during the period the research was carried out. Three visits were attempted but despite pre-arrangement, the archivist was not able to facilitate access. Another Cathedral archive was closed for works and the liturgical books could not be accessed. It is expected a separate study on the large number of liturgies in those dioceses will be published at a future date.

6. As an example, the six antiphonaries in Huesca Cathedral were inaccessible because they were too large to move. I am grateful to the part-time archivist for facilitating access to the remainder of the collection. These volumes are not therefore included in the corpus.

study. It begins with the liturgies pertaining to Barcelona, which has some claim to being the earliest diocese to adopt and celebrate the feast in the Peninsula (Peinado 2012: 88), seemingly as early as 1281.

2 Celebration of the Conception Feast in Dioceses in the Crown of Aragon

2.1 *Barcelona*

The earliest Conception office in a Barcelona breviary, now held in the Vic Cathedral archives, dates from the second half of the fourteenth century.⁷ The very earliest instructions in England for the Conception feast found in the miracle of Ramsey Abbey's Abbot Elsinus and in the sermon of Osbert of Clare (†1158), both early advocates of the feast, are to use the office of the Nativity of the Virgin, changing the word Nativity to Conception. The Barcelona liturgy mirrors that instruction but also has some separate sections, unrelated to the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin (8 September), in the same breviary. The Barcelona office begins with vespers and ends at prime and, for matins as well, has different words to the Nativity of the Virgin. The office, therefore, includes antiphons, readings, and prayers which are unrelated to those used for the Nativity. The remaining hours, the ones of lesser importance, terce, sext, and none, however, have an instruction to use the Nativity office, whilst compline is said "Ut in dominica natiuitatis".⁸ The office also incorporates liturgical song in the form of two full *verbetas*, or hymns, also related to the Conception of the Virgin.⁹

Given the early interest in the Conception office in Barcelona, there are a number of indications that Leonardo Nogarola's Conception office, "Egredimini" was adopted. Leonardo Nogarola or de Nogarolis (active 1470-1490) was the Papal protonotary, a clerk in the household of Pope Sixtus IV (1414-1484) and an important theologian in his own right, whose works were known in the Peninsula. For example, his *De Beatudine Liber* (Valencia, BH, MS 313) was owned by Fernando, the Duke of Calabria (1488-1550). Nogarola's office was approved for use by the Franciscan Pope Sixtus in 1478. The liturgies which adopt it include a separate manuscript Conception office, a Missal (*Missale parvum*), and a breviary.¹⁰ The incunable breviary, printed by Erhard Ratdolt in Augsburg, includes Nogarola's office for the Conception. That breviary's rubric indicates it is the work of Nogarola: "incipit officium Immaculate Conceptionis uirginis Marie editum per reverendum presbiterem Leonardum Nogarolum apostolicum protonotarium Artium et Sanctae Theologiae doctorem famosissimum".¹¹ A manuscript copy of the office offers a very similar rubric.¹² At the end of the

7. The best-preserved early Barcelona breviary is the one held in Vic, "Breviarium secundum usum ecclesiae Barcinonensis", Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 83, with a Conception office at fols 467r-68r.

8. Normally, this might be translated "As at the Nativity of the Lord" but here is probably meant to mean "As at the Nativity of the Lady". See "Breviarium secundum usum ecclesiae Barcinonensis", Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 83, fol. 487r.

9. For study of the *verbeta* form in the Crown of Aragon, see Bonastre i Bertran (1982).

10. "Manuscrit miscel-lani", Barcelona Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1043, fol. 13r; *Missale parvum* (1509), fol. 57r; (1486-1491). *Breviarium secundum ordinem Romanae ecclesiae* (Augsburg: Erhardus Ratdolt), <https://bipadi.ub.edu/digital/collection/incunables/id/22769> [accessed 31-12-2022].

11. (1486-1491). *Breviarium secundum ordinem Romanae ecclesiae* (Augsburg: Erhardus Ratdolt), <https://bipadi.ub.edu/digital/collection/incunables/id/22769> [accessed 31-12-2022].

12. "Manuscrit miscel-lani", Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1043, fol. 13r: "Here begins the office of the Immaculate Conception compiled by the reverend priest Leonardo Nogarola, Apostolic protonotary and famous doctor of Arts and Sacred Theology".

Catalan manuscript office, there is an instruction in Catalan about the indulgences accorded by the Pope for saying the psalms set out in Nogarola's office: "Aprovació i confirmació per part de Sixt IV de indulgències per la recitació de les salmes de la Verge al seu ofici. Any 1479".¹³ The Catalan instruction reveals the office was destined for the Crown of Aragon.

Evidence of strength of devotion to the Conception feast from a range of other Barcelona liturgical books is plentiful.¹⁴ A sanctorale or proper of saints provides a fascinating early record of the feast celebrated in Barcelona with nine readings for the feast recorded.¹⁵ This is one of very few late thirteenth-century manuscripts which record the Conception feast in the copyist's original hand.¹⁶ It corroborates findings about Barcelona's early interest in the feast and, taken in conjunction with the Barcelona *consueta* or customary, it points to the celebration of a developed Conception liturgy by the mid fourteenth century.¹⁷ Given the nature of the liturgy in the fourteenth-century Barcelona breviary, held at Vic Cathedral, mentioned above, it seems likely it is a copy of an earlier office. The office contains nine readings: six are dedicated to the apocryphal Gospel story of Anna and Joachim, with the other three readings parallel to the Nativity office. One of these is the Gospel reading, *Liber Generationis*, from the beginning of St Matthew's Gospel. Sectors of the Barcelona faithful were devoted to the Conception and there was a local *cofradía*, or religious association, which established a Conception altar in the cloisters of Barcelona Cathedral in 1494 (Mas 1906: 71, n. 328).

Barcelona diocese reveals strong evidence for adoption of the feast in the fourteenth century, built at an early stage around the story of Anna and Joachim in the Apocryphal Gospel of James.¹⁸ There is a Barcelona missal with a Conception office dated 1458, held in a small collection at the Biblioteca Balaguer in Vilanova i la Geltrú.¹⁹ The opening antiphon in that Conception office praises the angelic Annunciation to Anna and Joachim, the Virgin's parents, echoing the Apocryphal Gospel. There is also a tendency to reference the Nativity feast, whilst incorporating separate liturgy for the Conception in the more important offices for the feast. Later, the emphasis on Anna and Joachim would be abandoned in favour of Nogarola's more scripturally sound office with its indulgences and papal approval.

2.2 *Vic*

Evidence suggests Barcelona's neighbouring diocese, Vic, had also begun celebrating the Conception feast early in the fourteenth century. Yet, the evolution of the feast was not straightforward. There is a single fourteenth-century breviary with a Conception feast in the calendar, which has been dated shortly after 1319.²⁰ It indicates that the feast was to be celebrated with three lessons (fol. 6v). By the

13. "Manuscrit miscel·lani", Barcelona Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1043, fol. 23r.

14. Manuscripts which refer to the Conception feast include the "Sanctorale", Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona, MS 104, fol. 354r; an "Ordinatio" or *consueta*, Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona, MS 77b, and a "Flos sanctorum", Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona, MS 105. There is neither breviary nor missal in the Cathedral archives.

15. "Sanctorale", Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona, MS 104, fols 354r-56v.

16. Two Barcelona missals neither of which has a Conception office, can be found in Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, "Misal de Barcelona", MSS 116 and 163.

17. "Consueta", Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona, MS 77b. According to the Cathedral inventory, the *consueta* is a fifteenth-century manuscript, but José Janini dates it at 1352.

18. "Protoevangelium of James" (Schneemelcher 1991: 427).

19. Vilanova i la Geltrú, Biblioteca Balaguer, "Misal", MS 1, fol. 287r. The collection was purchased by Francisco Asenjo Barbieri in the nineteenth century and given to Vincent Balaguer.

20. "Breviarium secundum consuetudinem sedis Vicensis", Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 80. At fol. 163v, the scribe

fifteenth century, Vic records a further number of calendars with an entry for the Conception. Within the proper of saints, most of the offices are to be celebrated using the office of the Nativity of the Virgin, “in festo conceptionis Beate Marie Salve Sancta Parens ut in natiuitate dicatur totum ut in natiuitate eiusdem mutatis mutandis”.²¹ It is not uncommon for the rubric for the Conception feast to instruct celebrants to use words from the Nativity office: “Et fit totum officium sic in festo natiuitatis s[an]c[t]e Marie”.²² However, including the Conception feast in the calendar or proper of saints was by no means standard. One of the fifteenth-century Vic breviaries has no entry for the Conception feast.²³ A fourteenth-century breviary records the feast of the Conception in the calendar only, although the entry is a later addition.²⁴ Vic probably continued to use the Nativity as the basis for the Conception feast, albeit with additional prayers or readings. The *Consueta de Vic* or Vic customary, which can be dated after 1413, includes the Conception feast within the offices, confirming it was to be celebrated with the office for the Nativity feast.²⁵ The later fifteenth-century Book of Custom and Practice continues to state that the Nativity office liturgy is to be used: “Et fit [...] officium sicut in nativitate cum verbetis et prosis”.²⁶ In this *consueta*, however, the margins next to the entry for the 8 December are filled with a lengthy note which copies a Conception feast. The margin liturgy is an unidentified, slightly shortened version of the Conception liturgy by Nogarola. When the Pope decreed indulgences for Nogarola’s liturgy, as noted for the Barcelona manuscript office (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1043), Vic diocese, which had been celebrating the Conception feast faithfully, using the words of the Nativity office, adopted it.

The margin office replaces the main rubric’s instruction to use the Nativity feast. Its structure and the order of antiphons follow Nogarola’s office.²⁷ The margin office does not, however, include any of the readings. The margin office in the *consueta* provides further support for the theory that the Vic diocese had not established a local Conception office by the mid fifteenth century. Nogarola’s liturgy continued to be used in Vic into the sixteenth century, as the *Breviarium vicensis* (1557) shows.²⁸

Sometimes designated readings are included which regularly connect the feast with the authority of St Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109). In one of the Vic breviaries, the readings are to be the sermon, believed to have been written in support of the Conception doctrine by Anselm, beginning “*Conceptio*

adds the date of MCCCIX decimo (1319), which indicates that it was composed later than that. The twelfth century “Missale parvum”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 71, has a selection of Marian feasts, with both the Virgin’s Nativity and Assumption having an entry. The Conception does not. The Nativity and Assumption are included because of being the principal Marian feasts in the diocese. Manuscripts at Vic have been catalogued by Gudiol i Cunill with Junyent (1934).

21. “On the feast of the Conception of Blessed Mary ‘Salve Sancta Parens’ is said as at the Nativity. All is as at her Nativity, changing the words”. See “Missale secundum ritum ecclesiae Vicensis”, MS 69, fol. 106v.

22. “The office is said just as at the Nativity”. See “Breviarium secundum consuetudinem sedis Vicensis”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 82, fol. 81r, indicates that the full office is to be said as for the Nativity feast. It adds one prayer and a set of readings for the office laid out as a continuous text. The breviary dates from the end of the fourteenth century or from the early fifteenth century.

23. “Breviarium de officio totius anni secundum consuetudinem ecclesiae Vicensis”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 86. The calendar for the breviary is missing and the feast is not in the proper for saints’ days at the folios corresponding to 8 December (fols 142v–44r).

24. “Breviarium secundum consuetudinem ecclesiae Vicensis”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 81.

25. “Consueta de Vic”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 31–19, fol. 92v.

26. “And all the office is to be said as in the Nativity of Blessed Mary with verbetas and hymns”. See “Consueta de Vic”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 31–19, fol. 92v.

27. The margin office is copied in the “Consueta de Vic”, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 31–18, at fols 111v–12r. It is a short version of the liturgy by Nogarola, copied in the “Manuscrit miscel·lani”, Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1043.

28. *Breviarium vicense* (1557), p. 304v.

venerandae".²⁹ The spurious Anselmian sermon is by Osbert of Clare, regularly copied along with works by St Anselm.³⁰ The situation in Vic diocese, where the Nativity office is used until the Nogarola office was approved, is completely different to that of Girona.

2.3 Girona

The Girona diocese, known as Gerona in English, at the northern tip of the present-day Catalonia, has preserved a range of Conception liturgies and the earliest is a feast for the Sanctification of the Conception of Mary, dating from 1339.³¹ The Sanctification of the Conception is a precursor of the Conception, as it refers to the Virgin being sanctified in her mother's womb rather than being created immaculate or untouched by original sin. It is unlikely that the Sanctification office was the first liturgy to exist in Girona diocese for the purpose of celebrating Mary's sanctified origins.³² Girona provides insight into how the Conception feast evolved between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with a single manuscript containing two versions of the office.³³ The later office (fols 4r-7v), indicates that the Sanctification of the Conception office began to be seen as outmoded by the 1440s. It is also indicative of how Girona diocese responded positively to the promotion of the Immaculate Conception at the Council of Basel (1431-1449).³⁴

The reason for appending a new office to the 1339 breviary is made clear in one of the responses for the first night prayer: "Immunem semper fuisse Maria ab omni originali et actuali culpa sanctamque et immaculatam. Diffiniuit ecclesia catholica in unum legitime congregata".³⁵ The liturgist's insistence on the agreement of the whole Church recalls the definition of the doctrine at the Council of Basel in 1439 (Pérez 2006). The new Girona office is a version of Juan de Segovia's Conception office, written after the declaration at the Council of Basel.³⁶ The office was never approved by the Church and Basel's conclusions were discounted.

In the words "*legittime*" ("legitimately"), Girona diocese proclaims its support for Basel's definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. It is also confirming that it intends to abide by Basel's decisions, even though the Council was to be subsequently declared schismatic,

29. "Breviarium secundum consuetudinem ecclesiae Vicensis", Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 82, fol. 81r.

30. Pseudo-Anselm (Osbert of Clare), "Sermo de conceptione Beate Mariae", ed. J-P Migne, PL 159, cols 319-24.

31. "Breviari de Girona", Arxiu de la Catedral de Girona, MS 125. Cataloguing of the manuscripts in the Cathedral in Girona was undertaken by Pere Bohigas in 1936, under the threat of their destruction by Republican groups at the outset of the Civil War. The documents were preserved from damage by the actions of this exceptional scholar (Janini-Marqués 1962).

32. The Girona Conception liturgies include hymns specifically developed to accompany the liturgy. For this reason, I contend that it is more developed than other liturgies, which indicate that the liturgy of the Nativity is to be used on 8 December, substituting Conception for Nativity. See, for example, "Misal de Toledo", Archivo Capitular de Toledo MS 37-23, at fol. 29v, where "*in die Conceptionis*" is written in the margin alongside the Nativity.

33. The new Conception office was appended to the original breviary, eventually being bound at the front of the first volume.

34. Kern (2019: 24) counters the accepted view that Iberia revealed little interest in conciliarism. High numbers of Iberian attendees, including Juan de Segovia (c.1395-1458) and Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468), Juan González de Sevilla, Bishop of Cadiz (in office 1420-1440), Alfonso de Madrigal ("El Tostado", c. 1410-1455) at either Council of Constance (1414-1418) and Council of Basel run counter to the accepted view. The implementation of Basel's pronouncement on the Immaculate Conception also is evidence to the contrary.

35. "Mary was always immune from all original and actual sin and holy and immaculate. The Catholic Church gathered legitimately together has defined it". See "Breviari de Girona", Arxiu de la Catedral de Girona, MS 125, fol. 5r.

36. For background to Juan de Segovia and his office, see García Hernando (1958); Ricossa (1994). For the debate between Juan de Segovia and Juan de Torquemada, see Martín Palma (1957).

and its decisions nullified.³⁷ The breviary reference also stands as a confirmation of what had been an annual event for over one hundred years in the diocese.

That both offices, the Sanctification of the Conception and the Juan de Segovia office, survive, is in some ways surprising. Once breviaries became outdated, they would often be abandoned and then be destroyed in favour of newer breviaries, which contained the full range of up-to-date offices required. Once outmoded, they were used for binding newer liturgies and other documents and, frequently, the only evidence they existed is from such fragments (Janini 1982, 1: 74). Churches, on occasion, updated individual offices, however, often appending them to existing books of offices.³⁸ Manuscripts of the quality of the Girona breviary were, however, expensive to produce both in time and materials and, for that reason, the Girona church did not discard the breviary, preserving its beautiful miniatures, as well as continuing to use it for all the remaining offices.

Once again, other Girona liturgies reveal variation in practice. One fourteenth-century breviary contains neither Sanctification nor Conception office, although the Conception has an entry in the calendar.³⁹ Despite the Conception office in the calendar, there is no dedicated Conception liturgy, which suggests the liturgy for the Nativity of the Virgin was being used for the Conception. The fifteenth-century *consueta* has a Conception feast which does not correspond to either the feast appended to the fourteenth-century Girona breviary or to the Sanctification feast.⁴⁰ The *consueta* indicates that six lessons are to be taken from Anselm's "sermon" "*Principium quo salus*".⁴¹ The text in question is a treatise on the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, long believed to be by Anselm but by Eadmer of Canterbury (c. 1060–1123), a theologian and Anselm's chaplain.⁴² The Girona diocese seeks to add authority to the celebration of the feast through associating it with Anselm of Canterbury.

Girona's practice is exceptional in that it retains a Sanctification office which other dioceses do not. It is also exceptional in adopting Juan de Segovia's office after 1439. Practice in the archdiocese of Tarragona is more difficult to determine.

2.4 Tarragona

Attempts to determine Tarragona's relationship with the Conception are hampered by truncated and fragmentary manuscripts. Some breviaries, such as the Tarragona breviary, include the Conception in the calendar, although the office is no longer present in the proper of saints because the Conception office would have been copied into the final folios and these are missing.⁴³ The same problem occurs with the *Breviarium de Pere d'Urrea*, dated 1484, printed by Nicholas Spindeler.⁴⁴ The Tarragona missal dated 1499 is no more than a fragment.⁴⁵

37. On the struggle between Pope and Council, see Joachim Stieber (1978: 51–94).

38. See also the *Vic consueta*, Arxiu Episcopal de Vic, MS 31–18.

39. "Breviarium gerundense", Arxiu Diocesà de Girona, MS 14, fol. 130. See fol. 234v for the office.

40. "Consueta ecclesiae S. Felicis Gerunde", Girona, Arxiu Diocesà, MS 18, fol. 124r.

41. "Consueta ecclesiae S. Felicis Gerunde", Girona, Arxiu Diocesà, MS 18, fol. 124r. See PL 159, cols 301–18.

42. See for example, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, "Theological Works by Anselm of Canterbury OSB, Augustine and Others", MS 154, fol. 135v; St Anselm (Eadmer of Canterbury), "Tractatus de conceptione Beate Virginis Marie", ed. J-P Migne, PL 159, cols 323–26.

43. "Breviarium tarraconense", Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà de Tarragona, MS 80, fol. 203v.

44. *Breviarium de Pere d'Urrea*. The Historical Archive of the Tarragona Archdiocese possesses a second complete copy of the same breviary but it was unavailable at the time of research.

45. (1499). *Missale de Tarragona* (Barcelona: Joan Rosenbach).

However, there is incontrovertible evidence that the feast was being celebrated in the fourteenth century from one of the diocesan *consuetudines*.⁴⁶ The manuscript opens with the words “Consuetudines qu[e] in usu ro[man]e uel auctoritate per totius anni circulum n[ost]ra obseruat ecclesia”.⁴⁷ The *consuetudines* indicate that the Conception feast was celebrated as a major feast (*duplex*) and also show that a vigil for the feast had been established to bring it into line with other Marian feasts.⁴⁸ The Tarragona Church celebrated the office with nine lessons.⁴⁹ Three of these were from the Elsinus legend and six from homilies on the opening chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, the Book of the Generation of Jesus or *Liber Generationis*.⁵⁰ However, another Tarragona book of custom and practice has no record of the Conception in either its calendar or offices.⁵¹

The custom and practice recorded by the *consuetudines* give an indication of the degree of solemnity accorded the feast of the Conception in Tarragona in the fourteenth century. Two cantors, both robed in copes and albs, were to sing the vigil to the feast. On the feast day itself, there were to be six robed clergy with the same vestments as at the vigil. Notes on the day of the Conception also show that antiphons for the Nativity feast were to be used: “An[tiphon]e feriales dicantur cu[m] p[salmi]s de feria et omnia dicimus sicut in natiuitate eiusdem”.⁵²

The Tarragona records are important to show how the degree of solemnity with which the feast was being celebrated but also that the diocese introduced a vigil which is not usual practice for the Conception office, although it is usual for some Marian feasts, such as the Assumption.

2.5 Tortosa

Tortosa’s practice follows a similar pattern to Tarragona, the archdiocese to which it belongs. An early fifteenth-century psalter has the Conception in the calendar, marked as celebrated with nine lessons. It accompanies the Expectation feast of 18 December, which is also a red-letter day, celebrated with nine lessons.⁵³ Both the December feasts have the same number of lessons as the Purification (fol. 1v), Annunciation (fol. 2r), and Nativity of the Virgin (fol. 5r). The Nativity is celebrated with an octave and the Assumption (fol. 4v) with vigil and octave. The Conception feast is not celebrated with either. Some Tortosa liturgies, even those dated as late as the end of the fourteenth century, do not include a Conception office.⁵⁴ During the fifteenth century, the Conception office has been added to a fourteenth-century missal, together with other saints’ days, such as that of St Monica and St Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419), the Dominican preacher (fols 5–23).⁵⁵

46. “Book of practice which our Church observes according to Roman use or authority for the whole liturgical year”. See “Consuetudines”, Arxiu Històric Arceidiocèsà de Tarragona, MS s/s, fol. 4r.

47. “Consuetudines qu[e] in usu ro[man]e uel auctoritates per totius anni circulum n[ost]ra obseruat ecclesia”, Arxiu Històric Diocèsà de Tarragona, s/s, fol. 4r, unnumbered.

48. “Consuetudines”, Arxiu Històric Diocèsà de Tarragona, s/s, fol. 147v. Double (*duplex*) feasts are so called because the antiphons are repeated before and after the psalm.

49. “Consuetudines”, Arxiu Històric Diocèsà de Tarragona, s/s, fol. 143r.

50. Pseudo-Anselm, “Miraculum de conceptione Sanctae Mariae”, PL 159, cols 323–26.

51. “Consuetudines quas in usu vel auctoritate totius anni circulum nostra obseruat tarraconense ecclesia”, Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 276, fols 81v–82v. For a brief introduction to this manuscript see Amadeu Soberanas i Lleó (1960).

52. “The feast day antiphons and psalms are said and we say everything as at her Nativity”. See “Consuetudines”, Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Diocèsà de Tarragona, s/s, fol. 142v.

53. “Salterio-himnario”, Tortosa, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 21, fol. 5[bis]v.

54. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Tortosa, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 145. The manuscript is dated by Janini and Serrano (1977–1980, 1: 270).

55. “Misal de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 259, fols 1v–4v.

Many fourteenth-century Tortosa offices, instead, dedicate pride of place to the Expectation liturgy, sometimes called the December Annunciation or even the Conception.⁵⁶ In the fourteenth century, the feast of St Anne, mother of the Virgin, is celebrated with six readings from the Apocryphal Gospels with focus on the exile and return of Joachim.⁵⁷ By the fifteenth century, Tortosa breviaries begin to acknowledge Conception offices.⁵⁸ In the case of several of these, the readings only are included, meaning that the office was to be celebrated using the words of the Nativity liturgy.⁵⁹ In one fourteenth-century breviary, the first reading emphasizes how the Conception feast was first authorized to be celebrated in Ramsey Abbey.⁶⁰ The reading not only acknowledges the Elsinus miracle and the English origin of the feast but adds to the original the detail of authorizing the feast through convening a Synod, cloaking it in ecclesiastical authority.⁶¹

The final readings for the feast are taken from the sermon of Osbert of Clare (Barré 1958; Lamy 2000: 89).⁶² Whilst adopting the sermon as a reading is not common in either Aragon or Castile, it is common practice in other European countries (Bataille 2016: 21). One other unusual feature of the breviary is that the Elsinus legend is taken as the ninth and final reading for the Expectation feast.⁶³ The reading recounts the storm and shipwreck as well as the appearance of the angel, instructing the abbot to celebrate and preach the feast on his return, in this case the Expectation feast. As is the case with the Conception feast of 8 December, the readings for the Expectation office emphasize both the first celebration in a specific location: “Remensis grandis archiepiscopus tantum mirandum sciens predictum festum in communi consilio perpetuo quolibet anno celebrari mandavit” and also notes authorization by both Archbishop and Council of the Church.⁶⁴ The use of the Elsinus miracle for both offices reveals the confusion in the Tortosa diocese over the Conception of the Virgin and the Virgin’s Conception of Christ, showing that when the feast first reached the diocese, the word ‘conception’ was associated with the feast celebrated on 18 December. In Castilian dioceses, the Expectation feast (Nuestra Señora de la O) is always associated with St Ildephonse and the miracle of the chasuble which the Virgin gave him after he transferred the March Annunciation feast to 18 December. The miracle takes first place in Gonzalo de Berceo’s *Milagros*

56. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 136, fol. 89v. Peinado Guzmán (2012: 87-88) rightly identifies the care needed when interpreting reference to the celebration of the Conception, as this often refers to the Expectation feast. In the case of this study, the position of the office in the proper of saints clarifies which office is being celebrated.

57. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 116, fols 135v-36r.

58. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 111, fol. 478v.

59. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 18, fol. 298v. The use of the Nativity office may be made explicit: “*In conceptione in matutinibus et in aliis horis dicitur officium sicut in natiuitate eiusdem*”. The book of Custom and Practice, “*Consueta*”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 44, fol. 125r, similarly specifies the words of the Nativity feast are to be used with the exception that the first three readings are to be changed.

60. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 18, fol. 298v: “*Et per ordinem absque dubio in Remesiensi ecclesia ab [archiepiscopo] eiusdem ecclesie in com[un]e[m] sinodo constituta est et primum celebrate*”.

61. The influence of the Church gathered in General Council is found in the writing of Juan de Segovia and in that of Alfonso de Madrigal, particularly in his *Defensorium* (Mann 2019: 64). Given the influence of Segovia’s liturgy in Catalonia, his writing and thinking about Councils is likely to have influenced the younger man as well as influencing Diocesan thinking: “*Et ista est Concilium Generale legitime congregata, quia nulla alia congregatio est, quae legitime et sufficienter repraesentet totam universitatem fidelium, nisi generale Concilium*” (Mann 2019: 64, n. 81). The words “*legitime congregata*” recall those of the Girona office, see note 37 supra.

62. “*Consueta*”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 44, fol. 125r. In the *Consueta* the first three readings are to be changed to the homily, presumably that of Osbert.

63. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 18, fol. 302v.

64. “Breviario de Tortosa”, Arxiu Capitular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 18, fol. 302v: The locus for the feast may also be Ramsey, as with the Conception office. It may also be confused with Rheims.

de *Nuestra Señora* (Berceo 1980: 46-52) and prime position in Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (1959-1964, I: 7-8).

The Tortosa liturgies show a concern with how the feast was to be celebrated in terms of its degree of solemnity. According to the calendar in a fifteenth-century Tortosa breviary (MS 115), the Conception (fol. 6v) is celebrated with four cantors, making it equivalent to the Annunciation (fol. 2r), the Visitation (fol. 4r), and the octave of the Assumption (fol. 4v). The Nativity, on the other hand, is celebrated with six cantors (fol. 5r), as is the solemnity of the Assumption (fol. 4v). The Expectation is more simply celebrated, with two cantors (fol. 6v).⁶⁵

Although Tortosa is close to Tarragona and in its archdiocese, its practice is not the same. The solemnity with which the feast is celebrated is equivalent to the Visitation and March Annunciation as well as the December Annunciation but takes a lower rank than the Assumption and Nativity of the Virgin. In Tortosa, the Expectation shares the Elsinus legend with the Conception feast.

2.6 *La Seu d'Urgell*

One of the earliest Urgell books of liturgies is the "Missal de Galceran".⁶⁶ Documents record the donation of the missal to the church in Urgell by the bishop, Galceran or Galcerandus, in 1396. This missal does not include the Conception feast in the calendar or in the offices for saints' days. A fourteenth-century missal, the "Missale de Santa Eulalia", was used for the celebration of Mass in the Santa Eulalia municipal chapel.⁶⁷ The missal was sold for 40 florins in 1380 to Guillem Casanoves, a cloth manufacturer, meaning it must have been finished before its sale by some years (Parés i Saltor 2002: 71). It follows the pattern of other fourteenth-century liturgies in La Seu d'Urgell and does not include the Conception office in the proper of saints. The feast of the Conception has been added in the calendar.⁶⁸

No Conception offices are incorporated in any of the fourteenth-century codices from the diocese and none have entries for the feast in the calendar in the original scribe's hand.⁶⁹ The Urgell diocese was already celebrating the Conception at the start of the fifteenth century as the "Consueta urgellense" (Book of Custom and Practice in Urgell) reveals. The *consueta* is recorded in the inventory of the Cathedral archives as being a fourteenth-century manuscript but, at fol. 167r, refers to a resolution of the Cathedral Chapter, passed at Easter 1400:

In Conceptione s[an]c[t]e M[ari]e fuit ordinatum per reuerendissimum dominum episcopum cum per hon[orabil]e capitulum in capitulo paschali. Anno domini MCCCC que [...] festum Conceptionis

65. "Breviario de Tortosa", Arxiu Capítular de la Catedral de Tortosa, MS 115.

66. "Missal del bisbe Galceran de Vilanova", Arxiu Capítular de la Seu d'Urgell, MS 503.

67. "Missale urgellense de Santa Eulalia", Arxiu Municipal de la Seu d'Urgell, MS s/s.

68. "Missale urgellense de Santa Eulalia", Arxiu Municipal de la Seu d'Urgell, MS s/s, fol. 6v. Parés i Saltor (2002: 71) believes another missal, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1238, was written for Urgell. It belonged to the Church of the Mother of Pity, located within the Cathedral grounds. Despite Parés i Saltor's conviction, the missal does not contain any of the feasts normally associated with the diocese, such as the feasts of local saints, St Olot or St Ermengaud. Curiously, Janini and Serrano (1977-1980) do not include this manuscript in their review of liturgical manuscripts. The Biblioteca de Catalunya possesses a second missal, dating from the mid fourteenth century, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1237. It contains a selection of Masses for the proper of the saint including those for the principal Marian feasts, the Assumption (fol. 50v), Nativity (fol. 53r), Annunciation (fol. 34v), and Purification (fol. 32v). There is no entry for the Conception. The missal has both the beginning and end missing and has 113 folios. It has no calendar.

69. "Missal", Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 1238 has no calendar. The *Missal de Sancta Eulalia*, Arxiu Municipal de la Seu d'Urgell, s/s, fol. 6v, has the Conception feast added to the calendar in a different handwriting. The Galcerán Missal, Arxiu Capítular de la Seu d'Urgell, MS 503, fol. 6v, has no entry for the Conception feast in the calendar.

b[ea]te virg[in]is M[ari]e per totam suam dyoces[em] sollempniter celebretur et colatur sicut festum Assumptionis uel natiuitat[is] ipsius. Et fiat processione cum capis et omnia sicut indutis festiuitatibus sollempn[is] Et si festum Conceptionis uenit in dominica die aduentu, mutetur in crastinum die lune. Et uesperis die dominica sit de b[ea]ta M[ari]a sed in ipsa dominica die ab reuerencia b[ea]te M[ari]e dicatur missa et fiat processio cum capis et psallentur...⁷⁰

The *consueta* indicates that the diocese celebrates the feast of the Conception with the same degree of solemnity as the Assumption or Nativity: “Colatur sicut festum assumptionis uel natiuitatis ipsius”.⁷¹ At La Seu d’Urgell, as in most other dioceses, the Assumption was the principal Marian feast day and was one of the five principal solemnities in the year: “Est sciendum que in v festiuitatibus uidelicet Natale Domini, Paschi, Penthecoste, Assumptionis Beate Marie et in die cene, si domini episcopus celebret missa, sint duodecim presbiteri de illis quibus minus possunt deseruire”.⁷²

The *consueta* also gives an insight into how the feast developed in the diocese. The Chapter would not have contemplated advocating a Conception feast, which was to be celebrated with robed procession, unless the feast had already been introduced some time previously. Fourteenth-century missals do not corroborate that there was any separate office for the Conception, but this may be due to lost codices or may mean that, as at Vic, the Conception feast was subsumed under the liturgy of the Nativity feast. By the early sixteenth century, the Conception feast was standard in all missals.⁷³

From the instructions in the Urgell *consueta*, after the initial statement about the Conception feast, the Church at La Seu d’Urgell celebrated the feast with three indicators of its solemnity. The clergy robed with copes and there was a procession: “Et fiat processione cum capis et omnia sicut indutis festiuitatibus sollempn[is]”.⁷⁴ Finally, a vigil had been introduced for the Conception feast, as for the Assumption and Nativity, placing it on an equal footing with those feasts. The Urgell *consueta* instructs that the Nativity office is to be used for the Conception with the names changed: “In omnibus aliis [h]ori[bu]s et in uigil[ia] per totum diem sicut festo natiuitatis b[ea]te M[ari]e t[ame]n mutando uocabulo ubi est natiuitas dicatur conception”.⁷⁵

The office of the Conception is likely to have been celebrated in La Seu d’Urgell using the Nativity office. The *Breviarium urgellense*, printed in Venice by Andrea de Thoresanis de Asula, begins by stating that the feast was to be celebrated using the Nativity office and perhaps this was

70. For the Conception of St Mary, it was ordained by the most reverend bishop with the honourable Chapter in the Easter meeting of the Chapter, year of Our Lord 1400 that the feast of the Conception throughout his diocese was to be solemnly celebrated and was to be honoured as in the feast of her Assumption or Nativity. And a procession was to be held with copes and everything was to be done as in her solemn feast days. And if the Conception feast fell on a Sunday in Advent it was to be moved to the next day on Monday. And the vespers of the Sunday are to be of Blessed Mary but on that same day with reverence is to be said Mass of the Blessed Virgin and the procession with copes is to be held and psalms are to be sung.

71. “It should be celebrated just like the feast of the Assumption or Nativity (of the Virgin) themselves”. See “*Consueta urgellense*”, Arxiu Capitular de la Seu d’Urgell, MS 2048, fol. 167r.

72. “All should be aware, that in the case of five feasts, in other words, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the Assumption of Blessed Mary, and the Last Supper, the Mass is celebrated with twelve priests”. See “*Consueta urgellense*”, Arxiu Capitular de La Seu d’Urgell, MS 2048, fol. 180r.

73. (1502). *Missale secundum consuetudinem romanum nouiter impressum*; (1509). *Missale secundum ordinem urgellensis ecclesie* (Venice: Bartholmé de Tridino); (1528). *Ecclesie urgellensis missale* (Zaragoza: Georgi Coci).

74. “And there is to be a procession with copes and the robes worn are to be in every way as for solemn feast days”.

75. “In all the other hours and at the vigil and throughout the feast day, all is to be as in the feast of the Nativity of Blessed Mary, changing the word, however. Where Nativity is read, Conception is said”. See “*Consueta urgellense*”, Arxiu Capitular de La Seu d’Urgell, MS 2048, fol. 167r.

evidence to show how the Conception was celebrated using the words of the Nativity liturgy.⁷⁶ Despite the instruction, the entry at the appropriate point in the proper of saints for the Conception office includes not only readings specific to it but also a full set of antiphons for vespers, the first, second and third night prayers, and for lauds, as well the usual brief entries for terce, sext, and none. The office also includes a *verbeta*.⁷⁷ The Nativity office in the breviary has different antiphons and responses meaning the Conception office is not a reworking of the Nativity, merely changing the name, but has some degree of independence. The printer seems to have retained a traditional instruction, now at odds with the wording in the breviary. Despite the date of printing, 1487, some ten years after Nogarola's Conception office was approved, the diocese has not adopted it and retained its own local liturgy for the Conception feast.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, all missals from La Seu d'Urgell have dedicated Conception offices. The earliest of these is the so-called Urgell Missal.⁷⁸ From the calendar of this missal (fol. 6v), in Urgell, the feast is celebrated with the status of major feast (*duplex maior*), alongside the Purification (fol. 1v), Annunciation (fol. 2r), Visitation (fol. 4r), Assumption (fol. 4v), and Nativity of the Virgin (fol. 5r). It was by no means universal practice for Churches to accord the Conception feast the same status as the other Marian feasts, as Urgell does. For example, the newly printed missal, according to the practice of Rome, records the Conception feast as *duplex minor*, whilst all the other Marian feasts are *duplex maior*.⁷⁹

2.7 Lleida

Lleida, in English known as Lerida, at the west of Catalonian territory, bordering with the modern-day Autonomous Community of Aragon, reveals a different series of developments.⁸⁰ The archive contains liturgies used in the former diocese of Roda de Isábena, as well as those used in Lleida itself, after it was reconquered in 1149. Lleida preserves an important record of the Conception feast and how it was celebrated in the "Breviarium ilerdense", which was completed in 1451.⁸¹ In addition, an early sixteenth-century missal confirms that the feast was established in the diocese by the 1520s.⁸² Other Lleida breviaries, like the one dated 1479, have lost sections over the years.⁸³ For this reason, none preserve either the calendar or the end of the proper of saints, and there is no way of determining whether they originally contained the Conception. The fourteenth-century liturgy, recorded as a *sanctoral* in the catalogue, is an *epistolarium* or book of epistles, corresponding to the proper of saints, which briefly mentions the feast.⁸⁴ It indicates that the same epistle for the

76. *Breviarium urgellense*, Arxiu Capitular de La Seu d'Urgell, Incunabile 14 (Venice: Andrea de Thoresanis), p. 318r.

77. *Breviarium urgellense*, fol. 320r.

78. "Missale urgellense", Biblioteca Episcopal de la Seu d'Urgell, MS s/s, fol. 145r.

79. "Missale secundum consuetudinem romanum nouiter impressum" (1502), Arxiu Capitular de La Seu d'Urgell.

The missal is probably of Italian origin.

80. This location is known as Lerida in English.

81. "Breviarium ilerdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 16, fol. 435v.

82. "Missale ilerdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 32, fol. 118r.

83. "Breviarium ilerdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 14. Since it is generally the beginning and end of breviaries where folios are lost, in Lleida the calendar in the early folios and the final folios of the proper of saints have been most at risk. The calendar in Lleida breviaries is positioned in the opening folios and the proper of saints is ordered from Stephen (26 December) to Thomas the Apostle (18 December), differing from the order in other dioceses. In the Girona diocese, where a high number of Conception offices is preserved, the proper of saints begins from Andrew the apostle (30 November) and ends with Saturninus (29 November). This manner of ordering the breviary leads to the Conception office being at the opening of the proper of saints.

84. "Sanctorale", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 27.

vigil of the Assumption is to be used for the Conception: "In Conceptione B[ea]te Virginis incipit euangelium: Loquente iesu ad turbas. Quare in vigilia[m] Assumptionis".⁸⁵ This entry provides another example of the Conception feast being associated with a Marian feast other than the Nativity. In fact, the dating of this liturgy can be placed at later than 1512 (fol. 196r). The *consueta* for Sundays and feast days, according to the use of Lleida Cathedral, shows that the feast was being celebrated there in the fourteenth century: "De Conceptione beate M[ari]e facimus festum totium duplex sexto ydus dece[m]bris et dicimus off[iciu]m p[ro]prium si h[a]beatur".⁸⁶ The Lleida *consueta* reveals that offices for the day were not always common and that, in some cases, the Nativity office was to be used.

The introduction of the Conception feast at Lleida may, however, have been as early as the late thirteenth century. One early record of the celebration of the office is noted in a missal, dated in the catalogue as later than 1263.⁸⁷ This missal includes the Conception feast in the calendar only, noting there that it was to be celebrated with nine lessons and as a major (*duplex*) feast (fol. 11v). It is more certain that the Lleida diocese was celebrating the feast from the mid fourteenth century, although evidence of it is not from liturgical books:

Conceptionis Beate Marie Virginis: Die x mensis Junii anno a nat. domini MCCCLXXII fuit facta collatio beneficii Conceptionis sive **sanctificationis** Beate Marie virginis, instituti in Sede per R[everentissim]um bone memorie Dm Ferrarium episcopum ilderdense, venerabili domino, Bernardo Serra presbitero, de consensu et voluntate venerabilium dominorum Guillermi *Cescala* et Bernardi Ferrarii, in eadem capella dicti dni episcopi beneficiati, et tamquam beneficiati patroni dicti beneficii.⁸⁸

Bishop Ferrer held the episcopacy from 1334-1340, indicating that the Conception feast was being celebrated in some form by 1340 (Bajén 2002: 456).⁸⁹

Study of the Lleida breviaries and missals can be supplemented by another valuable collection of early manuscripts, presently held in the Cathedral archives, originally from the Cathedral of Roda de Isábena in the Pyrenees, where the diocese was transferred during the Islamic occupation of Lleida. The Roda collection provides information on the celebration of the Conception feast in the fourteenth century. In Roda breviaries, the feast was not originally included in the calendar, but it had been added in a different script.⁹⁰ The *consueta* also provides additional details of how the feast ranked. There was a procession first to the altar of the Conception of Blessed Mary and then

85. "On the Conception of the Blessed Virgin the gospel begins 'When Jesus was speaking to the crowds', as on the vigil of the Assumption".

86. "In respect of the Conception of blessed Mary, we celebrate with a full *duplex* feast on the sixth day of the Ides of December and we say the office for the day, if there is one". See "Misal", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS Rc-0030, fol. 80r; "Consueta dominical ferial y santoral de la Catedral de Lleida", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS Rc-0031. The original numbering for this folio is still visible, fol. 89r.

87. "Missale ilderdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 26.

88. "Conception of the blessed Mary the Virgin: On 10 June 1372 there was made a summary of the income for the Conception or Sanctification of Blessed Mary the Virgin, instituted by the Very Reverend Bishop Ferrer of Lleida, deceased, with the consent and will of the venerable lords William Cescala and Bernard Ferrer in the same chapel of the said Lord Bishop granted the income and also of the patron of the said benefice" (Bajén 2002: 456). I am grateful to Melchor Bajén Español for drawing my attention to this reference.

89. Bajén Español noted the entry but was surprised that it could refer to the Conception feast of 8 December.

90. "Breviario de Roda", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS Rc-0026, fol. 9v.

back to the high altar, both during the singing of responses.⁹¹ The Cathedral at Roda celebrated the Conception office and it is corroborated by a breviary.⁹² The Nativity liturgy was to be used.

The Lleida diocese maintains a strong tradition of celebrating the other Conception feast of 18 December, sometimes, as noted earlier, called the Expectation or Annunciation. The Church celebrated the Expectation alongside the Conception feast and it does not wane as the Conception increased in importance. The Lleida Missal, "Missale ilerdense", gives details of how it was to be celebrated with nine lessons and as a red-letter feast day (*duplex*) feast.⁹³ In the Lleida Breviary, "Breviarium ilerdense", in 1451, the Expectation is also recorded as a red-letter feast.⁹⁴ In the Roda missal, the Expectation takes its place within the proper of saints, unlike the Conception feast, which is omitted. In 1503, there is a record of the feast being an anniversary for the first wife of Anthony of Montsuar, Constanca: "In die Expectationis partus gloriosissime virginis Marie fit anniuersarium pro anima magnifice domine Constancie prime uxoris magnifici domini Anthonii de Montsuar".⁹⁵

Lleida diocese, like Tortosa, shows a great emphasis on the feast of the Expectation. The development of the feast of the Conception can be traced in both the Roda de Isábena liturgies and the later Lleida ones. The neighbouring diocese of Huesca shows a similar emphasis on the Expectation feast.

2.8 Huesca

Huesca Cathedral has a wealth of liturgical manuscripts dated earlier than the fourteenth century (Durán 1953). None of these provides any indication that the Conception feast was known. The thirteenth-century three-part breviary omits the Conception from the calendar but there is an entry for the Expectation feast.⁹⁶ The Expectation is to be celebrated with nine lessons.⁹⁷ Both fourteenth-century breviaries add the Conception to the calendar in a different hand, showing that, at the time, each of them was copied, the Conception feast was not being celebrated.⁹⁸ A note in the earlier breviary (MS 13) indicates that the feast is to be celebrated using the Nativity office.⁹⁹

The Expectation feast, on the other hand, has an entry in the proper of saints and, by the early fourteenth century, the Huesca Church celebrates it, just as the neighbouring diocese of Lleida does. The second volume of a late fourteenth-century lectionary has an entry for the Conception, where six lessons from Pseudo-Anselm are the readings for the day.¹⁰⁰ The six-lesson format points to a correlation between the Conception and the Nativity because the final three readings are to be drawn from the Nativity office. However, if one of the Huesca missals is correctly dated as early fifteenth century, then the feast was not universally accepted in the diocese by that date.¹⁰¹

91. "Consueta dominical ferial y santoral de la Catedral de Lleida", MS Rc-0031, fol. 180v.

92. "Breviario de Roda", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS Rc-0026, fol. 435v.

93. "Missale ilerdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 26, fol. 11v.

94. "Breviarium ilerdense", Arxiu de la Catedral de Lleida, MS 16, fol. 8v.

95. "On the day of the Expectation of the most glorious Virgin Mary it is the anniversary of the death of the great lady, Constanca, first wife of the noble gentleman, Anthony of Montsuar" (fol. 195r).

96. "Breviario de Huesca", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MSS 7, 8, and 9, fol. 9.

97. "Breviario de Huesca", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 9, fol. 9.

98. "Breviario de Huesca", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 13 and MS 14, prelim. fols 6v and 8r.

99. "Breviario de Huesca", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 13, fol. 6v.

100. "Leccionario del oficio", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 19, fol. 199v.

101. "Misal de Huesca", Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 16, fol. 106v.

By the fifteenth century, there is some evidence of the feast in the diocese. In one missal, there is a short Conception Mass.¹⁰² A mid-fifteenth-century *consueta* corroborates this.¹⁰³ The entry for the Conception mentions the royal decree, promulgated by Martin I (1356-1410), King of Aragon, when he required all churches in his realm to celebrate the Conception feast: “Serenissimus rex Martinus recolend. memorie Rex Arag[onis] uoluit et ordinaturque in tota eius dicio[n] celebraretur solemniter”.¹⁰⁴

Practice was inconsistent within the Crown of Aragon, and even within dioceses, and the notes for the Conception office highlight this: “Recitetur officium p[ro]prium et qu[ando] no[n] habuerit dicat de natiuitate eiusdem uirginis”.¹⁰⁵ Dioceses frequently used the Nativity office and some favoured it, as they did at Vic.

Some Huesca liturgies include a procession for the feast which recognizes the important contribution to celebrating the Conception feast being made by the Franciscan friary in the town: “Fit gen[er]alis processio ad monasterium fratrum minorum”.¹⁰⁶ The procession and its destination is indicative of the central role the Franciscan Order played in celebrating the Conception. Devout readings, purporting to be from the works of Anselm of Canterbury, are similar to the ones used in other dioceses for the feast. A short entry for the Conception provides two other details about the feast. First, it is ‘*reduplex*’, and, second, that the bells are to be rung. They are not rung on other feasts in December, even that of St Nicholas, traditionally a major feast.

The overview of evidence of celebration of the Conception feast in the dioceses in the Crown of Aragon shows that, in general, by the mid fourteenth century, the feast was being celebrated in one of four ways. Dioceses sometimes kept close to the early instruction to use the Nativity office for the Conception, changing the name. Dioceses might introduce some individualized readings and perhaps some special antiphons. Dioceses might use the Juan de Segovia office, as was the case at Girona and, finally, dioceses might opt to introduce the office approved by Pope Sixtus and written by Leonardo de Nogarola.

Diocesan bishops and archbishops had little control over what happened within the monasteries founded within the towns and villages they represented. The second part of this study will, therefore, examine practice within the religious Orders established in the Crown of Aragon.

3 Religious Orders and the Conception feast

The different religious Orders and their doctrinal approach to the Conception feast was studied by a number of scholars at the time of the first centenary of the definition of the Conception dogma (Delgado 1955; Garrido 1955; García 1955; Gutiérrez 1955). Practice in each Order was established by province rather than on a diocesan basis and it did not conform to what the local Church was doing.

102. “Misal de Huesca”, Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 20, fol. 199v.

103. “Consueta de Huesca”, Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 21, fol. 3r.

104. “His most serene majesty, Martin, wished and ordained that in honour of the memory of the King of Aragon that the feast should be solemnly celebrated in his realm”. See “Consueta de Huesca”, Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 21, fol. 3r.

105. “Let its own office be recited and, where there is none such, let the office of the Nativity of the Virgin be said”.

106. “There is a general procession to the monastery of the Friars Minor”. See “Consueta de Huesca”, Archivo de la Catedral de Huesca, MS 21, fol. 3r.

3.1 *Franciscans*¹⁰⁷

Defending the Immaculate Conception had become the *opinio minorum* by the fifteenth century and, by the mid-century, Franciscan breviaries generally include the Conception office as standard. The Franciscans often ran into opposition from other friars in their advocacy of the Conception of Mary. Santiago Disalvo (2013: 244) distinguished traces of the debate between Franciscans and Dominicans in the writing of the thirteenth-century Franciscan poet and liturgist Juan Gil de Zamora (c. 1240–c.1320). I examined the debate poems, exchanged by Franciscan Lope del Monte and a soon-to-be Hieronymite friar, Diego Martínez de Medina in the *Cancionero de Baena* (Twomey 2003), which reveals the depth of opposition to the Franciscan position on the Conception among the Cistercians, given that a Bernardine abbess commissioned the response from Martínez de Medina, Martínez de Medina's entry to the Hieronymite Order gives some insight into the position of that Order on the Conception doctrine.

Even Franciscan breviaries from the fourteenth century are not consistent in their inclusion of the Conception feast, despite the Order's overwhelming support for the celebration of the feast. Two early fourteenth-century breviaries, one of Italian origin, have the calendar entry for the 8 December added in a later script and in different ink.¹⁰⁸ It goes without saying that the Italian breviary does not include a Conception office within the proper of saints. A Franciscan book of day offices, dated early fourteenth century, makes no reference to the Conception either.¹⁰⁹ This supports the view that the Order did not adopt the Conception feast in 1241 but rather gradually introduced it. The pattern of celebration indicates that Duns Scotus's arguments did not immediately impact on the Order in all provinces, but that, as the fourteenth century advanced, more Franciscan provinces made changes to their offices. The feast might, thus, have been introduced by the Franciscans from the first quarter of the fourteenth century (Lamy 2000: 396). Evidence available from Hispanic breviaries suggests that the feast was widely celebrated by the mid-fourteenth century. By the later fifteenth century, I have not found a single Franciscan breviary which does not contain the office.

3.2 *Dominicans*¹¹⁰

The Conception feast, as is well known, led to polemic between the Dominican and Franciscan Orders from the fourteenth century onward (Lamy 2000: 259 et seq.). The Valencian Dominican, Joan de Montsó (c.1340–1412) (Lamy 2000: 577), was expelled from the University of Paris for rejecting the doctrine, whilst Nicolau Eymerich (1320–1399), Inquisitor General for the Crown of Aragon, was exiled from the realm for preaching against it (Lamy 2000: 576). Both incidents show that there was a high degree of rancour against those who tried to halt the spread of the doctrine.

Despite the strength of Dominican opposition to the Conception, certain Dominican breviaries and missals, dating from the fifteenth century, include it in the calendar, although there is no office:

107. On the spread of the Franciscan Order in the Crown of Aragon, see Webster (1979; 1993; 2000). For the Franciscans, most liturgical books do not give the friary where they were used.

108. "Breviario franciscano", Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 33.11; *Breviario franciscano*, Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 33.12.

109. "Diurnale ad usum fratrum minorum", Abadía de Montserrat, MS 13.

110. For the spread of the Dominican Order in the thirteenth century as well as their impact on the more established Orders, see Palacios Martín (1996). The influence of Toledo's Dominicans on the Crown of Aragon has been examined by Cañas Gómez (2018) brought to the kingdom by the Castilian monarch Fernando de Antequera (1380–1416).

“By the close of the fourteenth century, even the Dominicans, who opposed belief in the Immaculate Conception, were celebrating Mary’s Sanctification” (Ellington 2001: 53-54).¹¹¹

Despite the institution of the feast of the Sanctification in the Dominican Order in 1388 (Lamy 200: 422), few breviaries incorporate it in the calendar. However, by the late fifteenth century, the Conception had begun to take its place in the Dominican calendar.¹¹² A Dominican breviary, which appears to have belonged to the royal family, also incorporates the Conception in the calendar.¹¹³ The same late fifteenth-century breviary has a feast for the Conception, which is included among additional offices at the end.¹¹⁴ The Sanctification is celebrated in one fourteenth-century *ordinarium* or ordinary for the celebration of hours and Masses.¹¹⁵ The manuscript is of Italian origin and there is no evidence it was used in Spain before the end of the fifteenth century.

Many Dominican breviaries, dating from the fifteenth century, do not even include the Sanctification feast on 8 December.¹¹⁶ Even in the second half of the century, Dominican liturgical books, such as a Valencian missal, do not include it.¹¹⁷ The Dominicans may have transferred their celebration of the Sanctification of the Virgin to the feast of St Anne. A new feast of St Anne has been appended to a fifteenth-century Dominican antiphony and seems to stand in for the Sanctification feast.¹¹⁸ The feast is included in the calendar but has the same status as low-ranking feast days, such as that of St Eulalia. One fifteenth-century Dominican breviary, although not from the Crown of Aragon, shows that the feast of St Anne had the same fate, since it is not included.¹¹⁹ Calendar pages from December have been lost.

3.3 *Benedictines*¹²⁰

Celebration of the liturgy was the principal task of the Benedictine monk, according to the Rule of Benedict (Panizo 2013: 36). Celebrating the Conception office was, therefore, to become part of a daily liturgical round. An introductory study of the Conception feast in the Order was undertaken at the time of the centenary of the dogma, although its purpose is to examine one particular congregation rather than the entire Order (Garrido 1955). There was no record of the Conception feast in the Order in the twelfth century. By the fourteenth century, a Benedictine breviary has an entry for the Conception feast in the calendar with a dedicated Conception office.¹²¹ The lessons for the day emphasize the authority of St Augustine and his links to the Elsinus miracle which the lesson recounts.¹²²

111. The largest collection of Dominican liturgical books is held. These liturgies have been outside Aragon. They have been used to give a more complete picture of the situation in the Order. For the Dominicans, most liturgical books do not give the friary where they were used.

112. See *Breviarium OP*, Escorial, MS a.iii.2, fol. 6v.

113. “Breviarium OP”, Escorial, MS a.iii.3, fol. 328r (coat-of-arms of Castile and León).

114. “Breviarium OP”, Escorial, MS a.iii.3, fol. 355v.

115. “Ordinario de la Orden de Predicadores”, Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 37.6.

116. “Breviarium OP”, Escorial, MS a.iii.2; *Breviario de la Orden de Predicadores*, Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 37.5.

117. “Breviario dominicano”, Biblioteca Històrica de la Universitat de València, MS 890, fol. 260v.

118. “Antiphonarium officii Ordinis Praedicatorum”, MS 759, fols 1-12.

119. “Missal dominicano”, Seville, Biblioteca Colombina, MS 58-1-37, fol. 4r.

120. For a study of the influence of the Benedictines from the time of their earliest foundations in Catalonia, see Linage Conde (2000).

121. “Breviarium ad usum ordinis S. Benedicti”, Escorial, MS g.iv.20, fol. 166v.

122. “Breviarium ad usum ordinis S. Benedicti”, Escorial, MS g.iv.20, fol. 421r.

A fifteenth-century *consueta* calendar, at the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, in a margin note on 8 December, accords the feast the honour of four robed clergy, and this brings it into line with Christmas, Easter, and the principal Marian feasts, the Assumption and the Nativity.¹²³ From a Benedictine breviary held in the Monastery of the Escorial, it is known that the procession with four robed clergy had been instituted by the late fourteenth century.¹²⁴ The *consueta*'s Castilian roots are apparent from how the December Annunciation "*Nuestra Señora de la O*", is given similar status to that in Castilian dioceses.

3.4 Cistercians

Early Cistercian breviaries and office books are preserved from a number of key medieval religious centres in the Iberian Peninsula.¹²⁵ The Archive of the Crown of Aragon holds manuscripts from Sant Cugat, a monastery north of Barcelona and an important centre of learning in the Middle Ages. There is another important group of manuscripts from the monasteries of Santes Creus and Bon Repos, near Tarragona. Together, they provide a good indication of early Cistercian practice. In the thirteenth century, the Conception was not included in some Cistercian breviaries and missals, although it has been added to some.¹²⁶ A fourteenth-century *sacramentario*, or set of instructions for the celebration of the Mass, has a margin note indicating the Conception feast should be celebrated in the same way as the Nativity.¹²⁷ Similarly, a missal, dated twelfth to thirteenth century, notes that the Nativity office is to be used for the Conception.¹²⁸ In the late fourteenth-century, an entry in a calendar and proper for the Conception is found in a Ripoll missal and this is the earliest datable reference within the Order. The entry for the feast day in the proper indicates that the words of the Nativity office are to be used: "In Conceptione beate uirginis M[a]rie, om[n]ia dica[n]tur sic[ut] in natiuitate exceptis or[at]io[n]ibus".¹²⁹

The thirteenth-century Bon Repos liturgy copies "Conceptio" over "Nativitas" in the office of the Nativity, signalling that the same liturgy was used for both feasts.¹³⁰ A margin note where the Conception liturgy might have been indicates that the Nativity liturgy is to be used.¹³¹ The Conception feast has been added to the calendar of an early fourteenth-century breviary, indicating it was not regularly celebrated, even by that date. However, the fourteenth-century "Capitulario-colectario" from Sant Cugat already includes the Conception in the calendar, marking it to be

123. "Consueta Benedictina", Real Academia de la Historia, MS Aemiliensis 43.

124. "Breviarium OSB", Escorial, MS p.11.1, fol. 6v.

125. For a study of the contribution and dissemination of the Order in the Crown of Aragon, see Carrero Santamaría (2020).

126. The feast has been added to the calendar in "Breviario cisterciense", Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 9, fol. 5r. The liturgy was used for Santes Creus monastery. There is no mention of the Conception feast in "Consuetudines cistercium", Montserrat MS 1245, "Ritual, misal, processional", Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS SC-79 (dated 1218); "Missal cisterciense", Biblioteca Pública de Tarragona, MS 59, fol. 153v.

127. "Sacramentario de San Cugat", Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS SC-24, fol.164r.

128. "Missale cisterciense", MS 70, fol. 134v.

129. "At the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary everything is to be said as at the Nativity, except for the prayers". See "Misal de Ripoll", Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS R-112, fol. 237r.

130. "Breviario cisterciense", Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 45, fol. 254r.

131. "Breviario cisterciense", Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 45, fol. 272r: "*in die conceptionis Uirginis Marie fiat sicut in eius natiuitate propter octo lecciones quas reper[er]it in fine libri*". See also the thirteenth-century "Missal cisterciense" Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 70, fol. 134r and the "Consueta (San Cugat)", Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS SC-46, fol. 157v.

celebrated with twelve lessons.¹³² Other liturgies have no record of the Conception feast either in the calendar or in the proper of saints.¹³³

A missal, dated 1402, includes the Conception in the calendar, noting that it is to be celebrated with twelve lessons, but does not include any office for it in the proper of saints.¹³⁴ The logical conclusion is that the Nativity liturgy was being used and this inference is confirmed by an *ordinarium* or instructions for celebration of the office, dated 1481.¹³⁵ The notes about the use of the Nativity office are similar to the practice in the diocese of Vic.

The Cistercians were powerful in Catalonia, with important monasteries in Sant Cugat and Santes Creus and may have influenced surrounding dioceses. A Cistercian *ordinarium* or book of instructions for the office, indicates that the practice of using the Nativity office was still in force in 1481. The Conception is to be celebrated "With two Masses with no octave and with all the offices as at the Virgin's Nativity with the word Conception exchanged for Nativity as necessary".¹³⁶ For details of how to celebrate the Mass, the celebrant is directed to the section relating to the feast of St Sylvester. The Mass is to be said at the high altar and the abbot is to be accompanied by monks in albs, bearing two candles.

3.5 *Augustinians*

The two principal Orders of Canons established in the Crown of Aragon were the Order of Canons of the Holy Sepulchre and the Order of St Rufus, an Order originating in Avignon (Calvo 2014; 2015; 2016). There is some indication that the Conception feast existed in the Augustinian Order, according to offices in their breviaries, although these are French (Lamy 2000: 416). To this evidence, gathered by Marielle Lamy, can be added evidence from the Peninsula. A general overview of the Order's contribution to the development of the Immaculate Conception is sometimes thought to begin with St Augustine, although precise evidence about how and when the feast was celebrated in the Order is not always provided (Gutiérrez 1995).

The Canons Regular began celebrating the feast from the early fourteenth century, since there is a Conception feast in a breviary of that period, albeit from south-east France (Lamy 2000: 416, n.135). A fourteenth-century breviary of Italian origin also contains a shortened office for the Conception.¹³⁷ It indicates that the Nativity office is to be used and includes readings and prayers under the entry for 8 December. The readings are a version of the Apocryphal Gospel stories.

The Canons of the Order of St Rufus were established as a chapter at Tarragona Cathedral and, for this reason, the Archdiocese archive holds a "Breviario según la Orden de San Rufo" or Breviary according to the Order of St Rufus, which dates from the end of the fourteenth century. The San

132. "Breviario cisterciense" (Santes Creus), Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 147, fol. 6v. It is not included in the offices, fol. 206v. "Capitulario-colectario de San Cugat", Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS SC-30, fol. 6v.

133. See, for example, "Breviario cisterciense" (Sant Cugat), Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS SC-87; "Breviario cisterciense" (Santes Creus), Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 119, fol. 223r; "Missale cisterciense" (Santes Creus), Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 126, fol. 306r; "Missale cisterciense" (Santes Creus), Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 59, fol. 152v.

134. "Misal de San Cugat", Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS SC-14, fol. 6v.

135. "Consueta de San Cugat", Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, MS SC-77, fol. 1r. See fol. 96v for the nativity feast in this office.

136. "*Cum duabus missis sine octabis et cum omni officio natiuitatis ipsius nomine Conceptionis loco natiuitatis ubi oportuerit adaptato*": "Ordinarium beate Marie cisterciensis", Montserrat, MS 812, fol. 6v.

137. "Breviarium eremitarum S. Augustini", Escorial, MS h.IV.7, fol. 199v-r.

Rufo breviary did not originally include the Conception feast, for the feast has been added to the calendar in a different hand.¹³⁸ The feast of St Anne has been added in the same hand.¹³⁹

A small number of breviaries show that Augustinians were celebrating the Conception in the fifteenth century. A late fourteenth-century Augustinian breviary adds readings for the Conception with six dedicated readings from the Elsinus legend and two from the drowned sacristan legend.¹⁴⁰ Two readings then adapt the Theophilus legend to end on the celebration of the Conception feast. Practice seems to have varied across the Peninsula, making it difficult to determine practice in the Order but evidence suggests that the Nativity office was used up to the mid-fifteenth century.¹⁴¹ One particular office indicates that the Nativity is to be used. By the late fifteenth century, in some liturgies the Order had adopted Nogarola's office, although such evidence comes from outside the Crown of Aragon.¹⁴² The number of extant liturgies is too small to be certain that the Nativity office was always used until then.

3.6 *Hieronymites*

The Hieronymites originated in Valencia and arrived in Catalonia in about 1390 (Díaz 2017). From the *Cancionero de Baena*, it is known that a fourteenth-century poet, soon to enter the Order, was willing to defend the Sanctification and argue against the Conception (Dutton-González 1993: 567). Nevertheless, by the fourteenth century, some Hieronymite breviaries, such as one from the library of the Conde de Haro, of Italian origin, mark the Conception as a red-letter feast (*duplex maior*).¹⁴³ In the same breviary, the Expectation feast is marked with the same degree of solemnity. The breviary incorporates a dedicated Conception office, still being used in the fifteenth century.¹⁴⁴ Another Hieronymite breviary dated 1460, also from a private library, that of the Conde Duque de Olivares, incorporates the Conception into the calendar as a red-letter day, where it has similar status to the Purification, Annunciation, Visitation, and Expectation, none of which are celebrated with an octave or vigil.¹⁴⁵ Two of the Marian feasts are celebrated with greater ritual and pomp than the others in the Hieronymite calendar, the Nativity of the Virgin has an octave and the Assumption has both octave and vigil.¹⁴⁶

3.7 *Carthusians*

The Carthusians began to found monasteries in the kingdom in the late twelfth century (Scala Dei, Priorat, founded in 1194), followed by other important foundations, such as Porta Celi (Valencia, founded in 1272), Vall de Crist (Valencia, founded in 1385), and Montalegre, Catalonia, founded

138. "Breviario según la orden de San Rufo", Arxiu Històric Arcidiocesa de Tarragona, MS 87.

139. The differences in handwriting are particularly marked in terms of the A of Anne and the A of Abdon on the same folio. It is likely that the feast of St Anne was added by the same person and at the same time as the Conception feast.

140. "Breviario romano para el uso de S. Agustín", Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 33.13, fol. 354r, 383r.

141. By the late fifteenth century, an Italian Augustinian breviary, held in Peninsular archives, includes a Conception office. See "Breviarium Canonicorum Sancti Augustini, diocesis regiensis in Aemilia", Montserrat, MS 852, fol. 33iv.

142. "Breviario romano para el uso de S. Agustín", Archivo Capitular de Toledo, MS 33.12, fol. 235r. The Conception liturgy begins with the standard rubric for the Nogarola feast.

143. "Breviario romano adaptado al uso de la Orden de los Jerónimos", BNE, MS 9802, fol. 716r.

144. "Breviario romano adaptado al uso de los Jerónimos", BNE, MS Res.186, fol. 424r.

145. "Breviarium ordinis Sancti Hieronymi", Escorial, MS g.iv.40, fols 16iv (Purification), 162r (Annunciation), 163r (Visitation, added), 166v (Expectation).

146. "Breviarium", Escorial, MS g.iv.40, fols 163v (Assumption), 164r (Nativity).

in the fifteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Evidence from extant liturgies shows that the Conception was being celebrated in the Order by the end of the fifteenth century and that it had adopted Nogarola's office.¹⁴⁸ Evidence for the Order beginning to celebrate the Conception feast dates from 1335, and, from 1340, the feast was given the name Sanctification in Carthusian calendars.¹⁴⁹ In the 1495 Carthusian incunabulum, printed in Vienna, the feast was celebrated as a solemnity (*totum duplex*), and was accorded an octave.¹⁵⁰ Sadly, pages of the calendar have been lost at the front of the breviary, so that comparison with other Marian feasts is no longer possible. The Expectation feast has been handwritten as an addition on 18 December.

Both the fifteenth-century Carthusian missal and breviary record that the Sanctification feast, at 8 December, was to be celebrated with twelve lessons.¹⁵¹ Both indicate that candles are to be lit and a sermon is to be said to mark the feast. Both practices are common to all Marian feasts. The Expectation is not included in either calendar. The Conception feast is added to the 1488 breviary 'as in the office at the start of the book', but whilst other Marian feasts (the Presentation, Annunciation, Assumption, and Nativity) are *totum duplex*, no instruction is given about the Conception feast.¹⁵² However, in the fifteenth-century morning offices from the Carthusian monastery of Porta Celi, the Conception is marked in the calendar, together with an instruction, noting that when the feast falls on a Sunday it is to be transferred to the following day and is to be celebrated with candles and abstinence.¹⁵³ This transfer indicates that the feast was not celebrated as a solemnity but rather just as a major (*duplex*) feast. Celebrating Marian feasts with fasting to precede the feast day occurs for Annunciation (fol. 3v) and the Nativity of the Virgin (fol. 9r). Whilst the calendar records the Conception on 8 December, the offices themselves do not, which may suggest the Nativity liturgy was to be used.

In the early fifteenth century, the Conception appears not to have been included in the Carthusian calendar as standard, since it has been added to the 1407 Carthusian antiphonary, to the late fifteenth-century antiphonary, and also to the 1488 breviary.¹⁵⁴ A margin note about the Conception in a Zaragoza proper of saints indicates that the Nativity office is to be said on the 8 December, whilst an Escorial breviary directs the celebrant to the feast of the Conception, added at the front.¹⁵⁵ Surprisingly, given its late date, the fragment of the feast is not Nogarola's (fol. 2v). The readings for the feast are taken from the story of Anna and Joachim.

147. For a history of the Carthusian Order in Catalonia, see Gómez (1984); Hogg (2006).

148. *Breviarium carthusianum*, Biblioteca de la Universidad de Zaragoza, incunabulum 60.

149. See for example "Missale mixtum carthusiense", Montserrat, MS 780, fol. 112r: "*Officium sanctificationis Beate Marie. Sicut in natiuitate eiusdem mutat nomine*".

150. *Breviarium carthusianum*, Biblioteca de la Universidad de Zaragoza, incunabulum 60, fol. 370v.

151. "Misal mixto cartujano", Vilanova i la Geltrú, Biblioteca de Balaguer, MS 4, fol. 6v; "Breviarium carthusianum", Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 870.

152. "Breviarium ordinis carthusianorum", Escorial, MS b.iii.15, fol. 17v.

153. "Matutinario de la Cartuja de Portaceli", Universitat de València, MS 373, fol. 12r: "si co[n]ceptio ven[er]it i[n] do[m]inica] transfertatur ad die[m] seque[n]tem cu[m] candelis et abstine[n]cia".

154. "Antifonario cartujo de la misa", Biblioteca de la Universidad de Zaragoza, MS 186, fol. 240r; "Antifonario cartujo de la misa", Biblioteca de la Universidad de Zaragoza, MS 86, fol. 272; "Breviarium ordinis carthusianorum", Escorial, MS b.iii.15, fol. 17v.

155. "Require officium in principio libri": "Breviarium ordinis carthusianorum", Escorial, MS b.iii.15, fol. 2r-v. The Conception office added in the opening folios is incomplete.

4 Conclusion

From the 134 sources examined in the Crown of Aragon's dioceses and religious Orders from the thirteenth century onward, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, the range of liturgies examined, including breviaries, missals, and books of custom and practice, physically attest to the presence of the Conception feast in the Crown of Aragon. Second, although they give vital clues as to how the feast of the Conception came to be introduced and began to develop there, they also show a lack of uniformity. Some manuscripts include the feast in the calendar only and make no further reference to it in the proper of the saints. Often such an entry in the calendar for the Conception feast should be taken as a shorthand way of indicating that it was to be celebrated using the Nativity liturgy. In some liturgical books, the entry in the proper of saints for the Conception feast clearly shows that the order for the Nativity was to be used. In others, the word "Conception" or "conceived" is simply written above "Nativity" or "born", wherever they occur in the Nativity feast.¹⁵⁶ As an interim stage in development of an independent liturgy for the feast, there is often a set of collects or readings to be used in conjunction with that Nativity liturgy. In some Conception offices, hymns start to be introduced and some dedicated elements of Conception liturgy, whether responses or antiphons are added. Dedicated offices for the 8 December then begin to be in evidence, moving from the single example of a Sanctification of the Conception office in Girona, then to independent Conception offices. Even though the monarchs supported the feast by royal decree from the 1390s (Guix 1954; Lamy 2000: 577), dioceses and religious Orders continued their individual approaches.

Third, the dioceses and religious Orders used a range of offices, until the authority of Council or papal-approved offices caused many to adopt first Juan de Segovia's office and, later, Nogarola's office. Nogarola's office is attested in most dioceses because it was recognized by the Pope and granted indulgences. In Vic, for example, it supplanted local practice of using the Nativity feast. What is surprising in Aragon is that, even after Sixtus had officially recognized Nogarola's office, there is evidence that locally approved liturgical books were still being copied and printed, and they were still in use.¹⁵⁷

Fourth, the degree of solemnity afforded the Conception feast varies from according it the same solemnity as the vigil of the Assumption to bringing all Marian feasts in line with vigil and octave, like La Seu d'Urgell. Franciscan influence was enormous. Huesca, for example, inaugurated a solemn procession from the Cathedral to the Franciscan convent.

It is recognized that there were some sources which could not be introduced to the study, because many archives are privately owned and there is no right of public access. However, it is hoped they will be in the future so that the full history of the Crown of Aragon in terms of the Conception can be considered. Detectable within the material studied is the increasing tendency to honour the Conception of the Virgin and this impulse reflects a force which would eventually lead to its recognition as a dogma in 1854.

156. A good example of this practice can be found in one of the thirteenth-century manuscripts possibly from the convent of Bon Repos (Janini 1982, 1: 225): "Breviario cisterciense", Biblioteca Pública de Tarragona, MS 45.

157. See *Breviarium urgellense* (Venice, 1487), for practice in the Urgell diocese.

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