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ART HISTORY EXPERT IN FLORENCE

The outline and features of the face of Christ are also quite comparable to those of Joseph in the painting *Rest on the Flight to Egypt*, here below, but also in this case the colouring and the brushwork of the face of Joseph are different than those of the face of Christ.



Image not
available for
public display.

Fra Bartolommeo, *Rest on the Flight to Egypt*
Palazzo Vescovile, Pienza, ca. 1500

Another feature of the painting *Christ Carrying the Cross* typical for the work of Fra Bartolommeo is the presence of the gold and red halo. Although Fra Bartolommeo mostly painted transparent halos, he made several paintings with gold and red halos for the convent of San Marco in the 16th century, such as in the fresco the *Virgin and Child* below. Fra Bartolommeo probably attempted to honour the painting style of his famous predecessor, Fra Angelico, who almost always painted halos in this style and had made a large amount of religious paintings for this convent. Although the halo in *Christ Carrying the Cross* has clearly been overpainted, it is plausible that a gold and red halo was already depicted in the original painting before it was damaged. A part from Fra Bartolommeo, only very few artists painted gold and red halos in the 16th century, which was an outdated style; it was more common to paint transparent halos. This is one of the reasons to assume that the painting *Christ Carrying the Cross* may have originally been painted by Fra Bartolommeo.



Fra Bartolommeo, *Virgin and Child*
San Marco Museum, Florence, ca. 1514