

Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo, Hob. XXII:7
Short mass for St. John of God
Franz Joseph Haydn

We celebrate communion this week through sacrament and through music. Our service music features a *missa brevis*, or short mass, by Austrian composer Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809).



The *Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo* (short mass for St. John of God) was written for the Eisenstadt house of the Barmherzige Brüder (Order of the Brothers of Mercy), with whom Haydn held artistic and medicinal relationships. St. John of God was a 16th century Portuguese monk who founded what would become this monastic order. St. John taught others to care for the poor, the sick and the aging. The brotherhood spread throughout Europe, and by Haydn's time the successors of the order were nurses in city hospitals. The Barmherzige Brüder had great faith in the healing powers of music, which occupied a prominent place in worship services associated with their centers. The hospital at Haydn's home in Eisenstadt was paid for by his benefactor, Prince Paul Anton. This particular facility included a chapel and an organ. Haydn wrote the *Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo* specifically for the context of a worship service in the hospital. Given that the nurses of the brotherhood only allowed themselves to be away from their patients for thirty minutes at a time, Haydn had a rigorous time constraint with which to work.

The mass was, indeed, small of scope and size. Haydn wrote for modest forces: chorus, solo soprano, and a typical 18th century church ensemble of two violins, cello, and organ. With substantial time constraints, Haydn shortened longer sections of the traditional mass by setting lines of text simultaneously. The *Gloria* sung by the choir today is an example of that overlapping text, led initially by the basses. One of the most distinctive features of this short mass is the elaborate *Benedictus* for solo soprano and organ. The organ writing is so unique in this movement that the mass earned the Austrian nickname, *Kleine Orgelmesse*, or little organ mass. The opening *Kyrie* and closing *Agnus Dei* sections serve as a pair of slower, contemplative movements. As the mass draws to a close, you will hear repeated settings of the text *dona nobis pacem*, "grant us peace." Noted Haydn music historian H.C. Robbins Landon described this concluding musical gesture as Haydn's way of "waving goodbye to his many friends" at the end of a worship service.

Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison,*

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy.

Gloria

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 coelestis,

Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,

Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,

miserere nobis.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,

suscipe deprecationem nostrum.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solu sanctus.

Tu solus Dominus.

Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.

Cum Sancto Spiritu

in Gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,

Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt coeli et terra

Gloria tua.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit

in nomine Domini.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,

qui tollis peccata mundi:

miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,

qui tollis peccata mundi:

miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,

qui tollis peccata mundi:

dona nobis pacem.

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace

to all those of good will.

We praise thee. We bless thee.

We worship thee. We glorify thee.

We give thanks to thee

according to thy great glory.

Lord God, Heavenly King,

God the Father almighty.

Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.

Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer.

Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father,

have mercy upon us.

For Thou alone art holy.

Thou alone art the Lord.

Thou alone art the most high, Jesus Christ.

With the Holy Spirit

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy,

Lord God of Hosts.

Heaven and earth are full

of thy glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes

in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,

grant us peace.