

Introduction to the Virtues in Art Part II

A Guide for Further Exploration (Intermediate/Secondary Students)

By Stephanie Korczynski



Title: Allegory of Faith

Artist: Johannes Vermeer

Date: c.1671-74

Technique/Medium: oil on canvas

Location: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (was painted in the Netherlands)

Did you notice....

The chalice; an open Bible; a crucifix; a bitten apple (representing sin); the twisted serpent on the floor (has been crushed by a stone and blood spurts from its mouth, which symbolizes victory of good over evil); the painting of the

Crucifixion on the back wall, her foot on a globe, the glass ball hanging from the ceiling.

For additional information see

http://www.essentialvermeer.com/catalogue/allegory_of_faith.html





Title: Hope

Artist: Unknown

Date: 17th century

Technique/Medium: fresco

Location: Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck (Castle of Ambras in Innsbruck, Austria)

Did you notice.... The virtues are all incorporated throughout this large palace room. The figure of hope is identified by the anchor.

Anchor: Early Christians used the anchor as a disguised cross, and as a marker to guide the way to secret meeting places. A Christian symbol of hope, it is found as funerary symbolism in the art of the catacombs, often set amongst rocks. It can also be an occupational symbol in sea-faring areas or the attribute of Saint Nicholas, patron saint of seamen, symbolized hope and steadfastness. An anchor with a broken chain stands for the cessation of life.

Scripture Reference:

Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 6:17 [NIV])



Artist: Hans Burgkmair the Elder (German)

Title: Love/Charity from The Seven Virtues (**series**).

Date: 1510 (circa)

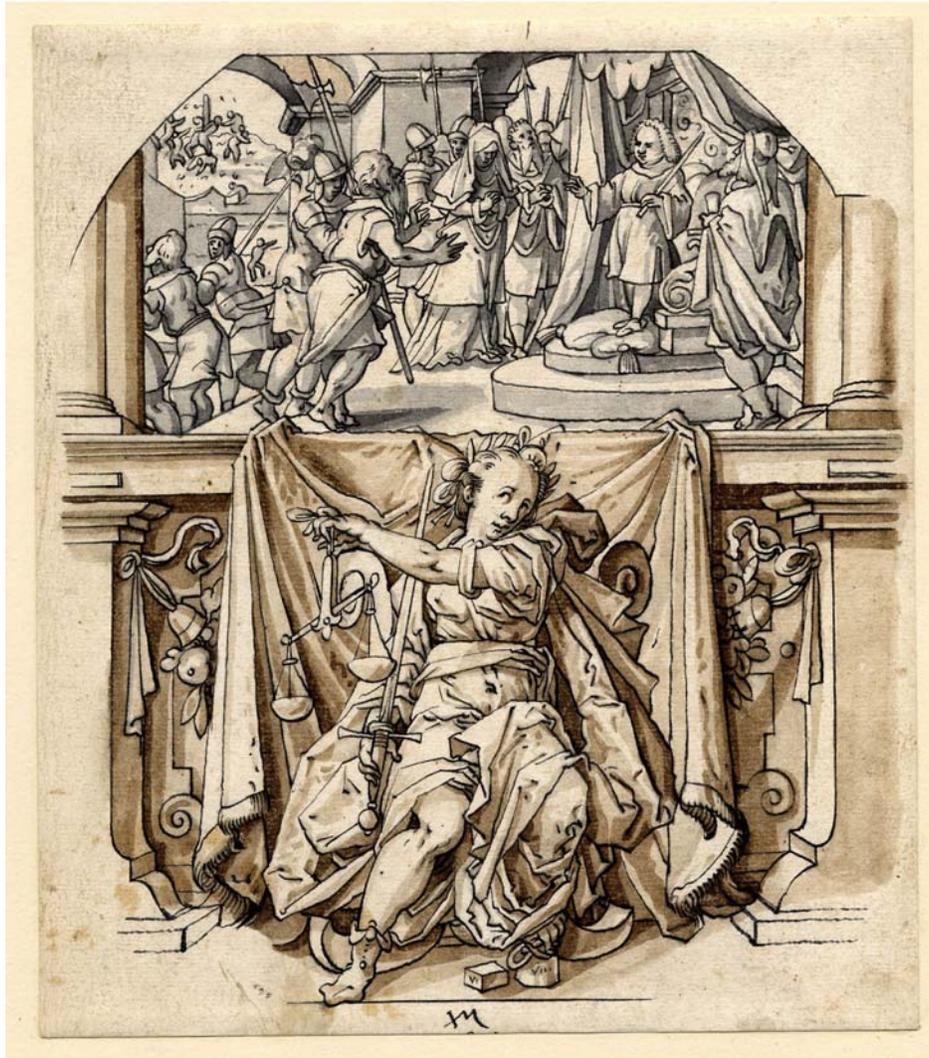
Technique: Woodcut print on paper

Location: This print exists in many copies, the one illustrated here is in the British Museum, London.

Did you notice....

Whole-length female figure holding a burning torch and a child, another child at her feet; Inscribed 'DIE LIEBE'. (German word for LOVE)

The love of God was illustrated by a figure holding a flame or a flaming heart. The love of one's neighbour was shown by one of the acts of mercy. A new way of depicting Charity was developed in the 14th century. This took the form of a loving mother with two, three, or more, children. In the example shown here both types of Charity are combined, love of God and love of neighbour.



Title: Justice

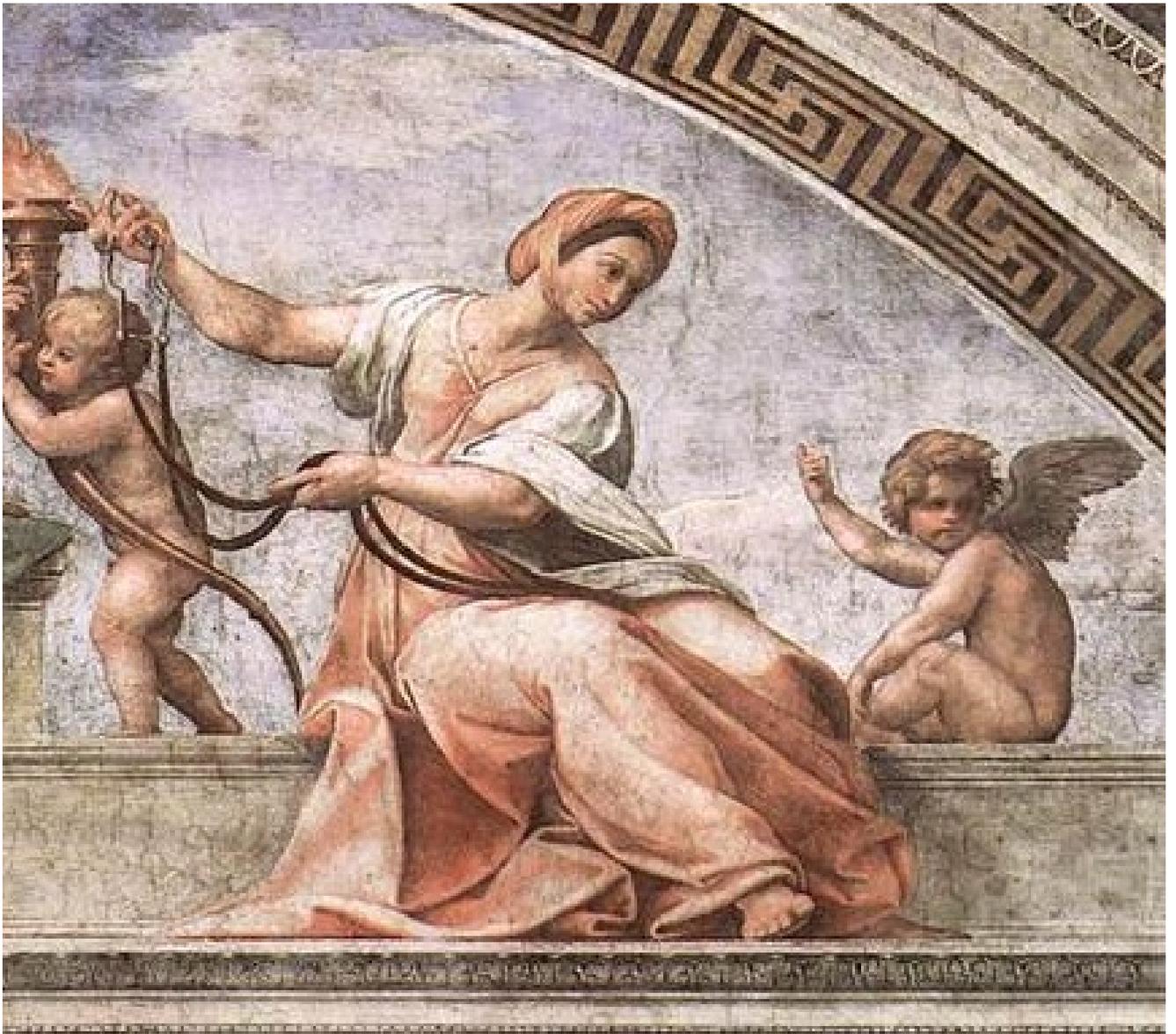
Artist: Jos Murer

Date: 1545-1580

Technique/Medium: Pen and black ink, with grey and brown wash

Location: London, The British Museum

Did you notice.... from a series of the Four Cardinal virtues, seated with scales and a sword before a curtain and ornamental ledge. Behind her, the scene of Christ and the woman taken in adultery.



Title: Temperance

Artist: Raphael

Date: c. 1509

Technique/Medium: fresco (wall)

Location: Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican.

Did you notice... Temperance with a bridle (self control and restraint). She is from a larger wall decoration with Prudence and Fortitude. The ceiling tondo of justice is on the ceiling about this work.



Title: Prudence

Artist: Giotto

Date: c.1303-05

Technique/Medium: monochrome (grisaille) fresco (wall painting)

Location: Cappella Scrovegni (Arena Chapel), Padua

Did you notice.... the inscription, the mirror (acquired in the middle ages, as it signifies that a wise person has the ability to see themselves as they really are, her book (Scriptures) and pen.



Title: Fortitude

Artist: after Parmigianino

Date: c. 1530

Technique/Medium: woodcut (chiaroscuro)

Location: London, The British Museum

Did you notice....Female personification of Fortitude who breaks the top of a column (signifying courage, endurance, and strength; the broken pillar is also an allusion to the story of Samson).