Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

18th-Century Portrait of a Saint with a Wooden Cross

£245

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REF: 6644

Height: 50 cm (19.7")

Width: 35 cm (13.8")

Description

An evocative 18th-century oil on canvas portrait of a saint, shown in contemplative half-length and holding a simple wooden cross. Painted with quiet gravity and devotional sensitivity, the work centres on the saint's solemn expression and the humble emblem of faith held before him.

The restrained composition gives the figure a compelling spiritual presence. The saint emerges from a darkened background, allowing the light to settle across the face, hands, and cross, while the rich tones and softly modelled brushwork create a sense of depth and intimacy. Rather than presenting an elaborate vision, the artist has focused on a moment of private reflection, making the image both moving and immediate.

The plain wooden cross is an especially powerful detail. It speaks to humility, sacrifice, and steadfast belief, and identifies the subject within the long European tradition of devotional portraiture. The work would originally have provided a focal point for private prayer or contemplation, whether in a domestic interior, chapel, or religious setting.

With its atmospheric surface, expressive figure, and strong devotional character, this painting has considerable decorative as well as historical appeal. It would sit beautifully in a library, entrance hall, study, or period interior, and offers a thoughtful addition to a collection of religious art, Old Master-style portraiture, or 18th-century European paintings.

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