This luminous anthem by Franz Schubert (1797–1828) sets the final two verses of the six-verse Eucharistic hymn *Pange Lingua Gloriosi*, attributed to Thomas Aquinas (c1225–1274).

*Tantum Ergo* with its original Latin text is available in several published editions. Here I have provided Schubert's musical setting with an English translation.

Each of the lyric's two verses consists of six lines. The meter of the Latin is trochaic tetrameter catalectic: poetic lines consisting of four long stresses, each followed by a short, except that lines 2, 4, and 6 lack the final short stress. I have preserved this metrical pattern in English.

The Latin of *Tantum Ergo* is wondrously succinct, and I have tried to preserve this quality also. As a result my English translation is stricter than most that I have seen.

I have been able to follow these two principles—preserving in English both the Latin's metrical pattern and its succinctness—only at some expense to rhyme. The poetic power of Latin declension, with its freeing up of word placement, allows the ending word of each line to rhyme: 1 with 3 and 5, and 2 with 4 and 6. As English lacks Latin's freedom of word placement and I lack Aquinas's poetic powers, I have found myself limited to rhyming lines 2 and 4 and 6 of each verse.

Schubert wrote *Tantum Ergo* for SATB chorus accompanied by orchestra. Here I have used the transcription for keyboard accompaniment prepared by the assiduous editor of Schubert's music, Max Friedlaender (1852–1934).

Schubert's original specifies a solo quartet of voices for measures 1–8 and 19-22, with full choir singing the remainder of the piece. With small choirs in mind, I have omitted the solo specifications from this score.

Albert Blackwell
November 18, 2012
Tantum Ergo

**Tantum ergo sacramentum**
Bowing heads, now let us honor

**Veneremur cernui,**
This our sacrament divine,

**Et antiquum documentum**
Ancient promises fulfilling

**Novo cedat ritui,**
As we take the bread and wine,

**Praestet fides supplementum**
Faith bestowing satisfaction

**Sensuum defectui.**
Where deficient sense declines.

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**Genitori, Genitoque,**
To Creator, to Begotten,

**Laus et jubilatio,**
Glory, praise, and honor be,

**Salus, honor, virtus quoque**
Joy and blessing everlasting,

**Sit et benedictio,**
Power to save eternally,

**Procedenti ab utroque**
And to One from both proceeding,

**Compar sit laudatio.**
Spirit in equality.
Bowing Heads, Now
*(Tantum Ergo)*

Latin hymn, att. Thomas Aquinas (1225?–1274)
Translated by Albert Blackwell

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Soprano

Andante sostenuto

1. Bowing heads, now let us honor
   2. To Creator, to Begotten,

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Acc.

Andante sostenuto

This our sacrament divine,

Glory, praise, and honor be,

This our sacrament divine,

Glory, praise, and honor be,

This our sacrament divine,

Glory, praise, and honor be,

This our sacrament divine,

Glory, praise, and honor be,

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An ancient promises fulfilling
Joy and blessing ever lasting.

As we take the bread and wine.
Power to save, to save eternally.

As we take, we take the bread and wine.
Power to save, to save eternally.
Bow ing heads, now let us
To Cre at or, to Be

ho nor
got ten,

This Glo ry, praise and
This Glo ry, praise and
ment di-vine, An cient prom-is-es ful-
ment di-vine, Joy and bless-ing ev-er-
hon-or be,

As we take, we take the
fill-ing, Power to save, to save e-

last-ing,
bread and wine.

ter-nal-ly,

Faith bestowing satisfaction
And to One from both proceeding.
Where deficient sense declines.

Spirit in equal ity.

Faith bestowing satisfaction
And to One from both proceeding,
Where deficient sense declines,
Spirit in equality,
Where deficient sense declines,
Spirit in equality.
Where deficient sense declines.
Spirit in equality.
Performance suggestion: As singing both verses requires some seven minutes, one verse or the other might provide an anthem of more suitable length for a worship service. Each verse stands well alone, the first being a meditation on the Eucharist, the second a benediction addressed to the Trinity.