

The canticle of the brother sun

Il Cantico del Frate Sole

FRANCIS OF ASSISI (c. 1181–1226)

translated by PASCHAL ROBINSON (o)

Most high, omnipotent, good Lord,
Praise, glory and honor and benediction all, are Thine.
To Thee alone do they belong, most High,
And there is no man fit to mention Thee.

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, with all Thy creatures,
Especially to my worshipful brother sun,
The which lights up the day,
and through him dost Thou brightness give;
And beautiful is he and radiant with splendor great;
Of Thee, most High, signification gives.

Praised be my Lord, for sister moon and for the stars,
In heaven Thou hast formed them clear and precious and fair.

Praised be my Lord for brother wind
And for the air and clouds and fair and every kind of weather,
By the which Thou givest to Thy creatures nourishment.

Praised be my Lord for sister water,
The which is greatly helpful and humble and precious and pure.

Praised be my Lord for brother fire,
By the which Thou lightest up the dark.
And fair is he and gay and mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our sister, mother earth,
The which sustains and keeps us
And brings forth diverse fruits with grass and flowers bright.

Praised be my Lord for those who for Thy love forgive
And weakness bear and tribulation.
Blessed those who shall in peace endure,
For by Thee, most High, shall they be crowned.

Praised be my Lord for our sister, the bodily death,
From the which no living man can flee.
Woe to them who die in mortal sin;
Blessed those who shall find themselves in Thy most holy will,
For the second death shall do them no ill.

Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, and give Him thanks,
And be subject unto Him with great humility.

English metrical version by WILLIAM H. DRAPER:

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam,

O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Italian text: Paul Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), pp. 304–305, via *Hymnology Archive*.

English text (Robinson): Paschal Robinson, *The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi* (Philadelphia: Dolphin Press, 1906), pp. 152–153, via *Hymnology Archive*.

Original Italian:

Altissimu, onnipotente, bon signore,
tue so le laude la gloria e l'onore et onne benedictione.
Ad te sole, altissimo, se konfano
et nullu homo ene dignu te mentovare.

Laudato sie, mi signore, cum tucte le tue creature
spetialmente messor lo frate sole,
lo quale jorna,
et illumini per lui;
Et ellu è bellu e radiante cum grande splendore;
de te, altissimo, porta significatione.

Laudato si, mi signore, per sora luna e le stelle,
in celu l'ài formate clarite et pretiose et belle.

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

Laudato si, mi signore, per sor acqua,
la quale è multo utile et humele et pretiosa et casta.

Laudato si, mi signore, per frate focu,
per lo quale ennallumini la nocte,
ed ello è bello et jucundo et robustoso et forte.

Laudato si, mi signore, per sora nostra matre terra,
la quale ne sustenta et governa
et produce diversi fructi con colorite flori et herba.

Laudato si, mi signore, per quilli ke perdonano per lo tuo amore
et sostengo infirmitate et tribulatione.
beati quilli ke sosterrano in pace,
ka da te, altissimo, sirano incoronati.

Laudato si, mi signore, per sora nostra morte corporale,
de la quale nullu homo vivente po skappare:
guai a quilli ke morrano ne le peccata mortali;
beati quilli ke se trovarà ne le tue sanctissime voluntati,
ka la morte secunda nol farrà male.

Laudate et benedicete mi signore et rengriate
et serviteli cum grande humilitate.

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heaven along.

O praise him, Alleluia!

Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice.

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear,

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfoldest blessings on our way,

O praise him, Alleluia!

The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
Let them his glory also show.

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,

O sing ye, Alleluia!

Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on him cast your care.

And thou most kind and gentle Death,
Waiting to hush our latest breath,

O praise him, Alleluia!

Thou leadest home the child of God,
And Christ our Lord the way hath trod.

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness,

O praise him, Alleluia!

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One.

English text (Draper): The Public School Hymn Book with Tunes (London:
Novello, 1919), no. 79, via *Hymnology Archive*.