



## PICCOLOMINI LIBRARY

A grand marble “façade” in the left aisle of the cathedral, decorated with classical reliefs by Lorenzo di Mariano, known as “Marrina,” leads us into the Piccolomini Library, a sumptuous architectural complex created starting in 1492 at the behest of Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini Todeschini to hold the extensive library of his uncle Pope Pius II. The interior of the library is covered with brilliant frescoes painted by Bernardino di Betto, better known as “Pinturicchio,” who illustrated on the ceiling (1502) and in ten frames on the walls (1505-07) the salient episodes from the life of Pius II. Below these, glass cases hold large choir books illuminated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with elegant, beautiful miniatures. In the center of the room stands a sculpture group of the Three Graces, a Roman copy of a Hellenistic original, made in the third century A.D.