

# Music for Fifth Sunday of Lent - 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 9.30am

## St. Peter's Toorak

### 1. Prelude

During the season of Lent, we are replacing the *Prelude* with an *Entrance Antiphon*. The *Entrance Antiphon* will be sung both in English and Latin by the Cantor. This week's *Entrance Antiphon* is based on Psalm 42:1-2

Give me justice, O God,  
And plead my cause  
Against a nation that is faithless.  
From the deceitful and cunning, rescue me,  
For you, O God, are my strength.

Judica me Deus,  
Et discerne causam meam  
De gente non sancta:  
Ab homine iniquo et doloso eripe me:  
Quia tu es Deus meus, et fortitudo mea.

### Responsorial Psalm

for St. Peter's Toorak

#### *Psalm 50*

Frank Schoen



### Gospel Acclamation

for St. Peter's Toorak

#### *John 12:26*

Douglas Mews



Sentence (Cantor): If you serve me, follow me, says the Lord  
And where I am, my servant will also be.

### 2. Collection Voluntary

*Christe, du Lamm Gottes* (BWV 619) by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). The choral prelude is based on a Lutheran hymn where Luther translated into German the words to the *Agnus Dei* from the liturgy of the mass. The tune was taken from an older liturgy. The hymn was first published in 1528 and has been the basis for several musical settings. The German Catholic hymnal *Gotteslob* of 2013 has the hymn using a slightly different melody. This chorale is beautifully-crafted with a constantly falling phrase echoed in the three voices.

### 3. Offertory Motet

Recitative "*Erbarne dich! Jedoch nun tröste ich mich*" ("*Have mercy! However, I console myself*") and Chorale "*Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen, stell ich mich doch wieder ein*" ("*Though I have turned aside from Thee, Yet shall I return*") from a Lenten cantata ***Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht (I, wretched man, a servant to sin)*** (BWV 55/4 and 5) by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). This cantata was written in Leipzig in 1726 and is the only Bach cantata written entirely for the tenor voice. Today we will feature three excerpts from the cantata and here for the Offertory we are turning to the two closing movements. The poet for this cantata was Christoph Birkmann and in the recitative he asks God for mercy, beginning both with *Erbarne dich* ("*Have mercy*"). The following closing chorale is verse 6 of Johann Rist "*Werde munter, mein Gemüte*" (1642). Bach used the same verse later in his St Matthew Passion, again following *Erbarne dich*, for the aria where Peter is seen regretting his denial of Jesus.

Erbarne dich!  
Jedoch nun  
Tröste ich mich,  
Ich will nicht für Gerichte stehen  
Und lieber vor dem Gnadenthron  
Zu meinem frommen Vater gehen.  
Ich halt ihm seinen Sohn,  
Sein Leiden, sein Erlösen für,  
Wie er für meine Schuld  
Bezahlet und genug getan,  
Und bitt ihn um Geduld,  
Hinfüro will ich's nicht mehr tun.  
So nimmt mich Gott zu Gnaden wieder an.

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,  
Stell ich mich doch wieder ein;  
Hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen  
Durch sein Angst und Todespein.  
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld,  
Aber deine Gnad und Huld  
Ist viel größer als die Sünde,  
Die ich stets bei mir befinde.

Have mercy!  
Nevertheless  
I take comfort,  
I do not want to stand before the tribunal for  
judgement  
And would rather go before the throne of mercy  
To my holy Father.  
I present to him his Son.  
His suffering, his redemption,  
How for my guilt he  
Has paid and done enough,  
And I pray to him to be patient with me,  
From now on I want to commit sins no more.  
In this way God takes me into his grace once more

Though I have abandoned you,  
I give myself back to you again;  
Your son has settled accounts for us  
Through his anguish and the pain of his death  
I do not deny my guilt  
But your grace and mercy  
Is far greater than the sins  
Which I continually find in myself.

### 4. Communion Motet

Aria: "*Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht*" ("*I, wretched man, a servant to sin*") from the same Lenten cantata ***Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht (I, wretched man, a servant to sin)*** (BWV 55/1) by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). In this aria the singer tells us of his sinful condition and his fear of presenting himself to God.

Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht,  
Ich geh vor Gottes Angesichte  
Mit Furcht und Zittern zum Gerichte.  
Er ist gerecht, ich ungerecht.  
Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht!

Poor wretched man, a slave of sin,  
Before God's judgment seat I place me  
With fear and trembling, fears abase me.  
Unjust, can I his justice win?  
Poor wretched man, a slave of sin!

## 5. Postlude

*Ach, was soll ich Sunder machen* (BWV 770) a *Partite diverse sopra il Corale* by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) based on the hymn by Weltlich Altdorf (1653).

“*Oh what should I, a sinner, do? Oh where should I begin?*” are the opening words of the chorale on which Bach based this series of variations. Bach shows no sign of such doubts, in a musical sense at any rate. He begins with a relatively simple harmonisation of the chorale melody followed by a series of 9 variations - today we will feature just 2 to highlight his ingenuity.

This work probably originates from Bach's time in Arnstadt, where he worked between 1703 and 1707. It bears a strong resemblance to the chorale partitas by Georg Böhm (1661-1733), who took up the post of organist in 1697 at St John's Church in Lüneburg, the town where Bach studied between 1700 and 1703. It seems likely that Bach took music lessons with him and this work appears to be a direct response or tribute to him.

Written in just two staves, Bach leaves it to the organist to include the pedal organ at will. He also provides minimal dynamics in the score. This creates a licence for us to fully display the intricacies of the wonderful instrument at St. Peter's.