

# Jean-François Courtois

French Painter

(1627-1707)

In Italy known as Giovanni Francesco Cortese - Son of the mediocre painter Jean-Pierre, he was probably born in Saint-Hippolyte in Burgundy around 1627; with the more famous brothers Jacques and Guillaume he arrived in Rome around 1639. One of the few certain news about his life is that in 1659 he took the Capuchin habit in the convent of Palanzana (Viterbo), taking the name of Giovanni Antonio da Sant'Ippolito

Regarding the pictorial work of C. Pascoli (1730) speaks of "some devotional operettas" painted in the "Capuchin convent in Capolecase", today not traceable. Salvagnini reports the news, deducing it from documents of the Archive of the Ursulines of Friborg, that Courtois accompanied, in 1655, his brother Jacques on the journey to Friborg, where he went to visit two sisters nuns: in this city collaborated in the execution of some paintings by Jacques for the church of S. Orsola. At the request of the nuns sisters, he sent in 1688 in Freiburg three paintings, depicting a S. Antonio da Padova, a copy of the Madonna of S. Luca and a Pietà, the location of which is unknown today. In 1673 he replaced the ruined paintings in the tribune of the Anagni cathedral with frescoes depicting the Twelve Apostles, commissioned by the bishop of Anagni GL Castiglioni. In the Capuchin monastery in Rome it is perhaps to be assigned to his hand a painting S. Chiara in ecstasy, which the ancient inventories refer to. However, it is very difficult to find homogeneous or recurring stylistic characters among the mentioned works, such as to be able to define the personality of the author: they are however modest works and of only devotional interest.

by Simonetta Prospero Valentini Rodinò - Biographical Dictionary of Italians - Volume 30 (1984)

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