With these divisions of the Apocalypse, the Commentary could not function effectively as a lectionary. The text of the first chapter of the Apocalypse in the Commentary, for example, is divided into I:1-6, I:7-11, and I:10-20, with lengthy exegetical texts intervening. Moreover, the Commentary employed the Old Latin text. The only direct link with the liturgy is found in the Girona Commentary (no. 6, f. 17v) of 975. The arch enclosing the 'furnace' of the full-page picture of Hell carries the inscription O INFERNO RERUM TUA—ERI MORSU TUIS INFERNE (Oh, Hell, I will be your death, I will be your bite, Hell), a text found in two antiphons for the Matutinal service of Holy Saturday in the Mozarabic liturgy. This Hell, however, was added to the normal series of illustrations in this single instance. That is not to say the Commentary had no role in the devotions of the mass: it must often have inspired homilies in the Easter season.13

In a curious interpretation which he did not explain, Gómez-Moreno claimed that the history of the manuscripts indicated a primarily lay use.14 Though the layman is not excluded, monastic devotions must have been the principal function envisioned. The Facundus Beatus (No. 1) was commissioned by Fernando I of León, but it may have been intended for the religious community that served the site. Otherwise, however, the patronage and history of the manuscripts is essentially conventional. In the one explicit reference to use in the dedication which opens the Commentary, it is for the edification of 'brothers'. Rubrics, albeit post-medieval ones, in the Lorvão and Huelgas Commentaries (Nos. 22 and 24) confirm the Commentary's role in monastic, non-liturgical reading in the refectory. One of the designated lections in the Lorvão Beatus (f. 17v) is the commentary on Apoc. I:10-20, which would have been appropriate for Holy Saturday. In the Las Huelgas Beatus (f. 142v) the Explanatio of the description of the Heavenly Jerusalem, a reading for the first Sunday after Easter, is marked. It is true that these rubrics date only from the fifteenth (Lisbon) and seventeenth centuries (Las Huelgas), but one may imagine that a practice of communal reading of the Apocalypse during the Easter octave existed in medieval Spanish monasteries, as it did at Cluny.15 We know that the very large and luxuriously illuminated English Winchester Bible of the twelfth century (Winchester Cathedral Library) served for lections there in the refectory.16 Still, the evidence for an 'official' function is meagre, and it is likely that if more frequently served private devotional exercises in a less formal way. Personal reading of the Commentary with the goal of spiritual enlightenment would be a practice especially suitable, indeed traditional, for the contemplative life. As the Easter season saw the reading of the Commentary in the two manuscripts preserving such a record, so too private reading of the Commentary may well have been concentrated in the Paschal octave.17 The numerous glosses and corrections of such Commentaries as Vitrina 14-1, Morgan 644 and the Girona Beatus, testify to an educated readership and to the seriousness accorded the texts.

The choice of the Apocalypse may well have had a significance beyond its special association with Easter. As the last book of the Bible, it marks the end of history and announces the beginning of the eternal kingdom of God. It describes the conditions of that end as an horrendous struggle against evils of various sorts,