

The Wittenberg Times 1526-1550



All the news that's fit to print with some editorializing by Martin Luther
Editor: Hank Bitten

1548 *Tintoretto Paints "St. Mark Rescuing a Slave"*



St. Mark Rescuing a Slave

This painting is one of four pictures painted in the Scuola di San Marco. The painting illustrates the story of a Christian slave who was condemned to have his legs broken and his eyes put out for worshipping the relics of Saint Mark, the patron saint of Venice.

Tintoretto painted the slave naked and lying face up. His "owner" is dressed in black and can be seen leaning into the center from a balcony on the left side of the painting. Saint Mark is the figure coming down from heaven to save the slave for his faith in Christ. There are more than 25 ordinary people surrounding the humiliated slave.

The reaction of the people interviewed by *The Wittenberg Times* is that this painting is powerful, thought-provoking, unsettling, and disturbing.

The painting is considered revolutionary in its use of psychology, the theatrical way he illustrates the miracle of St. Mark rescuing a slave, the importance of the spiritual beliefs of ordinary people, and the use of light and shading to provoke a reaction from the viewer. Clearly, this painting reflects the new teachings of both Protestant and Catholic reformers and represents a departure from other religious paintings.