

Editor's Notes for *El Penitente (Plegaria)*

Here is a beautiful *plegaria* (prayer) by Hilarión Eslava for either soprano or tenor vocalist. It is intended for a five-piece string ensemble accompaniment and includes a keyboard reduction. For a fuller sound, the keyboard may be played along with the strings.

In the score, the lyrics –a moving prayer of contrition, are provided in Italian and Spanish. They are copied below, along with an English translation. The origin of the lyrics is unknown.

The original music (catalogued in Eslava's time as *Obra 146*) came to us from the Biblioteca Nacional de España in the form of a scanned digital copy of a print produced by Bonifacio Eslava's print shop. The original contains the signature and initials of Ramón Rufín y Valdés.

For the synthesized audio rendition of this music, we have combined orchestral sound fonts from MuseScore 4® and an AI-generated customized version of the 'Felicia' voice in Synthesizer V Studio 2 Pro®. While we are strong believers in the unique power and beauty of live human performance, these artificial tools do enable the listener to experience the basic elements of the music when no other resources are available.

ITALIAN LYRICS:

IL PENITENTE

Si pietà se vostra grazia aspettar posi o ancor,
date pace all' alma mia e riposo a questo cor,
pietà Signor, pietà Signor,
Ah! date pace all' alma mia e riposo a questo cor,
Mi sara per sempre dolce una speme un raggio sol,
di veder eternamente il mio santo redentor.
Se pietà se vostra grazia aspettar posi o ancor,
date pace all' alma mia e riposo a questo cor,
Pietà Signor! Pietà Signor!
Ah! date pace all' alma mia e riposo a questo cor,
Mi sara per sempre dolce, una speme un raggio sol,
di veder eternamente,
di veder eternamente il mio santo redentor,
di veder eternamente il mio santo redentor,
di veder eternamente il mio santo redentor,
pietà Signor
Ah si, pietà Signor.

SPANISH LYRICS:

EL PENITENTE

Si me es dado Dios clemente alcanzar vuestra piedad,
conceded paz a mi alma y una santa caridad,
Señor piedad, Señor piedad,
¡Ah! conceded paz a mi alma y una santa caridad,
Desparezcan mis pecados,
Vuestra gracia logre yo para ver eternamente a mi santo redentor.
Si me es dado Dios clemente alcanzar vuestra piedad,
Conceded paz a mi alma y una santa caridad,
¡Señor piedad! ¡Señor piedad!
¡Ah! conceded paz a mi alma y una santa caridad,
Desparezcan mis pecados,
Vuestra gracia logre yo para ver eternamente,
para ver eternamente a mi santo redentor,
para ver eternamente a mi santo redentor,
para ver eternamente a mi santo redentor,
piedad Señor
Ah si, piedad señor.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

THE PENITENT

If God will give me clemency to receive his mercy,
Grant peace to my soul and a rest to my heart,
Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy,
Ah! grant peace to my soul and rest to my heart,
Let my sins disappear,
Your grace lets me eternally see my holy redeemer
If God will give me clemency to receive his mercy,
Grant peace to my soul and a rest to my heart,
Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy,
Ah! grant peace to my soul and rest to my heart,
Let my sins disappear,
Your grace lets me eternally see my holy redeemer
see eternally my holy redeemer,
see eternally my holy redeemer,
see eternally my holy redeemer,
Mercy, Lord
Ah yes, mercy Lord.

[Notes updated 9 Sept. 2025]