

Editor's Notes for Christus Factus Est

"Christus factus est" ("Christ became obedient"), taken from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, is a gradual (hymn) in the Roman Catholic liturgy of the mass. It was traditionally sung on Maundy Thursday, until in 1969 it became employed also as a hymn on Palm Sunday. Up until then it was also sung daily at the conclusion of *Tenebrae* (Matins and Lauds) on the last days of Holy Week.

Many composers have set this gradual to music, and Eslava composed several different versions of it. He wrote at least two *Misereres* for Holy Week, and used the "Christus Factus Est" gradual as the first movement in these; however, this particular version is quite different. It appears to have been written later in Eslava's life, when he was incorporating a wider range of instruments such as harp and timpani in his music, a trend that was not generally considered acceptable for liturgical purposes by the Catholic authorities of the time, and that was eventually prohibited by Pope Pius X in his infamously retrograde 1903 *motu proprio* "Tra le sollecitudini" (Italian for "among the concerns").

The original score used in this transcription was published as a standalone composition by Eslava's nephew Bonifacio, with the subtitle "Antífona del Miserere", which would indicate that this work might have been intended as an alternate "Christus Factus Est" for his existing *Misereres*, or perhaps the beginning of a new, never completed and more elaborate *Miserere*.

Regardless, this work is magnificent and beautifully orchestrated, and stands quite well on its own.

LATIN LYRICS:

Christus factus est pro nobis obediens
usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.
Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum et dedit illi nomen,
quod est super omne nomen.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Christ became obedient for us unto death,
even to the death, death on the cross.
Therefore God exalted Him and gave Him a name,
which is above all names.