

Editor's Notes for Salve en Mi

This beautiful cantata is based on the "Salve Regina", also known as the "Hail Holy Queen", a Marian hymn and one of four Marian antiphons sung at different seasons within the Christian liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church. The Salve Regina is traditionally sung at Compline (evening prayers) from the Saturday before Trinity Sunday (which usually occurs in June) until the Friday before the first Sunday of Advent. It is also the final prayer of the Rosary.

This prayer was written during the Middle Ages and originally appeared in Latin, the prevalent language of Western Christianity until modern times. Though traditionally ascribed to the eleventh-century German monk Hermann of Reichenau, it is regarded as anonymous by most musicologists. It has been put to music by many famous composers.

Eslava composed several different musical works based on this prayer. This particular composition was published posthumously in 1879, and is perhaps not as well-known as other versions. It is written in four distinct movements, including a beautiful tenor/bass duet, and with the last movement echoing the first.

LATIN LYRICS:

Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiæ,
vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevæ,
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos
misericordes oculos ad nos converte;
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,
Hail our life, our sweetness and our hope.
To thee do we cry,
Poor banished children of Eve;
To thee do we send up our sighs,
Mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn then, most gracious advocate,
Thine eyes of mercy toward us;
And after this our exile,
Show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving,
O sweet Virgin Mary.