

Texts, Translations, and Synopses

Requiem Aeternam (Introit from *Missa Pro Defunctis*) - Plainchant, c. 9th-10th Century

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Ierusalem:
exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

-Missa pro defunctis.

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
A hymn, O God, becometh Thee in Zion;
and a vow shall be paid to Thee in Jerusalem
hear my prayer;
all flesh shall come to Thee.
Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them..

Benedictus (from *Missa Papae Marcelli*) - Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525-1594)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

-Ordinarium Missae

Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Denn das Gesetz (from *Jesu, Meine Freude, BWV 227*) - Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Denn das Gesetz des Geistes, der da lebendig macht in
Christo Jesu, hat mich frei gemacht von dem Gesetz der
Sünde und des Todes.

-Romans 8:1-2.9-10 / Johann Franck

For the law of the [Holy] Spirit who makes [believers]
alive in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of
sin and of death.

-Translation by Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed

Pie Jesu (from *Requiem in D Minor, Op. 48*) - Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924), arr. Tom Brand

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.
Dona eis requiem sempiternam.

-Missa pro defunctis

Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest;
grant them eternal rest.

O How Amiable Are Thy Dwellings - Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623), arr. Tom Brand

O how amiable are thy dwellings: Almighty God!
My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord:

My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
O Lord God of hosts: blessed is the one that putteth their trust in thee. Amen.

-Psalm 84: 1-2, 13



Ave Verum Corpus, KV 618 - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Ave verum corpus, natum
de Maria Virgine,
vere passum, immolatum
in cruce pro homine
cuius latus perforatum
fluxit aqua et sanguine:
esto nobis praegustatum
in mortis examine.

Hail, true Body, born
of the Virgin Mary,
having truly suffered, sacrificed
on the cross for mankind,
from whose pierced side
water and blood flowed:
Be for us a sweet foretaste
in the trial of death!

The hymn "Ave Verum Corpus" has been set to music in a number of ways since the 13th century, most notably by Mozart. He wrote this motet during a time of respite in Austria with his wife, who was in the final months of a difficult pregnancy. Composed for a friend's parish church choir, the notes of this musical gem may be simple to learn, but Mozart's one and only dynamic marking – *sotto voce* – calls upon performers to exercise restraint and precision, with a result that paradoxically elevates performers and listeners alike to a state of transcendence. *Ave Verum Corpus* marked a conceptual shift, for Mozart, in the writing of sacred music, one that centered on the vocal writing, and this was evident in his approach to composing *Requiem* just a few months later.



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Requiem, KV 626 - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Meredith Hansen (Soprano), Meredith Ziegler (Mezzo-Soprano), Albert Lee (Tenor), Mark Womack (Baritone)

I. Introitus: Requiem

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
To you a song of praise, O God, in Zion,
and to you a vow shall be paid in Jerusalem.
Answer my prayer,
to you all flesh shall come.
Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.

The mood of the first movement is mercurial. Basset horns, coupled with bassoons, set a dark, solemn tone in the opening bars, before strings and timpani jump to life to herald the entrance of the chorus. Basses enter first, followed sequentially by tenors, altos, and sopranos, each in their turn somberly intoning Requiem aeternum dona eis Domine (Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord) – a textual theme that will appear again in movements III, VII and VIII. In a short, lyrical passage the soprano soloist expresses a song of praise before the chorus rushes back in with pleas for the blessings of eternal light and eternal rest, at times insistent, at times meek. Throughout much of the movement the soprano line resides “in the clouds,” and is at times reminiscent of the soprano line in the Plainchant that opened the concert. [Incidentally, Mozart’s use of basset horns, paired with bassoons, in this movement and elsewhere give the work a particular tonal color and musical language which made this requiem stand out in Mozart’s day from other settings already composed.]

II. Kyrie

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy,
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have Mercy.

Mozart made extensive use of polyphony in Requiem, and this is particularly evident in the Kyrie, which is structured as a musical conversation between the primary theme of Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy) and the secondary theme of Christe eleison (Christ, have mercy). In fact, this entire movement is a double fugue, with the exception of the last three bars, which unite all voices in a final, definitive plea for mercy.

III. Sequentia

1. Dies irae

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando iudex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus.

The day of wrath, that day of grief
shall change the world to glowing ash,
as David and the Sibyl tell.
How great a quaking there shall be,
when on that day the judge shall come,
to weigh man’s deeds in each detail.

Hope for mercy vanishes with the very first note of the terrifying Dies Irae (Day of Wrath). The vivid images of judgment in this medieval chant, as well as its setting in the eerie Dorian mode, have made it the perfect choice for foreboding scenes in countless movies. In Mozart’s treatment of it, the prominent role of timpani might be interpreted as the pounding hand of an angry God. Christoff Wolff, in the preface to the Baerenreiter (2017) vocal score, points to “the masterly and elegant enharmonic modulation at the end of the movement, going from A minor by way of A-flat minor and G minor to F minor with an impressive conclusion in the major.” Sounds complicated? Don’t worry about the details, but do listen for and enjoy this stroke of genius.

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III. Sequentia (continued)

2. Tuba mirum

Tuba mirum spargens sonum per
sepulcra regionum,
coet omnes ante thronum.

Mors stupebit et natura
cum resurget creatura
judicanti responsura.

Liber scriptus proferetur
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus judicetur.

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
quidquid latet, apparebit:
nil inultum remanebit.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
quem patronum rogaturus,
cum vix justus sit securus?

The trumpet sends a wondrous sound
through earth's graves
and gathers all before the throne.

Death and nature will be astounded
when all creation rises
to answer the judgment.

A book will be brought forth,
in which all will be written,
by which the world will be judged.

When the judge takes his place
what is hidden will be revealed,
nothing will remain unavenged.

What shall a wretch like me say?
Who shall intercede for me,
When the just ones need mercy?

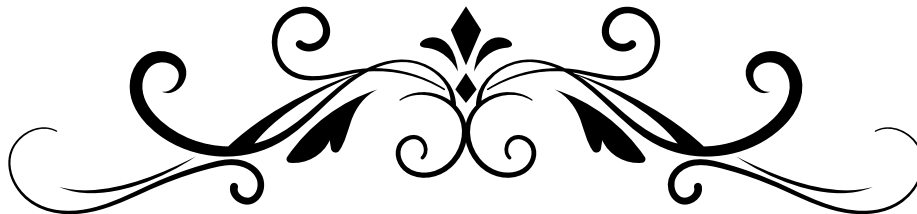
Something to listen for in this movement is the trombone solo at the very beginning. It is considered one of the earliest in classical symphonic literature and is also remarkable in that Mozart typically wrote sparingly for trombone. The solo quartet sings this movement, one that centers on the approach of judgment day, with the bass the first to enter, followed by tenor, then alto, and finally soprano, before all converge to ask the question dripping with anxiety, "Who shall intercede for me?"

3. Rex tremendae

Rex tremendae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salve me, fons pietatis.

O fearsome King of majesty,
who freely saves all that need you,
O fount of love, save me.

The string section stridently introduces this movement and drives the chorus's forceful pronouncements of the majesty of the Lord, coupled with emphatic entreaties for salvation. At bar 18, the confidence of the previous 17 dissolves abruptly into a whispered plea to a loving God to "save me."



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III. Sequentia (continued)

4. Recordare

Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuae viae,
Ne me perdas illa die.

Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus,
Tantus labor non sit cassus.

Juste iudex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis.

Ingemisco tanquam reus,
Culpa rubet vultus meus,
Supplicanti parce, Deus.

Qui Mariam absolvisti
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

Preces meae non sunt dignae,
Sed tu bonus fac benigne,
Ne perenni cremer igne.

Inter oves locum praesta,
Et ab hoedis me sequestra,
Statuens in parte dextra.

Dear Jesus remember
that it was for me that you walked your life's hard path.
Condemn me not on that terrible day.

In search of me you sat down weary and
redeemed me on your cross of pain.
Pray let such great toil be not in vain.

Of God's strict vengeance righteous judge,
the gift of sins' forgiveness grant
before the day of full accounting.

I groan as one accused of crime,
my face scarlet with the shame of sin.
O God, I humbly beg you pardon.

'Twas you to Mary pardon gave,
'twas you gave ear to the robber's plea,
and you beside who gave me hope.

Unworthy are my prayerful pleas,
yet in Thy goodness mercy grant,
Lest eternal fire by my fate.

Among your flock pray grant my place,
far removed from the goats,
to stand with those at your right hand.

The lovely melodies of the Recordare, sung by the quartet, offer a respite from the orchestral and vocal intensity of the previous three sections. Enfolded in these melodies are the prayers of a sinner facing judgment, prayers for mercy and forgiveness. Although these prayers are an acknowledgment of God's mercy and forgiveness, it's interesting to note that the directive to God to "Remember" (Recordare), indicates that the supplicant is not quite sure this mercy will be extended without giving God a subtle nudge. Nonetheless, this section expresses hope that salvation is attainable.

5. Confutatis

Confutatis maledictis
Flammis acribus addictis,
Voca me cum benedictis.

Oro supplex et acclinis,
Cor contritum quasi cinis,
Gere curam mei finis. Amen.

When sentence is passed on the damned,
and all are sent to piercing flames,
call me among the blessed.

Abased and bowed,
my heart crushed to ashes,
my destiny is Thine.

The hope of the Recordare is shattered with the opening notes of the Confutatis as bass and tenor voices deliver a vigorous evocation of the horror that awaits the damned. Altos and sopranos answer with timid, barely audible pleas for salvation. In hushed phrases that grow softer, one by one, the chorus sings of submission to the will of God.

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III. Sequentia (continued)

6. Lacrimosa

Lacrimosa dies illa
Qua resurget ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus.
Huic ergo parce, Deus.
Pie Jesu Domine,
Dona eis requiem. Amen.

A day of tears is that dread day,
on which each guilty man shall rise from ashen
dust to judgment.
Spare this soul, O God, we pray.
O loving Savior, Lord Jesus,
grant them your rest. Amen.

Now we arrive at what is perhaps the most widely recognizable movement of Mozart's Requiem, having figured in many popular movies, most notably in the death scenes in Amadeus (1984). Lacrimosa (tearful, weeping) is all the more poignant when we consider that it was the last music composed by Mozart, cutting off after the first eight measures. Listen as the strings mimic the sound of teardrops in the introduction. Basses horn and viola pave the way for the chorus's entrance. After dramatic expressions of dread, guilt, and pleas for mercy, this movement re-introduces the textual theme of Dona eis requiem (Grant them rest). Here, Mozart works his magic within a narrow range of notes that begin with foreboding and resolve into sweetness.

IV. Offertorium

1. Domine Jesu

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum de poenis inferni
et de profundo lacu!
Libera eas de ore leonis,
ne absorbeat eas tartarus,
ne cadant in obscurum.

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory,
deliver the souls of all the faithful departed
from the pains of hell
and from the deep pit!
Spare them from the lion's mouth,
grant that hell not swallow them,
that they not fall into darkness.

Sed signifer sanctus Michael
repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam,
quam olim Abrahae promisisti
et semini ejus.

O May your standard bearer Michael
speedily bring them into the holy light,
which of old you promised to Abraham
and to his descendants.

Like many of the preceding movements, Domine Jesu is an entreaty by the full chorus for deliverance of the faithful from eternal damnation, depicting Hell with such images as "deep pit" and "lion's mouth." The solo quartet briefly calls upon the angel Michael to bring the faithful to "the holy light." The chorus follows up with a majestic fugue (Quam olim Abrahae) in which they remind God, boldly and repeatedly, that such was promised to Abraham and his descendants.

2. Hostias

Hostias et preces tibi, Domine,
laudis offerimus.
Tu suscipe pro animabus illis,
quarum hodie memoriam facimus.
Fac eas, Domine,
de morte transire ad vitam,
quam olim Abrahae promisisti
et semini ejus.

Sacrifices and prayers of praise we offer to
you, O Lord.
Receive them for those souls
whose memory we keep this day.
Grant them, O Lord,
passage from death to life,
which was promised to Abraham
and his descendants.

The elegant Hostias, with its relatable harmonies and contrasting dynamics, offers sacrifices and prayers of praise, in hopes that mercy will be granted to the departed. It ends with a return to the Quam olim Abrahae fugue, assertively reminding God of his promises.

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V. Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth!
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Mozart died before he finished writing this movement and the ones that follow it, although there are clear signs of his influence in what his student Franz Süssmayr went on to write. Sanctus offers the audience (and performers) a break from the turbulence of previous movements. It is a triumphant prayer of praise to the glory of God and recognition of the blessed nature of Jesus. Be ready for the delightful, but very short, Osanna fugue that is over almost before it has begun. You'll have a second chance to enjoy it, or at least a close variation, at the end of the Benedictus.

VI. Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

One can imagine an enraptured choir of angels raising their voices in praise as the solo quartet sings the reverent Benedictus, with subtle orchestral accompaniment. There are two short orchestra interludes, and in the second instance it appears momentarily that the movement has ended. But don't be fooled! The tenors lead the charge as the chorus enters to reprise the brisk Osanna fugue.

VII. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them eternal rest.

We again return to a common theme of the Requiem, dona eis Requiem (grant them rest). In three iterations, the chorus implores the Lord, whose death has taken away the sins of the world, to grant rest to the departed (eternal rest in the final iteration.)

VIII. Communio: Lux Aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis,
Domine, cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Let perpetual light shine upon them,
O Lord, with your saints forever,
for you are forgiving.

Requiem aeternam dona eis,
Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Eternal rest grant to them,
O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them

The final movement returns with themes from the first movement, both musical and textual, in keeping with instructions it is believed Mozart had given to Süssmayr. The movement concludes with a double fugue, which is in fact a recapitulation of the Kyrie. This time though, the text emphasizes the assurance that God is forgiving (quia pius es), coupled with the familiar phrase "grant them rest" (dona eis requiem), and it imagines an afterlife in the company of saints (cum sanctis tuis in aeternum). Mozart's Requiem ends as it began, reiterating the overriding theme of "Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light (lux aeterna) shine upon them."