

Wednesday, December 30, 2020– Christ's Church Cathedral

MEDITATION ON THE NATIVITY

Featuring

LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR by Olivier Messiaen
presented by Michael Bloss

***La Nativité du Seigneur** (The Nativity of the Lord or The Birth of the Saviour) is a work for organ, written by the French composer Olivier Messiaen in 1935. It is a testament to Messiaen's Christian faith, being divided into nine "meditations" inspired by the birth of Jesus. As the composer notes in his preface, he sought "the emotion and sincerity first". The work was written by the composer at the age of 27 during the summer of 1935 while he was in residence at Grenoble near the French Alps. Messiaen wrote that in addition to theology, the movements were inspired by the mountains, as well as the stained glass windows in medieval cathedrals. The work was premiered on 27 February 1936 on the organ of La Trinité, Paris.*

The work is in nine movements, each depicting an image or concept from the birth of Jesus. In publication, the work is divided over four books.

1. *La vierge et l'enfant (The Virgin and Child)*
2. *Les bergers (The Shepherds)*
3. *Desseins éternels (Eternal designs)*
4. *Le verbe (The Word)*
5. *Les enfants de Dieu (The Children of God)*
6. *Les anges (The Angels)*
7. *Jésus accepte la souffrance (Jesus accepts suffering)*
8. *Les mages (The Magi)*
9. *Dieu parmi nous (God Among Us)*

This masterpiece is one of the greatest organ works of all time and the earliest to feature elements that were to become key to Messiaen's later compositions, such as the extensive use of the composer's own modes of limited transposition, as well as influence from birdsong, and the meters and rhythms of Ancient Greek and traditional Indian music.

NEXT WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021

A SERVICE OF CHORAL EVENSONG (BCP)
THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Officiant: Rev. Dan Tatarnic; Homilist: Dean Tim Dobbin
The Cathedral Schola Cantorum with Michael Bloss, Director of Music.
