Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Sanctorum meritis

(Hymn)

S.A.T.B.

ed. S. Biazeck

Quire EDITIONS
EDITORIAL NOTES


Originally notated a minor third lower in the following clefs: C1, C3, C4, F3. All secondary text is from the primary musical source. (See notes below.)

Cue-sized accidentals within the staves are editorial musica ficta, and remain in force for the duration of one measure.

Cautionary accidentals are editorial.

Text: Sanctorum merit is the hymn at First and Second Vespers in the Common of many Martyrs. Its authorship is unknown, although it is often attributed to Rabanus Maurus (d. 856), Archbishop of Mainz. The present edition uses the version found in the Roman Breviary. It also appears with the Mode 4 melody in the Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159) upon which Palestrina's setting is based.

Unfortunately the primary musical source (Rome, 1589) contains several errors (see below) that corrupt the stanzas written in Classical Latin metre: a combination of three Asclepiads and a Glyconic also used in 9 of the Odes of Horace and often called Second (some say Third) Asclepiad, although the essentials are unchanged. A stanza is formed with 3 Asclepiad lines followed by a Glyconic.\(^1\)

Changes were probably made by clerics (ignorant of Classical poetic metre) on theological grounds to strengthen or modify the meaning. The fact that prose, rich in Classical allusions and written in ancient metres should have been corrupted in this way seems entirely unnecessary to us, but the approach to historical preservation and authenticity, if it existed at all in the Renaissance, was probably somewhat less rigorous than it is today. Whether or not Palestrina himself was aware of the faults is perhaps less relevant; the choice of which version to set may not have been his. Whatever the case, it seems important to accurately preserve the recognized Classical metre.

The following alterations accord with the text from the Roman Breviary and the Liber Usualis.

Verse 1, line 3: nam gliscit animus is linguistically correct, but the first three syllables of each line of Second Asclepiads should be long and it is hard to regard –it of gliscit as long in this context. Therefore, gliscens fert animus is preferable.

Verse 3, line 1: The nominative ferocia makes no sense here where accusative is certainly required. The alternative minus truces fits the meaning and metre perfectly.

Verse 3, line 3: Cessit his should be changed to His cessit. There is no change to the meaning and the metre is saved.

Verse 5, lines 3 & 4: The order of fulgidis and laureis has been reversed, and although the meaning remains unchanged, there is no reason why the original order should not be reinstated.

Verse 6, line 4: nos quoque gloriain / Per cuncta tibi saecula. Amen, does not fit the metre and is difficult to combine with the preceding lines – the final syllable of cuncta being the problem. The ending, nos quoque etc. was probably introduced by a priest who did not understand the metre and who wanted a generic ending complete with an Amen. Substitution of ut tibi gloriam / Anorum in seriem canant restores the metrical scheme. In order to fit the metre (and the notes) the –um of annorum should be elided, which is common practice in Classical Latin poetry.

The link to Horace is further strengthened with the use of bidentium, translated here as ‘sacrificial lambs’. It means literally ‘two-toothed (creatures)’. This refers to sheep with two teeth i.e. those in their second year of life, of an age deemed suitable for sacrifice (cf. Horace Odes 3.23.14).\(^3\)

http://gregobase.selapa.net/chant.php?id=2026 - source 1

\(^1\) Asclepiad: LLLSSL (word-break) LSSLSL or S

Glyconic: LLLSSLSL (L = long, S = short)

In Horace, the stanza is indicative of a sober and contemplative mind, whilst its use in breviary hymns is often suggestive of victorious exultation.

http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/HoraceOdesBkIII.htm
Doubtless the new pointing will occasionally seem less effective than Palestrina’s original intentions (c.f. bb. 47 – 50), but it is worth noting that verbal accentuation in the chant is also awkward at times, and requires a subtle and persuasive molding of melody to text. For those concerned to render Palestrina’s setting unaltered, the text found in the 1589 edition is printed under the correct version.

**Musica ficta:** Leading-note cadences are approached from a linear perspective, and as such, are easily discernible from a single part; signed by return from above immediately before the final syllable of a musical and/or textual phrase.

Sometimes where there is a strong feeling for a cadence, one finds a tail in the melody after the note on which the final syllable falls.

Other intermediate cadences are more contentious. Some may be tempted to add leading notes in b. 17 and on the second syllable of *gliscens* and thereafter, but it is unlikely that Palestrina expected this, not least because he is quoting intervals from the second part of the Hymn melody.

Simon Biazeck, June 2015.

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**SANCTORUM MERITIS:** *Hymn at First and Second Vespers in the Common of many Martyrs.*

Sanctorum meritis inclyta gaudia
Pangamus, socii, gestaque fortia:
Gliscens fert animus promere cantibus
Victorum genus optimum.

Hi sunt quos fatue mundus abhorruit:
Hunc fructu vacuum, floribus aridum,
Contempsero tui nominis asseclae,
Jesu Rex bone caelitum.

Hi pro te furies atque minas truces
Calcarunt hominum, saevaque verbera:
His cessit lacerans fortiter ungula,
Nec carpsit penetralia.

Caeduntur gladiis more bidentium:
Non murmur resonat, non querimonia:
Sed corde impavidos mens bene conscia
Conservat patientiam.

Quae vox, quae poterit lingua retexere
Quae tu Martyribus munera praeparas?
Rubri nam fluido sanguine fulgidis
Ditantur bene laureis.

Te, summa Deitas unaque, poscimus,
Ut culpas abigas, noxia subtrahas:
Des pacem famulis ut tibi gloriem
Annorum in seriem canant.

Amen.

(Anon.)

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· nam *gliscit* in 1589 edition.
· *ferocia* in 1589 edition.
· *cessit* his in 1589 edition.
· The original order of *fulgidis* and *laureis* has been restored.
· *nos quoque gloriam per cuncta tibi sacula* in 1589 edition.
· Lit. enriched
Sanctorum meritis

(HYMNI TOTIUS ANNII, ... quator vocibus concinendi, ...
Apud Iacobum Tornerium, & Bernardium Donangelum. Rome, 1589)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525 - 1594)
edited by Simon Biazeck
Gliscens fert animus:

orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the
Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159).

*1589 ed. has Nam gliscit animus. (See editorial notes.)*
Bassus

Víctorum genus optimum, optimum
Víctorum genus optimum, optimum

Altus

33

nus optimum, optimum
nus optimum, optimum

pro rum optimum.
pro rum optimum.

37 v. 2


40

Con-temp-sé-re tu-i nó-mí-nis ás-se-ciae, le-su Rex bo-ne caéli-tum.

V. 3

Altus

Tenor

Bassus

Hi pro te fúri-as, fúri-as, fúri-as
Hi pro te fúri-as, pro te fúri-as at-que mi-

Hi pro te fúri-as, fúri-as, at-

** Minus truces: orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159). 1589 ed. has fœcacia. (See editorial notes.)
atque minas truces Calcárunt hónas truces, atque minas truces

que minas truces Calcárunt hónum

mi num, hónum saevaque vér

Calcárunt hónum saevaque vér

mi num, calcárunt hónum saevaque vér

be ra: His cessit láscearns

be ra: His cessit láscearns, láse

be ra: His cessit láscearns

fórtiter ungula, ungula,

fórtiter ungula, ungula, Nec
Cae-dún-tur glá-di-is more bi-dén-tium: Non mur-mur ré-so-nat, non que-rí-mó-ni-a:

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit, quae vox,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit, quae vox,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit, quae vox,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit, quae vox,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae vox, quae pó - te - rit lin - gua re - té - xe - re,

Quae tu lin - gua re - té - xe - re, Quae tu Mar - ty - re - té - xe - re, Quae tu Mar - ty - ri -
Quae tu Martyribus

Martyribus, quae tu Martyribus

Martyribus, quae tu Martyribus munera praemia

Munera praemaria, munera praemia

Qui rum fluido, fluido

Prae paras? Rubri nam fluido, fluido

Prae paras? Rubri nam fluido, rubri

Prae paras? Rubri nam fluido, fluido
113

sán - gui - ne fú - li - dis, sán - gui - ne fú - li -

- ri nam flú - i - do sán - gui - ne fú - li - dis, sán -

- i - do sán - gui - ne fú - li - dis

- ru - bri nam flú - i - do_____

118

dis

Di - tán - tur be -

- ne fú - li - dis Di - tán - tur be -

Di - tán - tur be -

Di - tán - tur,_____

123

ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be -

- ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be - ne láu - re - is, be -

- ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be -

- ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be -

** fulgidis preceding laurus is the orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159). The order is reversed in the 1589 ed. (See editorial notes.)
Te, summa Deitas, unaque, posci mus, Ut culpas abulas,
noxia sustras: Des pacem famulis ut tibi gloriam
Ann o r'in seriem canant. Amen.

**ut tibi gloriam / Annorum in seriem canant: orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159). 1589 ed. has nos quoque gloriam / Per cuncta tibi saecula. (See editorial notes.)**