



Saint Mary's Church

The Mother Church of Norwalk

ASSUMPTA EST MARIA IN CÆLUM

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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St. Mary's Schola Cantorum Releases *Lux Fulgebit*

CD features premiere recording of William Rasar's Mass Christe Jesu

NORWALK, CONN., April 17, 2017 — St. Mary's Church and the St. Cecilia Society proudly announce the release of *Lux Fulgebit—The Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day*. Performed by the St. Mary's Schola Cantorum under the direction of David J. Hughes, organist and choirmaster of St. Mary's Church, *Lux Fulgebit* features the world premiere recording of the William Rasar Mass *Christe Jesu*—a magnificent 16th Century English composition.

Titled after the Introit of the Mass, *Lux Fulgebit* is a unique compact disc recording. From beginning to end, it typifies the sung Masses celebrated at St. Mary's Church on Sundays and feast days. The CD features the scripture readings and chants of the Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day, with the polyphony of the Rasar Mass and motets by William Byrd, Alfonso Ferrabosco and Walter Lambe; the priest chants those parts of the Mass proper to him, such as the Collect, Epistle, Gospel and Preface.

“We are enthusiastic about the release of *Lux Fulgebit*,” said David Hughes. “Not only is this the first recording made by the St. Mary's Schola Cantorum, to our knowledge it is the *only* William Rasar composition ever recorded. If not for the manuscript of his Mass, this gifted composer might have been lost to history. In addition, the Propers for the Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day are beautiful but not frequently recorded, and we believe they deserve a wider audience. We are thrilled to make this CD available to lovers of sacred music.”

Saint Mary's Church

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Saint Mary's Church

Page 2

“Pre-Reformation English composers are widely recognized as having produced extraordinary music,” said Charles Weaver, associate director of music at St. Mary’s Church and a Schola musician. “The Tallis Scholars and other ensembles, for example, have popularized music by English composers such as John Taverner and Robert Fairfax. We believe Rasar’s Mass deserves to be ranked among pieces by the great composers of this period.”

Lux Fulgebit captures the musical splendor of the traditionally-oriented life of St. Mary’s Church, internationally recognized as a beacon of liturgical renewal in the Roman Catholic Church. The St. Mary’s Schola Cantorum is the heart of the multi-faceted sacred music program that contributes to making St. Mary’s a stand-out among Catholic parishes.

“One of the most important ways of restoring beauty to the Mass is through the use of music,” said Father Richard G. Cipolla, pastor of St. Mary’s Church. “The music of the Mass must be sacred music, not merely religious music, because the Mass is the icon of the worship of God in heaven. At St. Mary’s, we offer Mass adorned with music written specifically for it by some of the greatest composers in history. *Lux Fulgebit* will help more people experience the beauty of Rasar’s music and the ancient and venerable Tridentine Rite.”

St. Mary’s Schola Cantorum is a professional ensemble of five talented and versatile musicians who are proficient in singing the most complex polyphony in the canon of Western sacred music: soprano Elizabeth Baber Weaver, mezzo-soprano Judith Malafronte, countertenor Terrence Fay, tenor Richard Dobbins and bass Charles Weaver. The St. Cecilia Society, chaired by Thomas B. Heckel, provides critical financial support for the Schola in order to bring to life Gregorian chant, Renaissance polyphony and the great organ repertoire.

Artfully rendered to lofty standards by accomplished musicians, *Lux Fulgebit* faithfully transmits to our time a priceless musical treasure from an age of great faith. This deeply inspirational recording will appeal strongly to those interested in sacred music and the transcendent liturgical traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

The release of *Lux Fulgebit* will be celebrated with a festive wine and cheese reception at St. Mary’s Church, 669 West Avenue, Norwalk on Sunday, April 23 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., during which the Schola will perform excerpts from Rasar’s Mass.

Lux Fulgebit will be available for purchase at the reception. It can also be purchased through the St. Mary’s Church website (www.stmarynorwalk.net/cd), at the St. Mary’s Church Bookstore and through Amazon.com and iTunes. The attractively packaged CD includes the complete text of the Mass at Dawn in English and Latin, as well as an informative essay on Rasar’s Mass and the music of his period, and is available for US\$20.00. To request a review copy of *Lux Fulgebit*, please contact Tom Heckel at 203-656-2389 or theckel51@gmail.com.

For further information, please visit the St. Mary’s Church website at www.stmarynorwalk.net.

ABOUT SAINT MARY’S CHURCH

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Saint Mary's Church

Page 3

Saint Mary's Church is a Roman Catholic Church within the Diocese of Bridgeport. Parishioners in this unique multi-ethnic community are united in their devotion to the Trinitarian God through aesthetically beautiful and reverent celebrations of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in three languages: English, Spanish and Latin. The Traditional Form of the Roman Rite lies at the heart of the parish's liturgical life and its timeless essence infuses every Mass. The parish's mission of evangelization through authentic liturgical renewal is enhanced by a sacred music program of rare caliber featuring the acclaimed St. Mary's Schola Cantorum. Designed in Gothic Revival style and dedicated in 1870, this historic church was beautifully and lovingly renovated beginning in 2009 to support its essential and timely mission. For more information, please visit the parish's website: www.stmarynorwalk.net.

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