

Cover Art: Jesus heals the blind man
El Greco, 1570 A.✠ D.

El Greco, which means “The Greek” in Spanish, was born Δομήνικος Θεοτοκόπουλος, (Dominicus Theotokopoulos) on the Greek island of Crete in 1541 A.✠ D. He trained in the style of post-Byzantine art, but grew to incorporate elements of “mannerism” (which took High Renaissance style and made figures look ideal or perfect rather than natural), and of the Venetian Renaissance. He moved to Toledo, Spain (hence his name), and became one of the most important artists in Spanish history. Both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions claim El Greco as their own.

The painting on the cover was done in either Venice or Rome, after the artist left Crete but before he arrived in Spain. The oil on canvas betrays a western High Renaissance style, in contrast to the elongated figures and pale skin of many works by El Greco. The left upper portion of the painting, not seen here, is unfinished. Similarly, note the translucence of the two figures seated on the stairs, painted on the rectilinear grid which gives the work perspective. El Greco painted Jesus healing the blind man three times in three separate works, this one he took with him to Spain. The painting is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.



Quinquagesima