CO–CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART

May 24, 2020

The Ascension of the Lord

Saturday 5 PM Mass
Sunday 11 AM Mass

We are monitoring rapidly-emerging information about the pandemic. Last week several fluid dynamic studies were released about potential hazards of group music-making. Multiple national choral organizations joined with medical researchers to state on Tuesday night that group singing is not currently recommended, even when masked and 6-feet apart. We join with other cathedrals worldwide, of those that are open, in a position of caution at this time: we are minimizing congregational singing while remaining faithful to Mass rubrics. The cantor is moved upstairs and will sing the Proper of the day alone, on your behalf. The Mass Ordinary remains a familiar one, but we ask that you do not sing out of prudence for your neighbors. Organ music will stand in for the people in the places allowed by liturgical documents. Please silently meditate on the texts.

Your Co-Cathedral Music remains committed to excellence, and to your participation. We don’t like this temporary situation, and we don’t like this virus. We expect more information to emerge as re-opening is phased. For now, until further notice, we prefer to err on the side of caution and concern for your safety until more is known. We will continue to monitor.

Thank you.

Prelude
Ricercar: LLANFAIR in the Grand Style
L’Ascension (1934)

IV. Prière du Christ montant vers son Père
(Prayer from Christ ascending towards His Father)

Introit
Viri Galilae (mode VII)

Men of Galilee, why gaze in wonder at the heavens? alleluia; this Jesus whom you saw ascending into heaven will return as you saw him go, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Welcome
Penitential Act
Kyrie eleison
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Gloria
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
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.
Collect

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for “the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

When they had gathered together they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He answered them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.”

Responsorial: Psalm 47

Owen Alstott

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

All you peoples, clap your hands, shout to God with cries of gladness,
For the LORD, the Most High, the awesome, is the great king over all the earth.

God mounts his throne amid shouts of joy; the LORD, amid trumpet blasts.
Sing praise to God, sing praise; sing praise to our king, sing praise.

For king of all the earth is God; sing hymns of praise.
God reigns over the nations, God sits upon his holy throne.

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:17-23

Brothers and sisters: May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe, in accord with the exercise of his great might, which he worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens, far above every principality, authority, power, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things beneath his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

Gospel Acclamation

Owen Alstott

Alleluia, alleluia.
Go and teach all nations, says the Lord; I am with you always, until the end of the world.

Gospel

Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in
the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

**Homily**

**Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.  

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.  

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.  

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Prayers of the Faithful**

**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

**Preparation of the Gifts**

*Ave Maria*  
Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;  
blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

This is a time where everyone is anxious about finances and job security. At our  
parish, we are hoping to pay our required expenses without cutting ministries  
or staff—both that are so important to spread the Gospel and serve you.  

Traditionally, this is the normal part of the Mass for the Offertory Collection.  
IF you are able to make any contribution to the Co-Cathedral, we ask you to do  
so now by using the QR code to the right or following the link below. Or after  
Mass, you may enroll in Faith Direct for regular online contributions, also by  
following the link.  

Thank you for your assistance at this trying time.  

[www.sacredhearthouston.org/donate](http://www.sacredhearthouston.org/donate)
Eucharistic Prayer
Eucharistic Preface
Sanctus Robert LeBlanc
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
Memorial Acclamation
We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.
Concluding Doxology
AMEN.
Communion Rite
The Lord’s Prayer
Agnus Dei Robert LeBlanc
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.
Holy Communion
Data est mihi (mode I) Bruce E. Ford
All power has been given to me, in heaven and on earth, alleluia; Go out and teach all the nations,
baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, alleluia, alleluia.

We invite you to pray for Spiritual Communion using these words:
My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Prayer after Communion
Blessing and Dismissal
Postlude
Les Corps Glorieux (1939) Olivier Messiaen
VI. Joie et Clarté des Corps Glorieux
(Joy and Clarity of the glorified body)
Notes on Music for Ascension Sunday

Ascension Day has some of the most triumphant hymns, second only to Easter. One of the best known is Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise. With an Alleluia literally after every line, this hymn both recalls Easter, and is immediately singable when the tune named LLANFAIR is used.

While we are continuing to refrain from congregational hymnody during the uncertainty regarding group singing and the transmission of Covid-19, we still want to keep this music in your hearts and minds. Those of you worshipping in the domestic church can sing along – with gusto - with our LLANFAIR video recorded on Ascension 2019 and found on YouTube's Houston Co-Cathedral Music. (In the near future, hymn videos will also be accessible at www.sacredhearthouston.org.) For those of you who are in person in the Co-Cathedral, the organ prelude this Sunday includes a setting of LLANFAIR, composed by David Briggs (b. 1962) for a hymn-based Oxford Collection of music for the Easter season. If you listen closely, you will hear the melody of the hymn played in slow notes on a trumpet stop in the pedals. Above the melody is some complicated music in the hands. In a nod to a much earlier tradition when Gregorian chant melodies were played slowly, the hands play quicker counterpoint as singers would perform a motet. Briggs' harmonic language is modern, but if you think the text as you listen, you should be able to pick out the slow moving trumpet song: Hail. The. Day. That. Sees. Him. Rise. A—le-lu-ia.

The remainder of the prelude, and the postlude, are composed by groundbreaking Parisian composer Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992). A Catholic mystic, Messiaen's music, though sometimes aurally challenging, always is meant to evoke scripture quotes and Catholic writings; the composer notates these very clearly in the score. Today's prelude is the final movement of a four-movement symphonic 1932 poem for organ entitled L'Ascension, which follows this sequence:

I. Majesty of Christ praying that His Father should glorify Him
II. Serene Alleluias from a soul longing for Heaven
III. Outburst of joy from a soul before the Glory of Christ which is its own glory
IV. Prayer from Christ ascending towards His Father.

Messiaen quotes the Gospel of St. John within the final Prayer: “And now, O Father, I have manifested Thy name unto men...and now, I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee.” As with much of Messiaen’s music, the harmonies are unusual and deliberately otherworldly to depict the arrival of Christ in heaven.

In the postlude, we hear Messiaen’s follow-up to L'Ascension, Joie et clarté des Corps Glorieux (Joy and Clarity of the glorified body) from his 1939 Les Corps Glorieux. In this music, a soul finds rhapsodic joy upon arriving in heaven, after the ascended Christ has opened the way. The scripture quotation is from Matthew 13:43: “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father.”

Both of these pieces by Messiaen use a contemporary and abstract language which even includes painstakingly catalogued birdsong. You may notice some familiar jazz chords, too. Not everyone likes the Catholic music of Messiaen, which was true even in the church he served in Paris, La Trinité. However, we believe all Catholics can appreciate the extent of human creativity inspired by the vast richness of our beliefs and traditions. (And if this isn’t in your personal taste, something else is coming soon. Remember a stated goal of Co-Cathedral Music has always been to provide our parish with samples of 1000 years of Catholic sacred music. Next Week: Come Creator Spirit! Music for Pentecost.)