Finch & Co



ITALIAN IVORY JANUS FACED 'MEMENTO MORI' ROSARY BEAD

AN ITALIAN IVORY JANUS FACED 'MEMENTO MORI' ROSARY BEAD CARVED WITH THE HEAD OF THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST AND A HUMAN SKULL

17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 2.5CM HIGH, 2.5CM DEEP, 2CM WIDE - 1 INS HIGH, 1 INS DEEP, ¾ INS WIDE

SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 25, ITEM NO. 20, FOR A SOUTH GERMAN DOUBLE HEADED IVORY ROSARY BEAD

LITERATURE

ROSARIES ASSISTED THE DEVOTED IN ACCURATELY REPEATING FROM MEMORY THE CORRECT NUMBER OF PRAYERS AND INCANTATIONS REQUIRED BY THEIR FAITH. THE USE OF BEADS AS AN AID TO DEVOTION BEGAN IN THE MEDIEVAL MONASTERIES AROUND 1000 AD. APART FROM THE LEARNED MONKS, PRIESTS AND ABBOTS, THE LAITY WERE ILLITERATE AND UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND LATIN AND SO COULD NOT SING OR RECITE THE PSALMS. WHEN GIVEN A SET OF 150 PRAYERS THEY WOULD USE ROSARY BEADS TO COUNT THEM, AND THE DOUBLE HEADED PATERNOSTER WOULD REMIND THE VIEWER OF THEIR OWN MORTALITY AND ENCOURAGE A RECITATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.