

# The Wonder of Mary *program*

**Gabriel's message** Eleanor Daley

**Magnificat** César Cui  
*Soloist: Maureen Ferley*

**Upon my lap my Sov'reign sits** Martin Peerson

**All under the leaves** (women's choir) arr. Imogen Holst

**Ave Maria** (women's choir) David McIntyre

**Salut, Dame Sainte** (men's choir) Francis Poulenc

**Ave Maria** Vytautis Miskinis

**Totus Tuus** Henryk Górecki

## *intermission*

**A Hymn to the Virgin** Benjamin Britten

**Today the Virgin** John Tavener

**Herself a rose who bore the Rose** Robert Young

**Mary had a baby** (men's choir) arr. Robert Scandrett  
*Soloists: Dan Peasgood, Craig Schapansky*

**O my dear heart** (women's choir) Eleanor Daley

**Sleep, sweet child** Peter Berring  
*Soloists: Céline Ross, Karen Tole-Henderson*

**Ave Maria** Franz Biebl  
*Soloists: Michael Schroeder Hubert, Dan Peasgood*

**The Virgin Mary had a baby boy** arr. Stephen Hatfield

# *Renaissance Voices*

Derek Morphy, conductor

## **Sopranos**

Mary-Lynn Berti  
Sarah Chopse  
Louise Friesen  
Wanda Nicol  
Maureen Ferley  
Kim Neufeld  
Céline Ross  
Tristan Tergesen

## **Tenors**

Ted Dueck  
Peter Dueck  
Chad Falk  
Craig Schapansky  
Kyle Friesen  
David Peters  
Dan Peasgood

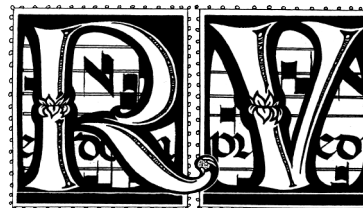
## **Altos**

Kathryn Balacko  
Edna Dahl  
Charlene Diehl  
Keira Friesen  
Martha Graham  
Karen Tole-Henderson  
Meagan Peasgood

## **Basses**

John Brubacher  
John Dobson  
Mike Schroeder Hubert  
Wes Elias  
Rudy Dahl  
Ted Wiens

December 8 & 9, 2006  
Young United Church, Winnipeg



[www.renaissancevoices.com](http://www.renaissancevoices.com)

# *Renaissance Voices*

Derek Morphy, conductor

# The Wonder of Mary



design: hydesmith

*Mary* has been the subject of much discussion in Christian theology, especially since the Reformation, although devotion to her was not rejected by such early Protestant figures as Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. Roman Catholic and Byzantine doctrine asserts that Mary is literally Mother of God, and believers invoke her aid in prayer, praise her in liturgy and depict her as a saintly figure in icons and statuary. For later Protestants, focus is more specifically on Jesus and Mary becomes, in Luke's words, a humble 'servant of the Lord.'

Our program tonight makes no effort to unscramble the controversies that swirl around Mary. We merely wish to represent some of the glorious music that has been written about a woman who was visited by an angel and gave birth in very humble surroundings after an arduous journey, a woman who tenderly cared for her new-born child.

Our repertoire highlights the divine 'wonder' that Mary signifies, praised and venerated as an inspiration and symbol of the perfection of women. At the same time, we touch on the human emotions that both she and Joseph must have felt 'wondering' what this was all about.

The most famous Marian text, of course, is the *Ave Maria*, which springs from the Catholic tradition, and has been said and sung from the early 7th century. In the first part, the Angel Gabriel greets the Blessed Virgin on the day of the Annunciation:

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.*

[Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.]

The second part is Elizabeth's salutation:

*Benedicta tu in mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.*

[Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.]

The third part, added in the 15th century, is a petition to Mary to intercede on behalf of the sinner:

*Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus  
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.*

[Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.]

The Mary story begins in Luke's gospel with the visit of the Angel Gabriel to 'the most highly favoured lady,' who tells her that she will give birth to Emmanuel as foretold by Old Testament prophets. The text of **Gabriel's message**, by the Reverend S. Baring Gould, has long been a familiar Advent hymn. This version is set by Toronto composer, Eleanor Daley.

According to Luke, Mary sang the **Magnificat** (My soul magnifies the Lord) in response to Elizabeth's greeting. As an important part of the liturgy of the traditional churches, it has also been set in many forms. We are singing a version by César Cui, who was born in Lithuania in 1835, but spent most of his life in Russia. Though by profession a military engineer, many of his works, including this sonorous choral piece,

stand on a level with his most famous contemporaries, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff. The soprano soloist sings the Magnificat text, while the choir responds: 'Above all the cherubim, more glorious than the seraphim in the realm of light, blessed mother and maiden, thou who bore our Lord, sinless and pure and undefiled.'

We travel back to the early 17th century for Martin Peerson's setting of **Upon my lap my sov'reign sits**, in which Mary pours out her love to the infant Jesus.

Imogen Holst, the daughter of Gustav, has shortened the original poem **All under the leaves**, a folk carol from Shropshire. The text's seven virgins, one of whom is Mary, seek 'under the leaves of life' for Jesus, only to find that he is about to be 'nailed to a big yew tree.' It is one of many carols that foreshadows the agony of Jesus' death in the joy of His birth.

Of the countless Ave Marias that have been written, tonight we offer three. The first is for women's voices by David MacIntyre, born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. His **Ave Maria**, written in 1994, is an up-tempo and joyous piece dedicated to his mother Betty for her 65th birthday.

Francis Poulenc composed his 'Quatre petites prières de Saint François d'Assise' in 1948 at the request of his nephew, Brother Jérôme Poulenc. The men will sing the first of the set, **Salut, Dame Sainte** (Hail, Holy Lady), which is unmistakably French and contains the charming melodies and close harmonies characteristic of Poulenc's compositions.

We also offer an **Ave Maria** by Vytautis Miskinis (born 1954), a Lithuanian composer and choral conductor, who has written more than a hundred sacred choral pieces. Underneath a compelling melodic line, he employs vital and even competing rhythmic accompanying structures, contrasted later with more contemplative sections.

The first half ends with the extraordinary **Totus Tuus** by Polish composer, Henryk Górecki, born in 1933. The piece was first performed in Warsaw on June 1987 at a High Mass held by Pope John Paul II and is notable for its huge dynamic range, from the very loud opening to the extremely quiet ending. The repeated melodic phrases create a hypnotic effect, and singers as well as audiences have remarked on its trance-like power.

We begin the second half with **A Hymn to the Virgin**, a choral gem by English composer, Benjamin Britten. The text is an anonymous 13th-century poem in alternating English and Latin statements, which Britten



found in the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. Set for double chorus, the first choir sings the English verse and the second sings the Latin response.

Born in 1944, English composer John Tavener converted to the Orthodox faith in his 30s, and many of his compositions draw on that tradition. The text of **Today the Virgin** was written by Russian-born Orthodox nun, Mother Thekla, who has provided a number of libretti for Tavener's compositions. In this dialogue between Mary and her husband, Joseph struggles to come to terms with the mystery of his wife's pregnancy. The conversation is punctuated by outbursts of praise exhorting us to 'Rejoice, O World.'

In direct contrast is the lovely setting by American Robert Young of Christina Rossetti's **Herself a rose who bore the rose**, in which the poet describes the close relationship between mother and son in imagery and metaphor.

The men sing a familiar spiritual **Mary had a baby** set by American Robert Scandrett. His insistence on an almost impossibly slow tempo allows the text to be fully weighed and the singers to explore every nuance of the wonder of the birth of Jesus.

Two gentle pieces by Canadian composers follow: **O my dear heart** is originally a 16th-century rocking carol, here arranged for women's voices by Eleanor Daley, and **Sleep, sweet child** is by Peter Berring of Vancouver.

The most well-known modern setting of **Ave Maria** is probably by German composer, Franz Biebl (1906-2001), who wrote it in 1967, originally for male voices. Tonight's version is an eight-part arrangement for mixed voices. The baritone and tenor soloists insert an antiphon prior to each section of the traditional text.

We finish with a lively arrangement by Stephen Hatfield, currently of Newfoundland, of the spiritual **The Virgin Mary had a baby boy**, full of invention and fun.

Thank you for joining us for this evening of music. May each of you have a season filled with wonder.

*Derek Morphy, conductor*

*Warm thanks* to each of our volunteers for cheerful assistance with this evening's hosting, to Sheldon Chartier for behind-the-scenes production work, and to choir members Louise, Céline, Mike, Ted, Martha and Charlene for their efforts en route. First Presbyterian Church, Alexis Studio, and Young United Church have provided welcome rehearsal and performance space. McNally Robinson Booksellers continues to be an invaluable supporter of local arts ventures. Brian Hydesmith is our design dervish. Thanks to *Prairie Fire Magazine*, Tergesen's General Store, and the Winnipeg International Writers Festival for door prize contributions.

*Gabriel's message* (text: Rev. S. Baring-Gould; music: Eleanor Daley)

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,  
Most highly favoured lady." *Gloria!*

"For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,  
All generations laud and honour thee,  
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,  
Most highly favoured lady." *Gloria!*

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.  
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said.  
"My soul shall laud and magnify His holy name."  
Most highly favoured lady; *Gloria!*

Of her, Emmanuel the Christ was born  
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,  
Most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!*

*Magnificat* (English version of Latin text: John Rutter; music: César Cui)

The Lord be exalted and magnified:  
O my spirit, sing the praises of God, who is thy Saviour.

*Above all the cherubim,  
more glorious than the seraphim in the realm of light,  
blessed Mother and maiden, thou who bore our Lord,  
sinless and pure and undefiled, Ave Maria.*

He hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaid,  
and behold, all generations shall call me blessed.

He that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his Name:  
his mercy is sure unto his people throughout all generations.

With his own right arm hath God displayed his power:  
He hath scattered all the proud in their vanity.

Mighty kings hath he brought down to naught, the lowly hath he lifted up:  
all those who hunger he hath filled, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

For behold, the gracious and merciful Lord defendeth his servant Israel,  
even as he promised our fathers, unto Abraham, and unto all his seed,  
now and forever. The Lord be exalted and magnified. *Ave Maria.*

*Upon my lap my Sov'reign sits* (text: Richard Verstegan; music: Martin Peerson)

Upon my lap my Sov'reign sits,  
And leans upon my breast;  
Meanwhile, his love sustains  
And gives my body rest.

*Sing lullaby, my little Boy,  
Sing lullaby, mine only joy.*

My Babe, my Bliss,  
My Child, my Choice,  
My Fruit, my Flower, and Bud,  
My Jesus and my only Joy,  
The sum of all my good.

*All under the leaves* (or The seven virgins) (Shropshire folk carol, collected by Cecil Sharp; arranged by Imogen Holst)

All under the leaves and the leaves of life,  
I met with the virgins seven,  
And one of those was Mary mild,  
Our Lord's blest mother in heaven.

O what are you seeking, you seven pretty maids,  
All under the leaves of life?  
We're seeking for sweet Jesus Christ,  
To be our heavenly guide.

Go down, go down to yonder town  
And seek sweet Galilee  
And there you'll see sweet Jesus Christ,  
Nailed to a big yew tree.

O the rose, the rose, the gentle rose,  
And the fennel that grows in the spring,  
And God give us grace in any place,  
This carol for to sing.

*Ave Maria*

<i>Ave Maria, gratia plena; Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus Et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, Ora pro nobis peccatoribus Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.</i>	Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women And blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.
---	---

<i>Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae, Et concepit de Spiritu sancto.</i>	The angel of God visited Mary And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.
--	--

<i>Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini, Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.</i>	Mary said: See the servant of the Lord, May it happen to me according to your word.
--	--

<i>Et verbum caro factum est Et habitavit in nobis.</i>	And the Word became flesh And lived among us.
---	--

*Salut, Dame Sainte*

(text: St Francis of Assisi; music: Francis Poulenc)

<i>Salut, Dame Sainte, reine très sainte O Marie qui êtes vierge perpétuelle Élue par le très saint Père du Ciel, Consacré par Lui avec son très saint Fils Bien aimé et l'Esprit Paraclet Vous en qui fut et demeure Toute plénitude de grâce et tout bien!</i>	Hail, Holy Lady, very holy queen O Mary, who is the eternal virgin Chosen by the very holy Father of Heaven, Consecrated by Him with his very holy Son Sweet and mild, and the Spirit above, You in whom has been and dwells Complete fullness of grace and everything good.
--	--

<i>Salut, palais; salut tabernacle; Salut maison; salut vêtement; Salut servante; salut, mère de Dieu! Et salut à vous toutes, saintes vertus Qui par la grace et l'illumination du Saint Esprit Tes versées dans les coeurs des fidèles Et d'infidèles que nous sommes, Nous rendez fidèles à Dieu.</i>	Hail palace; hail tabernacle; Hail house; hail sacred raiments; Hail Maidservant; hail mother of God. And hail to all you holy saints Who by the grace and light of the Holy Spirit Are poured into the hearts of the faithful And also to us unfaithful ones; Make us faithful to God.
--	--

## *Totus Tuus*

(music: Henryk Mikolaj Górecki)

*Totus Tuus sum, Maria,  
Mater nostri Redemptoris,  
Virgo Dei, Virgo pia,  
Mater mundi Salvatoris.  
Totus Tuus sum, Maria!*

I am totally yours, Mary,  
Mother of our Redeemer  
Virgin Mother of God, blessed virgin,  
Mother of the world's Saviour.  
I am completely yours, Mary!

## *A Hymn to the Virgin*

(text: anon, circa 1800; music: Benjamin Britten)

Of one that is so fair and bright  
*Velut maris stella* [Like the star of the sea],  
Brighter than the day is light,  
*Parens et puella* [Mother and maiden]:  
I cry to thee, thou see to me,  
Lady, pray thy Son for me,  
*Tam pia* [So tender],  
That I may come to thee. *Maria!*

All this world was forlorn  
*Eva peccatrice* [Eve having been a sinner],  
Till our Lord was born  
*De te genetrice* [Of you his mother].  
With *ave* it went away  
Darkest night, and comes the day  
*Salutis* [Of salvation];  
The well springeth out of thee. *Virtutis* [Of virtue].

Lady, flower of everything,  
*Rosa sine spina* [Rose without thorn],  
Thou bare Jesu, Heaven's King,  
*Gratia divina* [By divine grace]:  
Of all thou bearest the prize,  
Lady, queen of paradise *Electa* [Chosen]:  
Maid mild, mother *es Effecta* [You are fulfilled].

## *Mary had a baby*

(text: traditional spiritual; arranged by Robert Scandrett)

Mary had a baby. My Lord.

What did they call Him? My Lord.

Called Him King Jesus, My Lord.

## *Today the Virgin*

(text: Mother Thekla; music: John Tavener)

Today the Virgin comes to the cave  
To give birth to the Word eternal:

*Rejoice, O World, with the Angels and the Shepherds!  
Give glory to the Child! Alleluia!*

Mary my wife, what do I see?  
I took you blameless before the Lord  
From the priests of the Temple. What do I see?

Joseph the Bridegroom, do not fear.  
God in his mercy has come down to earth,  
He takes flesh in my womb for all the world to see.

Mary, my Bride, what do I see?  
You, a virgin giving birth. Strange mystery!

Joseph the Bridegroom, do not fear.  
God in his mercy has come down to earth,  
He takes flesh in my womb for all the world to see.

Warned by the Angel we believe  
That Mary gives birth inexplicable  
To the infant, Christ, our God.

## *Herself a rose who bore the Rose*

(text: Christina Rossetti; music: Robert H. Young)

Herself a rose, who bore the Rose,  
She bore the Rose and felt its thorn.  
All loveliness newborn took on her bosom its repose,  
And slept and woke there night and morn.

Lily herself, she bore the one Fair Lily;  
Sweeter, whiter, far than she or others are:  
The Sun of Righteousness her Son,  
She was His morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace,  
He was the Fountain, she the rill:  
Her goodness to fulfill and gladness,  
With proportioned pace,  
He led her steps through good and ill.

Christ's mirror she of grace and love,  
Of beauty and of life and death:  
By hope and love and faith transfigured in His likeness,  
Dove, Spouse, Sister, Mother; Jesus saith.

## *O my dear heart*

(text: James, John and Robert Wedderburn; music: Eleanor Daley)

O my dear heart, young Jesu sweet,  
Prepare thy cradle in my spreit [spirit],  
And I shall rock thee in my heart,  
And nevermore from thee depart. *Balulalow.*

But I shall praise thee evermore,  
With songes sweet unto thy gloir [glory].  
The knees of my heart shall I bow,  
And sing that right *Balulalow.*

## *Sleep, sweet child*

(text: Margaret Fleming; music: Peter Berring)

Sleep, sweet child, sleep.  
Your mother watches round your manger cradle.

Sleep my child, sleep.  
The oxen lowing guard your gentle slumber.

Sleep, blest child, sleep.  
No harm befalleth God is watching o'er you.

Sleep, sweet child, sleep. Sleep, my sweet child, sleep.

## *The Virgin Mary had a baby boy*

(Traditional Trinidad Carol; arranged by Stephen Hatfield)

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
An' they said that His name was Jesus.

*Where'd He come? He come from the glory,  
He come down, He come from the glorious kingdom.  
Oh yes, believer!*

The angels sang for the baby boy,  
An' they said that His name was Jesus.  
*In excelsis gloria Deo.*

First the shepherds came and saw the boy  
An' they said that His name was Jesus

The wise men saw the little baby boy  
An' they said that His name was Jesus.