Finch & Co



GERMAN TURNED BOXWOOD SET OF PATERNOSTER ROSARY BEADS

AN UNUSUALLY LARGE GERMAN TURNED BOXWOOD SET OF PATERNOSTER ROSARY BEADS WITH PENDANT CROSS
LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY
SIZE: APPROX: 52CM LONG – 20½ INS LONG
SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 3, ITEM NO. 19, FOR A 17TH CENTURY LARGE INDO-PORTUGUESE MOTHER OF PEARL ROSARY

LITERATURE

PATERNOSTER BEADS ARE TRADITIONALLY RESERVED FOR THE LORDS PRAYER. THE USE OF BEADS FOR SAYING PRAYERS BEGAN IN MEDIEVAL EUROPEAN MONASTERIES ALMOST A THOUSAND YEARS AGO. HOWEVER, IN THE MID 16TH CENTURY POPE PIUS V DECREED THAT THE ROSARY HAD BEEN INVENTED BY SAINT DOMINIC (1170-1231). ALTHOUGH THERE IS LITTLE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS CLAIM, A SERIES OF POPES HAVE APPROVED THE TRADITION AND TODAY THE DOMINICANS ARE OFFICIALLY IN CHARGE OF MAKING ROSARIES.
MANY BEADS WERE CONSIDERED TALISMANIC, A DEVICE TO WIN THE BENEFICENCE OF GOD, BUT ST AUGUSTINE ADMONISHED THE FAITHFUL: 'GOD IS A CIRCLE WHOSE CENTRE IS EVERYWHERE' AND ADVISED THE THOUGHTFUL, SOLITARY MANIPULATION OF PRAYER BEADS TO ENHANCE A CONTEMPLATIVE STATE OF MIND. HE BELIEVED THE REPETITIOUS HANDLING OF THE CIRCULAR BEADS HELPED THE WORSHIPPER TO CONCENTRATE ON SPIRITUAL INWARD NEEDS.