



Palestrina's Missa Iste Confessor

The mass of 1590 and related music
by Asola, Finck, Frescobaldi & Victoria

Renaissance Choir Sacramento



Presented with support from
the Center for Cultural and Ethnic Studies of National University

THE MUSIC

All selections are based on the chant hymn *Iste confessor Domini sacratus* (ca. 8th century).

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/26-1594)

Polyphonic mass for four voices: *Missa Iste confessor* (1594)

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1683-1643)

Four versets for organ: *Hinno Iste Confessor* (1627)

Two organ pieces to accompany the mass: *Ricercar dopo il Credo* and *Tocata per le levatione* (1635)

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

Polyphonic hymn settings (two verses): *Iste Confessor in festo Confessorum* (1581)

Heinrich Finck (ca. 1445-1527)

Polyphonic hymn setting (one verse): *Iste confessor* (1594?)

Giovanni Matteo Asola (ca. 1532-1609)

Hymn setting: *Iste Confessor* (ca. 1581)

THE PERFORMANCE

I. The Five Verses of the Chant *in alternatim*

- v. 1 for organ (Frescobaldi)
- v. 2 for choir (Victoria)
- v. 3 for organ (Frescobaldi)
- v. 4 for choir (Victoria)
- v. 5 for choir (chant) II.

II. *Missa Iste confessor* (Palestrina, unless noted below)

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| - Kyrie | - Benedictus |
| - Gloria | - Hosanna |
| - Credo | <i>Tocata per le levatione</i> (Frescobaldi) |
| <i>Ricercar dopo il Credo</i> (Frescobaldi) | - Agnus Dei 1 |
| <i>Offertorium: Iste confessor</i> (Finck) | - Agnus Dei 2 |
| - Sanctus | |

III. The Five Verses of the Chant *in alternatim*

- v. 1 for choir (chant)
- v. 2 for organ (Frescobaldi)
- v. 3 for choir (chant)
- v. 4 for organ (Frescobaldi)
- v. 5 for choir (Asola)

A Word about the Program

It may seem curious that a hymn with several verses might be performed with only some of the verses sung by the choir or a cantor, the others played on an organ without anyone singing the words. This Renaissance practice may be explained by assuming the listeners knew the words to the hymn well enough not to need to hear them. Another explanation may be that the organ verses might be so skillfully written as to suggest the meaning of the words in tones alone. Having the choir and the organ take turns in “singing” the verses is known as *alternatim* performance.

Tonight’s performance begins with the organ playing verses 1 and 3 of the hymn *Iste confessor* set by Girolamo Frescobaldi, answered by the choir singing Tomás de Victoria’s polyphonic versions of verses 2 and 4, followed by the choir singing the plainchant for verse 5. The organ verses quote the hymn tune each time in a different way.

The central part of tonight’s concert consists of the common parts or the *Ordinary* of the Christian mass. Giovanni da Palestrina’s *Missa Iste confessor* uses the chant melody as the basis for each part of the mass. Sacred music of the Renaissance was often performed “a capella,” meaning in chapel style, *not* necessarily unaccompanied; hence, the organ will be heard playing along with much of the choral music.

Two organ pieces intended to be played at key moments in the liturgy—after the Creed and during the elevation of the host and chalice before Communion—were written by Frescobaldi.

At the Offertory, a four-part setting of the chant tune by an earlier composer, Heinrich Finck, is presented.

The performance concludes with *alternatim* verses again of the chant by the choir and organ, the last verse a simple chordal setting by Giovanni Asola.

A Word about the Choir

Formed less than two years ago, *Renaissance Choir Sacramento* focuses on sacred music—motets and masses chiefly—from around 1450 to 1600. The Choir also performs carols and other Christmas music in various venues including the Capitol Rotunda in Sacramento.

This volunteer ensemble is led by Dr. Lee T. Lovallo, assistant professor of music at National University. There is no cost for participation, only a strong dedication to this marvelous, rarely heard repertoire. We are not affiliated with a church, though we appreciate the use of the rehearsal space and the Renaissance organ at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Antelope. Church membership is not required.

Prospective singers with previous choral experience and who can read music are encouraged to attend one of our open rehearsals on Thursday evenings from 7-9 pm at St. Andrew's. Although the size of this chamber choir is limited to around 16 singers, new members are always encouraged.

Thank you for sharing this performance with us!

www.RenaissanceChoirSacramento.com

RENAISSANCE CHOIR SACRAMENTO

Dr. Lee T. Lovallo, Director

Cantus: Elizabeth Crain, Rebecca Lee, Carol Smyth, Mary Anne Snyder

Altus: Noele Krenkel, Douglas Salazar¹, Holly Wenger, Jennifer Yee

Tenor: Lee Lovallo, Matthew Royal, Bogdan Shevchenko

Bassus: Bruce Crain, Brian Lucas, Mark Swabey, Val Balagot²

Organum: Barry Moenter

¹GUEST SINGER, ²ON LEAVE

TEXTS

Iste confessor, possibly commemorating St. Martin of Tours (ca. 315-397)

1. Iste confessor Domini sacratu festa plebs cuius celebrat per orbem hodie letus meruit secreta scandere celi.
 2. Qui pius prudens humilis pudicus: sobrius castus fuit et quietus vita dum presens vegetavit ejus corporis artus.
 3. Ad sacrum cujus tumulum frequenter membra languentum modo sanitati quolibet modo fuerint gravati restituuntur.
 4. Unde nunc noster chorus in honore ipsius hymnum canit hunc libenter ut piis ejus meritis iuvenur omne per aevum.
 5. Sit salus illi decus atque virtus qui supra celi residet cacumen totius mundi machinam gubernat trinus et unus. Amen.
1. The Witness of the Lord, this holy man whose feast the people celebrate throughout the world, has this day deserved to rise in blessedness to the highest hall of heaven.
 2. He who was godly, prudent, humble, modest, sober and quiet of life, yet was prompt to exert himself in bodily action.
 3. At his sacred tomb the limbs of many sick, by whatever disease they are afflicted, are quickly restored to health.
 4. Therefore now this our choir gladly sings this hymn in his honour, that through the ages we might be helped by his holy merits.
 5. Salvation, glory and power be to Him who from his throne above the heavens governs to whole frame of earth. Three and One. Amen.

Ordinary of the mass

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Glory be to God on high. And on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Thee. We bless Thee. We worship Thee. We glorify Thee. We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy. Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Ordinary of the mass (continued)

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium, et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri: per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine; et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas. Et ascendit in caelum; sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos et mortuos: cujus regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem: qui ex Patre Filioque procedit. Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Osanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Renaissance Choir Sacramento gratefully expresses its appreciation to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Antelope, the Rev. Peter Rodgers, rector, for hosting the Choir's rehearsals and to the Department of Arts & Humanities of National University as well as the National University Center for Cultural and Ethnic Studies for music, programs, and printed materials.

Renaissance Choir Sacramento, a chamber choir dedicated to performing sacred music from approximately 1500-1600, meets Thursday evenings from 7-9 p.m. There is no charge for participation, and music is supplied. Prospective singers are encouraged to contact Dr. Lovullo at **916.320.8423** or visit our website at **www.RenaissanceChoirSacramento.com** for more information.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. Begotten of his Father before all worlds. God of God, light of light, very God of very God. Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father: by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven. And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and was made man. And was crucified also for us; under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried. On the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory, to judge the living and the dead: Whose Kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son. Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified: who spake by the prophets. And in one holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead. And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis. Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.