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**Franciscan Preaching Tradition in Italian Painting of the Thirteenth Century**

Images represent essential part of medieval devotion. What kind of a medium for a corporative education of the community they offered, besides serving as a centre and fundament of votive rites and liturgical practices? They offered moral patterns and civic ideals, ennobling and simultaneously providing evidence and memory of the particular activity done by the urban community. The depiction that combined a preaching of a saint with an act of presence of city community, offered the faithful a visual formulation of the canon of exemplary conduct to be followed. The representations of preachers in the act of reciting sermons stimulated the desire for atonement of sins: they constituted, in this sense, a high degree of social function. By the preachers themselves, these images, a mirror of their activities, legitimize and promote their institutional activities conducted for the benefit of local community. The subject of the sermon was affirmed in a decisive manner by the Italian figurative culture in the thirteenth century within mendicant orders. The Franciscan Order, and in a more restricted way Dominican Order, used the media of painting to confirm visually and on a grand scale the authorship of this important innovation in the field of sacred rhetoric, beginning the reform of the traditional preaching or the glossa and pure biblical exegesis, to a more playful and accessible forms. This article aims to provide impetus to the study of the thirteenth century paintings that have as their subject Franciscan preaching. Focusing on significant figurative examples in the Italian context, it highlights specific characteristics and forms.