

What you need to know about Roman Catholic hymnody:
Information on pre-Urban hymns and evaluations of those who have tried
to write “metrical” translations—with good and poor examples

Criticism of the Urbanite revisions:

John Mason Neale (*Rev.), *Mediæval Hymns* (1851), introduction:
“[...] In the third [or classical period, the Roman Church ...] submitted to the slavish
bondage of a revived Paganism.”

Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Fernand Cabrol (Dom) OSB, “Breviary” (VI. Reforms):
Urban VIII, being himself a Humanist, and no mean poet, as witness the hymns of St.
Martin and of St. Elizabeth of Portugal, which are of his own composition, desired that the
Breviary hymns, which, it must be admitted are sometimes trivial in style and irregular in
their prosody, should be corrected according to grammatical rules and put into true meter.
To this end, he called in the aid of certain Jesuits of distinguished literary attainments. The
corrections made by these purists were so numerous – 952 in all – as to make a profound
alteration in the character of some of the hymns. Although some of them without doubt
gained in literary style, nevertheless, to the regret of many, they also lost something of
their old charm of simplicity and fervor. At the present date, this revision is condemned,
out of respect for ancient texts; and surprise may be expressed at the temerity that dared to
meddle with the Latinity of a Prudentius, a Sedulius, a Sidonius Apollinaris, a Venantius
Fortunatus, an Ambrose, a Paulinus of Aquileia, which, though perhaps lacking the purity
of the Golden Age, has, nevertheless, its own peculiar charm. Even the more barbarous
Latinity of a Rhabanus Maurus is not without its archaic interest and value. Moreover, the
revisers were ill-advised inasmuch as they adopted a *via media*; they stopped half-way. If,
as it is freely admitted, the Roman Breviary contains many hymns of inferior poetic worth,
and whose sentiment is perhaps commonplace, then there is no reason why they should
not be eliminated altogether, and replaced by new ones. Many of the older ones, however,
were worthy of being preserved just as they stood; and, in the light of the progress made in
philology, it is certain that some of the corrections in prosody made under Urban VIII
convict their authors of ignorance of certain rhythmic rules, whose existence, it is only
right to say, came to be known later. However it may be, these corrections have been
retained.

Adrian Fortescue (Rev.), *Latin Hymns* (1913), preface:

A great number of the hymns are taken from the Roman breviary. Many of these were
altered in 1629, with the idea of making them agree better with the laws of classical Latin
poetry. Everyone now admits that this was a mistake. Much of the beauty of the older
forms was lost and the hymns did not really become classical [...] Even in their altered
forms, which after all leave the ideas and most of the text unchanged, our old Latin hymns
are immeasurably more beautiful than any others ever composed. Other religious bodies
take all their best hymns in translations from us. It would be a disgrace if we Catholics
were the only people who did not appreciate what is our property .

<<http://www.ccwatershed.org/blog/2015/mar/2/pdf-adrian-fortescue-latin-hymns-1913/>>

Ludwig von Pastor, *History of the Popes*, tr. Ernest Graf (Dom) OSB (1938), vol. 29:
A letter from [Father Famiano] Strada to Urban VIII makes it quite clear that the
responsibility for the alterations in the hymns does not rest with the four revisers alone but
quite as much with the Pope himself. Many hymns, so we learn from this important
document, were personally corrected by the Pope and then submitted to Strada’s criticism.
The latter raised many objections but, in most cases, Urban VIII’s metrical changes were

retained. On the whole it must be admitted that this inroad into the treasury of ancient hymns, which was prompted by an exaggerated passion for the principle of the classic meter, is as regrettable as the new dress with which the Baroque age loved to array the old and venerable basilicas.

Donald Attwater, *A Catholic Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1949), “Reform” (c. Of Urban VIII): A correction of the Breviary and Missal issued in 1634, only important because of alterations in the text of the office-hymns, the barbarisms and false quantities of Prudentius, Venantius Fortunatus, St. Ambrose and others being offensive to the refined and Ciceronian scholarship of Renaissance Rome. “That those who were responsible outran their commissions and, under pretext of restoring the language of the hymns in accordance with the rules of meter and good grammar, deformed the works of Christian antiquity, is now an established fact” (Chevalier); the older versions [...] are not merely old, they are better hymns: *cf.*, *Cælestis urbs Jerusalem* (Roman Breviary) with *Urbs Jerusalem beata* (Monastic Breviary).

Joseph Connelly (Rev.), *Hymns of the Roman Liturgy* (1955), General Introduction: This revision, now universally admitted to have been a great mistake, was set on foot by Urban VIII and carried out vigorously by him in his double capacity of pope and poet. Associated with him were four Jesuits, Famiano Strada, Tarquinio Galuzzi, Girolamo Petrucci and Matthias Sarbiewski—all well able to produce elegant imitations of classical models and the last-named being likened by his contemporaries to Horace. How far their private feelings about exercising their gifts on the hymns and their spirit of obedience coincided is a matter of dispute, but it is quite clear that the driving force was from Urban, the last of the Humanist Popes. He personally considered all the changes suggested, and added his own—his, sometimes, being more radical than theirs. If hymns were needed for new feasts, he himself wrote them. It is probably due to the fact that he had such a large part in the revision that the results go far beyond the original plan [...] The immediate purpose of the revision was to make the hymns more classical in expression and meter. To do this ‘952 corrections were made in the 98 hymns then in the Breviary. Eighty-one hymns were corrected: 58 alterations were made in the hymns of the Psalter [...] 359 in the Proper of the Season, 283 in the Proper of the Saints and 252 in the Common of the Saints. The first lines of more than 30 hymns were altered. The *Jam lucis orto sidere*, the *Ave maris stella*, the hymns of St Thomas Aquinas and a few others were spared. Some hymns were practically rewritten, others were scarcely touched’, B [Matthew Britt (Dom) OSB, *The Hymns of the Breviary and Missal* (1936)] , p. 24. The result of this was that many thoughts and ideas of the original text were obscured, changed or discarded altogether and many a good prayer spoiled. An equally bad result has been that these corrected hymns have furnished a style of hymn-writing that has been followed ever since [...] Ambrose and Prudentius took something classical and made it Christian; the revisers and their imitators took something Christian and tried to make it classical. The result may be pedantry, and sometimes perhaps poetry; but it is not piety. *Accessit Latinitas, discessit pietas.*
<http://www.ccwatershed.org/media/pdfs/15/04/27/14-16-11_o.pdf>

“In came Latinity, out went piety.”

On the forms and development of Latin hymnody, see Connelly, *Hymns*, as above, and Jeffrey Ostrowski, “The ‘Long & Short’ of Latin Hymns” (2016), introduction and section 1. <<http://www.ccwatershed.org/blog/2016/aug/3/long-short-latin-hymns/>>

In classical Latin the accent, or *arsis* (“lifting”), is a rise in pitch rather than a downward beat.

Venantius Fortunatus, *Pange, lingua, gloriosi praelium certaminis*: (6th cent.)
Urbanite version, *Pange, lingua, gloriosi lauream certaminis* (17th cent.)

Connelly, *Hymns*:

[T]he *Vexilla Regis* and the *Pange lingua* [...] were written for a special occasion. The Emperor Justin II and his wife had sent a relic of the true Cross to Queen Radegunde for the convent at Poitiers. Fortunatus, who has a lifetime of writing occasional verse to his credit, was inspired by this occasion to poetry of supreme excellence in hymns which ‘combine a deep sincerity and a fervor of poetic feeling and religious thought with high dignity, strength and skill of expression. They are indeed models of what Christian hymns should be,’ W [A.S. Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns* (1927)]. Nor could he let the occasion pass without addressing a long elegiac poem to the Emperor to honor him for this gift [...] Venantius Fortunatus. He was born about the year 530 near Ravenna. After a colorful life, being everybody’s friend at home and on his many travels, he settled at Poitiers at the court of Radegunde, wife of Clotaire I. He was ordained priest and eventually became bishop of Poitiers, where he died about 600.

The hymn of Venantius was the model for the hymn of St Thomas Aquinas, *Pange, lingua, gloriosi Corporis mysterium* (13th cent.).

Pastor, *History*:

In the memorandum which the above-named [Jesuit revisers] presented to the Congregation of Rites, we read: “The hymns composed by Ambrose, Gregory, Prudentius, Sedulius, Fortunatus, and other poets of renown, remain either wholly unaltered and untouched, or are corrected according to good ancient manuscripts, or completed with words taken from some other hymns by the same authors; and where there seems to be an error either of latinity or meter, the mistake is corrected in conformity with the rules of prosody by the slightest change possible in the syllable.” The reason given is the reverence due to the holiness and the venerable antiquity of the authors. Accordingly, the revisers proceeded with the utmost caution: only the hymns of Paulinus of Aquileia and Rabanus Maurus underwent radical changes. In Venantius Fortunatus’ hymns in honor of the holy cross, about one and a half dozen metric licenses were treated as “mistakes” and altered accordingly [!].

Written in “catalectic trochaic tetrameter”:

- 1.) “tetrameter” (“fourfold measure”): four feet per line;
- 2a.) “trochaic”: two trochees (or two-syllable substitute) per foot;
- 2b.) “trochee” (“running”): long syllable followed by short: — ∪
- 2c.) “choree” (“dancing”) is an alternative name for the trochee;
- 3.) “catalectic” (“ceasing”): the last trochee is incomplete;
- 4.) this meter is also known as the “trochaic septenarius.”

Pleonasm?

“Pleonasm” (“adding superfluously”): redundancy of expression, e.g., “kill dead.”

Comparing *gloriosi praelium certaminis* with *gloriosi lauream certaminis*:

“the *battle* of a glorious campaign” and “the *bay-wreath* of a glorious campaign.”

- 1.) The *decisive encounter* in the struggle or the *successful end* of the struggle.
- 2a.) Cf. “subjective” redemption versus “objective” redemption.
- 2b.) The battle *for my soul* is a part of the ongoing conflict; the battle *for all souls* is over.
- 2c.) Cf. “already” and “not yet”:
- 2d.) In one sense, the work of our redemption is accomplished:
in another, it still continues.

Venantius Honorius Clementius
Fortunatus, c. 530—c. 600

I.

1.
Pange, lingua, gloriósi
prælium certáminis,
et super Crucis trophæo
dic triúmphum nóbilem:
quáliter Redémptor orbis
immolátus vícerit.

2.
De paréntis protoplásti
fraude Factor¹ cóndolens,
quando pomi noxiális
morte morsu córruit:
ipse lignum tunc notávit,
damna ligni ut sólveret.

3.
Hoc opus nostræ salútis
ordo depopóscerat;
multifórmis perditóris²
arte³ ut artem fálleret,
et medélam ferret inde
hostis unde læserat.

4.
Quando venit ergo sacri
plenitúdo témporis, [*Gal 4.4*]
missus est ab arce Patris
Natus, orbis Cónditor;
atque ventre virgináli
carne factus pródiit. [*Jo 1.14*]

5.
Vagit infans inter arcta
cónditus præsépia:
membra pannis involúta [*Lc 2.7, 12*]
Virgo Mater álligat:
et pedes manúsque,⁴ crura
stricta pingit⁵ fáscia.

BR 1568: (1.) facta; (2.) proditoris; (3.)
ars; (4.) manus pedesque; (5.) cingit

Urban VIII, pontificate 1623—1644,
and Jesuit revisers

I.

1.
Pange, lingua, gloriósi
láuream certáminis,
et super Crucis trophæo
dic triúmphum nóbilem:
quáliter Redémptor orbis
immolátus vícerit.

2.
De paréntis protoplásti
fraude Factor cóndolens,
quando pomi noxiális
in necem morsu ruit:
ipse lignum tunc notávit,
damna ligni ut sólveret.

3.
Hoc opus nostræ salútis
ordo depopóscerat;
multifórmis proditóris
ars ut artem fálleret,
et medélam ferret inde
hostis unde læserat.

4.
Quando venit ergo sacri
plenitúdo témporis,
missus est ab arce Patris
Natus, orbis Cónditor;
atque ventre virgináli
carne amíctus pródiit.

5.
Vagit infans inter arcta
cónditus præsépia:
membra pannis involúta
Virgo Mater álligat:
et Dei manus pedésque
stricta cingit fáscia.

II.

6.

Lustra sex qui jam perácta,⁶ [Lc 3.23]
tempus implens córporis,
se volénte, natus ad hoc, [Is 53.7]
passióni déditus, [Jo 18.37]
Agnus in Crucis levátur
immolándus stípíte.

7.

Hic acétum, fel, arúndo,
sputa, clavi, láncea;
mite corpus perforátur:
sanguis, unda prófluit:
terra, pontus, astra, mundus
quo lavántur flúmíne!

8.

Crux fidélis, inter omnes
arbor una nóbilis:
nulla talem silva⁷ profert
flore, fronde,⁸ gérmine:
dulce lignum dulci clavo
dulce pondus sústinens.⁹

9.

Flecte ramos, arbor alta,
tensa laxa víscera,
et rigor lentéscat ille,
quem dedit natívitas;
ut supérni membra Regis
miti tendas stípíte!

10.

Sola digna tu fuísti
ferre prétium sæculi,¹⁰
atque portum præparáre
nauta mundo náufrago,
quem sacer cruor perúnxit
fusus Agni córpore.

II.

6.

Lustra sex qui jam perégit,
tempus implens córporis,
sponte líbera Redémptor
passióni déditus,
Agnus in Crucis levátur
immolándus stípíte.

7.

Felle potus ecce languet:
spina, clavi, láncea
mite corpus perforárunt:
unda manat, et cruor:
terra, pontus, astra, mundus
quo lavántur flúmíne!

8.

Crux fidélis, inter omnes
arbor una nóbilis:
silva talem nulla profert
fronde, flore, gérmine:
dulce ferrum, dulce lignum,
dulce pondus sústinent.

9.

Flecte ramos, arbor alta,
tensa laxa víscera,
et rigor lentéscat ille,
quem dedit natívitas;
et supérni membra Regis
tende miti stípíte!

10.

Sola digna tu fuísti
ferre mundi víctimam;
atque portum præparáre
arca mundo náufrago,
quam sacer cruor perúnxit
fusus Agni córpore.

BR 1568: (6.) lustris ... peractis; (7.) silva
talem; (8.) fronde, flore; (9.) dulce lignum
dulces clavos, / dulce pondus sustinet;
(10.) sæcli pretium

I.

1.

Tell, my tongue, the battle
of a glorious campaign,
and sing a famous victory
on the monument of the Cross:
how the earth's Redeemer,
sacrificed, conquered.

2.

For our first-formed father's
deception grieving,
when he fell down in death
at a bite of the harmful fruit,
our Maker then marked the wood
to clear the damages of the wood.

3.

This work the scheme
of our salvation required;
that the prótean destroyer's craft
he by craft might beguile,
and bring a cure from that site
from which the foe had struck.

4.

So when came the fullness
of the hallowed time, [*Gal 4.4*]
from the Father's fastness was sent
the Son, earth's Fashioner;
and from a maidenly womb, [*Jn 1.14*]
made with flesh, he went forth.

5.

A babe he wails, stowed within
confining stall:
his limbs, wrapped in swaddling,
his Maiden Mother binds, [*Lk 2.7, 12*]
and a tight-drawn band adorns
his feet, his hands and legs.

I.

1.

Tell, my tongue, the bay-wreath
of a glorious campaign,
and sing a famous victory
on the monument of the Cross:
how the earth's Redeemer,
sacrificed, conquered.

2.

For our first-formed father's
deception grieving,
when he fell to slaughter
at a bite of the harmful fruit,
our Maker then marked the wood
to clear the damages of the wood.

3.

This work the scheme
of our salvation required;
that the prótean betrayers's craft
its craft might beguile,
and bring a cure from that site
from which the foe had struck.

4.

So when came the fullness
of the hallowed time,
from the Father's fastness was sent
the Son, earth's Fashioner;
and from a maidenly womb,
clothed with flesh, he went forth.

5.

A babe he wails, stowed within
confining stall:
his limbs, wrapped in swaddling,
his Maiden Mother binds,
and a tight-drawn band encircles
the hands and feet of God.

II.

6. [Lk 3.23]

Having now passed thirty years,¹¹
filling up the time of his body, [Is 53.7]
of his own will, and born for this,
determined on his passion, [Jn 18.39]
the Lamb is raised up to be sacrificed
on the trunk of the Cross.

7.

Here the vinegar, gall, reed,
spittle, nails, spear;
his tender body is pierced through:
blood and water stream forth:
land, sea, stars, the world
are washed in that stream!

8.

Cross of faith, among all
the one famous tree:
no woodland brings forth thy match
in bloom, foliage or seed:
sweet wood with sweet nail
upholding a sweet burden.¹²

9.

Bend thy branches, lofty tree,
slacken thy strained innards,
and may that stiffness soften
which thy birth gave thee;
that the limbs of the sovereign King
thou mayest spread on tender trunk!

10.

Only thou wert worthy
to bear the ransom of humanity
and ready a harbor
for a shipwrecked world, mariner
whom the hallowed gore anointed,
poured from the Lamb's body.

II.

6.

He has now passed thirty years,
filling up the time of his body,
our Redeemer, by free choice
determined on his passion,
the Lamb, is raised up to be sacrificed
on the trunk of the Cross.

7.

Drinking gall, lo he swoons:
thorn, nails, spear
pierce through his tender body:
water and gore flow:
land, sea, stars, the world
are washed in that stream!

8.

Cross of faith, among all
the one famous tree:
thy match no woodland brings forth
in foliage, bloom or seed:
sweet iron, sweet wood,
uphold a sweet burden.

9.

Bend thy branches, lofty tree,
slacken thy strained innards,
and may that stiffness soften
which thy birth gave thee;
and the limbs of the sovereign King
spread thou on tender trunk!

10.

Only thou wert worthy
to bear the victim of the world
and ready a harbor
for a shipwrecked world, ark
which the hallowed gore anointed,
poured from the Lamb's body.

BR 1568: (11.) thirty years having now
passed; (12.) the sweet wood the sweet
nails / and sweet burden upholds

John Mason Neale (*Rev.), 1818—1866

Edward Caswall (Rev.) CO, 1814—1878

I.

I.

1.
Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle
with completed victory rife,
and above the Cross's trophy
tell the triumph of the strife:
how the world's Redeemer conquered
by surrendering of his life.

1.
Sing, my tongue, the Savior's glory,
tell his triumph far and wide,
tell aloud the famous story
of his body crucified:
how, upon the Cross a victim,
vanquishing in death, he died.

2.
God his Maker, sorely grieving
that the firstborn Adam fell,
when he ate the noxious apple,
whose reward was death and hell:
noted then this wood, the ruin
of the ancient wood to quell.

2.
Eating of the tree forbidden,
man had sunk in Satan's snare,
when his pitying Creator
did this second tree prepare:
destined, many ages later,
that first evil to repair.

3.
For the work of our salvation
needs would have his order so;
and the multiform deceiver's
art by art would overthrow,
and from thence would bring the
medicine,
whence the venom of the foe.

3.
Such the order God appointed
when for sin he would atone;
to the serpent thus opposing
schemes yet deeper than his own,
thence the remedy procuring,
whence the fatal wound had come.

4.
Wherefore, when the sacred fullness
of the appointed time was come,
this world's Maker left his Father,
left his bright and heavenly home;
and proceeded, God incarnate,
from the Virgin's holy womb.

4.
So, when now at length the fullness
of the sacred time drew nigh,
then the Son, who molded all things,
left his Father's throne on high;
from a virgin's womb appearing,
clothed in our mortality.

5.
Weeps the infant in the manger
that in Bethlehem's stable stands:
and his limbs the Virgin Mother
doth compose in swaddling bands:
meetly thus in linen folding
of her God the feet and hands.

5.
All within a lowly manger,
lo, a tender babe he lies:
see his gentle Virgin Mother
lull to sleep his infant cries:
while the limbs of God incarnate
round with swathing bands she ties.

II.

6.

Thirty years among us dwelling,
his appointed time fulfilled;
given for this, he meets his passion,
for that this he freely willed;
on the Cross the Lamb is lifted,
on whose death our hope we build.

7.

He endured the shame and spitting,
vinegar and nails and reed;
as his blessed side is opened,
water thence and blood proceed:
earth, and sky, and stars, and ocean,
by that flood are cleansed indeed!

8.

Faithful Cross, above all other
one and only noble tree:
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit compares with thee:
sweetest wood, and sweetest iron,
sweetest weight sustaining free.

9.

Bend thy boughs, O tree of glory,
thy relaxing sinews bend,
for a while the ancient rigor
that thy birth bestowed suspend;
and the King of heavenly beauty
on thy bosom gently tend.

10.

Thou alone wast counted worthy
this world's ransom to uphold;
for a shipwrecked world preparing
harbor, like the ark of old,
with the sacred blood anointed
from the wounded Lamb that rolled.

Mediæval Hymns and Sequences, 1851

II.

6.

Thus did Christ to perfect manhood
in our mortal flesh attain,
then of his free choice he goeth
to a death of bitter pain,
as a Lamb, upon the altar
of the Cross for us is slain.

7.

Lo, with gall his thirst he quenches:
see the thorns upon his brow:
nails his tender flesh are rending,
see, his side is opened now:
whence, to cleanse the whole creation,
streams of blood and water flow!

8.

[Faithful Cross, O tree all beauteous,
tree all peerless and divine:
Not a grove on earth can show us
such a flower and leaf as thine:
sweet the nails and sweet the wood, (7)
laden with so sweet a load.] (7)

9.

Lofty tree, bend down thy branches
to embrace thy sacred load,
oh, relax the native tension
of that all too rigid wood;
gently, gently bear the members
of thy dying King and God.

10.

Tree, which solely wast found worthy
earth's great victim to sustain;
harbor from the raging tempest,
ark, that saved the world again,
tree, with sacred blood anointed
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

Lyra catholica, 1818

Thomas Joseph Potter (Rev.),
1828—1873

I.

1.
Sing, my tongue, with glowing accents,
of thy Savior's death the strain,
sing the great and noble triumph
of thy God by sinners slain:
how, upon the Cross triumphing,
he for man did mercy gain.

2.
Grieving in his tender mercy
o'er his fallen creatures' sin,
he their woes to soothe and soften
did in loving haste begin:
and the tree marked out, which later
should for sinners mercy win.

3.
Such the order of redemption
by the Lord our God decreed;
o'er the wily serpent's projects
thus in triumph to succeed,
that the fatal tree of Eden
man to glory bright should lead.

4.
When the time of grace and mercy
in its fullness had drawn nigh,
he, the world's Redeemer, coming
from his Father's throne on high;
clad in flesh of purest virgin,
came to suffer and to die.

5.
See the new-born infant Jesus
in a lowly manger lie:
see his Mother's gentle fingers
his poor humble garments tie:
as with loving hand she swathes him,
list her fond maternal sigh.

Ronald Arbuthnott Knox (Mons.),
1888—1957

I.

1.
Sing, my tongue, of warfare ended,
of the Victor's laureled crown;
let the Cross, his trophy splendid,
be the theme of high renown;
how a broken world was mended—
life restored by life laid down.

2.
God, for man's rebellion grieving,
when the world his hands had made
perished by a fruit's deceiving,
in that hour his counsel laid,
by a tree the race reprieving
whom a tree long since betrayed.

3.
Man's eternal health contriving
wrought he with unfailing art—
wisdom 'gainst the wisdom striving
of the tempter's guileful heart;
from that source the balm deriving
where the foe had steeped his dart.

4.
Therefore, when that hallowed hour
time to its fulfillment brought,
from his Father's heavenly tower
came he, who the worlds had wrought,
from his Mother's secret bower,
clothed in flesh, and welcome sought.

5.
See a helpless infant crying,
whom a manger doth enfold;
see his Virgin Mother tying
rags about him in the cold;
bound both hand and feet, and lying
'mid the beasts, your God behold!

Robert Campbell, 1814—1868
(1850)

II.

6.
Soon the sweetest blossom, wasting,
droops its head and withered lies:
early thus to Calvary hasting,
on the Cross the Savior dies;
freely death for all men tasting,
there behold our sacrifice.

7.
Finishing his tribulation,
now his head he boweth low:
from his side for our salvation
blood and water mingling flow:
hail the Lamb, from earth's foundation
slain to bear the sinner's woe!

8.
Holy Cross, blest tree, outvying
all that's fair in loveliest bowers:
God's own blood thy bloom supplying,
sweet thy leaves, thy fruit, thy flowers:
medicine of the sick and dying,
tree of life, thy balm be ours.

9. (iambic)
Yet bénd thine árms, O lófty trée, (8)
to éase the súfferer's ágoný. (8)
O bítter téars, O dýing gróans! (8)
Why mélt ye nót, ye rócks, ye stónes? (8)
Blest Cróss, some kínd relíef accórd, (8)
and géntly béar our dýing Lórd. (8)

10.
Borne on thee, the storm we weather:
thou dost ride the billows o'er
and, though floods around us gather,
safe on thee, we reach the shore,
where the mansions of our Father
shelter us for evermore.

Annus sanctus, 1884

II.

6.
Now, his years of life perfected,
our atonement's price to be,
by the doom long since elected,
bound and nailed to set us free,
Christ, our Victim, hangs rejected
on the Cross of Calvary.

7.
Gall he drinks; his strength subduing,
reed and thorn and nail and spear
plot his gentle frame's undoing;
blood and water thence appear,
with their cleansing tide renewing
earth and sea and starry sphere.

8.
Hail, true Cross, of beauty rarest,
king of all the forest trees;
leaf and flower and fruit thou bearest,
medicine for a world's disease;
fairest wood, and iron fairest—
yet more fair, who hung on thee.

9.
Bend thy branches down to meet him,
bend that stubborn heart of thine;
let thy native force, to greet him,
all its ruggedness resign;
gently let thy wood entreat him,
royal sufferer, and divine.

10.
Victim of our race, he deignèd
on thy arms to lay his head;
thou the ark, whose refuge gainèd,
sinful man no more may dread;
ark, whose planks are deeply stainèd
with the blood the Lamb hath shed.

Westminster Hymnal (2nd ed.), 1939

1. When, the foe laid low, exulting,
homeward Abraham did swing,
then Melchisedech before him,
great who was, of Salem king,
came, and acting on his priesthood,
wine and bread there forth did bring.

2. Truth that ancient shadow hinted
clearly shines before our gaze:
see, our new High Priest the pattern
of Melchisedech displays,
under bread and wine his body
with his blood for us outlays.

3. Wondrous change the Word produces,
all creation's fountainhead,
into blood is wine converted,
even as to flesh is bread:
feeling fails, but to our thinking
strength by lofty faith is wed.

4. As in gory wise he offered
to the Father once of yore,
so himself he duly renders
daily, victim as before,
by the hands of those who serve him,
on our altars, without gore.

5. Drawing nigh the hallowed precincts,
there the holy people stand,
Christ unto the sovereign Father
and themselves with Christ remand,
by his flesh and blood thus yielded
feed then from a shepherd's hand.

6. Highest praise to God the Father,
who has made all things of nought,
highest praise be to his Offspring,
who us with his blood has bought,
to the Spirit, by whose bounteous
breath we thrive, the same be wrought.
Amen.

1. Hoste dum victo triúmphans
Abraham revértitur,
óbvius fit magnus illi
rex Salem Melchisedech,
vina qui, tamquam sacérdos,
atque panem prótulit.

2. Quam vetus signábat umbra
clara lucet véritas:
Póntifex novus, secúndum
órdinem Melchisedech,
pane sub vinóque corpus
dat suum cum ságuine.

3. Quo creáta cuncta Verbo
mira fit mutátio,
panis in carnem, merúmque
in cruórem vértitur:
déficit senus, sed alta
róborat mentem fides.

4. Qui semel Patri cruéntam
óbtulit se víctimam,
síngulis idem diébus,
per ministrórum manus,
rite nostris incruéntus
se sub aris ímmolat.

5. Ipsa quin astans sacrátis
sancta plebs altáribus,
máximo Christum Parénti
seque cum Christo litat,
carne posthac, quam litávit,
et cruóre pascitur.

6. Summa laus Deo Parénti,
qui creávit ómnia,
summa sit Nato, redémit
qui suo nos ságuine,
Flámini par, cujus almo
confovémur hálitu.
Amen.

«Santolius Victorinus» (J.-B. de
Santeul) Can. Reg. S. Victor. (1630-
1697), *Breviarium Cluniacense*, 1686

1. When the patriarch was returning
crowned with triumph from the fray,
him the peaceful king of Salem
came to meet upon his way;
meekly bearing bread and wine,
holy priesthood's awful sign.

2. On the truth thus dimly shadowed
later days a luster shed;
when the great High-priest eternal,
under form of wine and bread,
for the world's immortal food,
gave his flesh and gave his blood.

3. Wondrous gift! The Word who fashioned
all things by his might divine,
bread into his body changes,
into his own blood the wine;
what though sense no change perceives?
Faith admires, adores, believes.

4. He who once to die a victim
on the cross did not refuse,
day by day upon our altars
that same sacrifice renews;
through his holy priesthood's hands,
faithful to his last commands.

5. While the people, all uniting
in the sacrifice sublime,
offer Christ to his high Father,
offer up themselves with him;
then together with the priest
on the living Victim feast.

Edward Caswall (Rev.) CO (1814-1878)