

Tridentine Community News

November 1, 2009

Members of the Archdiocesan Chorus from Detroit's Blessed Sacrament Cathedral To Sing at St. Albertus Tridentine Mass on November 15

In yet another encouraging sign of the liturgical times, some relatively high-profile musicians from our area will participate in their first Extraordinary Form Mass: Members of the Archdiocesan Chorus from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Detroit will sing at the next quarterly Tridentine Mass at St. Albertus Church at noon on Sunday, November 15.

The Archdiocesan Chorus is a group of professional and high-caliber amateur singers. Members must audition before being considered for admission. Distinct from the Cathedral Chorale that sings for regular Sunday Masses, the Archdiocesan Chorus sings for major diocesan events, such as Pontifical Masses (Masses celebrated by the Archbishop of Detroit) and ordinations.

The typical Cathedral Mass repertoire skews toward the contemporary genre. Nevertheless, the Archdiocesan Chorus is no stranger to sacred polyphony. Since 1974, the Cathedral Concert Series has hosted the Chorus performing several grand-scale works as performance pieces, including Verdi's Requiem, Bach's B Minor Mass and Vierne's Messe Solennelle. The Chorus released a superb CD recording of the latter in the mid-1980s. In 2003, the Chorus traveled to Rome to sing at an Ordinary Form Latin Mass at St. Peter's Basilica. To our knowledge, however, the Chorus has not sung a polyphonic Mass within the setting of the sacred liturgy in Detroit in many years.

While the choir that will be singing at St. Albertus is not officially the Archdiocesan Chorus, it is impressive that several members of that Chorus are interested in gaining experience in the Extraordinary Form. The choir will sing the Mass in Honor of the Apostles Peter & Paul by René Louis Becker, the first Director of Music at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, serving from 1930-1943. He was also co-founder of the Palestrina Institute, a venture of Sacred Heart Seminary that taught Gregorian Chant. This will be the first performance of the Ss. Peter & Paul Mass since Vatican II, and Becker's family will be in attendance.

It is worth pointing out that an increasing number of cathedral choirs in North America are moving towards a repertoire more focused on the classics. Some that come to mind include Portland, Maine; Toronto; New York; Washington, DC; and Providence, Rhode Island. In so doing, they follow the model of many of the great European cathedral choirs, such as London and Vienna. This is only fitting, considering that our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, in his 2007 letter *Sacramentum Caritatis*, recommended that Latin be used for large-scale Masses, exactly the kind of event that cathedral choirs are called upon to serve.

The organist for many of the Pontifical events at the cathedral is Dr. Steven Ball, known to many of our readers as the principal substitute organist for the Extraordinary Form Masses at Assumption-Windsor and St. Josaphat. Steven is the catalyst for bringing this special music program together, and we thank him for taking this initiative.

Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail tridnews@stjosaphatchurch.org. Previous columns are available at www.stjosaphatchurch.org

St. Albertus Bell Progress Report

Steven Ball is also the person who has been refurbishing the tower bell mechanism at St. Albertus. Unlike most tower bell systems, which are controlled by a timer box, automatic ringing of the bells at St. Albertus is controlled by the tower clock, in this case an historic mechanism by longtime clock maker Seth Thomas.

Steven and some volunteers are in the process of cleaning the long-dormant bells from dirt and bird droppings that have accumulated over the years. The first objective is to make the bells ringable the old-fashioned way, by pulling on ropes. Later, Steven hopes to reactivate the electric motor system and perhaps the tower clock as well. At press time, we do not know if the bells will be ready by November 15, but that is certainly the intention.

The Blessing Of All Things

The Extraordinary Form *Rituále Románium*, the Church's book of rites and blessings, contains numerous blessing prayers for various kinds of items. Some are specific, such as the Blessing of the Brown Scapular of Mount Carmel, or the Blessing of a Rosary. In the absence of a specifically designated prayer, the Roman Ritual provides "The Blessing Of All Things":

✠ Adjutórum nostri in nómini Dómini.

℟. Qui fecit cælum et terram.

✠ Dóminus vobiscum.

℟. Et cum spíritu tuo.

Orémus.

Deus, cujus verbo sanctificántur ómnia, benedictiónem tuam effúnde super creatúram istam (creatúras istas): et præsta, ut, quisquis ea (eis) secúndum legem et voluntátem tuam cum gratiárum actióne usus fúerit, per invocatiónem sanctíssimi nóminis tui, córporis sanitátem et ánimæ tutelám, te auctóre, percípiat. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum.

℟. Amen.

✠. *Our help is in the name of the Lord.*

℟. *Who made heaven and earth.*

✠. *The Lord be with you.*

℟. *And with your spirit.*

Let us pray.

O God, whose word suffices to make all things holy, pour out Thy blessing † on this object (these objects); and grant that anyone who uses it (them) with grateful heart and in keeping with Thy law and will, may receive from Thee, its (their) Maker, health in body and protection of soul by calling on Thy holy name; through Christ our Lord.

℟. Amen.

[It (they) is (are) sprinkled with holy water.]

Do you have object(s) that you would like blessed? Let the priest or one of the altar servers know, or bring the items to the sacristy after Mass.