

Death and Resurrection – “Stabat Mater”



The sorrowful Mother was standing beside the cross while her Son was hanging there.

The sword had passed through her lamenting, anguished and sorrowing soul.

O how sad and afflicted was that blessed Mother of the only-begotten one.

She grieved and lamented and trembled when she saw the pains of her glorious son.

Who is the man who would not weep if he were to see the Mother of Christ in so much suffering?

Who could fail to be compassionate seeing the pious Mother sorrowing for her Son?

She saw Jesus in torment and subjected to floggings for the sins of his people.

She saw her sweet Son dying abandoned when he yielded up his spirit.

O Mother, fountain of love, make me to feel the strength of your sorrow so that I may mourn with you.

Make my heart burn in the love of Christ my God so that I may be pleasing to him.

Holy Mother, do that, fix the wounds of the crucified deeply within my heart.

Share with me the pains of your wounded Son who deigned to suffer so much for me.

Make me truly weep with you and suffer with the crucified so long as I live.

I desire to stand with you and to join willingly in your lamentation.

Lady, peerless among ladies, don't be ill-disposed to me. Let me sorrow with you.

Grant that I may bear the death of Christ within me and meditate on his passion and his wounds.

Grant me to be wounded by his wounds and intoxicated by his cross for the love of your Son.

Inflamed and set on fire through you, O Virgin, may I be defended in the Day of Judgement.

Grant that I may be protected by the cross, fortified by the death of Christ and strengthened by his grace.

Grant that when my body dies, the glory of Paradise may be given to my soul.

Amen.

St Swithun's Festival 2012

Creation to Crucifixion

400 Years of the King James Bible

Saturday 14th July 2012

7.30pm

St Swithun's Church, Worcester

Jane Field

Soprano

John Swindells

Organ/Piano

Elaine Fleming

Mezzo

Murray's Muscles

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Creation - "O lovely peace"



Judas Maccabaeus is an oratorio in three acts composed in 1746 by George Frideric Handel based on a libretto written by Thomas Morell. The oratorio was devised to compliment the victorious Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland upon his return from the Battle of Culloden (16 April 1746).

The events depicted in the oratorio are from the period 170-160 BC when Judea was ruled by the Seleucid Empire which undertook to destroy the Jewish religion. Being ordered to worship Zeus, many Jews obeyed under the threat of persecution, however some did not. One who defied was the elderly priest Mattathias who killed a fellow Jew who was about to offer a pagan sacrifice. After tearing down a pagan altar, Mattathias retreated to the hills and gathered others who were willing to fight for their faith.

In the third and final part of this oratorio, victory has finally been achieved for the Jewish people. News arrives that Rome is willing to form an alliance with Judas against the Seleucid empire. The people rejoice that peace has at last come to their country (*O lovely peace*).

Birth - "Rejoice greatly, o daughter of Zion!"



Messiah is an English-language oratorio composed in 1741, once again, by George Frideric Handel, with a scriptural text compiled by Charles Jennens from the King James Bible, and from the Psalms included with the Book of Common Prayer. It was first performed in Dublin on 13 April 1742, and received its London premiere nearly a year later. After an initially modest public reception, the oratorio gained in popularity, eventually becoming one of the best-known and most frequently performed choral works in Western music.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion" (Zechariah 9:9–10) is a virtuoso coloratura aria for the soprano which might express any kind of great joy—as seen in an opera. An upward fourth followed by a rest accents "Rejoice", and further repeats of the word are rendered as seemingly endless coloraturas. The middle section tells in mellow movement "He is the righteous Saviour and

he shall speak peace unto the heathen"—with "peace" repeated several times as a long note. Finally, a da capo seems to begin, but only the first entry of the voice is exactly the same, followed by even more varied coloraturas and embellishments to end the aria.

Life - "He shall feed his flock"



A summary of the Saviour's deeds is given in a compilation of words from both Isaiah and Matthew. The Old Testament part "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd" (Isaiah 40:11), is sung by the alto in music in 12/8 time which is reminiscent of the Pifa (an instrumental Pastorella which takes its name from the shepherd-bagpipers, or *pifferare*, who played in the streets of Rome at Christmas time). The New Testament part, in the Gospel words of Jesus, are changed to the third person "Come unto Him, all ye that labour" (Matthew 11:28–29). The soprano sings the same melody, but elevated by a fourth from F major to B flat major.

Betrayal - "He was despised"



Isaiah's Songs of the suffering servant, the fourth song, is about the Man of Sorrows: "He was despised, rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Isaiah states in his songs that "the Messiah will play a sacrificial role on behalf of his people".

...oo0oo...
15 minute Interval
...oo0oo...