

**Franco Mormando** is Associate Professor of Italian in the Dept. of Romance Languages and Literatures at Boston College. Born and raised in Manhattan, he did his undergraduate degree (B.A.) at Columbia University. His two graduate degrees in Italian (M.A. and Ph.D.) are from Harvard University. He holds as well a licentiate (Master's degree) in church history from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, having also completed the *Biennio di Filosofia* program at the Gregorian University in Rome.

In 1999 he was principal curator and catalogue editor of the Boston Caravaggio exhibition, *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image*. He was also originator and co-curator of the 2005 exhibition at the Worcester Art Museum entitled *Hope and Healing: Painting in Italy in a Time of Plague, 1500-1800* and edited a companion volume entitled, *Piety and Plague in Europe: From Byzantium to the Baroque*, published in 2007.

His book, *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy*, was published in 1999 by the University of Chicago Press and awarded the Howard Marraro Prize for Excellence in Italian historical scholarship by the American Catholic Historical Association.

Author of various interdisciplinary articles on Italian literature and history, popular religion and sermons, he has lectured extensively on the religious art and culture of early modern Italy at various universities and museums including the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. The focus of his current research and writing is the Italian Baroque artist, Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

In September, 2005, in recognition of his achievements in the promotion of the Italian language and culture, he was inducted by the Republic of Italy into its honorary *Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana* with the title of "Cavaliere."