Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Sanctorum meritis

(Hymn)

S.A.T.B.

ed. S. Biazeck

Source: HYMNI TOTIUS ANNI, (…) *quator vocibus concinendi,* (…)
Apud Iacobum Tornerium, & Bernardium Donangelum. Rome, 1589.

Originally notated a minor third lower in the following clefs: C1, C3, C4, F3.
All secondary text is from the primary musical source. (See notes below.)
Cue-sized accidentals within the staves are editorial *musica ficta,* and remain in force for the duration of one measure.
Cautionary accidentals are editorial.

Text: **Sanctorum meritis** is the hymn at First and Second Vespers in the Common of many Martyrs. Its authorship is unknown, although it is often attributed to Rabanus Maurus (d. 856), Archbishop of Mainz. The present edition uses the version found in the Roman Breviary. It also appears with the Mode 4 melody[1] in the Liber Usualis (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159) upon which Palestrina's setting is based.

Unfortunately the primary musical source (Rome, 1589) contains several errors (see below) that corrupt the stanzas written in Classical Latin metre: a combination of three Asclepiads and a Glyconic also used in 9 of the Odes of Horace and often called Second (some say Third) Asclepiad, although the essentials are unchanged. A stanza is formed with 3 Asclepiad lines followed by a Glyconic.[2]

Changes were probably made by clerics (ignorant of Classical poetic metre) on theological grounds to strengthen or modify the meaning. The fact that prose, rich in Classical allusions and written in ancient metres should have been corrupted in this way seems entirely unnecessary to us, but the approach to historical preservation and authenticity, if it existed at all in the Renaissance, was probably somewhat less rigorous than it is today. Whether or not Palestrina himself was aware of the faults is perhaps less relevant; the choice of which version to set may not have been his. Whatever the case, it seems important to accurately preserve the recognized Classical metre.

The following alterations accord with the text from the Roman Breviary and the Liber Usualis.

Verse 1, line 3: *nam gliscit animus* is linguistically correct, but the first three syllables of each line of Second Asclepiads should be long and it is hard to regard –it of *gliscit* as long in this context. Therefore, *gliscens fert animus* is preferable.

Verse 3, line 1: The nominative *ferocia* makes no sense here where accusative is certainly required. The alternative *minas truces* fits the meaning and metre perfectly.

Verse 3, line 3: *Cessit his* should be changed to *His cessit.* There is no change to the meaning and the metre is saved.

Verse 5, lines 3 & 4: The order of *fulgidis* and *laureis* has been reversed, and although the meaning remains unchanged, there is no reason why the original order should not be reinstated.

Verse 6, line 4: *nos quoque gloriam / Per cuncta tibi saecula. Amen,* does not fit the metre and is difficult to combine with the preceding lines – the final syllable of *cuncta* being the problem. The ending, *nos quoque* etc. was probably introduced by a priest who did not understand the metre and who wanted a generic ending complete with an Amen. Substitution of *ut tibi gloriam / Annorum in seriem canant* restores the metrical scheme. In order to fit the metre (and the notes) the –um of *annorum* should be elided, which is common practice in Classical Latin poetry.

The link to Horace is further strengthened with the use of *bidentium,* translated here as 'sacrificial lambs'. It means literally 'two-toothed (creatures)'. This refers to sheep with two teeth i.e. those in their second year of life, of an age deemed suitable for sacrifice (cf. Horace Odes 3.23.14).[3]

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[1] http://gregobase.selapa.net/chant.php?id=2026 - source_1
[2] Asclepiad: LLLSSL (word-break) LSSLSL or S
   Glyconic: LLLSSLSL (L = long, S = short)
In Horace, the stanza is indicative of a sober and contemplative mind, whilst its use in breviary hymns is often suggestive of victorious exultation.
[3] http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/horace/carm3.shtml
 http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/HoraceOdesBkIII.htm

Doubtless the new pointing will occasionally seem less effective than Palestrina's original intentions (c.f. bb. 47 – 50), but it is worth noting that verbal accentuation in the chant is also awkward at times, and requires a subtle and persuasive molding of melody to text. For those concerned to render Palestrina's setting unaltered, the text found in the 1589 edition is printed under the correct version.

Musica ficta: Leading-note cadences are approached from a linear perspective, and as such, are easily discernible from a single part; signed by return from above immediately before the final syllable of a musical and/or textual phrase.

Sometimes where there is a strong feeling for a cadence, one finds a tail in the melody after the note on which the final syllable falls.

Other intermediate cadences are more contentious. Some may be tempted to add leading notes in b. 17 and on the second syllable of *gliscens* and thereafter, but it is unlikely that Palestrina expected this, not least because he is quoting intervals from the second part of the Hymn melody.

Simon Biazeck, June 2015.

SANCTORUM MERITIS: *Hymn at First and Second Vespers in the Common of many Martyrs.*

Sanctorum meritis inclyta gaudia	*Let us record the celebrated joys of the saints along with*
Pangamus, socii, gestaque fortia:	*Their rewards, my comrades,*
Gliscens fert[4] animus promere cantibus	*And also their brave achievements.*
Victorum genus optimum.	*As it swells, the soul proposes to make known in song*
	This finest race of conquerors.

Hi sunt quos fatue mundus abhorruit:	*These are the men the world foolishly spurned;*
Hunc fructu vacuum, floribus aridum,	*Those who follow Your name,*
Contempsere tui nominis asseclae,	*Despise the world as devoid of produce, parched of blooms,*
Iesu Rex bone caelitum.	*Jesus, worthy King who have come down from heaven.*

Hi pro te furias atque minas truces[5]	*These men, for Your sake, have trampled on the frenzied*
Calcarunt hominum, saevaque verbera:	*Rages and cruel threats of men,*
His cessit[6] lacerans fortiter ungula,	*And on their barbaric blows:*
Nec carpsit penetralia.	*The fiercely ripping talon withdrew from them*
	And did not tear at their entrails.

Caeduntur gladiis more bidentium:	*They are slaughtered with swords like sacrificial lambs:*
Non murmur resonat, non querimonia:	*Not a murmur rings out, not a complaint.*
Sed corde impavido mens bene conscia	*But in their fearless heart, their fine mind, fully conscious,*
Conservat patientiam.	*Maintains its willingness to endure.*

Quae vox, quae poterit lingua retexere	*What voice, what tongue will be able to unravel*
Quae tu Martyribus munera praeparas?	*The tributes which You are preparing for martyrs?*
Rubri nam fluido sanguine fulgidis	*For, red with dripping blood, they are garlanded[9]*
Ditantur bene laureis.[7]	*With splendidly shining laurels.*

Te, summa Deitas unaque, poscimus,	*Highest Deity, One and Only God, we entreat You*
Ut culpas abigas, noxia subtrahas:	*That You drive out our guilt, take away our wrongdoings.*
Des pacem famulis ut tibi gloriam	*May You give peace to Your servants, so that they may sing*
Annorum in seriem canant.[8]	*Your glory throughout the succession of the years.*

Amen.	(Trans. Simon Preece, June 2015)

(Anon.)

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[4] *nam gliscit* in 1589 edition.
[5] *ferocia* in 1589 edition.
[6] *Cessit his* in 1589 edition.
[7] The original order of *fulgidis* and *laureis* has been restored.
[8] *nos quoque gloriam per cuncta tibi sæcula* in 1589 edition.

[9] Lit. enriched

In communi Plurimorum Martyrum

Sanctorum meritis

(HYMNI TOTIUS ANNI, … *quator vocibus concinendi*, …
Apud Iacobum Tornerium, & Bernardium Donangelum. Rome, 1589)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525 - 1594)
edited by Simon Biazeck

** *Gliscens fert animus:* orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the *Liber Usualis* (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159).
1589 ed. has *Nam gliscit animus.* (See editorial notes.)

Vi - ctó - rum ge - nus ó - pti - mum, ó -

- ctó - rum ge - nus ó - pti - mum, vi - ctó - rum ge -

Vi - ctó - rum ge -

ctó - rum ge - nus ó - pti - mum, vi - - ctó - rum

- - - pti - mum, ge - nus ó - - - pti - mum.

- nus ó - - - - - - - pti - mum.

nus ó - pti - mum, ge - nus ó - - pti - mum.

ge - nus ó - pti - mum, ó - - - pti - mum.

v. 2

Hi sunt quos fá - tu - ae mun - dus ab - hór - ru - it: Hunc fru - ctu vá - cu - um, fló - ri - dus á - ri - dum,

Con - temp - sé - re tu - i nó - mi - nis ás - se - clae, Ie - su Rex bo - ne caé - li - tum.

v. 3

Altus

Hi pro te fú - ri - as

Tenor

Hi pro te fú - ri - as, pro te fú - ri - as at - que mi -

Bassus

Hi pro te fú - ri - as, fú - ri - as at -

** *Minas truces:* orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the *Liber Usualis* (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159).
1589 ed. has *ferocia.* (See editorial notes.)

48

at - que *mi - nas* *tru - ces* Cal - cá - runt hó -

nas tru - ces, at - que *mi - nas tru - ces*

que *mi - nas* *tru - ces* Cal - cá - runt hó - - -

53

- mi - num, hó - - - - mi - num saé - va - que vér - -

Cal - cá - runt hó - - mi - num saé - va - que vér -

- mi - num, cal - cá - runt hó - mi - num saé - va - que vér - -

58

- be - ra: *His* *ces - sit* lá - sce - rans

- be - ra: *His* *ces - sit* lá - sce - rans, *lá - - - - - sce -*

- be - ra: *His* *ces - sit* lá - sce - rans

63

fór - ti - ter ún - gu - la, ún - - - gu - la,

rans fór - ti - ter ún - gu - la, Nec

fór - ti - ter ún - gu - la, ún - - - gu - la,

** *His cessit:* orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the *Liber Usualis* (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159). 1589 ed. has *cessit his.* (See editorial notes.)

68 Nec_____ carp - sit pe - ne - trá - li - a, *nec_____*

carp - - - sit, *nec_____ carp -*

Nec_____ carp - sit pe - ne - trá - li - a,_____

73 ____ *carp - sit pe - ne - trá - - li - a, pe -*

sit pe - - ne - trá - li - a._____

____ nec carp - sit pe - ne - trá - li - a, pe -

76 - ne - trá - li - a._____

pe - - - ne - trá - - li - a.

- ne - trá - - - - - li - - a.

v. 4

79 Cae - dún - tur glá - di - is____ mo - re bi - dén - ti - um: Non mur - mur ré - so - nat, non que - ri - mó - ni - a:____

82 Sed_ cor - d'im - pá - vi - do mens be - ne cón - sci - a Con - sér - vat____ pa - ti - én - ti - am.

99

Quae tu Mar - ty - ri - bus

Mar - ty - ri - bus, _quae_ _tu_ _Mar - ty - ri - bus_

- ri - bus, _quae tu Mar - ty - ri - bus_ mú -

bus, _Mar - ty - ri - bus_ mú - ne - ra praé-

104

mú - ne - ra praé - - -

mú - ne - ra praé - pa - ras, _mú - ne - ra praé -_

- ne - ra praé - - - pa - ras, praé - - - - pa -

- - - - - - pa - ras, _mú - ne - ra_

108

- pa - ras? Ru - bri nam flú - i - do, flú - i - do

- _pa - ras?_ Ru - bri nam flú - i - do, _ru -_

ras? Ru - bri nam flú -

praé - pa - ras? Ru - bri nam flú - i - do,

113

sán - gui - ne fúl - gi - dis, sán - gui - ne fúl - gi -

bri nam flú - i - do sán - gui - ne fúl - gi - dis, sán - gui -

- i - do sán - gui - ne fúl - gi - dis

ru - bri nam flú - i - do

118

dis Di - tán - tur be -

ne fúl - gi - dis Di - tán - tur be -

Di - tán - tur be -

Di - tán - tur,

123

ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be -

- ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur be - ne láu - re - is, be -

- ne láu - re - is, di - tán - tur

di - tán - tur be - ne

** *fulgidis* preceding *laureis* is the orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the *Liber Usualis* (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159). The order is reversed in the 1589 ed. (See editorial notes.)

128

- ne láu - re - is.

- ne láu - - - - - - re - is.

be - - ne láu - re - is, láu - - - - re - is.

láu - re - is, láu - - - re - is.

v. 6

133

Te, sum - ma Dé - i - tas,___ ú - na - que, pó - sci - mus, Ut cul - pas á - blu - as,

135

nó - xi - a súb - tra - has:___ Des___ pa - cem fá - mu - lis ut ti - bi gló - ri - am

138

An - nó - r'in_____ se - ri - em___ ca - nant. A - men.___

** *ut tibi gloriam / Annorum in seriem canant:* orthodox text as it appears with the Mode 4 melody in the *Liber Usualis* (Solesmes, 1961, p. 1159).
1589 ed. has *nos quoque gloriam / Per cuncta tibi saecula.* (See editorial notes.)