Sancta Maria Virgo

Edited by Jason Smart

Thomas Knyght (*fl.*1526-*c.*1550)

Staff 1 (lyrics): - gem or - - - - - - bis, qui - a ge - nu - i - sti___

Staff 2 (lyrics): re - gem or - - - - - - -

Staff 3 (lyrics): - a_____ ge - - - nu - - - -

Staff 4 (lyrics): *ge - nu - i* - sti re - gem or - - -

Measure 35:

Staff 1 (lyrics): _____ re - gem__ or - bis, re - gem or -

Staff 2 (lyrics): - bis,_____ qui - a

Staff 3 (lyrics): - i - sti re - gem or - - -

Staff 4 (lyrics): - - - - - - - - bis, qui - a

Measure 41:

Staff 1 (lyrics): - - - - - - - - - - bis.

Staff 2 (lyrics): ge - nu - i - sti_____ re - gem_____ or - - bis.

Staff 3 (lyrics): - - - - - - - bis._____

Staff 4 (lyrics): ge - nu - i - sti [re - gem] or - - - bis.

Solo

Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei ge - ni - trix.

Ut di - gni ef - fi - ci - a -

Ut di - gni ef - fi - ci - a - mur___

Ut di - gni ef - fi - ci - a - - - -

Ut___ di - gni ef - fi - ci - a - - - - mur___

- mur pro - mis - si - o - ni - bus___ Chri -

___ pro - mis - si - o - ni - bus Chri -

- mur pro - mis - si - o - ni - bus

___ pro - mis - si - o - ni - bus Chri - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - - sti.
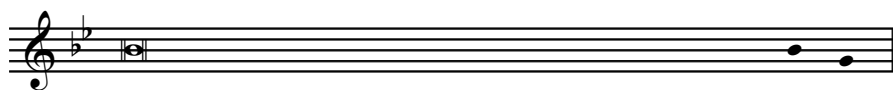
- - - - - - - - - sti.

Chri - - - - - - - - - sti.

- - - - - - - - - sti.

In omni tribulatione et angustia, succurat nobis, Virgo Ma - ri - a.

A - - - - - - - -

A - - - - - - - -

A - - - - - - - -

A - - - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - -

- - - - - - - - - men.

- - - - - - - - - men.

- - - - - - - - - men.

- - - - - - - - - men.

Translation

Holy Virgin Mary, intercede for all people, for you have given birth to the king of the world.
℣ Pray for us, O holy mother of God:
that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
In all our tribulation and anxiety, help us, O Virgin Mary.
Amen.

Liturgical Function and Form

In 1395 the archbishop of Canterbury, William Courtney, issued a charter confirming an agreement between the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury Cathedral and their choristers that, in recognition of the benefits that bishop John Waltham had bestowed on the choristers, they would henceforth for evermore show their appreciation by singing an evening antiphon to the Virgin Mary. Every day, immediately after Compline had been sung in the choir, the boys were all to assemble before the high altar, where, as a memorial to the bishop, they were to kneel and sing in a well-projected voice (*alta voce*) the antiphon *Sancta Maria Virgo intercede*, followed by the versicle *Ora pro nobis sancta Dei genitrix* and the prayer *In omni tribulacione et angustia*. Following this they were to conclude with a *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria*. So far as is known this memorial was still being sung in 1540/1 when evidence of a second antiphon emerges: in addition to *Sancta Maria*, the choristers were now also singing the Jesus antiphon *Sancte Deus* before the great crucifix in the nave of the church.[1]

Thomas Knyght was the instructor of the choristers at Salisbury Cathedral from 1529 until at least 1543 and must have written his setting of *Sancta Maria* for use there. The boys would have sung the Treble and Mean parts, while he himself no doubt sang the Countertenor, although since that voice uses only the top ninth of its available range and the compass of the whole piece is only a tone wider than the usual combined compasses of Trebles and Means, it is quite conceivable that he was joined by any boy whose voice was breaking. The work is unusual in that it encompasses the whole memorial up to the *Pater noster*. Bars 1–45 are the antiphon, which has proper plainsong in the Mean as a cantus firmus. The polyphony that follows, *Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi*, was the customary response to the versicle *Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genitrix*, which must be interpolated as a plainsong recitation. Similarly, the prayer *In omni tribulatione* needs to be inserted before the Amen.[2] The Use of Salisbury had no orison beginning with these words and Waltham probably had in mind a widely known versicle and response that later came to be set by Jean Mouton.[3] It is unlikely that, in this memorial, the sentence retained its versicle and response form. Had it done so, Knyght would undoubtedly have set the response in polyphony as he did with the previous versicle. Instead, his Amen is the choir's reply.

Editorial Conventions

The nomenclature of the voice parts follows the Tudor convention.
The original clef, mensuration symbol and first note of each part are shown on the prefatory staves at the start of the piece.
Ligatures are denoted by the sign ⌐‾‾‾‾⌐ .
Repeat signs in the underlay have been expanded using italic text.
Underlay between square brackets is entirely editorial.

Source

London, British Library Add. MSS 17802–5 (*c*.1570–*c*.1578).

17802	(Tr2)	f.236	[no attribution]	
17803	(Tr1)	f.233ᵛ	at beginning:	mʳ knighte
			at end:	mʳ knyghte
17804	(M)	f.226	[no attribution]	
17805	(Ct)	f.215	at end:	mʳ knyghte

Readings of the Source

In the notes below, each reference to a bar or group of bars is separated by an oblique stroke. The order within each reference below is: 1) bar number(s); 2) voice; 3) reading of the source. Pitches are given in capital letters. The sign + denotes a tie.

Accidentals
14 Tr1 ♮ for B / 21 Ct ♮ for A / 48 M ♮ for first A /

Underlay
21 M *mun-* below A (not in 24) / 27 Tr1 *genuisti* undivided below GFEDCB / 28 Tr2 *genuisti* undivided below DCBAGF / 33 Ct *mor-* for *or-* / 42 Ct *or-* below A / 56–57 Tr1 *Christi* undivided below BFE (-*sti* moved editorially to 60) / 56–57 Tr2 *Christi* undivided below CGF (-*sti* moved editorially to 60) / 59 M -*sti* below A (not in 60) / 76 Ct -*men* below C /

Other Readings
17 Tr1 C is B / 50–51 M G+G is a breve only (it may be the following A that is incorrect, but cf. 67) / 66 M F is G /

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[1] Roger Bowers, *Choral Institutions within the English Church:- Their constitution and development 1340–1500* (Ph.D. thesis, University of East Anglia, 1975), p.4061. I am grateful to Dr Bowers for updating and supplementing the information contained in his thesis.
[2] Similar votive antiphons that apparently encompass other elements of the memorials of which they were a part are discussed in Nick Sandon, 'The Manuscript London, British Library Harley 1709', in Susan Rankin and David Hiley (eds.), *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy: Plainsong & Mediaeval Music Society Centennial Essays*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp.371–9.
[3] The text is supplied here from *Hore Beatissime Virginis Marie* (Paris: Regnault, 1527), f.64–65. For the previous versicle and response see f.55 and compare the very similar versions for other saints found after several of the short antiphons in the '*suffragia*' sections of this book.