

Salve caput cruentatum

O Sacred Head Sore Wounded

James W. Alexander • Henry W. Baker • August Crull

1. O sacred head sore wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down;
O kingly head surrounded
with thorns thine only crown.
Death's pallor now comes o'er thee,
the glow of life decays;
yet hosts of heav'n adore thee
and tremble as they gaze.
2. What language shall I borrow
to praise thee, heav'nly friend.
for this thy dying sorrow,
thy pity without end?
O agony and dying!
O love to sinners free!
Jesus, all grace supplying,
turn thou thy face on me.
3. In this, thy bitter passion,
Good Shepherd, think of me
with thy most sweet compassion,
unworthy though I be:
beneath thy cross abiding
for ever would I rest,
in thy dear love confiding,
and with thy presence blest.
4. Be thou my consolation,
my shield, when I must die;
remind me of thy passion
when my last hour draws nigh.
Mine eyes shall then behold thee,
upon thy cross shall dwell,
my heart by faith enfold thee;
who dieth thus, dies well.

Inspiration: "Salve caput cruentatum"; Arnulf of Leuven, flourished 1240-1250; amended in the 16th century.

Lyrics: 76.76 D; st. 1, 2, James Waddell Alexander, 1804-1859; st. 3, Henry Williams Baker, 1821-1877; st. 4, August Crull, 1845-1923; as in "The Lutheran Hymnal", Concordia, 1941.