



Saint Gregory The Great, Pope And Doctor Of The Church



1 650 EUR

Signature : Maître Italien du 16ème Siècle

Period : 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 46 cm

Height : 66 cm

Description

Saint Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church
16th-Century Italian School
Oil on canvas - 66 x 46 cm
Original canvas, later stretcher. Very well preserved. This remarkable portrait of Saint Gregory the Great (540-604), elected pope in 590, is part of the great tradition of Italian religious painting of the late Renaissance. The artist offers us here a composition imbued with solemnity and contemplation, characteristic of the papal effigies of the Counter-Reformation. Saint Gregory is depicted as a bust, dressed in pontifical vestments, his tiara resting on the table to his left, a symbol of his spiritual authority. His right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing, while his left hand holds an open book, a sign of doctrine and the divine word. Behind him, a wide purple curtain opens onto an architectural backdrop.

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evoking papal Rome and its temporal stability. The quill and inkwell on the right recall his role as a writer and Church Father, notably the author of the *Liber Regulæ Pastoralis* and numerous sermons. The execution, expressively sober, is typical of 16th-century Italian painting, where the balance of volumes and rigorous drawing take precedence over decorative display. The treatment of the face, imbued with interiority, evokes the great Lombard or Emilian school, sensitive to the spirituality and psychological accuracy of the saints depicted. The warm, muted tones—ochres, deep reds, ferruginous browns—contrast with the whiteness of the liturgical vestments, emphasizing the purity of the pontiff's soul. The brushstroke, both firm and supple, and the chromatic structure dominated by dark glazes, recall certain works from the Bolognese sphere, in the tradition of Prospero Fontana or the early Carracci.

Condition The work is in very good condition, mounted on its original canvas, with a replaced stretcher. The painting surface displays a beautiful uniformity of varnish and retains its original brightness. No visible restoration or major alteration.

Historical Context Saint Gregory I, known as Gregory the Great, was one of the four great Latin Doctors of the Church. His pontificate (590-604) had a profound impact on medieval spirituality. His iconography, widespread in northern Italy and Rome in the 16th century, was often commissioned for Benedictine monasteries or episcopal sees. This painting may have come from a cycle of papal portraits intended for an oratory or a religious chapter.

Attribution and Expertise Attributable to a northern Italian workshop, probably Bologna or Milan, circa 1580-1600. Further expertise could be considered to refine the attribution, particularly through stylistic comparison with works by Domenico Tibaldi or Bartolomeo Passerotti, whose drapery and palette are closely related.

Dimensions 66 x 46 cm

Provenance Private collection, Milan.

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