

Veni Sancte Spiritus Editor's Notes

Veni Sancte Spiritus, sometimes called the "Golden Sequence," is a sequence prescribed in the Roman Liturgy for the Mass of Pentecost. The original verse is usually attributed to either the thirteenth-century Pope Innocent III or to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Stephen Langton, although it has been attributed to others as well. The text is one of only four medieval Sequences which were preserved in the Missale Romanum published in 1570 following the Council of Trent (1545–63).

In this work, Hilarión Eslava has set the text into a brilliant orchestra/choral presentation, including a beautiful duet for two bass singers midway through. An organ reduction is provided if an orchestra is not available.

A piece like this would typically only be performed on Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is the annual Christian festival commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus after his ascension from earth to heaven. It always falls on the seventh Sunday after Easter, typically in early June.

ORIGINAL LATIN TEXT:

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
et emitte caelitus
lucis tuae radium.

Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium.

Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.

In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.

O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima
tuorum fidelium.

Sine tuo numine,
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.

Lava quod est sordidum,

riga quod est aridum,
sana quod est saucium.

Flecte quod est rigidum,
fove quod est frigidum,
rege quod est devium.

Da tuis fidelibus,
in te confidentibus,
sacrum septenarium.

Da virtutis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.

LITERAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Come, Holy Spirit,
send forth the heavenly
radiance of your light.

Come, father of the poor,
come, giver of gifts,
come, light of the heart.

Greatest comforter,
sweet guest of the soul,
sweet consolation.

In labour, rest,
in heat, temperance,
in tears, solace.

O most blessed light,
fill the inmost heart
of your faithful.

Without your spirit,
there is nothing in man,
nothing that is not harmful.

Cleanse that which is unclean,
water that which is dry,
heal that which is wounded.

Bend that which is inflexible,
fire that which is chilled,
correct what goes astray.

Give to your faithful,
those who trust in you,
the sevenfold gifts.

Grant the reward of virtue,
grant the deliverance of salvation,
grant eternal joy.