

# Altar ornament - with the depiction of the Holy Family

## Metalwork Collection

Accession Nr.: 69.1813.1 

Date of production: (presumably)

Place of production: Southern Germany (presumably)

Materials: brass mounts; bronze; wooden base

Techniques: cast; gilded

Dimensions: height: 70 cm  
width: 44 cm  
depth: 22,5 cm

Above the prismatic base is a cartouche-shaped copper plate with a plain framework, there are three frontally placed cast bronze figures on it, attached by rivets: the Virgin and St. John, surrounding the infant Jesus, leading him by the hand. The grouping of the figures is after a composition by Rubens, the Flight into Egypt, from which numerous engravings were made in the middle and in the second half of the 17th century. This type of representation as a devotional picture became particularly favoured in the baroque period, mainly on the basis of the writings of the Jesuit theologians of the early Counter-Reformation. They honoured the Holy Family as a kind of earthly, or "small trinity". On the base of the altar ornament is a five-line chronostichon on a copper plate set in a cartouche — between the third and the fourth lines the IHS and Virgin monograms — the date is not unambiguous: "In VirgInVM/ sanCtae VrsVLae saGeLLO eXorlens/ feLICIter saCer pIVsqVe CaetVs/DICat hoCLeVe plgnVs aMorIs". If one takes only the first three lines when reading the chronostichon, the capital letters give the date of 1751, which may be assumed as the date when the work was made.

## Literature

- Szerk.: Szilágyi András, Péter Márta: *Barokk és rokokó. Az európai iparművészet stíluskorszakai*. Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1990. - Nr. 1.21. (Szilágyi András)

