

Editor's Notes for *Misa En La*

Composed in late 1866, this beautiful, intricate Mass was premiered on January 23, 1867, at the Royal Chapel in Madrid to honor His Royal Highness the Prince of Asturias (the future King Alfonso XII), who was 9 years old at the time. It became one of Eslava's most popular Masses, played often until the early 20th century, when the 1903 *Motu Proprio* issued by Pope Pius X effectively put an end to this genre of orchestrated music in the Catholic liturgy.

For a contemporary review of the premiere of this work in the *Revista y Gaceta Musical* (a Spanish musical gazette published in Madrid at the time), refer to Pages 3 and 4 from the following link (contents in Spanish):

<https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/viewer?id=856a4e5c-2e49-4d0f-9458-528731729123>

The original score for this transcription was obtained from the Biblioteca Nacional de España. An early publication by Bonifacio Eslava ("obra 150"), the signature and stamp on the cover of this score indicates it was likely a personal copy belonging to Hilarión Eslava himself. The publication clearly labeled the organ part as "*Reducción a órgano*" ("Organ Reduction"). When I originally transcribed this work in 2020, it was early in our Eslava project, and I had no idea when exactly the original piece was written nor its historical significance. Given the instrument titling, I naturally assumed the organ part was intended to be used for choir practice or performance when an orchestra was not available. When I compared this "reduction" to the actual orchestration, I found it often inconsistent with or lacking important musical details, to the extent that I decided to create my own keyboard reduction and leave out the original organ reduction entirely.

As we are nearing the completion of our Eslava project, I now know more about this particular Mass, which led me to revisit my original transcription and look at the organ part more closely. I have now concluded that the organ part was in reality intended to be *obbligato*, i.e. an essential element of the orchestration, never to be omitted. Its original labeling as a reduction was probably a printing error. This is the only interpretation that makes musical sense, and would be consistent with the ample musical resources available to Eslava at the Royal Chapel at the time the piece was written, when he served as Master-Director of this institution. I have therefore restored the organ part in this updated transcription, making it clear that the organ part is *obbligato*. I also provide my own piano reduction, which can be used for practice, accompaniment when only a piano is available, or it also makes a nice duet with the organ obbligato part when an organ is available, but no orchestra.

This work includes 6 elements of the Catholic liturgy as follows:

1. **Kyrie:** The first part of Mass involves a "Penitential Rite" or "Confession", which simply acknowledges that everyone sins and has sinned to some degree in their daily lives. This is

followed by the Kyrie, which expresses guilt and shame for such sins. The lyrics, taken from the ancient Greek are simple, and translate as:

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| <i>Kyrie eléison, Christe eléison</i> | Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy |
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2. **Gloria:** This is a sung exhortation expressing adoration of God, followed by a prayer to the Holy Trinity. The traditional Latin lyrics are written and translated below:

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| <p><i>Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te, gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam, Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe, Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.</i></p> <p><i>Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu: in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.</i></p> | <p>Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise You, we bless You, we adore You, we glorify You, we give You thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, God almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.</p> |
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3. **Credo:** Following the homily or sermon, the Mass requires a Profession of Faith, or Creed, which summarizes the basic teachings of the Church. The traditional Nicene Creed is the text utilized by Eslava in his *Credo* here.

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| <p><i>CREDO in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.</i></p> | <p>I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.</p> |
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| <p><i>Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est, et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris.</i></p> <p><i>Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis.</i></p> <p><i>Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.</i></p> <p><i>Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per prophetas.</i></p> <p><i>Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.</i></p> <p><i>Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi.</i></p> <p><i>Amen.</i></p> | <p>For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, He suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.</p> <p>He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and His kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the Prophets. And I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.</p> <p>I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.</p> <p>Amen.</p> |
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4. **Sanctus:** The *Sanctus* (“Holy”) is typically sung prior to the priest consecrating the Communion elements.

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| <p><i>Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus</i> <i>Dominus Deus Sabaoth.</i> <i>Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.</i> <i>Hosanna in excelsis.</i></p> | <p>Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest.</p> |
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5. **Benedictus** (“Blessed”) is typically sung after the Communion elements are consecrated. This blessing is often combined with the preceding *Sanctus*, and certain religious authorities believe there should not be a break between them. Here Eslava has kept the *Benedictus* separate. The lyrics and translation are:

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| <p><i>Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.</i> <i>Hosanna in excelsis.</i></p> | <p>Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</p> |
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6. **Agnus Dei:** Finally, the *Agnus Dei* (“Lamb of God”) asks for mercy and peace, and is sung prior to the congregants receiving Communion. Lyrics and translation follow:

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| <p><i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.</i> <i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.</i> <i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.</i></p> | <p>Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.</p> |
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