Allusions in *The Nun’s Priest’s Tale*:

- The teaching of “humors” in the Middle Ages:
  
  http://www.maggietron.com/med/humors.php

- Dionysius Cato:
  

*Distich: 1. A unit of verse consisting of two lines, especially as used in Greek and Latin elegiac poetry. 2. A rhyming couplet.


- Joseph: Joseph, son of Israel (Jacob) and Rachel, lived in the land of Canaan with eleven brothers and one sister. He was Rachel's firstborn and Israel's eleventh son. Of all the sons, Joseph was loved by his father the most. Israel even arrayed Joseph with a "long coat of many colors".[4] Israel's favoritism toward Joseph caused his half brothers to hate him, and when Joseph was seventeen years old he had two dreams that made his brothers plot his demise. In the first dream, Joseph and his brothers gathered bundles of grain. Then, all of the grain bundles that had been prepared by the brothers gathered around Joseph's bundle and bowed down to it. In the second dream, the sun (father), the moon (mother) and eleven stars (brothers) bowed down to Joseph himself. When he told these two dreams to his brothers, they despised him for the implications that the family would be bowing down to Joseph. They became jealous that their father would even ponder over Joseph's words concerning these dreams. (Genesis 37:1-11)

- Pharaoh...baker...butlerJoseph in prison: The warden put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners,[12] and soon afterward Pharaoh's chief cup bearer and chief baker, who had offended the Pharaoh, were thrown into the prison.[13] They both had dreams, and they asked Joseph to help interpret them. The chief cup bearer had held a vine in his hand, with three branches that brought forth grapes; he took them to Pharaoh and put them in his cup. The chief baker had three baskets of bread on his head, intended for Pharaoh, but some birds came along and ate the bread. Joseph told them that within three days the chief cup bearer would be reinstated but the chief baker would be hanged.[14] Joseph requested the cup bearer to mention him to Pharaoh and secure his release from prison,[15] but the cup bearer, reinstalled in office, forgot Joseph.[16] After Joseph was in prison for two more years, Pharaoh had two dreams which
disturbed him. He dreamt of seven lean cows which rose out of the river and devoured seven fat cows; and, of seven withered ears of grain which devoured seven fat ears. Pharaoh's wise men were unable to interpret these dreams, but the chief cup bearer remembered Joseph and spoke of his skill to Pharaoh. Joseph was called for, and interpreted the dreams as foretelling that seven years of abundance would be followed by seven years of famine, and advised Pharaoh to store surplus grain during the years of abundance. Pharaoh acknowledged that Joseph's proposal to store grain during the abundant period was very wise. So before Joseph was even 30 years old, Pharaoh released him from prison and put him in charge over "all the land of Egypt" as Vizier. The Pharaoh took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph's hand, then clothed him in fine linen and put a gold necklace around his neck.

- Andromache, Hector’s wife: [http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/andromache/Andromache.htm](http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/andromache/Andromache.htm)
- Venus: [http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/aphroditevenus/a/Venus.htm](http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/aphroditevenus/a/Venus.htm)
- Richard the Lionheart: [http://www.themiddleages.net/people/richard_lionheart.html](http://www.themiddleages.net/people/richard_lionheart.html)
- Greeks won Troy/Pyrrhus/King Priam (characters in the Aeneid by Virgil): One of the things that I love about Vergil as an author is his profound humanism. Even his so-called villains are worthy of sympathy and understanding—all, that is, except for Pyrrhus. With Pyrrhus, Vergil seems to be doing something else entirely: creating a person with no ability to pity or empathize with others. It is, as far as I can tell, the first depiction of a sociopath in Western literature. Once inside the palace, Pyrrhus chases down the Trojan prince Polites, killing him in front of his father, the aged King Priam, who has taken shelter at the household alters. The old king, in one of the most moving moments in the Aeneid, rises, trembling with grief and age, to deliver a ringing speech that calls down the wrath of the gods upon Pyrrhus for his double blasphemy: killing a son in front
of his father, and defiling a sanctuary. As a further reproach, he compares him to his father, unfavorably: “Not even Achilles behaved so to me. He knew how to respect the laws of the suppliant; he returned my son’s body to me, and sent me safely home again.” This is a reference to the famous scene in the Iliad where Priam goes to Achilles’ tent to beg for Hector’s body, and Achilles relents—a shining moment of mercy and hope in an otherwise bloody work. Priam begs Achilles for Hector’s body, but you cannot shame a man like Pyrrhus. His response is sneering contempt: “You can go tell my father about my disgraceful deeds yourself. Now, die!” He seizes the old man by his hair, and drags him, slipping in the blood of his son, to the altar to dispatch him. Later we hear that Priam’s body has been left on the shore, missing its head, for the animals to eat. It is not enough for Pyrrhus to have killed him, he must also dishonor him—mutilating his body and depriving his soul of its eternal peace. The hope kindled in the meeting between Achilles and Priam is snuffed, utterly, by the son.


- Nero: [http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/mediterranean/nero.html](http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/mediterranean/nero.html)