

Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection: Works of St. Bonaventure

Robert J. Karris, OFM

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Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection: Works of St. Bonaventure Robert J. Karris, OFM On the surface, St. Bonaventure's Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection seems like another scholastic exercise until one realizes four things. First, of the 81 pages in the critical edition 40 of those pages deal with poverty and 19 pages deal with obedience. Second, of the 19 pages dedicated to obedience almost half of those pages deal with obedience to the Pope. Third, at the end of this treatment of Question II, Article II on begging, Bonaventure devotes 6 pages to refuting those who attack the mendicant way of life. Finally, in Question II, Article II (on begging) and Question V 9on obedience) Bonaventure cites cannon law with great frequency. When these internal pieces of evidence are taken together with events at the University of Paris during the period 250-1256 and with the eschatological mood of the era, we begin to realize that this work of Bonaventure is not just a scholastic exercise that will help form young friars minor in their evangelical style of life. It is also an eschatological document with a sharp polemical bite. If readers today can capture just one spark of Bonaventure's eschatological fervor and vision in this writing, they will have surely warmed their hearts at its center.



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