Under Urban VIII, the correctors of the hymns omitted the fourth stanza and, in their zeal to turn the rhythm into Classical iambic dimeter, altered every line except one. Hymnologists, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, are usually severe in their judgment of the work of the correctors; but in this instance, Pimont, who thinks the hymn needed no alteration at their hands, nevertheless hastens to add that “never, perhaps, were they better inspired.” And it is only just to say that, as found now in the Roman Breviary, the hymn is no less vigorous than elegant.

Translation by Fr. John Fitzpatrick, O.M.I.

1.) Eternal king of the blessed, creator of all things and the Father’s co-equal Son from all eternity,
2.) …when the world was at its beginning You created Adam and gave him the image of Your own likeness, joining a soul of noble destiny with slime of the earth.

Made Man, man’s likeness unto Thee Thou didst restore with mastery.

3.) But when an envious, deceitful enemy had covered mankind with the filth of sin, You clothed Yourself in man’s flesh and, a creator once again, gave man back the beauty he had lost.

Made Man, man’s likeness unto Thee Thou didst restore with mastery.
4.) Once You were born of a virgin. Now born from the tomb, You command us, buried in sin, to rise with You from the dead.

5.) As our eternal shepherd You wash Your flock in the waters of baptism, where souls are cleansed and sins are buried.
6.) And as our redeemer, fastened to the cross that we ought to have suffered, 
You gave Your blood to the last drop as the price of our salvation.

7.) …that You, O Jesus, may be an everlasting Paschal joy to our hearts, deliver us reborn to life, 
from a dire death of sin. (Literal translation, except for verse 7, by Rev. Joseph Connelly, M.A.)