

“Caelestis Urbs Jerusalem” 1631 version by Pope Urban VIII

Cf. *Divinam Psalmodiam* (25 January 1631)

Caeléstis urbs Jerúsalem,
Beáta pacis visio,
Quæ celsa de vivéntibus
Saxis ad astra tólleris,
Sponsæque ritu cingeris
Mille_Angelórum millibus.

O sorte nupta próspera,
Doláta Patris glória,
Respérsa Sponsi grátia,
Regína formosíssima,
Christo jugáta príncipi,
Cæli corúsca Cívitas.

Hic margarítis émicant,
Paténtque cunctis óstia;
Virtúte namque prævia
Mortális illuc dúcitur,
Amóre Christi pércitus
Torménta quisquis sústinet.

Scalpri salúbris íctibus
Et tunsíone plúrima,
Fabri políta málleo
Hanc saxa molem cóstruunt,
Aptisque juncta néxibus
Locántur in fastígio.

Alto_ex Olýmpi vértice
Summi paréntis Filius
Ceum monte deséctus lapis
Terras in ímas décidens,
Domus supérnæ_et ínfimæ,
Utrúmque junxit ángulum.

Sed illa sedes Cælitum
Semper resúltat láudibus,
Deúmque Trínun_et Únicum
Jugi canóre prædicat:
Illi canéntes júngimur
Almæ Siónis æmuli.

Hæc templa, Rex Caeléstium,
Imple bénigno lúmine;
Huc o rogátus advéni;
Plebisque vota súscipe,
Et nostra corda júgiter
Perfúnde cæli grátia.

Hic ímpetrent Fidélium
Voces, precésque súpplicum
Domus beátæ múnera,
Partisque donis gaudeant:
Donec solúti córpore
Sedes beátas ímpleant.

Decus Parénti débitum
Sit usquequáque_Altíssimo,
Natóque Patris único
Et ínclyto Paráclito,
Cui laus, potéstas,glória
Ætérna sit per sáecula.

Jerusalem, heavenly city,
blest vision of peace! Built
from living stones, you are
raised on high to the heavens
& attended, like a bride, by
countless thousands of angels.

How happy the bride of such a favored
destiny! Your rich endowment is the
Father’s glory & your comeliness is
from the Bridegroom’s grace—queen
most beautiful, bride of Christ the
King, radiant city of heaven.

Your gates, glittering with
pearls, are open to all;
thither is led whosoever
follows virtue, & who,
urged by the love of Christ,
endures torments.

Stones which have been polished
by vigorous blows of the chisel
& by countless strokes of the
Divine Master’s mallet form this
edifice; closely knit together,
they rise to the summits.

From the heights of heaven, the Son of
the Eternal Father came down to this
humble earth like a stone hewn from the
mountain & fell to the plains beneath.
He was the cornerstone where met the
earthly house & the heavenly one.

But that heav’nly abode forever
resounds with praise & with continuous
hymns that glorify the Triune God; &
when we sing our hymns of praise, we
are one with heaven, our purpose the
same as that of holy Sion.

Fill these temples, O King of the
heavens with Your sweet light.
Come down to it at our calling, there
to receive Your people’s prayers,
& fill our hearts unceasingly with
heavenly grace.

Here may the voices of the faithful (&
prayers of Your suppliants) find their
answer in graces from our heav’nly home;
& may they find joy and comfort in graces
received until, being freed from the body,
they take their place among the blessed.

Forever, let due honor be given
to the most high Father, & to the
only begotten Son of the Father
& to the glorious Paraclete. To
God be praise, power, & glory
through everlasting ages.

“Urbs Jerusalem Beata” 6th century version

Based on: *1 Peter 2: 5; Apoc. 21; Eph. 2: 19-22; Heb. 12: 22.*

Blessed city Jerusalem,
called vision of peace, which
even now is being built in
heaven out of living stones,
encircled by angels as a bride
surrounded by her maids.

Coming down new from
heaven, adorned like a
spouse for marriage, let her
be wedded to the Lord:
All her streets and walls
gleam with purest gold.

Her gates sparkle with
pearls, while her vaults
lie open; and every one
who is persecuted in this
world for the name of
Christ may enter there.

Polished by hammer-strokes
and sharp blows, her stones
are fitted to their places by
the craftsman’s hands, & are
set to remain forevermore
in the holy shrine.

Christ the cornerstone was sent
to be the foundation, & He is
bound in both joints of the wall:
Christ, whom holy Sion takes
unto itself, Christ, in whom it
stands firm in its belief.

That entire city, sacred to
God, beloved of God, is
full of melodies in praise
& sonorous jubilation: she
extols with fervor the God
who is one and three.

In this temple, O God most high,
be present when You are invoked;
& with merciful goodness hear
our vows & prayers, pour forth
Your abundant blessing here
ceaselessly.

May all deserve to receive here
what they have sought in prayer,
& to enjoy those blessings received
with the saints forever; may they
deserve, when transported into rest,
to enter into Paradise itself.

Everywhere be there glory &
honor to God most High; equal
glory to the Father, Son, &
glorious Paraclete, to whom
belong praise & power
through everlasting ages.

Urbs Jerúsalem beáta,
Dicta pacis visio,
Quæ constrúitur in coelis
Vivus ex lapídibus,
Et Ángelis coronáta,
Ut sponsáta cómite.

2. Nova véniens e coelo,
Nuptiáli thálamo
Præparáta, ut sponsáta
Copulétur Dómino:
Platée et muri ejus
Ex auro puríssimo.

3. Portæ nitent margarítis
Ádytis paténtibus;
Et virtúte meritórum
Illuc introdúctur
Omnis, qui ob Christi nomen
Hic in mundo prémitur.

4. Tunsiónibus, pressúris
Expolíti lápides,
Suis coaptántur locis
Per manus artificis,
Disponúntur permansúri
Sacris ædificiis.

Anguláris fundaméntum
Lapis Christus missus est,
Qui parietum compáge
In utróque néctitur,
Quem Sion sancta súscépit,
In quo credens pérmanet.

Omnis illa Deo sacra,
Et dilécta cívitas,
Plena módulis in laude,
Et canóre júbilo,
Trínun Deum unicúmque
Cum fervóre prædicat.

Hoc in templo, summe Deus,
Exorátus advéni;
Et cleménti bonitáte
Precum vota súscipe;
Largam benedictiónem
Hic infúnde júgiter.

Hic promereántur omnes
Petíta acquirere,
Et adépta possidére:
Cum Sanctis perénitter
Paradísum introíre,
Transláti in réquiem.

Gloria et honor Deo
Usquequáque_altíssimo,
Una Patri, Filióque,
Ínclyto Paráclito,
Cui laus est et potéstas
Per ætérna sáecula.

ITS EDITORS LEFT NO STONE unturned in their quest for the best versions of these ancient Catholic hymns, combing through centuries of English translations from the sixteenth century to the present day. In the process, they have revealed much little-known material, and some that is published in a hymnal for the first time. [They] navigate this difficult terrain with assurance; indeed, the editors’ explanation of the Urbanite reform and its impact on English translators is a model of clarity, and contains information this reviewer has not encountered elsewhere.

—Dr. Aaron James: 2019 review of the *Brébeuf Catholic Hymnal* in the *Journal of the Society for Catholic Liturgy* • <https://ocwatershed.org/hymn/>