

Anthem Notes for March 26, 2017

Ubi Caritas

Gregorian Chant

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

*WHERE charity and love are, God is there.
Christ's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.*

*WHERE charity and love are, God is there.
As we are gathered into one body,
Beware, lest we be divided in mind.
Let evil impulses stop, let controversy cease,
And may Christ our God be in our midst.*

*WHERE charity and love are, God is there.
And may we with the saints also,
See Thy face in glory, O Christ our God:
The joy that is immense and good,
Unto the ages through infinite ages. Amen.*



This morning's anthem, based on the medieval Gregorian chant *Ubi caritas et amor*, is a beautiful, *a cappella* (unaccompanied) setting for SATB choir. The *Ubi caritas* text expresses love, charity, rejoicing, understanding and the prayer that Christ will dwell among us. The music and text are combined in a subdued, restrained whole that beautifully underscores and emphasizes the message of love.

The text is appropriate for Lent and was initially intended to accompany the washing of feet ceremony on Maundy

Thursday, commemorating Christ's action in washing his disciples' feet on the night he was betrayed. Some scholars believe the text dates from very early Christian gatherings. The choir is singing the chant unaccompanied in the original Latin.

This setting of *Ubi Caritas* is one of a set of four unaccompanied motets ("Quatre Motets sur des thèmes grégoriens") by Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986). Duruflé shows his particular genius for invoking the spiritual element of plainsong in using the chant

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melody in its original form in the alto part, with a simple syllabic accompaniment from the other voices. It flows freely and syllabically in a meditative fashion. Although there is a 'simple syllabic accompaniment' in the other voices, the harmony is complex and close, particularly for the tenors whose part is divided throughout most of the anthem.

Duruflé studied at the Paris Conservatoire, where he won first prizes in harmony, fugue, composition and organ. As a composer, he worked slowly and painstakingly, constantly revising his work. The four motets, of which this is one, are very well known and highly regarded.

Duruflé felt he had his own silent collaborators in these pieces: the anonymous monks and church musicians who, in the medieval era, composed the treasure chest of Gregorian chants that are a permanent part of our heritage of sacred music.

Duruflé is considered one of the most distinguished of French organists as well as a highly regarded composer. In 1929, he became titular organist of the church of St. Étienne-du-Mont in Paris, a position he held for the rest of his life. He was professor of harmony at the Conservatoire de Paris from 1943 to 1970. Our choir sang his *Requiem*, composed in 1947 in memory of his father, with organ and chamber orchestra in April, 2000.

Thanks to Dr. John Brobeck for conducting *Ubi Caritas* this morning.

Ubi caritas et amor Gregorian chant notation

U - bi cá-ri- tas et a-mor, De- us i-bi est. ̄. Con-
gregá-vit nos in u-num Christi amor. ̄. Exsultémus, et in