Essay by Charlotte Harrison and Natalie Wiegand

Until now, there has been an unknown page in the Miscellany Collection at Tisch Library. Based on our research, we have identified most of the text on the obverse, which contains passages from the Bible and important religious sermons. Because of its Christian content and musical notation, we believe this document to be a fragment from a missal, possibly from the 12th century.

The rubrication of initials, occasional musical notation, and repeated use of abbreviation make this manuscript noteworthy and very beautiful. The scribe uses numerous internally consistent and conventional abbreviations throughout the text, such as spc scs for spiritus sanctus and various small symbols to represent endings such as –us, –tur, and –um. He does, however, make a few slight errors in his transcription. For example, he generally uses the ω symbol to represent the “ua” sound that follows a q: he renders the word quanto as qonto. In the word contodixit, however, at the end of the second column, he misuses the ω symbol, as the intended word was contradixit.

This leaf has been cut on all four sides. From the top we estimate that about ten lines are missing. Only a few characters from the left and right sides have been eliminated, and fortunately no text has been lost from the bottom.

The first few lines (fmjluer... inueniat) are a parable from Luke 15:8. This is the second parable in a series of three made by Jesus to demonstrate that “there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent” (Luke 15:7). The first of such comparisons is the famous parable of the lost sheep, and the third is the well-known story of the prodigal son. These parables emphasize the value of the individual in Christianity and God’s priority of saving lost souls. This is likely the end of a
reading in the mass, but because of the musical notation, perhaps this was sung in the manner of a responsorial psalm or hymn.

The significance and identification of the next line (*rationem... domine*) are unclear. It is a small fragment, possibly from a sermon or Biblical passage, that has been interrupted by the parable of Luke. Elsewhere in the manuscript, small lines of music break up larger sections of text, as in the fourth column of the obverse, where the musically annotated line *Caritas pater est, caritate, quis...* is interjected in the middle of a continuous passage. Thus, we can assume that the parable from Luke is a musical interlude in the midst of a larger religious text, of which we have only the last few words.

The subsequent excerpt is 1 Samuel 14:24-39, from *[adiur]auit Saul...* through the end of the second column (*...contradixit ei*). After an important Israelite victory over the Philistines, the leader of the Israelites, Saul, bound his people with an oath to fast that day. His son Jonathan, ignorant of the oath, sinned by eating some honey. When the people informed him of his mistake, he undermined the authority of Saul by arguing that Saul had weakened his people with such an oath. After defeating more Philistines, the Israelites, roused by Jonathan’s speech, also sinned by barbarically eating the cattle of their enemies. Saul accused them of transgression, and he punished them and claimed that he would kill the person who broke the oath, even if it was his own son Jonathan. This is a fairly long passage and was probably the reading from the Gospel during this particular mass.

At the top of the third column, there is a small fragment of text (*li singula*) which we cannot identify because of the unfortunate cutting of the manuscript. Any preceding lines have been lost, but we can conclude that it is not a continuation of the passage from 1 Samuel.
The next selection (from *De sancta...* to *...inseparabiliter diceretur*) is from a sermon of Pope Leo the Great, whose papacy began in 440 and ended with his death in 461. He is considered one of the doctors of the Church. In this excerpt from Sermon LXXVI, On Pentecost (or Whitsunday), he argues that belief in the Trinity as one divine essence is central to the Catholic faith. A short musical interlude (*Te inuocamus...*) separates this sermon from the next, an excerpt of Saint Augustine’s Sermon 245. Saint Augustine was another doctor of the Church, who lived from 354 to 430. The selection begins with *Legimus sanctum moysen...* in the third column of the obverse and continues onto the reverse of the manuscript. He argues that the Trinity is one unit, but it has multiple essences. Christ is the incarnate being, but he is inseparable in divinity from God. Augustine uses various similes to express his ideas, most significantly his comparison of the Trinity to the sun. There is some evidence to believe that this was a sermon conventionally delivered on the Third Sunday of Advent ([http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~renwick/sarum-01.html](http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~renwick/sarum-01.html)).

The connections between the various texts of the obverse are somewhat unclear; however, the readings and homilies of traditional Catholic masses often deal with multiple Christian themes. In this case, we have two readings from the Gospel that approach the topics of individuality, salvation, and sin. The two sermons clearly discuss the controversial essence of the Trinity. More work needs to be done to connect this page to other leaves and to discover its significance within the Catholic traditions by linking the readings more conclusively.