

Editor's Notes for *Misa en Mi bemol*

Roman Catholic Masses are very structured, with certain required litanies and responses that may be sung. Many composers have set these liturgical elements to music, including Hilarión Eslava, who wrote several different *Misas* (Masses) during his life. Each of Eslava's Masses is quite unique musically, and spectacular in its own way. I have now transcribed the majority of Eslava's *Misas*, as well as many other special musical Catholic offices (*Misereres*, *Te Deums*, etc. - around 30 separate works), which may be found at our <https://hilarioneslava.org> website or in the following MuseScore set: <https://musescore.com/user/29381772/sets/5736620>

Like all of Eslava's major works, the *Misa en Mi Bemol* (Mass in E-flat) is beautifully orchestrated, and it is unique in its use of a Bass Chorus in addition to the SATB voicings, which lends a beautiful rich depth to the work. This latter distinguishing feature has led to this Mass being popularly known as *Misa de bajos*. This Mass incorporates five different Mass liturgical elements, which are described below. The *Misa en Mi Bemol* was composed for the Royal Chapel and received its premiere on November 9, 1856. It was reviewed with much praise in Madrid's *Gaceta Musical* soon thereafter, and remained one of Eslava's most enduring sacred works.

This work has been edited from a printed version of the Mass produced by the *Calcografía de Bonifacio Eslava* in Madrid, a scanned copy of which was obtained from the Biblioteca Nacional de España. This composition was catalogued during Eslava's lifetime as Op. 133. The cover of the printed score features a manuscript dedication by the composer to his friend and colleague Francisco Asenjo Barbieri. The original score included a rather simple organ reduction, but in this version I have replaced it with a keyboard reduction that incorporates more of the orchestral accompaniment elements. Errors in the printed score have been corrected.

The five elements that form this *Misa en Mi Bemol* would have been used in the following order in conjunction with the Mass:

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:

<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:

<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,</i>	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.
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<p><i>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>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.

<p><i>CREDO in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.</i></p> <p><i>Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.</i></p> <p><i>Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt.</i></p> <p><i>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>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>I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.</p> <p>I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.</p> <p>God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through Him all things were made.</p> <p>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> <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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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. The *Benedictus* (“Blessed”) is typically sung after the Communion elements are consecrated. It is often combined with the preceding *Sanctus*, and certain religious authorities believe there should not be a break between them. Although Eslava has kept the *Benedictus* separate in other *Misas*, in this one he has combined the two. The lyrics and translation are:

<i>Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus</i> <i>Dominus Deus Sabaoth.</i> <i>Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.</i> <i>Hosanna in excelsis.</i>	Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
<i>Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.</i> <i>Hosanna in excelsis.</i>	Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

5. **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:

<i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,</i> <i>miserere nobis.</i> <i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,</i> <i>miserere nobis.</i> <i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,</i> <i>dona nobis pacem.</i>	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.
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