

# O SACRUM CONVIVIUM!

*Music for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi*



The Choir of Buckfast Abbey  
Matthew Searles





## *Introduction from Fr Abbot*

The ancient feast of Corpus Christi is celebrated at Buckfast with great solemnity, including a procession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, making the real presence of Jesus Christ visible in our world.

On this, their latest recording, the Abbey Choir, enhanced by the rousing voice of our Ruffatti organ, presents a musical offering representative of what one might hear at Buckfast during the course of Mass and Vespers in celebration of this feast.

I hope that you enjoy this splendid array of sacred music, rooted in our Benedictine tradition of Gregorian chant, which continues to form the bedrock of the Community's daily prayer in this place.

RT REV. DAVID CHARLESWORTH OSB

*Abbot of Buckfast*

SOLEMN MASS

ANTON HEILLER (1923–1979)

- 1 Ante Introitum (In festo Corporis Christi) ... 1' 57

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 2 Introit: Cibavit eos..... 3' 11

MARTIN BAKER (b.1967)

- 3 Kyrie (Missa O sacrum convivium!)..... 3' 19  
4 Gloria (Missa O sacrum convivium!)..... 7' 13

PETER STEVENS (b.1987)

- 5 Responsorial Psalm:  
The cup of salvation I will raise ..... 2' 32

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 6 Sequence: Ecce panis angelorum..... 1' 38  
7 Alleluia: Caro mea..... 3' 11

FRANCISCO GUERRERO (1528–1599)

- 8 O sacrum convivium..... 5' 05

ANTON HEILLER

- 9 Post Offertorium (In festo Corporis Christi) 2' 40

MARTIN BAKER

- 10 Sanctus (Missa O sacrum convivium!) ..... 2' 46  
11 Agnus Dei (Missa O sacrum convivium!)..... 3' 58

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA

- 12 O bone Iesu..... 1' 34

ANTON HEILLER

- 13 Post Communionem  
(In festo Corporis Christi).....1' 18

RICHARD RUNCIMAN TERRY (1865–1938)

- 14 O Godhead hid, devoutly I adore thee ..... 5' 23

ANTON HEILLER

- 15 Post Benedictionem ('Lauda Sion')  
(In festo Corporis Christi)..... 4' 55

SOLEMN VESPERS & BENEDICTION

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 16 Office Hymn: Pange lingua ..... 4' 00  
17 Short Responsory: Cibavit illos..... 2' 15



GREGORIAN CHANT/ANDREW REID (b.1971)

- 18 Antiphon: O sacrum convivium!..... 1' 09  
19 Magnificat quinti toni..... 4' 23  
20 Antiphon: O sacrum convivium!..... 1' 19

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV (1844–1908)

- 21 Litany & Lord's Prayer ..... 1' 05

FERNAND LALOUX (1901–1970)

- 22 O salutaris Hostia ..... 1' 55  
23 Tantum ergo ..... 2' 29

TRADITIONAL

- 24 O Sacrament most holy ..... 1' 34

FRANCIS STANFIELD (1835–1914)

*harmonised by Matthew Searles (b.1991)*

- 25 Sweet Sacrament divine ..... 3' 57

THE CHOIR OF BUCKFAST ABBEY

MATTHEW SEARLES | *director*  
CHARLES MAXTONE-SMITH | *organ*



*Benediction following Mass on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi*

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

*Caro mea vere est cibus...* ‘My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink’ (John 6:56)

Of the many feasts in the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church, the Solemnity of Corpus Christi is unique in its emphasis on celebrating or commemorating not so much the past but rather the present, through the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the consecrated elements on the altar. Traditionally celebrated sixty days after Easter, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, it is now typically transferred to the following Sunday. The feast looks back to the Last Supper and Christ’s Passion, but it is chiefly concerned with celebrating the Church’s teaching that Christ is made present again, so that in forms of bread and wine he himself can be seen, touched, smelled, and tasted by the faithful. And yet, in the central paradox of this day (to use the words of the hymn *O Godhead hid*): ‘Sight, touch, and taste in thee are each deceived; the ear alone most safely

is believed’ – the only sense that actually proclaims this teaching is hearing. Music, then, has a special importance on this feast day, beyond its customary role of evoking an atmosphere of holiness and reverence – it is an integral part of proclaiming and sustaining the inner faith necessary to accept the sense-defying teaching, ultimately surpassing human understanding, that Christ is present on the altar.

The music on this album is arranged in the order in which it would be heard in the course of the Mass on Corpus Christi. Thus the disc opens with pre-service organ music by the Austrian composer Anton Heiller, followed later by the other three movements of his liturgical suite *In festo Corporis Christi* from 1957, which the composer dedicated ‘to Marie-Claire Alain with warm affection’. Heiller was an exemplary figure of the *Orgelbewegung* (organ reform movement) in the mid-twentieth century, moving the sound world of the organ away from late Romanticism; he was a close friend of the celebrated neo-classical composer Paul Hindemith. Crisp, clean sounds abound, with a fastidious

emphasis on counterpoint, the interaction of different lines of music. The first movement of the suite, *Ante Introitum*, heralds the opening of the Mass in declamatory chords and virtuosic triplet figures rippling up and down the keyboard. Both *Ante Introitum* and the triumphant *Post Benedictionem*, which concludes the Mass, demonstrate an important thread of continuity (and indeed, catholicity) in Heiller's music through its rootedness in Gregorian chant, since the former quotes the introit *Cibavit eos* and the latter the sequence *Lauda Sion* in their entirety. Two other movements of the suite are played within the Mass: *Post Offertorium* is a homage to the German Baroque chorale prelude and the French Classical *Récit de nasard*, setting an exquisite, ornamented melody in the right hand against a homophonic accompaniment; *Post Communionem* offers a surprisingly whimsical interplay between three voices, showing Heiller's effervescent lightness of touch.

The portions of the Mass are threaded together with the proper chants for the day, part of an Office first

constructed by St Thomas Aquinas at the behest of Pope Urban IV when the feast was instituted in 1264. Thus Mass commences with the Introit *Cibavit eos*, sung at the entry of the priest to the altar. Unlike other chants of the day composed by Aquinas afresh, this introit reapplied an existing chant, from the Monday of the Pentecost Octave (hence the paschal three-fold Alleluia at the end of the antiphon). The antiphon sets, with a restrained amount of melisma, Psalm 81:17, celebrating the feeding of the people with the finest of wheat and honey from the rock. This is food in the most unlikely of circumstances, emphasised on reiterated notes on 'finest' and 'rock' and reaching a climax in the tessitura on the words 'saturavit eos', illustrating God's superabundance in satisfying the appetites of his people.

Continuing with the proper chant, and following the custom of singing at the liturgy at Buckfast Abbey, the choir sings the responsorial psalmody appointed for the day, Psalm 116. Peter Stevens' setting of the antiphon,

*Procession of the Blessed Sacrament  
following Mass on the Solemnity  
of Corpus Christi*



designed to be sung by the congregation, employs simple but effective word painting on the phrase ‘I will raise’, emphasised the final time through a soaring descant, culminating with a temporary modulation around the word ‘call’, drawing out the unexpected earnestness of the people’s cry for their God.

This is followed by the traditional chants appointed for the feast, first the Sequence *Ecce panis angelorum*, part of a lengthy and involved text by Aquinas explaining the complex theology of the Eucharist – subject matter that could fill many tomes compressed into 24 verses. Its melody, a contrafactum of a twelfth-century chant for the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, *Laudes crucis attollamus*, was praised by Dom Guéranger for ‘exciting in the Christian soul the sentiments of unearthly joy, which are so peculiar to this feast of the Sacrament of love’. Sequences – liturgical hymns of the Mass – would have been far more familiar to medieval listeners, when thousands of texts and melodies proliferated, but following the Council of Trent and the



Missal of Pius V (1570) the sequence for Corpus Christi was one of only four to be retained in the Roman Missal. In contrast to other chants at the Mass, the sequence derives its power from its syllabic nature (one note per syllable) and largely trochaic metre, lending it rhetorical energy and a hypnotic character emphasised by the recurring cadential formulas at the ends of the melodic verses.

In contrast to the Sequence, the pyrotechnics of *Caro mea*, the Alleluia proper to the day, demonstrate a moving use of melisma, reflecting the status of this chant as a musical high point in the liturgy of the day, preceding the proclamation of the Gospel. In medieval thought, the Alleluia was one of the songs sung concurrently by the angelic choirs in heaven together with the worshipping Christians on earth, a moment of harmony that transcends words. This is reflected, as usual, with the *iubilus*, a prolonged expressive inflection of the last syllable of the word alleluia (‘ah’). This continues in the psalm verse itself, which soars upwards on words such as ‘sanguis’ (blood) and ‘potus’ (drink), but

descends daringly low on the word ‘eo’, (him), in other words, referring to the person whom Christ promises to dwell within – a moving example of word-painting (God coming down to dwell among men) in a medium often resistant to matching word sense and melodic gesture.

Francisco Guerrero is a central figure in the so-called Golden Age of Spanish sacred music; unlike contemporaries such as Victoria, he spent almost his entire life in the service of the Church in Spain, mostly at Seville, eventually becoming *maestro de capilla* at its cathedral. (He was, however, not averse to adventure, embarking on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land that saw him captured and ransomed by pirates – he was preparing for a return visit just before his death.) His *O sacrum convivium*, here sung as the Offertory motet, is an impressive, stately, six-part monument to faith in the Blessed Sacrament; nevertheless, it never ceases to rest, with its regular harmonic shifts each half-bar and its restrained but effective use of melodic decoration which conveys a continual sense of movement.



The musical lynchpin of the Mass is provided by the Mass Ordinary (as it never changes, unlike the Mass Propers), consisting of the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Benedictus, and Agnus Dei (as well as the Credo). This Ordinary is sung in a setting newly composed by Martin Baker for the Choir of Buckfast Abbey specifically for Corpus Christi: *Missa O sacrum convivium!* It was given its premiere on this feast at Buckfast Abbey in 2024. The work is permeated by two chants, *O sacrum convivium!*, the Magnificat antiphon for the feast, discussed below, and *Alleluia: Caro mea*. These chants pervade the work both through direct quotation, and their ‘major key’ modality which tends towards brightness and joy. This is immediately apparent in the choice of key, E major, as the prevailing tonality in the Kyrie, which starts entirely as a quotation from the *O sacrum convivium!* melody. Several other ideas also feature in this movement, to be developed later: significantly, a descending motif on the words ‘Christe eleison’ – Renaissance polyphony quoting from Palestrina’s motet *O bone Iesu* – which comes to be



associated with the theme of divine mercy, as it later appears around the word ‘miserere’ in both the Gloria and Agnus Dei. Another theme that enters soon after is the pairs of descending thirds, first in the organ part in crotchets, then in the choral parts in quavers, which in turn then propels the opening of the Gloria, where it appears in semiquavers, heralding a whirlwind that transforms the melody of *Caro mea* into an angelic chorus with verve. This is followed by strident intervals of an open fifth on the words ‘Laudamus te’ (another recurring melodic motif) and contemplative commentary on the words ‘Adoramus te’, which borrows a motif from the Gloria of Mass I (Lux et origo) at the words ‘Iesu Christe’. The remainder of the Gloria largely pits these ideas against each other, alternating between moments of great pathos and hard-driven passion, supported by an organ accompaniment with obvious French influences. A particularly triumphal moment comes towards the end with the words ‘cum Sancto Spiritu’, where both choir and organ (given voice by the Abbey organ’s chamades)

ring out with the opening melody of *Veni creator Spiritus*. By contrast, the Sanctus offers a much more reflective, trance-like atmosphere, where the music is slowed by the longer note lengths, and the choir sings *a capella*, after an initial organ introduction which picks up where the celebrant leaves off, leaning heavily on the reflective ‘Iesu Christe’ motif introduced earlier. The Agnus Dei follows similarly on, juxtaposing the material of the major-mode *O sacrum convivium!* melody with a minor key accompaniment, with jarring, off-beat insertions from the organ creating deliciously discordant clashes. The whole movement rounds off with an increasingly prominent organ part that fades into silence.

Palestrina’s *O bone Iesu*, here sung as a brief Communion motet, stands in its original context following its use in the *Missa O sacrum convivium!* A simple, lightly-adorned gem in four parts, whose parts move by step (as opposed to leap) wherever possible, achieving powerful effects with that most elementary tool of Renaissance polyphony, the suspension.



The post-communion hymn, *O Godhead bid*, is a translation of the Latin prayer *Adoro te devote*, composed by Aquinas, but unlike the other texts by him here, its origins were as an aid to private devotion, not as a liturgical hymn. The version here appears in translation by Edward Caswall and set to a tune by Richard Runciman Terry included in his Westminster Hymnal of 1912. As Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Terry was a great champion of Catholic hymnody, and this hymn, like many of his other compositions offers both a rousing, heartfelt melodic sweep combined with a rich harmonic palette. The unforgettable pelican, mentioned in verse six, refers to ancient legend that, in times of famine, a mother pelican would pierce her breast and sacrifice herself to revive her dying offspring, a fable with obvious parallels to Christ.

Following this hymn, the music for Mass concludes with the final movement of the Heiller suite, *Post Benedictionem*, and then we shift to later in the day, with the celebration of Vespers and Benediction. Vespers opens with the Office

Hymn for the day, *Pange lingua*, part of the set of liturgical material composed by Aquinas for the feast's institution. The hymn is perhaps best known today for its appearance on Maundy Thursday when the Blessed Sacrament is moved to the altar of repose; but the chant of this day is to a different, Mode III melody, proper to Vespers and in a subtly different version in the Monastic Rite. This would then be followed by the four psalms appointed for the office, with their proper antiphons; we, however, move directly on to the Short Responsoy *Cibavit illos*, a call-and-response portion of the liturgy, here based on the Introit of the Mass heard earlier. This leads on to the Magnificat antiphon *O sacrum convivium!*, earlier alluded to in the Mass Ordinary. Its radiant, fifth-mode brightness is apparent from the major triad on the word 'sacrum'; even as Christ's Passion is mentioned, it is transformed into a cause for hope: 'a pledge of future glory is given to us'. This leads on to the Magnificat itself, sung in a fauxbourdon setting by Andrew Reid, commissioned as part of a set of



Magnificats in all eight tones for the choir in 2022. Odd-numbered verses, sung to the monastic solemn tone of the fifth mode, alternate with Reid's setting of the even-numbered verses which provides a harmonic progression (suitably resplendent for a feast) scored for six voices, while still being efficient enough to function in the liturgy. After a second rendition of the Magnificat antiphon, a brief litany is sung, and the *Lord's Prayer*, as one of its three solemn recitations in the liturgy each day, a version composed by Rimsky-Korsakov and adapted for the English language, following the custom at Buckfast Abbey.

*O salutaris Hostia* and *Tantum ergo* mark the shift from the monastic Office of Vespers to the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at Benediction. This musical pair of hymns is here performed to a setting by Fernand Laloux, a Belgian by birth who became Director of Music at the Jesuit church on Farm Street in London. Economical of means, it draws on sublime but non-traditional harmonic language reminiscent of Maurice Ravel. This is then followed, in the



*Benediction following Mass on the  
Solemnity of Corpus Christi*

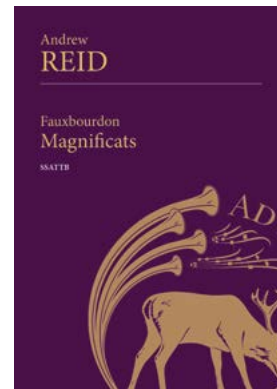
tradition at Buckfast Abbey, by a rendition of the words ‘O Sacrament most holy’, sung three times after Benediction has been given by the priest.

Benediction concludes with another favourite hymn in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, *Sweet Sacrament divine*, both text and melody composed by the nineteenth-century English priest Francis Stanfield. This hymn is a treasure dating from the renewal of English Catholicism in the era, patrimony to stir the soul as its melody leaps upwards in imitation of the heart’s yearnings towards the Blessed Sacrament. The version here amplifies this with a deftly rearranged accompaniment that adds more interest through its harmonic colour.

ROBERT PECKSMITH



## ALSO AVAILABLE FROM AD FONTES



**Andrew Reid: Fauxbourdon  
Magnificats** (AFP002)  
SSATTB

*This collection of fauxbourdon Magnificats, one for each of the eight tones, provide dignity and solemnity to the canticle, whilst encompassing an interesting harmonic journey.*



**Martin Baker: Missa  
O sacrum convivium!** (AFP006)  
SATB+organ

*Suffused with modal spirituality, this Mass draws upon chants for Corpus Christi and develops into a passionate tour de force for choir and organ.*

visit [www.adfontes.org.uk](http://www.adfontes.org.uk) for more information

## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

- 2 Cibavit eos ex adipē  
frumenti, alleluia: et de  
petra, melle saturavit eos,  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
- Ÿ. Exsultate Deo adiutori  
nostro: iubilare Deo Iacob.
- Ÿ. Gloria Patri, et Filio,  
et Spiritui Sancto.  
Sicut erat in principio,  
et nunc, et semper, et in  
sæcula sæculorum. Amen.
- 3 Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.
- 4 Gloria in excelsis Deo  
et in terra pax hominibus  
bonæ voluntatis.  
Laudamus te,  
benedicimus te,
- He fed them with the finest  
wheat, alleluia; and with honey  
from the rock, he satisfied them,  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*
- Rejoice in honour of God our helper;  
shout for joy to the God of Jacob*
- Glory be to the Father, and to the  
Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.*
- Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.*
- Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace  
to people of good will.  
We praise you,  
we bless you,*

adoramus te,  
glorificamus te,  
gratias agimus tibi propter  
magnam gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus, Rex cælestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite,  
Iesu Christe,  
Domine Deus,  
Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis;  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram  
Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus Altissimus,  
Iesu Christe,  
cum Sancto Spiritu,  
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks  
for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.*

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins  
of the world, have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the  
world, receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand  
of the Father, have mercy on us.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the  
glory of God the Father. Amen.*

5 **R.** The cup of salvation I will raise;  
I will call on the name of the Lord.

How can I repay the Lord  
for all his goodness to me?  
The cup of salvation I will raise;  
I will call on the name of the Lord. **R.**

How precious in the eyes of the Lord  
is the death of his faithful.  
Your servant am I, the son of your handmaid;  
you have loosened my bonds. **R.**

I will offer a thanksgiving sacrifice;  
I will call on the name of the Lord.  
My vows to the Lord I will fulfil  
before all his people. **R.**

6 Ecce panis angelorum,  
factus cibus viatorum:  
vere panis filiorum,  
non mittendus canibus.

*Behold the bread of angels  
sent as food for pilgrims,  
truly the bread of children,  
that must not be given to the dogs.*

In figuris præsognatur,  
cum Isaac immolatur,  
Agnus paschæ deputatur,  
datur manna patribus.

*In the olden types foreshadowed,  
when Isaac was sacrificed, a lamb  
was commanded for the Pasch,  
and manna given to the fathers.*

Bone pastor, panis vere,  
Iesu, nostri miserere:  
tu nos pasce, nos tuere,  
tu nos bona fac videre  
in terra viventium.

*Good shepherd, true bread,  
Jesus, have mercy on us:  
feed us still, protect us,  
make us to see good things  
in the land of the living.*

Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,  
qui nos pascis hic mortales:  
tuos ibi commensales,  
cohæredes et sodales,  
fac sanctorum civium.

*You who know and will all things,  
who feed us mortals,  
make thine own to be partakers,  
co-heirs and citizens  
in the heavenly company.*

7 Alleluia.

**V.** Caro mea vere est cibus,  
et sanguis meus vere est potus:  
qui manducat meam carnem,  
et bibit meus sanguinem,  
in me manet, et ego in eo.

*Alleluia.  
My flesh is real food  
and my blood is real drink.  
He who eats my flesh  
and drinks my blood  
lives in me and I live in him.*

8 O sacrum convivium,  
in quo Christus sumitur,  
recolitur memoria passionis  
eius, mens impletur gratia,  
et futuræ gloriæ nobis  
pignus datur. Alleluia.

*How sacred this banquet  
in which Christ is consumed,  
and the memorial of his passion  
celebrated anew. It fills our souls  
with grace and gives us a pledge  
of the glory to come. Alleluia.*

- 10 Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
 Pleni sunt cæli et terra  
 gloria tua.  
 Hosanna in excelsis.  
 Benedictus qui venit  
 in nomine Domini.  
 Hosanna in excelsis.
- 11 Agnus Dei, qui tollis  
 peccata mundi,  
 miserere nobis.  
 Agnus Dei, qui tollis  
 peccata mundi,  
 dona nobis pacem.
- 12 O bone Iesu, miserere nobis,  
 quia tu creasti nos,  
 tu redemisti nos  
 sanguine tuo pretiosissimo.
- 14 O Godhead hid, devoutly I adore thee,  
 who truly art within the forms before me;  
 to thee my heart I bow with bended knee,  
 as failing quite in contemplating thee.

*Holy, holy, holy  
 Lord God of Hosts.  
 Heaven and earth are  
 full of your glory.  
 Hosanna in the highest.  
 Blessed is he who comes  
 in the name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna in the highest.*

*Lamb of God, who takes  
 away the sins of the world,  
 have mercy on us.  
 Lamb of God, who takes  
 away the sins of the world,  
 grant us peace.*

*O good Jesus, have mercy on us,  
 because you created us,  
 you have redeemed us  
 with your most precious blood.*

Sight, touch, and taste, in thee are each deceived:  
 the ear alone most safely is believed:  
 I believe all the Son of God has spoken,  
 than truth's own word there is no truer token.

God only on the cross lay hid from view;  
 but here lies hid at once the manhood too:  
 and I, in both professing my belief,  
 make the same prayer as the repentant thief.

Thy wounds, as Thomas saw, I do not see;  
 yet thee confess my Lord and God to be;  
 make me believe thee ever more and more;  
 in thee my hope, in thee my love to store.

O thou memorial of our Lord's own dying!  
 O bread that living art and vivifying!  
 Make ever thou my soul on thee to live;  
 ever a taste of heavenly sweetness give.

O loving Pelican! O Jesus, Lord!  
 Unclean I am, but cleanse me in thy blood,  
 of which a single drop for sinners spilt,  
 is ransom for a world's entire guilt.

Jesu! whom for the present veiled I see,  
what I so thirst for, O vouchsafe to me:  
that I may see thy countenance unfolding,  
and may be blest thy glory in beholding.

16 Pange, lingua, gloriosi  
corporis mysterium,  
sanguinisque pretiosi,  
quem in mundi pretium  
fructus ventris generosi  
rex effudit gentium.

Nobis datus, nobis natus  
ex intacta Virgine,  
et in mundo conversatus,  
sparso verbi semine,  
sui moras incolatus  
miro clausit ordine.

In supremæ nocte cenæ  
recumbens cum fratribus  
observata lege plene  
cibis in legalibus,  
cibum turbæ duodenæ  
se dat suis manibus.

*Tell, tongue, the mystery  
of the glorious body  
and of the precious blood,  
which, for the price of the world,  
the fruit of a noble womb,  
poured forth the king of the nations.*

*Given to us, born for us,  
from the untouched Virgin,  
and dwelt in the world  
after the seed of the Word had been  
scattered. His inhabiting ended the  
delays with wonderful order.*

*On the night of the Last Supper,  
reclining with his brethren,  
once the law had been fully observed  
with the prescribed foods,  
as food to the crowd of twelve  
he gives himself with his hands.*

Verbum caro, panem verum  
verbo carnem efficit:  
fitque sanguis Christi merum,  
et si sensus deficit,  
ad firmandum cor sincerum  
sola fides sufficit.

Tantum ergo sacramentum  
veneremur cernui:  
et antiquum documentum  
novo cedat ritui:  
præstet fides supplementum  
sensuum defectui.

Genitori, genitoque  
laus et iubilatio,  
salus, honor, virtus quoque  
sit et benedictio:  
procedenti ab utroque  
compar sit laudatio.  
Amen.

17 **R.** Cibavit illos ex adipe,  
frumenti, alleluia, alleluia.  
Et de petra melle saturavit  
eos, alleluia, alleluia. **R.**

*The Word as flesh makes true bread  
into flesh by a word and the wine  
becomes the blood of Christ.  
And if sense is deficient  
to strengthen a sincere heart  
faith alone suffices.*

*Therefore let us reverence  
the great sacrament:  
and let the old covenant  
give way to a new rite.  
Let faith stand forth as substitute  
for defect of the senses.*

*To the Father and the Son  
be praise and joy,  
greeting, honour,  
strength also and blessing.  
To the Holy Spirit who proceeds  
from both be equal praise.  
Amen.*

*He fed them with the finest  
wheat, alleluia, alleluia.  
And with honey from the rock he  
satisfied them, alleluia, alleluia.*

Gloria Patri, et  
Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. **R̄.**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the  
Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

*For text and translation of track 18, please see track 8*

- 19 Magnificat: *My soul  
glorifies the Lord.*  
anima mea Dominum.  
Et exsultavit spiritus meus: *My spirit rejoices  
in God my Saviour.*  
in Deo, salutari meo.  
Quia respexit humilitatem *He looks on his servant  
in her lowliness; henceforth*  
ancillæ suæ: ecce enim ex hoc *all ages will  
call me blessed.*  
beatam me dicent *The Almighty works  
marvels for me.*  
omnes generationes. *Holy his name!*  
Quia fecit mihi magna *His mercy is from  
age to age*  
qui potens est: *on those who fear him.*  
et sanctum nomen eius. *He puts forth his arm in strength  
and scatters*  
Et misericordia eius *the proud-hearted.*  
a progenie in progenies: *He casts the mighty from their  
thrones: and raises the lowly.*  
timentibus eum.  
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:  
dispersit superbos  
mente cordis sui.  
Deposuit potentes de sede:  
et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis:  
et divites dimisit inanes.

*He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.*

Suscepit Israel puerum suum:  
recordatus misericordiæ suæ.

*He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy.*

Sicut locutus est ad patres  
nostros: Abraham, et  
semini eius in sæcula.

*The mercy promised to our fathers,  
to Abraham and  
his sons forever.*

Gloria Patri, et Filio:  
et Spiritui Sancto.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the  
Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

Sicut erat in principio,  
et nunc, et semper:  
et in sæcula sæculorum.  
Amen.

*As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.*

*For text and translation of track 20, please see track 8*

- 21 Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.

22 O salutaris Hostia,  
quæ cæli pandis ostium:  
bella premunt hostilia,  
da robur, fer auxilium.

Uni trinoque Domino  
sit sempiterna gloria,  
qui vitam sine termino  
nobis donet in patria.  
Amen.

23 Tantum ergo sacramentum  
veneremur cernui,  
et antiquum documentum  
novo cedat ritui:  
præstet fides supplementum  
sensuum defectui.

Genitori, genitoque  
laus, et iubilatio,

*O saving Victim,  
opening wide the gate of heaven:  
wars oppress us,  
grant us aid, thy strength bestow.*

*To the Lord, three in one,  
may there be everlasting glory;  
that we may have life without end  
in our homeland.  
Amen.*

*Therefore let us reverence  
the great Sacrament:  
and let the old covenant  
give way to a new rite.  
Let faith stand forth as substitute  
for defect of the senses.*

*To the Father and the Son  
be praise and joy,*

salus, honor, virtus quoque  
sit et benedictio:  
procedenti ab utroque  
compar sit laudatio.  
Amen.

*greeting, honour,  
strength also and blessing.  
To Holy Spirit who proceeds  
from both be equal praise.  
Amen.*

24 O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament divine.  
All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment thine.

25 Sweet Sacrament divine,  
hid in thine earthly home,  
lo, round thy lowly shrine,  
with suppliant hearts we come;  
Jesus, to thee our voice we raise  
in songs of love and heartfelt praise:  
sweet Sacrament divine.

Sweet Sacrament of peace,  
dear home for every heart,  
where restless yearnings cease  
and sorrows all depart;  
there in thine ear all trustfully  
we tell our tale of misery:  
sweet Sacrament of peace.

Sweet Sacrament of rest,  
ark from the ocean's roar,  
within thy shelter blest  
soon may we reach the shore;  
save us, for still the tempest raves,  
save, lest we sink beneath the waves:  
sweet Sacrament of rest.

Sweet Sacrament divine,  
earth's light and jubilee,  
in thy far depths doth shine  
thy Godhead's majesty;  
sweet light, so shine on us, we pray,  
that earthly joys may fade away:  
sweet Sacrament divine.



*Charles Maxtone-Smith at the Quire console of the Ruffatti organ  
during a recording session*



*Listening back to takes in the control room between recording sessions*

## THE CHOIR OF BUCKFAST ABBEY

The present incarnation of the Abbey Choir was established in 2009. The choir has since developed a broad repertoire, ranging from polyphonic music of the sixteenth century and Masses of the Viennese school, through to music of the French Romantic tradition and contemporary music by James MacMillan, Matthew Martin and Dom Sebastian Wolff OSB. The choir has recently commissioned a set of eight fauxbourdon Magnificats for the liturgy from Andrew Reid, and given the premiere of a new Mass for Corpus Christi composed by Martin Baker.

The choir sings Solemn Mass and Vespers on Sundays, and Mass on Holy Days of Obligation during the week. A smaller schola supports the singing of the Monastic Community for Mass on weekday Solemnities and during choir holidays. The choir gives several concert performances each year, with recent highlights including Charpentier's *Messe de minuit* with Noxwode Baroque and

the Duruflé *Requiem* with the Southern Sinfonia. The choir recorded its first album in 2014 and has subsequently made several recordings on the Abbey's in-house record label, Ad Fontes. In 2018 the choir sang Midnight Mass at the conclusion of Buckfast's millennium year, which was televised live on BBC One.



## SOPRANO

Maia Carter-Oakley  
Louise Hardy  
Bel Hartley  
Denise Kehoe  
Harriet Oakley  
Hattie Pecksmith  
Sally Reeve  
Alicia Stolliday  
Jane Suckling  
Sophie-Dominique Waddie  
Pascale Walker

## ALTO

Rachel Bennett  
Louise Laprun  
Becka McClaughry  
Alice Risdon  
Elle Williams  
Amy Wonnacott

## TENOR

Peter Beamish  
Jason Bomford  
Michael Graham  
Matt Jeffery  
Matt Skaria  
Jonathan Wood

## BASS

Philip Arkwright  
Charlie Dean  
Tony Kehoe  
Philip Lancaster  
Michael Latimer  
Tim Mirfin



## MATTHEW SEARLES

Matthew Searles is Master of the Music at Buckfast Abbey. He is responsible for all aspects of the musical life of the Abbey, including the daily Mass and Office, direction of the Abbey Choir, and the in-house record label, Ad Fontes. Matthew joined the Abbey in 2018 as Assistant Master of the Music, during which time he helped to re-establish a treble line of choristers, and accompanied Midnight Mass televised live on BBC One. Prior to moving to Buckfast, Matthew was Sub-Organist of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. He is a prizewinning graduate of Royal Holloway, University of London, where he received First Class Honours and the Driver Prize for 'outstanding musical performance'. Matthew continued his studies at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Poitiers, France. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists.

## CHARLES MAXTONE-SMITH

Charles Maxtone-Smith is Organist of Buckfast Abbey. He graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in 2023 with the Advanced Diploma, MA with distinction and the DipRAM award, as a student of David Titterington, Bine Bryndorf, and Richard Pinel. He won the Musicians' Company Award for Organists in 2023, which provides generous funding for two years of further study. He currently takes lessons with Christophe Mantoux at Saint-Séverin, Paris, studying French Baroque and Romantic literature. He successively held organ scholarships at Hereford Cathedral, New College, Oxford, Westminster Abbey, Royal Hospital Chelsea, and Kings College, London. Since 2014 he has been one of the Festival Organists at the annual Edington Festival of Music within the Liturgy, and has played for several BBC Radio 3 broadcasts.





*Recorded at BUCKFAST ABBEY, 7–9 June 2024*

*Recording Engineer* DAVID HINITT

*Recording Producers* MATTHEW MARTIN & MARTIN BAKER

*Executive Producer* MATTHEW SEARLES

*Booklet Proofreader* AARON KIELY

*Organ maintained by* GARY OWENS

*Front illustration: The Blessed Sacrament exposed during Benediction at  
Buckfast Abbey*

Photography © Buckfast Abbey (cover, pages 4–5, 6, 11, 16–17, 28–29,  
50, 53, 54), Ben Horden (page 22) and David Hinitt (pages 45, 46, 56–57).

© Ad Fontes 2025

© Ad Fontes 2025

All rights of the producer and of the owner of the recorded work  
reserved. Unauthorised copying, hiring, renting, public performance  
and broadcasting of this record are prohibited.

Manufactured in the EU

[www.adfontes.org.uk](http://www.adfontes.org.uk)



*The Choir of Buckfast Abbey during a recording session*

# O SACRUM CONVIVITUM!

*Music for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi*

The Choir of Buckfast Abbey

Matthew Searles *director* | Charles Maxtone-Smith *organ*

Heiller | Baker | Stevens | Guerrero | Palestrina | Terry | Reid | Laloux

The Solemnity of Corpus Christi celebrates each year the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. On this album, the Choir of Buckfast Abbey presents a musical offering bearing witness to this great celebration through music rooted in the words and ancient chants of this feast. At the heart of this album is a Mass setting by Martin Baker, *Missa O sacrum convivium!*, newly commissioned for the Choir of Buckfast Abbey and here given its premier recording, which develops chant melodies into a passionate *tour de force* for choir and organ. This work is complemented by chants and hymns of the day for Mass and Vespers, as well as sumptuous choral settings by Guerrero, Palestrina and Laloux and a suite for solo organ by Anton Heiller.



Total running time: 74'46

[www.adfontes.org.uk](http://www.adfontes.org.uk)