

Editor's Notes for *Beatus Vir en Re Menor*

Beatus Vir ("Blessed is the man" or "Happy are those") is the Latin incipit of Psalm 112 (in the general modern numbering; Psalm 111 in the Vulgate). Hilarión Eslava wrote several other choral versions of this psalm, two of which I have previously transcribed (see <https://musescore.com/user/29381772/scores/6349212> and <https://musescore.com/user/29381772/scores/5703632>, or visit <https://hilarioneslava.org/music/>).

This version of *Beatus Vir* is actually a truncated rendition that Eslava included as an example in Volume 2 of his 1864 treatise on music composition, entitled "Escuela de Composición, Tratado Segundo: del contrapunto y fuga". As implied by the title, this study describes the history and techniques used in composition of counterpoint and fugue, providing numerous examples of the art by many different composers, including himself. The pages describing choral fugues include a series of examples in order of increasing complexity, and he concludes these with this beautiful and intricate eight-part SSAT/SATB fugue with figured organ accompaniment.

In his discussion of the example, Eslava indicates that it was originally composed in 1829, when he would have been only 21 or 22 years old, while serving as Master of the Chapel of the Cathedral of El Burgo de Osma, in the province of Soria (northern Castille). As this piece was only provided as an example in his treatise, he only included the first four verses of the psalm, omitting the remaining six, and skipping to the concluding *Gloria Patri* section. The example then abruptly ends at the words "sicut erat" of the *Gloria Patri*, and Eslava explains that he omitted that part because it was thematically and musically similar to the second verse ("potens in terra") of the Psalm.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to locate the full score for this piece¹. In the fall of 2021, we did visit the archives of the Cathedral of El Burgo de Osma, and while we were able to view a version of *Beatus Vir* that we had not encountered before, it was a different piece (a lovely SATB chorale with organ and ophicleide accompaniment, which we hope the Cabildo Catedral may someday allow us to transcribe).

Even though the source score was incomplete, I felt that there were still close to 4 minutes of beautiful music with just Psalm 112:1-4 to make it worth transcribing. And with the clues provided by Eslava, I believed there was just enough information to create a close approximation of his original intent and to bring this piece to a good conclusion point. So, I decided to give it my best, and this is the result. I have clearly indicated with colored font the concluding section of the piece that I surmised based on Eslava's guidance. And while it may not be the full version, I believe this arrangement is an effective representation of Eslava's original and it is very much worthy of performance.

¹ Interestingly, this particular setting of *Beatus Vir* is not among the scores inventoried by José Ignacio Palacios Sanz in his book *Tres siglos de música en la catedral de El Burgo de Osma (1780-1924)*, Centro de Estudios Sorianos (1991), indicating that either Eslava did not leave a copy of the score in El Burgo de Osma when he moved to Sevilla in 1832, or just as possibly, the original in El Burgo de Osma was lost or has never been catalogued.

Translation of the Latin text (Verses 1-4)

Latin Lyrics	English Translation
1. Beatus vir, qui timet Dominum, in mandatis ejus volet nimis. 2. Potens in terra erit semen ejus, generatio rectorum benedicetur. 3. Gloria et divitiæ in domo ejus, et justitia ejus manet in sæculum sæculi. 4. Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis, misericors et miserator et justus.	1. Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments. 2. Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. 3. Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever. 4. They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, and now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen