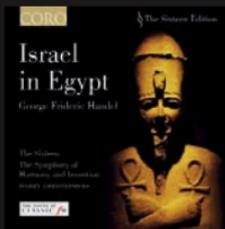


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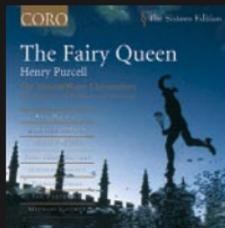


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# Allegri Miserere

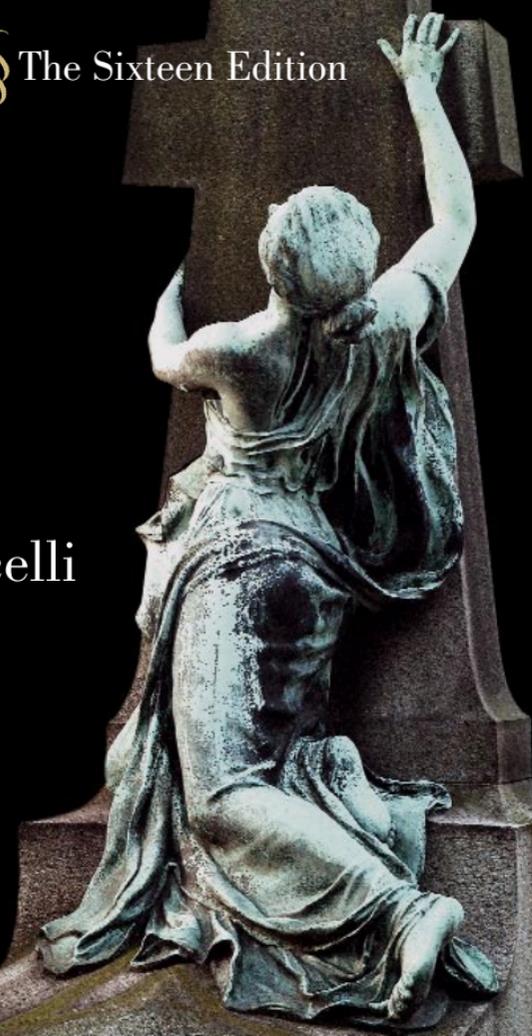
Palestrina  
Missa Papae Marcelli

The Sixteen  
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Tradition is amazing – the process of handing down an established practice or custom. This is exactly what Allegri’s *Miserere* has become. It was sung every year during the existence of a choir at the Sistine Chapel and is now sung in every cathedral on Maundy Thursday. As a chorister at Canterbury, I earned a florin for attempting to sing those renowned “*abbellimenti*” (even the second treble, myself in the not-so-starry role – got one!).

Allegri himself was a tenor in the choir at the Sistine Chapel but was not the prolific composer Palestrina was. He presided over Rome’s music before Allegri was even born. Choral singers world-wide will know his *Mass Papae Marcelli*; it is quite simply the most famous mass of all time. But it was written to prove a point. The Council of Trent had decided that music was getting too flowery, too complex; the words of the mass were virtually inaudible and thus the message of the scriptures was not coming across to the congregation. So, instead of writing simplistic music, Palestrina does exactly the opposite and produces an intricate tapestry for voices but where the words are ever apparent – clearly pointed and often exquisitely painted. And the secret in performance is to think and breathe as one – it is then a joy to sing and joy to hear.

Harry  
Christophers,

In 1770, the year of Beethoven’s birth, the historian Charles Burney was moved to tears on hearing music by Antonio Lotti, who had died thirty years before. Lotti was a versatile musician who seems to have spent really all of his life in Venice (the probable city of his birth in about 1667). His operas, cantatas, and oratorios were admired for their ‘progressive’ tendencies - their movement towards what we now describe as the ‘Classical’ style; and his pupils, who included Albcrti, Galuppi, Marcello, and possibly Hasse, emulated him in this respect. Lotti’s sacred music, while firmly rooted in the developed harmonic language of the early 18th century, is related very strongly to the contrapuntal procedures of the 16th - the *prima prattica*. The famous eight-part *Crucifixus*, actually one of several independent settings of this text scored for between five and ten voices, is a good example of this. While it uses a relatively fast-moving quasi-recitative style typical of the Baroque for much of its duration, this is punctuated by cadential passages of more polyphonic writing which belong to the older tradition in spirit though not in letter. Their harmonic structure is far more chromatic and they are considerably more melodically angular than Palestrina would have been. Even the farthest outposts of polyphony (notably Portugal, Latin America,

and Eastern Europe) would not have contemplated this degree of chromatic saturation. Yet it is precisely this that makes this piece seem so fitted to the profundity of its text to modern ears, and this extreme reaction to the words that caused Burney to weep.

Palestrina had been born in 1525 or 1526 (which is to say just over one hundred and forty years before Lotti). He was born not far from Rome, in the town whose name he bore, and worked in several places but chiefly in Rome as chapelmaster at the papal Cappella Giulia. By his death in 1594, he had published a large amount of music including over 100 Masses and over 350 motets. His publications were dedicated to wealthy and influential men: princes and popes who were patrons of music.

It has been suggested that Palestrina’s *Stabat Mater* was written during the last years of his life, and it seems to have been written for Pope Gregory XIV (who reigned from 1590 to 1592). It was for a long time securely guarded by the papal choir, who sang it (or possibly only part of it) at High Mass on Palm Sunday each year. The first printed edition was the work of Dr Burney, who managed to obtain a copy in 1770, the same year in which he heard Lotti’s music sung. The work’s other editors have included Richard Wagner. The *Stabat Mater*

is one of the best examples of Palestrina's apparent simplicity of means, which in fact both conceals amazing subtlety of rhythmic and harmonic procedure, and allows for the greatest clarity in the transmission of the text. The static nature of the harmony and the slow pacing of the contrapuntal working give a tragic eloquence rarely surpassed by Palestrina or his contemporaries.

The music of Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652) falls in many respects between that of Palestrina and Lotti. His famous *Miserere* is in essence an extremely simple work, a simple *falsobordone* setting of the penitential Psalm 50 (51). His polyphonic setting alternates with the chant which would customarily have been used, in this case a simple monotone, reflective of the solemn nature of the occasion. This Psalm would have been performed at the end of the *tenebrae* services of Holy Week at the papal chapel. It would have been sung in complete darkness while the pope and cardinals knelt before the altar.

Allegri's setting, which may date from 1638, has had a chequered history. The papacy refused to allow any copy to leave the chapel, realising that they were in possession of a work of considerable renown. There is a story that it was Mozart who first broke this barrier of secrecy by copying the work out from memory. Whatever the truth of this,

there developed several versions of the piece in manuscript sources, which show how the added ornamentation (the *abbellimenti* which were traditionally added to *falsobordone*) changed over the years. Whereas usually in the papal chapel, such added ornamentation would have changed from performance to performance, in the case of this work, because it was sung in darkness, the embellishments – though elaborate – were memorised and were thus recorded on paper. This did not prevent changes occurring later in its history, and the version used on this recording is based on a sketch made by Mendelssohn of the ornamentation. It is the case that this is hardly what would have been heard in Allegri's own time, but it is also true that music takes on its own life when it leaves the hands of its creator: thus Allegri's *Miserere* and the present tradition of performing this version.

The *Missa Papae Marcelli* is without doubt the most renowned of Palestrina's works. The date of its first publication was 1567, in the Second Book of Masses, but the date of its actual composition is what has fascinated musicians and historians because of the legends surrounding the work. The Abbé Baini, writing in 1828, was the source of these legends. Having undertaken considerable research in the Roman archives,

he suggested that the *Missa Papae Marcelli* was written for a gathering in 1565 at the home of one cardinal Vitalozzi of a commission established to ascertain whether various Mass settings achieved an adequately clear rendition of the texts for the congregation's comprehension. This had followed the injunctions of the Council of Trent in 1562 and the call by Cardinal Borromeo for the writing of 'la musica intelligibile'. Baini, following Agazzari's writings of 1607, claimed that Palestrina's Mass was the work which prevented the abolition of polyphony (as opposed to monophonic chant) in the liturgy. This myth was demolished only in 1892 by Haberl, after a thorough examination of the sources and the documentary material relating to the Mass. He thought that the Mass could have been written as early as 1555, possibly in celebration of Pope Marcellus's election. Marcellus reigned for a mere three weeks that year, but during that time was recorded on Good Friday as being dissatisfied with the perfunctory singing of the liturgy, and admonished the singers accordingly. Whatever the actual truth behind this complicated web of fact and fiction, Palestrina's Mass is fully concordant with the Council of Trent's directives. Its simplicity of manner ensures total intelligibility of the Mass text, and the

translucent beauty of the musical material has driven musicians into an excess of superlatives from the composer's lifetime to the present day. The characteristics which have made this Mass so renowned are its consistently memorable fusion of simplicity and clarity in the service of the liturgy, and its great refinement of melody, harmony, and rhythm. The Kyrie, Sanctus and Agnus Dei have a poise and a serene feeling of control typical of Palestrina in general, but here brought possibly to their highest point. In the Gloria and Credo something else is achieved: every word of their lengthy texts is projected with the utmost clarity even though there is no lack of contrapuntal momentum. The contrasting of various scorings and the subtle use of homophonic passages impart to the music a dramatic element which emphasises the words of the Mass, and delineate the proportions of the movements (something over which Palestrina exercised the greatest care). It is not recorded whether Dr Burney was ever moved to weep by this work, but if it is less obvious in its appeal to one's emotions than Lotti's music, it is nevertheless a simultaneously grand and humble expression of faith of great profundity whose mystique and universality have never been lost.

IVAN MOODY

Antonio LOTTI (1667-1740)

## Crucifixus

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,  
sub Pontio Pilato;  
passus et sepultus est.

*He was crucified also for us,  
under Pontius Pilate;  
he died and was buried.*

Giovanni Pierluigi da  
PALESTRINA (1525-1594)

## Stabat Mater

Stabat mater dolorosa  
Juxta crucem lacrimosa  
Dum pendebat Filius.  
Cuius animam gementem,  
Contristantem et dolentem,  
Per tansivit gladius.

*The sorrowful Mother stood  
close to the cross in tears  
as her Son hung there.  
Through her groaning heart,  
grieving in compassion for him,  
a sword had passed.*

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater Unigeniti!  
Quae moerebat et dolebat  
Et tremebat cum videbat  
Nati poenas inclyti.

*O how sad and how oppressed  
was that blessed  
Mother of the Only-begotten!  
How she grieved and mourned,  
how she trembled to see  
her noble Son's sufferings.*

Quis est homo, qui non fleret  
Quis Christi Matrem si videret  
In tanto supplicio?  
Quis non posset contristari  
Christi Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?

*Who is the man who would not weep  
to see Christ's Mother  
in such great suffering?  
Who could not grieve in sympathy  
to behold Christ's Mother  
grieving with her Son?*

Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Jesum in tormentis  
Et flagellis subditum.  
Vidit suum dulcem Natum  
Morientem desolatum  
Dum emisit spiritum.

*For the sins of his people  
she saw Jesus in torment,  
subjected to the lash.  
She saw her sweet Son  
dying abandoned  
as he gave up his spirit.*

Eia Mater fons amoris,  
Me sentire vim doloris,  
Fac ut tecum lugeam.  
Fac ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum Deum,  
Ut sibi complaceam.

*Ah Mother, fount of love,  
make me feel the keenness of your grief  
that I may grieve with you.  
Let my heart burn  
with love for Christ my God,  
that I may be pleasing to him.*

Sancta mater, istud agas,  
Crucifixi fige plagas  
Cordi meo valide.  
Tui nati vulnerati,  
Tam dignati pro me pati,  
Poenas mecum divide.

*Holy Mother, do this for me,  
fix the pains of the Crucified  
firmly in my heart.  
Your wounded Son,  
who deigned to suffer so for my sake,  
share his pains with me.*

Fac me vere tecum flere,  
Crucifixo con dolore  
Donec ego vixero.  
Juxta crucem tecum stare,  
Et me tibi sociare  
In planctu desidero.

Virgo virginum praeclara,  
Mihi jam non sis amara:  
Fac me tecum plangere.  
Fac, ut portem Christi mortem,  
Passionis fac consortem  
Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari  
Cruce hac inebriari  
Ob amorem Filii.  
Inflammatum et accensum  
Per te, Virgo, sim defensum  
In die iudicii.

Fac me cruce custodire,  
Morte Christi praemuniri,  
Confoveri gratia.  
Quando corpus morietur  
Fac ut animae donetur  
Paradisi gloria.

*Make me truly weep with you  
and suffer with the Crucified  
as long as I shall live.  
To stand by the cross with you  
and to keep company with you  
in your tears, this is my desire.*

*O Virgin bright beyond all virgins,  
be not aloof from me now;  
make me weep with you.  
Let me bear the death of Christ,  
make me a companion in his passion  
and recall his pains.*

*Let me be wounded with the same blows,  
make me ecstatic with this Cross  
for the love of your Son.  
Thus inflamed and burning with love,  
may I enjoy your protection, O Virgin,  
on the day of judgement.*

*Let me be kept safe by the Cross,  
defended by the death of Christ  
and enfolded in his grace.  
When my body dies,  
then let my soul be granted  
the glory of Paradise.*

## Gregorio ALLEGRI (1582 1652) Miserere (Psalm 50/51)

Soloists: Ruth Dean, Sally Dunkley,  
Christopher Royall, Christopher Purves

Miserere mei Deus, secundum magnam  
misericordiam tuam;  
et secundum multitudinem miserationem  
tuarum dele iniquitatem meam.

Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea;  
et a peccato meo munda me.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco:  
et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

Tibi soli peccavi  
et malum coram te feci;  
ut iustificeris in sermonibus tuis,  
et vincas cum iudicaris.

Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum:  
et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti;  
incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae  
manifestasti mihi.

*Have mercy upon me, O God,  
after thy great goodness;  
according to the multitude of thy  
mercies do away mine offences.*

*Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness;  
and cleanse me from my sin.*

*For I acknowledge my faults;  
and my sin is ever before me.*

*Against thee only have I sinned,  
and done this evil in thy sight;  
that thou mightest be justified in thy saying,  
and clear when thou shalt judge.*

*Behold, I was shapen in wickedness;  
and in sin hath my mother conceived me.*

*But lo, thou requirest truth in the  
inward parts; and shalt make me to  
understand wisdom secretly.*

Asperges me hyssopo,  
et mudabor;  
lavabis me  
et super nivem dealabor.

Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam;  
et exultabunt ossa humiliata.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis;  
et omnes iniquitates meas dele.

Cor mundum crea in me Deus;  
et spiritum rectum innova, in visceribus meis.

Ne proicias me a facie tua;  
et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.

Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui;  
et spiritu principali confirma me.

Docebo iniquos vias tuas;  
et impii ad te convertentur.

*Thou shalt purge me with hyssop,  
and I shall be clean;  
thou shalt wash me,  
and I shall be whiter than snow.*

*Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness;  
that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

*Turn thy face from my sins;  
and put out all my misdeeds.*

*Make me a clean heart, O God;  
and renew a right spirit within me.*

*Cast me not away from thy presence;  
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.*

*O give me the comfort of thy help again;  
and stablish me with thy free Spirit.*

*Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked;  
and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*

Libera me de sanguinibus  
Deus salutis meae;  
et exultabit lingua mea iustitiam tuam.

Domine, labia mea aperies;  
et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium  
dedessem utique;  
holocaustis non delectaberis.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus;  
cor contritum et humiliatum, Deus,  
non despicias.

Benigne fac domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion;  
ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis  
sacrificium iustitiae  
oblationes et holocausta;  
tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

*Deliver me from blood-guiltiness,  
O God, thou that art the God of my health;  
and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.*

*Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord;  
and my mouth shall show thy praise.*

*For thou desirest no sacrifice,  
else would I give it thee;  
but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.*

*The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God,  
shalt thou not despise.*

*O be favourable and gracious unto Sion;  
build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

*Then shalt thou be pleased with the  
sacrifice of righteousness,  
with the burnt-offerings and oblations;  
then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.*

Giovanni Pierluigi da  
PALESTRINA (1525-1594)

# Missa Papae Marcelli

## Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord have mercy.  
Christ have mercy.  
Lord have mercy.*

## Gloria

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,  
Iesu Christe.  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris.

*Glory be to God on high.  
And on earth peace  
to men of good will.  
We praise Thee,  
we bless Thee,  
we worship Thee,  
we glorify Thee.  
We give thanks to Thee  
for Thy great glory.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father almighty.  
O Lord, the only-begotten Son,  
Jesu Christ.  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father.*

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  
Iesu Christe.  
Cum Sancto Spiritu  
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*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 the Father,  
have mercy upon us.  
For Thou only art holy,  
Thou only art the Lord,  
Thou only art the most high,  
Jesu Christ.  
With the Holy Spirit  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

## Credo

Credo in unum Deum.  
Patrem omnipotentem,  
factorem coeli et terrae,  
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.  
Et in unum Dominum, Iesum 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,  
consubstantiallem Patri,  
per quem omnia facta sunt

*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.*

Qui, propter nos homines,  
et propter nostram salutem,  
descendit de coelis.  
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 coelum,  
sedet ad dextram Patris.  
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria  
iudicare vivos et mortuos,  
cuius 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.

*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.  
And the third day he rose again  
according to the scriptures;  
and ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of the Father.  
And he shall come again with glory  
to judge both the quick and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.  
And I believe 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 I believe 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, sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
Osanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

## Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Osanna in excelsis.

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

## Agnus Dei I

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

*Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

## Agnus Dei II

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

*Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

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