

LLI-19SP35A – SAINTS and STORIES IN WESTERN ART
March 29 and April 5, 2019 – 10 – 11:30 AM – Room CN 126
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Themes in Western Art

From the advent of Christianity until the 19th century, the stories illustrated in western art were primarily religious. Early Christian art during the Period of Persecution often stressed Old Testament themes. Once Christianity was allowed to exist and then became the state religion of the Roman Empire, art in churches focused on the life of Christ often balanced with Old Testament stories. Artists slowly developed formulas for portraying themes and individuals.

Distinguishing God and Jesus

Some Old Testament themes:

- A story with camels – what’s happening? (Genesis)
- Moses (Exodus)
- David (1 Samuel)
- Three figures – who are they? (Daniel)
- Judith and Holofernes (Old Testament Apocrypha)

The life of Jesus (with some deviations for important individuals):

- Mary & Baby Jesus
- Annunciation – Mary & Gabriel
- Visitation – Mary & Elizabeth
- Adoration of the Magi (Gaspar, Balthasar & Melchior)
- Flight into Egypt
- Massacre of the Innocents
- Baptism of Christ
- Calling of Matthew
- Delivery of the Keys to Peter
- Parable of the Prodigal Son
- Entry into Jerusalem
- Last Supper
- Betrayal
- Road to Calvary
- Crucifixion – who else is there?
- Pietà
- Resurrection
- Supper at Emmaus
- Pentecost
- Last Judgment

A roll call of saints

Listed below are some of the most important figures frequently portrayed by artists. Saints were usually shown with the instruments of their martyrdom. Themes were derived from the Bible, the Apocrypha, and *The Golden Legend* by Jacopus de Varagine, c. 1260.

Agatha	Peter the Martyr
Agnes	Sebastian
Andrew	Stephen
Ann (Anna)	Thomas
Anthony Abbot (Anthony the Great)	Veronica
Barbara*	
Bartholomew	
Catherine of Alexandria*	
Catherine of Siena	
Cecilia	
Christopher*	
Dorothy (Dorothea)	
Elizabeth	
Evangelist symbols – Matthew (man), Mark (lion), Luke (ox), John (eagle)	
Francis	
George	
Helen (Helena)	
James (the Great)	
Jerome	
John the Baptist	
John the Evangelist	
Lawrence	
Lucy (Lucia)	
Luke	
Martha	
Margaret	
Mary Magdalen	
Mark	
Martin	
Matthew	
Michael the Archangel	
Peter & Paul	

*Removed by the Catholic Church in 1969