

## From the editor . . .

Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca.1524–1594) is the acknowledged master of the sixteenth-century sacred polyphonic style, and his music represents the epitome of the classic Renaissance ideals of restraint, concordance, and balance. Palestrina worked most of his life in Rome, and the majority of his works were composed as service music for the Roman Catholic Church. Revered in his lifetime, his music has become the basis for many texts on sixteenth-century counterpoint in the 400+ years since his death.

This setting of *Alma Redemptoris Mater* first appeared in a collection of motets (*Motectorum liber secundus*) published in Venice in 1584. The bases for this edition are several collections of collected works that include this motet. For this edition the original mensuration sign has been changed from  $\text{C}$  to  $\text{C}$ , the note values have been halved, and barlines and a tempo suggestion have been added. It should be noted as well that the pitch has been raised a major third from the source materials. Suggested accidentals are indicated by brackets [ ] over notes in the score.

The prospective performer will notice a lack of dynamic markings in this score. Rather than clutter the score, the editor would like to suggest that when performing this work the conductor remember those Renaissance ideals of restraint and balance, and work within a suggested dynamic range of *piano* to *mezzo forte*. Understated shaping of phrases and a subtle emphasis on entrances and repeated points of imitation will also maintain clarity of texture while allowing the listener to recognize the structural signposts of this motet. One final remark concerning appropriate choral tone: the present-day concept of “straight-tone” would seem to have little basis in fact. While extensive vibrato would in fact muddy the texture of this music and make it unintelligible to the listener, a judicious amount will impart a vocal warmth that will enhance the overall effect of the music.

Raymond Sprague

Translation:

*Loving Mother of Our Saviour, who opens our way to heaven;  
Thou star of the sea, look on us and grant thy grace to those who  
seek thy grace; Thou who gave birth, nature is in awe of thee, thou  
most blessed. Thou a virgin, then and forever more, who was told  
by Gabriel “Greetings to thee, Hail!” have mercy on our sins.*

# Alma Redemptoris Mater\*

SSAA *a cappella*

Anonymous, 13th century

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina  
(ca. 1524–1594)  
*Edited by Raymond Sprague*

**Adagio in 2**  $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 54$   
Prima Pars

Soprano 1  
[Cantus I]

Soprano 2  
[Cantus II]

Alto 1  
[Cantus III]

Alto 2  
[Altus]

Al -

ma re - demp - to - ris ma -

Al -

Al - ma re - demp - to -

Duration: 5:15

\* This is the third of *Three Marian Antiphons for Treble Choir*. The first is *Salve Regina* (15/1853R) and the second is *Ave Regina Coelorum* (15/2165R).

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7

ter, ma - ter, re -  
 ma re - demp - to - ris ma -  
 ris ma - ter, re - demp -  
 Al

11

demp - to - ris ma - ter,  
 ter, ma -  
 to - ris ma - ter, quae  
 ma re - demp - to - ris ma -

15

quae per - vi - a coe - li  
 ter, quae per - vi - a  
 per - vi - a, quae per - vi - a  
 ter, quae per - vi -

19

por - ta ma - nes,  
 coe - li por - ta ma - nes, por - ta  
 coe - li por - ta ma -  
 a coe - li por - ta ma -

23

et stel - la ma - ris, et  
 ma - nes, et stel - la  
 nes, et stel - la ma -  
 nes, et stel - la ma - ris, et

27

stel - la ma -  
 ma - ris, et stel - la ma -  
 ris, et stel - la ma - ris, suc -  
 stel - la ma - ris, suc -

31

ris, suc - cur - re ca - den - ti, suc - cur - re ca -  
nes, suc - cur - re, suc - cu - re  
cur - re ca - den -  
re, suc - cur -

35

den - ti, sur - ge -  
ca - den - ti, sur -  
ti, suc - cur - re ca - den - ti,  
re ca - den - ti, sur -

39

re, sur - ge - re -  
ge - re, sur - ge - re  
sur - ge - re, sur - ge - re qui cu -  
ge - re, sur - ge - re qui cu -

43

qui cu - rat po - pu -

qui cu -

rat po - pu - lo, qui cu - rat po - pu - lo,

rat po - pu - lo, qui cu - rat po - pu -

47

lo, qui cu - rat, qui cu -

rat po - pu - lo,

qui cu - rat po - pu - lo, qui cu -

lo, qui cu - rat po - pu -

51

rat po - pu - lo;

qui cu - rat po - pu -

rat po - pu - lo, qui cu - rat po - pu -

lo, qui cu - rat po - pu -