

Editor's Notes for *Tres Motetes a Cuatro Voces*

The three motets in this set were among the first pieces by Hilarión Eslava that I transcribed, before I actually embarked on this extensive multiyear endeavor. Out of pure curiosity, I found them separately as the result of a Google search for Eslava music. They had already been transcribed by others, and I reedited them from those sources for use by my church choir. I have since run across the original publication (ca. 1860) by Bonifacio Eslava (nephew of the composer) as “Obra 156”, where the three motets appear as a set. The archival source is the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid. Upon a thorough review of this latest documentation, which was likely reviewed by the composer himself, I found that there were several transcription errors in my earlier sources. Therefore, I have revisited these pieces, restoring them to the set of three as the composer must have intended.

The first motet is a gorgeous setting of the “*Ave Maria*”, with a majestic organ accompaniment. This particular piece was also discovered by my MuseScore colleague William Berry, who used his considerable talent to arrange it for performance by brass instruments and organ. For a recording of a live performance of his beautiful arrangement, visit <https://hilarioneslava.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Ave-Maria-for-brass-organ-w-radio-intro.mp3>. For an excellent performance of the original choral version by “Coro de la Sociedad Coral de Madrid”, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY_IbRAwBM.

The second motet, “*Benedicta Es Tu*”, is another Marian hymn. The lyrics are from the gradual for the Mass of the Immaculate Conception. Here the organ accompaniment is essentially a reduction of the vocal parts, and therefore this piece may be performed a cappella, as done by the Spanish “Coral El Madroño” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJoLJGRQfgk>.

The final motet in this set is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament, with the title “*O Sacrum Convivium*”. The organ starts this piece, soon joined by a beautiful bass solo, and then weaving in a rich choral tapestry. There is a lovely recording of this piece by the “Coral de Cámara de Pamplona” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_iPOFKSEWs.

LATIN LYRICS	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Ave Maria , gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Amen.	Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Amen.
Benedicta es tu , Virgo Maria, a Domino Deo excelsa, præ omnibus mulieribus. Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu lætitia Israel, tu honorificentia populi nostri. Alleluia, alleluia. Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te. Alleluia.	Blessed are you, Virgin Mary, by the Lord, the most high God, beyond all women. You are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the joy of Israel, you are the honour of our people. Alleluia, alleluia. You are totally beautiful, Mary, and the original sin is not in you. Alleluia.

LATIN LYRICS	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
<p>O sacrum convivium! in quo Christus sumitur: recolitur memoria passionis eius: mens impletur gratia: et futuræ gloriæ nobis pignus datur. Amen.</p>	<p>O sacred banquet! in which Christ is received, the memory of his Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory to us is given. Amen.</p>