

Supplemental Religious Material for Latin

Mary J. Moerbe

There are good Latin curriculum choices out there. At the same time, they don't necessarily include Latin from specifically Lutheran traditions and sources. Hence, I've started to compile a) places to start so that Latin-learners can broach translation work with some familiar Lutheran texts, b) supplemental religious memory work to introduce familiar Lutheran phrases and texts to our Latin students, and c) a little advice along the way.

This document does *not* include grammar charts or explanations. It does, however, feature:

1. Suggested Resources
2. Supplemental Religious Memory Work
3. A *Little Word Vocabulary Help*
4. Latin text of the Creeds
5. Three of the most common Latin hymn texts
6. "A Mighty Fortress" translated into Latin
7. The O Antiphons in Latin

None of this is to say that Latin is the only language of the Reformation—certainly not. Nor are any of these Latin things necessary for heartfelt Lutheran devotion. At the same time, it can be very helpful and instructive for students to ease into translation work with more than sentences about gladiators or togas.

Would I love for my students to grow into translating Latin poetry by Lutheran writers like Johann Heinrich Ernesti? Yes! (He was the rector at the Thomasschule when Johann Sebastian Bach applied for the position of cantor!) Or Johann Heermann, who is commemorated with Philipp Nicolai and Paul Gerhardt? I'd love it! And what a joy that would be!

All these Latin texts are public domain. If there are mistakes—or you find more to include—please just let me know. (Sometimes various places punctuate Latin different. I shouldn't need correction in that, unless it is an obvious typo.)

MJM



Resources & Tips for Additional Latin Study

Pending publication: a hymnal for classical Lutheran schools is being prepared by the talented Matthew Carver. I will add that title whenever it is released. Rumor has it that it will contain Matins, Vespers, the Litany, the Psalter, and 75 Lutheran hymns, all in Latin!!!)

For the Small Catechism in Latin, I recommend [*Catechismus Minor Martini Lutheri: The Small Catechism of Martin Luther in Latin with notes*](#) by Lutheran Rev. Dr. Edward Naumann, available through Amazon. The catechism is *not* the easiest Latin. I suggest this book with translation notes for students who have studied Latin a few years, maybe middle school or junior high upward.

To add a few Latin prayers to your family devotions now, download the free booklet, [*A Family Handbook of Prayer*](#), which is free through LutheranHomeschool.com. It contains prayers in various languages, compiled by a Lutheran pastor, Rev. Stratman. Also search his wonderful website, ACollectionofPrayers.com.

[*The Brotherhood Prayer Book*](#), available through Emmanuel Press, has Latin in it, including a Latin Compline. You may also be interested in the website retinenda.weebly.com. From it, you can download free resources to pray Matins (Lauds), Vespers, and Compline, including psalter, hymns, propers, etc. There are also additional resources such as [*Patres Latini Lutheran: Latin Readings from the First Two Centuries of Lutheranism*](#), compiled by Walter Bartling

For additional Latin hymns, see [*Liber Hymnorum: The Latin Hymns of the Lutheran Church*](#), edited and translated by Matthew Carver, available through Emmanuel Press. It's a treasure, half in English, half in Latin.

The entire Book of Concord is available in its three definitive languages in what is sometimes called the *Triglot* or *Triglotta*. CPH sells the [*Concordia Triglotta*](#) with its German, Latin, and English texts in three parallel columns. It's pretty awesome.

The Vulgate, the primary Latin version of the Bible, is free and online in multiple places and editions, although if you have a favorite printed version, preferably with notes, I'd love to learn about it. I have heard that the Gospel of St. Mark is an excellent place to start translating for devotional reading.

[*Stelten's Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Latin*](#), is helpful, but if you learn about something better, please let me know and I'll update this document.

Religious Memory Work

The Invocation:

In nomine Patris
Et Filii
Et Spiritus Sancti.
Amen.

Latin Words & Phrases in the Liturgy

Invocatio
Introitus
Gloria
Sanctus
Agnus Dei
Nunc Dimittis
Benedictio (Both for Benediction and Benedictus)
Venite
Te Deum

Solas

Sola Fide
Sola Scriptura
Sola Gratia

Solus Christus or Solo Christo (Both are accepted)
Soli Deo Gloria

Lutheran Teachings Commonly Referred to by Latin Terms

Filioque
Incurvatus in se
Extra nos
Simil iustus et peccator
Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum (VDMA is the common abbreviation)

Additional Religious Latin Phrases

A cruce salus - Salvation from Cross
Anno Domini - In the Year of the Lord
Caelum et Terra - Heaven and Earth, also meaning 'everything everywhere'

Corpus Christi - The body of Christ
De profundis - From the depth
Deo gratias - Thanks be to God
Dies irae - The day of wrath (Also a famous Latin hymn)
Dominus vobiscum - The Lord be with you
Dona nobis pacem - Grant us peace.
Gloria in excelsis Deo - Glory to God in the highest
Lux mundi - The light of the world
Mea culpa - My fault
Miles Christi sum. - I am a soldier of Christ.
Opus Dei - God's deed
Ora pro nobis - Pray for us
Pax tibi - Peace onto you
Rex mundi - King of the World
Signum Crucis - Sign of the Cross
Sursum corda - Lift up your hearts

The Doxology:

Gloria Patri,
Et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,
Sicut erat in principio,
Et nunc, et semper,
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

The Table Blessing:

Benedic, Domine, nos
Et haec Tua dona
Quae de Tua largitate
Sumus sumpturi.
Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

The Sanctus:

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra Gloria Tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Pater Noster: The Lord's Prayer

Pater Noster qui es in Caelis
Sanctificetur nomen Tuum
Adveniat regnum Tuum
Fiat voluntas Tua
Sicut in Caelo et in terra

Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra
Sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris
Et ne nos inducas in temptationem
Sed libera nos a malo.

Quia tuum est regnum, et potestas, et gloria,
In saecula saeculorum. Amen.

O Antiphon Dates & Titles

- 17 December: O Sapientia
- 18 December: O Adonai
- 19 December: O Radix Jesse
- 20 December: O Clavis David
- 21 December: O Oriens
- 22 December: O Rex Gentium
- 23 December: O Emmanuel

A Little Word Vocabulary Help: Common Little Words

ad - to
Christum - Christ
Crux - Cross
cum - with
de - of
Deus - God
Dies - Day
Dómine/ Dóminus - Lord
est - is
et - and
Fides - Faith
Gloria - Glory
Gratia - Grace

in - in or sometimes on
Misericordia - Mercy
nos - us
Pax - Peace
Peccatum - Sin
per - for
pro - for
qui - who
Salus - Salvation
Sanctus (Sancta, Sanctum)- Saint
super - over
ut - that
vel - or

Latin Text of the Creeds

Symbolum Apostolorum: Apostles Creed

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem caeli et terrae.

Et in Iesum Christum, Filium eius unicum, Dominum nostrum, qui conceptus est

de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine, passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus,

et sepultus, descendit ad inferna, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit ad caelos,

sedet ad dexteram Dei, Patris omnipotentis, inde venturus est iudicare vivos et

mortuos.

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum

communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem et vitam aeternam.

Amen.

Symbolum Nicaenum: The Nicene Creed

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, Factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, gentium, non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt; qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis, et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est; crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est, et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas et ascendit in caelum; sedet ad dexteram Patris et iterum venturus est in gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit, qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et glorificatur, qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

Quicunque Vult: Athanasian Creed (With line numbers for ease of progression)

1. Quicunque vult salvus esse, ante omnia opus est, ut teneat catholicam fidem:
2. Quam nisi quisque integrum inviolatumque servaverit, absque dubio in aeternum peribit.
3. Fides autem catholica haec est: ut unum Deum in Trinitate, et Trinitatem in unitate veneremur.
4. Neque confundentes personas, neque substantiam separantes.
5. Alia est enim persona Patris, alia Filii, alia Spiritus Sancti:
6. Sed Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti una est divinitas, aequalis gloria, coaeterna maiestas.
7. Qualis Pater, talis Filius, talis Spiritus Sanctus.
8. Increat Pater, increat Filius, increat Spiritus Sanctus.
9. Immensus Pater, immensus Filius, immensus Spiritus Sanctus.
10. Aeternus Pater, aeternus Filius, aeternus Spiritus Sanctus.
11. Et tamen non tres aeterni, sed unus aeternus.

12. Sicut non tres increati, nec tres immensi, sed unus increatus, et unus immensus.

13. Similiter omnipotens Pater, omnipotens Filius, omnipotens Spiritus Sanctus.

14. Et tamen non tres omnipotentes, sed unus omnipotens.

15. Ita Deus Pater, Deus Filius, Deus Spiritus Sanctus.

16. Et tamen non tres dii, sed unus est Deus.

17. Ita Dominus Pater, Dominus Filius, Dominus Spiritus Sanctus.

18. Et tamen non tres Domini, sed unus est Dominus.

19. Quia, sicut singillatim unamquamque personam Deum ac Dominum confiteri

christiana veritate compellimur, ita tres Deos aut Dominos dicere catholica

religione prohibemur.

20. Pater a nullo est factus: nec creatus, nec genitus.

21. Filius a Patre solo est: non factus, nec creatus, sed genitus.

22. Spiritus Sanctus a Patre et Filio: non factus, nec creatus, nec genitus, sed

procedens.

23. Unus ergo Pater, non tres Patres: unus Filius, non tres Filii: unus Spiritus Sanctus, non tres Spiritus Sancti.
24. Et in hac Trinitate nihil prius aut posterius, nihil maius aut minus;
25. Sed totae tres personae coaeterna sibi sunt et coaequales. Ita ut per omnia, sicut iam supra dictum est, et unitas in Trinitate, et Trinitas in unitate veneranda sit.
26. Qui vult ergo salvus esse, ita de Trinitate sentiat.
27. Sed necessarium est ad aeternam salutem, ut incarnationem quoque Domini nostri Iesu Christi fideliter credat.
28. Est ergo fides recta ut credamus et confiteamur, quia Dominus noster Iesus Christus, Dei Filius, Deus et homo est:
29. Deus est ex substantia Patris ante saecula genitus: et homo est ex substantia matris in saeculo natus:
30. Perfectus Deus, perfectus homo: ex anima rationali et humana carne subsistens.
31. Aequalis Patri secundum divinitatem: minor Patre secundum humanitatem.
32. Qui, licet Deus sit et homo, non duo tamen, sed unus est Christus.

33. Unus autem non conversione divinitatis in carnem, sed assumptione humanitatis
in Deum.
34. Unus omnino, non confusione substantiae, sed unitate personae.
35. Nam sicut anima rationalis et caro unus est homo: ita Deus et homo unus est
Christus,
36. Qui passus est pro salute nostra: descendit ad inferos: tertia die resurrexit a
mortuis.
37. Ascendit ad caelos, sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis: inde venturus est
iudicare vivos et mortuos.
38. Ad cuius adventum omnes homines resurgere habent cum corporibus suis: et
reddituri sunt de factis propriis rationem,
39. Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam aeternam: qui vero mala, in ignem aeternum.
40. Haec est fides catholica; quam nisi quisque fideliter firmiterque crediderit, salvus
esse non poterit. Amen.

Three Very Common Latin Hymns

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Veni veni, Emmanuel
captivum solve Israel,
qui gemit in exsilio,
privatus Dei Filio.

Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel,
nascetur pro te Israel!

Veni, O Sapientia,
quae hic disponis omnia,
veni, viam prudentiae
ut doceas et gloriae.

Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel,
nascetur pro te Israel!

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles
Laeti triumphantes
Venite, venite in Bethlehem
Natum videte
Regem angelorum
Venite adoremus
Dominum

Cantet nunc io
Chorus angelorum
Cantet nunc aula caelestium
Gloria, gloria
In excelsis Deo
Venite adoremus
Dominum

Once in Royal David's City

Regis olim urbe David,
Sub bovili misero,
Mater posuit infantem
In praesaepi pro lecto:
Mitis Maria mater;
Iesus Christus is puer.

De caelo ad nos descendit
Deus, Dominus orbis;
Ei tectum est bovine
Et praesaepe pro cunis.
Pauperum virum amator
Sancte vixisti Salvator.

A Mighty Fortress!

NB.* Martin Luther did not write this text in Latin. "A Mighty Fortress" was supposed to be a specifically vernacular hymn. At the same time, it can be very fun to read and sing familiar text in another language! And Latin retains some of the German specificity sometimes lost in translations into English. The translator's name may distract students, so it isn't included, though I want to shake his hand vigorously in heaven! This Latin version was first published in 1830.

*NB means *nota bene*, note well.

A Mighty Fortress

Arx firma Deus noster est,
Is telum, quo nitamur;
Is explicat ex omnibus
Queis malis implicamur.
Nam cui semper mos,
Jam ter terret nos:
Per astum, per vim,
Saevam levat sitim;
Nil par in terris illi.

In nobis nihil situm est,
Quo minus pereamus:
Quem Deus ducem posuit,
Is facit ut vivamus.

Scin quis hoc potest?
Jesus Christus est,
Qui, dux caelitum,
Non habet aemulum:
Is vicerit profecto.
Sit mundus plenus daemonum,
Nos cupiant vorare;
Non timor est; victoria
Nil potest nos frustrare.
Hem dux saeculi!
Invitus abi!
In nos nil potes,
Jam judicatus es;
Vel vocula te sternat.

Hoc verbum non pessumdabunt,
Nec gratiam merebunt;
In nobis Christi Spiritus
Et munera vigebunt:
Tollant corpus, rem,
Mundique omnem spem:
Tollant! jubilent!
Non lucrum hinc ferent;
Manebit regnum nobis.

O Antiphons: Full Text

O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi prodiisti,
attingens a fine usque ad finem,
fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia:
veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.

O Adonai, et Dux domus Israel,
qui Moysi in igne flammæ rubi apparuisti,
et ei in Sina legem dedisti:
veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.

O Radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum,
super quem continebunt reges os suum,
quem Gentes deprecabuntur:
veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.

O Clavis David, et sceptrum domus Israel;
qui aperis, et nemo claudit; claudis, et nemo aperit:
veni, et educ vincum de domo carceris,
sedentem in tenebris, et umbra mortis.

O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol justitiae:
veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris, et umbra mortis.

O Rex Gentium, et desideratus earum,
lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum:
veni, et salva hominem, quem de limo formasti.

O Emmanuel, Rex et legifer noster,
exspectatio Gentium, et Salvator earum:
veni ad salvandum nos, Domine, Deus noster.

More Suggested Lutheran Translation Texts

Again, for more Latin Lutheran hymns, see [*Liber Hymnorum: The Latin Hymns of the Lutheran Church*](#), edited and translated by Matthew Carver, available through Emmanuel Press.

For further study on Lutheran Latin hymnody, you may also wish to read “Latin Liturgical Hymns of the Reformation Crisis (1520-1568),” *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, Vol. 40 (1991), pp. 73-111, available online [here](#).

You can peruse a poetic rendering of Gerhard’s *Sacred Meditations* in Latin [here](#).

The hymns and sacred poetry of Georg Fabricius fills 900 pages [here](#).

For serious students seeking more translation material from beginning in the 1400s, you may be interested in [*The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*](#), a handbook that surveys many main genres of Latin writing including “Renaissance Latin” or “early modern Latin.”

Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum!
MJM