

Lauda Sion: Sequence for the Feast of Corpus Christi

composed by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
translated by Jeffrey C. Kalb, Jr.

Lauda, Sion, Salvatórem
Lauda ducem et pastórem
 In hymnis et cánticis.
Quantum potes, tantum aude:
Quia major omni laude,
 Nec laudáre súfficis.

Laudis thema speciális
Panis vivus et vitális
 Hódie propónitur.
Quem in sacrae mensa coenae
Turbae fratrum duodénae
 Datum non ambígitur

Sit laus plena, sit sonóra,
Sit jucúnda, sit decóra
 Mentis jubilátio.
Dies enim solémnis ágitur
In qua mensae prima recólitur
 Hujus institútio.

In hac mensa novi Regis
Novum Pascha novae legis
 Phase vetus términat.
Vetustátem nóvitas,
Umbram fugat véritas,
 Noctem lux elíminat.

Quod in coena Christus gessit,
Faciéndum hoc expréssit
 In sui memóriam.
Docti sacris institútis,
Panem, vinum in salútis
 Consecrámus hóstiam.

Dogma datur christiánis,
Quod in carnem transit panis,
 Et vinum, in sánguinem.
Quod non capis, quod non vides,
Animósa firmat fides
 Praeter rerum órđinem.

Worship, Zion, your Salvation,
Guide and Shepherd with elation.
 Hymns and canticles upraise.
Laud Him with the utmost daring,
For He's great beyond comparing,
 Nor do you suffice to praise.

Now a theme of laud deserving,
Living Bread and life-preserving,
 Calls us to a special feast.
Bread at sacred supper broken
For the twelve as Love's own token
 Is not doubted in the least.

Let the praise be full, resounding.
Let your joy of mind, abounding,
 Pleasant and well ordered peal.
Greet the solemn day awaited,
In which feast is meditated
 The first founding of this Meal.

At this board of the new Regent,
Novel Pasch of Law more recent
 Brings to end the ancient rite.
Newness routs the obsolescent;
Truth dispels the shadows present;
 Morning banishes the night.

What at supper Christ effected,
His apostles He directed
 Likewise to commemorate.
Taught by sacred regulation,
Into Victim of Salvation
 Bread and wine we consecrate.

Bread into His Body changes,
Wine to Blood, as He arranges:
 Christian dogma verifies.
Neither touch nor sight revering,
Lively Faith affirms in hearing
 What past nature's order lies.

Sub diversis speciébus,
Signis tantum, et non rebus,
Latent res exímiae.
Caro cibus, sanguis potus:
Manet tamen Christus totus,
Sub utráque spécie.

A suménte non concísus,
Non confráctus, non divísus:
Ínteger accípitur.
Sumit unus, sumunt mille:
Quantum isti, tantum ille:
Nec sumptus consúmitur.

Sumunt boni, sumunt mali:
Sorte tamen inaequáli,
Vitae, vel intéritus.
Mors est malis, vita bonis:
Vide paris sumptiónis
Quam sit dispar éxitus.

Fracto demum sacraménto,
Ne vacilles, sed meménto,
Tantum esse sub fragménto,
Quantum toto tégitur.
Nulla rei fit scissúra:
Signi tantum fit fractúra,
Qua nec status nec statúra
Signáti minúitur.

Ecce Panis Angelórum
Factus cibus viatórum!
Vere Panis filiórum,
Non mitténdus cánibus.
In figúris praesignátur,
Cum Isáac immolátur,
Agnus Paschae deputatur,
Datur manna patribus.

Bone pastor, panis vere,
Jesu, nostri miserére:
Tu nos pasce, nos tuére,
Tu nos bona fac vidére
In terra vivéntium.
Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,
Qui nos pascis hic mortáles:
Tuos ibi commensáles,
Coherédes et sodáles
Fac sanctórum cívium.

Under species yet persisting,
Merely signs, and not subsisting,
Unexampled Substance hides.
Meal of Flesh and Blood sustaining,
Still the whole of Christ, remaining,
Under both the signs resides.

By the taker neither severed,
Nor divided, nor dismembered,
Christ entire is brought in store.
One receives, thus thousands making,
Just as much as these partaking:
Taken, He but offers more.

Good and bad, receiving, merit
Lots diverse, and thus inherit
Life divine, or endless waste.
Life for good men, death for evil:
See the outcome so unequal
Brought about by equal taste.

Once the Sacrament's divided,
Do not waver, be decided:
There's as much to each confided
As in whole it comprehends.
Of the Substance there's no rupture,
In the sign alone a fracture,
By which neither state nor stature
Of the Signified descends.

Bread of the angelic chorus
Made the Food of pilgrims for us!
Children's Leaven so decorous
To the dogs must not be thrown.
In the types fore-indicated,
He is Isaac immolated,
He the Paschal Lamb awaited,
Manna to the fathers sown.

Jesus, Bread, but veiled austere,
We Thy mercy beg sincerely.
Feed us, Shepherd, guard us dearly,
Make us see the good things clearly
In Thy living people's land.
All things knowing, all things able,
Feeding mortals at Thy table:
Us to dine with Thee enable,
Deign us friends and heirs to label,
Make us with Thy saints to stand.