

*Hymn for St Albans Day*

[Tune: Corvedale]

In a town below the hillside,  
As the sun began to set,  
Came a priest, beseeching shelter  
From a man he'd never met.  
Alban hid him from the soldiers;  
Learnt from him of God's own Son,  
Took his place before the Governor,  
With his life in Christ begun.

With rough hands and ropes they bound him,  
Dragged him to the river's side.  
There, he looked upon the water,  
Saw the flow of Jordan's tide,  
Walked barefoot across the streambed  
And continued on his way.  
Reached the trees upon the hilltop  
In the early light of day.

'You are charged with grave offences',  
said the Judge upon the hill.  
'Do you bow to Caesar's power,  
his divine and perfect will?'  
'I am Alban,' cried the martyr,  
'And I worship and adore  
neither Caesar nor his servants -  
but the true and living Lord.'

With a sword-stroke, there they killed him:  
Felled his body to the ground,  
Jeered and mocked the martyr's witness,  
Laughed with cruel, spiteful sound.  
But, just where his blood had fallen,  
Like the rain upon the earth,  
Flowers sprang at once to blossom -  
Signs of Alban's grace and worth.

On a hill beside a river  
Stands the shrine of Britain's saint;  
Honoured, loved by those who know him,  
Freed at last from all restraint.  
For he stands with saints in glory,  
With his prayers, our feet are shod.  
May our courage never fail us  
As we journey home to God.