



A Song (or two) for Mom

Following last week's detective mystery, we have something more straightforward, the Preface Dialogue. The Preface is basically a prayer over the sacrificial offering revolving around the theme of the Mass (it is a Proper, though many Masses use a general one). Like almost everything else thus far, it can (and sometimes should) be sung, and there is specific music provided for it by the Church.

Following the Preface is the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy). It is part of a sequence of responses called the Eucharistic Acclamations, which occur during the Eucharistic Prayer. These include the Memorial Acclamation, the Great Amen, the Lord's Prayer, and the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God). These are all Propers of the Mass, and are often referred to (along with the Kyrie and Gloria) as THE Proper of the Mass. The reason for this is that they encapsulate the majority of responses in the 1st and 2nd degree of solemnity that are not simple one to five word phrases (so basically responses that it makes sense to set to different compositions of music). Further, the Eucharistic Acclamations are all part of one big prayer (the Eucharistic Prayer) so it makes sense for them to be musically similar, since they are parts of the same whole.

If you are wondering why the Creed is not included in the above phrase, I applaud your memory. Yes, the Creed does qualify to be included in what are colloquially known as THE Proper of Mass, but it is generally not included in modern settings of the Propers. I am honestly not entirely sure why this is, but it seems to be a combination of 1) The text is challenging to set to music WELL, 2) most parishes nowadays speak the Creed, 3) Credo III (the most common setting) is really good and accessible - so why "fix what ain't broke".

Finally, for this week, we have the celebration of Mother's Day - a fitting recognition to have during May, the month of our Blessed Mother. We began the month with May Crowning, and all through the month we will continue to honor our heavenly Mother prior to and after Mass. After Mass we are singing the Regina Coeli - it is a prayer to our Lady which replaces the daily Angelus during Eastertide. We will sing it mostly in English, but I want to draw your attention to one of the Latin words in the refrain - Laetare. Hopefully you remember that term from Laetare Sunday (the "happier" Sunday in Lent). It means rejoice. Let's rejoice today and everyday in the Lord, in the gift of Our Lady the Blessed Mother, and in the blessing that is our own earthly mother. To all the mothers in our lives, thanks for dealing with us Mom....we love you!

St. Cecilia, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity...Pray for us!

--Mark Wozniczka, Music Director (mwozniczka@archchicago.org)

