

Purgatory XI

Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)
Il Cantico del Sole (Cantico della Creature)

Purgatory XI begins with a recitation of the Lord's prayer. Critics have shown that Dante's phrasing ("*laudato sia 'l tuo nome*," "praised be your name") does not reproduce the Gospel but rather echoes St. Francis' religious hymn *Laudes creaturarum*.

Il Cantico del Sole

Altissimu onnipotente bon signore. tue so le laude la gloria e l onore
et onne benedictione. Ad te solo altissimo se konfano. et nullu homo
ene digne te mentouare.

Laudato sie mi signore cum tucte le tue creature spetialmente messor
lo frate sole. lo quale iorno et allumini per loi. Et ellu e bellu e radiante
cum grande splendore. de te altissimo porta significatione.

Laudato si mi signore per sora luna e le stelle. in celu l ai formate et
pretiose et belle.

Laudato si mi signore per frate uento et per aere et nubilo et sereno et
onne tempo. per lo quale a le tue creature dai sustentamento.

Laudato si mi signore per sor acqua. la quale e multo utile et humile et
pretiosa. et casta.

Laudato si mi signore per per frate focu. per lo quale ennallumini la
nocte. ed ello e bello et iucundo et robusto et forte.

Laudato si mi signore per sora nostra matre terra. la quale ne
sustenta et gouerna. et produce diuersi fructi con coloriti fiore et
herba.

Laudato si mi signore per quelli ke perdonano per lo tue amore. et
sostengo infirmitate et tribulatione. beati quelli ke l sosterranno in
pace. ka da te altissimo sirano incoronati.

Laudato si mi signore per sora nostra morte corporale. da la quale
nulla homo uiuente po skappare. guai a cquelli ke morrano ne le
peccata mortali. beati quelli ke trouara ne le tue sanctissime uoluntati
ka la morte secunda nol farra male.

Laudate et benedicete mi signore et rengratiate et seruiteli cum
grande humilitate.

Translation

The Canticle of the Sun

Most high, all powerful, all good Lord! All praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing. To you, alone, Most High, do they belong. No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and clouds and storms, and all the weather, through which you give your creatures sustenance.

Be praised, My Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, through those who forgive for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy those who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whose embrace no living person can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your most holy will. The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks, and serve him with great humility.

(Translated by Bill Barrett)

Purgatory XI

Saint Augustine (354-430)

Book I, Chapters I-III, *Confessions*

Dante's language in Purgatory XI also evokes St. Augustine's *Confessions*, which begins with the invocation of God.

Book I, Chapters I-III, *Confessions*

Book I, Chapter I

magnus es, domine, et laudabilis valde. magna virtus tua et sapientiae tuae non est numerus. et laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae, et homo circumferens mortalitatem suam, circumferens testimonium peccati sui et testimonium quia superbis resistis; et tamen laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae. tu excitas ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te. da mihi, domine, scire et intellegere utrum sit prius invocare te an laudare te, et scire te prius sit an invocare te. sed quis te invocat nesciens te? aliud enim pro alio potest invocare nesciens. an potius invocaris ut sciaris? quomodo autem invocabunt, in quem non crediderunt? aut quomodo credent sine praedicante? et laudabunt dominum qui requirunt eum: quaerentes enim inveniunt eum et invenientes laudabunt eum. quaeram te, domine, invocans te et invocem te credens in te: praedicatus enim es nobis. invocat te, domine, fides mea, quam dedisti mihi, quam inspirasti mihi per humanitatem filii tui, per ministerium praedicatoris tui.

Book I, Chapter II

et quomodo invocabo deum meum, deum et dominum meum, quoniam utique in me ipsum eum vocabo, cum invocabo eum? et quis locus est in me quo veniat in me deus meus, quo deus veniat in me, deus qui fecit caelum et terram? itane, domine deus meus? est quicquam in me quod capiat te? an vero caelum et terra, quae fecisti et in quibus me fecisti, capiunt te? an quia sine te non esset quidquid est, fit ut quidquid est capiat te? quoniam itaque et ego sum, quid peto ut venias in me, qui non essem nisi esses in me? non enim ego iam inferi, et tamen etiam ibi es, nam etsi descendero in infernum, ades. non ergo essem, deus meus, non omnino essem, nisi esses in me. an potius non essem nisi essem in te, ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia? etiam sic, domine, etiam sic. quo te invoco, cum in te sim? aut unde venias in me? quo enim recedam extra caelum et terram, ut inde in me veniat deus meus, qui dixit, 'caelum et terram ego impleo'?

Book I, Chapter III

capiunt ergone te caelum et terra, quoniam tu imples ea? an imples et restat, quoniam non te capiunt? et quo refundis quidquid impleto caelo et terra restat ex te? an non opus habes ut quoquam continearis, qui

contines omnia, quoniam quae imples continendo imples? non enim vasa quae te plena sunt stabilem te faciunt, quia etsi frangantur non effunderis. et cum effunderis super nos, non tu iaces sed erigis nos, nec tu dissiparis sed conligis nos. sed quae imples omnia, te toto imples omnia. an quia non possunt te totum capere omnia, partem tui capiunt et eandem partem simul omnia capiunt? an singulas singula et maiores maiora, minores minora capiunt? ergo est aliqua pars tua maior, aliqua minor? an ubique totus es et res nulla te totum capit?

Translation

Book I, Chapters I-III, *Confessions*

Book I, Chapter I

1. "Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is thy power, and infinite is thy wisdom."⁶⁶ Cf. Ps. 145:3 and Ps. 147:5. And man desires to praise thee, for he is a part of thy creation; he bears his mortality about with him and carries the evidence of his sin and the proof that thou dost resist the proud. Still he desires to praise thee, this man who is only a small part of thy creation. Thou hast prompted him, that he should delight to praise thee, for thou hast made us for thyself and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee. Grant me, O Lord, to know and understand whether first to invoke thee or to praise thee; whether first to know thee or call upon thee. But who can invoke thee, knowing thee not? For he who knows thee not may invoke thee as another than thou art. It may be that we should invoke thee in order that we may come to know thee. But "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe without a preacher?"⁷⁷ Rom. 10:14. Now, "they shall praise the Lord who seek him,"⁸⁸ Ps. 22:26. for "those who seek shall find him,"⁹⁹ Matt. 7:7. and, finding him, shall praise him. I will seek thee, O Lord, and call upon thee. I call upon thee, O Lord, in my faith which thou hast given me, which thou hast inspired in me through the humanity of thy Son, and through the ministry of thy preacher.¹⁰¹⁰ A reference to Bishop Ambrose of Milan; see Bk. V, Ch. XIII; Bk. VIII, Ch. 11, 3.

Book I, Chapter II

2. And how shall I call upon my God--my God and my Lord? For when I call on him I ask him to come into me. And what place is there in me into which my God can come? How could God, the God who made both heaven and earth, come into me? Is there anything in me, O Lord my God, that can contain thee? Do even the heaven and the earth, which thou hast made, and in which thou didst make me, contain thee? Is it possible that, since without thee nothing would be which does exist, thou didst make it so that whatever exists has some capacity to receive thee? Why, then, do I ask thee to come into me, since I also am and could not be if thou wert not in me? For I am not, after all, in hell--and yet thou art there too, for "if I go down into hell, thou art there."¹¹¹¹ Ps. 139:8. Therefore I would not exist--I would simply not be at all--unless I exist in

thee, from whom and by whom and in whom all things are. Even so, Lord; even so. Where do I call thee to, when I am already in thee? Or from whence wouldst thou come into me? Where, beyond heaven and earth, could I go that there my God might come to me--he who hath said, "I fill heaven and earth"? 1212 Jer. 23:24.

Book I, Chapter III

3. Since, then, thou dost fill the heaven and earth, do they contain thee? Or, dost thou fill and overflow them, because they cannot contain thee? And where dost thou pour out what remains of thee after heaven and earth are full? Or, indeed, is there no need that thou, who dost contain all things, shouldst be contained by any, since those things which thou dost fill thou fillest by containing them? For the vessels which thou dost fill do not confine thee, since even if they were broken, thou wouldst not be poured out. And, when thou art poured out on us, thou art not thereby brought down; rather, we are uplifted. Thou art not scattered; rather, thou dost gather us together. But when thou dost fill all things, dost thou fill them with thy whole being? Or, since not even all things together could contain thee altogether, does any one thing contain a single part, and do all things contain that same part at the same time? Do singulars contain thee singly? Do greater things contain more of thee, and smaller things less? Or, is it not rather that thou art wholly present everywhere, yet in such a way that nothing contains thee wholly?

(Translated by Albert C. Outler)