



THE ROOM OF VIRTUES

The room takes its name from the four cardinal Virtues that appear in the frescoed frieze on the walls, which was painted in 1616 by Cesare Rossetti. In addition to the Virtues, the frieze includes ten faux-framed paintings of soothing landscapes. As in the adjoining rooms, the centre of the vaulted ceiling once bore the coat of arms of Pope Paul V, later replaced with the emblem of Pius IX in the 1800s.

The Tapestry of *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* is part of a grandiose series dedicated to the New Testament and was woven in the Paris factory of Gobelins in the mid-1700s. The series is composed of total of eight pieces, four of which remain in the Quirinale Palace while the others are conserved in the pontifical collections. Another tapestry from this group hangs in the Room of the Deluge.

On either side of the tapestry are two magnificent terracotta vases, produced in Mexico in the late 1600s; they are mounted on two elegant gilt wooden bases from the 18th Century. The other two vases are part of an extraordinary collection of oriental porcelains gathered by the popes in the second half of the 18th Century; the bases were specifically made to display all the large vases in the gallery of the Quirinale Palace.