

The Dies irae
Attributed to Thomas of Celano
(1200-1225)
Sequence from the Latin Requiem Mass
since the sixteenth century.

Of all the reflections on the Last Judgement, few compare with this Latin poem attributed to Thomas of Celano (1200-1225). It is known from its opening words as the Dies Irae, a title borrowed from the prophecy of Zephaniah 1.15ff. The entire poem is a delicate tapestry of quotations from the Old Testament and the New which treat not only of the cosmic events associated with Last Judgement, but also of the emotional response of one individual, our poet Thomas of Celano.

Combined with the author's remarkable command of revelation he displays an equally remarkable sensitivity to the response of the human spirit to the inevitability of death and the unwelcome prospect of a final judgement to follow. In fact, he speaks as if he himself were already dead and preparing to face judgement. In keeping with common usage, this judgement is considered in two stages. The first immediately follows the death of the individual and concerns him or her alone; the second concerns the universal judgement which engages the whole of humanity and will follow at the end of this world.

Summary of the 19 verses of our Sequence:

- Part 1: The theme of the Last Judgement is announced (1)
- Part 2: Five events associated with the Judgement are briefly described (2-6)
- Part 3: The poet laments his own fate and prays for compassion (7-17)
- Part 4: The fate of mankind is followed by a prayer for eternal rest (18-19)

Almost every verse in Part 3 of the Sequence contains a succinct prayer (Save me source of goodness; do not leave me to perish; let not your labour be in vain; grant me pardon; O God help me a suppliant; give me also some hope; do not let me burn in hell; let me stand at your right hand; call me among the blessed; help me as I face my final end. With Part 4 his vision is raised to include the destiny of the whole of mankind for whom he offers his final prayer that all may rest in peace.

The author is believed to be a Franciscan friar and a contemporary of Saint Francis of Assisi, called Thomas of Celano. By common consent Scripture scholars, theologians, and especially poets, consider his Latin composition to be beyond compare. Unfortunately, that means that in any language, other than the original Latin, it suffers badly. The number of English language poets of distinction who have attempted this task runs into hundreds. One of them made as many as eighteen versions but, in the end, had to admit that his last attempt was no better than his first.

An Unfashionable Sequence.

It has to be admitted that the Dies Irae has fallen from favour and has almost completely disappeared from public worship. It is not to be found in the revised English edition of the Roman Missal or the Mass Lectionary, published in the wake of Vatican II. Determined researchers will find it in the Latin version of The Prayer of the Church for optional use during the last weekdays before the beginning of Advent each year.

There are those who are convinced that it has been elbowed out of public worship in the face of modern trends. Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, who was one of the most influential liturgists at the Vatican Council, has this to say: 'They (the liturgical Consulters) got rid of texts that smacked of a negative spirituality inherited from the Middle Ages. Thus they removed even such beloved texts as the 'Libera me Domine', the 'Dies Irae', and others that overemphasised judgement, fear, and despair. These they replaced with texts urging Christian hope and arguably giving more effective expression to faith in the resurrection'. Something tells me that Bugnini was not well pleased with this development!

On the rare occasions when it is sung, it is set to Gregorian chant. Others have attempted musical settings, and some of them have been very successful in their own way. The Requiem Masses of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) and Gabriel Faure (1845-1924) stand out for obvious reasons. The prayer 'Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen' (inspired by verse 19) has, in recent years, been popularised by Andrew Lloyd Weber's (1948-) musical setting. (In passing, I must make a plea for exclusion of this 'song' from the musical repertoire for Christian weddings. It seems a bit previous to pray that the bride and groom will enjoy eternal rest as they sail up the aisle on their wedding day!)

Poetic Licence

There is every danger of spoiling with too much analysis, a text that gives the impression of being the spontaneous outpouring of a deeply spiritual soul. The term inspiration is normally reserved to the Word of God. There is, however, such a thing as the inspiration of artists and poets. Within the limits of that definition, our Sequence can claim to be inspired.

There are nineteen verses, each consisting of three lines and the last words in each verse rhyme. The metre is constant and moves ahead at a fare pace. We might expect this repetitive formula to prove boring by the time we reach the end of the poem, but that is certainly not the case. No two verses end with the same rhyme and the sounds and emphases generated in each verse have an uncanny capacity to enhance the impact of the verse on the listener.

Biblical Sources.

The following are the main biblical texts that are quoted to a large extent from the Latin Vulgate of Saint Jerome, which was used in the Church for the best part of a thousand years.

Verse 1: Reference to King David and an unnamed Sibyl.

verse 2: The return of the Son of Man (Luke 21.25-27).

verse 3: The trumpet blast (Matthew 24.31).

verse 4 and 5: The final judgement (Apocalypse 20.11-13).

verse 7: the fate of good and evil people (1 Peter 4.18).

verse 9: The Gospel Passion Narratives (passim).

verse 10: The Samaritan woman at the well (John 4.1ff).

verse 11 Vengeance and recompense (Deuteronomy 32.35).

verse 13 Mary Magdalene (Luke 8.2) and the Repentant Thief (Luke 23.43).

verse 15 Separation of sheep from goats (Matthew 25.33).

verse 16 Eternal punishment or eternal life (Matthew 25.45).

The Latin text with a literal translation and brief notes:

Verse 1

Dies irae, dies illa
solvat saeculum in favilla
teste David cum Sibylla.

+

A day of wrath, that day
which will reduce this world to ashes
as David and the Sibyl claim.

The first words of our poem, *Dies irae*, act as a clarion call to catch our attention and to announce the theme of what follows, namely, the Last Judgement. These words, and much of the vocabulary of the rest of the poem, are borrowed from the Latin Vulgate translation of the Prophet Zephaniah 1.15-18 which address the same subject:

A day of distress and anguish,
Dies tribulationis et angustiae,
a day of ruin and devastation,
dies calamitatis et miseriae,
a day of darkness and gloom
dies tenebrarum et caliginis,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
dies nebulae et turbinis
a day of trumpet blast and battle cry.
dies tubae et clangoris
In the fire of his passion
In igne zeli eius
the whole earth shall be consumed,
devorabitur omnis terra
for a full, a terrible end he will make
quia consummationem cum festinatione faciet
to all the inhabitants of the earth.
cunctis habitantibus terram.

It must, however, be noted from the outset, that Thomas of Celano parts ways with Zephaniah in one essential. Far from being a prophet of doom, Thomas is a prophet of compassion and redemption. While he is prepared to face the prospect of a final judgement, he never loses sight of the goodness of God and the hope of final redemption.

Our poet invokes both King David and an unnamed Sibyl as witnesses to Jewish revelation and to Gentile wisdom respectively ('as David and the Sibyl claim'). His choice of King David is probably dictated by the fact that David was also a poet and is credited with the composition of many of the Psalms. He was known, in unguarded moments, to break into song and dance (2 Samuel 6.14). Our poet may have had in mind one particular psalm which affirms that this world must one day 'pass away':

Long ago you laid the earth's foundations,
the heavens are the work of your hands.
They pass away but you remain;
Psalm 101.25.

All attempts to identify the sibylline oracle and her message have come to nothing.

Those who are familiar with the sound of poetry in any language will recognise the careful choice of sounds already evident from verse one and developed in all the subsequent verses with remarkable versatility. The mood can change from verse to verse and even from line to line.

No doubt what the poet has to say is as important as the manner in which he says it. There will be a day when this world of ours will be reduced to ashes. We have this on the authority of Sacred Scripture. That will be a day when the anger of the Creator will be visited on unrepentant sinners and his blessing bestowed on the just. If this blunt confrontation is too much for us to swallow in these enlightened times, we may find it nuanced in the rest of the poem when anger is tempered with compassion and justice with mercy. For the moment, however, we are left to ponder the judgement of God face to face.

Verse 2

Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando iudex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus.

+

What terror lies ahead,
when the judge is about to arrive,
to take strict account of everything.

We quickly move on from the distant echo of a prophetic threat, to the heavy step of the judge. Harsher sounds announce his arrival and the noisy Latin gerundives (futurus/venturus/discussurus) capture the commotion before the bailiff calls for 'silence in court'.

Nothing will escape his attention as he scrutinises the lives of those before him. The gentle shepherd of their lives on earth now gives way to the strict arbiter of everything they have done or failed to do in life ('cuncta stricte discussurus/to take strict account of everything').

Verse 3

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
per sepulchra regionum,
coget omnes ante thronum.

+

A trumpet blast will pierce the skies
over the graves of the world,
to summon all before the throne.

Our third verse recalls two of the well-documented signs of the end of the world included in Saint Paul's catalogue of sounds and signs of the end (1 Thessalonians 4.13ff). There is no escaping the mighty trumpet blast as the last post booms out, and the dead rise from their graves. (**Tuba mirum spargens sonum/per sepulchra regionum**). In this centenary year of the First World War, most of us will know the emotions evoked as a solitary trumpet calls an abrupt halt to our silent prayer for the dead.

Everyone is constrained to present themselves (to summon all/coget omnes ante thronum). We are more attuned to the image of angelic harps in the heavenly orchestra, but Christian art has introduced a much more varied selection of musical instruments. The angelic trumpet may well echo the ancient Jewish custom of sounding the Shofar (Ram's horn) as a call to battle or an invitation to join in the celebration of major festivals. Christian art has felt free to include a variety of instruments with the heavenly chorus, including flutes, trombones and an accordion.

Verse 4

Mors stupebit et natura,
cum resurget creatura,
judicanti responsura.

+

Death and nature will be shaken,
when a creature returns to life,
to plead his case before the judge.

Our poet is clearly aware of the solidarity of mankind with the rest of nature (Death and nature will be shaken). Death entered the world as a result of original sin (Romans 5.12) and the earth itself was blighted on the occasion of that first sin of disobedience (Gen 3.1 ff). It is the same judge who passed the first judgement on Adam and Eve and on the wily serpent who is now about to pass the final judgement on mankind. The verse, however, implies that the suppliant will not be perfunctorily condemned but will have an opportunity to enter a plea (to plead his case before the judge).

Verse 5

Liber scriptus proferetur,
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus judicetur.

+

The written book will be produced,
in which everything is recorded,
on which the world will be judged.

The Book of Life is the next well-attested ingredient in the inventory of these final days. Jesus had once assured his faithful disciples that 'their names would one day be written in heaven' (Luke 10.20). The Apocalypse gives a prominent place to the Book of Life when addressing the Last Judgement and the new heaven and the new earth (20.11ff). To date, this valuable source of classified information has escaped the attention of hackers.

Verse 6

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
quidquid latet apparebit:
nil inultum remanebit.

+

When the judge takes his place
whatever is hidden will then appear
nothing will remain unpunished.

Line 2 quotes Luke 8.17: 'Nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed'. The message of the Sermon on the mount on the subject of retribution has found its way into the third line: 'Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny' (Matthew 5.26). Absolutely nothing will escape the scrutiny of the judge as he issues a commensurate sentence.

Verse 7

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
quem patronum rogaturus,
cum vix justus sit secures?

+

What then am I so miserable to plead
what advocate employ,
when even a just man is at risk?

The perspective now changes radically from the litany of ordeals just revealed, to the state of mind of one forlorn creature, the poet himself, who speaks as if he were already dead. Words fail him (What then am I to plead?). In life, others might have been called to enter a plea on his behalf but these have now melted away and he stands alone, isolated and vulnerable (What advocate employ?).

Against the measure of God's infinite goodness, no creature can be considered worthy to enter his presence; not even those whose lives on earth were thought to be blameless. What hope is there for him (When even the just man is at risk).

He ends with a quotation from the First Letter of Saint Peter 'It is difficult for good people to be saved, what, then, will become of Godless sinners? (1 Peter 4.18).

Verse 8

Rex tremendae majestatis,
qui salvandos salvas gratis,
salva me fons pietatis.

+

King of boundless majesty,
who saves the sinner gratis,
save me source of goodness.

The miserable creature of the previous verse is dwarfed by the majestic figure of the king. Everything the poet knows of him points to the gratuitous gifts of nature and grace bestowed on creation from the beginning (Genesis 1.32). We might suspect that there also lies behind this verse a thought so dear to Saint Paul. God loved us with a totally unselfish love, even when we were sinners and did so to the point of giving his only Son in the knowledge that he would be betrayed and put to death, though completely innocent (who saves the sinner gratis. cf Romans 5,8)). The final line of this verse reaches out to the prodigal Father for something even greater than ready pardon, reinstatement as his adopted son (save me source of goodness).

Verse 9

Recordare, Jesu pie,
quod sum causa tuae viae:
Ne me perdas illa die.

+

Remember, dear Jesus,
that I am the reason for your journey here on earth:
Do not leave me to perish on that day.

Memory is one of the most important themes in both the Old and the New Testaments. It is inseparable from the thought of redemption. 'But God remembered Noah' (Genesis 8.1). In remembering Noah, the Creator set in motion the sequence of events that would restore his fortunes and save him, his family and mankind from total extinction. God's remembering is the beginning of salvation.

The place of memory is established in a unique way at the Last Supper when Jesus told his disciples to 'do this in memory of me' (Luke 22.19). The blessing and consecration of the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ were not intended simply as an expression of nostalgia for the past. They would render present the act of sacrifice that accomplished their redemption, the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Prophetic gestures, such as that performed by Jesus at the last supper, would set in motion the events they signified. They were effective signs of future

redemption. This is equally true of the prophetic gestures of the Old Testament prophets as it is of the prophet Jesus in the New. 'I see you are a prophet' concluded the Samaritan woman, as Jesus offered her living waters welling up within her to eternal life, all in exchange for a cup of water! (John 4.19).

This prayer in verse 9 to be 'remembered', is a dynamic prayer to set in motion the redeeming grace of God for one man facing the most decisive moment in his existence, the decision about his final destiny. The ultimate expression of the place of memory in redemption is surely the parting request of the repentant thief: 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom' (Luke 23.42).

In our Sequence, the memory is focused on the fact that the salvation of the suppliant is the very reason for the Incarnation (Remember I am the reason for your journey). To bring the suppliant to a miserable end would signal the failure of Jesus' purpose (Do not let me perish on that day).

The fact that this verse, like the others in this section of the poem, directs our attention to the fate of one sinner is in the spirit of the Good Shepherd who is prepared to abandon the ninety-nine sheep in order to rescue the one that was lost. The evangelist Saint John recalls Jesus' intention: 'I did not lose a single one of those you gave me' (John 19.9).

Verse 10

Quaerens me, sedisti lassus:
redemisti Crucem passus:
tantus labor non sit cassus.

+

You sought me out, when tired and weary:
You redeemed me by your suffering on the cross:
Let not such labour be in vain.

One of our poet's most telling understatements is his subtle reference to the genuineness of Jesus' humanity ('when tired and weary'). One word (lassus/fatigued) is enough to carry our minds to the scene described at length by the evangelist Saint John (4.1ff). Exhausted, Jesus sat down to rest at Jacob's well. The Gospel text could hardly describe more clearly the reality of the humanity of Jesus, Son of God. The divine person is incapable of experiencing fatigue. Not so his human nature which is like ours in all things but sin. In describing Jesus as tired and weary the Evangelist makes an uncompromising statement of the genuineness of his humanity, mysteriously joined to his divinity.

Our poet also wins our affection, as well as our sympathy, by identifying himself with the woman at Jacob's well, an alien Samaritan, despised as much for her nationality as for her moral state (you sought **me** out). Further on, in verse 13, he develops this same sense of identity with another two marginalised members of society, Mary Magdalene and the repentant thief.

Verse 11

Juste judex ultionis,

donum fac remissionis
ante diem rationis

+

Just yet vengeful judge,
grant me the gift of pardon
before the day of reckoning.

No matter how we translate the first line of this verse we cannot escape the difficulty of the description of the just judge as 'vengeful' ('just yet vengeful judge'). Perhaps the key to this is to be found in the letter to the Romans which appears to make the bluntest claim in favour of vengeance. 'Vengeance is mine, says the Lord' (12.19). The context, however, makes it clear that there is no place for revenge in the life of the Christian. Part of the legacy of the fall from grace is a desire to take revenge and is paraded in its most extreme form in Lamech's boastful song:

Cain's revenge is sevenfold
then Lamech's is seventy-seven fold (Genesis 4.24).

When asked by Peter how often he should forgive his brother if he offended him, as often as seven times? Jesus reversed Lamech's vengeful boast: forgive him not seven times but seventy times seven (Matthew 18.22).

That this temptation is to be resisted at all costs is an essential element in Jesus' teaching. The great reconciliation sermon, preserved by Matthew, ends with the parable of The Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18.21-31). The parable is really an illustration of one of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 5.12). In the light of this parable a more precise translation into English of this petition might be: Forgive us our trespasses if we forgive those who trespass against us. Some years ago, a wayside pulpit caught my attention with the following banner headline: Trespassers will be welcomed!

Verse 12

Ingemisco, tamquam reus:
Culpa rubet vultus meus:
Supplicanti parce, Deus.

+

I groan like one condemned:
Guilt brings a blush to my face:
Pardon one who appeals to you, O God.

Adam and Eve had been 'naked yet unashamed' before their fall from grace (Genesis 2.23). One of the immediate effects of their sin was a sense of shame and embarrassment. To that extent they would be very different from future generations of sinners who, more and more, would lose or abandon any sense of shame. Remember Cain's brazen reply to the Creator when challenged about his brother's whereabouts: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' In marked contrast, our poet makes no secret of his shame. How could he when it is written all over his face?

Surely his shame will argue before his judge for leniency (Guilt brings a blush to my face).

Verse 13

Qui Mariam absolvisti,
et latronem exaudisti,
mihi quoque spem dedisti.

+

You who absolved Mary,
and listened to the prayer of the thief,
to me too you have given hope.

Two repentant sinners are singled out from the Gospel tradition as a sign of hope for every penitent. Mary Magdalen is mentioned by name and by implication at key moments in Jesus' life. He expelled seven demons from her and with several other women she then accompanied him on his way to Jerusalem. She was among the witnesses to the crucifixion and to Jesus' burial (Matthew 27.61) and is counted among the first to find the empty tomb and spread the Good News (Matthew 27.56).

The repentant thief is also remembered as a prime example of Jesus' compassion. Indeed, Jesus' final words are addressed to this most destitute and despised of men but one who found it in his heart to admit and regret his sins: 'This day you will be with me in paradise' (Luke 24.23). Although our Sequence speaks at length of the dark side of life, it ends on a triumphant note. 'Mihi quoque spem dedisti / To me too you have given hope'.

Verse 13 rises high above the darkness of sin and guilt to shine a light on pardon and reconciliation. Jesus' last words are enough to extinguish even the flames of hell fire.

Verse 14

Preces meae non sunt dignae:
Sed tu bonus fac benigne,
ne perenni cremer igne.

+

My prayers are not worthy:
Yet in your goodness treat me kindly,
lest I burn in everlasting fire.

The last line, 'lest I burn in everlasting fire' confronts us bluntly with a thought that has been present since the very beginning of the Sequence, hell fire. In this verse, a further dimension is added to the image; hell fire is everlasting (ne perenni cremer igne / lest I burn in everlasting fire). Every generation, including our own, has difficulty with the very idea of the existence of hell fire. Jesus' teaching leaves us little room for doctrinal manoeuvres. We might just get our heads round the concept of the burning pain of loss. The very thought of separation forever from the love of family and friends is painful enough. The thought of separation forever from the love of God is devastating.

One of the most convincing arguments for this is surely Jesus' parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16.20). In this parable Jesus pressed to the limit a

truth to which he returned time and time again: neither sin nor grace can be grasped in themselves. Their presence is, however, revealed where there is distance and separation. Wherever there is hostile separation between individuals or between larger groups of people there is some deep evil at work. No disease can be examined directly but its presence is evidenced by the symptoms it displays. The principal symptom of the presence of sin and evil is separation and distance and here distance is not to be measured in miles.

While all four evangelists are familiar with this teaching of Jesus, Saint Luke, in a special way, gives it prominence. The three parables of his chapter 15 could hardly be more different from one another but they have one thing in common; unity that is lost for a time but eventually restored.

In each case the evil generated is the evil and sadness of loss. There can be no rejoicing till the woman repossesses the coin she had lost, till the shepherd carries his lost sheep back to the sheepfold and the prodigal and his elder brother cross the threshold of their father's house hand in hand.

Verse 15

Inter oves locum praesta,
et ab haedis me sequentra,
statuens in parte dextra.

+

Among the sheep secure my place,
and from the goats shelter me,
by allowing me to stand at your right.

Verse 15 is also built round a saying of Jesus concerning separation; in this instance of sheep from goats on a final day of reckoning (Matthew 25.32).

Verse 16

Confudatis maledictis,
flammis acribus adictis:
Voca me cum benedictis.

+

When evil men are left confused,
consigned to bitter pains:
Call me among the blessed.

In three lines and nine words our poet takes us to the heart of Jesus' teaching on the greatest commandment, the love of God and our neighbour. The key words are quoted from 'The Judgement of the Nations' recorded by Matthew 25.1-46, a passage that equates the love of our neighbour with our love of God. The love of our neighbour authenticates our claim to love God and it is on this that we will finally be judged. The key words that bring Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God to a close are 'maledicti' and 'benedicti' (damned and blessed).

Jesus anticipated the 'confusion' of those who failed to appreciate this and act accordingly. When you cared for one of the least of my brethren, you cared for

me. The 'maledicti' of this verse had failed to act on this fundamental message. The 'benedicti' had acted. 'And they will go into eternal punishment, and the blessed to eternal life' (Matthew 25.46). 'Jesus had now finished all he wanted to say' (Matthew 26.1). On this note of finality Jesus concludes the last of his five sermons recorded by Matthew.

Verse 17

Oro supplex et acclinis,
cor contritum quasi cinis:
gere curam meae finis.

+

I pray on my knees,
with a contrite heart reduced to dust:
Care for me as I face my end

Our poem moves easily from external postures to deeper realities. The suppliant on his knees has already taken a step in the right direction as he adopts the posture of a penitent sinner. However, without a profound change of heart this external gesture makes little sense. 'Unless you turn round and become like a little child you will not enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 18.1ff).

Jesus had reserved his most devastating criticism for scribes and Pharisees who were given to parading their virtue in public. They have had their reward. A contrite heart must lie deep within his being if he is to receive his reward for a good life: (a contrite heart reduced to ashes). How often Jesus commends this spiritual state in the face of so much hypocrisy and phariseeism.

Verse 18

Lacrimosa dies illa,
qua resurget ex favilla
judicandus homo reus.

+

That will be a tearful day,
on which will rise from the ashes
mortal man to face his judge.

The two final verses represent a change in perspective, in mood and in metre and are believed by some commentators to be an addition to the poem to render it more apt for public worship. The immediately preceding verses were concerned with the fate of one individual, the poet himself. Verse 18 offers a résumé of the whole poem as it echoes the wording of the first verse – dies illa, ex favilla.

All mankind now arrives on the scene to face a Universal Judgement. He appeals to 'Good Lord Jesus' to forgive and grant them rest

Verse 19

Huic ergo parce, Deus:
pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem. Amen.

+
Therefore spare such a one, O God:
blessed Jesus Lord,
give them rest. Amen.

Summary

Our powerful Sequence may have disappeared from public worship but it need not disappear from personal reflection on the four last things: death, judgement, hell and heaven. It makes no claims that are not already grounded in the Gospel, and deserves at least an occasional hearing, if not as food for thought at least as an example of the best of medieval Latin poetry.

Even in a pontificate, so full of joy and hope, there still remains a place for final judgement, a sense of regret, an awareness of the reality of sin and the equal reality of absolution. Fear of God is, of course, the beginning, not the end, of wisdom.

There is another Sequence of equal poetic and theological stature, *Vexilla Regis*. Although a literal translation of the first words would proclaim the 'banners' of the King, the poem concerns the greatest of them all, the Cross of the Risen Lord. After the conversion of Constantine, the Roman eagle blazoned on military banners would give way to the cross of Christ on the banners of onward Christian soldiers.

Vexilla Regis was composed by Venantius Fortunatus (530-609), which translates as Lucky Venantius. He was well named. His Sequence resonates with good fortune, positive thinking and even prosperity. However, in the spirit of Horace this Sequence will have to wait for the shade of a summer tree.