

REFORMATIONS DÜRER & the New Age of Print

The Beginnings of a Historic Collection

Many of the printed books and all of the prints by Albrecht Dürer featured in *Reformations: Dürer & the New Age of Print* were donated to the Gleeson Library by German businessman and collector, Reinhard F. Timken-Zinkann. A devoted admirer and collector of early printed books and incunabula (printed works before 1501), Timken-Zinkann first encountered Dürer's prints as a schoolboy in the final year of World War I, and soon became a collector of prints himself.

"As a lad of seventeen I was held spellbound," he wrote for a *Gleeson Library Associates* newsletter in 1987. "Dürer's graphic work startled me... How masterly did Dürer's woodcuts express the anxieties and the despair which my contemporaries experienced in my own time."

In the 1930s, Timken-Zinkann began collecting rare books and prints, especially those published before 1500, and continued collecting them until he left Germany at the onset of World War II. After settling in Palo Alto, California, he met and began a friendship with William J. Monihan, S.J., then Director of Library Relations at the University of San Francisco. In 1957, Timken-Zinkann lent, and later donated, a significant portion of his exquisite collection to the Gleeson Library.

Since then, the books and prints have been kept in the permanent study collection of the Library's Donohue Rare Book Room for use by USF faculty and students. They have also been loaned to other institutions like the Crocker Art Museum (Sacramento) and to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco for the Legion of Honor's exhibition celebrating Dürer's 500th birthday in 1971.

Objects from the Timken-Zinkann Collection that are exhibited here include all of the prints in Dürer's *Life of the Virgin*, the *Small Woodcut Passion*, and the *Engraved Passion* series, as well as the *Nuremberg Chronicle* printed by Anton Koberger (1493), a popular, early printed Latin Bible (*Biblia Latina*, c. 1468-70), Vitruvius's influential architectural treatise (*De architectura*, 1511), and a very rare example of early biblical commentary by Nicholas of Lyra (*Repertorium in postillam...*, 1494). When not on display these and thousands of other rare volumes are available for study in the Donohue Rare Book Room in Gleeson Library.

