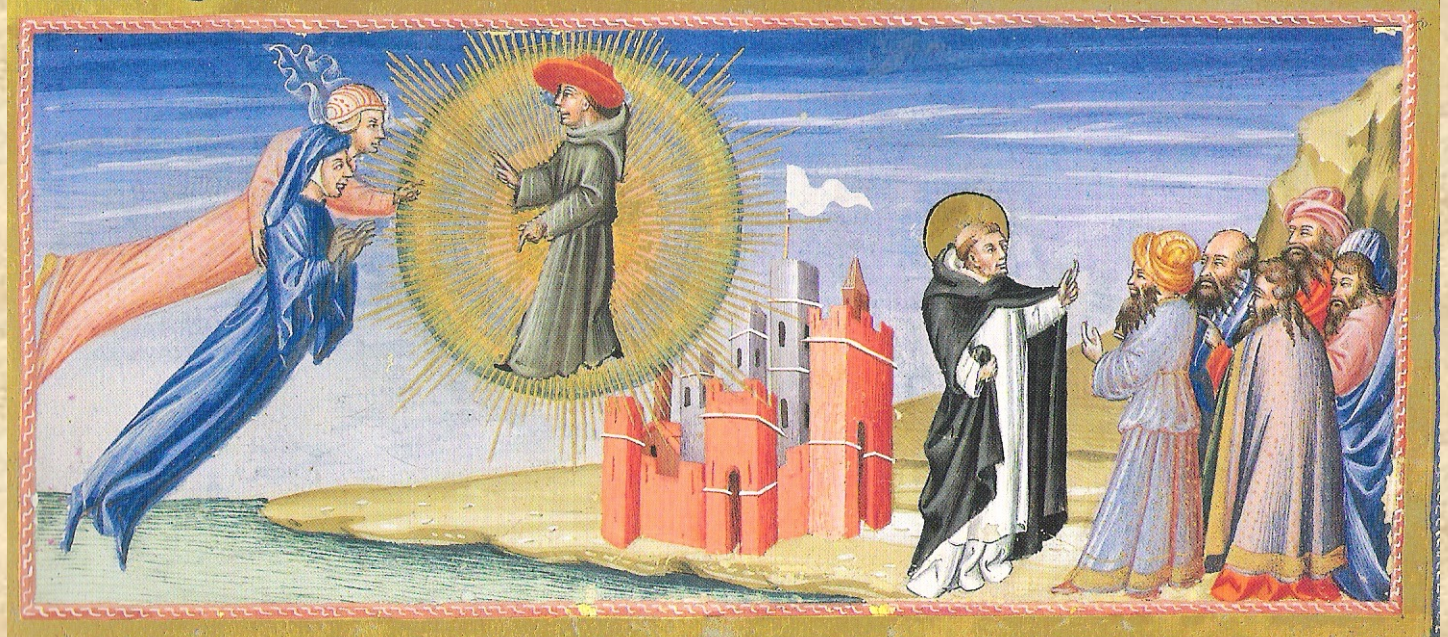


# Dante' s Paradise

## A Pictorial Journey



Bonaventure  
tells story of  
Dominic  
preaching to  
the heathens



## Canto 12



A further  
circle of  
learned men  
surround St.  
Thomas,  
including  
some  
“heretics”





Thomas Aquinas introduces Dante to the other spirits in the heaven of the Sun



# The Two Wheels of the Chariot



Fra Angelico: Dominican saints



Franciscan friars, detail of a painting by Duccio c. 1300



# Mendicant Corruption

Bosch, detail of  
Hell from the  
Garden of Earthly  
Delights,



Juan de Flandes,  
Temptation of  
Christ





# 14. Sound and Light



Leonardo da Vinci,  
water study

The water in a round container  
moves

Center to rim rippling, or rim to  
center,

When struck first from within, then  
from without:

This image suddenly occurred to me  
The moment that the glorious, living  
light

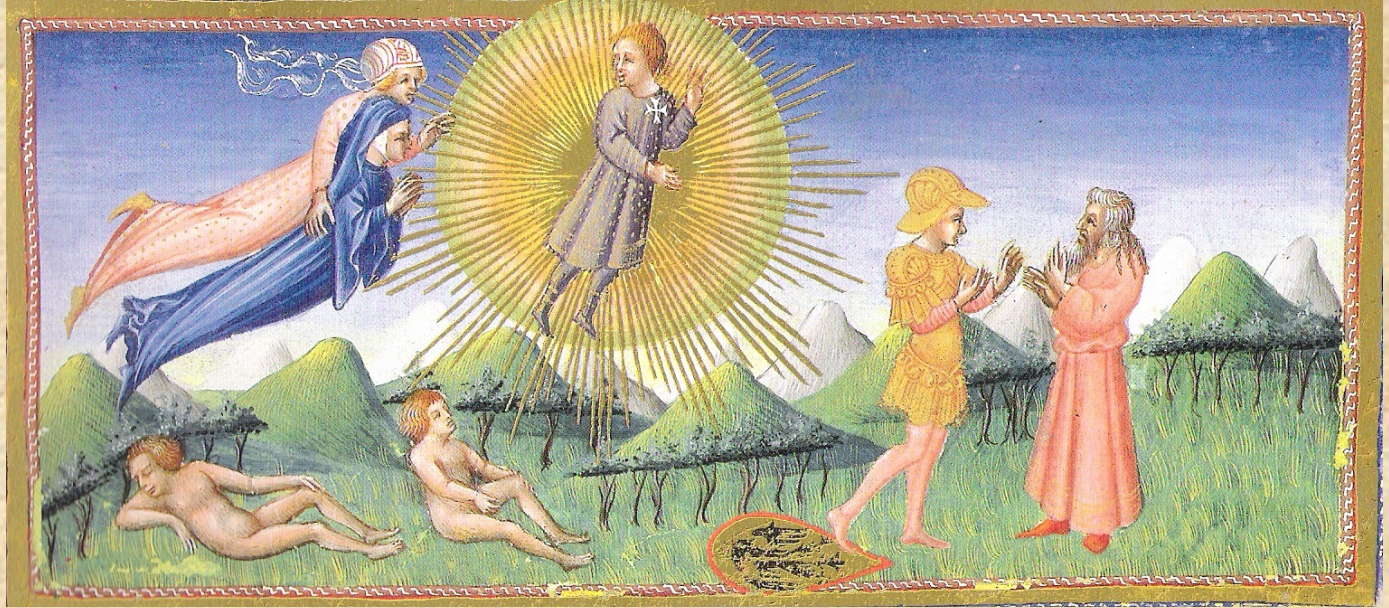
Of Thomas had concluded his  
remarks

Because of the resemblance that was  
born

Between his flow of words and  
Beatrice's ....

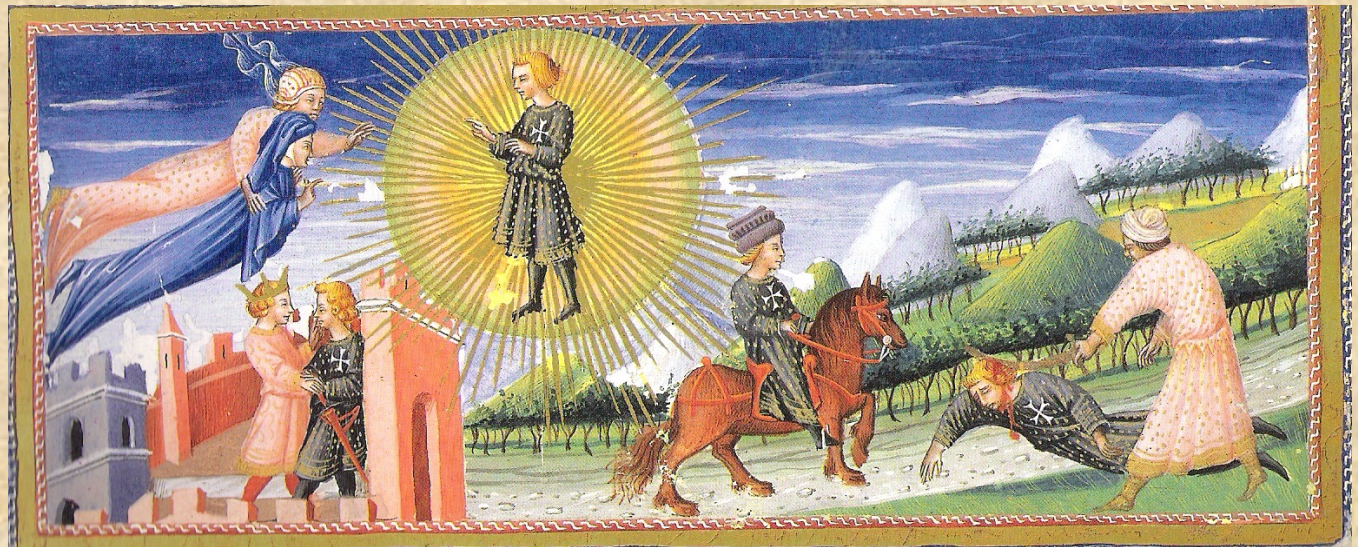


The Ascent to  
Mars:  
Cacciaguida,  
Dante's  
crusader  
ancestor, died  
in battle in  
1147.



## Canto 15

The story of  
his life

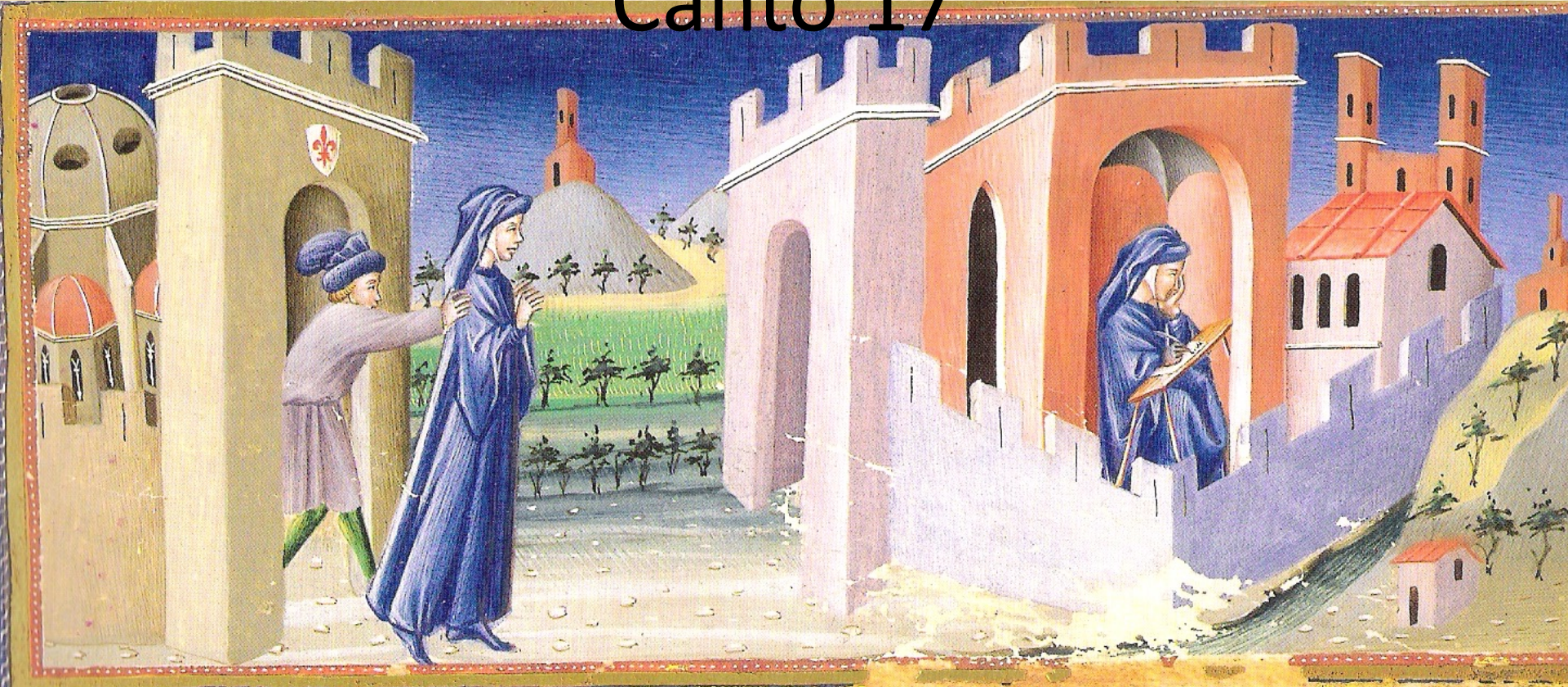








# Canto 17



You will be forced to leave behind those things/you love most dearly ... And you will know how salty is the taste/of others' bread, how hard the road that takes/you down and up the stairs of others' homes.



Cacciaguida  
commissions  
Dante to write  
the Paradiso

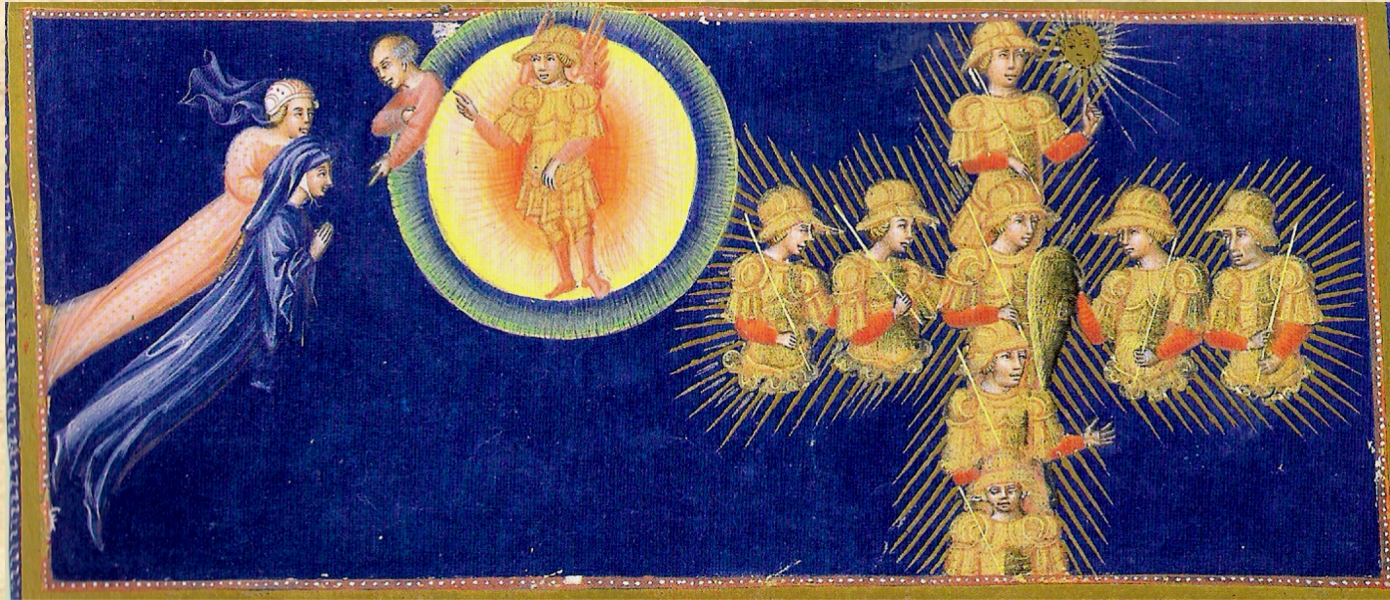
# Canto 18



“Do not resort to lies,/let  
what you write reveal all  
you have seen,/and let  
those men who itch  
scratch where it  
hurts./Though when your  
words are taken in at  
first/they may taste bitter,  
but once well-  
digested/they will become  
a vital nutriment.”

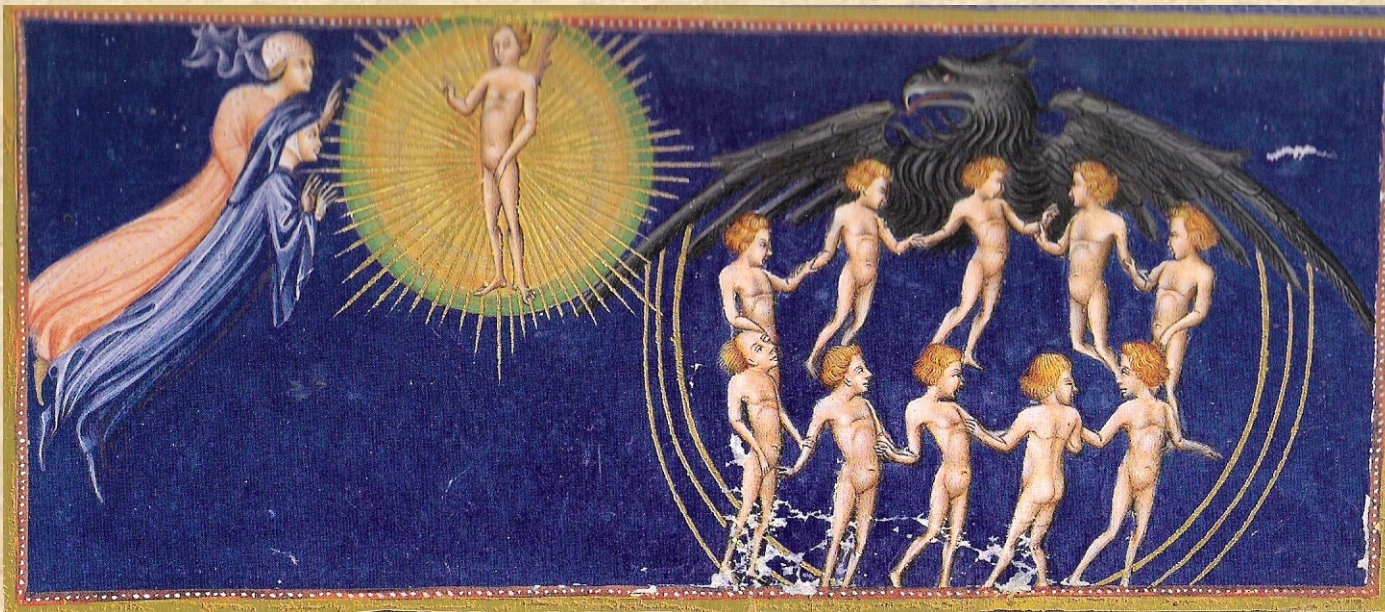


# Canto 18



The eight  
holy  
warriors

Ascent to the Heaven  
of Jupiter

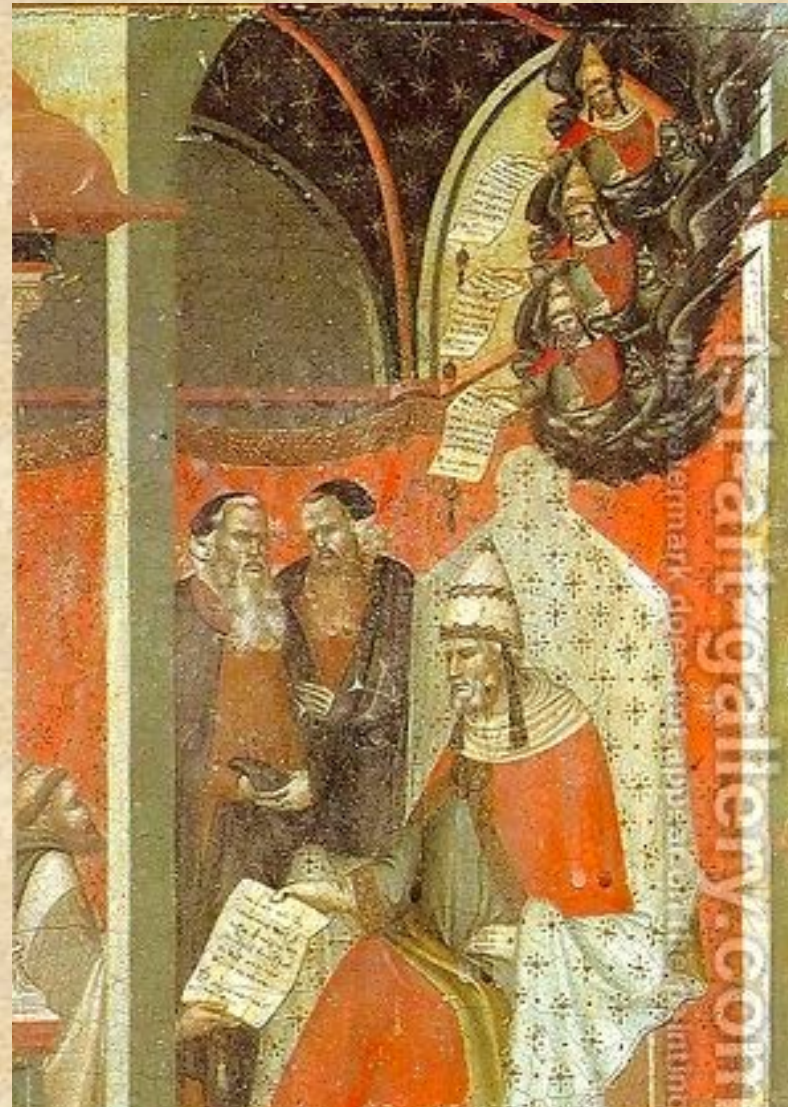




# Excommunication Abused

O Heaven's army to whom my  
mind returns,/pray for those  
souls on earth who are misled/by  
bad example and have gone  
astray,/it used to be that wars  
were waged with swords,/but  
now one fights withholding here  
and there/the Bread our Father's  
love denies to none./And you  
who write only to  
nullify,/remember that Peter and  
paul, who died/to save the  
vineyard you despoil, still live.  
PAR XVIII 124-131

Lorenzetti: Pope John XXII, famous for  
politically motivated excommunications





# Canto 19

The eagle of  
justice, fully  
formed



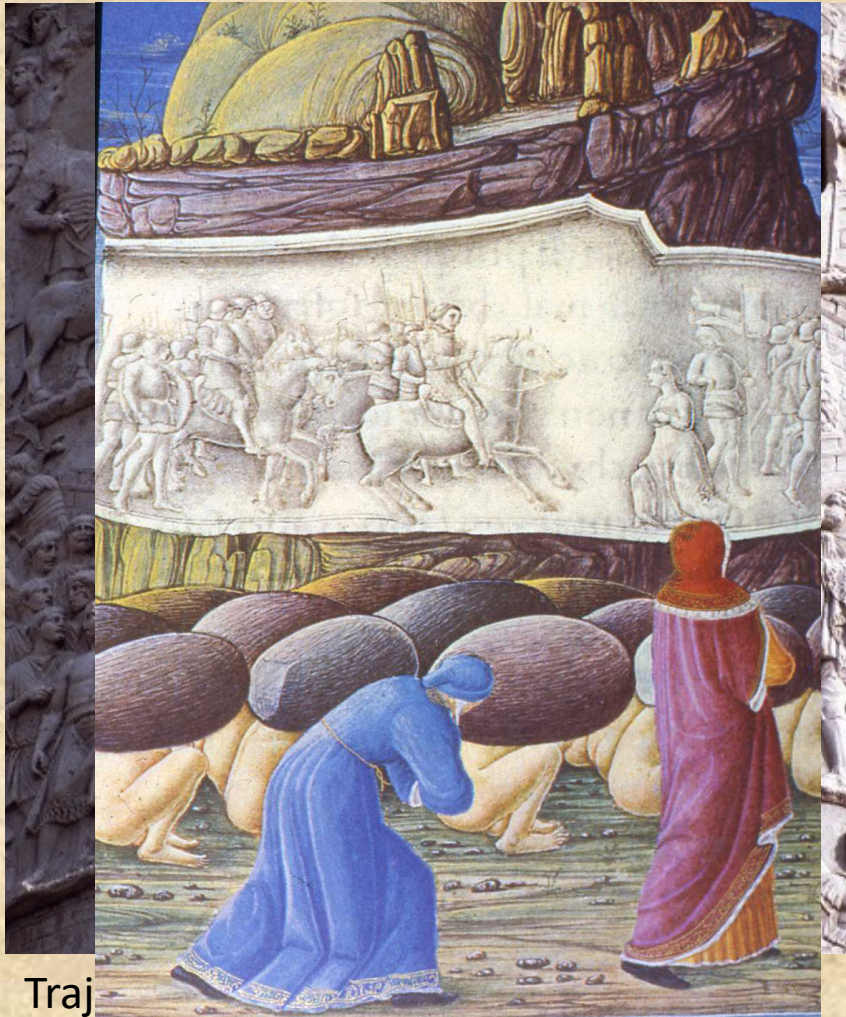
Just rulers: Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, William II of Sicily, David



Unjust rulers  
denounced by the  
eagle



# Trajan, Take 1, Take 2



“Of those five souls that  
form my eyebrow’s  
arch/the one who shines  
the closest to my  
beak/consoled the widow  
who had lost her son.”



# David, Take 1, Take 2

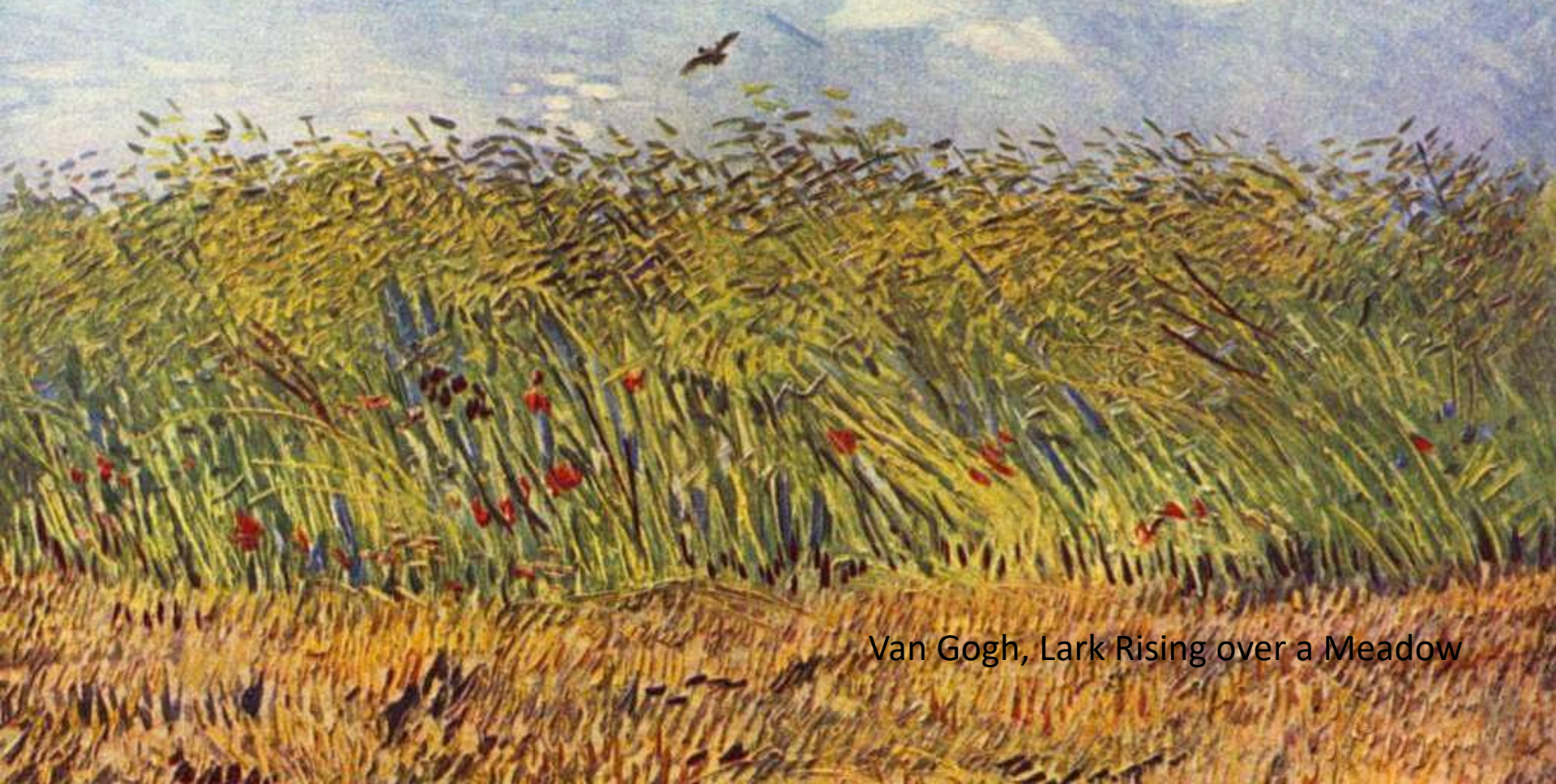
“He at the center of the pupil’s spark/wrote songs inspired by the Holy Spirit/and once conveyed the ark from town to town.”



David Dancing before the Ark  
Heidelberg Psalter  
11th century  
Manuscript (Pal. lat. 39.)  
Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican



Now like that lark that soars in spacious skies,/singing at first, then silent, satisfied,/rapt by the last sweet notes of its own song,/so seemed the emblem satisfied with that/ reflection of God's pleasure, by Whose will/all things become that which they truly are.



Van Gogh, Lark Rising over a Meadow



# Salvation of Ripheus



A comrade of Aeneas, he was a Trojan who was killed defending his city against the Greeks. "Ripheus also fell," Virgil writes, "uniquely the most just of all the Trojans, the most faithful preserver of equity; but the gods decided otherwise" (Virgil, Aeneid II, 532–3). Ripheus's righteousness was not rewarded by the gods.

Barocci, Aeneas' Flight from Troy 1598



# Divine Justice

“Consider that man born/along the Indus where you will not find/a soul who speaks or reads or writes of Christ,/and all of his desires, all his acts/are good, as far as human reason sees; not ever having sinned in deed or word,/he dies unbaptized, dies without the faith./What is this justice that condemns this soul?”





## 21. Saturn

I saw—color of gold as it  
reflects/the sun—a ladder  
gleaming in the  
sky,/stretching beyond the  
reaches of my sight./And I  
saw coming down the  
golden rungs,/so many  
splendors that I thought  
the heavens/were pouring  
out the light of every star.





Ascent  
to  
Heaven  
of  
Saturn

## Canto XXI



St Benedict



# From Contemplation to Action



Dante meets  
the 11<sup>th</sup>  
century church  
reformer Peter  
Damian

Lean and barefoot Cephas came, and came/the  
mighty vessel of the Holy Spirit,/both taking food  
whenever it was offered./Your modern pastors need  
all kinds of help,/one here, one there to lead, to prop  
and hold/up their behinds—they are so full of food.



# St. Benedict's Invective



“Peter built his without silver or gold,/and I constructed mine with prayer and fast/while Francis, his convent, with humbleness;/If you examine each one’s origins,/then look again at what became of it/you will see the white has withered into dark.”

G. Bellini, St. Benedict from the Frari Altarpiece, 1485





XXII 22-51 St.  
Benedict rises  
to join  
companions,  
Dante also  
goes up golden  
stairs

XXII- 112-123,  
Dante  
supplicates the  
Twins to give  
him strength to  
describe his  
vision





# The earth looks so small!



My vision traveled back  
through all the  
spheres/through seven  
heavens, and then I saw our  
globe;/it made me smile, it  
looked so paltry there./I  
hold that mind as best that  
holds our world/ for least,  
and I consider truly wise/the  
man who turns his thoughts  
to other things.



# The Little Blue Dot

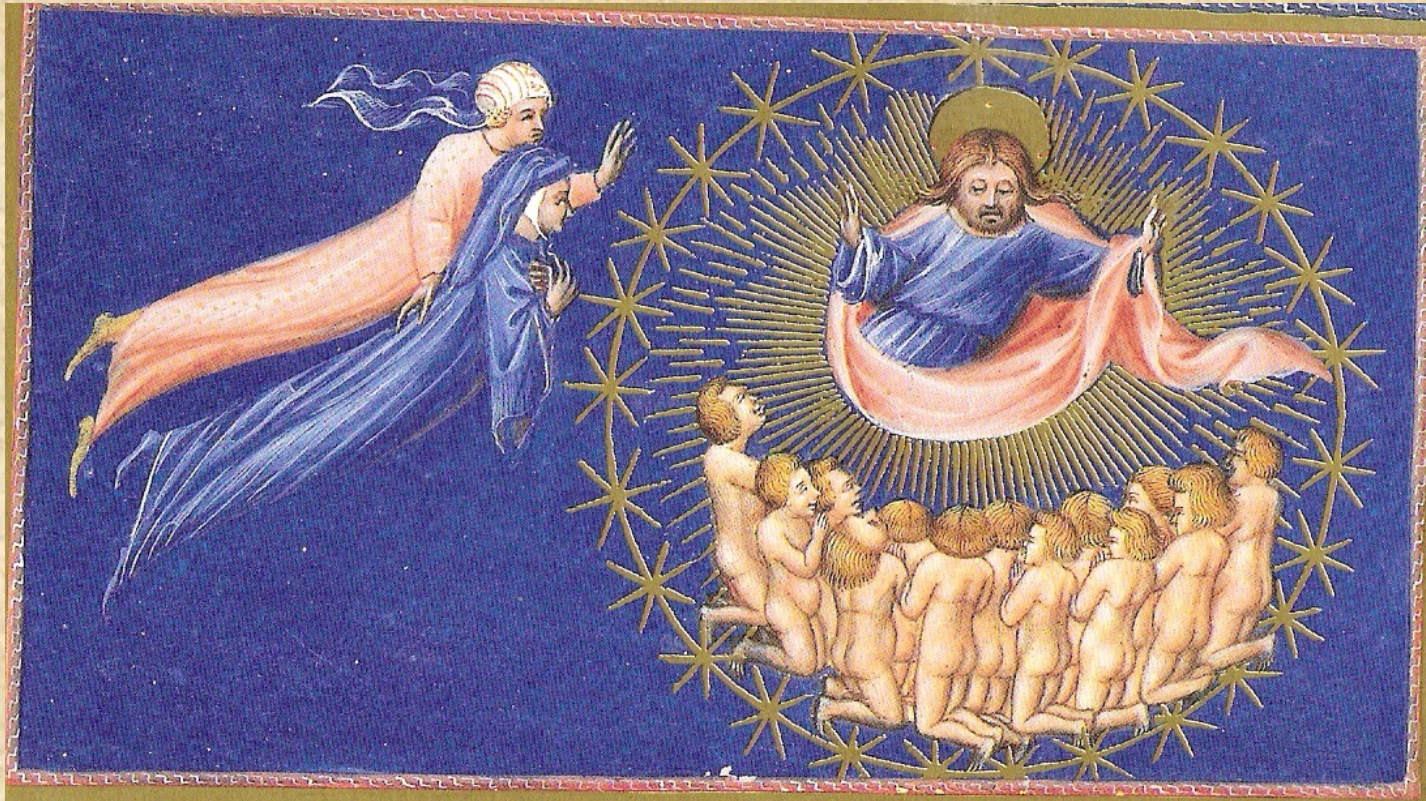


Look again at that dot.  
That's here.  
That's home.  
That's us.



Ascent to  
Heaven of  
Fixed Stars

## Canto 23



And Beatrice said: “Behold the hosts/of Christ in triumph, and see all the fruit/harvested from the turning of these spheres.”



“There is the Rose in which the Word of God/took on the flesh, and there the lilies are/whose fragrance led mankind down the good path.” Beatrice





Veit Stoss, Annunciation  
1517-18 Nuremberg

Down from Heaven's height there  
came a flaming torch, shaped in a  
ring, as if it were a crown,/that  
spun around the glory of her  
light,/the sweetest sounding  
notes enrapturing/a man's soul  
here below would sound just  
like/a clap of thunder crashing  
from a cloud/compared to the  
melodious tones that  
poured/from the sweet lyre  
crowning the lovely  
sapphire/whose grace enraptured  
the heaven's brightest sphere.





SIMONE MARTINI  
The Annunciation and Two Saints (detail)  
1333



“I am angelic love and I  
encircle the exalted joy  
breathed from the womb  
That was the swelling place  
of our desire,  
And I shall circle you, lady  
of Heaven,  
Until you follow your son to  
the highest sphere,  
Making it the more divine  
because you enter.” 103-  
108



First vision of  
Radiance of  
Christ, turns into  
vision of Mary  
surrounded by  
angels



There they remained suspended in my sight/singing Regina  
Coeli in tones so sweet, the joy of it will never leave my mind.  
And here/victorious, beneath the Son/of God and Mary and  
amid the good/souls of the Old and the New  
Covenant/triumphs the one who holds the keys to glory.



St. Peter Enthroned with the Keys, detail  
from the Stefaneschi Altar by Giotto  
Vatican Pinacoteca, c. 1330.

Beneath the exalted Son  
of God and Mary,  
Up there he triumphs in  
his victory,  
With souls of the  
covenants old and new,  
The one who holds the  
keys to such great glory.  
136-139





And as wheels in the movement of a clock/turn in such a way that, to an observer,/the innermost seems standing still, the outermost to fly,/just so those dancers in their circling, moving to a different measure, fast or slow, let me gauge their wealth of gladness. XXIV: 13-18



A"Carola" or round dance, seen in a painting in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena c. 1340





“Now test this man on questions grave or light/as it pleases you, pertaining to that faith/by means of which you once walked on the sea./If love and hope and faith he truly has,/you will know, for your eyes are fixed upon/the place where everything is seen.”

*Beatrice to Peter*

Konrad Witz, Peter Walking on Water, 1440



# Canto 24

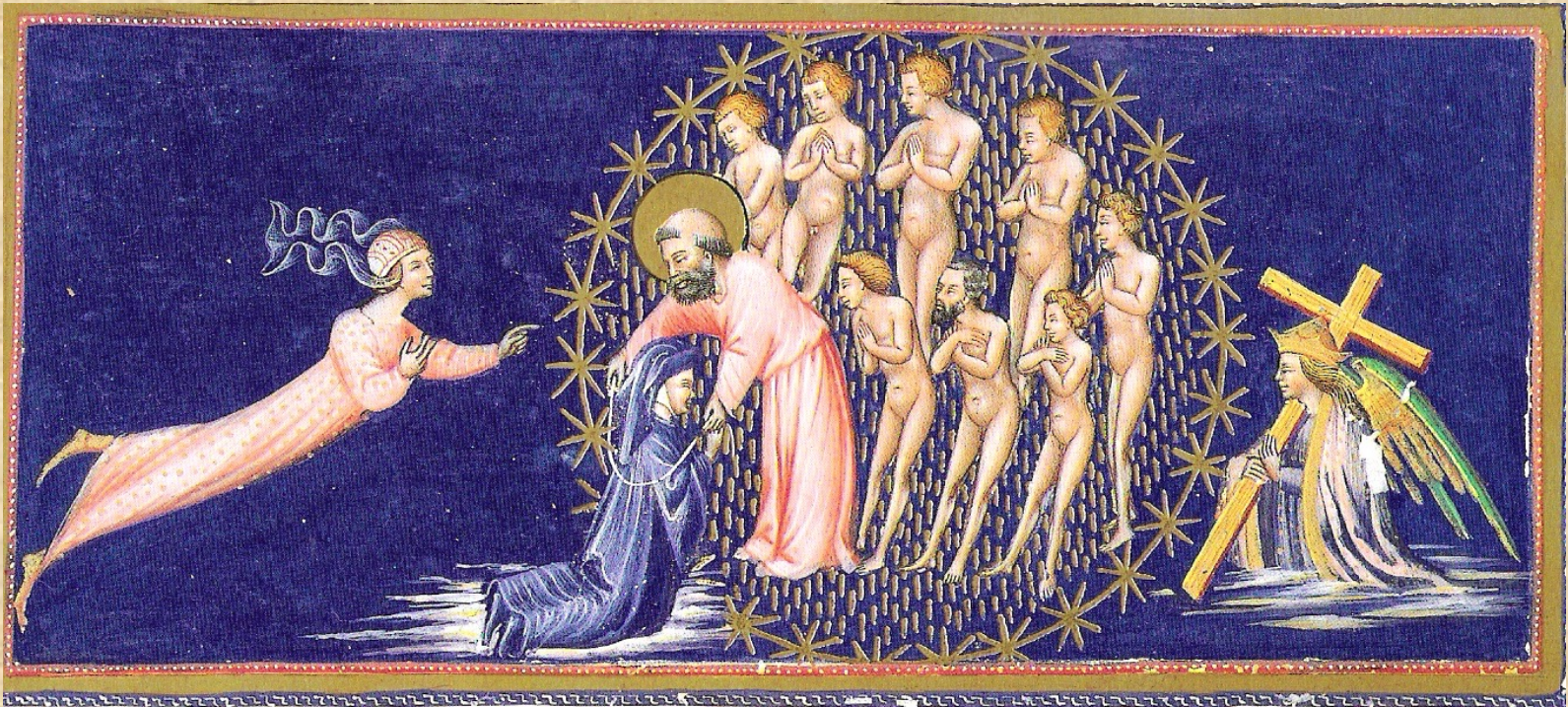
St. Peter interrogates Dante on the Faith



“Faith is the substance of things we hope for/and is the evidence of things not seen.” Dante the pilgrim



# Canto 24



“Like some great man, who, pleased with what he hears,/ rejoicing at his  
servant’s news, will fling/his arms, as silence falls, around his neck,/so, singing  
as its blessings fell on me,/three times—my words now mute—it circled me,/the  
light of that apostle at whose will/I’d spoken thus, the speech had pleased it  
so.”



# Canto 25

Should it ever come to pass that  
this sacred poem,  
to which both Heaven and earth  
have set their hand  
so that it has made me lean for  
many years,  
should overcome the cruelty that  
locks me out  
of the fair sheepfold where I slept  
as a lamb,  
foe of the wolves at war with it,





with another voice then,  
with another fleece,  
shall I return a poet and,  
at the font  
where I was baptized,  
take the laurel crown.  
For there I came into the  
faith  
that recommends the  
soul to God, and now,  
because of it, Peter  
encircled thus my brow.



Florentine Baptistery, 11<sup>th</sup>-  
12<sup>th</sup> century



ANTONIO VENEZIANO  
Apostle James the Greater  
c. 1384  
Poplar panel, 51 x 33 cm  
Staatliche Museen, Berlin

“look, look, here is the  
nobleman/who down  
below draws pilgrims  
to Galicia.”





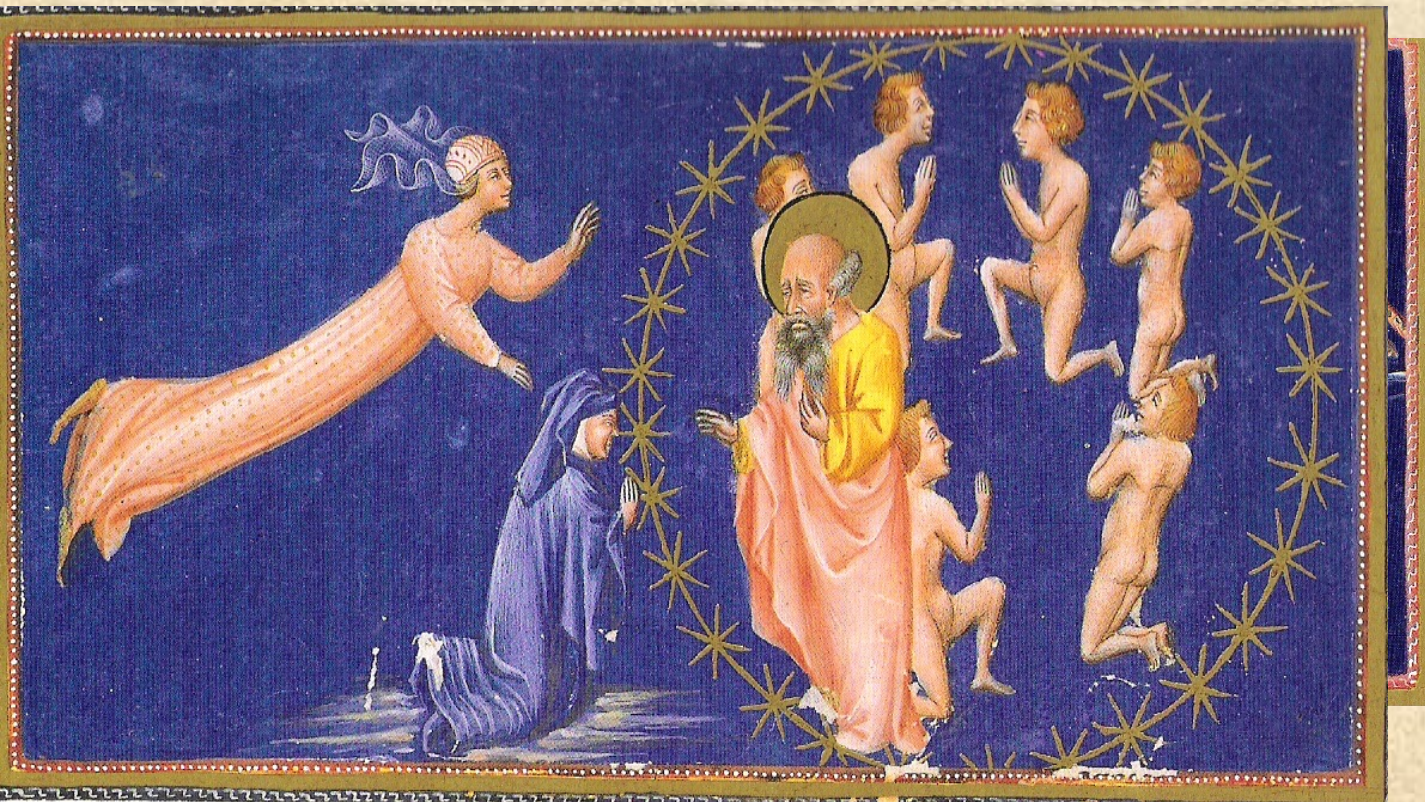
DUCCIO di Buoninsegna  
Transfiguration 1308-11



"Illustrious living soul, you who wrote/of the abundant gifts of our heavenly court,/make Hope resound here at this height,/since you know how, you who were the very figure of it/when Jesus showed most favor to the three."



# Canto XXV-XXVI



Sts. James and John  
question Dante about  
hope and charity

St. John, shown as  
old man, questions  
Dante on Charity



# Canto 27

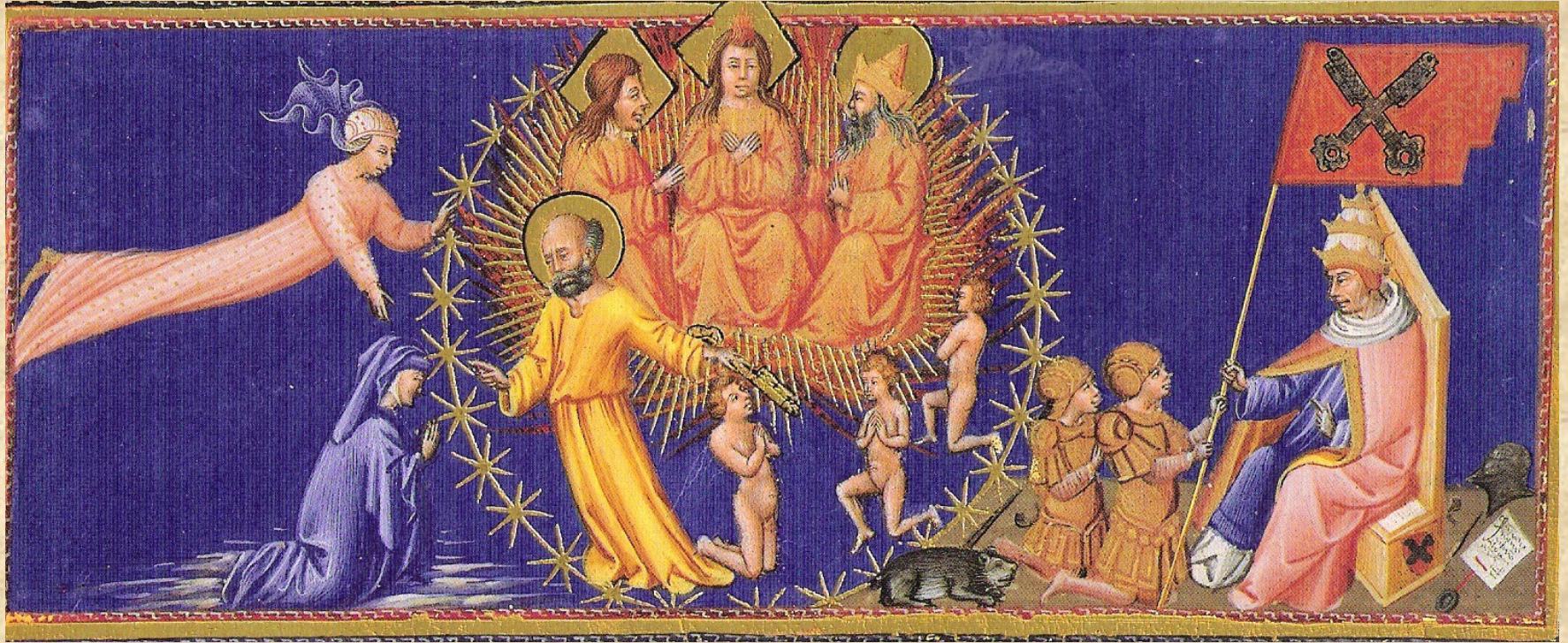


The heavenly host glorifies the Trinity, while Peter denounces vices of his successors



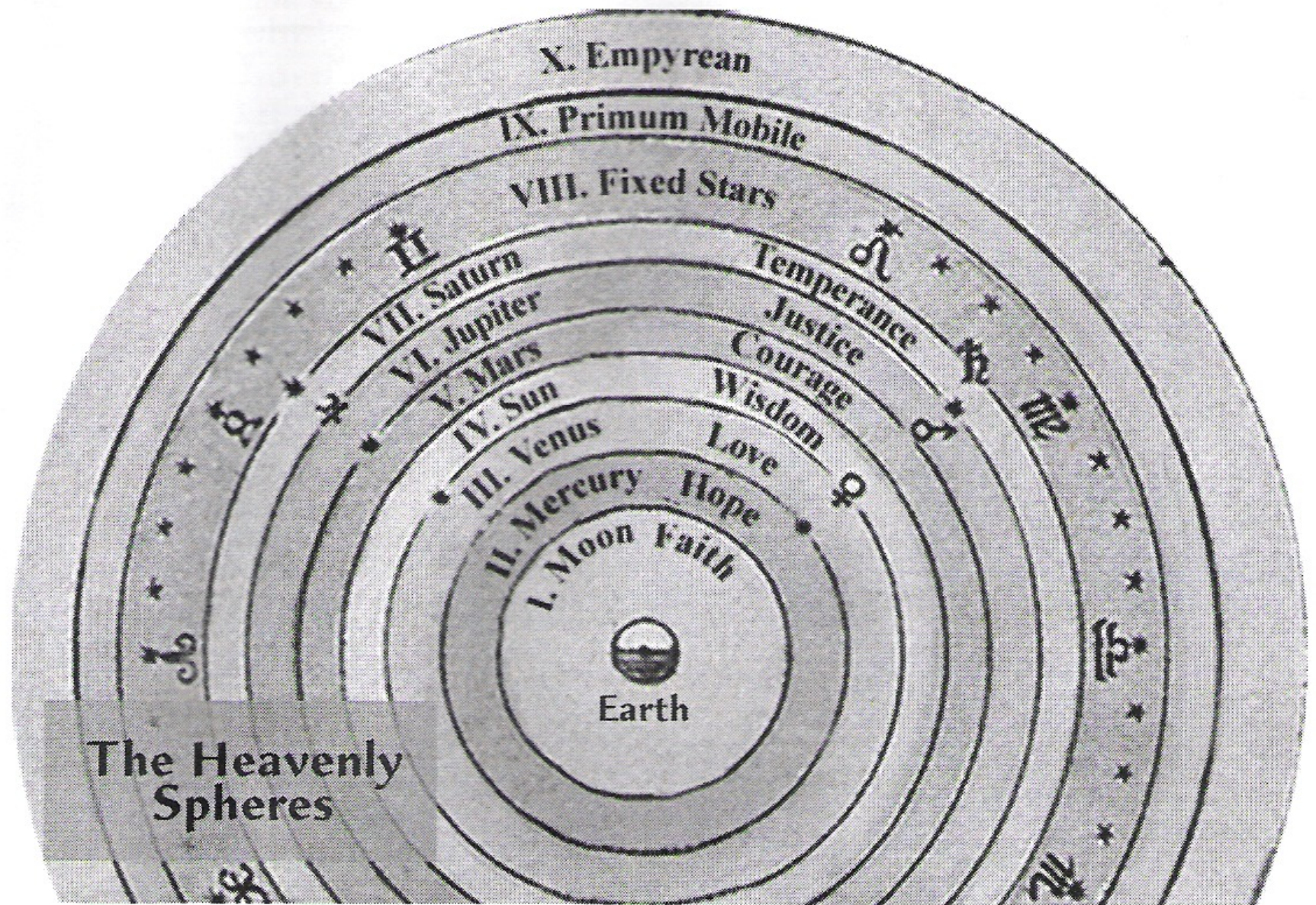
The heavenly host glorifies the Trinity,  
while Peter denounces vices of his  
successors

## Canto 27



“He who on earth usurps my place,/my place, my place,  
which in the eyes of God’s own Son is vacant,/has made  
my tomb a sewer of blood and filth...”





The Heavenly  
Spheres



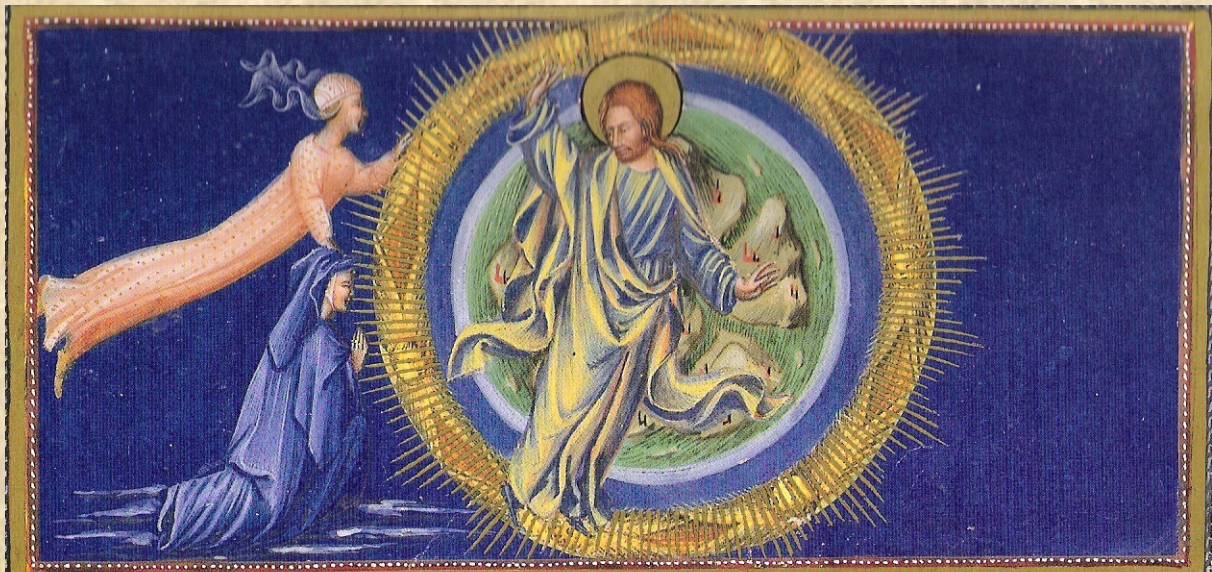
# Three States of Mind Are like Three States of Matter

- Solid—like Lucifer and the traitors, imprisoned in ice
- Liquid—like penitent shades in Purgatory, who move heavenward in a constant state of flux
- Gas—like the weightless “lights” of Heaven, who can be in many places at the same time



# Canto 28

When she who does imparadise my mind  
had revealed the truth against  
the present life of wretched mortals,  
then, as one whose way is lit by a double-candled lamp  
held at his back, who suddenly in a mirror sees  
the flame before he has seen or even thought of it  
and turns to see if the glass is telling him the truth,  
and then sees that it reflects things as they are –  
as notes reflect the score when they are sung –





# Canto 29



Now preachers go with feeble jokes and gags/and, just so long as they can raise a laugh,/their hoods puff up. They ask for nothing more./ A devil bird, though, nestles in their cowls./Were folk to see this, they would see (they must!)/what sort of pardons these are they so trust.

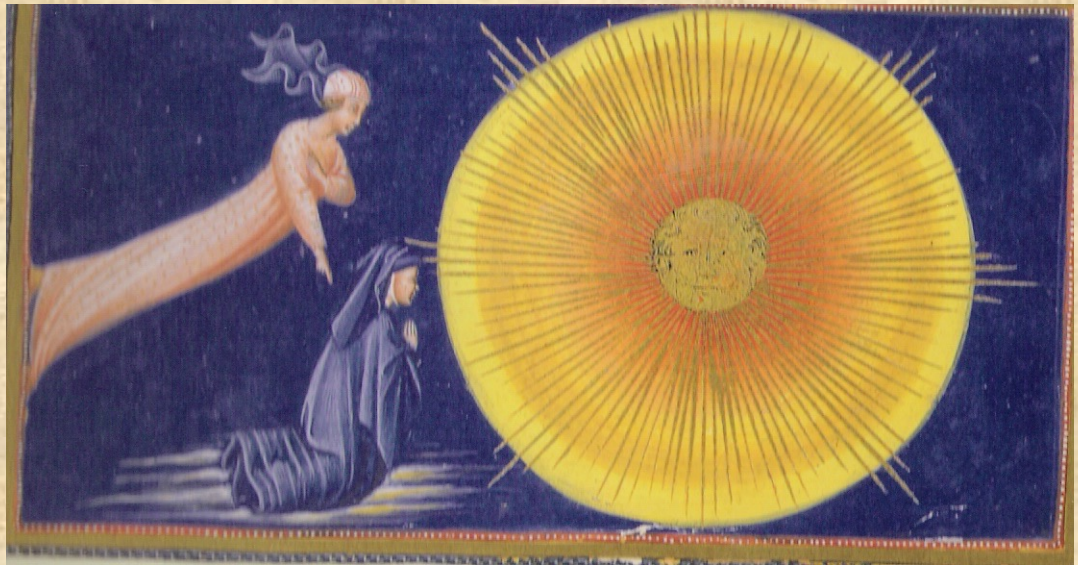


Can we trust our senses?  
Canto 30





just so do I remember having  
done,  
gazing into the beautiful eyes  
which Love had made into the  
snare that caught me.  
When I turned back and my eyes  
were struck  
by what appears on that revolving  
sphere – if one but  
contemplates its circling –  
I saw a point that flashed a beam  
of light  
so sharp the eye on which it burns  
must close against its piercing  
brightness.







Bosch, Ascent of the Blessed, c. 1505



There whirled about that point a ring of fire  
so quick it would have easily outsped  
the swiftest sphere circling the universe.  
This point was encircled by another ring,  
and that by the third, the third by the fourth,  
the fourth by the fifth, and the fifth by the  
sixth.

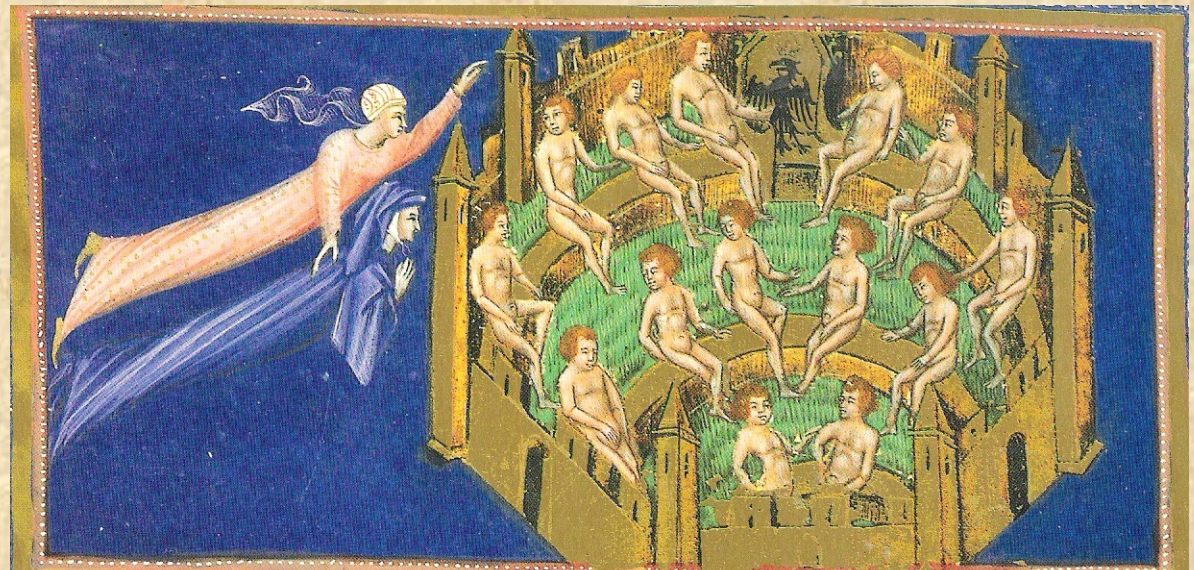
Higher there followed the seventh, now  
spread so wide  
that the messenger of Juno, in full circle,  
would be unable to contain its size.  
And so, too, the eighth and ninth,  
each one revolving with diminished speed  
the farther it was wheeling from the first.



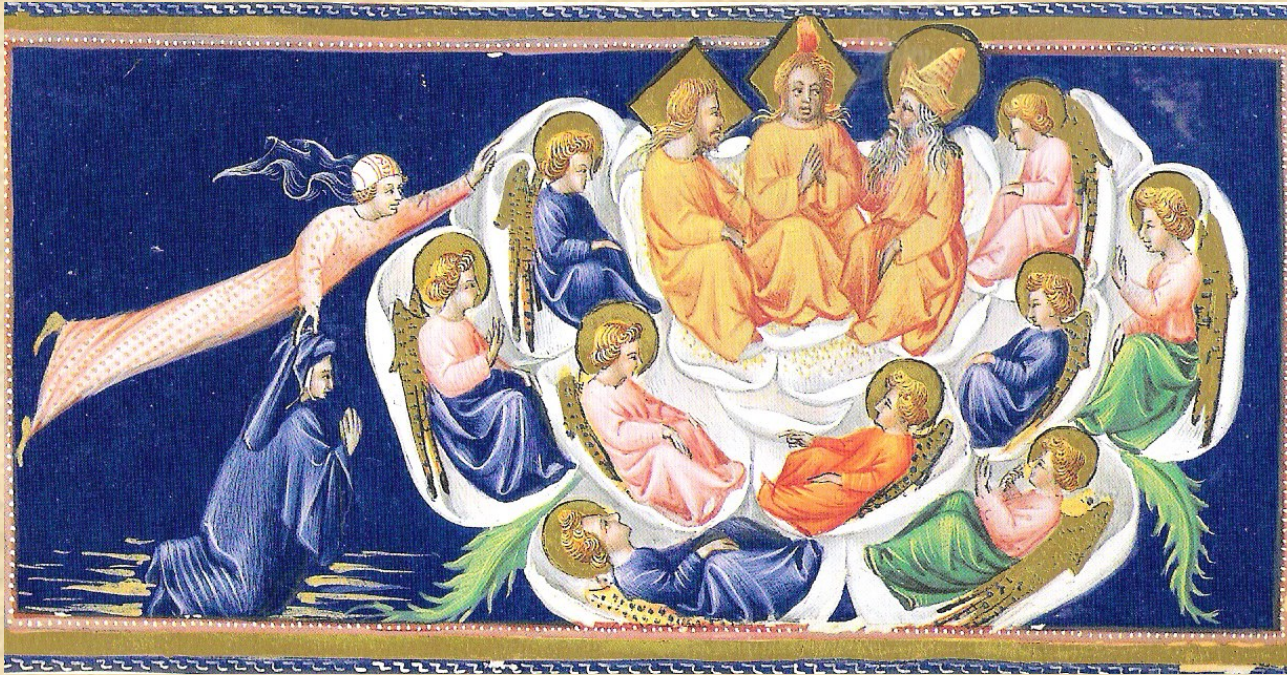
Ascent to the  
Empyrean: the  
river of light



The  
celestial  
Jerusalem







The celestial rose, with the Trinity filling the stamen of the flower



St. Bernard shows Dante the Virgin in glory at the edge of the rose



# Guide 3: Bernard of Clairvaux



Bernard (1090-1153) would expand upon Anselm of Canterbury's role in transmuting the sacramentally ritual Christianity of the Early Middle Ages into a new, more personally held faith, with the life of Christ as a model and a new emphasis on the Virgin Mary. In opposition to the rational approach to divine understanding that the scholastics adopted, Bernard would preach an immediate faith, in which the intercessor was the Virgin Mary.



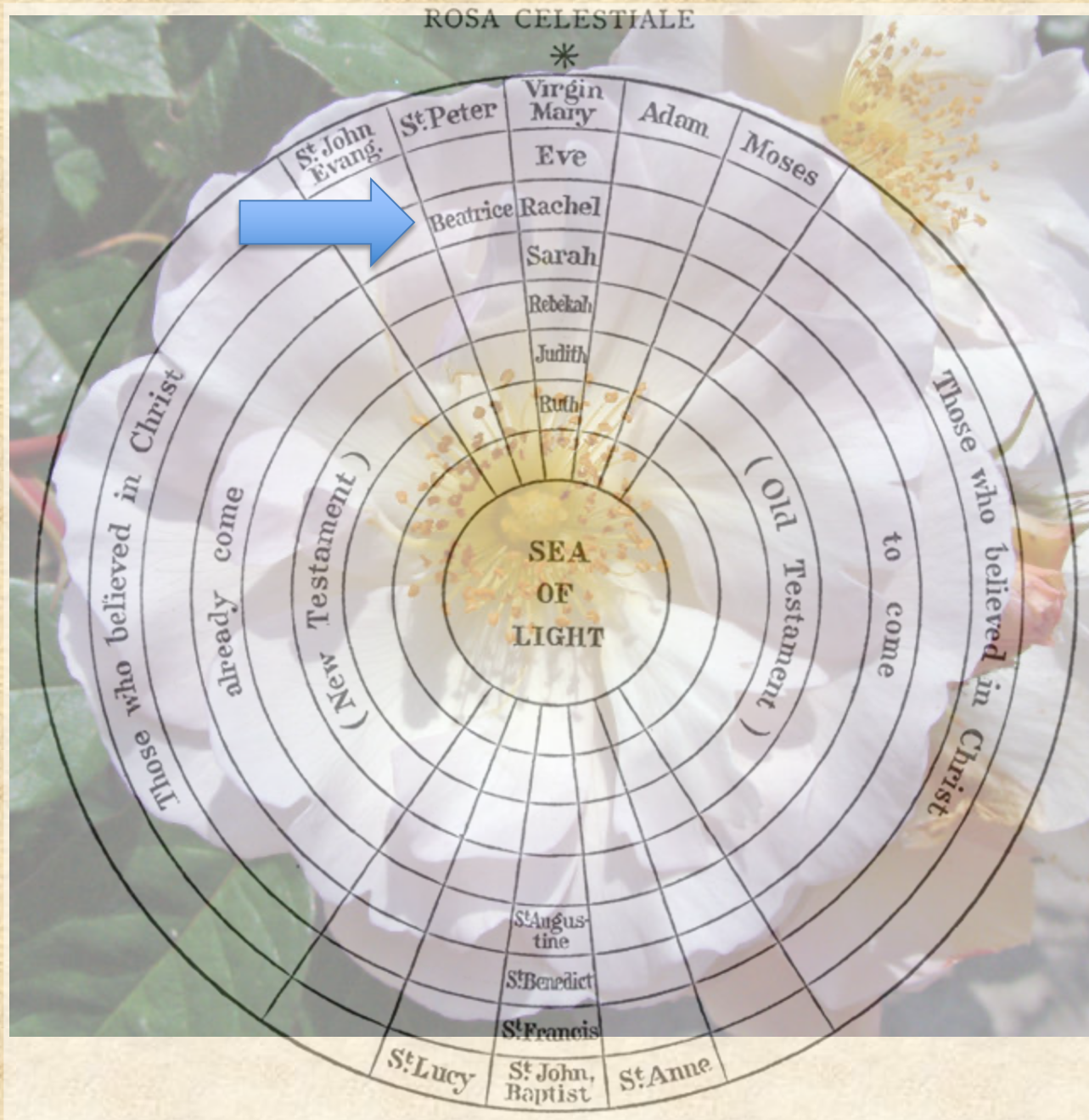
# Canto 32



Dante, kneeling before St. Bernard, obtains right to see Mary in Majesty surrounded by Old and New Testament figures and Angel Gabriel.



## Canto 31





# Songs of Canto 32

Psalm 50:

Miserere mei – have mercy on me!

<https://youtu.be/kWJrWDNcv5o>

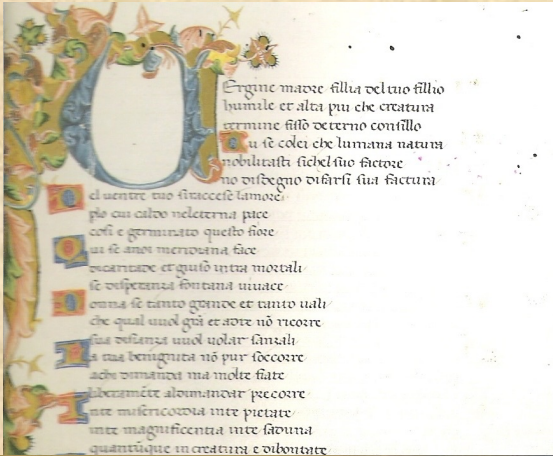
Angelic Salutation:

Ave Maria, gratia plena

<https://youtu.be/LUPZSZfPZvg>



# Canto 33



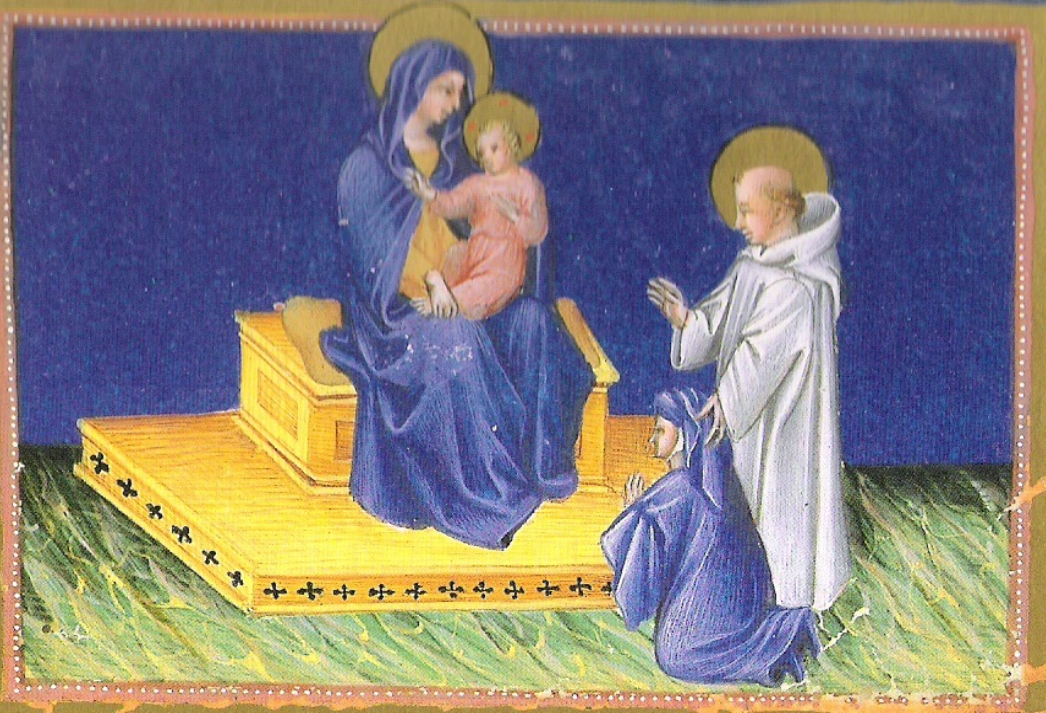
Vergine madre, figlia del tuo  
figlio,

Humile et alta piu che  
creatura,

Termine fisso dello aeterno  
consiglio,

Tu sei Colei che l' umana  
natura nobilitaste si che il  
suo fattore

Non disdegno di farsi sua  
fattura.







'Virgin Mother, daughter of your Son,  
more humble and exalted than any  
other creature,  
fixed goal of the eternal plan.  
you are the one who so ennobled  
human nature  
that He, who made it first, did not  
disdain  
to make Himself of its own making  
'Your womb relit the flame of love--  
its heat has made this blossom  
seed and flower in eternal peace.





My memory of that moment is more lost than five and twenty centuries make dim that enterprise when, in wonder, Neptune at the Argo's shadow stared.

Thus all my mind, absorbed, was gazing, fixed, unmoving and intent, becoming more enraptured in its gazing.



Not that the living Light at which I gazed  
took on other than a single aspect --  
for It is always what It was before --

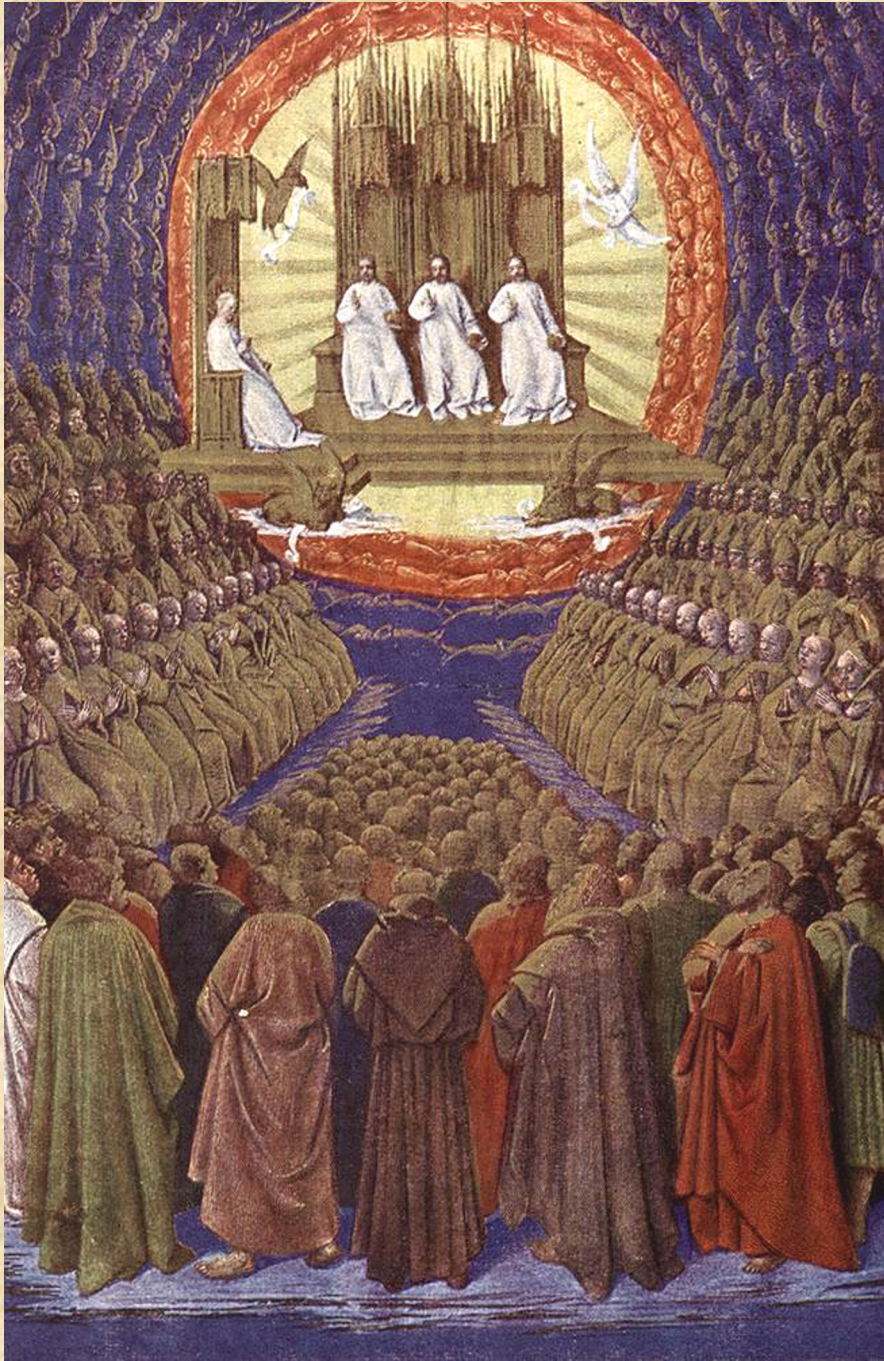
but that my sight was gaining strength, even as  
I gazed at that sole semblance and, as I  
changed, it too was being, in my eyes,  
transformed.

In the deep, transparent essence of the lofty  
Light  
there appeared to me three circles  
having three colors but the same extent,

and each one seemed reflected by the other  
as rainbow is by rainbow, while the third  
one seemed fire, equally breathed forth  
by one and by the other.







O eternal Light, abiding in yourself alone, knowing yourself alone, and, known to yourself and knowing, loving and smiling on yourself! That circling which, thus conceived, appeared in you as light's reflection, once my eyes had gazed on it a while, seemed within itself and in its very color, **to be painted with our likeness**, so that my sight was all absorbed in it.

Fouquet, Paradise, c. 1460



This is a detail from Raphael's fresco 'The School of Athens'. It depicts the mathematician Archimedes, an older man with a balding head and a beard, wearing a red robe. He is leaning over a table, using a pair of compasses to draw a geometric diagram on a tablet. Several students are gathered around him, looking on with interest. One student in the foreground is kneeling, looking down at the diagram. Another student stands behind him, looking up at Archimedes. The scene is set in a classical architectural space with steps and columns visible in the background.

Raphael, School of Athens, 1508: detail of Archimedes and students

Like the geometer who fully applies himself to square the circle and, for all his thought, cannot discover the principle he lacks, such was I at that strange new sight. I tried to see how the image fit the circle and how it found its where in it.



But my wings had not  
sufficed for that had not  
my mind been struck by a  
bolt of lightning that  
granted what I asked.  
Here my exalted vision  
lost its power. But now  
my will and my desire,  
like wheels revolving  
with an even motion,  
were turning with the  
Love that moves the sun  
and all the other stars.  
140-145

Giotto, Christ of the  
Last Judgment, c.  
1308, Padua, Arena  
Chapel







<https://youtu.be/yivk-iCRoDc>

Coppo di Marcovaldo, Last Judgment, Ceiling of the Baptistery of Florence, c. 1260



