

Gregorian Chant from the Abbey of

FONTGOMBAULT

Saint Joseph



ON the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as patron of the universal Church by Bl. Pius IX (1846-1878) on December 8, 1870, commemorated by the year of St. Joseph established by Pope Francis, this disk aims to be a testimony of the Fontgombault monks' devotion to this great saint, a provider of vocations in religious communities, as well as an invitation to pray him: *Ite ad Ioseph*, "Go to Joseph".

The four Gospels devote but a few lines to St. Joseph, yet, these lines say the essentials. Joseph is first of all the husband of Mary. Now, "it was from his marriage to Mary that Joseph derived his singular dignity and his rights in regard to Jesus" (St. John Paul II, *Redemptoris custos*, n. 20). Joseph is thus also referred to as Jesus' father. Save for begetting him according to the flesh, Joseph does indeed deserve the title of Jesus' father, as his teacher and nurturer. Again, Joseph is called "a just man" (Mt 1:19), docile to the voice of God, and the devoted protector of the Child and his Mother. His patronage over the Church follows naturally from his role towards Jesus and Mary. A role model for husbands and fathers, a master of interior life, and the protector of the holy Church, St. Joseph can be invoked as the great patron of the third millennium, in which the world is deeply undermined by the crisis of the family, of fatherhood, and of the Church herself.

During the first centuries of the Church history, St. Joseph remained largely unknown. His public worship did not begin until the 15th century. For the March 19th feast, the Roman breviary initially referred to the common of a confessor not a bishop. In 1671, the three hymns, *Te Ioseph* (Vespers), *Iste quem læti* (Lauds) and *Cælitum, Ioseph* (Matins), made their appearance. In 1714, Clement XI (1700-1721) reformed the office and completed it. The melodies were later

revised by Dom Pothier, then by Dom Gajard. The March 19th Mass has kept the same set of sung pieces, from the Roman Missal of 1570 down to the Gradual of 1974. The pieces are taken from the commons of a confessor not a bishop, except for the gradual, taken from the common of abbots. The communion antiphon, *Ioseph fili David*, was probably composed for the occasion.

The May 1st feast has a different history. A feast for the patronage of St. Joseph was granted in 1680 to the Discalced Carmelites of Spain and Italy. In 1700, this formulary was retouched for several other religious orders. The introit *Adiutor* then made its appearance. The 1700 formulary was kept unchanged in 1874, when the feast was extended to the universal Church. St. Pius X (1903-1914) set it on the Wednesday in the second week after Easter. Pius XII (1939-1958) replaced in 1955 this feast by the present memory of St. Joseph the Worker, set on May 1st, with a new office and a new mass (*Sapientia*), so as to give a Christian dimension to the Labor Day. At Fontgombault, the monks sing on May 1st the pieces of the former feast of the patronage. This explains why the mass *Adiutor* (recomposed by Dom Pothier for his 1883 gradual), and not *Sapientia*, was recorded.

The disk opens with two beautiful antiphons, *Lætare* and *Clamavit*, which are an invitation to confidence, joy, and docility, meant for the whole Church. They set the tone for what our devotion to St. Joseph should be. Joseph is the embodiment of the man who listens to God and receives His will, and puts it into practice without any self-introspection. He proved to be totally available for God's plan of salvation. That is the teaching of the March 19th office.

The first Vespers focus on the marriage between Mary and Joseph, and the latter's anguish when faced with the pregnancy of his betrothed. The progression

of the antiphons keeps us spellbound as to the outcome, disclosed by the Magnificat antiphon.

The antiphons of Lauds present the episode of the finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple. The melody of each antiphon successfully conveys the atmosphere of each of the Gospel scenes. The word *dolentes* is especially emphasised in the fourth antiphon, *Dixit Mater eius* (as well as in the two other pieces with the same text). Joseph and Mary were “devoured by sorrow”, as the Gospel says. Likewise, the expression *quærebamus te* is fraught with deep concern. The mass is a meditative praise of Joseph’s personal holiness.

The May 1st office meditates on the same themes. The mass is more effusive in its praise than the March 19th Mass, and it insists more on the figure of the Protector, first of all God himself (Introit), then in God’s image, St. Joseph (the Alleluia). The disk concludes with an antiphon to the praise of St. Joseph, and the response *Iam lætus moriar*, the words addressed by Jacob to his son Joseph the patriarch, figure of Mary’s spouse.

Except for the pieces taken from the commons, and the Benedictus antiphon of the patronage feast (*Ioseph fili David*), the Gregorian melodies of both of St. Joseph’s feasts are rather recent, and yet not devoid of interest, and most of them remain attuned to the spirit of Gregorian chant.

1. Organ : Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704), *Noéls pour les instruments, Joseph est bien marié, (Joseph is well married)* H. 534 [3]

2. Antiphon *Lætare*

*Lætare, * alma mater Ecclësia: sancti Ioseph sponsi Mariæ adsunt sollëmnia; tanti protectóris lætare méritis, lætare patrocínio; cuius gloriósæ preces et pia suffrágia nos tueántur semper, ac ducant ad cæléstia.*

Rejoice, * Holy Mother Church: today is the feast day of Saint Joseph, spouse of Mary. Rejoice for the merits of so great a protector. Rejoice for his patronage. Let his glorious prayers and his devout intercession protect us always and guide us to heaven.

3. Antiphon *Clamavit*

Clamávit ad regem pópulus, aliménta petens; quibus ille respóndit: Ite ad Ioseph.

The people implored the king to give them some food; “Go to Joseph,” he replied. (Gen 41:55)

4. Organ: Henricus Isaac (1445-1517), *Ecole Flamande, Motet for three voices, Stiesser Vatter, Herre Gott (Sweet Father, Lord God).*

First Vespers of March 19

5. Antiphons *Iacob autem, Missus est, Cum esset desponsata, Ioseph vir eius Iacob autem * genuit Ioseph, virum Mariæ, de qua natus est Iesus, qui vocá-tur Christus.*

And Jacob begot Joseph * the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, Who is called Christ. (Mt 1:16)

*Missus est * Angelus Gábriel a Deo ad Vírginem desponsátam viro, cui nomen erat Ioseph, de domo David, et nomen Vírginis Mariá.*

The Angel Gabriel * was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. (Lk 1:26-27)

*Cum esset desponsáta * Mater Iesu Maria Ioseph, ántequam convenirent, invénta est in útero habens de Spíritu Sancto.*

When as Mary * the mother of Jesus, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost. (Mt 1:18)

*Ioseph vir eius, * cum esset iustus, et nollet eam tradúcere, vóluit occúlte dimittere eam.*

Then Joseph her husband * being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. (Mt 1:19)

6. Prolix Responsory *Fidelis Servus*

*Fidélis servus * et prudens quem constituit Dóminus super familiam suam: * Amen dico vobis quóniam super ómnia bona sua constituet eum.*

☩. *Qui custos est Dómini sui, glori ficátur.*

☩. *Glória Pátri et Filio et Spíritu Sancto.*

The faithful and prudent servant * whom the Lord set over His household: * Amen I say to you, that He will set him over all His goods.

☩. He who is the guardian of his Lord shall be glorified.

☩. Glory be to the Father.

7. Hymn *Te Ioseph*

Te, Ioseph, célebrent ágmina cáelitum,

Te cuncti résonent cristiádum chori,

Qui clarus méritis, iunctus est ínclitæ

Casto fédere Virgini.

Let angels chant thy praise, pure spouse of purest bride,

While Christendom's sweet choirs the gladsome strains repeat,

To tell thy wondrous fame, to raise the pealing hymn,

Wherewith we all thy glory greet.

Almo cum tímídam gérmíne cóniugem

Admírans, dúbio tángeris ánxíus,

Afflátu súperi Fláminis Angelus

Concéptum Púerum docet.

When doubts and bitter fears thy heavy heart oppressed,

And filled thy righteous soul with sorrow and dismay,

An angel quickly came, the wondrous secret told,

And drove thy anxious griefs away.

Tu natum Dóminum stringis, ad éxteras

Ægýpti prófugum tu séqueris plagas;

Amíssum Sólymis quæris, et ínvenis,

Miscens gáudia flétibus.

Thy arms thy new-born Lord, with tender joy embrace;

Him then to Egypt's land thy watchful care doth bring;

Him in the temple's courts once lost thou dost regain,

And 'mid thy tears dost greet thy King.

Post mortem réliquos sors pia cónsecrat,

Palmámque eméritos glória súscipit:

Tu vivens, Súperis par, frúeris Deo,

Mira sorte beátior.

Not till death's pangs are o'er do others gain their crown,

But, Joseph, unto thee the blessed lot was given

While life did yet endure, thy God to see and know,

As do the saints above in heaven.

Nobis, summa Trias, parce precántibus,

Da Ioseph méritis sídera scándere:

Ut tandem líceat nos tibi pérpetim

Gratum prómere cánticum. Amen.

Grant us, great Trinity, for Joseph's holy sake,

In highest bliss and love, above the stars to reign,

That we in joy with him may praise our loving God,

And sing our glad eternal strain. Amen.

8. Antiphon of the Magnificat: *Exsurgens Ioseph*

*Exsúrgens Ioseph a somno, * fecit sicut præcépit ei Angelus Dómini, et accépit cónjugem suam.*

Joseph, being raised from sleep, * did as the Angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.

Lauds of March 19

9. Antiphons *Ibant, Cum redirent, Non invenientes Iesum, Dixit Mater eius, Descendit Iesus*

*Ibant paréntes Iesu * per omnes annos in Ierúsalem, in die solémni Paschæ.*

The parents of Jesus * went to Jerusalem every year, at the feast of the Passover. (Lk 2:42)

*Cum redirent, * remánsit puer Iesus in Ierúsalem, et non cognovérunt paréntes ejus.*

When they returned * the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and His parents knew not of it. (Lk 2:43)

*Non inveniéntes * Iesum, regréssi sunt in Ierúsalem requiréntes eum; et post trídium invenérunt illum in templo sedéntem in médio doctórum, audiéntem et interrogántem eos.*

When they found not Jesus, * they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him; and after three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. (Lk 2:45-46)

*Dixit Mater ejus * ad illum: Fili, quid fecisti nobis sic? Ecce pater tuus, et ego doléntes quærebámus te.*

His mother said unto Him: * Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. (Lk 2:48)

*Descéndit Iesus * cum eis, et venit Názareth, et erat súbditus illis.*

Jesus went down with them, * and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. (Lk 2:51)

10. Hymn *Iste quem laeti*

*Iste, quem læti cólimus, fidéles,
Cuius excélsos cánimus triúmphos,
Hac die Ioseph méruit perénnis
Gáudia vitæ.*

Worshipped throughout the Church to earth's far ends
With prayer and solemn rite,
Joseph this day triumphantly ascends
Into the realms of light.

*O nimis felix, nimis o beátus,
Cuius extrémam vígiles ad horam
Christus et Virgo simul astitérunt*

Ore seréno.

O blest beyond the lot of mortal men!
O'er whose last dying sigh
Christ and the Virgin-Mother watched serene,
Soothing his agony.

*Hinc stygis victor, láqueo solútus
Carnis, ad sedes plácido sopóre
Migrat ætérnas, rutilisque cingit
Témpora sertis.*

Loosed from his fleshly chain, gently he fleets,
As in calm sleep, away;
And diademed with light, enters the seats
Of everlasting day.

*Ergo regnántem flagitémus omnes,
Adsit ut nobis, veniámque nostris
Obtinens culpís, tríbuat supérnæ
Múnera pacis.*

There throned in power, let us his loving aid
With fervent prayers implore;
So may he gain us pardon in our need,
And peace forevermore.

*Sint tibi plausus, tibi sint honóres,
Trine, qui regnas, Deus, et corónas
Aureas servo tríbuis fidéli
Omne per ævum. Amen.*

Glory and praise to thee, blest Trinity!
One only God and Lord,
Who to thy faithful ones unfailingly
Their aureoles dost award. Amen.

11. Antiphon at the Benedictus: *Ipse Iesus*

*Ipse Iesus * erat incipiens quasi annorum triginta, ut putabatur, filius Ioseph.*
Jesus Himself * began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed,
the son of Joseph. (Lk 3:23)

12. Antiphon of the Magnificat (2nd Vespers): *Ecce fidelis servus*

*Ecce fidelis servus * et prudens, quem constituit Dominus super familiam suam.*

Behold a faithful * and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household. (Mt 24:45 and 47)

Mass of March 19

13. Introit *Iustus ut palma*

Iustus ut palma florébit: sicut cedrus Libani multiplicábitur: plantátus in domo Dómini: in átriis domus Dei nostri. Ps 91:2: Bonum est confiteri Dómino: et psállere nómini tuo, Altíssime. ✠. Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spirítui Sancto. Sicut erat in princípío, et nunc, et semper, et in sécula sæculórum.

The just man shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow: planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Ps 91:2: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to Your name, Most High.

☩. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

14. Gradual *Domine prævenisti*

*Dómine, * prævenisti eum in benedictionibus dulcédinis: posuisti in cápite eius corónam de lápide pretiósó.*

☩. *Vitam pétiit a te, et tribuísti ei longitúdinem diérum in sáeculum sáeculi.*

O Lord, * You welcomed him with goodly blessings, You placed on his head a crown of pure gold.

☩. He asked life of You: You gave him length of days forever and ever. (Ps. 20:4-5)

15. Tract *Beatus vir*

*Beátus vir, * qui timet Dóminum: in mandátis eius cupit nimis.*

☩. *Potens in terra erit semen eius: generátio rectórum benedicétur.*

☩. *Glória et divitíæ in domo eius: et iustítia eius manet in sáeculum sáeculi.*

Happy the man * who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commands.

☩. His posterity shall be mighty upon the earth; the upright generation shall be blessed.

☩. Wealth and riches shall be in his house; his generosity shall endure forever. (Ps. 111:1-3)

16. Offertory *Veritas mea*

*Véritas mea * et misericórdia mea cum ipso: et in nómine meo exaltábitur cornu eius.*

My faithfulness * and My kindness shall be with him, and through My name shall his horn be exalted. (Ps. 88:25)

17. Communion *Ioseph fili David*

*Ioseph, * fili David, noli timere accipere Mariam coniugem tuam: quod enim in ea natum est, de Spiritu Sancto est.*

Joseph, * do not be afraid, son of David, to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. (Mt 1:20)

18. Communion *Fili quid fecisti*

*Fili, * quid fecisti nobis sic? ego et pater tuus dolentes querebamus te. Et quid est quod me querebatis? nesciebatis quia in his quae Patris mei sunt oportet me esse?*

Son, * why hast Thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have been seeking Thee sorrowing. How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business? (Lk 2:48-49)

19. Organ: *J.S. Bach, Adagio of sonata 3 for violin and harpsichord*

May 1

20. Antiphons of Lauds: *Missus est, Ascendit autem Ioseph, Et venerunt*

*Missus est * Angelus Gábríel a Deo in civitatem Galilææ, cui nomen Náza-reth, ad Virgínam desponsátam viro, cui nomen erat Ioseph, allelúia.*

The Angel Gabriel * was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph. Alleluia. (Lk 1:26-27)

*Ascéndit autem * Ioseph a Galilæa de civitate Náza-reth in Judæam, in civitatem David, quæ vocátur Bêthlehem, allelúia.*

And Joseph also went up * from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, unto Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. Alleluia. (Lk 2:4)

*Et venérunt festinántes, * et invenérunt Mariám, et Ioseph, et Infántem pósitum in præsépio, allelúia.*

And they came with haste, * and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Alleluia. (Lk 2:16)

21. Hymn *Cælitum Ioseph*

*Cælitum Ioseph, decus atque nostræ
Certa spes vitæ, columénque mundi,
Quas tibi læti cánimus, benignus
Súscipe laudes.*

Joseph, the praise and glory of the heavens,
Sure pledge of life, and safety of the wide world,
As in our joy we sing to thee, in kindness
List to our praises.

*Te Sator rerum státuit pudicæ
Virginis sponsum, volúitque Verbi
Te patrem dici, dedit et mínistrum
Esse salútis.*

Thou by the world's Creator wert appointed
Spouse of the Virgin: thee he willed to honour
Naming thee father of the Word, and guardian
Of our salvation.

*Tu Redemptórem stábulo iacéntem,
Quem chorus Vatum cécinít futúrum,
Aspicis gaudens, humilisque natum
Numen adóras.*

Thou thy Redeemer, lying in a stable,
Whom long ago foretold the choir of prophets,
Sawest rejoicing, and thy God adoredst
Humble in childhood.

*Rex Deus regum, Dominátor orbis,
Cuius ad nutum tremit inferórum
Turba, cui pronus famulátur æther,
Se tibi subdit.*

God, King of kings, and Governor of the ages,
He at whose word the powers of hell do tremble,
He whom the adoring heavens ever worship
Called the protector.

*Laus sit excélsæ Tríadi perénnis,
Quæ tibi præbens súperos honóres,
Det tuis nobis méritis beátæ
Gáudia vitæ. Amen.*

Grant us, great Trinity, for Joseph's holy sake,
In highest bliss and love, above the stars to reign,
That we in joy with him may praise our loving God,
And sing our glad eternal strain. Amen.

22. Antiphon of the Benedictus: *Ioseph fili David*

*Ioseph, fili David, * noli timére accíperre Mariám cóniugem tuam; quod enim in ea natum est, de Spírítu Sancto est, alleluia.*

Joseph, thou Son of David, * fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for That Which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, alleluia. (Mt 1:20)

23. Antiphon *Fili*

*Fili, quid fecisti * nobis sic? Ecce pater tuus et ego doléntes quærebámus te, allelúia.*

Son * why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. Alleluia. (Lk 2:48)

Mass of May 1

24. Introit *Adiutor*

*Adiútor, * et protéctor noster est Dóminus: in eo lætábitur cor nostrum, et in nómine sancto eius sperávimus. (T.P. Allelúia.) Qui regis Israëł, inténde: qui dedúcis, velut ovem, Ioseph. Ψ. Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper, et in sácula sæculórum. Amen.*

The Lord * is our helper and protector: in Him our heart shall rejoice, and in His holy name we have trusted. (P.T. Alleluia.) Ps. 79. 2. Give ear, O Thou that rulest Israel: Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep. Ψ. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. — The Lord ...

25. Alleluia *De quacumque*

Allelúia, allelúia. Ψ. De quacúmque tribulatióne clamáverint ad me, exáudiam eos, et ero protéctor eórum semper

Alleluia, alleluia. In whatever tribulation they shall cry to Me, I will hear them, and be their protection always.

26. Alleluia *Fac nos*

Allelúia. Ψ. Fac nos innocuam, Ioseph, decurrere vitam: sitque tuo semper tuta patrocínio. Allelúia.

Alleluia. Ψ. Obtain for us, Joseph, grace to lead an innocent life; and may it ever be shielded by thy patronage. Alleluia.

27. Offertory *Lauda*

*Lauda, * Jerúsalem, Dóminum: quóniam confortávit seras portárum tuárum: benedíxit filiis tuis in te. (T.P. Allelúia.)*

Praise * the Lord, O Jerusalem, because He hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates: He hath blessed thy children within thee. (P.T. Alleluia.) (Ps. 147:12-13)

28. Communion *Iacob autem*

*Iacob autem * génuít Ioseph virum Mariæ, de qua natus est Iesus, qui vocátur Christus. (T.P. Allelúia.)*

But Jacob * begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (P.T. Alleluia.) (Mt 1:16)

Mass from the 1974 Gradual

29. Introit *Ecce oculi*

*Ecce oculi * Dómini super timéntes eum, sperántes in misericórdia eius, allelúia: ut erípiat a morte ánimas eórum: quóniam adiútor et protéctor noster est, allelúia, allelúia.*

Behold the eyes * of the Lord watching over those who fear Him and trust in His mercy, alleluia, who will save their souls from death: He is our strength and our shield, alleluia, alleluia. (Ps 32: 18-20)

30. Offertory *In te speravi*

*In te sperávi * Dómine: dixi: Tu es Deus meus, in mánibus tuis témpora mea.*

Lord, my trust in Thee * is not shaken; still I cry, thou art my God, my fate is in Thy hands. (Ps. 30: 15-16)

31. Communion *Dominus firmamentum meum*

*Dóminus * firmaméntum meum, et refúgium meum, et liberátor meus: Deus meus, adiutor meus.*

The Lord * is my rock-fastness, my stronghold, my rescuer: my God is my shield. (Ps. 17:3)

32. Organ: J.S. Bach, (1685-1750), *Sonatine de la cantate BWV 106 (Actus Tragicus) Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit (God's time is the very best time)* - 1707.

33. Antiphon *O felicem virum*

*O Felícem virum, * beátum Ióseph, cui datum est Deum, quem multi reges voluérunt vidére et non vidérunt, audire et non audierunt, non solum vidére et audire, sed portáre, deosculári, vestire et custodire*

O blessed Joseph, * happy man, to whom it was given not only to see and to hear that God Whom many kings longed to see, and saw not, to hear, and heard not; but also to carry Him in your arms, to embrace Him, to clothe Him, and guard and defend Him.

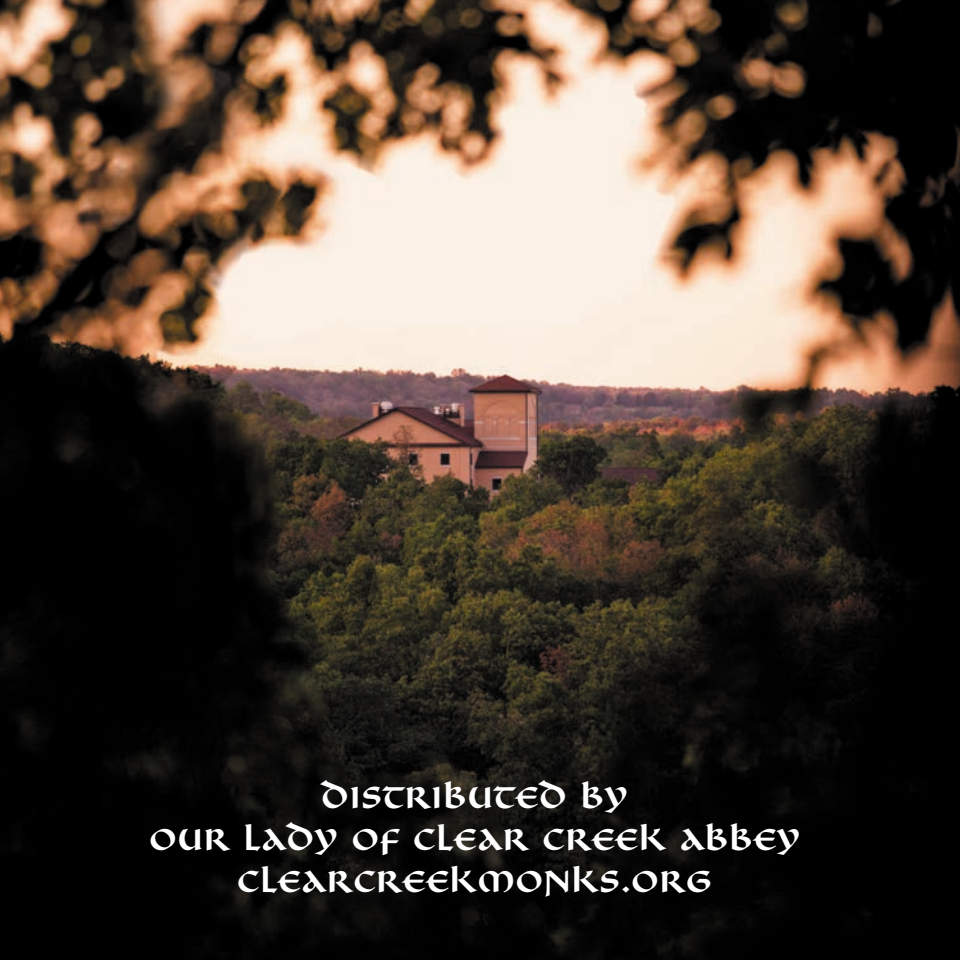
34. Responsory *Iam lætus*

*Iam lætus móriar * quia vidi fáciem tuam, et supérstitem te relínquo. Non sum fraudátus aspéctu tuo: * Insuper osténdit mihi Dóminus semen tuum. Ψ.*

Qui pascit me ab adolescentiæ mea, benedicat pueris istis: et invocetur super eos nomen meum. V. Glória Patri.

Now I will die a joyful death, * because I have seen thy face, and I will leave thee alive after me. I have not been prevented from seeing thee again; * the Lord moreover has shown me thy posterity. V. Let Him who has fed me since my infancy bless those children, and let my name be invoked upon them. V. Glory be to the Father.

35. Organ: Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706), *Toccata in E minor*.



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