



Italy 05042 M00052

15th century Tempera on panel

A devotional scene depicting the Virgin Mary on her deathbed,

surrounded by the Apostles in solemn vigil. The composition reflects a transition from Gothic tradition—evident in the gilded halos—to early Renaissance naturalism in the expressive, individualized figures.

This evocative devotional panel portrays The **Dormition of the Virgin**, the sacred moment marking the earthly passing of the Virgin Mary, rendered with solemn dignity and intimate human emotion.

At the center, the Virgin reclines peacefully upon her bier, her pale, serene visage embodying both resignation and spiritual transcendence. Draped in deep crimson, her form creates a striking visual anchor within the composition, contrasting against the surrounding figures. A tapering candle in the foreground—its flame delicately rendered—serves as a poignant symbol of mortality and the passage from earthly life to eternal rest.

Encircling her are the apostles, gathered in close, almost claustrophobic proximity, their overlapping halos forming a rhythmic golden arc across the upper register. Each figure is

imbued with individualized expression: some bow in quiet contemplation, others lean inward with visible grief, while one figure—traditionally identified as Saint Peter—appears absorbed in reading sacred rites, underscoring the liturgical solemnity of the scene.

The composition is intentionally compressed, heightening the emotional intensity and directing the viewer's focus toward the Virgin's final repose. The stylized halos, rendered in luminous gold tones, and the rich palette of deep reds, blacks, and ochres reflect the enduring influence of late medieval devotional painting, while the subtle modeling of faces suggests an emerging Renaissance sensibility.

Rather than depicting the triumphant ascent of the Assumption, this work captures the more intimate and human moment of transition—the quiet threshold between life and eternity—inviting contemplation on mortality, faith, and divine grace.

Height: 31 3/4" x Width: 21 5/8" x Depth: 2"