

Sia laudato San Francesco

Laudario di Cortona (Cortona, Biblioteca Comunale, MS 91), fols 93–96. SATB arrangement of the refrain by Leah Stuttard.

The great Franciscan lauda of the Cortona manuscript, sung by lay people at the friars' church within living memory of the saint. It is a compact life of Francis: the stigmata on La Verna, the three Orders he founded (friars, Poor Clares, and the married penitents of the Third Order), the sermon to the birds, his miracles. The refrain returns after every stanza. Our score sets the refrain in four parts with the first stanza as a solo line; the whole poem is given here so that any stanza can be sung to the same tune. Note the pun in stanza 12: 'Francesco, franco core', Francis, frank heart.

English translation	Italian (as sung)
Ripresa (refrain)	
Praised be Saint Francis, who appeared nailed to the cross like the Redeemer.	<i>Sia laudato San Francesco, quelli c'aparve en croce fixo, como redemptore.</i>
Stanza 1 (in our score)	
He was made in the likeness of Christ: he was marked with the wounds because he had carried Christ's love written in his heart.	<i>A Cristo fo configurato: de le piaghe fo signato emperciò k'avèa portato scripto in core lu suo amore.</i>
Stanza 2	
Many messengers had been sent by the divine majesty, and the peoples had been preached to, as the scriptures tell.	<i>Molti messi avea mandati la divina maiestade e le gente predicate, como dicom le scripture.</i>
Stanza 3	
Among them there was found no one so privileged, equipped with new arms, a knight of such honour.	<i>Intra ' quali non fo trovato nullo privilegiato d'arme nove coredato, cavalieri a tant'onore.</i>
Stanza 4	
On La Verna, the holy mountain, the saint stood in great weeping; and that weeping was turned into song by the consoling seraph.	<i>A la Verna, al monte sancto, stava 'l sancto cum gran pianto; lo qual pianto li torna in canto el sarapyn consolatore.</i>
Stanza 5	
By divine inspiration he was given the understanding to save from perdition many who were sinners.	<i>Per divino spiramento folli dato intendimento de salvar da perdemento molti k'eran peccatori.</i>
Stanza 6	
When blessed Saint Francis was sent by God, the world that lay in darkness received a great splendour.	<i>Quando fo da Dio mandato San Francesco lo beato, lo mondo k'era entenebrato recevette gran splendore.</i>

English translation

Italian (as sung)

Stanza 7

To the praise of the Trinity
the three Orders he planted,
spread throughout the world,
bear fruit and fragrance.

*A laude de la Trinitade
l'ordine tre da lui plantate
per lo mondo delatate
fanno fructo cum aulore.*

Stanza 8

The poor Friars Minor
are followers of Christ:
they are teachers of the people,
preaching without error.

*Li povari frati minori
de Cristo son seguitatori:
de la gente son doctori
predicando sença errore.*

Stanza 9

The next are the precious,
gracious pearls:
virgin women enclosed
for love of the Saviour.

*L'altre son le pretiose
margarite gratiose,
vergeni donne renchiuse
per amor del Salvatore.*

Stanza 10

And the continent brothers,
married penitents,
live in the world in holiness
to serve the Creator.

*E li frati continenti,
coniugati penitenti,
stand'al mondo santamente
per servire al Creatore.*

Stanza 11

Saint Francis, you are
wholly glorious: full of longing
for God you were, overflowing,
loving with sweetness.

*San Francesco, glorioso
tutto se': desideroso
de Dio fosti, copioso,
amoroso cum dolçore.*

Stanza 12

For your holy virtue,
given wholly to God,
this sweet lauda sings
of you, Francis, frank heart!

*Per la tua virtude sancta
a Dio data tutta quanta,
questa dolçe lauda canta
di te, Francesco, franco core!*

Stanza 13

An angel in purity,
an apostle in poverty,
a martyr in desire
you were, through your great ardour.

*Angelo per puritade,
apostolo per povertade,
martiro per volutade
fosti, per lo grand'ardore.*

Stanza 14

Your holiness was shown,
and your pure faithfulness,
by the birds you preached to,
which stayed quiet and unafraid.

*Mostrò la tua sanctitade
e la pura fidelitade
l'ucelli da te predicate
stando queti et securi.*

English translation

Italian (as sung)

Stanza 15

You preached penance,
you brought a new Rule,
you renewed the Passion,
bright star of the dawn.

*Penitentia predicasti,
nova regula portasti,
la passione renovellasti,
clara stella de l'albore.*

Stanza 16

Many sick you healed,
the blind and the crippled you healed,
several dead you raised,
giving them life and vigour.

*Molti enferme tu sanasti,
cieki et retracti tu sanasti,
morti più resuscitasti
dand'a lor vit'e vigore.*

Stanza 17

On land and sea and on every side
you are known as holy and proven;
your name is called upon
as health and gladness for all.

*Èi 'n terra e in mare et in onni lato
sancto sapere et provato;
lo tuo nome è invocato
sanitad'ogn'e baldore.*

Stanza 18

Grant us, father, as a gift
the remembrance of you,
so that our understanding
may follow you as its guide.

*Danne, padre, en donamento
lo tūo ricordamento,
ke lo nostro intendemento
te seguisca guidatore.*

Stanza 19

O lamp, sun and light,
govern us and lead us:
so be our harbour and our haven
now, always and at every hour.

*O lucerna, sole et luce,
tu ne governa e ne conduce:
sì sia nostro porto et foce
ora, sempre et tutte l'ore.*