

Victimae Paschali Lauda Editor's Notes

In this orchestra/choral work, Hilarión Eslava has taken a simple Gregorian chant written in 1048 and transformed it into showcase piece with a Spanish flair, contemporary for his time. A piece like this would typically only be performed on Easter Sunday.

Victimae paschali laudes is a sequence prescribed for the Catholic of Easter Sunday. It is usually attributed to the 11th century Wipo of Burgundy, chaplain to the German Emperor Conrad II. Victimae Paschali Laudes is one of only four medieval sequences that were preserved in the Missale Romanum published in 1570 after the Council of Trent (1545-63). The three others were the "Veni Sancte Spiritus" for the feast of Pentecost, "Lauda Sion" for Corpus Christi, and the "Dies Irae" for the Requiem Mass. Eslava wrote music for these as well, although I have yet to find "Dies Irae".

Victimae Paschali Laudes is one of the few sequences that are still in liturgical use today. Its text was set to different music by many Renaissance and Baroque composers.

LATIN LYRICS:

Victimae paschali laudes
immolent Christiani.
Agnus redemit oves:
Christus innocens Patri
reconciliavit peccatores.

Mors et vita duello
confluxere mirando:
dux vitae mortuus,
regnat vivus.

Dic nobis Maria,
quid vidisti in via?
Sepulcrum Christi viventis,
et gloriam vidi resurgentis:
Angelicos testes,
sudarium, et vestes.

Surrexit Christus spes mea:
precedet vos in Galilea.
Scimus Christum surrexisse
a mortuis vere:
tu nobis, victor Rex,
miserere.

Alleluya.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

May you praise the Paschal Victim,
immolated for Christians.
The Lamb redeemed the sheep:
Christ, the innocent one,
has reconciled sinners to the Father.

A wonderful duel to behold,
as death and life struggle:
The Prince of life dead,
now reigns alive.

Tell us, Mary Magdalen,
what did you see in the way?
I saw the sepulchre of the living Christ,
and I saw the glory of the Resurrected one:
The Angelic witnesses,
the winding cloth, and His garments.

The risen Christ is my hope:
He will go before His own into Galilee.
We know Christ to have risen
truly from the dead:
And thou, victorious King,
have mercy on us.

Alleluia.