

Final Blessing

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your Spirit.

Celebrant: And may almighty God bless all of you, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Celebrant: Let us praise the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Concluding Hymn

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

JourneySong no. 313

Text: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Tune: 'Mendelssohn' (77 77 D); by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Arrangement: William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

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Gregorian notation of the Ordinaries of the Mass adapted from *The Liber Usualis (1961 Missal)* and *The Graduale Romanum* (1964).

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Information on the Gloria adapted from various approved liturgical and theological sources.

Gloria RV 589 accompanied by the Ad Orientem Solisti Orchestra, under the direction of Dr Aloysius Leong. Transcription by S. Skye Donald.

Connect with the Parish:

Website: www.sppchurch.org.sg



sts_peterpaul@singnet.com.sg



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LAUDAMUS TE

An evening of Praise for the Gift of Christ

Paraliturgy on the Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas
before the Eucharistic Celebration
for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Procession

Hymn: O Come All Ye Faithful

JourneySong no. 300

Text: John F. Wade (1711-1786); translation by Fredrick Oakeley (1802-1880)

Tune: 'Adeste Fidelis'; by John F. Wade

The Celebrant processes in and incenses the Infant Jesus.

Introduction

When the Entrance Chant is concluded, the Celebrant and the faithful, standing, sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross.

Celebrant: In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Celebrant: Grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you always.

All: And with your spirit.

Celebrant: My dear brothers and sisters, On this seventh day in the Octave of Christmas, we continue to rejoice for the gift of a Saviour who is called Emmanuel – God is with us. This evening, we gather to reflect on the words of the Gloria – the acclamation of Praise and joy sung by the angels at the Nativity of our Lord. As we listen to the words of the Gloria, we pray that the peace and joy that Christ brings will always dwell in our hearts.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Celebrant: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John 1:1-18

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

The Word was made flesh, and lived among us

In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. John appears as his witness. He proclaims: 'This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me.' Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received – yes, grace in return for grace, since, though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

After the reading of the Gospel, the Priest in the Homily uses the sacred text to expound the mystery of the Nativity of the Lord and the text of the hymn Gloria with its significance in Christmastide.

XI. Quoniam tu solus sanctus

Chorus

Quóniam tu solus Sanctus,
tu solus Dóminus,
tu solus Altíssimus,
Iesu Christe,

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,*

We are greeted by the familiarity of the central theme of the work: 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo'. The same busy activity occurs again as we are transported back to a heavenly scene. The angels laying heaps of praises declaring that Jesus is the Holy One, the Most High.

XII. Cum Sancto Spiritu

Chorus

cum Sancto Spírítu:
in glória Dei Patris.
Amen.

*with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

It almost seems like Vivaldi could have ended the work in Movement XI with the reprise of the tune for the Gloria. But in the Baroque style, it is quite usual to have an extended ending to a song. This part is called the "Coda". Literally, the "coda" means "a concluding event". The lower Bass voices start this final movement with gusto, while the brighter voices echo the same. Vivaldi paints a great ending with both humanity & celestial angels singing with each other in praise of God the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Concluding Prayer

Celebrant: Let us pray. O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity. Grant, also, O merciful God, that, just as the Saviour of the world is the author of divine generation for us, so he may be the giver even of immortality. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

VII. Domine, Fili unigenite

Chorus

Dómine Fili Unigénite,
Iesu Christe,

*Lord Jesus Christ,
Only Begotten Son,*

In Movement VII, it opens at galloping pace. Jesus Christ is mentioned for the first time. Like the White Horse in Revelations 19, whose rider is called Faithful & True. On his head are many crowns, and his name is the Word of God. On his robe and on his thigh His name written: King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He is the Lamb of God, Son of the Father!

VIII. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei

Contralto and Chorus

Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Fílius Patris,
qui tollis peccáta mundi,
miserére nobis;

*Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the
Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;*

The narrative in Revelations 19 reveals a sorrowful plight for the kings of this world, the nations, and all who have fallen to sin. They meet their destiny under the Sword of Truth. An alto sings Movement VIII in a sullen tone: Sad, forlorn, lost and cast away from God, while crowds of people beg for God's mercy.

IX. Qui tollis peccata mundi

Chorus

qui tollis peccáta mundi,
súscipe deprecationem nostram.

*you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;*

The people's supplication continues into Movement IX, asking God for mercy. In almost desperate frenzy, the chorus persists relentlessly: pleading God to hear their prayer.

X. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris

Contralto

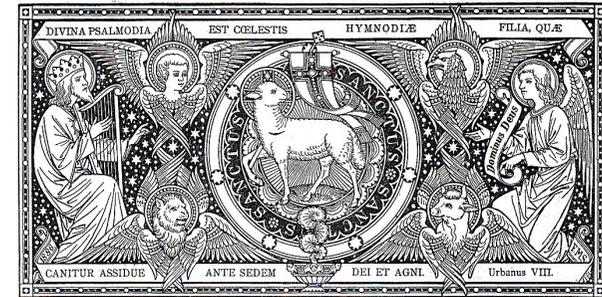
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserére nobis.

*you are seated at the
right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.*

What courage and audacity Movement X presents. Like a lawyer presenting her case, persuading her way for God's favour upon humanity. She declares that the Son of God is seated at the right hand of the Father and makes a case for Him to grant mercy to mankind.

CELEBRATION OF THE NATIVITY

Introduction to the Gloria



The very beginning of the Gloria is an allusion to the hymn of the angels in the infancy narrative of the Gospel of Luke found in Lk 2:14 – “Glory to God in the highest & on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” The song of the angels welcoming Jesus into the world at his birth, becomes now the song of God's people about to welcome him into their hearts. It is the Church's song of praise to God in rhythm, verse, and rhyme. It expresses each of the four purposes of prayer:

- Adoration - *Adoramus Te, glorificamus Te* (We adore you, we glorify You);
- Thanksgiving - *Gratias agimus Tibi propter magnam gloriam Tuam* (We give You thanks for your great glory)
- Supplication to the only Begotten Son of God Jesus Christ - *Suscipe deprecationem nostram* (receive our prayer)
- Reparation - the double *Miserere nobis* (have mercy on us) offered in atonement to the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

We've learned from an early age the First Commandment: “I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.” The Gloria is the perfect antidote to any idolatry we may have fallen into. In the past it was divine beings, heroes, and emperors—the Christians in composing and singing the Gloria responded decisively against such false gods. Today the list of potential false gods has expanded to relationships, possessions, ego, pleasure, an innumerable list. This hymn, if we pray it from the heart, expresses our desire to glorify God as our one true God.

1. Praise to the Father

In the first part of the Gloria, we present a simple list of all the ways in which we glorify God the Father. He merits our praise and adoration, and through the hymn and the celebration of the Eucharist we give it. We bless the source of all our blessings and acknowledge him for blessing us. We thank him for the gift of his Son- that glory that burst into human history and freed us from sin and death.

2. Praise to the Son

The second part of the Gloria praises Our Lord Jesus Christ's divinity as well as his humanity. We praise Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the same praise as St. John the Baptist when he was encouraging his disciples to follow him (John 1:29) and announcing what he would do for the world. This image of Christ captured the imagination of St. John the Evangelist, just as it should capture ours; from these few words of the Baptist he was led to see and describe Christ as the Lamb in his glory in the Book of Revelation.

3. A Homage to a Trinitarian God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The hymn ends with a flourish of titles for Christ that are placed in the context of a Trinitarian finish with the naming of both the Holy Spirit and God the Father: "For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen."

These titles – Holy One, Lord, and Most High – emphasise Christ's divinity and His relationship to the other persons of the Holy Trinity.

Gloria – RV 589 Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

The Composer

Antonio Vivaldi was an Italian composer, violinist and Priest who was born in Venice. Because of his ailing health, he served in the Ospedale della Pietà. The Ospedale was a home for young girls, abandoned or orphaned. He taught them music and how to play the strings. The girls would perform Vivaldi's compositions as a means of income for the home. It is very likely that they performed all parts - even the Bass sections of the Choir.

What is a Cantata?

The Gloria (RV 589) is a Cantata. It is usually a narrative piece of music involving an orchestra, solo voices and a choir. It sounds like the composer using the music to tell a story. The work is typically on a sacred theme, presented without costumes, stage sets nor enactments. Vivaldi wrote three orchestral works on the 'Gloria'. RV 589 is currently the most well-known.

Individual Movements and Details

I. Gloria

Chorus

Glória in excélsis Deo

Glory to God in the highest,

Vivaldi's Gloria opens with a lot of activity and dialogue with various sections of the orchestra – like the activity of the celestial angels surrounding God in His heavenly kingdom.

When the Chorus introduces the text in this movement, we immediately recognise this popular song – 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo!'

The long phrases and lines in the middle depict the vastness of God's kingdom.

The overlapping choral lines almost sound like armies of angels echoing unending praise.

It also reminds us of scripture: 'Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircle the throne and the living creatures and the elders.' (Revelation 5: 11)

II. Et in terra pax

Chorus

et in terra pax homínibus
bonæ voluntátis.

*and on earth peace
to people of good will.*

From the quick activity of the opening, Vivaldi contrasts the second movement with a peace that is a lot slower... almost laborious and heavy. We are reminded of how God's spirit walked the earth in Genesis – of how he breathed life and created all things.

III. Laudamus te

Sopranos I and II

Laudámus te,
benedícimus te,
adorámus te,
glorificámus te,

*We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,*

In 'Laudamus Te' (Movement 3) - the first of four solo pieces - features a duet between two Soprano voices. It is a song of praise to God, perhaps sung by two angels, or by Adam and Eve. But whoever it is sung by, the imitations and similarities in the voice parts depict two persons who agree that God is to be praised, to be adored, to be worshipped and to be glorified.

IV. Gratias agimus tibi V. Propter magnam gloriam

Chorus

grátias ágimus tibi

we give you thanks

propter magnam glóriam tuam,

for your great glory,

In some publications, movements 4 and 5 are merged into one movement.

While Movement 3 painted a playful duet, 'Gratias agimus tibi' (Movement 4) begins in a more solemn and serious manner. If you have ever found yourself indebted to someone so deeply, then perhaps the weight of gratitude Movement 4 carries is something that can grip the whole of humanity.

Rallies of God's great glory resound unceasingly in 'Propter magnam gloriam' (Movement 5). Orchestra sections paired with voice parts from the choir depicting the whole of creation, praise God's glory. The steps and leaps in the voice parts remind us of a busy scene; angels with wings in a flurry, people in clockwork steps going about God's service.

VI. Domine Deus

Soprano

Dómine Deus, Rex cæléstis,
Deus Pater omnípotens.

*Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.*

In 'Domine Deus' (Movement 6) - the second of four solo pieces – the oboe opens with the cello giving the rhythm. A Soprano solo sing of the character of God, called 'All powerful, all mighty'. It almost seems like the singer is in love with God. This beautiful love song showcases the created, loving her Creator who first created her, because He first loved her.