

Program 4 – Week of April 26, 2020

Missa Longa in C major, K. 262 is unusual for several reasons. While not labeled a *missa solemnis*, the work, as its manuscript title suggests, is longer and more complex than the typical *missa brevis* of Mozart's Salzburg years. A big reason for the typical brevity of Mozart's Salzburg masses was the archbishop's express desire to keep masses under one half-hour in length. It seems unlikely that Mozart would have intentionally gone against these clear parameters (as proven by all his shorter masses); this raises the question as to the occasion for K. 262-- a question which has never been conclusively answered. In addition to its length, the mass also features a rich orchestration: paired oboes, paired horns, paired trumpets, timpani, violins, cello/bass, organ, SATB soloists and chorus. In keeping with Salzburg tradition, there are no violas and there is also optional use of three trombones, which double the choral parts. Finally, the grandiose nature of the work is noticeable through its wonderful fugues -- more on that in a moment. The work is tentatively dated 1775/6, so Mozart was likely around 20 years old when he composed it. The Kyrie opens with a fairly extended orchestral introduction (another difference this work has with the *missa brevis* type). The movement is in sonata form and displays remarkable fugal/contrapuntal technique. The *Christe* section uses the soloists as a vocal quartet and underscores the absence of longer more extended/operatic-type roles for soloists in this work (as seen, for example in the c minor mass). The *Gloria* again makes use of the soloists briefly, with dramatic choral moments in the "Qui Tollis" and "Miserere Nobis." Listen also for the lively fugue at the "Cum Sancto Spiritu." Perhaps the most impressive fugue, however, comes at the end of the Credo -- a 120-measure contrapuntal tour-de-force at the "Et Vitam Venturi" -- don't miss it! The movement also features a lovely solo quartet setting the "Et Incarnatus," and a powerful choral "Crucifixus" and "Et Resurrexit." After the *Sanctus*, the *Benedictus* comes as a delicately expressive and serene movement; here Mozart deftly interweaves the soloists with the chorus interjecting the *Osanna*. The mass ends with the *Agnus Dei*, featuring expressive leaps on "Miserere" and a powerful concluding "Dona Nobis Pacem." © Jonathan Saylor

Kyrie, K. 323 The Abbé Stadler, a Benedictine monk, should not be confused with Anton Stadler, for whom Mozart wrote his clarinet quintet and beautiful concerto. Maximilian Stadler entered the Melk Abbey in 1766 and served as Prior and Abbot in several monasteries, ultimately settling in Vienna by 1796 where he helped settle Mozart's estate and became supervisor of the Imperial Music Archive. One of Stadler's most noteworthy efforts was his completion of several unfinished compositions left by Mozart. We will be playing one of these today, the *Kyrie*, K. 323; in performance it will be made clear where Mozart left off, and what Stadler completed. The extreme example of this process is, of course, Mozart's unfinished *Requiem*, the last composition he was working on when he died, and which we will be performing in our last concert. In that case, the work was completed by Mozart's pupil Franz Süssmayr. But this little *Kyrie* setting gives you some idea of that unenviable task, since Stadler and Süssmayr both, I'm convinced, would be the first to admit that in many ways nobody is capable of truly completing the vision of another artist, even less one from such a genius as Mozart. Nevertheless, the effort is interesting, and should be rewarding to experience, especially since these fragments are rarely performed. © Jonathan Saylor