

## Editor's Notes for "Plegaria a la Divina Pastora"

My source for this beautiful piece is an anonymous handwritten transcription of a prayer titled "Prayer to the Divine Shepherdess" for voice and piano attributed to Hilarión Eslava, produced well after the composer's death. Judging by an annotation at the bottom of the score, the copy of the melody appears to have been made in Sanlúcar de Barrameda (a city in the province of Cádiz and the ancestral home of the Rufin family) in 1922, and the accompaniment has a similar postscript placing it in Melilla (a Spanish autonomous city located on the northwest coast of Africa, sharing a border with Morocco) in 1927. This composition is not mentioned in any of the past inventories of Eslava's works, which is not necessarily surprising, but may indicate that it may have never been performed outside of Eslava's lifetime.

The pages of the accompaniment were out of order and completely missing several measures – defects not obvious until one tries to either perform the piece or transcribe it. I did my best to provide appropriate accompaniment for the missing measures, copying similar passages in some cases, and weaving similar musical patterns in with others. Hopefully it is not too far off from the composer's original intent. Additions are highlighted in the edited score.

The lyrics in this piece contain beautiful imagery, appropriate for the Christmas/Advent season but general enough to be used for other religious or even secular occasions. The lyrics start with "Zagala", which is an older word meaning "young maiden" or "shepherdess", and in this context is basically synonymous with "pastora".

For more about Eslava and his music visit <https://hilarioneslava.org/home/home-en/>

### SPANISH LYRICS:

Zagala hermosa, pastora bella,  
Fulgida estrella, flor olorosa.  
Oye amorosa, tu mi querella  
Mi humilde huella, guía piadosa,  
Sé de mi vida, Madre querida, luz y consuelo.  
Rompa sus lazos, mi alma en tus brazos, y vuele al cielo.

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Lovely shepherdess, beautiful shepherdess,  
Shining star, fragrant flower.  
Hear lovingly, my lament to you,  
To my humble footsteps, give pious guidance,  
Be in my life, dear Mother, light and comfort.  
May it break its bonds, my soul in your arms, and fly to heaven.