

Hartford Memorial Baptist Church

Detroit, Michigan

Presents



The Stations Of The Cross

by Marcel Dupr 

In Performance by

Marilyn Mason, Organist

Good Friday, April 13, 1990

9:00 A.M.

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS, OP. 29

LE CHEMIN DE LA CROIX

Poems by Paul Claudel - Music for Organ by Marcel Dupré

Notes compiled by Marilyn Mason

"The Stations or Way of the Cross" refer to a series of pictures or tableaux representing certain scenes in the Passion and Death of Christ, each corresponding to a particular incident connected with the Passion. They are usually arranged at intervals around the walls of a church. The object of the Stations is to help the faithful make in spirit a pilgrimage to the principal scenes of Christ's passion and death. The devotion is carried out by passing from Station to Station meditating on each incident represented in the tableaux. The origin of this devotion is traced to the Holy Land. The route Christ traveled from the place of sentencing to Calvary has been marked since the earliest years of Christianity, and has been the object of pilgrimage since the days of Constantine. There is, however, no direct evidence of a set form of devotion until the seventeenth century, at which time the number of Stations was fixed at fourteen.

--*The Catholic Encyclopedia, XV*

Dupré has placed himself before the drama as a witness who could in his emotions take up words of the apostle: "What I have seen, what I have heard - that is what I have to say to you." He has seen, and heard the two principal actors of the drama: Christ and the Virgin.

The Christ as Victim - we foresee it everywhere: from the first Station with the cries of the crowd pursuing him; we hear him stumble under the weight of the cross, but it is at the eighth Station that he reveals himself in a gesture of pity toward the "daughters of Israel who follow him." Crushed under the burden, he falls shortly afterwards at the ninth Station; it is upon him alone that our eyes are fixed, when stripped of his garments, nailed upon the cross, he speaks a last time to his Father before dying.

The virgin is shattered by grief; a striking figure which appears at the fourth Station. While the drama is taking place, she remains apart. When all is consummated, she advances again to receive the body of her son.

Around these two personages, other secondary figures are sketched: the Holy Women whose meeting furnishes a temporary halt to the ascent to Calvary; Simon the Cyrenian, his steps adjusted little by little to those of the Victim; Veronica, who cannot withhold a gesture of pity, crowned by a Miracle at the close of the sixth Station.

Thus the personages: here now is the setting amid which they move - first, the praetorium where the crowd mills around, shouts, then little by little melts away.

Then begins the climb toward Calvary, translated from the second Station by an expressive rhythm: a solemn cortege which will become, at the fourteenth Station, a funeral march for the placing of the body in the tomb. Christ falls heavily, having arrived at the place of torture; his body is hoisted to the Cross by the ropes which grate; the blows of the hammer resound; the earth trembles, and finally, while the funeral procession leads us to the entrance of the tomb, by a magnificent lightening effect, the dawn of the Resurrection, felt little by little throughout the work, rises and illumines by its radiant tonality.

--*Abbe R. Delestra, L'Oeuvre de Marcel Dupré,*

transl. Dr. E.L. Ford

"Structurally, the piece is a gigantically-conceived set of musical depictions of the Saviour's journey to the final world tragedy. In this music, expressive of a burning faith and spiritual intensity, Dupré reveals himself as perhaps the greatest twentieth-century heir to the mantle of such masterfully devout composers of earlier times as Buxtehude and Franck."

--*Mark Gantt.*

"Dupré's powerful score contains some of the most powerful wrenching music ever created for the organ. It must be counted as a sincere, highly motivated work, unsparing in its depiction of grief, agony, horror and torture. Balancing these are luminous scenes of poignancy, hope and consolation."

*Liner notes from Marilyn Mason's recording at the
National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C.*

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

BY

MARCEL DUPRÉ, OP. 29

On poems by Paul Claudel

in performance by

MARILYN MASON, Organist

Dr. Charles G. Adams, Narrator

- I Jesus is Condemned to Death
- II Jesus Receives His Cross
- III Jesus Falls the First Time
- IV Jesus Meets His Mother
- V Simon The Cyrenian Helps Jesus to Carry the Cross
- VI Jesus and Veronica
- VII Jesus Falls a Second Time
- VIII Jesus Comforts the Women of Jerusalem Who Follow Him
- IX Jesus Falls the Third Time
- X Jesus is Stripped of His Garments
- XI Jesus is Nailed to the Cross
- XII Jesus Dies Upon the Cross
- XIII Jesus is Taken From the Cross and Placed in the Arms of His Mother
- XIV Jesus is Placed in the Sepulchre

Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565 - J.S. Bach

Marilyn Mason

Marilyn Mason is University Organist and Chairman of the Organ Department of the The University of Michigan. Her extensive career as concert organist, lecturer, adjudicator and teacher has carried her throughout the Western world. She was the first American woman to play in Westminster Abbey, the first woman organist to play in Latin America, and first American organist to play in Egypt. During one single year, invitations took her to five different continents. She has served as adjudicator at almost every major competition in the world. Marilyn Mason's dedication to contemporary music is evidenced in the 40 organ works which she has commissioned and premiered. Currently, she is pursuing her commitment to stylistic integrity through scholarly research into the construction and tonal design of historic European instruments. Recently sixteen research tours have focused on historic organs in France, North Germany, Saxony, and Spain.

In 1987 she was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music degree by The University of Nebraska, where she had served as consultant for the Casavant mechanical action organ. Recently, she was, chosen Performer of the Year by the New York Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and presented a concert of commissioned works on May 10, 1988, at the Riverside Church, New York City.

Her discography includes music of Bach, Handel, Mondonville, and contemporary composers on Columbia and Musical Heritage labels.