

# THE CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES

*for Saint Francis of Assisi*



LUIGI SANTUCCI

Translated by Demetrio S. Yocum | Illustrated by Br. Martin Erspamer, osw

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*It came to pass  
by a supernatural influx of power  
that the nature of brute animals  
was moved in some gracious manner  
toward him.*

—ST. BONAVENTURE







*Heaven and earth glorify God. All the creatures proclaim his existence. The heaven cries to God: "You it was who made me: I did not make myself." And the earth cries: "You are my creator: you it was who made me."*

*But when and how do they proclaim this truth? When humankind reflects on them and on this truth, therein precisely is the answer. It is thanks to your careful examination of them, it is thanks to your voice that they have a voice.*

*Look at the heavens: how beautiful they are! And look at the earth: how beautiful it is! Both heaven and earth radiate beauty.*

*God has made them, he directs them, he orders their course, is always present in their history, he determines their importance and arranges them in relation to his nature. That is why all creatures glorify him, those that move and those that are static, the heavens above and the earth below, perennial youth and august old age.*

*This spectacle which has been given you to admire, the joy with which it inspires you, the impetus with which it raises you up to the Maker of it all, the revelation of the ineffable Being through whom he created it—all this is the testimony of heaven and earth to which you bear witness when you look at them.*

*Because he has made every object, because no object is greater than he, all his works are as it were within him, as though contained in him. If you love what he has made, love still more him who has made it all. If the creation is beautiful, God who is reflected in it is infinitely more beautiful.<sup>1</sup>*

—ST. AUGUSTINE





*Through the love of the most sublime poverty, the man of God prospered and grew rich in holy simplicity. Although he certainly possessed nothing of his own in this world, he seemed to possess all good things in the very Author of this world. With the steady gaze of a dove, that is, the simple application and pure consideration of the mind, he referred all things to the supreme Artisan and recognized, loved, and praised their Maker in all things. It came to pass, by a heavenly gift of kindness, that he possessed all things in God and God in all things. In consideration of the primal origin of all things, he would call all creatures, however insignificant, by the names of brother and sister since they come forth with him from the one source. He embraced those, however, more tenderly and passionately, who portray by a natural likeness the gracious gentleness of Christ and exemplify it in the Scriptures. It came to pass by a supernatural influx of power that the nature of brute animals was moved in some gracious manner toward him. Even inanimate things obeyed his command, as if this same holy man, so simple and upright, had already returned to the state of innocence.<sup>2</sup>*

—ST. BONAVENTURE



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