

O Salutaris Hostia

Studying the Latin of the text

Verse 1

O salutaris¹ Hostia²
quae³ caeli⁴ pandis⁵ ostium⁶
bella⁷ premunt⁸ hostilia⁹
da¹⁰ robur¹¹ fer¹² auxilium.¹³

Strict Translation

O saving Victim
who openeth the gates of heaven
hostile wars press
give strength, bear aid.

Poetic Rendering

O saving Victim opening wide
the gate of heaven to all below
our foes press on from every side
thine aid supply, thy strength bestow.

¹Salutaris - saving. Salutaris salutare is an adjective. Here it is in the vocative to agree with hostia.

²Hostia - victim.

³Quae - who. A nominative feminine referring to hostia and is the subject of the verb pandis.

⁴Caeli - of heaven.

⁵Pandis - openeth. The second person singular of the verb pando, pandere, pandi, pansum (or passum) - to open, lay bare, or stretch out. Third conjugation.

⁶Ostium - gate. The object of pandis. From ostium, ostii, n. meaning a door, gate, or entrance to anything.

⁷Bella - wars. Nominative plural subject of premunt.

⁸premunt - press. Present indicative from premo, premere, pressi, pressum - to oppose, press, or press upon.

⁹Hostilia - hostile. From the adjective from hostilis, hostile - hostile.

¹⁰Da - give. Imperative of Do, dare, dedi datum - to give or grant. 1st conjugation.

¹¹Robur - a word derived from a very hard kind of oak, i.e. "strength." Neuter accusative from robur, roboris.

¹²Fer - bear. Present imperative of Fero, ferre, tuli, latus - to carry, or bring. Third conjugation.

¹³Auxilium - help. From auxilium, auxilii, n. - help, aid, assistance, support.

Verse 2

Uni¹⁴ Trinoque¹⁵ Domino¹⁶
sit¹⁷ sempiterna¹⁸ gloria¹⁹
qui²⁰ vitam²¹ sine²² termino²³
nobis²⁴ donet²⁵ in patria²⁶.

Strict Translation

To the one and threefold Lord
may there be everlasting glory
who life without end
may (he) grant to us in the Fatherland.

Poetic Rendering

To Thy great name be endless praise
immortal God-head one in three
O grant us endless length of days
in our true native land to see.

¹⁴Uni - one. Dative singular of unus.

¹⁵Trinoque - three-fold. Trino is the dative singular from the adjective trinus - three or triune. The "que" (and) is attached to trino to link it to the preceding word "uni."

¹⁶Domino - to the Lord. Dative singular of Dominus.

¹⁷Sit - may there be. Present subjunctive.

¹⁸Sempiterna - everlasting. From the adjective Sempiternus, a, um - everlasting or eternal.

¹⁹Gloria - glory.

²⁰Qui - who. Nomenative Subject of "donet." It refers back to "Domino."

²¹Vitam - life. Accusative sing. of "vita."

²²Sine - without.

²³Termino - end. Ablative singular of Terminus, i.

²⁴Nobis - to us.

²⁵Donet - may give. Present Subjunctive of Do, Dare, Dedi, Datum - to give. First declension.

²⁶In Patria - in the Fatherland. In this case the Fatherland is the Father's Land, i.e. Heaven

Notes: The Author is St. Thomas Aquinas. These are the last two verses of a longer hymn Verbum Supernum Prodiens (The Heavenly Word, going forth) which was composed for Lauds (Morning Prayer) of the Divine Office of Corpus Christi. The meter is Iambic Dimeter, accentual with alternating rhyme. This hymn was said to so please even the hostile Rousseau that he would have given all his poetry to be its author.