



Bob Jones Museum Offers An Impressive Collection Of Religious Art

You might be surprised to learn that one of the most important collections of religious art in America is housed at The Bob Jones University Museum & Gallery in Greenville.

Bob Jones, Jr., the second president of Bob Jones University, a Christian college and seminary, began collecting paintings for an art gallery in 1948, with a focus on Western religious art. The original collection, first displayed in 1951, included 25 paintings by such artists as Botticelli and Tintoretto. Expanding to include the James Cole Collection of Ecclesiastical Textiles and Vestments, the collection received national attention when some of its paintings appeared in an NBC TV broadcast and as various exhibitions in the U.S. and abroad borrowed from its collection.

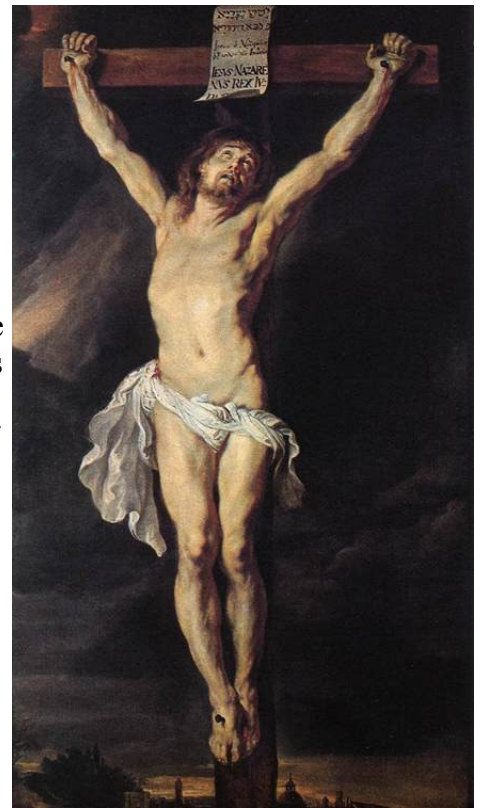
Today, the museum displays Italian, Spanish, French, English, Flemish, Dutch, and German sacred art from the 14th through the 19th centuries in over 25 galleries. In addition to paintings by major artists such as Rubens, van Dyck, and Ribera, the exhibitions feature



The Holy Family in the Carpenter Shop

period furniture, sculpture, tapestries, and porcelains.

One of the highlights is The Old Masters Collection: paintings of European sacred art from the 14th through the 19th centuries that trace the religious, artistic, and cultural history of



Christ on the Cross

Western Europe. One of the pieces is Peter Paul Rubens' *Christ on the Cross*, which is notable for the suggestion of victory in death through the upraised arms, the nails through the wrists, and the trembling body. Another piece is Gerrit Van Honthorst's *The Holy Family in the Carpenter Shop*, which shows a hard-working Holy Family with barely visible halos. Another is Sandro Botticelli's *Madonna and Child with an Angel*, which shows the praise and respect shown toward Jesus and reveals how the more naturalistic depictions of figures during the Renaissance enabled greater emotion. Yet another is Anthony van Dyck's *Mother of Sorrows*, a life-size image of Mary reaching out in despair.

Other highlights of the museum include The Bowen Collection of Antiquities, which includes over 1000 artifacts from ancient Babylon, Egypt, Palestine, and Rome for the purpose of

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Museum Features Paintings, Artifacts, And More

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bringing to life Biblical times and places, and the Russian icons collection, which includes works from the 14th through the 20th centuries. These Russian and Greek paintings display traditional images of Christ, Mary, and St. Nicolas, as well as depictions of the 13 great feasts of the Orthodox Church, scenes from the life of Christ, and scenes from various saints' legends.

Another collection is Benjamin West's *The Progress of Revealed Religion*. In the 18th century, many English Protestants viewed religious art as an extension of Roman Catholic worship and therefore largely excluded it from churches as part of their reformation efforts. Rebellious against that trend, King George III decided to build a private chapel at Windsor and to commission his court painter, Benjamin West, to create a series of painting to illustrate "the history of revealed religion." Though the series was never completed and the chapel was never completed due to the king's illness, West completed

18 large paintings for the chapel, seven of which are housed on the Bob Jones University campus.

The museum, which attracts over 20,000 visitors per year, is located

on the university's campus at 1700 Wade Hampton Boulevard in Greenville. It is open on Tuesday through Sunday from 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. except for holidays and special events. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors (age 60 and over), and \$3 for students with a school ID card. Children 12 and under are admitted free. Audio guides can be rented for an additional \$5 fee while scavenger hunts for children are available at no charge. Guided tours are available by reservation for groups of 10 or more. For more information, visit <http://www.bjulg.org/>.



Mother of Sorrows

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