

Finch & C^o



19 An unusual and large Indo Portuguese set of rosary beads with a Damascus olivewood and mother of pearl engraved cross
Late 17th/early 18th CENTURY

Size: 311 cm long, largest bead 3cm x 2cm

This fine rosary was most probably used to dress a large processional figure of the Virgin Mary. As a form of devotion the rosary is traditionally ascribed to Saint Dominic (1170-1221). Each of the five decades represents one of the events in the life of Christ or the Virgin; sorrowful, joyful and glorious. The person praying meditates on the beads whilst saying Hail Mary ten times, concluding with a Gloria, and then saying an Our Father on the larger bead to commence the next decade. In the Middle Ages this aid to devotion was so widely used that the manufacture of rosaries was a thriving industry attracting artisan skills of the highest order. Methods of saying the rosary varied as did the number and order of beads. This division into five decades solidified by large paterosters still conforms to modern practice.

AN INDO PORTUGUESE SET OF ROSARY BEADS 17TH/18TH CENTURY

AN UNSUAL AND LARGE INDO PORTUGUESE SET OF ROASARY BEADS WITH A DAMASCUS OLIVEWOOD AND MOTHER-OF-PEARL ENGRAVED CROSS
LATE 17TH / EARLY 18TH CENTURY
SIZE : 311 CMLONG , LARGEST BEAD 3CM X 2CM

LITERATURE

THIS FINE ROASARY WAS MOST PROBABLY USED TO DRESS A LARGE PROCESSIONAL FIGURE OF THE VIRGIN MARY. AS A FORM OF DEVOTION THE ROSARY IS TRADITIONALLY ASCRIBED TO SAINT DOMINIC (1170-1221). EACH OF THE FIVE DECADES REPRESENTS ONE OF THE EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST OR THE VIRGIN; SORROWFUL, JOYFUL AND GLORIOUS. THE PERSON PRAYING MEDITATES ON THE BEADS WHILST SAYING HAIL MARY TEN TIMES, CONCLUDING WITH A GLORIA, THEN SAYING AN OUR FATHER ON THE LARGER BEAD TO COMMENCE THE NEXT DECADE. IN THE MIDDLE AGES THIS AID TO DEVOTION WAS SO WIDELY USED THAT THE MANUFACTURE OF ROSARIES WAS A THRIVING INDUSTRY ATTRACTING ARTISTIC SKILLS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER. METHODS OF SAYING PATERNOSTERS STILL CONFORMS TO MODERN PRACTICE.