PROANTIC
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Antique Jesuit Multiple Reliquary In Silver With 19 Relics, Circa 1900-1910



2 500 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Description

Beautiful and important antique multiple Jesuit reliquary, made of silver and silver filigree around 1900-1910, with spectacular floral decoration and 19 relics linked to the Society of Jesus. It is a piece of great material beauty, intended to be hung, but its true value lies in the devotional ensemble it preserves: founding saints, missionaries, martyrs and great figures of Ignatian spirituality gathered together in a single piece.

The very elaborate outer border combines extremely fine filigree with leaves, scrolls, flowers and small details of gilt silver, creating a frame of enormous visual lightness and, at the same time, remarkable ornamental richness. The

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piece has a very special presence: on the one hand it is elegant, open and almost airy; on the other, it conveys a very intense devotional strength thanks to the relics it gathers.

In the centre opens the main oval, protected by glass, with a red textile background and a very striking arrangement of labels and small relics placed on several levels. The contrast between the red background, the shine of the silver and the antique tone of the labels gives the whole a very attractive appearance. This is not simply a beautiful reliquary, but a Jesuit reliquary with 19 relics of saints, blessed, martyrs, missionaries and great figures of the Ignatian tradition.

The content is especially important because it brings together some of the most representative names of the Society of Jesus: Saint Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the order; Saint Francis Xavier, great missionary of the East; Saint Francis Borgia, third Superior General; Saint Peter Claver, apostle of the slaves; Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Saint Stanislaus Kostka and Saint John Berchmans, models of Jesuit youthful holiness; as well as Saint Peter Canisius, Saint Francis de Geronimo, several martyrs of Cuncolim, Saint John de Britto, Saint Andrew Bobola, the Holy Martyrs of Japan and other blessed figures linked to preaching, mission and martyrdom.

The result is a piece of enormous spiritual strength, centred on foundation, expansion, teaching, mission and martyrdom within the Jesuit universe.

Relics it contains

1. S. Franc. Borg.: Saint Francis Borgia. Beatified

in 1624 and canonized in 1670.
2. S. Petri Claver: Saint Peter Claver. Beatified in 1850 and canonized in 1888.
3. S. Alois. Gonz.: Saint Aloysius Gonzaga. Beatified in 1605 and canonized in 1726.
4. S. Ignatii Loy.: Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Beatified in 1609 and canonized in 1622.
5. S. Franc. Xav.: Saint Francis Xavier. Beatified in 1619 and canonized in 1622.
6. S. Jo. Berchm.: Saint John Berchmans. Beatified in 1865 and canonized in 1888.
7. S. Stanis. Kos.: Saint Stanislaus Kostka. Beatified in 1605 and canonized in 1726.
8. S. Fr. de Hier.: Saint Francis de Geronimo. Beatified in 1806 and canonized in 1839.
9. B. Petri Canis.: Blessed Peter Canisius; today Saint Peter Canisius, canonized in 1925. He was beatified in 1864 and canonized on May 21, 1925.
10. B. Alf. Pacheco M.: Blessed Alfonso Pacheco, Jesuit martyr. Beatified in 1893 with the martyrs of Cuncolim; not canonized, he remains blessed.
11. B. Rod. Aquav. M.: Blessed Rodolfo Acquaviva, Jesuit martyr. Beatified in 1893 with the martyrs of Cuncolim; not canonized, he remains blessed.
12. B. Andr. Bob. M.: Blessed Andrew Bobola, martyr; today Saint Andrew Bobola, canonized in 1938. He was beatified in 1853 and canonized in 1938.
13. B. Petr. Bern.: Blessed Peter Berno, Jesuit martyr. Beatified in 1893 with the martyrs of Cuncolim; not canonized, he remains blessed.
14. B. Franc. Aran. M.: Blessed Francis Aranha, Jesuit martyr. Beatified in 1893 with the martyrs of Cuncolim; not canonized, he remains blessed.
15. B. Ant. Francisci M.: Blessed Antonio Francisco, Jesuit martyr. Beatified in 1893 with the martyrs of Cuncolim; not canonized, he remains blessed.
16. SS. MM. Jap.: Holy Martyrs of Japan, collective relic. The 26 Martyrs of Japan were beatified in 1627 and canonized in 1862.

17. B. Jo. de Brito: Blessed John de Britto; today Saint John de Britto, canonized in 1947. He was beatified in 1853 and canonized in 1947.
18. B. Bern. Realini: Blessed Bernardino Realino; today Saint Bernardino Realino, canonized in 1947. He was beatified in 1896 and canonized in 1947.
19. B. Baldinu.: Blessed Antonio Baldinucci. Beatified in 1893; not canonized, he remains blessed.

The importance of this ensemble lies not only in the number of relics, but in its spiritual unity. The reliquary brings together in a single piece the great pillars of the Jesuit tradition: founders, missionaries, preachers, young saints, martyrs of evangelization and key figures of the intellectual and apostolic life of the Society of Jesus. This devotional coherence makes the ensemble much more attractive than a simple accumulation of relics, because it conveys a complete vision of the Ignatian world: vocation, study, mission, surrender and martyrdom.

The rear cover is removable and allows access to the reverse of the lunette, where the wax seal with the authentication threads is preserved. This is a very important detail, because it reinforces the devotional seriousness of the ensemble and shows that the relics were gathered and sealed within a formal religious context. On the seal one can read Signum Postulatoris S.I. S.I. corresponds to Societatis Iesu, that is, the Society of Jesus. Within the order, the postulator is involved in the causes of beatification and canonization, as well as in the management and certification of relics. Therefore, it is most reasonable that the seal refers to the Jesuit postulator or to his office.

The silver has been confirmed by silver testing, although the piece bears no visible hallmarks.

The general condition is very good and the reliquary preserves a magnificent presence. The filigree remains very lively, with much of its ornamental richness well preserved, and the interior appears complete, orderly and legible. The labels appear antique and coherent with one another, and there are no evident signs of recent manipulation in the arrangement of the relics. The preservation of the rear seal also adds important value to the ensemble.

As for dating, the labels allow the ensemble to be placed quite logically between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Saint Peter Claver and Saint John Berchmans already appear as saints, which indicates a date after their canonizations in 1888. Bernardino Realino appears as blessed, whose beatification took place in 1896. At the same time, Peter Canisius appears as blessed and not as saint, which places the piece before his canonization in 1925. For all these reasons, a prudent range between 1896 and 1925 seems the most reasonable, fitting very well with an approximate date around circa 1900-1910 or the early years of the 20th century.

This is an especially attractive piece because it unites two highly sought-after values: on the one hand, a magnificent antique reliquary in silver and filigree, of great decorative beauty; on the other, an exceptional ensemble of 19 Jesuit and associated relics, with fundamental names of the Society of Jesus. It is an ideal piece for an important collection of religious antiques, for a community linked to Ignatian spirituality or for a person with special devotion to Jesuit saints and martyrs.

It is difficult to find a reliquary that combines material beauty, devotional richness and historical strength in such a balanced way. The

silver filigree makes it a visually precious piece, but the true heart of the object lies in its relics: 19 gathered testimonies of holiness, mission, preaching and martyrdom within the broad spiritual universe of the Society of Jesus.

Measurements: Total height: 18 cm (7.09 in).
Total width: 13.5 cm (5.31 in).