

*Ascension of Christ*, by Fra Angelico (c. 1395–1455)

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In Fra Angelico's depiction of Christ's ascension, Mary occupies center stage. A monk at the monastery of San Marco in Florence in the 15th century, Fra Angelico painted the work to decorate the doors of a silver treasury for an oratory to be constructed near the chapel of the Santissima Annunziata in the church of the same name. The 11 apostles, two angels, and Mary are united in a circle in the lower half of the

painting. Peter, with his keys, is identifiable at Mary's right. The top and bottom borders of the composition contain Latin inscriptions on scrolls, citing Psalm 17:11, "And he ascended upon the cloud, and he flew upon the wings of the winds," and Mark 16:19, "The Lord Jesus, after he had spoken, was taken up into heaven. The ending of Mark." The painting is now in the Museum of San Marco in Florence.