

Hic est dies verus Dei

*This is truly God's own day
gleaming with his blessed light—
the day when his sacred blood
washed away the crimes of a sinful world,*

*restored faith to the lost,
and gave the blind the gift of sight.
Breathes there a soul still bound by fear
although he sees the thief absolved of guilt?*

*He turned his cross into a reward,
gained Jesus by a moment's faith,
was the first to reach the kingdom of God,
and entered in before the just.*

*Even the angels were astounded
to see Christ's body scarred with pain,
and, close to him, the penitent thief
entering into the life of bliss.*

*Oh, mystery full of wonders:
that a whole world's filth,
the sins of all mankind, and the vices of
the flesh
should be cleansed by flesh itself!*

*Nothing could be more sublime
than very guilt begging for grace,
than love putting an end to fear,
death giving back life again,*

*death swallowing its own hook
and binding itself with its own bonds,
everyone's life dying the death
but rising to life again,*

*death felling all of mankind
only to see it rise anew,
death destroyed by its own blow
and grieving that it alone has truly died.*

*—St. Ambrose
trans. Edmond Bonin*