Editor’s Notes for *Letanía a tres voces en Sol Menor*

The Litany of Loreto is used to honor Mary, the Mother of God, invoking various titles for her, reminding us of the role she plays in the Christian (especially Catholic) faith. Most likely the Litany was composed in or around Paris between the years 1150 and 1200. It gets its name from the Italian shrine (Loreto) where it was adopted in 1558. Pope Sixtus V approved its use in public worship in 1587. The Litany is used especially during May services, the month traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is also used at Benediction and some congregations use it in the Divine Office. The Litany is approved for public use and carries a partial indulgence.

The Litany incorporates praises addressed to Mary found extensively in the writings of the early Church Fathers of the first six centuries. Over time, a number of titles for our Lady were removed or added to the Litany. Originally the Litany had fifteen additional titles, such as Our Lady of Humility, Mother of Mercy, Temple of the Spirit, Gate of Redemption, and Queen of Disciples. Recent history has seen the addition of five titles. The title of the Litany which refer to “Regina sine labe concepta (Queen conceived without sin)” is missing from this title, and therefore indicates it was originally composed sometime prior to 1854, when that particular title was approved.

We believe that Eslava may have written as many as eight different settings for the Litany of Loreto, and I have previously transcribed three of these; see [https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-y-regina](https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-y-regina), [https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-en-mi-litany-in-e](https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-en-mi-litany-in-e), [https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-a-3-voces-hilar-n-eslava](https://musescore.com/rebecca_rufin/letan-a-a-3-voces-hilar-n-eslava) and the corresponding pages on this site.

We found two sources for this particular litany; one from Eresbil published by Eslava’s nephew (Bonifacio Eslava), and another handwritten manuscript from the Archives of the Cathedral of Cádiz. The voicings themselves could be either solo voices or choir sections. Both sources contained errors, but in comparing the two versions I believe I was able to find and correct most, if not all of them.

Measures 281-284 were indicated as a cappella in both of my sources; however, in the published source someone had written in accompaniment keyboard music that matched the accompaniment found in similar passages elsewhere in the piece (e.g., Measures 41-44 and 121-124). While one could certainly use that accompaniment here as well, the following “ora pro nobis” response differed substantially from that found in the prior similar passages. Therefore, I believe Eslava intentionally omitted accompaniment in Measures 281-284 to create a better transition, and I have kept it that way.

For more about Eslava and his music, visit [https://hilarioneslava.org/eslava-bio/en/](https://hilarioneslava.org/eslava-bio/en/)

Lyrics and English translation follow:

| Kyrie, eleison  | Lord, have mercy.  |
| Christe, eleison. | Christ, have mercy.  |
| Christe, audi nos. | Christ, hear us.  |
| Christe, exaudi nos. | Christ, graciously hear us.  |
| Pater de caelis, Deus, miserere nobis. | God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.  |
| Fili, Redemptor mundi, Deus, miserere nobis. | God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.  |
Spiritus Sancte Deus, miserere nobis.
Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis.

Sancta Maria,
Ora pro nobis. (repeats after each of the following phrases)
Sancta Dei Genetrix,
Sancta Virgo virginum,
Mater Christi,
Mater Divinæ gratiæ,
Mater purissima,
Mater castissima,
Mater inviolata,
Mater intemerata,
Mater inmaculata,
Mater amabilis,
Mater admirabilis,
Mater Creatoris,
Mater Salvatoris,
Virgo prudentissima,
Virgo veneranda,
Virgo prædicanda,
Virgo potens,
Virgo clemens,
Virgo fidelis,
Speculum iustitiae,
Sedes sapientiae,
Causa nostræ laetitiae,
Vas spirituale,
Vas honorabile,
Vas insigne devotionis,
Rosa mystica,
Turris Davidica,
Turris eburnea,
Domus aurea,
Foederis arca,
Ianua caeli,
Stella matutina,
Salus infirmorum,
Refugium peccatorum,
Consolatrix afflictorum,
Auxilium Christianorum,
Regina Angelorum,
Regina Patriarcarum,
Regina Prophetarum,
Regina Apostolorum,
Regina Martyrum,
Regina Confessorum,
| Regina Virginum,                      | Queen of Virgins,                        |
| Regina Sanctorum omnium,             | Queen of all Saints,                      |
| Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,  | Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the |
| Parce nobis, Domine                  | world, spare us, O Lord.                  |
| Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,  | Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the |
| Exaudi nos, Domine                   | world, graciously hear us, O Lord.        |
| Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,  | Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the |
| miserere nobis                       | world, have mercy on us.                  |