

# Bardi Dossal

Master of San Francesco Bardi (~1245)  
Bardi Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence

*A medieval promotional/recruitment tool that can also provide contemporary Franciscans with another way to contemplate, learn from, and be inspired by the life of St. Francis.*

## LEFT: Vocation & relationship with clergy. His humanity.

First 5 scenes depict his journey and the founding of the Order. Note repeated presence of Bishop/Priests demonstrating strong relationship with the Church.

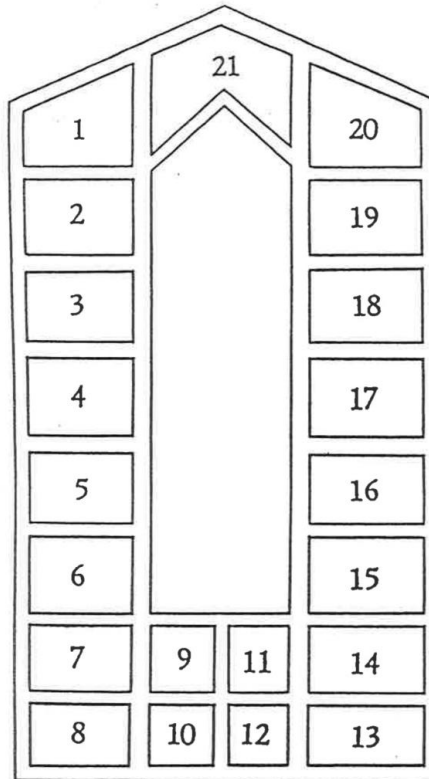
- 1) His mother frees Francis from prison.
- 2) Renounces his father before Bishop of Assisi
- 3) Tunic as cross = desire to follow Crucified Christ
- 4) Removes shoes while hearing Gospel of Luke
- 5) Pope Innocent approves Rule

Scenes depict Francis preaching. Emphasize movement beyond preaching penance. Also traditional matters: supporting secular clergy, living the Gospels, and missionary efforts.

- 6) Christmas at Greccio: Defines preaching mission – Francis is innovative; all about incarnation. Obedience to Church – asked permission for novel devotion. Dressed as Deacon.
- 7) Birds = Universal Mission. Many species of birds unlike to be seen together in this combination. Peacemaking.
- 8) Preaches to Sultan (robe sultan wearing is white – sultan is painted as a holy man)

Scenes show Francis saving lambs highlighting his special roll in defending and saving the Lamb of God and His Church.

- 9) Rescues lamb from rams and goats
- 10) Trades cloak for sheep



## CENTER: Imitation and love of Christ – rewarded with the stigmata. Holding the Gospel.

Scroll handed down from heaven:  
"HUNC EXA UDITE PER  
HIBENTEM DOGMATA VITE" or  
"Listen to him who bears the  
dogma of life.

## RIGHT: Holiness and canonization. Love of poverty. His literal obedience to law of Christ.

Next 4 scenes make connection between Francis and Christ explicit.

- 11) Receives Stigmata
- 12) Public Penance. Example – public show of humility. Iconography of the Passion.
- 13) Chapter of Arles – recalls Christ's appearance to the apostles before ascension.
- 14) Care of lepers (esp. washing feet) – Francis shown twice in same panel, and is shown at end of his life. This emphasizes that this was a life-long ministry of him and Friars.

Canonization and posthumous miracles. Demonstrate his sanctity and continued active presence even after death (esp. in Florence).

- 15) Death of Francis -- 4 persons kneeling indicate miracles that will come after his death
- 16) Cures: Girl with bent neck, possessed woman and cripple
- 17) Canonization
- 18) Calms sea – saves seamen - (a miracle that was not widely known, of special significance to Florence. It's thought some of the sailors portrayed were actual Florentines)
- 19) Mariners in penitential procession of thanks (Florence)
- 20) Cure of cripple of Narni – told in Celano