

VITUS FELIX RIGL

(Dillingen, c. 1717 - Augsburg, after 1779)

Saint Carlo Borromeo distributing communion

pen and black ink and grey wash over black chalk, heightened with white, incised for transfer (recto); red chalk (verso)

175 x 135 mm

Provenance:

Koller Auktionen, Zurich: 20 September 2008, lot 3588

Private collection, New York, until 2025

Incised for transfer, this highly finished drawing by Vitus Felix Rigl was conceived as a design for an engraving published by the engravers and publishers Joseph Sebastian (1710–1768) and Johann Baptist Klauber (1712–1787). Based in Augsburg, the Klauber brothers operated the principal European centre for the production of Catholic devotional prints in the mid-eighteenth century and played a decisive role in reforming Christian iconography. Working in the Rococo idiom characteristic of designers employed by the Klaubers – among them Johann Wolfgang Baumgart and Gottfried Bernhard Göz – the drawing depicts Saint Carlo Borromeo, the Milanese cardinal who was a leading voice in the Counter Reformation.

The related engraving belongs to a series of forty prints depicting saints within elaborate ornamental borders, enriched with biblical quotations and personal attributes. Signed impressions suggest that Baumgartner and Rigl were the principal designers of the series, possibly assisted by collaborators, as in the present example. While no preparatory drawings by Baumgartner are known, several works by Rigl can be found in the Kunstsammlungen & Museen Augsburg, including a study for Saint Francis Xavier.

Please contact us for a full catalogue entry.