

**ST. MARY'S SCHOLA CANTORUM**

David J. Hughes, director

**LUX FULGEBIT**

THE MASS AT DAWN OF CHRISTMAS DAY

William Rasar: Mass *Christe Jesu*

Motets by Ferrabosco, Byrd, and Lambe

St. Mary's Schola Cantorum

David J. Hughes, Director



**CD Launch**

**Sunday, April 23, 2017**

**St. Mary's Church**

**Norwalk, CT**

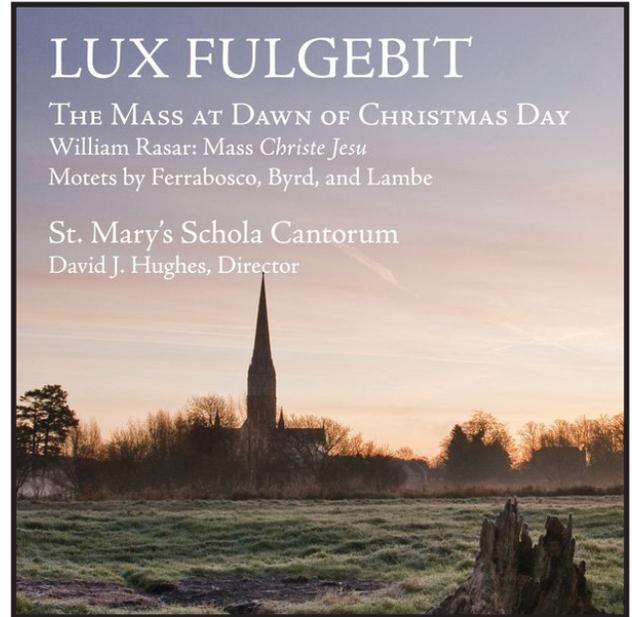
Presented by the St. Cecilia  
Society of St. Mary's

# WELCOME

St. Mary's Church and the St. Cecilia Society are very proud to announce the release of *Lux Fulgebit: The Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day*, the professional recording debut of the St. Mary's Schola Cantorum, featuring the world premiere recording of William Rasar's *Mass Christe Jesu*.

Thank you for joining us on this special occasion. It is only through your support that we can sustain our exceptional sacred music program.

Tom Heckel  
Chairman, St. Cecilia Society



The CD is now available for purchase through the following outlets:

In person at the **St. Mary's Bookstore**

Sun: 9-9:30 A.M., 11:00 A.M.—2:30 P.M.

Mon—Thurs: 2:45-5:45 P.M.

Sat: 10 AM—2:30 P.M.

Direct from **St. Mary's website** at

[www.stmarynorwalk.net/cd](http://www.stmarynorwalk.net/cd)

At **CDBaby.com**

[cdbaby.com/cd/stmarysscholacantorum](http://cdbaby.com/cd/stmarysscholacantorum)

At **Amazon.com**

Digital downloads are also available at CDBaby, Amazon, and the **iTunes Store**.

Full tracks from the CD are available for listening on the **St. Mary's Norwalk YouTube Channel**.

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# FAQS

## What music is included on the CD?

The CD is the “soundtrack” of a sung Mass as it is done at St. Mary’s Norwalk on Sundays and feast days. Everything musical that takes place in the Mass is included, from the bells to the organ, the chant, and the choral polyphony. The readings and chants all come from the Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day, and the polyphony featured is the Mass *Christe Jesu* by William Rasar, with motets by Alfonso Ferrabosco, William Byrd, and Walter Lambe.



AD SECUNDAM MISSAM.  
IN AURORA.

fulgē- bit \*hó- di- e su- per

t no-bis Dó- mi- nus : et vo- cá- bi-

is. De- us, Princeps pa-cis. Pa-ter f

## What is the “Mass at Dawn”?

The Mass at Dawn is the second Mass of Christmas Day. Most feasts in the Roman rite have one proper set of readings and chants, but Christmas, almost uniquely, has three sets: one to be sung at midnight, one at dawn, and one for masses during the day. The Masses for Midnight and during the day have been recorded numerous times before, while the Mass at Dawn is less commonly heard.

## What is the Mass *Christe Jesu*?

The Mass *Christe Jesu* is a sixteenth-century English setting of the Mass Ordinary for five voices, which is found complete in the Forrest-Heyther partbooks (Bodleian Library) and incomplete in the Peterhouse partbooks (Cambridge University Library). It is the only extant composition of William Rasar, and is of very high musical quality. The model of the Mass is unknown or lost, and there are a couple of other features of the Mass that are unusual for the period: the entire text of the Gloria and Credo are set, and the Mass is entirely in duple meter.

ostend' dñe fili dngente Jesu

ne deno agno dei filio pa

in fovee no

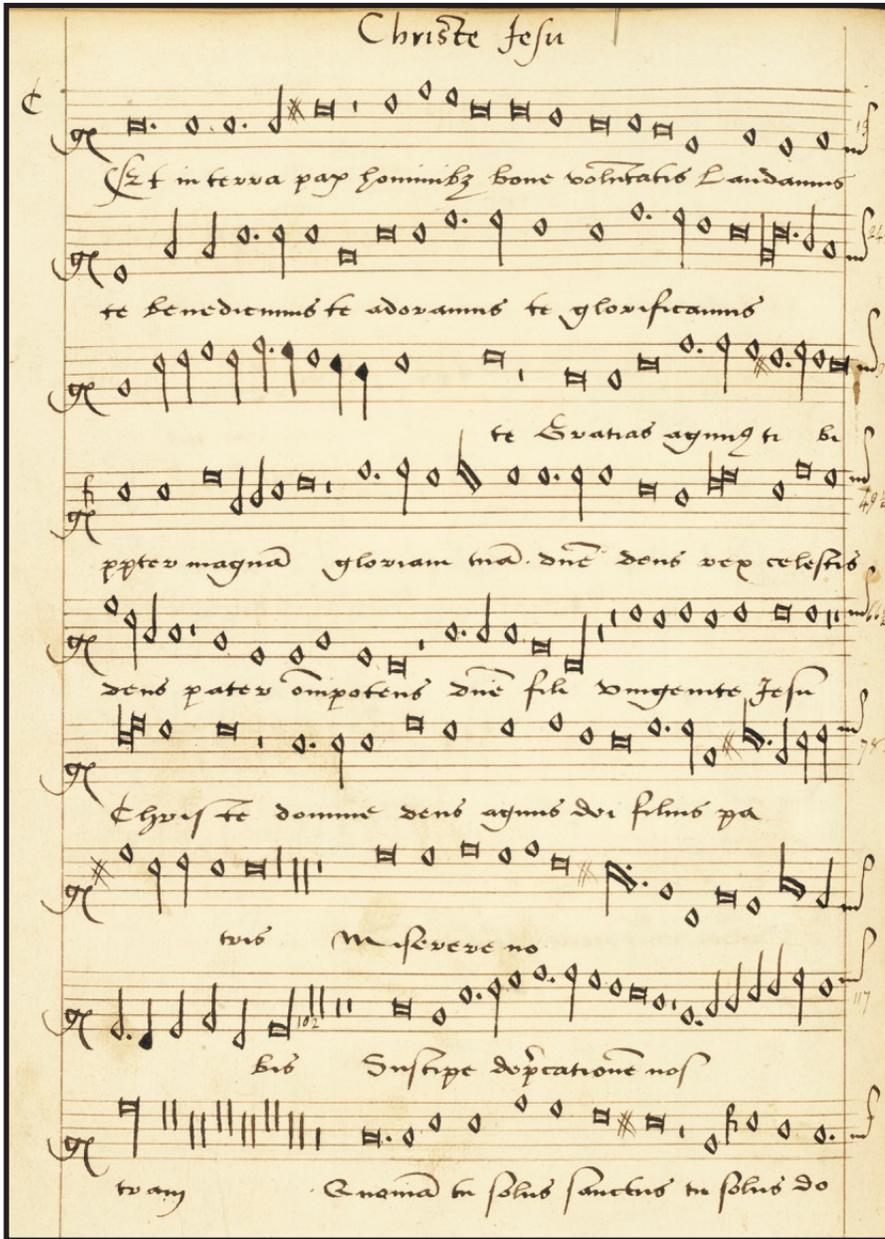
In fovee d'p'catone nos



## Who is William Rasar?

William Rasar is an obscure composer who was active in the early sixteenth century. The only dates known with certainty about him are his tenure as a boy chorister at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, from 1499 to at least 1504, from which his birth year can be estimated as 1491, and his time as a clerk at King’s College, Cambridge, 1510–c. 1515. His only known composition is the Mass *Christe Jesu*, which survives in two sets of partbooks.

## THEN...



The first page of the Mass *Christe Jesu* from the Peterhouse partbooks

- Since paper was expensive and copying was labor intensive (almost no music was printed in Britain in the sixteenth century), each voice part had its own partbook, which minimizes the space taken up by the notation.
- Music in partbooks was written without barlines. The pulse of the music, called the *tactus*, was felt and spoken of, but not explicitly notated on the page.
- The system of notating rhythm was more complex and took years to master: the length of a note relative to the notes around it depended not only on the way the note was written but also on a whole system of additional symbols and rules for interpreting context.
- Music for the Mass was provided by males only, with the characteristic English high treble lines sung by highly trained boys.
- The size of a typical English choir that sang this music was around twenty men and boys, with five or six boys on the treble line and two or three men on each of the other parts.

William Raras's Mass would have first been performed in the context of the elaborate Sarum (Salisbury) Rite. In the Middle Ages, there were many local liturgical variations throughout the Catholic Church. In England, most churches followed the Sarum use, which placed great emphasis on ceremonial and music. The Sarum use included special "troped" versions of the Kyrie eleison, the first movement of the Mass Ordinary, so the Raras Mass, like almost all others of this period, does not include a setting of the Kyrie. In response to the Protestant Reformation, the Church in the Council of Trent standardized many elements of the Roman Rite, allowing local variants only in places where the customs extended back more than two centuries. Some of these, most notably the Ambrosian Rite in Milan, survive to the present. In England, some elements of the Sarum Rite survive in the Anglican liturgy, including the Anglican Use of the modern Roman Rite, which is used by the Anglican Ordinariate. But most of the Sarum customs were lost during the centuries when the Catholic Mass was first outlawed and later tolerated. During the height of Catholic persecution under Elizabeth I, a performance by a large choir in the pre-Reformation style would have been out of the question at a Catholic Mass.

- While partbooks are still the standard for instrumentalists in orchestras and chamber music, choral singers almost universally read from a full score.
- Music is always written with barlines, which simplifies reading by showing the *tactus*, but at the cost of cluttering the page with extra lines and artificially dividing long notes, which makes written music take up more space.
- Music is written in a simpler mensuration system, in which notes always have the same rhythmic relationship with other notes. Extra symbols are now used for details of performance (dynamics, tempo, rubato, phrasing) that were understood from context in older music.
- Mixed ensembles of men and women like the Schola Cantorum are common in churches.
- Large professional ensembles are beyond the financial resources of most Catholic churches, or would be seen as an extraneous expense.

Mass: Christe Jesu

WILLIAM RASAR (b. ca. 1491)  
Ed. Charles Weaver  
Peterhouse Partbooks/Forrest-Heyther Partbooks

Gloria

The image shows a page of a musical score for a Schola Cantorum. It features five vocal parts: Triplex, Medius, Contratenor, Tenor, and Bassus. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score is for the Gloria section of the Mass 'Christe Jesu' by William Rasar. The lyrics are: 'Et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Gloria in excelsis deo. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te.'

The first page of the Mass *Christe Jesu* from the modern edition prepared for the Schola Cantorum

The Schola Cantorum of St. Mary's did not revive William Rasar's Mass in the context of a historical reconstruction, but in a living liturgical setting. It was first performed at a Solemn High Mass at St. Mary's Norwalk on Sunday, January 3, 2016 (the feast of the Holy Name). While large professional choirs are still the ideal in the context of the Church of England (indeed some of the most famous Anglican Collegiate choirs were established before the Reformation), the St. Mary's Schola Cantorum more nearly approximates the sound of a Catholic choir during the period of Recusancy, when the Mass was illegal and was usually performed by fugitive priests in chapels inside country houses. It is likely that most choral ensembles in this period were small out of necessity. That choral polyphony maintained its importance in this context is attested by the work of William Byrd, including his *Quem terra, pontus, æthera* included on the recording. The only conceivable liturgical context for this was an officially illegal Catholic Mass. Manuscript collections, such as the important library of Edward Paston (1550–1630), a recusant Catholic gentleman of Norfolk, also show that music by composers of Rasar's generation continued in use in some form late into the century.

## MEET THE SCHOLA



The professional **Schola Cantorum of St. Mary's Church** of Norwalk, Connecticut is the cornerstone of one of the most admired Catholic parish music programs in the country. The Schola was founded to provide fitting music for the traditional Latin Mass, which was instituted at St. Mary's shortly after Pope Benedict XVI issued his Apostolic Letter *Summorum Pontificum* in 2007. Over the years, the Latin Mass at St. Mary's has become the liturgical heart of the parish, and has attracted visitors from all over the country and even the world. The superb music provided by the Schola Cantorum is integral to this beloved Mass and a pivotal part of St. Mary's' mission to evangelize through beauty. Director David J. Hughes has assembled an extraordinary group of singers, all of whom are at home with the most complex polyphony in the canon of Western sacred music: early-music soprano Elizabeth Weaver; mezzo-soprano, teacher, and writer Judith Malafronte; multitalented high tenor and trombonist Terrence B. Fay; tenor Richard Dobbins, who got his start in ensemble singing in the Oxford Oratory Choir; and bass Charles Weaver, who teaches and performs widely on early plucked instruments and directs early opera. On a weekly basis, the Schola performs a wide range of the greatest music written throughout the centuries for the Mass: late medieval and Renaissance polyphony, Baroque gems by composers such as Monteverdi and Charpentier, and even twentieth- and twenty-first-century works. For important feasts, the Schola also joins the combined choirs of St. Mary's to perform large-scale music with organ and instruments, such as Mass settings by Mozart.



**David J. Hughes** is Organist & Choirmaster at St. Mary's Church, where he directs the professional schola, the parish choir, a men's chant schola, and a children's schola program. At World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011, he led the St. Mary's Student Schola in singing chant and Renaissance polyphony for the primary English-speaking Masses; the students also sang for pontifical Masses at the Cathedral of Toledo, Masses at the Carmelite monasteries in Avila and Madrid, and Masses sponsored by Juventutem. Active as a composer, and fascinated by the role that plainchant can play in the inspiration of new compositions, Mr. Hughes has written extensively for choir and organ. Recent premieres include *Pascha jucundissimum* and the *Missa de Beata Maria*. Film-scoring credits include Navis Pictures' *St. Bernadette of Lourdes* and several documentaries. Mr. Hughes teaches music at St. John Fisher Seminary of the Diocese of Bridgeport. He is on the board of the Church Music Association of America, and serves as a chant instructor and the director of new music at the CMAA's annual Summer Music Colloquium. He is also director of music for the annual Roman Forum Summer Symposium at Lake Garda in the north of Italy. Mr. Hughes' composition teachers have included Ruth Schonthal and John Halle, and he has studied organ with Paul Jacobs and Daniel Sullivan. A native of Stamford, CT, he is a graduate of Yale College.

## MEET THE SCHOLA (CONTINUED)



**Elizabeth Baber Weaver**, soprano, has been praised by the *Washington Post* for her “angelic brightness and dedication” and the “remarkable clarity” of her declamation, and the *New York Times* called her singing “truly lovely.” She has appeared as a soloist with Masterwork Chorus, Voices of Ascension, Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity, Ensemble Viscera, the New York Consort of Viols, Mountainside Baroque, Music in the Somerset Hills, Guido’s Ear, Hesperus, Parthenia, Ex Umbris, and in the revival of *The Play of Daniel* at the Cloisters. Elizabeth has performed and recorded masterpieces of Renaissance music as a member of the vocal chamber group Pomerium. She has also appeared as a guest artist with the acclaimed quartet New York Polyphony, including their Grammy-nominated album *Sing thee Nowell*. With her duo partner and husband, lutenist Charles Weaver, she has created recitals praised for their “impeccable performances” and “imagination in programming.” The duo is currently developing a program of devotional music from English recusant culture, centered on the manuscript collection of Edward Paston. Elizabeth also serves as a vocal coach on the faculty of the New York Continuo Collective.



**Judith Malafronte**, mezzo-soprano, has appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, the San Francisco Symphony, the St. Louis and Baltimore Symphonies, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Baroque Orchestra, Musica Sacra of New York, and the Handel and Haydn Society. She has sung at the Tanglewood Festival, the Boston Early Music Festival and the Utrecht Early Music Festival, and with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, The Dave Brubeck Quartet, and the American Bach Soloists. She has sung leading roles at the opera houses of Lyon, Liège, and Montpellier and won several top awards in Italy, Spain, Belgium and the U.S., including the Grand Prize at the International Vocal Competition in Hertogenbosch, Holland. She holds degrees with honors from Vassar College and Stanford University, and pursued post-graduate studies at the Eastman School of Music, with Mlle. Nadia Boulanger in Paris, and with Giulietta Simionato in Milan as a Fulbright scholar. She has recorded a wide range of repertoire, from the medieval chant of Hildegard von Bingen to the *Deutsche Motette* of Richard Strauss. Since 2004 Ms. Malafronte has taught historical performance and voice at Yale University. Her writings have appeared in *Opera News*, *Early Music America*, and *Stagebill*.



**Terrence B. Fay**, tenor, has been a soloist with the choirs of St. John’s Lutheran Church (Stamford, CT), Trinity Episcopal Church (Torrington, CT), and the Marquand Chapel Choir at the Yale Divinity School. He has also performed with the Grammy-winning choir *Gaudeamus*, and with Mid America Productions in New York City under the direction of John Rutter. He has sung in the Collegiate Chorale at the Verbier Festival, and at the Bard Festival with the American Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Fay also makes much of his living playing trombone. As a trombonist, he has appeared as soloist with the Wallingford Symphony. He is assistant principal trombonist of the New Haven Symphony and principal trombonist of the Eastern Connecticut and New Britain Symphony Orchestras, also performing with the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera Theater of Connecticut, Moscow State and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestras, and the Waterbury Symphony. His Bachelor of Music degree is from the Juilliard School, where he studied under Michael Powell and Joseph Alessi. He spent a year at the Royal Academy of Music in London under Dudley Bright, Susan Addison, and Simon Gunton. While there, he was awarded the Drummond Sharpe Prize. His graduate degrees are from the Yale School of Music, where he received the John Swallow Prize. He is on the faculty of the Neighborhood Music School, Choate Rosemary Hall, and the Universities of Bridgeport and New Haven.

## MEET THE SCHOLA (CONTINUED)



**Richard Dobbins**, tenor, joined the St. Mary Schola Cantorum in January of 2008. Since then, he has built a solid reputation as an interpreter of Gregorian chant and developed a special expertise in the music of William Byrd and the early Franco-Flemish Renaissance tradition, which has seen him perform widely in Roman Catholic Churches in the greater New York City area. Prior to 2008, he sang professionally at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, CT, as well as for the Schola Cantorum of the St. Gregory Society of New Haven, where he served as assistant director of the Schola in 2007. Largely self-trained, he began the formal study of Roman plainchant over twenty years ago and immersed himself in the study of classical polyphony during a seven-year spell as a member of the Oxford Oratory Choir in Oxford, England, where he was working on a graduate degree in Patristic Theology. After marrying and returning to Connecticut, he completed his doctorate in Mechanical Engineering at Yale University, where he also worked as a Postdoctoral Scientist. He is currently on the mathematics faculty of the Brunswick School in Greenwich, CT. Richard is the father of six young St. Mary's parishioners, four of whom are delighted to be able to sing with the Student Schola.



**Charles Weaver**, bass, is on the faculty of the Juilliard School, where he teaches Historically Informed Performance on Plucked Instruments. Last season he was the assistant conductor for Juilliard Opera's production of Francesco Cavalli's *La Calisto*. He also performs on lute and related instruments as a recitalist and accompanist, and as a singer and choral conductor. Chamber music appearances include Quicksilver, TENET, Piffaro, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Folger Consort, Blue Heron, ARTEK, Musica Pacifica, the Sebastians, Mercury Baroque, and the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble. He studied lute with Patrick O'Brien. He also works as a vocal coach and director with the New York Continuo Collective—an ensemble of players and singers exploring seventeenth-century vocal music in semester-length workshop productions. He has also been a vocal coach at the Juilliard School and for the Yale Baroque Opera Project. He has served on the faculty of the City University of New York Graduate Center. He has taught at the Lute Society of America Summer Workshop in Vancouver, the Madison Early Music Festival, and the Western Wind Workshop in Ensemble Singing.



### LUX FULGEBIT: The Mass at Dawn of Christmas Day

Recorded March and November 2016

St. Anthony of Padua Church, Fairfield, Connecticut

Organ: Austin Opus 2756 II/24 1994, St. Mary's Church, Norwalk, Connecticut

Grant Herreid, *Session Producer*

Mateusz Zechowski, *Recording Engineer*

David J. Hughes and Charles Weaver, *Producers*

Dongsok Shin, *Digital Editing*

### IMAGE CREDITS

CD cover: Salisbury Cathedral on a winter morning (Adobe Stock).

The first page of the Mass *Christe Jesu* in the treble partbook from the Peterhouse partbooks (GB-Cpc 471 f.37v):

Image courtesy of the Perne Library and DIAMM, © Peterhouse, Cambridge.

Photos of liturgies at St. Mary's Norwalk by Stuart and Jill Chessman.