

CONFRATERNAL MERCY AND FEDERICO BAROCCI'S
MADONNA DEL POPOLO: AN ICONOGRAPHIC STUDY

by

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INTRODUCTION

It is certain that Barocci had a particular genius for painting sacred images, for which merit he deserves all the more credit because it is so rare to see pictures in churches that meet the requirements of decorum and holiness in order to stimulate devotion.¹

Giovanni Pietro Bellori

As Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1613-96) wrote in his *Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1672), Federico Barocci's (c. 1528/35-1612) paintings embody the pious religious sentiment of the Counter-Reformation era in which he worked.

Barocci's religious paintings were seen by his contemporaries as immensely powerful in their devotion and were undoubtedly a reflection of the artist's own religiosity, as reflected in Bellori's quotation. Barocci's paintings were produced during a period when artworks were expected to evoke an emotional and religious response in their viewers, and his work seems to have been especially effective in this regard. With his consistent inclusion of elements from everyday life, such as animals and household items, and by setting many of his scenes against a recognizable contemporary location, such as his hometown of Urbino (see for example, his *Entombment*, which prominently features the Ducal Palace of Urbino in the background, fig. 6), Barocci stressed the presence of God in the modern-day and created accessible artistic representations to instruct and inspire the faith of the masses, fulfilling the requirements for Counter-Reformation artworks.

¹ Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 164. The seventeenth century writer, artist and antiquarian Giovanni Pietro Bellori is the chief biographical source on Barocci. Bellori admired antiquities and the classicizing qualities of artworks by Raphael and Annibale Carracci, preferring art that proposed a middle-way between Mannerism and Caravaggio's extreme naturalism. Bellori's account of Barocci was based on information given to him by Pompilio Bruni, a clock-maker from Urbino who was trained by Federico's brother Simone (Nicholas Turner, *Federico Barocci*, Paris: Vilo International, 2000, 10).

An example of these qualities is Barocci's large-scale altarpiece the so-called *Madonna del Popolo*² (1576-79), or the *Madonna of the People* (fig. 1). This painting is the largest and most ambitious of his works completed in the second half of the 1570s and is one of Barocci's many spectacular accomplishments. Commissioned by the Pia Confraternità dei Laici di Santa Maria della Misericordia in Arezzo for the confraternity's chapel in Santa Maria della Pieve, the painting was transferred to the Grand Ducal Galleries in Florence in 1786 by Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo de' Medici. The painting now resides in the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.³ In the composition, a large group of Aretines from various social classes gathers in the Piazza Grande of Arezzo, in prayer and awe at the appearance of the kneeling Virgin in the sky, who intercedes with Christ as he blesses the masses. Below on earth, acts of mercy, almsgiving, and everyday life transpire. A poor woman, holding a straw basket and a young child, accepts a coin from a curly-headed boy barely visible on the periphery of the painting, while a member of the confraternity looks on. A poor blind man plays the hurdy-gurdy, turning his face towards the viewer, while a shirtless, reclining beggar asks for alms. An affluent mother points skyward to direct the views of her children to the mystical apparition above, but the young child to her right is distracted by the music of the blind man. On the left, a young child reaches around his mother, clad in a red mantle, to touch a small prayer book held by a young woman. A variety of individualized characters and facial expressions gaze up

² As various other scholars have noted, the painting support is not canvas, as recorded in Andrea Emiliani's catalogue raisonné on the artist (*Federico Barocci: Urbino, 1535-1612*, I, Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1985, 129), but is instead on poplar panels. On the condition, history and recent restoration of the painting, see Stefano Scarpelli, "Nota sul restauro," *L'Onestà dell'Invenzione: Pittura della Riforma Cattolica agli Uffizi*, Antonio Natali, ed. (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1999), 43-49.

³ Turner, 69.

at Christ and the Virgin, while in the background of the composition, two figures, unaware of the goings-on in the piazza, visit prisoners in jail.

Bellori discussed the *Madonna del Popolo* only briefly in his *Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1672), noting that the painting represents “Christ...seated on a cloud, blessing, in answer to his mother’s prayers, those who perform the seven acts of mercy; and there are many figures, amongst which, in the group of poor receiving alms, there is a particularly lifelike blind man who plays a viola by turning a handle.”⁴ Bellori’s vague explanation of the iconography, often repeated in the Barocci literature for want of a better description, misunderstands Barocci’s unique interpretation of traditional Madonna della Misericordia (Madonna of Mercy) iconography.⁵ Nor does the well-known title of the painting, *Madonna del Popolo*, which could suggest a variety of subjects, including a representation of an ordinarily dressed Virgin in a rustic setting⁶ or a particularly venerated icon, give an accurate impression of the painting’s subject. I will argue that Barocci’s painting was never intended to be a depiction of the Seven Acts of Mercy as related by Bellori, but is instead a unique modification of Misericordia imagery with a particular emphasis on the charitable works of the Arezzo confraternity. I will expand upon the interpretation, first proposed by S. J. Freedberg, that Barocci’s painting is an innovative blend of traditional Misericordia imagery and the Madonna Mediatrix⁷ with a focus on almsgiving to stand in for the acts

⁴ Bellori, 163.

⁵ Two recent publications on Barocci by Nicholas Turner and David Scrase (*A Touch of the Divine: Drawings by Federico Barocci in British Collections*, Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2006) repeat Bellori’s description without apparent regard of what is actually depicted in the painting.

⁶ John Varriano, “Caravaggio and Religion,” *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image*, Franco Mormando, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 203.

⁷ Edmund Pillsbury, Grove Art Online. Oxford University Press, [25 February 2007], <http://www.groveart.com/ezproxy.tcu.edu>. S. J. Freedberg, *Painting In Italy 1500-1600* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex; New York: 1979), 637.

of mercy not represented. Furthermore, Bellori's description of the painting is illuminating, in that he emphasizes the "many figures" in the composition, and especially the musician, who is playing what we would now call a *hurdy-gurdy*. Bellori seems to pick up on what is prominently featured in the composition, the naturalistic portrayals from life that assume a more primary visual role than the act of almsgiving itself.

Barocci's deeply religious character infuses the panel with characteristics typical of Italian religious painting after the Council of Trent, when patrons required artworks to instruct as well as delight their audiences.⁸ The patrons and subject of the Uffizi painting itself, with their emphasis on the performance of charity and almsgiving, indicate a Post-Tridentine spirit that reaffirmed the importance of the sacraments and good works to achieve salvation.⁹ An expanded contextual discussion of the painting has not been completed, and it is necessary to provide an analysis of the sixteenth century confraternal patrons of the artwork and the iconographic traditions of the Madonna della Misericordia and the Seven Acts of Mercy, which lend greater insight into the iconography of the painting. Finally, to supplement Andrea Emiliani's valuable, yet incomplete, catalogue raisonné on the artist, I will provide a more comprehensive checklist of drawings that can be connected to the *Madonna del Popolo*. The drawings are central to an understanding of how the iconography of the painting changed and developed throughout his elaborate drawing process. In addition, I will argue that Barocci's constant study and observation from life through the medium of drawing informs his painting with a sense of immediacy and poignancy that speak to the pious ambient of Counter-Reformation Italy.

⁸ Varriano, 192.

⁹ Ibid., 194.

Chapter one situates Federico Barocci in light of his artistic training and with regard to the tightening of iconographic regulations that took place during the Catholic Counter-Reformation. I address the deeply religious nature of Barocci's paintings commissioned by a number of religious orders and confraternities in Italy. Chapter two discusses the role of confraternities in artistic production in late cinquecento Italy and will specifically address the confraternity of S. Maria della Misericordia in Arezzo, including its role in Arezzo and its history. With reference to the fortunate survival of much of the correspondence between Barocci and patrons of the *Madonna del Popolo* in the Archivio di Stato in Arezzo, I will then summarize the genesis of Barocci's commission and the challenges encountered by the artist to create an innovative altarpiece while still producing a work acceptable to the conservative religious patrons. Chapter three will deal with traditional iconographic depictions of the Madonna della Misericordia, the Madonna Mediatrix, and the Seven Acts of Mercy as precedents for Barocci's painting in the Uffizi. Furthermore, I will suggest why Barocci's altarpiece fails to fit neatly into any of these iconographic categories. Finally, in chapter four, I will discuss the influence of Raphael on the artist, specifically Barocci's expansion of Raphael's multi-step drawn preparatory process for his paintings. I will provide a selected analysis of the approximately ninety preparatory drawings for the *Madonna del Popolo*, including the *modello* in a Chicago private collection, which exhibits a number of changes to the final composition.¹⁰ In addition, I will discuss the artist's adaptation of drawings from his *Immaculate Conception* and *Perdono of St. Francis of Assisi*, painted just prior to the *Madonna del Popolo*.

¹⁰ Formerly Chatsworth inv. 357.

CHAPTER 1:
PIETY AND PAINTING: BAROCCI AND THE RELIGIOUS ART OF
POST-TRIDENTINE ITALY

Artistic Influences and Training

As Bellori writes in his biography, Barocci was born into a distinguished family of craftsmen and learned how to draw from his father, Ambrogio. The talents of the young Federico were noticed by the artist Francesco Menzocchi da Forlì (1502-74), who first urged Federico to make a career as an artist. Barocci's uncle Bartolomeo Genga, the court architect to the Duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo II della Rovere, agreed with Menzocchi, and Federico was apprenticed to the Venetian painter and printmaker Battista Franco (c. 1510-61), who was working in Urbino at the time. Barocci worked with the mannerist artist Taddeo Zuccaro (1529-1566) in Urbino in the early 1550s and later in Rome during Barocci's trips to the city circa 1555 and 1560-63. Barocci began his first independent works in the 1550s; the earliest painting extant today is his copy of Raphael's *St. Cecilia, with Saints Mary Magdalen, John the Evangelist, Paul and Catherine* in the Cathedral of Urbino. Raphael proved to be a great influence on the young Barocci, who, as Bellori relates, "resolved to go to Rome, stimulated by the desire for acclaim and by the renown of Raphael, his fellow countryman." Once in Rome, Barocci studied the great masterpieces of the Renaissance and "drew the works of Raphael with the other youths..." Bellori also recounts how Barocci was drawing in the loggia of the Villa Farnesina and was approached by Raphael's former assistant Giovanni da Udine, who admired Barocci's work and upon finding out that Barocci was from

Urbino, “he embraced him and kissed him, deeply moved by the memory of his beloved master, and thanked God to see someone in whom the glory of Urbino would be revived.”¹

Barocci’s adoption of Raphael’s preparatory process can be seen partly as a result of the younger artist’s admiration for the master and also as a circumstance of Barocci’s desire to control every aspect of his production and health concerns. Bellori relates that while Barocci was painting in the Casino of Pius IV in the Vatican, the artist was allegedly poisoned by painters who were envious of Barocci’s talents, forcing him to return home to Urbino in 1563 and leaving him too ill to paint for several years. He seems never to have completely recovered from the illness, despite the fact that he lived five more decades and constantly suffered from a digestive disorder and sleeplessness.² Bellori recounts that Barocci was only able to work for one hour in the morning and one in the evening,³ and thus, after his return from Rome, Barocci may have turned himself more fully to the creation of preparatory drawings and pastel studies, which presumably would have been easier for the artist to work with in light of his medical condition.⁴ This process, which can be traced through the numerous drawings created in preparation for the *Madonna del Popolo*, allowed the artist to develop the iconography and composition of the painting in a great amount of detail before even putting paint on the canvas.

After the alleged poisoning incident and return to Urbino, Barocci spent time recovering at his family farm in nearby Crocicchia. In 1565, Barocci produced his first

¹ Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 160.

² Nicholas Turner, *Federico Barocci* (Paris: Vilo International, 2000), 30.

³ Bellori, 168.

⁴ Suzanne Folds McCullagh, “Serendipity in a Solander Box: A Recently Discovered Pastel by Federico Barocci,” *Italian Drawings at the Art Institute: Recent Acquisitions and Discoveries*, *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1991), 59.

painting after a partial recovery from his illness, the small *Virgin and Child with St. John the Evangelist* (the *Madonna di S. Giovanni*), now in the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino (fig. 2).⁵ Bellori writes that Barocci prayed for his afflictions to subside, and one day “he prayed to the glorious Virgin with such efficacy that his prayer was granted.”⁶ In gratitude for this healing, Barocci created this painting and gave it as an ex-voto to the church of the Capuchin fathers at Crocicchia. The painting can thus be seen as a sincere and personal expression of his faith in thanksgiving for the deliverance from his illness as granted by the Virgin. Appropriately, the painting depicts the Virgin and Child seated in a rustic landscape, with St. John the Evangelist and his attributes, the eagle to his right and the silver chalice near his left knee.⁷ Given a prominent place in the painting, the silver chalice is a reference to St. John’s ability to drink poison without harm because of his faith; the chalice may also signify Barocci’s own poisoning and the faith that delivered him from his pain.⁸ As Nicholas Turner notes, the religious devotion inherent in all of Barocci’s subsequent religious works seems to show itself here for the first time.⁹ By situating the poorly-dressed Madonna and Child with St. John in a rustic setting, Barocci recalls the poverty of the Capuchin fathers who lived humbly in Crocicchia¹⁰ and imbues the work with a Counter-Reformation spirit that becomes typical of Barocci’s later paintings, especially the *Madonna del Popolo*.

⁵ Oil on canvas, 151 x 115 cm.

⁶ Bellori, 161.

⁷ Turner, 34.

⁸ Stuart P. Lingo, *The Capuchins and the Art of History: Retrospection and Reform in the Arts in Late Renaissance Italy* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), 281-82.

⁹ Turner, 34.

¹⁰ Lingo, 284.

Italian Painting Following the Council of Trent

Italian painting in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw a number of iconographic changes as a result of the Protestant Reformation, incited by Martin Luther's *95 Theses*, which in 1517 attacked Catholic dogmas such as the veneration of the Virgin Mary, the intercession of saints, the sacraments, and the authority of the Pope. The Counter-Reformation church, beginning with the Council of Trent (1545-1563), sought to make reforms in the church and to reaffirm the basic tenets of medieval Catholicism in opposition to Protestant beliefs. Following periods of authoritative reform, the papacy made efforts to address Martin Luther's legitimate criticisms, especially during the era of the Pope Pius V (1566-1572). Pius V sought to improve popular piety and the public morality of the church by promoting religious orders, such as the Jesuits, and by giving large alms to the poor and hospitals instead of financing artistic patronage.¹¹

Post-Tridentine Italian painting emphasized the main differences between the two Christian sects, upholding traditional beliefs regarding the status of the Virgin Mary, the cult of the saints, the legitimacy of the papacy, and the necessity of performing the sacraments. As a result of Trent's proclamations, artworks were required to be morally instructive to the masses. Countering Luther's accusations of idolatry, depictions of the Virgin Mary and saints became increasingly common in the Counter-Reformation. Artworks reaffirmed the status of Mary as a perpetual virgin who was free from original sin and who was not only the mother of Christ the man, but also the mother of God.¹²

¹¹ Eamon Duffy, *Saints & Sinners: A History of the Popes* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 218.

¹² Émile Mâle, "Religious Art after the Council of Trent," *Religious Art from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc, 1949), 169.

Episodes from the life of the Virgin became more prominent, including representations of the events rejected by the Protestants, such as the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, despite the fact that these episodes were not yet church dogmas.¹³ The church also reaffirmed the necessity of performing the sacraments and good works, such as charity, in order to achieve salvation,¹⁴ whereas Protestants believed that salvation could be achieved through faith alone. Patronage was also affected by the Counter-Reformation, as the newly established religious orders such as the Capuchins, Oratorians and Jesuits commissioned paintings to fill their new churches. The increase in numbers of religious orders and their renewed focus on poverty in reaction to the excesses of previous popes were important elements in Post-Tridentine painting and especially in Barocci's commissions for religious organizations.

Barocci's Commissions for Religious Orders and Confraternities

Since the majority of Barocci's paintings were commissioned for religious patrons in the Marches cities of Urbino, Pesaro, Senigallia, and Fossombrone, it is only essential to note a few pertinent examples of Barocci's deeply religious painting. Although many of Barocci's patrons were from these provincial cities near Barocci's hometown, he secured two major commissions for the Chiesa Nuova in Rome, the church of the Oratorian order founded by St. Filippo Neri.¹⁵ The Oratorians were the last of several new orders of secular clergy founded in the late sixteenth century; the group was confirmed in 1575 by Pope Gregory XIII and was allowed to use the dilapidated church

¹³ Ibid., 175-9.

¹⁴ Ibid., 171-3.

¹⁵ For more about Barocci's relationship with the Oratorians, see Ian Verstegen, "Federico Barocci, Federico Borromeo, and the Oratorian Orbit," *Renaissance Quarterly* 56 (2003), 56-87.

of Santa Maria in Vallicella. In many ways, the Oratorians were the model Counter-Reformation religious order, as their primary emphasis was on works of charity,¹⁶ and St. Filippo Neri invested a deep concern for the spiritual well-being of the masses.¹⁷

Barocci's painting of the *Visitation* (1583-86, in situ) (fig. 3),¹⁸ which depicts the humbly dressed Virgin Mary and Elizabeth meeting outside a common home, was said to have attracted visitors who stood in line for three days to see the newly unveiled painting. Even St. Filippo Neri was captivated with the painting, and sat for long periods of time on a chair in front of the painting in awe of the tender meeting of the two women.¹⁹

Barocci was a deeply religious man whose paintings appealed to conservative religious patrons. Throughout his life, Barocci was affiliated with the Capuchins, the religious order that began in 1529 as an outgrowth of the Franciscans,²⁰ who dominated the religious ambient of Urbino during Barocci's lifetime. Harald Olsen noted that Barocci was personally close with the friars in Urbino, and erroneously stated that Barocci joined the Capuchin Third Order in 1566 as a lay member who lived outside the religious community.²¹ However, as Stuart Lingo has shown, Barocci did not join the Capuchins but rather the Confraternity of Sant'Antonio Abbate in 1566. The conventual friars of San Francesco in Urbino also rented Barocci a room over the church of Sant'Antonio Abbate to use while painting his *Perdono* altarpiece.²² Barocci was also a

¹⁶ Deborah Howard, "Oratorians," Grove Art Online. Oxford University Press, [25 February 2007], <http://www.groveart.com/ezproxy.tcu.edu>.

¹⁷ Mary Ann Graeve, "The Stone of Uncion in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Sept. 1958), 234.

¹⁸ Oil on canvas, 285 x 187 cm.

¹⁹ Nicholas Penny, "The Raphael of the Counter-Reformation," *Times Literary Supplement* (26 September 1986), 1059.

²⁰ A.D. Wright, "Capuchins," Grove Art Online. Oxford University Press, [25 February 2007], <http://www.groveart.com/ezproxy.tcu.edu>.

²¹ Harald Olsen, *Federico Barocci* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1962), 33, n. 42.

²² Lingo, 266.

member of the Confraternity of Corpus Domini, for whom he painted an early *St. Margaret* (1555-56), now lost. In his will, Barocci left most of his possessions to his brother and sister; the remainder of which he donated to the Franciscans of Urbino,²³ illustrating his close relationship with the friars. Barocci executed a number of works throughout his lifetime for Capuchin abbeys, Franciscan churches, and Franciscan chapels in and near Urbino.²⁴

Thus Barocci was intimately tied to religious orders and confraternities in Urbino, as both a member and a recipient of their art patronage. He completed at least six commissions for confraternities in the Marches, including the aforementioned *St. Margaret* (1555-6) for the Confraternity of Corpus Domini in Urbino, the *Calling of St. Andrew* (1583) for the Oratory of the Confraternity of S. Andrea in Pesaro (fig. 4), the *Madonna of the Rosary* (1589-93) for the Confraternity dell'Assunta e del Rosario in Senigallia (fig. 5), the *Entombment of Christ* (1578-82) for the Compagnia della Croce e Sacramento (fig. 6), also in Senigallia, and of course, Barocci's *Madonna del Popolo* for the Confraternity of S. Maria della Misericordia in Arezzo. An important precedent for Barocci's *Madonna del Popolo* was his *Immaculate Conception* (c. 1575), painted for the Compagnia della Concezione in Urbino, to be discussed below (fig. 7). Barocci's personal involvement in a confraternal community influenced his iconography for the *Madonna del Popolo* and gave the painter greater insight into the religious nature of the altarpiece and the particular devotion of the Arezzo confraternity.

²³ Ibid., 263. See Keith Christiansen, "Barocci, the Franciscans and a possible funerary gift." *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 147 (Nov. 2005), 722-28.

²⁴ Ian Verstegen, *The Art of Painting and the Rhetoric of Persuasion* (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 2002), 27. For a more complete discussion of Barocci's relationship to the Capuchins, see Lingo.

CHAPTER 2: CONFRATERNITY AND COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL ITALY

Confraternities in Late Cinquecento Italy

With their origins in the tenth century, Italian confraternities were organizations of laymen and sometimes women, who gathered voluntarily to promote their religious life and to perform acts of charity in their community.¹ Although the groups were encouraged by mendicant orders, confraternities were composed and directed independently by the laity, serving as an alternative to monastic life and allowing members to take an active role in their salvation by performing good works.² Throughout their history, confraternities have been largely Marian in devotion and were often affiliated with parish churches.³ The brotherhoods maintained high social profiles and were highly organized, meeting weekly for pious devotions and feasts. Confraternities contributed to their parish churches by hiring preachers for special sermons, sponsoring theatrical and musical performances, and holding masses.⁴ The brotherhoods also assumed some of the rituals surrounding death previously reserved for clergy members, including reciting the Office of the Dead, saying requiem masses, and supervising the honorable burial of the dead.⁵

¹ Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1. Of the original confraternities, the tenth century brotherhood of S. Geminiano in Modena, whose membership was more clerical than lay, was devoted to raising money to provide lamps and candles for the cathedral (Black, 26).

² Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl, eds., *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1.

³ Black, 27.

⁴ Wisch and Ahl, 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Confraternities were based on the prescriptions of the Seven Acts of Mercy, a part of medieval church teachings to aid in the masses' understanding of charity.⁶ The Seven Acts of Corporal Mercy were defined as: (1) feed the hungry; (2) give drink to the thirsty; (3) clothe the naked; (4) shelter the homeless; (5) visit the imprisoned; (6) visit the sick and; (7) bury the dead. These were derived from the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." To the laity, the Seven Acts of Mercy provided an alternative to the strict ascetic and monastic lifestyle and were included in confessional manuals and catechisms. The Seven Acts of Mercy came to characterize confraternal piety, embodying the concepts of amor Dei (love of God) and amor proximi (love of neighbor).⁷ Intimately tied to the Seven Acts of Mercy, almsgiving was stressed in the medieval church, as the masses were encouraged to imitate Christ and the saints by giving charity. During the Counter-Reformation period, almsgiving came to signify the emphasis placed on the performance of good works to achieve Christ's blessing. As will be discussed in chapter three, the seven acts were also the subjects of paintings and sculptures for churches.⁸

Many confraternities were founded in the thirteenth century, when there was a major expansion of confraternities called *laudesi*, brothers who would process through their town singing songs in praise of God, or *battuti* or *disciplinati*, who flagellated

⁶ Maureen M. Flynn, "Charitable Ritual in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, XVI, No. 3 (1985), 336.

⁷ Wisch and Ahl, 2.

⁸ Flynn, 336.

themselves during somber public processions.⁹ Membership in confraternities increased in the fourteenth century following the Great Plague of 1348, as the populace of stricken communities in Italy sought relief in the form of spirituality.¹⁰ Confraternities devoted to the Madonna della Misericordia or “dei Poveri” (of the poor) brotherhoods became popular during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in reaction to fears of the plague, and the image of the Madonna of Mercy as a protector of the people was frequently employed in plague-related altarpieces.¹¹ The sixteenth century saw a rise of confraternities with philanthropic motivations, and brotherhoods usually specialized in one or two acts of mercy.¹² Some organizations favored almsgiving, while others established hospitals and orphanages, helped prisoners prepare for their eternal judgment and accompanied them to their executions, or raised money to provide dowries for young impoverished girls.¹³ In 1562, the Council of Trent limited the independence of confraternities by requiring the visitation and approval of bishops and other clerics.¹⁴ Nevertheless, confraternities flourished in post-Tridentine Italy.

***Gonfaloni* and Visual Imagery of Confraternities**

As art patrons, confraternities commissioned paintings and sculptures for their meeting places and chapels in the parish churches. A popular type of painting created for confraternities was the *gonfalone*, a banner on canvas or linen that was carried, along with crosses and reliquaries, during public processions and celebrations. The

⁹ Black, 27.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 28.

¹² Ibid., 168.

¹³ Ibid., 217.

¹⁴ Wisch and Ahl, 3.

processional use of *gonfaloni* was most popular in Umbria, Tuscany, and Rome,¹⁵ where confraternities would commission artists to produce these processional banners to honor Christ and the saints and impress their civic audience.¹⁶ *Gonfaloni* represented a wide range of subjects, including the Madonna and Child with saints, the Crucifixion, Annunciation, and Lamentation, depending on the particular devotion of the confraternity.¹⁷ However, due to the increase in number of confraternities devoted to the cult of the Virgin and the threat of the plague in the fifteenth century, one of the most popular subjects for Umbrian processional banners was the Madonna della Misericordia. One typical plague *gonfalone* is Benedetto Bonfigli's painting of 1464, now in the Church of S. Francesco al Prato in Perugia (fig. 8), which likens the plague to arrows thrown down at a sinful humanity by an angry God.¹⁸ The massive figure of the merciful Virgin protectively envelops the citizens of Perugia with her outstretched mantle, while the image of Death below claims the lives of those outside the city walls. Another of Bonfigli's paintings, the *Gonfalone di S. Maria Nuova* in Perugia (fig. 9)¹⁹ was commissioned by the flagellant Confraternity of San Benedetto dei Frustati in 1471, when the city was free of disease.²⁰ This nearly eleven-foot painting would have been carried during "crisis processions" whenever the city was threatened by drought, floods, siege, or pestilence, and was created to promote the status of the confraternity in rivalry with the others in the city.²¹ In this painting, Christ is prominently placed in the

¹⁵ Black, 252.

¹⁶ Wisch and Ahl, 3.

¹⁷ Francesco Santi, *Gonfaloni umbri del Rinascimento* (Perugia: Editrice Volumnia, 1976).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15, pl. I.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24, pl. XII.

²⁰ Louise Marshall, "Confraternity and Community: Mobilizing the Sacred in Times of Plague," *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy*, Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 26.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

composition, brandishing arrows and pointing to his own wounds in reminder of the constant threat of plague, crisis, and the eternal judgment. Three black-robed brothers kneel in the left foreground with other citizens of the town, while the Virgin Mary, barely distinguished from other interceding saints, gestures to the populace below. This large *gonfalone* indicates the enduring faith of fifteenth century confraternities and townspeople in the power of such traditional images, which would encourage civic solidarity and the living of pious, God-fearing lives.²²

Artworks for confraternities often employed the popular image of the Madonna della Misericordia, inserting their own members under the protective mantle of the Virgin. One such image is the frontispiece from the 1562 Statutes of the Confraternity of S. Maria della Morte, Bologna (fig. 10), depicting the Madonna della Misericordia protecting brothers who wear white processional robes. Some of the brothers wear hoods to preserve their anonymity, while others hold painted boards that would be used when accompanying prisoners to their execution. As is typical of confraternal images, the local cityscape is visible in the background. Interestingly, this *gonfalone* also represents the confraternity during one of its ceremonial processions through the town.²³ This image, unlike those on processional banners, was not intended to be viewed by the general public. Some confraternal art was created for private viewing to encourage the brotherhood to act in charitable ways, whereas *gonfaloni* and paintings for the parish church were created explicitly to communicate with the general public.²⁴ *The Madonna del Popolo*, which was commissioned for a publicly accessible chapel in the parish

²² Ibid., 26.

²³ Black, frontispiece.

²⁴ Ibid., 252.

church of S. Maria in Arezzo, depicted the performance of acts of mercy for and by the citizens of Arezzo to urge its citizens to give charitably.

The Pia Confraternità dei Laici di S. Maria della Misericordia, Arezzo

The Lay Confraternity of S. Maria della Misericordia was established in Arezzo in 1257 as a Dominican-sponsored Marian organization, controlled by the laity and, as declared in its statutes of 1262, devoted to performing works of mercy, “institutam ad opera misericordie (established to work mercy).”²⁵ The confraternity specified that the recipients of works of mercy were the deserving poor, such as widows, orphans, prisoners, clergy, and the *poveri vergognosi*, the “shame-faced poor” who were unable to beg openly due to their social class.²⁶ The organization financed their philanthropy through contributions by confraternity members and weekly solicitations of citizens of Arezzo and the surrounding countryside.²⁷ In their statutes, the confraternity identified its primary activities as daily prayer, monthly meetings to hear sermons and to practice the sacrament of reconciliation, and the celebration of the Virgin’s feast days.²⁸ By the end of the thirteenth century, the confraternity maintained a highly public presence in Arezzo, with membership lists including nearly 1700 names, or almost the entire adult population of the city. The confraternity’s members included individuals from a variety of classes, including feudal nobility, patricians, artisans, servants, and some laborers,

²⁵ Marshall, 29. For more on the medieval history of the confraternity and its philanthropy in the fourteenth century, see Antonella Moriani, “Assistenza e beneficenza ad Arezzo nel XIV secolo: la Fraternità di Santa Maria della Misericordia,” *La società del bisogno: Povertà e assistenza nella Toscana medievale*, Giuliano Pinto, ed. (Florence: Libreria Salimbeni, 1989), 19-35. The archives of the confraternity are published by Augusto Antoniella, *L’Archivio della Fraternità dei Laici di Arezzo*, 2 vols. (Milan: Giunta regionale Toscana & Editrice Bibliografica, 1985, 1989).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 43. n. 57.

although the officers and rectors were always the wealthy mercantile elite.²⁹ Fairly unusually, the Arezzo confraternity also included women, who were not required to pay the same amount of dues, nor were they allowed to attend meetings or participate in the fraternity's public activities. It seems that the Arezzo confraternity's atypical inclusion of women coincided with the group's aim to structure themselves after a familial model, as the fraternity stressed that the relationship between fraternity members should be similar to that of natural brothers.³⁰ Although women were allowed to join the official register of the confraternity, they were not given an equal degree of participation as the men and perhaps were only included so that the confraternity could claim to represent the entire population of Arezzo.³¹

In the fourteenth century, the Arezzo confraternity came to assume a more legitimate status and was recognized as a charitable branch of the city's government. The confraternity was increasingly involved in the civic life of the community and built a palace on the main Piazza Grande in Arezzo (fig. 11), around the corner from the parish church of Santa Maria.³² The confraternity's new statutes gave automatic membership to all citizens of Arezzo, and the brotherhood took over maintenance of the city's baptism and death records,³³ signifying the new legitimate status given to the organization.

Like other central Italian confraternities during the early modern period, the Arezzo confraternity was highly involved in artistic patronage. Significantly, the brotherhood expanded on the long-standing practice of processions with *gonfaloni*, and

²⁹ Ibid., 30.

³⁰ Jennifer Fisk Rondeau, "Homosexuality and Civic (Dis)order in Late Medieval Italian Confraternities," *The Politics of Ritual Kinship*, Nicholas Terpstra, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 34.

³¹ Ibid., 35.

³² Two recent sources on these buildings in Arezzo are Angelo Tafi, *La Pieve di S. Maria in Arezzo* (Cortona: Calosci, 1994) and Maria Mercantini, *Il Palazzo di Fraternità in Piazza Grande ad Arezzo* (Arezzo: Sant'Agnes di V. Badiali, 1990).

³³ Marshall, 30.

instead of a banner, paraded annually on June 2 with Parri Spinelli's panel painting *The Virgin Protecting the People of Arezzo with St. Lorentinus and St. Pergentinus*, commissioned by the fraternity in 1435 (fig. 12). The altarpiece was "taken out, raised on a stand, and carried by the said Company in solemn procession to the church of the said saints, where there is a silver chest...with their bodies within it." The painting would then be set up in a tent so that the large crowds could be accommodated for mass.³⁴ The brothers also commissioned a *Madonna della Misericordia with SS. Donatus and Gregory X* from Parri Spinelli in 1448 for the audience hall of their Palazzo della Fraternità.³⁵ Also hanging in the audience hall, where the rectors granted weekly audience to Aretine citizens, was Bartolomeo della Gatta's *Saint Roch Interceding with the Virgin on Behalf of Arezzo* of 1479 (fig. 13). As Louise Marshall notes, Bartolomeo's panel is surprising in that the main figure is not a traditional Madonna della Misericordia, but instead represents Saint Roch, the new plague saint who was believed to have cured plague victims before contracting the disease himself.³⁶ The Madonna della Misericordia does appear in place of the bell tower on the fraternity's palazzo in the deserted piazza, shown in the background of the painting. Two well-dressed rectors stand in the doorway of the palazzo, as a pair of grave-diggers climb the steps; it was common for the confraternity to employ such workers during times of plague. St. Roch meanwhile intercedes with the Virgin, with a banner attached to his pilgrim's staff inscribed "ora pro populo," or pray for the people. Marshall argues that the use of this liturgical plea was deliberate instead of the more common "ora pro nobis," or pray for us. The more general

³⁴ Boase, T.S.R., *Giorgio Vasari: The Man and the Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 181-2, fig. 117.

³⁵ Marshall, 45, n. 66.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 30.

“ora pro populo” suggests that in their plea for relief, the confraternity consciously represented the entire populace of Arezzo.³⁷

A more typical representation of the Madonna della Misericordia appears on the exterior of the Palazzo della Fraternità, the *Madonna della Misericordia with Saints Laurentinus and Pergentinus*, a relief carving by Bernardo and Domenico Rossellino (fig. 14). The sculpture was commissioned in 1433, during or immediately after a two year plague outbreak. Assisted by angels, the Virgin and Child protect the citizens of Arezzo, while two Aretine saints Laurentinus and Pergentinus, who were martyred in Arezzo in the third century, kneel on either side.³⁸ Prominently placed on the exterior of their palazzo, the relief communicates to the Aretine citizens that the confraternity could be relied upon to aid and protect its city during times of crisis.

Genesis of the Commission

Although experienced art patrons, the Aretine confraternity struggled with their commission for Federico Barocci to produce an altarpiece for their chapel in Santa Maria della Pieve. Fortunately, many of the letters between the confraternity and Barocci are preserved in the Archivio Comunale at Arezzo, which aid our analysis of Barocci’s subject matter and help us to understand the artist’s original intentions.³⁹ The confraternity initially commissioned Giorgio Vasari to paint the altarpiece, as the Aretine-born Vasari had recently designed and built the confraternity’s chapel in the parish church. However, Vasari died on June 27, 1574, before he could begin work on

³⁷ Ibid., 32.

³⁸ Ibid., 32.

³⁹ The letters were published in their original Italian by Michelangelo Gualandi, *Nuova Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura dei Secoli XV a XIX*, Vol. I (Bologna 1844), 133-192.

the painting,⁴⁰ and the fraternity rectors were anxious to proceed with the project. In a letter to Nofri Roselli dated July 22, the confraternity rectors asked their minister at the court of Cosimo I in Florence to recommend another painter. Remarkably, Roselli chose Barocci and not one of Vasari's followers, despite the fact that to date Barocci had only completed one major commission in Perugia.⁴¹ In a letter of October 30, 1574, the rectors asked Barocci to produce a painting that shows "the mystery of the misericordia or some other mystery and histories of the most glorious Virgin."⁴² Barocci immediately responded indicating his interest in a letter of November 5, but proposed that the fraternity suggest another subject:

The desire to do the mystery of the misericordia does not seem to me to [provide] a subject that is too apropos to make a beautiful panel; perhaps Your Lordships can decide to have [me] do another mystery, for there are other histories of the glorious Virgin which are more apropos with more beautiful inventions, as would be the Annunciation, the Assumption, the Visitation or other histories which will please Your Lordships more; on this You may decide amongst yourselves...⁴³

The rectors responded to Barocci's letter immediately, on November 12, asking the painter to travel to Arezzo to see the chapel and to study its lighting, writing "...thus we can come to agreement much sooner and much more easily on the quality of the figures and the type of history to which one can adapt them..."⁴⁴ Barocci was hesitant, however, to travel to Arezzo due to his sickness, and explained in a reply of November 19 that all that would be necessary to understand the light of the chapel would be a sketch.

Regarding the subject of the painting, Barocci wrote, "you decide on the history that will

⁴⁰ Nicholas Turner, *Federico Barocci* (Paris: Vilo International, 2000), 69.

⁴¹ Edmund Pillsbury and Louise S. Richards, *The Graphic Art of Federico Barocci, Selected Drawings and Prints* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 58.

⁴² Turner, 69.

⁴³ Translation from Stuart P. Lingo, *The Capuchins and the Art of History: Retrospection and Reform in the Arts in Late Renaissance Italy* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), 327-8. For original Italian, see Andrea Emiliani's *Federico Barocci: Urbino, 1535-1612*, I (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1985), 129.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 328.

please you and of the rest leave the care to me...”⁴⁵ After exchanging several more letters, the rectors finally persuaded the painter to travel to Arezzo, where the contract was signed on June 18, 1575. The contract, published by Pillsbury, indicates that the choice of subject was “the Virgin interceding and praying to Her Son on behalf of the populace, shown with the particular qualities and conditions appropriate to each individual figure.”⁴⁶ Barocci also agreed to several conditions in this contract: that the artist would execute the painting himself; that fine quality materials would be used including wood that was aged, firm, and stable; and that Barocci would put the finished work into a gilt wood frame financed by the fraternity. The contract also dictated that the artist would execute a tondo of his own choice of subject for above the altarpiece, a work that still survives in the Pinacoteca Comunale in Arezzo and depicts God the Father Blessing (fig. 43). Finally, the contract stipulated that the altarpiece be finished within one year, a deadline that later caused a significant misunderstanding. Since the painting was not delivered until 1579, Barocci later claimed that the deadline of June 18, 1576 was not binding and was only included in the contract to appease the general membership of the confraternity. In the contract, the confraternity agreed that they would allow Barocci to execute the painting in Urbino, and that the brotherhood would pay the costs of shipping the painting to Arezzo upon its completion. The agreed price for the painting was 400 scudi, 200 of which would be given to the artist immediately, 100 eight months later, and 100 upon delivery of the painting.⁴⁷

Barocci was a notoriously slow worker, due to his extensive preparatory process and the illness that prevented him from working full days. The artist probably did not

⁴⁵ Ibid., 328.

⁴⁶ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

begin working on the painting until the summer of 1576, after his completion of the *Perdono of St. Francis of Assisi* (fig. 15). However, he had probably begun making drawings for the altarpiece by February of that same year, as he wrote to the rectors in a letter of February 10 that he had completed all of the drawings and a portion of a small cartoon.⁴⁸ In 1576, the problem arose of finding an appropriate panel for the artwork, an issue that perhaps contributed to the cracks in the wood that appeared not long after Barocci completed the painting.⁴⁹ The artist's slow progress on the altarpiece led to the delay of the second installment of his fee; the artist did not request the fee until October of 1578, because the painting "had not progressed sufficiently."⁵⁰ The rectors initially refused to make the payment to Barocci because the painting had not been finished according to the terms of the contract, but finally relented, and the artist was paid his 100 scudi. Soon after, the fraternity became impatient and worried about the completion of the painting, and sent a man named Bernardo Albergotti to Urbino to see the painting and to arrange for its trip to Arezzo.⁵¹ Albergotti discovered that Barocci had not begun the small tondo for above the altarpiece, which caused a further delay in the delivery of the painting. Barocci finally completed the *Madonna del Popolo* around Easter of 1578, and the artist accompanied the painting to Arezzo to supervise its installation in the chapel in June.⁵²

Shortly after the painting arrived in Arezzo, the panel supports began to crack and the rectors complained in a letter of June 30 that Barocci did not observe the conditions of the contract, he stayed too long in Arezzo at the confraternity's expense, and that "the

⁴⁸ Ibid. This small cartoon is perhaps the Chicago modello, to be discussed below.

⁴⁹ Turner, 69.

⁵⁰ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

⁵¹ Turner, 69.

⁵² Ibid.

panel...does not succeed of the good quality that was expected.”⁵³ The confraternity’s disappointment with Barocci’s painting seems to have been due to its damaged condition upon arrival in the city. Barocci was probably not to blame for this unfortunate accident: the cracks in the support were likely caused by the stress of travel and changes in environmental conditions. In a letter to Barocci, the confraternity rectors indicated their displeasure with the condition of the panel, and wondered if the cracks could have been caused by using wood that had not been properly aged or if the panels were not properly joined together.⁵⁴

Although the brotherhood’s exact role in determining the painting’s iconography is uncertain, the description of the subject in the contract modifies the traditional Misericordia subject originally requested by the confraternity. This suggests that Barocci persuaded the confraternity to modify the painting to a Madonna Mediatrix, as in Barocci’s *Perdono*. In light of the brotherhood’s devotion and previous commissions resulting in fairly typical Madonna della Misericordia imagery, it seems that the rectors originally wanted a conventional depiction of the type represented in the confraternity’s palazzo, with the Virgin’s mantle outstretched over supplicants. Not interested in painting traditional images, Barocci modified the iconography to create a dynamic composition that combines conventional imagery of the Madonna della Misericordia with the mediating Virgin. The artist’s own involvement in confraternities in Urbino informed his interpretation of the Misericordia subject matter in the *Madonna del Popolo*. By referencing the particular acts of mercy practiced by the confraternity and in his inclusion of Aretine citizens that the confraternity claimed to represent, Barocci produced an

⁵³ In Italian: “La tavola...non riesca di quella buona qualità che si aspettava.” Pillsbury and Richards, 58.

⁵⁴ Emiliani, 135. The Italian reads, “Noi sappiamo se questo sia accaduto perché le asse non erano stagionate et antique o se per una poco diligentia vi si sia usata nel leggarla bene insieme...”

altarpiece that was particularly sensitive to the social and philanthropic function of the confraternity in Arezzo.

CHAPTER 3:
REPRESENTATIONS OF MERCY FROM THE MEDIEVAL TO LATE
RENAISSANCE PERIOD

The Madonna della Misericordia (Madonna of Mercy)

From the Medieval period to the present day, the Virgin Mary has served as the link between earth and heaven and between humankind and God. As the human mother of Christ, the Virgin Mary occupied a special status as the intercessor to Christ on behalf of the masses and as the mother of the faithful. Traditionally, the Virgin appears as an intercessor to Christ at the Last Judgment, pleading to her son to give mercy to the judged. The Virgin's role as the merciful advocate to God was emphasized in traditional depictions of the Madonna della Misericordia.¹ This iconographic theme portrays the Virgin with an outstretched mantle protecting her supplicants, which refers to the legal or ritual act of covering a petitioner with one's cloak as a sign of protection and adoption.² Paul Perdrizet has traced the iconography to 1230, when Caesarius of Heisterbach recorded the scene as related to him by a Cistercian monk in his *Dialogus Miraculorum*.³ One of the earliest artistic depictions of this theme is a small painting by Duccio, the *Madonna of the Franciscans*, datable from 1270-1300 and now in the Pinacoteca in Siena (fig. 16). This damaged panel painting depicts the seated Virgin extending the right side

¹ Louis Réau, *Iconographie de L'art Chrétien* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), 110-120.

² Louise Marshall, "Confraternity and Community: Mobilizing the Sacred in Times of Plague," *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy*, Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 21.

³ Paul Perdrizet, *La Vierge de Miséricorde, étude d'un thème iconographique* (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1908), 21. The passage in the *Dialogus Miraculorum* reads in part, "And opening her cloak, with which she seemed to be clothed, and which was of marvelous amplitude, she showed him an innumerable multitude of monks, lay-brothers, and nuns." Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The Dialogue on Miracles*, translated by H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland (London: Routledge and Sons, Ltd, 1929), 546.

of her blue cloak to cover three kneeling Franciscan monks. The seated Christ child in the Virgin's lap blesses the three figures below. This representation of a benevolent Christ and protective Virgin communicates that those who pray to the merciful Virgin will receive Christ's blessings. Although the Virgin's mantle is only partially covering the Franciscans below, the theme is later developed into one where the Virgin fully covers her supplicants with a large cloak.

Another similar, although later, example of this popular theme is Piero della Francesca's *Madonna della Misericordia* altarpiece, painted for the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Misericordia in Borgo Sansepolcro (1445-60, Pinacoteca, Sansepolcro; fig. 17).⁴ This image is typical of *Madonna della Misericordia* representations that were commissioned and popularized by confraternities in the fifteenth century. The statuesque full-length Virgin is shown frontally, with extended arms to envelop the kneeling confraternity members and citizens with her robe. The small humans look towards the Virgin with pleading expressions of prayer and devotion. However, the scene takes place on the gold background typical of trecento altarpieces and indicates Piero's need to produce a conventional altarpiece for his conservative confraternal patrons. The gesture of the Virgin protecting her followers is of primary importance and seems independent of the other scenes of saints and the life of Christ in the altarpiece.

The *Madonna della Misericordia* became a very popular image in the fifteenth century, especially for confraternal *gonfaloni* that were created to inspire piety during public processions. Benedetto Bonfigli's *Gonfalone di San Francesco al Prato* (fig. 8),⁵

⁴ James R. Banker, "The Altarpiece of the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Misericordia in Borgo Sansepolcro," *Piero della Francesca and His Legacy*, Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, ed. (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1995), 20-35.

⁵ Francesco Santi, *Gonfaloni umbri del Rinascimento* (Perugia: Editrice Volumnia, 1976), 24, pl. I.

discussed above, and Bartolomeo Caporali's *Gonfalone di Montone* (fig. 18)⁶ are typical of the plague- and crisis-related depictions of the Madonna della Misericordia. In contrast to the calm and peaceful representations of Piero della Francesca and Duccio, in these paintings the Virgin's mantle physically protects the gathered populace from the arrows and swords hurled down at earth by an angry God and angels. The Virgin implores the viewer's attention by gazing out of the painting with a calm expression intended to reassure those who gather below. These *gonfaloni*, created as plague and crisis images, contrast with the traditional Madonna della Misericordia depictions that emphasize Mary's peaceful protection of her people. The *gonfaloni* Misericordias introduce an element of conflict between an angry, punitive God who wants to reprimand humanity for its sins, and the protective gesture of the Virgin Mary.⁷ This medieval concept of an angry Christ and a merciful Virgin recalls depictions of the Last Judgment, in which the Virgin is seated on Christ's right side and intercedes with her son for the salvation of human kind.

The Madonna Mediatrix

The Madonna Mediatrix derives from typical Misericordia imagery in which the Virgin is centrally placed in the composition and physically protects those who kneel below. In the Mediatrix type of depiction, the Virgin is no longer central in the composition but instead kneels to the right of Christ in Majesty, usually in an intermediary space between the heavenly and earthly realms. The Virgin typically gestures simultaneously to the populace below and to Christ above and pleadingly looks

⁶ Ibid., 28, pl. XVI.

⁷ Marshall, 22.

to Christ for his mercy. The concept of the merciful Virgin interceding with Christ on behalf of the masses is the same here as the Madonna della Misericordia; however, the formal change in the Virgin's placement references the iconography of the Last Judgment more explicitly.

The biblical source for the iconography of the Last Judgment is most directly taken from the Parable of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew, the same passage as the prescriptions of the Seven Acts of Mercy:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46)

Thus, the Virgin, seated to the right of Christ, references the placement of the righteous on the right hand of Christ, and her mediating presence on behalf of the citizens below seems to recall her role during the Final Judgment.

Gonfalon paintings created in response to the threat of plague often reference the Last Judgment. Bonfigli's *Gonfalone di S. Maria Nuova* (fig. 9) exhibits such iconographic elements, including the arrows held by Christ that serve as a reminder to the people of the punishment of sinners. As is typical of Mediatrix representations, the Virgin is seated to Christ's right side and intercedes with Christ for mercy, even though she does not physically protect the people below. Plague was understood as one of the predictors of Christ's second coming, along with earthquakes and famines, and thus plague altarpieces and *gonfalon* would, to a fifteenth century audience, directly relate to

scenes of the Last Judgment. An additional example of this iconographic tradition is another Umbrian *gonfalone* for the Cathedral in Perugia, painted by Berto di Giovanni (fig. 19), in which the Virgin physically stays the hand of Christ who prepares to unleash punishment to the frenzy of people below. In his conception of the *Madonna del Popolo*, Barocci was especially influenced by this *gonfalone* in Perugia, presumably seen by the artist while painting his *Deposition of Christ* for the Chapel of S. Bernardino in Perugia Cathedral in 1568-9; the numerous formal similarities between the two works are striking. In a more direct way than the *Madonna della Misericordia*, depictions of the *Madonna Mediatrix* reference the Virgin Mary's merciful intercession at the Last Judgment. Barocci's inclusion of the *Madonna Mediatrix* theme, as well as his tondo depicting God the Father that originally fit in the frame above the altarpiece, reference the mercy that God will bestow upon those who perform charitable acts.

The Seven Corporal Acts of Mercy

The iconography of the Last Judgment is also essential to our understanding of the Seven Acts of Mercy in Italian art. As noted above, the Counter-Reformation church stressed the belief that charitable activities could prepare humanity for salvation, and medieval artistic representations reinforced this point by associating the Seven Acts of Mercy with depictions of the Last Judgment. In fact, a description of the Last Judgment comes from the same biblical passage where the Seven Acts of Mercy are described:

Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in

prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:41-45)⁸

The Seven Acts of Mercy were thus seen as directly related to the Final Judgment, and the earliest iconographic programs include representations of the Last Judgment with the Seven Acts of Mercy. One of the earliest surviving examples of this is Benedetto Antelami’s relief program executed for the west doors of the Parma Baptistery around 1196 (figs. 20, 21).⁹ In the tympanum above the door, Christ sits in judgment in the center, surrounded by angels and the cross, and six acts of mercy appear on the left jamb of the west door. A similar treatment appears on the Judgment Portal above the St. Gallus door of the Münster cathedral in Basel, Switzerland, datable to 1170 (fig. 25).¹⁰ In each of these examples, the works are illustrated in separate relief panels along the door jambs and were intended to clearly communicate to the illiterate masses the ways to achieve salvation through good works.

The iconographic theme of the Seven Acts of Mercy was extremely popular in Netherlandish painting and engraving in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, more so than in Italy. The most significant Italian painting of this subject does not appear until the fifteenth century in a fresco cycle by Domenico Ghirlandaio and workshop, for the church of San Martino dei Buonomini in Florence, executed for the Confraternity of Buonomini di San Martino c. 1478-79 (figs. 26, 27). In this series of lunettes,

⁸ The seventh work of mercy, burying the dead, was not a part of the biblical prescriptions, but was added in the twelfth century by the French theologian Jean Beleth in his *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Réau, 748). In the earliest depictions of this iconographic tradition, the act of burying the dead is often omitted.

⁹ Vincenzo Pacelli, *Caravaggio: Le Sette Opere di Misericordia* (Salerno: 10/17 Cooperative Editrice, 1984), 31.

¹⁰ Réau, 749.

Ghirlandaio depicts five corporal acts of mercy and two additional merciful acts: clothing the naked, housing pilgrims, dowering of young girls, inventorying bequests, feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty, and visiting the sick. Confraternal members dressed in recognizable blue and red robes perform the acts of mercy in separate painted scenes, and although the paintings do not strictly interpret the biblical text, the Ghirlandaio frescoes provide an important precedent for depictions of the Seven Acts of Mercy commissioned by confraternal communities.

Of the other depictions of the Seven Acts of Mercy,¹¹ the best known is Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's *Seven Acts of Mercy* (1607), painted for the Pio Monte della Misericordia in Naples (fig. 24). Although later than Barocci's *Madonna del Popolo*, an analysis of Caravaggio's painting is significant because it helps us to see where Barocci's painting fits within this changing art historical tradition. Caravaggio's painting is radically different from the typical depictions of the Acts of Mercy, because he has for the first time combined all of the acts into a singular composition. Also noteworthy is the fact that Caravaggio did not include representations of the confraternity members performing the acts, but favored instead a secular cast of characters acting charitably on a Neopolitan street. The Madonna and Child appear on the backs of angels who tumble down from the sky, and the pair look down upon the people who seem to have no awareness of the divine apparition above.¹²

To my knowledge, the only painting that incorporates elements of both the *Madonna della Misericordia* and the Acts of Mercy is by a follower of Bernardo Daddi,

¹¹ Other examples include paintings by Filippo Bellini (Fabriano, Chiesa della Carità) and Annibale Carracci (Folge, Gemäldegalerie). Andor Pigler, *Barockthemen*, Band I (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974), 549.

¹² John T. Spike, *Caravaggio* (New York and London: Abbeville Press, 2001), 186-188.

painted in 1352 for the Sala di Consiglio of the palazzo of Compagnia della Misericordia, Florence (now Museo del Bigallo) (figs. 22 and 23).¹³ In this painting, the Virgin floats above the city of Florence with kneeling supplicants separated by gender to her sides. As Phillip Earenfight notes, the Bigallo fresco differs from typical Madonna della Misericordia imagery because the Virgin's mantle does not physically cover the Florentines, allowing the artist to represent eight scenes of merciful acts in roundels on the Virgin's robe.¹⁴ Earenfight argues that the artist adopted the recognizable Misericordia format but intentionally changed the iconographic program to make the Virgin a personification of Heavenly Mercy signifying God's mercy for his followers. The roundels also include inscriptions that emphasize the relationship between performing acts of charity and judgment: "The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord," "No one despairs of God's mercy," and "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."¹⁵ The Virgin also bears a "T" on her head, signifying the Hebrew letter Tau, which will be inscribed on the saved at the Last Judgment.¹⁶ The direct illustration of the Acts of Mercy on the Virgin's cloak indicates her role as intercessor at the Last Judgment and as a medium through whom to achieve Christ's mercy.

¹³ Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and its Social Background* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1965, orig. published 1948), 251-52.

¹⁴ For example, see the scene of clothing the naked, which bears the inscription NUD/US ERAM/ OPERUISTIS/ ME, or I was naked and you clothed me (fig. 23).

¹⁵ Phillip Earenfight, "Catechism and *Confraternitas* on the Piazza San Giovanni: How the Misericordia Used Image and Text to Instruct its Members in Christian Theology," *The Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (February 2004), 76.

¹⁶ Giannozzo Pucci, "The Madonna of Mercy, The Bigallo Orphanage, Florence," [11 March 2007] <http://www.umilta.net/bigallo.html>.

The *Madonna del Popolo*

Barocci's *Madonna del Popolo* simultaneously draws upon and departs from the iconographic categories discussed above. Some of the artworks cited as examples of iconographic depictions may not have been directly known by Barocci. However, although isolated geographically, Barocci was surely aware of iconographic conventions and was committed to making innovative compositions, as evidenced by his disagreement with the Aretine confraternity regarding their choice of subject. Barocci was unwilling to create a conventional *Madonna della Misericordia*, but instead adopted the formal characteristics of the *Madonna Mediatrix* placed to the side of Christ. However, Barocci has repositioned the Virgin to the left side of Christ, departing somewhat from the conventional placement of the Virgin in scenes of the Last Judgment. The Virgin, seated slightly lower than Christ, gestures to the populace below and looks pleadingly to her son. However, Christ is no longer the punitive figure commonly seen in the plague altarpieces of the fifteenth century; instead he blesses the crowd below with his right hand. The prominent placement of Christ and the intercession of the Virgin reference the mercy bestowed upon those at the Last Judgment who give charity in this life.

However, elements of the traditional *Misericordia* image have not been abandoned by Barocci. Although the disparity in scale between the Virgin and her followers has been remedied, the Virgin still occupies a place of importance, seated on a billowy cloud with a blue mantle that takes the shape of the protective cloak of the *Madonna della Misericordia*. Her large shadow covers and protects the people below in place of the mantle.¹⁷ Most significantly, the Virgin still intercedes with Christ on behalf

¹⁷ Nicholas Penny, "The Raphael of the Counter-Reformation," *Times Literary Supplement* (26 September 1986), 1060.

of a large gathering of people and serves as the accessible medium through whom to communicate with the divine. It is surely this aspect of the painting that gave the altarpiece its common name, the Madonna of the People.¹⁸ The title *Madonna del Popolo* has been applied inconsistently in the literature on Italian art, suggesting no clear agreement regarding the iconography of this subject. It seems to be applied in two different cases: to particularly venerated icons depicting the Virgin and Child, such as the popular icon *Madonna of St. Luke* preserved in S. Maria del Popolo in Rome that was allegedly painted by St. Luke,¹⁹ and to depictions of the Madonna della Misericordia,²⁰ such as Piero della Francesca's altarpiece. However, the title of Barocci's painting may also be tied to the church for which it was commissioned. As recorded in the contract for the painting, the confraternity rectors refer to the Aretine parish church as "Sancte Marie Plebis de Aretio," or Saint Mary of the people of Arezzo.²¹ This designation suggests that from its inception, Barocci's painting was understood to symbolize the Virgin Mary's role as the mother and protector of the faithful masses.

But Barocci's painting cannot be called a representation of the Seven Acts of Mercy, as Bellori terms the subject. Only one act of mercy is explicitly depicted, the visiting of prisoners in jail in the left background. If we apply the Seven Acts of Mercy to the scene, we can speculate that the figure of the blind hurdy-gurdy player is meant to

¹⁸ When acquired by Duke Pietro Leopoldo de' Medici in 1792, the painting was catalogued in a generic manner (*Descrizione della Reale Galleria di Firenze. Secondo lo stato attuale*, Florence, 1792, p. 274). It seems that the piece began being called the *Madonna del Popolo* at least from 1816, when the painting was catalogued by its familiar title (*Galerie Impériale et Royale de Florence nouvelle édition ornée des planches de la Vénus de Médius de Celle de Canova et de l'Apollon*, Florence, 1816, p. 97).

¹⁹ Corrado Ricci, "The Madonna del Popolo di Montefalco," *Umbria Santa*, translated by H.C. Stewart (New York: Oxford University Press, 1927), 177-183. Eunice D. Howe, "Antoniazio Romano, the 'Golden Legend' and a Madonna of Santa Maria Maggiore," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 126, No. 976 (July 1984), 418.

²⁰ Perdrizet, 3.

²¹ Edmund Pillsbury and Louise S. Richards, *The Graphic Art of Federico Barocci, Selected Drawings and Prints* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 26. I am indebted to Dr. Nancy Edwards for bringing this to my attention.

be interpreted as one who is sick, and the shirtless beggar asks to be clothed. Whether or not the artist intended this interpretation of his figures, they are perhaps more importantly engaging portrayals of everyday subjects that consistently occupy Barocci's lively compositions. Instead of explicitly depicting the Acts of Mercy in a conventional manner, Barocci uses the act of almsgiving and visiting prisoners to symbolize all other merciful acts. Barocci's innovative interpretation of the Acts of Mercy was unprecedented and was perhaps due to the artist's first-hand knowledge of confraternal values as a member of several confraternities in Urbino. Bellori wrote that Barocci himself was "charitable towards the poor and kindly with everyone,"²² suggesting that the artist's personal charitable activities influenced his painting for the confraternity. The decision to combine the Acts of Mercy had formal implications, allowing the artist to create a more dynamic composition referencing the particular function of the Aretine confraternity, which was primarily devoted to collecting money from donors and giving alms to the poor. The act of almsgiving provided for all the needs of the poor as described in the biblical passage in Matthew, and so became a logical manner to fulfill the prescriptions of the Acts of Mercy upon which the brotherhood was founded. By completing good works of charity and with the intervention of the merciful Virgin, confraternity members gave alms to the poor to insure that in turn, God would show mercy upon them.

The recipients of mercy in Barocci's painting are also consistent with the specifications of the confraternity in its statutes. The figures that receive mercy in the *Madonna del Popolo* are the mother with her child on the right and the prisoners in the

²² Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 170.

background. It has also been suggested that the woman in the lower left with her two young children can be seen as a personification of Charity and thus symbolizes the act of feeding the hungry.²³ Lingo argues that the woman is too well-dressed with a richly decorated mantle, jewelry, and elegant hairstyle, marking her instead as an aristocratic lady of Arezzo.²⁴ However, in the early drawings that prepare for this figure, she is dressed plainly, suggesting that Barocci originally conceived of the mother as a Charity figure. In addition, the inclusion of both men and women from a variety of social classes who gaze up at the mystical vision suggests that Barocci was sensitive to the confraternity's desire to represent the whole populace of Arezzo. Surely the early viewers of the *Madonna del Popolo* would have identified with the figures represented by Barocci and recognized themselves in the crowd.

²³ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

²⁴ Stuart P. Lingo, *The Capuchins and the Art of History: Retrospection and Reform in the Arts in Late Renaissance Italy* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), 337, n. 187.

CHAPTER 4:

PREPARATORY DRAWINGS FOR THE *MADONNA DEL POPOLO*

Barocci's Preparatory Process and the Legacy of Raphael

Drawing was a major part of Barocci's artistic process; he seems to have created drawings both before he began working on a painting and while it was being produced, returning to his drawings at every stage in the process. Thus, it is necessary to consider Barocci's qualities as a draftsman and the ways in which Barocci adapted figures, settings, and included elements of the everyday in his paintings. Barocci was an astute visual observer, and his drawings evidence the ways in which he transformed poses in the studio to those in the final painting, such as the extraordinary drawing for the figure of the mother in a sheet in the Uffizi (inv. no. 1401 F.; checklist no. 46), which shows Barocci's translation of a nude male studio assistant holding a sack to the clothed mother who tenderly embraces her child. Numerous other drawings, not directly connected to paintings, show Barocci studying domestic animals, such as a detailed red and black chalk drawing of a dog in the Uffizi similar to the one in the lower right corner of the *Madonna del Popolo* (inv. no. 920 Orn.), and sleeping young boys, probably studio assistants (Uffizi inv. no. 1499 F.). A few landscape drawings by the artist survive, as do a number of portrait drawings. The most notable portrait to point out in this context is the more finished drawing of gentleman in the Uffizi (inv. no. 1393 F.); it is tempting to associate it with the portraits of the confraternity rectors to the right in the *Madonna del Popolo*. Barocci's drawings of specific individuals, household pets, and familiar locations, such as the Piazza Grande in Arezzo or the Urbino cityscape, lend Barocci's

paintings the accessibility required by the prescriptions of the Counter-Reformation, and fill his compositions with engaging figures that have since captivated viewers of his artworks.

Barocci's large drawn *oeuvre* of nearly 2,000 extant sheets, most of them connected to paintings, confirms Bellori's account of Barocci's detailed and multi-step preparatory process. Bellori writes that Barocci always studied his subjects from life, "when he worked he always referred to life and would not allow himself to make the least mark without seeing it..."¹ Bellori notes that the master "posed his young assistants as models, and made them gesture according to what he had in his imagination, and asked them whether they felt any strain in that gesture, and whether if they turned a little more or less they found it more restful."² Bellori remarks that Barocci might also arrange his assistants in groups to help him resolve the design for the picture. Then, the artist "fashioned models of the figures in clay or wax, of such beauty that they seemed made by the hand of an excellent sculptor...After that he clothed them to suit his purposes," and would make drawings after them. Barocci then made a "small cartoon in oils or else in gouache, in monochrome, and after that he used a cartoon, as large as the work, in charcoal and chalk or else in pastel on paper" which would be transferred using a stylus to the primed canvas or panel. After the cartoon was made, Bellori writes that Barocci made another small cartoon where the artist studied the color relationships of the painting.³

¹ Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 171.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Scholars John Shearman and Edmund Pillsbury have both challenged Bellori's account of Barocci's preparatory sequence, arguing that many of Barocci's drawings do not follow the precise scheme, nor would the artist be expected to follow the sequence for every painting.⁴ Pillsbury notes that although it is evident that Barocci did make life drawings, including drapery and detail studies (almost 800 drawings of this type were counted in his studio at his death), most seem to be created from a process of copying by transfer, using squaring and incision.⁵ Barocci faithfully preserved his drawings, probably in albums with the large cartoons framed to hang on the walls, allowing him to return to drawings at a later date for use in other compositions.⁶ It also seems that Barocci would not pose models in groups according to his ideas for a composition, as Raphael did and as Bellori recounted, but he would make individual figure drawings to combine in compositions. Pillsbury notes that two kinds of compositional drawings were made: *primi pensieri* (first ideas) done in a loose manner in pen or chalk, and the more developed studies of the composition called *disegni compiti* (finished designs), which Barocci would then translate to the full-scale cartoon.⁷ Pillsbury also refutes Bellori's implication that Barocci did not begin to consider lighting and color issues until a late stage in the drawing process. Barocci's consideration of light and color seems to begin even with the artist's first drawings from life, and often remains constant throughout his preparatory procedure.⁸ The *cartoncini per i colori* (cartoons for the colors), that studied

⁴ John Shearman, "Barocci at Bologna and Florence," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 188, No. 874 (Jan. 1976), 53-54.

⁵ Edmund Pillsbury and Louise S. Richards, *The Graphic Art of Federico Barocci, Selected Drawings and Prints* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 8.

⁶ Nicholas Turner, *Federico Barocci* (Paris: Vilo International, 2000), 154. Bellori notes that in his home, Barocci "arranged a large hall in which his pictures and cartoons were displayed" (Bellori, 170).

⁷ Pillsbury and Richards, 8-9.

⁸ Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, "Colour Study in Barocci's Drawing," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 98, No. 645 (Dec. 1956), 436.

the color relationships, and *cartoncini per i lumi* (cartoons for the lights), that studied the chiaroscuro, seem to have been completed at an earlier stage than Bellori believed.

Furthermore, it seems that the creation of the full-scale cartoon was not always the final step taken by Barocci before he began painting. Changes between the cartoons and the final painted work suggest that Barocci's large scale head studies in oil and pastel were created after the cartoon to study changes introduced by the artist in the final painting.⁹

In some cases, a drawn sheet was even pasted down on the surface of the canvas after Barocci had begun painting, evidence of the artist's continual process of revision.¹⁰

Barocci is also notable for his innovative use of media within his preparatory procedure. The consistent use of pastels and colored chalks for figure and auxiliary studies was unprecedented before Barocci.¹¹ Bellori wrote that Barocci adopted pastel after "a painter happened to come to Urbino during this time on his way back from Parma, with some fragments of cartoons and most sublime heads in pastel by Correggio, Federico was captivated by that beautiful style, which perfectly suited his natural inclination..."¹² However, McGrath has noted that no *pastelli* by Correggio survive today, and furthermore, art historians have no conclusive evidence that Correggio made pastel drawings at all. Although pastel was utilized simultaneously in Venice by Jacopo Bassano, there is no evidence that Barocci and Bassano knew each other, nor do their pastel works have stylistic affinities. Instead, McGrath suggests that Barocci was introduced to pastel through Raphael and his Umbrian associate, Timoteo Viti and

⁹ Pillsbury and Richards, 9.

¹⁰ Examples of this are the *Madonna di S. Simone* (c. 1567, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino) and *Il Perdono* (1574-76, S. Francesco, Urbino). Edmund Pillsbury, "The Oil Studies of Federico Barocci," *Apollo*, 108 (1978), 172.

¹¹ Thomas McGrath, "Federico Barocci and the History of Pastelli in Central Italy," *Apollo*, 148 (Nov. 1998), 3.

¹² Bellori, 161.

possibly even Parmigianino.¹³ Pastel was particularly suited to Barocci's style, as the artist seemed to imitate in his paintings the pastel palette and the soft, *sfumato* modeling achieved by stumping the dry pastel medium.¹⁴ Although Barocci's pastel drawings were undoubtedly created as a means to an end, Suzanne Folds McCullagh suggests that Barocci's colored pastel sheets anticipate the finished pastel drawings of the eighteenth-century, which were created to be sold as ends in their own right.¹⁵

The use of color in Barocci's preparatory drawings was not limited to pastel. Barocci also created painted *bozzetti*, or oil sketches, to study color on a smaller scale for his compositions. This practice can be traced to early cinquecento Italy and was utilized by artists such as Polidoro da Caravaggio (c. 1499-1543), who created a small number of compositional sketches in oil, and Domenico Beccafumi (1486-1551).¹⁶ Approximately thirty oil studies by Beccafumi survive, the majority of which are monochromatic head studies conceived as auxiliary cartoons.¹⁷ However, it seems that Barocci developed his innovative oil sketch for compositions and auxiliary studies independently, and was probably not aware of Beccafumi's drawings. As Edmund Pillsbury notes, the inventory taken at Barocci's death records at least forty-two studies in oil; at least fourteen of the oil studies were heads, and the remaining twenty-eight were a variety of subjects, including landscapes, trees, animals, fruit and water.¹⁸ Although the sheets of

¹³ McGrath, 4-5.

¹⁴ Jill Dunkerton, et al. *Dürer to Veronese: Sixteenth-Century Painting in The National Gallery* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 187.

¹⁵ Suzanne Folds McCullagh, "Serendipity in a Solander Box: A Recently Discovered Pastel by Federico Barocci," *Italian Drawings at the Art Institute: Recent Acquisitions and Discoveries, Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1991), 65.

¹⁶ Oreste Ferrari, "The Development of the Oil Sketch in Italy," *Giambattista Tiepolo: Master of the Oil Sketch*, Beverly Louise Brown, ed. (Milan: Electa; New York: Abbeville; Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1993), 43-44.

¹⁷ Ferrari, 44.

¹⁸ Pillsbury, 170.

landscapes, trees, and animals are not known to us today, Barocci's head studies represent for us the most formally beautiful and innovative step in his preparatory procedure. An extension of the practice of studying color relationships in pastel, Barocci utilized oil paints in preparatory drawings to judge more accurately the exact effects of tone and color as they would appear in the final work. The addition of color to the oil sketch is where Barocci departs from the monochromatic studies of Beccafumi, who seemed to use the oil sketches primarily to study pose and light and dark relationships.¹⁹ The creation of multi-colored oil sketches blurs the boundaries between drawing and painting, as oil sketches were often made on paper, but using paints and the painter's brush. The result is a preparatory study that is like a drawing in its function, but more like a painting in execution. Oil sketches were also an aspect of Barocci's preparatory process that played a key role in the development of the Baroque oil sketch in the following century.²⁰ Marilyn Aronberg Lavin discusses Barocci's use of color in drawings to prepare for his painted works, arguing that the artist deliberately selected colored papers and pastels to correspond to the color schemes later used in the final composition. Preliminary drawings of this type investigated color relationships in the same manner as other elements of design traditionally studied.²¹ The integration of color into preparatory drawings reflects Barocci's notion that drawings and paintings are directly linked.

¹⁹ Donato Sanminiatielli, "The Sketches of Domenico Beccafumi," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 97, No. 623 (Feb. 1955), 35.

²⁰ Pillsbury, 173.

²¹ Lavin, 436.

Throughout his career, Barocci consistently drew upon the stylistic influence of Raphael, directly borrowing motifs from his paintings²² and elaborating on his complex preparatory technique. Few artists equal the diversity and range of Raphael's drawn *oeuvre*, which shows the fullest use to date of drawing as preparatory for painting. The painting that best typifies Raphael's drawing process is the fresco of the *Disputa* from the Stanza della Segnatura frescoes in the Vatican, which was commissioned by Julius II and was Raphael's first exploration in the large scale media of fresco. Raphael's unfamiliarity with the medium of fresco presented a particular challenge to the artist, and necessitated a more involved preparatory process that ranged from loose pen compositional studies, nude drawings from life, figure studies, full-scale *modelli* for sections of the composition, to finally the cartoon and auxiliary studies.²³ Barocci drew upon his progenitor, but took Raphael's preparatory process to a radical extreme, creating at least double the number of extant studies for the *Madonna del Popolo* as Raphael did for the *Disputa*.²⁴ Particularly significant is Barocci's innovative use of pastel and oil media to create detailed auxiliary head studies, which is unprecedented in the *oeuvre* of Raphael.²⁵ Extant drawings by Barocci after Raphael's *Disputa* (fig. 28) (e.g. Uffizi inv. no. 11520 F. bis; fig. 29)²⁶ provide direct evidence that Barocci sought to follow in the

²² Examples of Barocci's imitation of Raphael are numerous, including Barocci's *Madonna and Child with Saints* or the *Fossombrone Madonna* (c. 1565-56, Milan, Brera), which is based on Raphael's *Madonna del Foligno* (1511-12, Vatican, Pinacoteca) (see Jeffrey Fontana, "Federico Barocci's Emulation of Raphael in the Fossombrone Madonna and Child with Saints," *Coming About...A Festschrift for John Shearman*, Lars R. Jones and Louisa C. Matthew, eds., Cambridge: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001, 183-90), and Barocci's *Entombment of Christ* (1580-83, Senigallia, S. Croce) which draws from Raphael's composition of the same name (1507, Rome, Borghese). The most direct borrowing from Raphael is Barocci's copy of the *St. Cecilia with Saints* (c. 1555-56, Urbino, Cathedral, original in Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale).

²³ Paul Joannides, *The Drawings of Raphael, with a Complete Catalogue* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 19-20.

²⁴ There seem to be approximately forty-five studies for the *Disputa*. Oskar Fischel, "An Unknown Drawing for Raphael's *Disputa*," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 47, No. 271 (Oct. 1925), 174.

²⁵ McGrath, 6.

²⁶ Black chalk on white paper, 198 x 150 mm.

footsteps, and perhaps improve upon, his compatriot. Raphael's *Disputa* fresco, which Barocci would have seen in the 1560s when he was at work in the Casino of Pius IV in the Vatican, also provided an important precedent for Barocci's *Madonna del Popolo*, *Il Perdono di San Francesco d'Assisi* and the *Immaculate Conception*.

The Drawings and the Development of the Iconography

Approximately ninety sheets, and over one hundred and ten total drawings including rectos and versos, exist for the *Madonna del Popolo*, the majority in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence and the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin. The drawings for the *Madonna del Popolo* exhibit the full range of Barocci's draftsmanship, including an oil sketch of a putto's head (Windsor inv. no. 5222; checklist no. 85), and a colorful pastel drawing of a young man giving alms (Windsor inv. no. 5226; checklist no. 86; fig. 37). Barocci's compulsive preparation for his paintings enables the viewer to come closer to the creative mind of the artist than the finished painting allows. Barocci utilized drawing at every step of the painting process, even returning to drawings after he had begun painting and constantly revising his figures and poses. The majority of preparatory drawings for the *Madonna del Popolo* are *mise en page* figure studies in which the artist repeatedly and quickly studied pose, details of body parts, drapery and head studies. The compositional modello in a Chicago private collection, the only drawing of its kind that survives for the painting, exhibits a number of iconographic changes that illustrate the artist's early conception for the painting, and how the painting evolved into a generalized scene that emphasizes the performance of acts of charity for and by the populace.

The drawings also provide valuable insight into the sources for the figures utilized by Barocci in his composition and the changes made to the iconography throughout its development. Due to the nature of Barocci's preparatory process and the length of time required to complete commissions, Barocci seems to have worked on more than one painting at a time, resulting in formal elements that carry through works of the same period. Typically, Barocci reused successful figures throughout his career and revisited his drawings that he preserved faithfully, sometimes many years later. No extant *primi pensieri* (rough compositional drawings) display the artist's original conception of the *Madonna del Popolo*. Instead, for his original ideas for the composition, Barocci drew from two paintings completed in the mid 1570s, just prior to the *Madonna del Popolo*, the *Perdono of St. Francis* (fig. 15) and the *Immaculate Conception* (fig. 7).

The earliest of these three paintings, the *Perdono* seems to draw directly from Raphael's *Disputa* in the Vatican's Stanza della Segnatura. The division between the upper and lower registers of the composition, the incorporation of the balustrade to divide recessional space, and the positioning of Christ, the Virgin, and St. John the Baptist in Raphael's composition have been adapted to Barocci's *Perdono*. The pose of Christ in Barocci's *Perdono* recalls Raphael's solution, but his gesture seems to be derived from God the Father in the *Disputa*, who blesses the gathering below with his right hand while holding his left arm outstretched. This pose of Christ blessing, explored by Barocci in a drawing in the Uffizi (inv. no. 11396 F.; fig. 34)²⁷ reappears in the *Madonna del Popolo* in a seated version. The pose of the Virgin Mary is also similar in Barocci's two paintings, with the slight change in the position of her arms in the *Madonna del Popolo*, which reinforces the traditional iconography of the Misericordia. In the *Perdono*, the

²⁷ Black, red, and white chalk on green paper; 422 x 285 mm.

Virgin clearly serves the role of the Madonna Mediatrix, interceding with Christ on behalf of St. Francis below, whereas the repositioning of the Virgin to the left of Christ in the *Madonna del Popolo* and her outstretched arms and flowing mantle suggests a blending of these separate iconographic programs.

In the *Immaculate Conception*, the Virgin Mary assumes the central placement and pose of Christ in the *Perdono*. However, Barocci modified the figure of the Virgin to a more typical type of Madonna della Misericordia representation. Commissioned by the Compagnia della Concezione for the church of S. Francesco, Urbino, the altarpiece is datable to ca. 1575, based on a sheet of studies in the Uffizi (inv. no. 11668 F. recto; fig. 30)²⁸ that prepares both the hands of the young girl in the lower right of the *Immaculate Conception* and the head of the Christ child in the *Madonna del Gatto* from 1574-75.²⁹ The earliest idea for the composition is a drawing in the Uffizi (inv. no. 11446 F. recto; fig. 31)³⁰ that records a conventional medieval depiction of the Madonna della Misericordia with a flowing, outstretched mantle to protect figures below. In an attempt to modernize the iconographic theme, Barocci corrected the disparity of scale between the Virgin and her supplicants by representing them half-length.³¹ However, Barocci eventually rejected the literal replication of the Misericordia convention in favor of a more subtle interpretation. The sheet in the Louvre (inv. no. 2855; fig. 32),³² executed following the Uffizi drawing, represents the Virgin without the large mantle, but in a dynamic position that recalls one of Barocci's original ideas for the figure of Christ in his

²⁸ Black and red chalk on blue paper; 410 x 268 mm.

²⁹ Andrea Emiliani, *Federico Barocci: Urbino, 1535-1612*, I (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1985), 124.

³⁰ Pen and wash, heightened with white, over black chalk on blue paper; 275 x 189 mm.

³¹ Stuart Lingo, "Retrospection and the Genesis of Federico Barocci's *Immaculate Conception*," *Coming About...A Festschrift for John Shearman*, Lars R. Jones and Louisa C. Matthew, eds. (Cambridge: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001), 217.

³² Pen and wash and black chalk on blue-gray paper; 237 x 180 mm.

Perdono (Uffizi inv. no. 11374 F.; fig. 33).³³ The earthly figures in the Paris drawing seem to be early explorations of the types that would later appear in the *Madonna del Popolo*, such as the reclining male figure seen from behind, and the mother and child grouping in the lower right that bears similarities to the mother and child with the basket on the right of the *Madonna del Popolo*. Barocci suggests the Misericordia convention with the outstretched arms of the Virgin and her swirling drapery, but the artist introduces the mandorla of clouds, recalling the symbol traditionally employed in visionary scenes.³⁴ For the final solution of the *Immaculate Conception*, Barocci decisively turned away from the traditional Misericordia image first explored in the Uffizi drawing and instead favored a representation that indirectly references the Misericordia with the repositioned mantle that assumes a triangular shape. Portraits of confraternity members appear in the lower left with upturned faces, while veiled female figures and a mother tending to her praying child admire the mystical apparition from the lower right. Although Barocci had to adhere as closely as possible to conventions in light of the confraternity's conservative tastes, he found a more innovative solution in his modification of Misericordia iconography.³⁵ Barocci would take this solution even further in his *Madonna del Popolo*, when the patrons requested a similar subject.

Barocci's letters to the Aretine confraternity, asking them to suggest another subject besides a Misericordia, may indicate Barocci's dissatisfaction with his *Immaculate Conception*, and unwillingness to complete another painting of a subject that he saw as old-fashioned. Instead, Barocci turned back to the Madonna Mediatrix imagery of the *Perdono of Assisi*, and incorporated elements of the Misericordia concept

³³ Black, red and white chalk on blue paper; 405 x 281 mm.

³⁴ Lingo, 219.

³⁵ Ibid., 218.

in the *Madonna del Popolo* to appease the patrons. The most significant preparatory drawing for Barocci's painting is the modello, in a private collection in Chicago (checklist no. 43; fig. 35). The modello exhibits a substantial number of changes to the final composition that suggest the artist was working through the iconography of the painting as he developed the arrangement of the figures. The general arrangement of the composition seems fairly resolved at this point in the process, and it is possible that when Barocci wrote to the confraternity rectors in February of 1576 that he had completed a portion of a small cartoon, he was referring to the Chicago modello.³⁶ However, it is clear that Barocci continued working on the arrangement on the figures after the creation of this drawing and possibly created a full-scale cartoon for the final painting that has not survived. The figures of Christ and the Virgin are very similar in the modello and the finished painting; Christ blesses the crowd below in a similar manner as the *Perdono*, while the gesture of the Virgin Mary and her mantle fluttering in the wind take the place of the traditional Misericordia. The primary changes take place in the lower half of the composition, where the multitude of individuals and actions required numerous figure studies.

The most apparent difference between the modello and the final painting is the figure of a gentleman, presumably a member of the confraternity, giving alms to a beggar in the lower right of the modello. He places a coin in the left hand of the beggar, who looks toward his benefactor while leaning on a rock. These figures were the subject of numerous exploratory drawings by Barocci, including the sheet at the Uffizi (inv. no. 1399 F. recto; checklist no. 45; fig. 36) that studies the position of the confraternity member and his hand as he gives charity to the reclining man. The figure of the man

³⁶ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

distributing alms is peculiar, because it seems to have been a part of Barocci's composition long enough for Barocci to create a detailed chalk head study (Windsor, Royal Library, inv. no. 5226; checklist no. 86; fig. 37), but he does not appear in the final composition. Barocci replaced the man with a young mother and child, making the beggar's open hand and gaze meaningless, as he seems to ask the hurdy-gurdy player for alms in the final painting. The position of the beggar was also thoroughly explored by Barocci and went through several permutations, where the figure is seen both from behind (Berlin, inv. no. KdZ 20438 (4153); checklist no. 13; fig. 39), and from profile (Berlin, inv. no. KdZ 20419 (3728); checklist no. 4; fig. 40). Pillsbury also suspects that the figure of the hurdy-gurdy player, which was drawn on another sheet and physically pasted down in the corner of the modello, was originally another figure of a beggar, perhaps facing towards the left of the composition, such as in the drawing in Berlin (inv. no. KdZ 20415 (3726); checklist no. 3; fig. 41).³⁷

With the incorporation of the confraternity member giving alms to the reclining beggar, the act of almsgiving played a prominent role in the foreground activities of the modello. If the man can be interpreted as a brother of the Arezzo confraternity, as he seems to be a part of the space that features the confraternity's portraits in the final painting, Barocci shows an agent of the confraternity performing a merciful act and a poor Aretine as the recipient of mercy. In the finished painting, the woman holding a baby receives alms from a young boy at the extreme right, and not from a confraternity member. The implication of this change in donor and recipient is that the confraternity was removed from the spotlight, and the composition does not literally signify the good works of the fraternity but instead encourages all people to give charitably. Scholars

³⁷ Ibid.

have speculated that if the patrons had indeed seen this modello, this significant change in the confraternity's involvement in the scene would have displeased the rectors.³⁸

However, since the quality of the panel seems to have been the primary objection of the confraternity, the change in iconography can be seen as Barocci's attempt to provide a more generalized, didactic painting that encourages all viewers, not just the confraternity brothers, to perform acts of mercy.³⁹

The white dove of the Holy Spirit, which is reminiscent of Raphael's dove in the Vatican *Disputa*, was repositioned in the painting from its original diagonal orientation in the modello. As noted by Pillsbury, in the modello, the dove seems to be angled over the reclining beggar, who becomes a beneficiary of Christ's gift of the Holy Spirit symbolized by the dove.⁴⁰ In the painting, Pillsbury sees the dove as directed more towards the "charity" grouping in the lower left, however, arguably the central orientation of the dove seems to suggest the presence of the Holy Spirit over the entire scene (a drawing of the dove in Urbino inv. no. 1686 also depicts this change; checklist no. 83; fig. 42). The dove also forms a part of the Holy Trinity represented by Barocci with the inclusion of the tondo depicting God the Father that originally hung above the *Madonna del Popolo*.⁴¹ This tondo, which is in a poor state of conservation, represents God the Father blessing in a manner similar to Christ (fig. 43). His gaze is directed to the lower left of the tondo, and towards Christ in the Uffizi painting, signifying God's approval of the scene below. As expected, Barocci's incorporation of the Trinity, which is not

³⁸ Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 257.

³⁹ Gary Walters suggests that the change in iconography references the biblical passage of Matthew 18:3, that one must be like a child to reach heaven. Gary Walters, *Federico Barocci: Anima Naturaliter* (Ann Arbor and London: University Microfilms International, 1981), 94-102.

⁴⁰ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

⁴¹ A drawing in Amsterdam, catalogued as a study for the *Martyrdom of S. Vitale* (*Italiaanse Tekeningen*, Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1970, cat. 48, fig. 29), prepared for the tondo.

included in the *Perdono*, is reminiscent of Raphael's treatment of the God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in the *Disputa*.

It is tempting to speculate that the grouping of confraternity members on the extreme right of the composition below the Virgin may be portraits of the Aretine rectors,⁴² although their identities remain unknown today. Bellori writes that the *Immaculate Conception* depicts "men and women of the Company in devotion."⁴³ Although it is possible that the confraternity rectors in the *Madonna del Popolo* are specific portraits, the archetypal individuals that consistently reappear in Barocci's paintings suggest instead that the figures are more generalized and less specific. A head study of one of the rectors (St. Petersburg, inv. no. 121; checklist no. 77; fig. 45), exhibits the long white beard and balding head typical of several other individuals in the *Madonna del Popolo*, such as the figure in black in the center middle-ground, whose expression was studied in an exquisite pastel head study in the Royal Library (Windsor, inv. no. 5232; checklist no. 87; fig. 44). In the modello, the confraternity rectors have a more prominent relationship to the Virgin as well. Below Mary's cloud, an angel holds open a book that carries an inscription for the grouping of rectors, further emphasizing the Virgin's role as the intermediary between the confraternity and the grace of God.⁴⁴ The angel with the book also seems to be a motif borrowed by Barocci from Raphael's *Disputa*. In the final painting, however, the message-bearing angel has been replaced by two putti who support the Virgin's cloud, and the rectors become mere onlookers as they gaze up at the divine apparition and the acts of charity.

⁴² Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

⁴³ Bellori, 168.

⁴⁴ Pillsbury and Richards, 61.

The figure of the hurdy-gurdy player was studied in numerous drawings and is one of the most engaging portrayals in the *Madonna del Popolo*. It seems that at first Barocci did not envision the musician to be blind, as he looks up towards the Virgin Mary and seems conscious of her presence in the sky (Berlin inv. no. KdZ 20431 (4137); checklist no. 11; fig. 38). However, Barocci soon studied the closed, swollen eyes of the hurdy-gurdy player in numerous sheets, the most beautiful being the drawing in the Uffizi (inv. no. 11359 F.; checklist no. 52; fig. 46) with a nude study of the musician and details of his hand and facial expression. In the painting, both this figure and the mother with her children in the lower left of the composition stayed fairly close to Barocci's ideas in the modello.⁴⁵ The gathering of women on the extreme left of the composition also changed very little, with the exception of the horizontal figure in front of the aristocratic woman holding a book, which was removed from the final composition.

The changes in the background of the composition between the modello and finished painting are also significant. In the modello, groups of men busily perform merciful acts: in the center, a man is burdened with a heavy sack upon his back, perhaps filled with food, as another figure directs him to the prison. Two figures visit prisoners in jail, one carrying a basket of food while the other hands the goods through the bars of the cell. At least two other figures behind them presumably perform an additional, illegible act of mercy.⁴⁶ In the finished painting, perhaps simplified for formal reasons, only the men visiting the prison were represented, and the other figures performing acts of mercy were replaced by a gallery of onlookers situated in an ambiguous space with an arched

⁴⁵ Barocci reused this grouping in his *Martyrdom of S. Vitale*. Also, the pose of the boy and the hand positions of the two children are very similar to those of the young girl in the *Immaculate Conception*.

⁴⁶ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

window.⁴⁷ Shearman was the first to suggest that the space in the background of the composition is probably the Piazza Grande in Arezzo, and not the courtyard of the Ducal Palace of Urbino as proposed by Emiliani, despite some similarities.⁴⁸

Barocci also made changes to the figures in the middle-ground that appear directly below Christ. The man who bows with his head to the ground in the modello has been replaced in the painting with a well-dressed man with arms outstretched; he appears originally to the right of the bowing man in the modello.⁴⁹ The gentleman's left arm and the fluttering drapery of the poor mother with a basket frame a reverent, inwardly focused figure in prayer wearing a yellow cloak. Lingo astutely identifies this figure as reminiscent of the supplicants huddled under the Virgin's mantle in traditional Madonna della Misericordia representations with hands clasped in prayer.⁵⁰ Barocci's placement of the quiet figure in the center of the lively composition emphasizes the deep religiosity of the humble, anonymous Aretine. Two figures in the composition, the man praying at center and the man gesturing to the Virgin holding his hat, bear the eight-pointed cross of the religious order of the Knights Hospitallers, or the Knights of Malta, the military order that began in the eleventh century as a hospital and shelter to care for the sick and

⁴⁷ I have been unable to determine if this is an accurate representation of a prison that existed near the Piazza Grande in Arezzo. However, the palazzo of the wealthy Aretine Sassoli family was acquired by the Comune in 1404 and converted to a prison that may have been located near the city center. It is likely that if such a prison existed, the brotherhood would have tended to the prisoners in light of the prescriptions of the Seven Acts of Mercy.

⁴⁸ Shearman, 52. I agree with Shearman that situating the event in Arezzo seems to fit with the tradition of Misericordia *gonfalon*. However, the arcade in the modello with the multiple arches and small rectangular openings more closely resembles the façade of S. Maria della Pieve, the church at the corner of the Piazza Grande for which the altarpiece was commissioned (fig. 47).

⁴⁹ This pose appears numerous times in Barocci's oeuvre, notably the figure of St. Francis in the *Perdono*. Barocci studied the pose of the figure in a drawing in Berlin (inv. no. KdZ 20427 (3772) verso; checklist no. 7; fig. 48).

⁵⁰ Stuart P. Lingo, *The Capuchins and the Art of History: Retrospection and Reform in the Arts in Late Renaissance Italy* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1998), 337.

pilgrims to the holy city of Jerusalem.⁵¹ Later, the order became associated with the crusades and moved its headquarters to Rhodes and later to Malta.⁵² The Hospitallers established seven priories on the Italian peninsula during the thirteenth century⁵³ and were presumably well-known in sixteenth century Arezzo. Although the signature dress of the Hospitallers was a black mantle bearing a white eight-pointed cross, and the figures in Barocci's painting wear yellow and red (see, for comparison, Titian's portrait of *Ranuccio Farnese*, fig. 49), the two men probably reference this charitable order that was founded based on two acts of mercy: housing pilgrims and visiting the sick. The same figures in the Chicago modello do not bear the Hospitaller cross, but the subtle inclusion of this well-known symbol would have further emphasized the message of the painting: to achieve God's grace and blessing, one must practice the Seven Acts of Mercy.

CONCLUSION

Barocci's unprecedented solution in the *Madonna del Popolo* is a melding of traditional Madonna della Misericordia imagery popularized by the mendicant orders in plague *gonfaloni*, and the Madonna Mediatrix, which emerged from depictions of the Virgin Mary seated to the right of Christ in scenes of the Last Judgment. However, the common title of Barocci's altarpiece misleadingly emphasizes the Virgin in the composition, whose role is as important as Christ's in the bustling activity of the scene.

⁵¹ Alessandra Giannotti, "Genesi e fortuna di un 'exemplum caritatis': la *Madonna del Popolo* di Federico Barocci," *L'Onestà dell'Invenzione: Pittura della Riforma Cattolica agli Uffizi*, Antonio Natali, ed. (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1999), 27. Giannotti has also identified five Aretines who were Knights of Malta (Giannotti, 40, n. 27).

⁵² Malcolm Barber, "Knights Hospitaller," *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press, [1 March 2007], <http://www.groveart.com/ezproxy.tcu.edu>.

⁵³ H. J. A. Sire, *The Knights of Malta* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 158-9.

Above all else, Barocci's altarpiece seems to feature the individualized portrayals of Aretine citizens who perform the merciful acts of almsgiving and visiting prisoners. This is precisely the aspect of Barocci's painting that marks it as a Counter-Reformation subject. The painting urges the physical and emotional involvement of the audience and encourages viewers to imitate the figures in the painting, emphasizing the necessity of performing good works to achieve God's grace.

Barocci's in-depth study of figures and poses in numerous drawings is evidence of the artist's concern to show "the particular qualities and conditions appropriate to each individual figure,"⁵⁴ as specified in the contract. Barocci's extraordinary draftsmanship and continual exploration of pose, lighting and color indicate the degree to which he sought to represent elements of daily life, studied in drawings directly from his surroundings. Barocci's *Perdono of St. Francis* and the *Immaculate Conception* served as precedents for the *Madonna del Popolo*, and we can see Barocci's initial ideas for the Uffizi composition as stemming from drawings for these two paintings. The iconography of the *Madonna del Popolo* seems to have been resolved fairly early; however, Barocci continued to study and alter the positions of the figures in the composition at all stages of the painting process. The large number of preparatory figure drawings suggests that Barocci was particularly interested in achieving a high degree of naturalism to produce a morally didactic and engaging painting that would physically and emotionally involve the Counter-Reformation viewer.

Although the *Madonna del Popolo* is not a representation of the Seven Acts of Mercy as identified by Bellori, Barocci's painting does focus on the performance of merciful acts. Barocci's interpretation is particularly sensitive to the function of the

⁵⁴ Pillsbury and Richards, 59.

confraternity in Arezzo, who collected money for the deserving poor of the city. However, unlike Ghirlandaio's representations of the Acts of Mercy, Barocci does not show the confraternity rectors participating in charitable behavior in the final solution in the painting. Instead, with his removal of the confraternity rector giving alms in the Chicago modello, Barocci emphasizes the universality of the activity and the involvement of the entire populace of the city, most of whom were presumably members of the confraternity, in the actions of giving and receiving mercy. Despite the confraternity's disappointment with the quality of the finished panel and the artist's initial displeasure with the Misericordia subject, Barocci produced an innovative painting that was responsive both to the devotion of the Confraternità dei Laici di Santa Maria della Misericordia in Arezzo and to his own artistic vision.

Appendix: Checklist of Drawings

Amsterdam, J. Q. Van Regteren Altena Collection

1. Inv. no. 108

Nude studies of a mother carrying a child and studies of heads (recto); nude figure study for mother (verso)

Red chalk on white paper, squared and partially incised for transfer (recto and verso)
274 x 229 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 165; Emiliani 1985, I, 138, figs. 245 and 246.

Berlin (Dahlem), Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett

2. Inv. no. 20437 (3720)

Study for the angel in the upper right corner

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

161 x 209 mm.

Bibliography: Emiliani 1985, I, 137, fig. 243.

3. Inv. no. 20415 (3726)

Figure study, probably for the beggar

Black and white chalk on blue paper, squared with black chalk.

180 x 110 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 143, fig. 269.

4. Inv. no. 20419 (3728)

Figure study for the beggar

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

133 x 185 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 142, fig. 261.

5. Inv. no. 20380 (3731)

Study of the back of the beggar

Black and white chalk on dark brown prepared paper.

263 x 207 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 143, fig. 268.

6. Inv. no. 20397 (3742)

Study of the head and right shoulder for the beggar

Black and white chalk, heightened with white on yellowed paper, squared with black chalk.

410 x 266 mm. (bottom left hand corner torn).

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 110, cat. 98; Emiliani 1985, I, 143, fig. 266.

7. Inv. no. 20427 (3772)

Nude study for the man in the center (recto); Study of his right leg (verso)
Black and white chalk on blue paper.
310 x 195 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 148, fig. 286 (recto).

8. Inv. no. 4115

Study for the lower left part of the composition (probably a fragment)
Pen and ink, heightened with white on white paper, squared.
136 x 89 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

9. Inv. no. 20383 (4126)

Study for the musician
Black and white chalk on blue paper.
318 x 217 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 259.

10. Inv. no. 20417 (4132)

Nude study and studies of a right arm and leg for the angel to the left of Christ
Black and white chalk on blue paper.
205 x 145 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 135, fig. 233.

11. Inv. no. 20431 (4137)

Nude study for the musician with studies of his head and left arm
Black and white chalk on blue paper, squared with black chalk.
304 x 191 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 140, fig. 250.

12. Inv. no. 4152

Study for the woman on the extreme left of the Chicago modello
Black and white chalk on blue paper.
240 x 161 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

13. Inv. no. 20438 (4153)

Nude study for the beggar and study of a right arm for the woman on the extreme left
Black and white chalk, heightened with white on blue paper, squared with black chalk.
177 x 277 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 111, cat. 100; Emiliani 1985, I, 142, fig. 263.

14. Inv. no. 7705 (4184)

Studies for the boy kneeling on the left and the *putto* seen from behind underneath the Virgin

Black chalk, heightened with white on light blue paper, squared with black chalk.

265 x 380 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 107, cat. 89; Emiliani 1985, I, 148, fig. 285.

15. Inv. no. 4226

Study of a left hand for the musician

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

415 x 275 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

16. Inv. no. 20174 (4235)

Studies of a left arm, probably for the beggar

Black and white chalk on blue paper (torn along the upper edge).

78 x 240 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 143, fig. 267.

17. Inv. no. 4237

Study for a man on the extreme right (recto); Studies for the musician (verso)

Red, black and white chalk on blue paper.

302 x 207 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

18. Inv. no. 20521 (4247)

Study of hands, probably for a man in the background

Black and white chalk on greenish paper.

159 x 234 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 293.

19. Inv. no. 4249

Study of a right arm for the *putto* underneath the Virgin

Black, red and white chalk on white paper.

175 x 180 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

20. Inv. no. 20429 (4264)

Studies of a right arm and a right leg for the mother and child at right

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper

215 x 300 mm. (torn lower left corner).

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 289.

21. Inv. no. 20421 (4272)

Studies for the *putto* underneath the Virgin and probably for the *putto* in the upper left corner

Black and white chalk on light brown paper.

271 x 420 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 136, fig. 240.

22. Inv. no. 20423 (4287)
Studies for the boy on the left
Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.
407 x 258.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 294.
23. Inv. no. 4290
Nude study for the beggar and perspective sketch for the composition (recto); loose sketches for the beggar (verso)
Black, red and white chalk on white paper, incised on recto.
505 x 310 mm.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.
24. Inv. no. 4293
Studies for the beggar
Black chalk, pen and wash, heightened with white on tinted paper.
264 x 209 mm.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.
25. Inv. no. 20430 (4297) (verso)
Nude study for musician and study of the drapery
Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.
218 x 316 mm.
Bibliography: Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 109, cat. 95; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 256.
26. Inv. no. 20427 (4302)
Drapery studies for the musician
Black and white chalk on blue paper.
215 x 326 mm.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 112, cat. 105; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 257.
27. Inv. no. 20426 (4313)
Drapery study for the Virgin
Black and white chalk on light brown paper.
430 x 274 mm.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 132, fig. 227.
28. Inv. no. 4325
Study for the woman on the left
Black and white chalk on light brown paper.
283 x 425 mm.
Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.
29. Inv. no. 20412 (4329)

Studies for the beggar

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper, squared.

102 x 218 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 142, fig. 264.

30. Inv. no. 20424 (4330)

Studies of musculature, probably for the beggar

Black and white chalk on light brown paper.

248 x 351 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 142, fig. 262.

31. Inv. no. 20425 (4370)

Studies for the two putti underneath the Virgin

Black and white chalk on light brown paper.

281 x 404 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166; Emiliani 1985, I, 136, fig. 239.

32. Inv. no. 4390

Study of a left leg for the beggar

Black chalk on brown paper.

179 x 110 mm (cut lower right corner).

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 166.

33. Inv. no. 20442 (4393)

Study of a left leg for the *putto* underneath the Virgin

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

197 x 245 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 136, fig. 241.

34. Inv. no. 20440 (4402)

Drapery studies for the right arm of Christ

Black and white chalk on brown paper.

256 x 160 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 134, fig. 230.

35. Inv. no. 20441 (4403)

Drapery studies for the Virgin

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

208 x 271 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 132, fig. 224.

36. Inv. no. 20439 (4408)

Study for the musician

Black and white chalk on brown paper.

270 x 170 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 254.

37. Inv. no. 20189 (4415)

Studies of the hands and a foot for Christ

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

313 x 211 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 111, cat. 101; Emiliani 1985, I, 134, fig. 231.

38. Inv. no. 20432 (4416)

Drapery study for the musician

Black and white chalk on brown paper.

284 x 214 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 258.

39. Inv. no. 20433 (4424)

Studies of the right arm for the angel on the left

Black, red and white chalk on white paper.

270 x 217 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 135, fig. 236.

40. Inv. no. 4440

Study of a right arm for Christ

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

188 x 263 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167.

41. Inv. no. 20434 (4472)

Study of a right hand for the mother on the left

Black and white chalk on brown paper.

244 x 171 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 290.

Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts

42. Inv. no. 1001

Study of the left arm of the child on the extreme left, and studies for the girl, bottom left (recto); study for the figures in the background on the left (verso)

Pen and ink and black chalk on white paper.

240 x 150 (damaged).

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 295 (recto).

Chicago, Private Collection

43. (Formerly Chatsworth Inv. no. 357)

Modello for the entire composition

Pen and brown ink wash, heightened with white, in the upper part also with red chalk, on brownish prepared paper, squared.

550 x 383 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167, fig. 43a; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 107, cat. 87; Pillsbury 1978, 58, cat. 35; Emiliani 1985, I, 130, fig. 222.

Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi

44. Inv. no. 812 E.

Studies for the hands and faces of the mother and the two children

Black, red and white chalk, pink pastel on brown paper.

281 x 416 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167, fig. 44a; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 292.

45. Inv. no. 1399 F.

Studies for the man giving alms in the Chicago modello (recto); studies for the man giving alms and the musician (verso)

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper (recto and verso).

203 x 322 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 107, cat. 88; Emiliani 1985, I, 140, fig. 252 (verso) and 142, fig. 260 (recto).

46. Inv. no. 1401 F.

Nude and drapery studies for the mother on the left (recto); studies for the men in the background of the modello (verso)

Black and red chalk on blue paper, squared with black chalk (recto); black chalk (verso).

322 x 215 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 108, cat. 90; Emiliani 1985, I, 148, fig. 287 (recto).

47. Inv. no. 1402 F.

Study for the musician

Black and white chalk on blue paper, squared with black and red chalk.

305 x 207 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 110, cat. 96; Emiliani 1985, I, 140, fig. 253.

48. Inv. no. 11305 F.

Study of an angel

Black and red chalk on yellowed paper

Size unavailable.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167.

49. Inv. no. 11334 F.

Head study for the mother on the left

Black and white chalk on white paper.

199 x 201 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 146, fig. 280.

50. Inv. no. 11337 F.

Study for God the father

Black and white chalk on green paper

185 x 255 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167.

51. Inv. no. 11348 F.

Study for the beggar

Black chalk on brownish paper, squared with black chalk.

234 x 195 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 142, fig. 265.

52. Inv. no. 11359 F.

Figure and head studies for the musician, and studies of his right hand

Black and white chalk and pink pastel on blue paper, squared with black chalk.

422 x 297 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 67; Emiliani 1985, I, 140, fig. 251.

53. Inv. no. 11492 F.

Nude study for the angel on the upper left (recto); study of a hand (verso)

Black and red chalk on white paper

251 x 204 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 111, cat. 102.

54. Inv. no. 11521 F.

Nude study for the Virgin, and study of a left leg for the musician

Red chalk on white paper.

202 x 181 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 141, fig. 255.

55. Inv. no. 11546 F.

Study of a bearded head, probably for a man on the right

Black and red chalk on white paper.

121 x 105 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 144, fig. 271.

56. Inv. no. 11547 F.

Study of a bearded head looking up, probably for a man on the right

Black and red chalk on white paper.

124 x 91 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 144, fig. 273.

57. Inv. no. 11553 F.

Study for the kneeling boy on the left, reversed

Black and white chalk, heightened with white on yellowed paper, squared with black chalk.

275 x 186 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 108, cat. 92; Emiliani 1985, I, 149, fig. 291.

58. Inv. no. 11587 F.

Study for the right foot of Christ

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

213 x 157 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 167; Emiliani 1985, I, 134, fig. 229.

59. Inv. no. 11591 F. (verso)

Studies of a right hand for one of the men on the right

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

267 x 191 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 156; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 112, cat. 104.

60. Inv. no. 11593 F. (verso)

Sketch for some of the figures in the background of the Chicago modello

Black and red chalk on white paper.

127 x 171 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 158.

61. Inv. no. 11603 F. (verso)

Study for the woman on the extreme left

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

240 x 220 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 146, fig. 279.

62. Inv. no. 11612 F.

Figure and head studies for the angel in the upper left (recto); drapery study (verso)

Black and red chalk on white paper.

329 x 208 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 135, figs. 234 and 235.

63. Inv. no. 11625 F.

Study of a right arm for the *putto* in the upper left hand corner (recto); study for the *putto* in the upper right corner, and a light sketch of a view of a town (verso)

Black, red and white chalk on white paper (recto); black chalk on white paper (verso)

272 x 256 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 135, fig. 237 (recto).

64. Inv. no. 11645 F.

Studies of hands, probably for some of the spectators

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper

207 x 301 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 110-111, cat. 99.

65. Inv. no. 11662 F.

Studies for the *putto* in the upper right corner

Black, red and white chalk, white and pink pastel, heightened with white on white paper, squared with black chalk and incised in lower part of the sheet.

402 x 271 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 137, fig. 244.

66. Inv. no. 11665 F.

Two studies of a left hand for the woman on the extreme left, reversed

Black, red and white chalk, brown and red wash, heightened with white on blue paper.

275 x 397 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 108, cat. 91; Emiliani 1985, I, 132, fig. 225.

London, British Museum

69. Inv. no. Pp. 3-200

Studies for the *putto* underneath the Virgin

Black, red and white chalk on white paper.

239 x 335 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Pillsbury 1978, 61, cat. 38; Emiliani 1985, I, 136, fig. 238; Scrase 2006, 136, cat. 43.

70. Inv. no. Pp. 3-201 (recto)

Three studies of a left arm for the musician and of his right leg

Red and black chalk, heightened with white on blue paper.

373 x 389 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168, fig. 43b; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 110, cat. 97; Emiliani 1985, I, 138, fig. 248; Scrase 2006, 134, cat. 42.

71. Inv. no. 1901-4-17-32

Studies for the child on the mother's arm on the right

Black, red and white chalk, with pink and white pastel, heightened with white on blue-gray paper.

263 x 256 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Pillsbury 1978, 60, cat. 36; Emiliani 1985, I, 138, fig. 247; Scrase 2006, 138, cat. 44.

London, Rayner-Wood Collection (formerly) / J. Skippe Collection (formerly), present whereabouts unknown

67. Study for the mother on the left

Pastel on blue paper.

320 x 290 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 146, fig. 281.

68. Study of the head for the *putto* in the top right corner

Pastel on blue paper.

219 x 169 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168.

Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana

72. Inv. no. B. 4393

Study for the *putto* underneath the Virgin

Black and white chalk on brown paper.

435 x 435 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168.

New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Art Gallery

73. Inv. no. 1973.141

Head of a young woman, turned three-quarters to the right, and looking downwards

Black, red, and white chalk, with pastel on blue-gray paper

252 x 191 mm.

Bibliography: Pillsbury 1978, 60, cat. 37.

Paris, Musée du Louvre

74. Inv. no. 2873

Study of a head, probably for a man in the background on the right

Black, red and white chalk on white paper.

211 x 172 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 145, fig. 276.

Paris, Fondation Custodia (Frits Lugt Collection), Institut Néerlandais

75. Inv. no. 1992 (recto)

Studies for the mother with the two children and the woman on the extreme left

Black and white chalk on blue paper.

209 x 293 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168, fig. 44b; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 109, cat. 94;

Emiliani 1985, I, 148, fig. 288.

St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum

76. Inv. no. 120

Head of an old man, probably for a man in the background on the right

Black and red chalk with pastel on green paper.

235 x 118 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 144, fig. 270.

77. Inv. no. 121

Head of a man on the right

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

355 x 250 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 144, fig. 272.

Stuttgart, Fleischhauer Collection (formerly), present whereabouts unknown

78. Study for the *putto* in the top left

Black and red chalk on white paper.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168.

79. Study of the head for the mother in the lower left corner

Black and red chalk with pastel on white paper.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168.

Urbania, Museo Civico

80. Inv. no. II 196.460

Three head studies of figures in the crowd

Black and red chalk on white paper

188 x 124 mm.

Bibliography: Cellini 1994, 58.

Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche

81. Inv. no. 1670

Study of a head, probably for the girl kneeling on the left

Black and red chalk on brown paper.

369 x 225 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 146, fig. 283.

82. Inv. no. 1680

Head of a boy, probably one of the spectators in the background

Black, red and white chalk on brown paper.

325 x 277 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 145, fig. 278.

83. Inv. no. 1686

Study for the dove

Black chalk on blue paper.

241 x 346 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 133, fig. 228.

Vienna, Albertina

84. Inv. no. 552 (380)

Study for the head of Christ

Black and red chalk, with yellow and white pastel on blue paper

320 x 236 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 168; Emiliani 1985, I, 134, fig. 232.

Windsor Castle, Royal Library

85. Inv. no. 88 (5222)

Head of a child, probably for the angel in the top right, incised

Oil colors over original drawing in pastel on white paper

188 x 137 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169; Emiliani 1985, I, 137, fig. 242; Scrase 2006, 128, cat. 39.

86. Inv. no. 92 (5226)

Head of a young bearded man distributing alms in the Chicago modello

Pastels on green paper.

309 x 244 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169; Emiliani 1985, I, 144, fig. 274; Scrase 2006, 130, cat. 40.

87. Inv. no. 97 (5232)

Head of a bearded man, probably the old man in the center

Pastels on blue paper.

348 x 254 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 112, cat. 103; Emiliani 1985, I, 145, fig. 277; Scrase 2006, 132, cat. 41.

88. Inv. no. 104 (5358)

Head of a woman, probably for the woman on the extreme left

Pastels on white paper.

247 x 128 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169.

Würzburg, Martin von Wagner Museum der Universität

89. Inv. no. 7189

Studies of a head, probably for one of the women on the left

Black chalk on green-gray paper.

247 x 203 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169; Emiliani 1985, I, 146, fig. 282.

90. Inv. no. 7190

Three studies of the profile of the woman on the extreme left
Black and white chalk on blue paper.

310 x 220 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169; Emiliani and Bertelà 1975, 109, cat. 93; Emiliani 1985, I, 132, fig. 226.

91. Inv. no. 7191

Study for the head of the woman on the left with the two children

Black, red and white chalk on blue paper.

425 x 260 mm.

Bibliography: Olsen 1962, 169.

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Figure 1. Federico Barocci, *Madonna del Popolo* (c. 1576-79). Oil on panel; 359 x 252 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 2. Federico Barocci, *Virgin and Child with St. John the Evangelist (Madonna di S. Giovanni)* (c. 1565). Oil on canvas; 151 x 115 cm. Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino.



Figure 3. Federico Barocci, *Visitation* (1583-86). Oil on canvas; 285 x 187 cm. Chiesa Nuova, Rome.



Figure 4. Federico Barocci, *Calling of St. Andrew* (1583). Oil on canvas; 315 x 235 mm. Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome.



Figure 5. Federico Barocci, *Madonna of the Rosary* (1589-93). Oil on canvas; 290 x 196 cm. Palazzo Vescovile, Senigallia.



Figure 6. Federico Barocci, *Entombment of Christ* (1579-82). Oil on canvas; 295 x 187 cm. Santa Croce, Senigallia.



Figure 7. Federico Barocci, *Immaculate Conception* (c. 1575). Oil on canvas; 217 x 144 cm. Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino.



Figure 8. Benedetto Bonfigli, *Gonfalone of S. Francesco al Prato* (1464).
 Tempera on canvas; 290 x 180 cm, San Francesco al Prato, Perugia.



Figure 9. Benedetto Bonfigli, *Gonfalone of S. Maria Nuova* (c. 1472).
Tempera on canvas; 330 x 171 cm. S. Maria Nuova, Perugia.



Figure 10. *The Madonna and Brothers of the Confraternity of S. Maria delle Morte, Bologna.*
 Miniature from the frontispiece for the 1562 Statutes.
 Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna.



Figure 11. Piazza Grande with a view of the Palazzo of the Confraternity, Arezzo.



Figure 12. Parri Spinelli, *The Virgin Protecting the People of Arezzo with SS. Laurentinus and Pergentinus* (1435). Arezzo, Pinacoteca.



Figure 13. Bartolomeo della Gatta, *St. Roch Intercedes with the Virgin on Behalf of Arezzo* (1479). Museo Statale di Arte Medievale e Moderna, Arezzo.



Figure 14. Bernardo and Domenico Rossellino, *Madonna della Misericordia with SS Laurentinus and Pergentinus* (1433). Palazzo della Fraternità, Arezzo.



Figure 15. Federico Barocci, *Perdono of St. Francis of Assisi* (1574-76). Oil on canvas; 427 x 236 cm. S. Francesco, Urbino.



Figure 16. Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Madonna of the Franciscans* (c. 1270-1300). Pinacoteca, Siena.



Figure 17. Piero della Francesca, *Misericordia Altarpiece* (1445-60). Pinacoteca, Sansepolcro.



Figure 18. Bartolomeo Caporali, *Gonfalone di Montone* (1482). Tempera on canvas; 236 x 164 cm. S. Francesco, Montone.



Figure 19. Bertoldo di Giovanni, *Gonfalone del Duomo di Perugia* (1526). Tempera on canvas; 250 x 140 cm. Cattedrale di S. Lorenzo, Perugia.



Figure 20. Benedetto Antelami, *Judgment Portal*, Parma Baptistery, west doors (c. 1196).

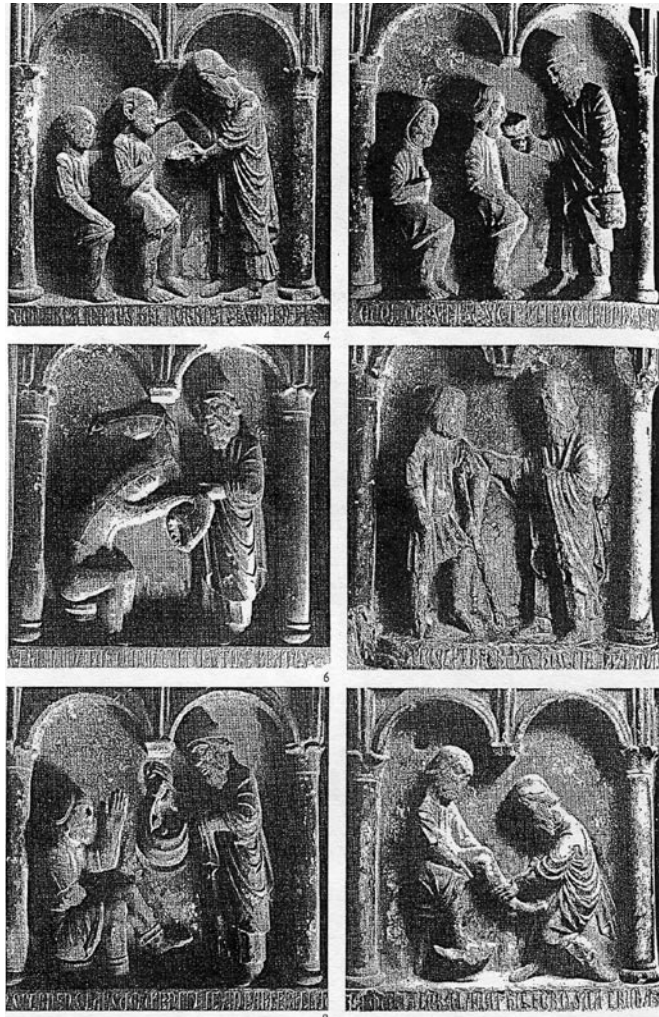


Figure 21. Benedetto Antelami, *Acts of Mercy*, from Parma Baptistery, west doors (c. 1196).



Figure 22. Follower of Bernardo Daddi, *Misericordia Domini* (1352). Museo del Bigallo, Florence.



Figure 23. Follower of Bernardo Daddi, detail of Clothing the Poor from *Misericordia Domini*, (1352). Museo del Bigallo, Florence.



Figure 24. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Seven Acts of Mercy* (1607). Oil on canvas; 390 x 260 cm. Church of Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples.



Figure 25. *Acts of Mercy* (c. 1170). Judgment Portal, Münster, Basel, Switzerland.



Figure 26. Domenico Ghirlandaio and school, *Clothe the Naked* (c. 1478-79). Fresco. San Martino dei Buonomini, Florence.



Figure 27. Domenico Ghirlandaio and school, *Dowering Young Girls* (c. 1478-79). Fresco. San Martino dei Buonomini, Florence.

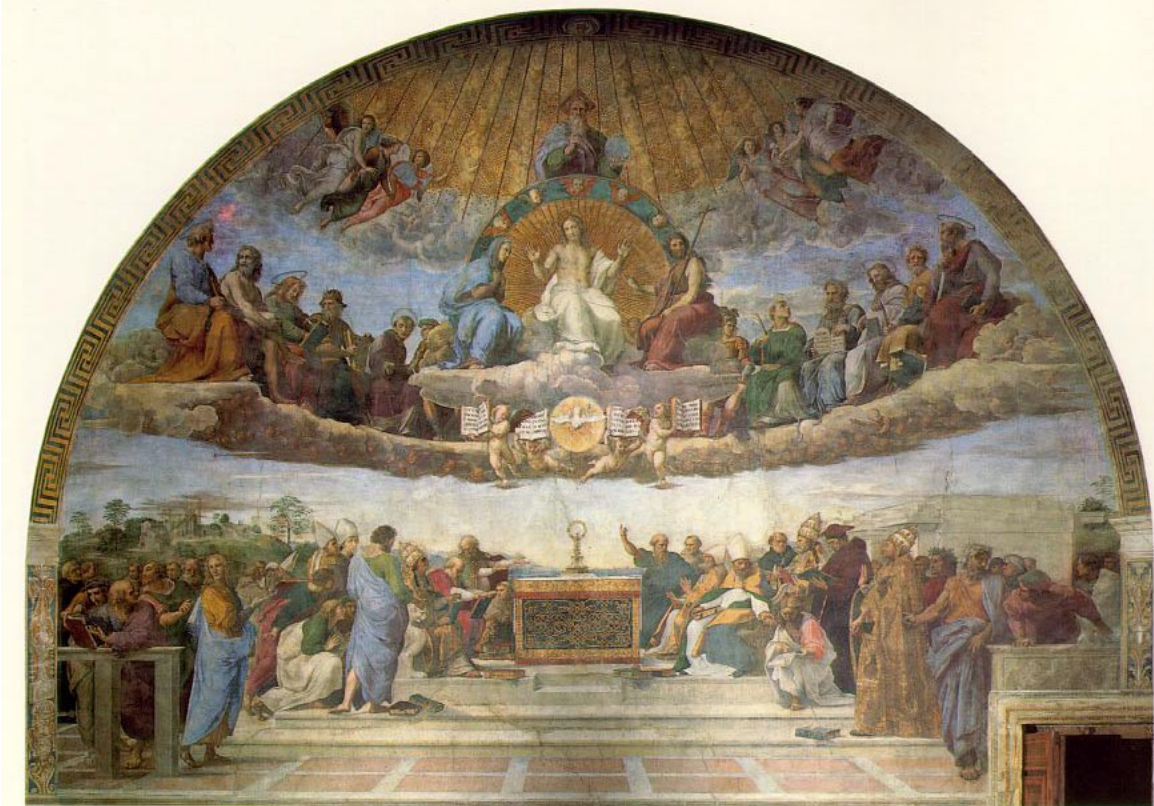


Figure 28. Raphael, *Disputation of the Holy Sacrament* (1510-11). Fresco. Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican, Rome.



Figure 29. Federico Barocci, *Drawing after Raphael's Disputa*, Uffizi inv. no. 11520 F. bis. Black chalk on white paper; 198 x 150 mm.



Figure 30. Federico Barocci, *Various studies for the Immaculate Conception*, Uffizi inv. no. 11668 F. recto. Black and red chalk on blue paper; 410 x 268 mm.



Figure 31. Federico Barocci, *Study of the Madonna della Misericordia*, Uffizi inv. no. 11446 F. Pen and wash, heightened with white, over black chalk on blue paper, squared; 275 x 189 mm.



Figure 32. Federico Barocci, *Compositional study for the Immaculate Conception*, Louvre inv. no. 2855. Pen and wash, black chalk on blue-gray paper; 237 x 180 mm.



Figure 33. Federico Barocci, *Study for Christ in Il Perdono*, Uffizi inv. no. 11374 F. Black, red, and white chalk on blue paper; 405 x 281 mm.



Figure 34. Federico Barocci, *Study for Christ in Il Perdono*, Uffizi inv. no. 11396 F. Black, red, and white chalk on greenish paper; 422 x 285 mm.



Figure 35. Federico Barocci, Modello for the *Madonna del Popolo*, Private Collection, Chicago. Checklist no. 43.



Figure 36. Federico Barocci, *Studies for the man giving alms in the Chicago modello*. Uffizi inv. no. 1399 F. recto. Checklist no. 45.



Figure 37. Federico Barocci, *Head of a young bearded man distributing alms in the Chicago modello*, Windsor inv. no. 5226. Checklist no. 86.



Figure 38. Federico Barocci, *Nude study for the musician*, Berlin KdZ 20431 (4137). Checklist no. 11.



Figure 39. Federico Barocci, *Nude study for the beggar*, Berlin KdZ 20438 (4153). Checklist no. 13.

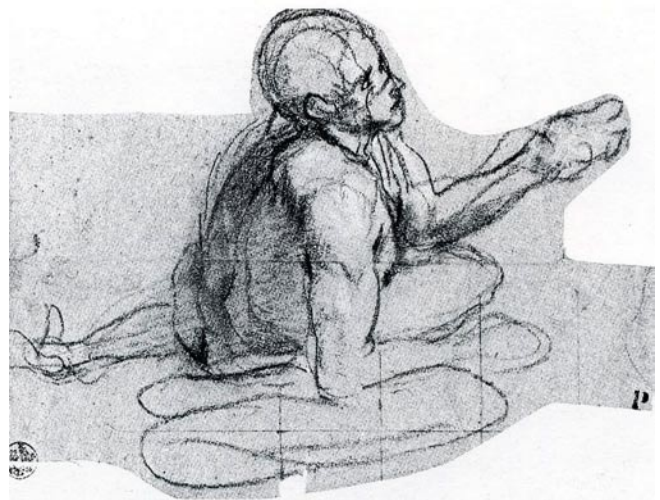


Figure 40. Federico Barocci, *Study for the beggar*, Berlin KdZ 20419 (3728). Checklist no. 4.



Figure 41. Federico Barocci, *Figure study, probably for the beggar*, Berlin KdZ 20415 (3726). Checklist no. 3.

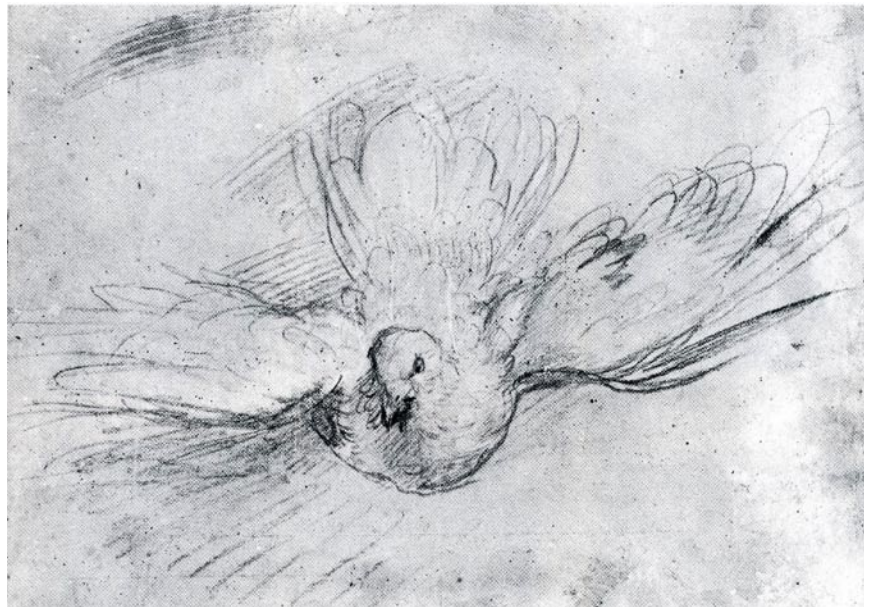


Figure 42. Federico Barocci, *Study for the dove*, Urbino inv. no. 1686. Checklist no. 83.

Figure 43. Federico Barocci, *God the Father Blessing*, Museo Statale d'Arte Medievale e Moderna, Arezzo.



Figure 44. Federico Barocci, *Head of a bearded man, probably the old man in the center*, Windsor inv. no. 5232. Checklist no. 87.



Figure 45. Federico Barocci, *Head of a man on the right*, St. Petersburg inv. no. 121. Checklist no. 77.



Figure 46. Federico Barocci, *Study for the musician*, Uffizi inv. no. 11359 F. Checklist no. 52.

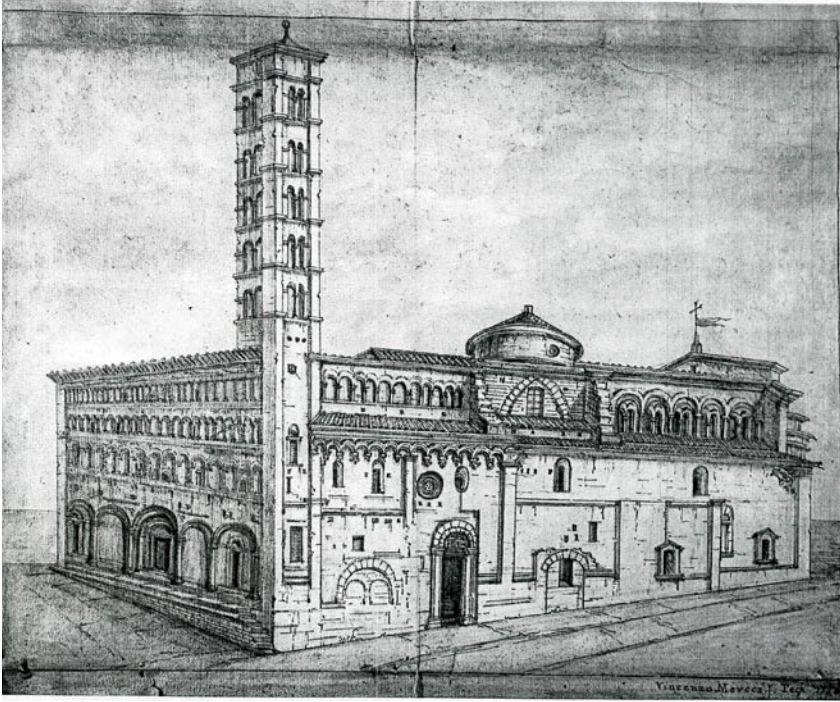


Figure 47. Vincenzo Meucci, Perspective view of S. Maria della Pieve, Arezzo (1756).



Figure 48. Federico Barocci, *Nude study for the man in the center*, Berlin KdZ 20427 (3772) recto. Checklist no. 7.



Figure 49. Titian, *Portrait of Ranuccio Farnese* (1542). Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

VITA

Laura Suzanne Fenley was born September 12, 1982 in Dallas, Texas. She is the daughter of John P. and Barbara S. Fenley. A 2001 graduate of Southlake Carroll High School in Southlake, Texas, she graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History and minor in Studio Art from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth in 2005. In August of 2005, she enrolled in graduate study at Texas Christian University. While working on her Master of Arts degree in Art History, she held a Graduate Assistantship appointment and a Kimbell fellowship.

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the context and iconography of the Italian artist Federico Barocci's (1528-1612) painting *Madonna del Popolo* (Uffizi, Florence). Commissioned by the Pia Confraternità dei Laici di S. Maria della Misericordia for their chapel in Pieve di Arezzo, Barocci develops the moralizing scene into an inventive iconographic depiction that includes acts of almsgiving and the visiting of prisoners to stand in for the Seven Corporal Acts of Mercy, outlined in Matthew 25:31-46. This thesis provides an introduction to confraternities, the religious brotherhoods that flourished in central Italy, and a discussion of the Aretine confraternal patrons of the *Madonna del Popolo*. It addresses Barocci's extensive preparatory process for this work in light of previous models for the subject and with regard to the tightening of iconographic regulations that took place in the wake of the Counter-Reformation, arguing that Barocci's innovative interpretation was particularly suited to the nature of the commission. Finally, this paper provides a discussion of the artist's prolific activities as a draftsman and innovator in the medium of pastel; a complete listing of the approximately ninety extant preparatory drawings for the painting appears in the appendix.