

# Great Sacred Music

## Sunday, April 11, 2021

John Roberts: Immortal, invisible, God only wise  
Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, John Scott  
Christopher Dearnley, organ

John Rutter: This is the day  
Cambridge Singers; Aurora Orchestra, John Rutter

Peter I. Tchaikovsky: Cherubic Hymn in F  
Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Graham Ross

According to Hymnary.org, “St. Denio is based on “Can mlynedd i nawr” (“A Hundred Years from Now”), a traditional Welsh ballad popular in the early nineteenth century. It was first published as a hymn tune in John Roberts’s *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (Hymns of the Sanctuary, 1839). The tune title refers to St. Denis, the patron saint of France.” John Rutter's "This is the day" was composed for the marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton at Westminster Abbey in 2011. Tchaikovsky left us 40 sacred choral compositions including three settings of the Cherubic Hymn.

Gabriel Faure: Tantum ergo, Op. 65 No. 2  
Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, John Scott  
Richard Pittsinger, Jack Keller and Samuel Schipps, treble; Kevin Kwan, organ

Joseph W. Jenkins: Sim Shalom, Op.159 No. 1; Mah Tov, Op. 159 No. 2  
U.S. Army Chorus, Lt. Col. Gary F. Lamb  
Master Sgt. Gene Tucker, tenor

Sir Hubert Parry: Chorale Prelude on "Eventide"  
Carlo Curley, organ  
Harrison & Harrison organ of the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, England

The Tantum Ergo text comes from the ancient hymn *Pange lingua* written by Saint Thomas Aquinas. Joseph Willcox Jenkins (1928–2014) was an American composer and educator, and a chief arranger in the 1950s for the U.S. Army Chorus. North Carolina native Carlo Curley (1952-2012) was one of the most brilliant performers of his generation.

Commentary: Mark Dirksen

Richard Dirksen: Hilariter  
The Choir of The Cathedral Church of Saints Peter and Paul, Washington DC; The Cathedral Brass,  
Richard Dirksen  
Douglas Major, organ

Josquin Despres: Ave Maria  
Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summerly

Canon Richard Dirksen was the Organist and Choirmaster of the Washington National Cathedral in Washington from 1977 to 1988. Des Pres spent time in both Milan and Rome where he was highly regarded by the musicians of his time. The invention of the printing press helped to expose Des Pres' music to a wider audience.

Anton Bruckner: Os justi  
Voices of Ascension, Dennis Keene

Herbert Howells: Behold, O God our defender  
Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, John Scott  
Christopher Dearnley, organ

Charles-Marie Widor: Andante Sostenuto ~Gothic Symphony  
Grant Edwards, organ  
The Bond Organ of St. Stephens Episcopal Church, Seattle, Washington

The great symphonic composer Anton Bruckner also wrote some fine music for the church. "Os Justi" is written for double choir. It takes its text from Psalm 36:30-31. Paul Andrews writes: "In November 1952, Howells was invited to compose a short Introit for the Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth II. The text was to be verses from Psalm 84, beginning 'Behold, O God our defender'. He completed this quiet, reflective prelude to a great state occasion at the end of that year, on Christmas Day. For the Coronation itself the combined choirs were large and Howells provided a fully orchestrated score, but this sensitive anthem is more usually heard, as here, with smaller forces and organ accompaniment." French organist Charles-Marie Widor was Organiste Titulaire at l'Eglise Saint Sulpice in Paris from 1870-1933.

J.S. Bach: Cantata 67, "Halt im Gedachtnis Jesum Christ"  
Holland Boys' Choir; Netherlands Bach Collegium, Pieter Jan Leusink  
Ruth Holton, soprano; Sytse Buwalde, alto  
Knut Schoch, tenor; Bas Ramselaar, bass

The German translates as "Hold in remembrance Jesus Christ". Bach continues the celebratory mood of Easter with this short cantata first performed in Leipzig on April 16, 1724. The fourth movement is one of those magical moments in which Bach weaves two contrasting themes and moods. The chorus and orchestra express the confusion and excitement at Jesus' resurrection. Bach contrasts that with the tranquillity of Jesus' calm utterance of "Peace be with you."

George Frideric Handel: Chandos Anthem No. 04, "O sing unto the Lord a new song"  
The Sixteen Choir and Orchestra, Harry Christophers  
Lynne Dawson, soprano; Ian Partridge, tenor

Chandos Anthem No. 4 is based on Texts from Psalms 93 and 96. It is one of eleven anthems, really short cantatas, which Handel wrote for use in the chapel at Cannons, the country home of James Brydges, Duke of Chandos.

Franz Schubert: Mass in C, D. 452/961  
London Sinfonietta and Chorus, David Atherton  
Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano; Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano  
Anthony Rolfe Johnson, tenor; Malcolm King, bass

Schubert wrote his Mass in C major in 1816 at the age of 19. It is scored for SATB choir and soloists accompanied by strings and organ.

Anton Bruckner: Te Deum

Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Daniel Barenboim

Jessye Norman, soprano; Yvonne Minton, mezzo-soprano

David Rendall, tenor; Samuel Ramey, bass

Austrian composer Anton Bruckner began composing this work in 1881, about the same time as he was completing his Symphony No. 6 and starting on Symphony No. 7.

Alonso Lobo: Missa Maria Magdalene

Choir of Westminster Cathedral, Martin Baker

Alonso Lobo (1555-1617) was a Spanish composer of the late Renaissance.

Spanish composer Alonso Lobo (1555-1617) based his six voice Missa Maria Magdalene on a motet by his mentor Francisco Guerrero.

Cesar Franck: Messe solennelle, Op. 12

BRT Choirs of Brussels, Pierre Bartholomee

Louis Devos, tenor

The Bru Zane Mediabase states: "The Messe solennelle op. 12 dates from 1860, two years before Franck was appointed to the post of organist at Sainte-Clotilde."

John Stanley: Voluntary in E minor

Gerald Wheeler, organ

1980 Karl Whilhelm organ in Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal

Blind English composer John Stanley (1712-1786) could accompany a Handel oratorio after hearing it played through once.