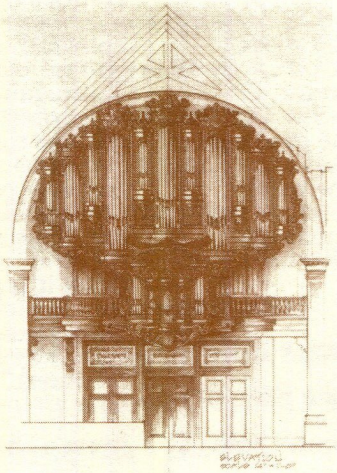
To Bless an Organ

by Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris

TO BLESS AN ORGAN IS TO AWAKEN IT—AWAKEN IT SO IT CAN SPEAK, SO IT CAN SING. FOR ALL OUR WORDS OF PRAYER AND THEIR BEAUTY ARE THUS UNVEILED AND TRANSFIGURED BY THE SONG OF THIS INSTRUMENT.

The Church—Christian experience—recognizes in the language of music, and uniquely in this instrument, not only familiar accompaniment of the sacred song of the congregation, but also an expression that enables the languages of mortals to reflect a glimmer of the uncreated depths of the Divine Word.



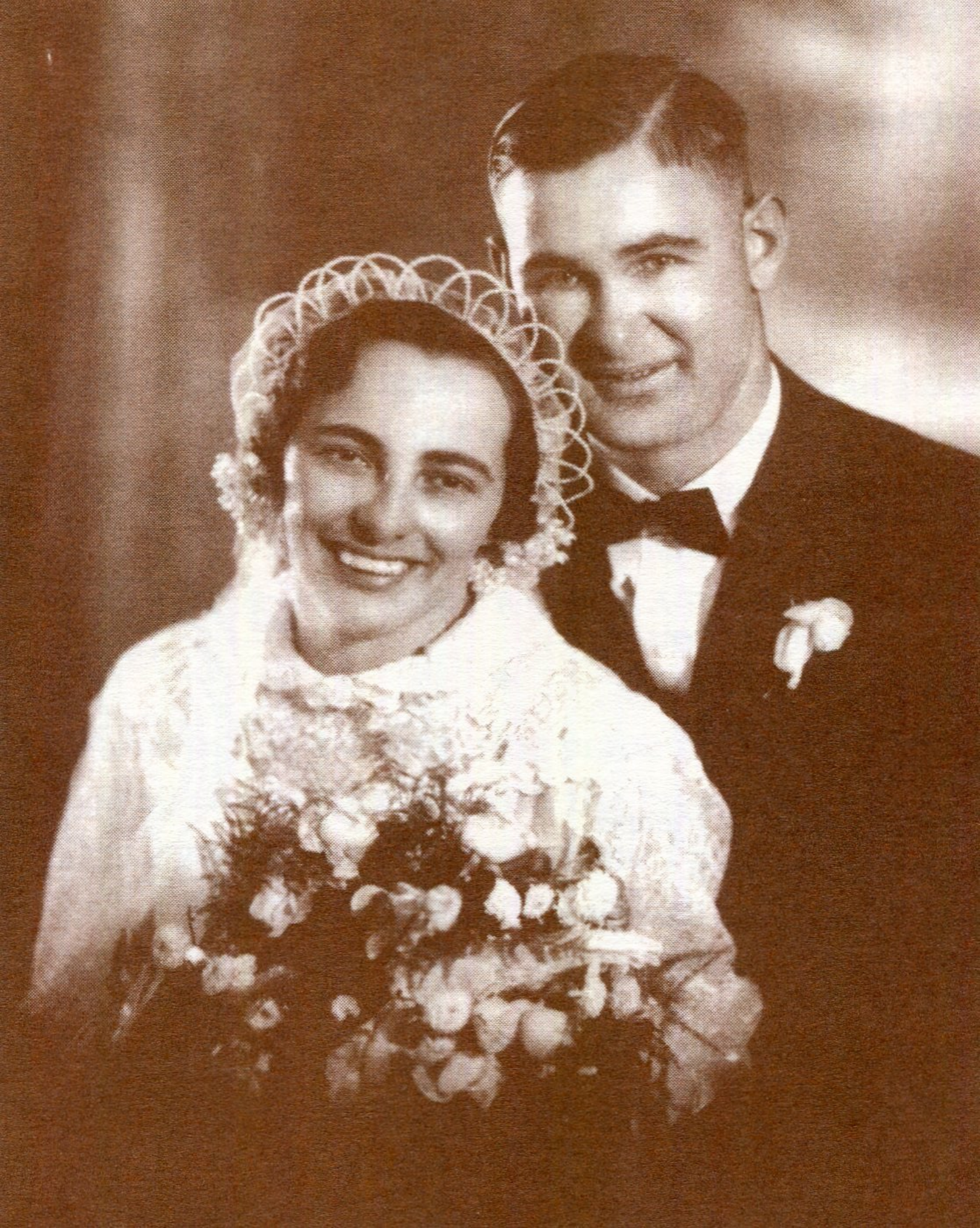
We shall pray to God that this instrument serve to sing his glory and unite our voices in song of praise.

Then we shall burn incense before it, thus honoring it in the same way we honor the Gospel, the Body of Christ, the altar, the People of God...everything that partakes of and symbolizes the holiness of God.

Next we shall enter into dialog with the organ. We shall speak to it as if it were a living being. Awakened by the fingers of the organist, it will respond, stop by stop, to each of the invocations, beginning with us the dialogue of prayer.

Finally, it will burst forth with all its power, rejoicing in our name before we in turn can sing with it to enter more deeply into the celebration of the Eucharist.

The blessing of an organ is not simply a rare and colorful event. It is rich in meaning. When man, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, transforms creation into a work of art and imprints on it the seal of God, he reveals in this act of worship that all creation can and must sing out the glory of God. What the delicate skill of art and worship can accomplish with this instrument, we must all do together for the whole of creation, revealing thereby that for which it was created by God: to give God glory by fulfilling our human mission. For God has entrusted the universe to us so that we might rule over it, not as tyrants, but in the priestly fashion of those who act as "stand-ins" of the Creator.



The organ is silent until the Éveiller.

PROCESSIONAL *Please stand at the sound of the handbells* — *Gloria, laus et honor*
—Theodulf, Bishop of Orléans († 821)

GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER — Archbishop Flynn

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON — Philippians 2:6-11
Brian Link, cantor

Psalm 150

Praise God in his holy place,
praise him in his mighty heavens.
Praise him for his powerful deeds,
praise his surpassing greatness.

O praise him with sound of trumpet,
praise him with lute and harp.
Praise him with timbrel and dance,
praise him with strings and pipes.

O praise him with resounding cymbals,
praise him with clashing of cymbals.
Let everything that lives and that breathes
give praise to the Lord. Amen.

Give praise to the Father Almighty,
to his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord,
to the Spirit who dwells in our hearts,
both now and for ever. Amen.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION — Praise and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ

GOSPEL LESSON — Luke 19:28-40
Deacon Peter M. Richards, cantor

HOMILY — Fr. Joel M. Konzen, S.M., *Vicar Provincial*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION — Archbishop Flynn

L'ÉVEILLER DE L'ORGUE

(congregation seated)

Awaken, Organ, sacred instrument. Intone the praise of God,
our Creator and our Father.
Éveille-toi, Orgue, instrument sacré. Entonne la louange de Dieu
notre Créateur et notre Père.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

Organ, sacred instrument, extol Jesus Christ our Lord,
who died and rose again for us.
Orgue, instrument sacré, célèbre Jésus Notre Seigneur,
mort et ressuscité pour nous.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

Organ, sacred instrument, sing praise to the Holy Spirit,
who ensouls our life with the breath of God.
Orgue, instrument sacré, chante l'Esprit Saint
qui anime nos vies du souffle de Dieu.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

Organ, sacred instrument, lift up our songs and supplications
to Mary, Mother of Jesus.
Orgue, instrument sacré, élève nos chants et nos supplications
vers Marie, la Mère de Jésus.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

Organ, sacred instrument, bring the assembly of believers
into Christ's own act of thanksgiving.
Orgue, instrument sacré, fais entrer l'assemblée des fidèles
dans l'action de grâce du Christ.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

Organ, sacred instrument, bring the consolation of faith
to those who are in pain.
Orgue, instrument sacré, apporte le réconfort de la foi
à ceux qui sont dans la peine.

ORGAN IMPROVISATION

⚜

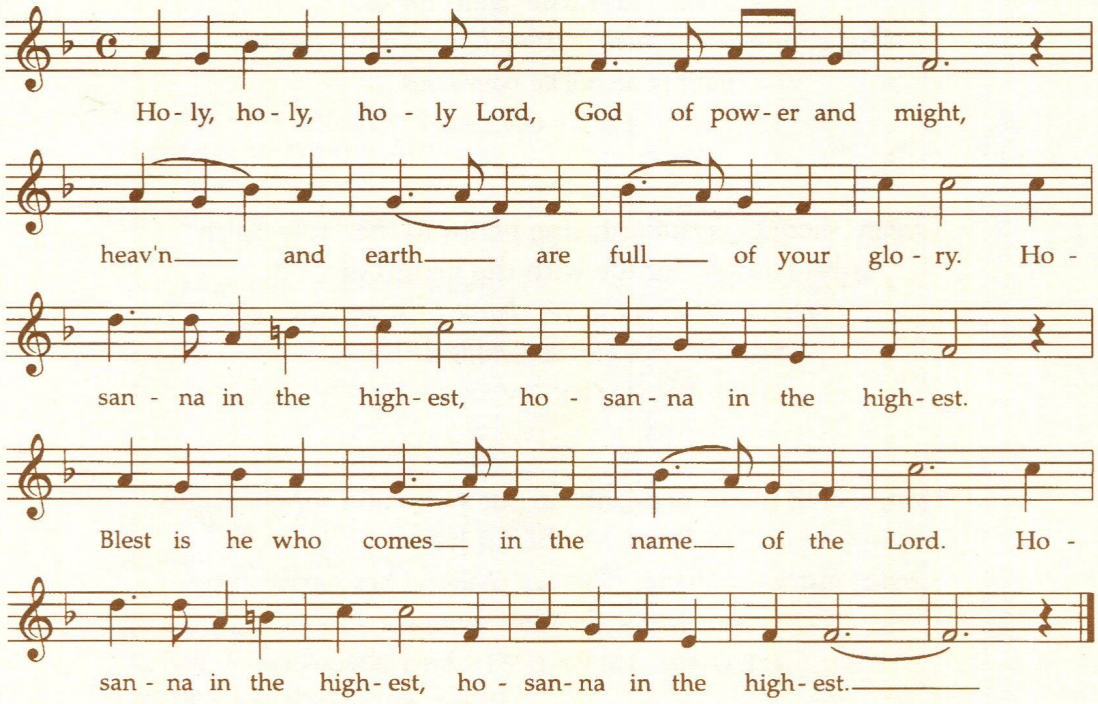
Organ, sacred instrument, accompany the prayer of Christians.
Orgue, instrument sacré, soutiens la prière des chrétiens.
ORGAN IMPROVISATION

✦

Organ, sacred instrument, proclaim
"Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."
Orgue, instrument sacré, proclame
"Gloire au Père et au Fils et au Saint-Esprit."
ORGAN IMPROVISATION

SANCTUS *standing*

A Community Mass, 1970
—Richard Proulx



Richard Proulx, © 1970; all rights reserved. Used by permission.

ANTHEM

Ave Maria
—J.S. Bach/Charles Gounod, arr. Ringwald

ORGAN SOLO

Chant de Paix
—Jean Langlais

This piece is offered in memory of **Jean-Claude Gauthier (†1996)**
whose design of the organ appears on the title page of this program

ANTHEM

Let all the World (Five Mystical Songs)
—Ralph Vaughan Williams

REMARKS BY THE PASTOR

Rev. Paul Morrissey, S.M.

—Richard Proulx

COMPOSER'S NOTE

When I was commissioned last year to write an organ work for the dedication of Casavant organ Opus 3762, I knew it would need to be a piece out of the ordinary for this grand-orgue extraordinaire!

In late October I visited the fascinating town of New Harmony, Indiana where a replica of the labyrinth from Chartres Cathedral had just been unveiled and where I learned of the historic interest in Saint Louis IX (1214-1270):

New Harmony had been sited on the old road which connected Saint Louis, MO to Louisville, KY, a truly "French trail." At the New Harmony Inn I discovered a remarkable chapel and shrine dedicated to the saint which beautifully displayed quotes from the king's final words. It was as though I had been led to the spot to receive the idea for the construction of this piece for the "Little French Church," and so I copied the saint's words with excitement and gratitude for such a clear solution to my quest. (Once before, in the Galilee Chapel of Durham Cathedral in England, I had copied a text from the wall which resulted in my "Prayer of the Venerable Bede").

These 'paroles finales de Saint-Louis' are thus used in this piece to suggest the general mood, color and sentiment, rather than to mirror specific programatics.

"I think more of the little church where
I was baptized than the cathedral
where I was crowned. For the dignity of
a child of God, which was bestowed
on me at baptism, is greater than that of
the ruler of the kingdom. The latter
I shall lose at death, the other will be my
passport to everlasting life glory.
Lord, I now enter your dwelling and there I
will adore you."

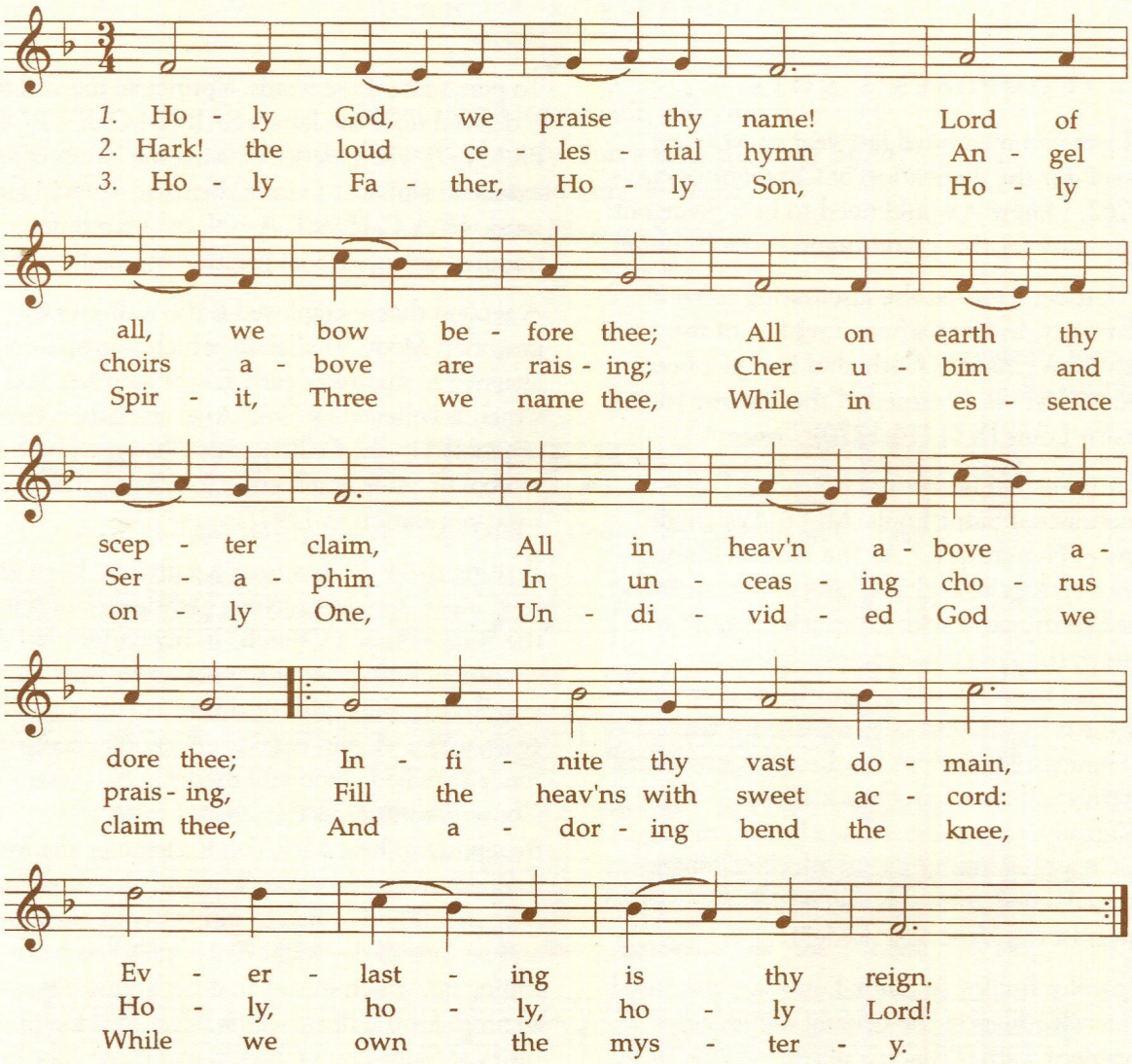
To punctuate these words, a principal musical theme is derived from the letters SAINT-LOUIS, ROI DE FRANCE. The practice of using the letters of an extended alphabet to form thematic material for music (B-A-C-H, A-L-A-I-N, etc.) is a time-honored compositional practice, especially in France.

A second theme employed is the well-known gregorian Mode VI alleluia, which was traditionally assigned to matins of early Easter morning, and which is believed by Willi Apel and others to have originated in the Gallican Rite. It is used here as a symbol of Saint Louis' entry into heaven and also of his canonization in 1297.

Writing this work has been a particular labor of love, since it reconnects my early association with the "Little French Church" in my native city! As a youngster, I often sat at the old organ with Margaret von Ruden, the parish organist here for some thirty years, and a woman of good cheer and great wit. Since I studied piano and theory at St. Agatha's Conservatory across the street, I came over frequently to hear Miss Von Ruden play the Monday multiple novena services. She was also the parish accountant and so had to run between organ loft and rectory all day long! Only rarely was her return timing off, which meant that her young observer got to fill in for the next hymn! Between these opportunities at Saint Louis Church, and those afforded by the good nuns at the conservatory, Saint Patrick and Saint Agnes schools, and composers Leopold Brunner and Bruce Larsen, my musicality was formed very early. It is my hope that all of these persons and places will be honored by this piece and that it will reflect the glorious French-Canadian traditions of this area and also the monumental generosity which have made possible the grandeur of this grand-orgue, given to the Glory of God, Notre Père.

—Richard Proulx
March 1998

Te Deum (Holy God We Praise Thy name)



Text: *Grosser Gott*, wir loben dich; Ascr. to Agnaz Franz, 1719-1790; Tr. by Clarence Walworth, 1820-1900
Tune: GROSSER GOTT, 7 8 7 8 77; *Katholisches Gesangbuch*, Vienna, c. 1774

FINAL BLESSING

POSTLUDE AND PROCESSION

Carillon Sortie
—Henri Mulet

RECEPTION FOLLOWING IN THE PARISH HALL

The ushers will assist in directing you to the parish hall. Some guests may remain in the church after the blessing so that the flow of people to the parish hall might not become congested.

When the primordial Breath of God
blew above the waters
stirring the miasma
chirring on the clavis of the darkness
and the new light,
only the green creation heard
the wind suspire
through the spikes of diatonic pines
and percolate up
from gilled hydraulus of new fishes.

The wanton voice of the wild God
wailed untamed in the vacuum
vanquished
the same as silence.

Centuries before the Christ
Ctsebius heard music
in a moving mirror
and crafted an instrument
cunning, scientific
mathematic
to catch the biding Breath.

And God gasped at last
through pipes
at a human touch.

God's choric and chromatic voice
captured by His own creation
For He had formed the ones
to frame His sound
no longer languishing in the millennia
soughing in the spheres.

Nimble brains,
mad with divine messages,
transcribed pneumatic patterns
for the speech of God.

Artisans, hearing in the organ
every instrument of nature and invention
inspired to warm these cadences
in wooden cases
carved and welded—
the further work of human hands
to forward the works of God
and focus the eye
where the ear was now transfixed.

Airy music
controlled and tense
trembling in the wind chest
burst into the churches,
becoming the fervid speech of faith, giving
life and language
laminae et linguae
keys and tongues
to the Composer of the wind.

I did not speak in secret,
in a land of darkness;

I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
'Seek me in chaos.'

For I am the Lord your God,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the lord of hosts is his name.

And I have put my words in your mouth
and hid you in the shadow of my hand.—(Isaiah)

—Dorothea Wagner Zamacona

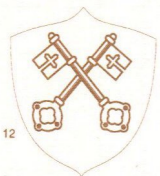
ORIGINAL POEM BY DOROTHEA WAGNER ZAMACONA ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING OF THE NEW ORGAN FOR THE CHURCH OF SAINT LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE. 1995. THIS POEM FIRST APPEARED IN THE 1995 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BROCHURE ENTITLED *"A JEWEL TO BE TREASURED."*

BLUE is the color of truth and purity, for truth possesses the piercing clarity of the heavenly sky. It is, then, a color of Christ—Truth himself—and of the Virgin, most pure vessel of Truth. And for us blue has two further associations. By recalling our crystalline northern sky, blue speaks of Minnesota, *l'étoile du nord*. And blue is the royal color of France, the France whose Catholic missionaries first brought the Truth to this region that it might indeed become a "Star of the North" for those seeking the Truth.

GOLDEN YELLOW is the brilliant color of the unchanging Revelation: it encompasses all reality, and it originates in God. Thus gold circumscribes the clock face and radiates from the central Cross of Christ—Christ, "the same yesterday, today, and forever," the "Alpha and Omega," through Whom all things have been created and Who transcends time itself. This is Christ, through Whose Incarnation by the Virgin "in the fullness of time" eternity entered the finite, heaven pierced earth. This is Christ in whom all things will find their completion so that, at the end of time, He will be "all in all."

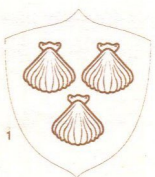
Thus the Triune God, signified in the tri-fold character of the clock hands' *fleur-de-lis*, sweeps across time through the "two hands of God": Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Red Blood of Christ and the Crimson Fire of the Spirit permeate the cosmos.

Yet God's action in history does not remain hidden. It flowers in nations and cultures. The *fleur-de-lis* therefore also speaks of France whose kings were the first in the west to embrace Christian revelation and whose culture—even in its darkest moments—has been imbued with the sense of God's presence. At the center of such a flowering stands the saint, and the people are doubly blessed whose saint is also a king. Such is *Ludovicus Rex:* St. Louis, King of France, the pious, the just, the wise. His piety centered on the passion of Christ, and the "St. Louis Cross" takes a central place in the clock. Louis' strength was his justice: the oak leaves and acorns remind us of this justice meted out beneath the Parisian oaks where all subjects had access to him. And Louis' wisdom was founded upon the ancient but living Deposit of Faith handed down from the Apostles whose twelve symbols here mark the hours.



St. Peter

ST. PETER ranks first: first in profession, first in denial, first in repentance, first in succession. To him and to the Church he stewards have been committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the power of standing *in persona Christi, in persona Alpha et Omega*.

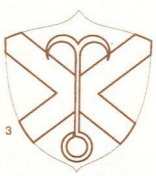


St. James the Greater

At one o'clock the three escallop shells stand for **ST. JAMES THE GREATER,** brother of St. John the Evangelist and kinsman of our Lord, who was beheaded by Herod Agrippa. The shells are associated with the pilgrims who visited the Spanish coastal shrine of Compostella housing James' remains.

St. John the Evangelist

At two o'clock, the serpent refers to sin which is nonetheless defeated by the "Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God" so eloquently attested to by **ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST,** beloved disciple of our Lord. The serpent hearkens, too, to the many vile attempts to murder John who, tradition holds, was the only Apostle to die a natural death at a great age.



St. Andrew

ST. ANDREW, signfied at three o'clock, was crucified on a cross saltire which he venerated before being hung upon it, and which has since taken the name of "St. Andrew's Cross." The boat hook recalls his profession, along with that of Simon Peter his brother, as a fisherman. Not surprisingly, Andrew's patronage is as far flung as Russia and Scotland.