

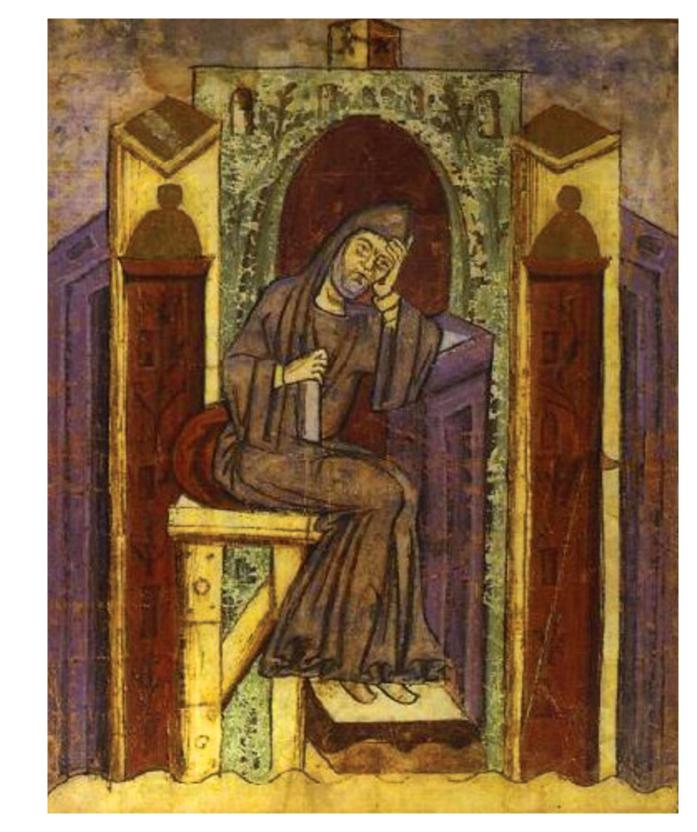
# NOTKER BALBULUS

(c. 840-912)

Liber ymnorum

Schola Antiqua of Chicago

Michael Alan Anderson



# **NOTKER BALBULUS**

(c. 840-912)

# Liber ymnorum

Text: Notker Balbulus 2-4 6-10 12-17 19-23; Traditional liturgical texts 1 5 11 18

1	Alleluia. Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis	2:13
2	Natus ante saecula	3:21
3	Laus tibi, Christe	3:16
4	Gaude, Maria virgo	3:11
5	Alleluia. Benedictus es	1:33
6	Festa Christi omnis christianitas celebret	3:42
7	Virginis venerandae	1:51
8	ludicem nos inspicientem	2:01
9	Summi triumphum regis	3:35
10	Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gratia	4:08
11	Alleluia. lustus ut palma florebit	2:31
12	Sancti baptistae Christi praeconis	3:14
13	Petre summe Christi pastor	2:51
14	Laurenti David	2:55
15	Stirpe, Maria, regia procreata	2:20
16	Magnum te, Michahelem	2:05
17	Psallat ecclesia	2:11
18	Alleluia. Beatus vir qui timet Dominum	1:44
19	Sacerdotem Christi Martinum	4:05
20	A solis occasu usque ad exortum	2:40
21	Deus in tua virtute	2:18
22	Agone triumphali	2:35
23	Quid tu, virgo	2:10

### Soloists:

Laura Lynch Anderson 7 11 17, Stephanie Sheffield Culica 14 20, Kaitlin Foley 16 23, Soprano Temmo Kinoshita 8 21, Matthew Dean 15 23, Tenor
Joe Labozetta, Baritone 9 18 19
Joseph Hubbard, Bass 1 2 5 13

### Notker Balbulus (Notker of St Gall) (c. 840–912)

### Liber ymnorum

When I was still a young man, and the very long melodies repeatedly committed to memory escaped my fickle little heart, I began quietly to contemplate how I might somehow tie them down. In the meantime, it happened that a certain priest from Jumièges, recently devastated by the Normans, came to us, carrying his antiphoner with him, in which certain verses had been measured out to the sequences; but even then the texts were very corrupted. While I was delighted by the sight of them, all the same, they were bitter in my mouth. Nevertheless, in imitation of these I began to write ...

These words were penned by one Notker, a monk at the Abbey of St Gall in Switzerland who died in 912; he is also known as Notker Balbulus, or Notker the Stammerer, because of a severe speech handicap with which he was born. He likely wrote these reflections in the 870s as part of an introduction to his collection of poems entitled *Liber ymnorum*, or 'Book of Hymns'. In the opening sentence the poet refers to 'very long melodies', melodies that were a formidable challenge to memorise. The very long melodies, as he subsequently reveals, were 'sequences', those extended purely musical expressions that formed the third section of the three-part liturgical form identified as 'Alleluia', an ecstatic, joyous expression sung just before the reading of the Gospel at Mass: (1) Alleluia, (2) Verse, (3) Sequence. The form as a whole represented the most elaborate, purely melodic expression within the liturgy. Only the middle section of the form set a text, generally a single verse taken from sacred scripture, and the setting of the verse itself represented a rather elaborate and challenging musical expression. The first and last sections, the 'Alleluias', were sung on the final vowel sound ('ah') of the emotive word 'Alleluia'. The final jubilation, the 'sequence', extended the form significantly, and given its length, musical structure, and range, it rigorously challenged any cantor. The challenge to Notker's 'memory' – to his 'fickle little heart' – emerges as the motivating factor for his creation.

A wayward monk fleeing Norsemen from west of the Rhine – from what is now France – had appeared in St Gall with an antiphoner containing texts 'measured out' to elaborate melodies, texts which, while rather 'corrupted' in their Latin, nevertheless served as an obvious aid to holding the 'very long melodies' within memory. Thus, the young South-German monk began to write his own texts which might serve students of liturgy in learning the melodies 'by heart'. These new texts anchor the symmetrical repetitions of the melodies with symmetrical accentual patterns and even rhyme, thereby forming a remarkable zenith of early-Medieval 'measured-out' rhythmic verse.

Unlike many French texts from the same period, Notker's texts were written in very polished Latin, in language that was 'measured out' to fortify the melodies in the memory, but also as mirrors of the underlying musical structures which were to be memorised. The 'rhythmic verses' thus represent one of the many 'musical notations' that were developing in the later 9th century. Yet these verses, at the same time, express deep theological and ecclesiastical bases for celebration of a particular feast.

The repertoire of this recording offers a representative selection of melodic and textual styles found within the *Liber ymnorum*. The liturgical calendar contained feasts determined by temporal events in the life of Christ and the church (the temporal cycle) and feasts which commemorated lives of saints (the sanctoral cycle). Of the repertoire recorded here, ② *Natus ante saecula*, ③ *Laus tibi, Christe*, ④ *Gaude, Maria virgo*, ⑥ *Festa Christi omnis christianitas celebret*, ③ *Iudicem nos inspicientem*, ⑨ *Summi triumphum regis*, ⑩ *Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gratia* and ⑰ *Psallat ecclesia* are melodies and poems associated with specific seasons within the liturgical year. Three sequences represent the 'common of saints'; that is, they may be sung for various saints celebrated through the year: ⑦ *Virginis venerandae*, ② *Agone triumphali* and ② *Quid tu, virgo*. The remaining melodies are associated with specific saints ⑫—⑰ ⑨—㉑.

Given that the sequence was the third member of a three-part musical form, four sequences are offered here as they would have been sung with Alleluia and verse before a gospel reading: 

Alleluia. Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis with the sequence 
Natus ante saecula and 
Alleluia. Benedictus es with the sequence 
Sequence 
Alleluia. Benedictus es with the sequence

The principal compositional technique found within sequence melodies that allows the composer/poet to unfold musical form through extended time is symmetrical repetition. The most immediately observable repetition occurs with the replication of entire verses, a formal technique perceptible upon first hearing almost any sequence. Yet a deeper, more subtle formal principle unfolds within each verse itself, for the repetition of clearly perceptible melodic gestures within verses allows the listener to sense unfolding musical structures at a more basic level, and these reiterated melodic gestures become the motivation for the poet's rhythmic composition of a text that will, on the one hand, elaborate the liturgical occasion, but – especially for Notker – will also articulate melodic structures thereby aiding the cantor in cementing melodies in his memory.

Other than the fact that the sequences were sung from memory, we know very little concerning the performance practice of these melodic creations in the 9th century. Given that fact that they do not seem to have been sung from any thoroughly developed notation, it seems doubtful that they were chanted by larger groups of cantors, but rather by soloists or smaller groups of cantors. Thus, most of the pieces recorded in this collection are sung by soloists, thereby rendering the expression of the melodic and textual structure as transparently as possible. We know nothing of the vocal quality of Medieval cantors, so we attempt to perform them as clearly and simply as possible. The pronunciation of Latin as sung by Notker and his contemporaries again lies mostly in the dark; in this recording Germanic pronunciation is used, or the pronunciation modern German scholars would use when reciting the texts. But more important than pronunciation is vocal rendering of the accentual patterns created by the poet, patterns that are 'measured out' to articulate, and thus to secure, melodic structures within the mind and memory of the cantor. The rich culture of the 'stammerer' becomes transparent in the skill with which he manipulates vocabulary, accentuation, and theological and ecclesiastical erudition.

Calvin M. Bower

Allelúia. Dies sanctificátus illúxit nobis: Veníte gentes, et adorate Dóminum: quia hódie descéndit lux magna super terram.

#### 2

Natus ante saécula Dei fílius, invisíbilis, intérminus, Per quem fit máchina caeli ac terrae. maris et in his degéntium; Per quem dies et horae labant et se íterum recíprocant: Quem ángeli in arce poli voce cónsona semper canunt: Hic corpus assúmpserat frágile sine labe originális críminis de carne Maríae vírginis, quo primi paréntis culpam Aevaéque lascíviam térgeret. Hoc praesens diécula lóquitur praelúcida, adaúcta longitúdine, quod sol verus rádio sui lúminis vetústas mundi depúlerit génitus ténebras. Nec nox vacat novi síderis luce, quod magórum óculos térruit scios: Nec gregum magístris défuit lumen, quos praestrínxit cláritas mílitum Dei.

Gaude, Dei génitrix, quam círcumstant obstétricum vice concinéntes ángeli glóriam Deo. Christe, patris únice, qui humánam nostri causa formam assumpsísti, réfove súpplices tuos, Et quorum partícipem te fore dignátus es, lesu, dignánter eórum súscipe preces, Ut ipsos divinitátis tuae partícipes, Deus, fácere dignéris, únice Dei.

#### 1

Alleluia. A holy day has dawned upon us: Come nations and adore the Lord, for today a great light has descended upon the earth.

#### 2

He, born before the beginning of time, the Son of God, beyond perception, without limit. Through whom the edifice of heaven and earth comes to be, the sea and of all that dwell therein. Through whom the days and hours flicker and then again are rekindled, Whom the angels in the citadel of heaven continually proclaim with harmonious voice, This one had taken on a feeble body free of the stain of original sin - from the flesh of the virgin Mary through which he might wipe away the sin of the first parent and the wantonness of Eve. This short day. this day of brilliant light, augmented in length, tells us that the true sun, once born, has with the ray of His light expelled the long-standing darkness of the world. And neither did the night lack the light of a new star. for it struck fear in the learned eves of the wise men. Nor was the light absent to the watchers of the flocks. for they were awestruck by the brightness of the heavenly host.

Rejoice, Mother of God,
whom, in place of midwives,
angels attend, singing glory to God.
O Christ, only begotten of the Father,
who for our sake took on human form,
give new life to those kneeling humbly before you;
And of those with whom
You deigned to participate, O Jesus,
graciously receive their prayers,
So that You, O God,
may deign to make them participants
in your divinity, O only-begotten of God!

Laus tibi, Christe, Cui sapit, quod vidétur céteris esse surdástrum; Famulátu cuius omnis cómpetit sexus et aetas. Recéntes atque téneri mílites. Herodiáno ense trucidáti. te hódie praedicavérunt; Licet necdum potúerint lígula. effusione tamen te. Christe. sui sánguinis praeconáti sunt, Lac cum cruóre fundéntes ad Deum clamitatúrum. Uda púpilli quem gena míseret et innocéntis. Quis athletárum fortíssimus umquam Exercítibus tantam, Christe, suis cóntulit victóriam. Quantam vágiens coaévulis tuis Tu praestitísti, mittens eos caelum reanatúros pérpetim? O Christi praecónes clari florésque mártyrum corúsci Et confessórum insígnes gémmulae sanctórum Atque sterílium in mundo vírginum! Cari filíoli, dulces pusíoli, nos iuváte précibus. Quas Christus innocéntem mortem vestram míserans, Pro sese maturátam. plácidus exaúdiens Nos regno suo dignétur.

#### 4

Gaude, María virgo, Dei aénitrix. Quae promíssis Gabrihélis Spe devóta credidísti. Númine tu Sancti Spíritus repléta gignis clausa fílium,

Praise to You. O Christ. To whom is known what seems to others difficult to hear. For whose service every sex and age is fit. Today, the young and tender soldiers, cut down by Herod's sword. have proclaimed you: While they could not yet preach you with their little tongues. nevertheless they did so, O Christ, through the shedding of their blood. Pouring forth milk with the life-blood as a cry unto God, Who, with tear-dampened cheek, pities the babe and the innocent. What mightiest of champions, O Christ, Has ever conferred so great a victory on his armies As You - yourself a wailing babe granted to your peers, sending them to reign without end in heaven? O worthy heralds of Christ. and sparkling flowers of the martyrs. Illustrious little buds of the Holy Confessors. And of the Virgins, barren in the world, Dear little sons, sweet little boys, help us with your prayers! And may Christ, showing mercy at vour innocent death -Hastened for his sake -

#### 4

Rejoice, O virgin Mary, mother of God! You who – with devout hope – Trusted the promises of Gabriel: You who – filled with the divine power of the Holy Spirit – bring forth, though inviolate, the Son

graciously hearing those prayers,

Count us worthy of His Kingdom.

Qui mundi regit máchinam. In tuo partu ad turrim gregis canunt ángeli, Quippe iacénte suo rectóre in praesépio urbis Bethlemíticae. Te nomen lesu edócuit caeléstis núntius. Quod circumcíso impóneres, intácta, fílio, Qui scit solus nostra crímina Cum patre sanctóque spíritu rite circumcídere. Ad tuas manus magi tria múnera déferunt. Quae vitam nostram et fídei figúrant régulam. Te primum Christus potentátus sui instrúxit doléntem glóriam; Te primo signo deitátis suae donáverat vina fáciens. Ergo precámur, ut nostri reátus apud cleméntem patrem fias intervéntrix, Qui te in terris eius hic paréntem delégit, quem rex caeli regem generávit. Et te iam spléndentem in praeséntia Dei, Te corde contríto, te flagitámus, Nos. nos tuórum ut mansórem víscerum Tuéri precéris.

### 5

Alleluia. Benedíctus es, Dómine Deus patrum nostrórum, et laudábilis in saécula.

#### 6

Festa Christi omnis christiánitas célebret, Quae miris sunt modis ornáta cúnctisque veneránda pópulis Per omnitenéntis advéntum

Who rules the edifice of the world. As you give birth the angels sing at the tower of the flock. Even with their monarch lying there in the manger within the city of Bethlehem. The heavenly messenger taught you the name Jesus. Which you – remaining pure – gave to your Son at his circumcision; He alone, with the Father and Holy Spirit, Knows the duty to circumcise our sins. Into your hands the magi deliver the three gifts, Which figuratively represent our life and the rule of faith. It was you in your grief whom Christ first taught the glory of his mighty power; You he rewarded with the first sign of his divinity. changing water into wine. Therefore we pray you to be an intercessor for our sin before the forgiving Father, Who chose you here on earth to be the parent of him, whom the king of heaven begat as king. And you – now resplendent in the presence of God – You, with contrite heart, you we implore, That you bid him - who dwelt in your womb -To watch over us, us who belong to you.

#### 5

Alleluia. You are blessed, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praiseworthy forever.

#### 6

Let the whole of Christendom celebrate the solemnities of Christ, They are adorned with wondrous signs and are to be venerated by all peoples Because of the coming of Him who sustains all things atque vocationem géntium. Ut natus est Christus, est stella magis visa lúcida. At illi non cassam putántes tanti signi glóriam Secum múnera déferunt. párvulo ófferant ut regi. caeli quem sidus praédicat. Atque aúreo túmidi príncipis léctulo tránsito Christi praesépe quaéritant. Hinc ira saevi Heródis férvida Ínvidi recens rectóri génito Béthleem párvulos praécipit ense crudéli pérdere. O Christe, quantum Patri exércitum, Íuvenis doctus ad bella máxima. pópulis praédicans cólligis, sugens cum tantum míseris! Anno hóminis trigísimo Subtus fámuli se íncliti inclináverat manus Deus cónsecrans nobis baptísma in absolutionem criminum. Ecce, Spíritus in spécie Ipsum álitis innócuae unctúrus sanctis prae ómnibus vísitat semper ipsíus conténtus mansióne péctoris. Patris etiam insónuit vox pia, véteris oblíta sermónis: poénitet me fecísse hóminem: Vere fílius estu meus míhimet plácitus, in quo sum placátus; hódie te, mi fili, génui. Huic omnes auscultáte, pópuli, praeceptóri!

#### 7

Vírginis venerándae de número sapiéntum festa celebrémus, sócii,

and his summoning of the nations. When Christ was born. a bright star was seen by the Magi. But they, pondering that the glory of such a sign would not be for naught, Bring with them gifts to offer to the infant child as the kind whom the star of heaven proclaims. And passing by the golden bed of the haughty prince they seek the manger of Christ. Then, the burning rage of savage Herod -Jealous of the new-born ruler decrees that the young boys of Bethlehem be destroyed by the cruel sword. O Christ, trained for the greatest battles while yet a youth. You assemble so great an army for the Father with such wretched ones. a suckling preaching to the multitudes! In the thirtieth year of manhood, God bowed beneath the hands of his celebrated servant. consecrating for us baptism for the remission of sins. And, lo, the Spirit visits him in the form of an innocent bird, to anoint him above all the saints. content for all times to dwell in his breast. The benevolent voice of the Father intoned - having forgotten his former pronouncement -'I am sorry that I made mankind': 'Truly You are my son, pleasing to me, in whom I am reconciled; today, my son, have I begotten you. O all you peoples, give ear to this teacher!'

#### 7

Fellow believers: from the number of the wise let us celebrate this feast of one virgin to be venerated,

Fíliae matris summi regis. sacrosánctae Maríae. Quam sibi in sorórem Dei adoptávit fílius. Haec corpus suum dómuit freno ieiúnii Et luxúriam sécuit ense agnóniae. Istaec contra cunctos mortis dimicávit ímpetus Et hostem cruéntum freta Christi dextra stráverat. Haec sponsum ab aula caeli sese inviséntem alácris Corde iocúndo secúta eius est ingréssa thálamum. Tute iam dúlcibus plena delíciis Christo misérias nostras suggérito Nobis consolationem precándo.

#### 8

lúdicem nos inspiciéntem Cripta cordis rimántem In commune precémur, Próprias illi puras consciéntias póssimus ut exhíbere. Deus pátiens iuste. clemens atque treménde: Tu vis párcere magis poeniténti quam plecti. Tu non pásceris morte moriéntum, sed eos súscitas. Nec gaudes, Deus, in perditióne, qui Stigem próperant. Tuis cívibus ángelis est gaúdium pravo crímina sua puniénte: Credo péreat ut unus pusíllulus, non est plácitum tuo in conspéctu. Tu nos serva iúgiter omni a malo, Deus iuste iudex. Ut non quando véneris ómnibus Digna factis redditúrus, Nosmet habéas puníre, sed munerári.

Daughter of the mother of the king most high. of most holy Mary. One whom the Son of God adopted for himself as a sister. This virgin subdued her body using the bridle of fasting. And she slew licentiousness with the sword of chastity. She struggled against all assaults of death And she laid low the bloody enemy sustained by the right-hand of Christ. She, having followed the bridegroom, who is going to her from the heavenly court, now eager Has entered his wedding chamber with joyful heart. You, now filled with delightful pleasures, May you make Christ mindful of our wretched state By praying that we be offered consolation.

#### 8

To the judge scrutinising us, Plumbing the secret places of our hearts, Let us pray in one accord That we may be able to reveal to him our own pure consciences: O God, patient, just, merciful - yet to be feared -You desire more to spare the penitent than that he be punished. You find no sustenance in the death of those dving. but raise them up, Nor do you rejoice, O God, in the damnation of those who hasten toward the Styx. There is joy among your citizens, the angels, when an errant one is punished for his sins; I believe that if one of the least of these should perish it is not pleasing in your sight. Continually preserve us from every evil, O God, O just judge, So that when you come to dispense right judgment for every deed, You need not be compelled to punish us, but grant us our reward.

prosequámur laude,
Qui caeli qui terrae regit sceptra
inférni iure dómito,
Qui sese pro nobis rediméndis
permágnum dedit prétium.
Huic nomen exstat
convéniens Ídithun:
Nam transílivit omnes strénue montes
collículosque Bethel.
Saltum de caelo dedit in virginálem
ventrem, inde in pélagus saéculi.
Postquam illud suo
mitigávit potentátu, tetras
Flegetóntis assíliit ténebras.
Príncipis íllius disturbáto império,

Summi triúmphum regis

Mániplis plúrimis inde érutis, mundum illústrat suo iúbare. Captivitátemque détentam ínibi victor duxit secum Et redivívum iam suis se praébuit servis et amícis. Dénique saltum déderat hódie máximum nubes polósque cursu praépeti tránsvolans Celébret ergo pópulus hunc diem crédulus, cuius mórbida Ídithun córpora in semet ipso altis sédibus caeli invéxit Dei fílius. Et tremens iúdicem expéctet affutúrum, ut duo ángeli fratres docuérunt: Qui lesus a vobis assúmptus est in caelum, íterum véniet, ut vidístis eum. lam Ídithun nostrum vócibus sédulis omnes implorémus Ut a dextris Patris qui sedet Spíritum mittat nobis Sanctum In finem saéculi ipse quoque semper sit nobiscum.

#### 9

The triumph of the great high king

let us recount with praise:

He who rules the sceptres of heaven, of earth,

having conquered the law of hell,

He who gave himself, a great ransom,

for our redemption.

For him the name

'Idithun' is fitting:

For he vigorously leapt over all the mountains

and the low hills of Bethel.

He made the leap from heaven into the virginal womb,

hence into the sea of this world.

After he had calmed that sea

through his dominion,

he leapt to the terrible darkness of Phlegethon.

He threw the reign of the prince of darkness

into utter confusion,

And, having snatched from there many troops,

he enlightens the world with his radiance.

And captivity - there laid in bonds -

he, the victor, led forth with him:

And now, born anew, he revealed himself to

his servants and friends.

Finally today he made his greatest leap,

flying across the clouds and skies in winged path.

Let faithful people therefore celebrate this day.

those whose diseased bodies Idithun - the Son of God -

has carried into the highest seats of heaven

in his very own body.

And, trembling, let them await the judge who is about to

come, as two angels instructed the brethren:

'The same Jesus, taken up from you into heaven,

will come again, as you now see him.'

Now us all implore our Idithun

with attentive voices.

That he who is sitting at the right hand of the Father

may send his Holy Spirit to us.

And that He - even unto the end of time -

might always abide with us.

Sancti Spíritus assit nobis grátia,

Quae corda nostra sibi

fáciat habitáculum,

Expúlsis inde cunctis

vítiis spiritálibus.

Spíritus alme, illustrátor hóminum:

Hórridas nostrae mentis purga ténebras.

Amátor sancte sensatórum

semper cogitátuum:

Infúnde unctiónem tuam,

clemens, nostris sénsibus.

Tu purificátor ómnium

flagitiórum, spíritus

Purífica nostri óculum

interióris hóminis,

Ut vidéri suprémus génitor

possit a nobis,

Mundi cordis quem soli cérnere

possunt óculi.

Prophétas tu inspirásti, ut praecónia

Christi praecinuíssent ínclita:

Apóstolos confortásti, uti trópheum

Christi per totum mundum véherent.

Quando máchinam per verbum suum

fecit Deus caeli terrae márium,

Tu super aguas fotúrus eas

numen tuum expandísti, Spíritus.

Tu animábus vivificándis

aguas foecúndas:

Tu aspirándo das spiritáles

esse hómines.

Tu divísum per linguas mundum

et ritus adunásti, Dómine,

Idolátras ad cultum Dei

révocans, magistrórum óptime.

Ergo nos supplicántes tibi

exaúdi propítius, Sancte Spíritus,

Sine quo preces omnes cassae

credúntur et índignae Dei aúribus.

Tu qui ómnium saeculórum sanctos

Tui núminis docuísti instínctu

10

May the grace of the Holy Spirit be with us,

To make our hearts

its dwelling place,

After having expelled

all spiritual vices.

O life-giving Spirit, illuminator of humankind:

Dispel the frightful darkness of our soul.

O holy one, ever the lover

of the thoughts of the knowing:

Mercifully pour your balm

over our senses.

You, O Spirit, purifier

of all shameful thoughts and deeds,

Purify the eye

of our interior being,

That the supreme source of being

might be seen by us,

The source whom only eyes

of a pure heart can discern.

You inspired the prophets, so that they

would chant the glorious accomplishments of Christ;

You strengthened the apostles

to carry the sign of Christ through the whole world.

When God through his word

made the edifice of heaven, of earth, of the seas.

You, O Spirit, to give it warmth,

spread out your divine breath.

You seeded the waters

to bring forth living beings:

You, in exhaling, enable humankind

to be spiritual.

You, O Lord, united the world,

divided through tongues and religious rites.

Calling idolaters back to the worship of God,

O greatest of all teachers.

Therefore, O Holy Spirit,

graciously give ear to us as we beseech you,

You without whom all prayers are empty

and unworthy for the ears of God.

You who embracing them taught the saints in all times

Through the impulse

amplecténdo, Spíritus, Ipse hódie apóstolos Christi Donans múnere insólito et cunctis inaudíto saéculis Hunc diem gloriósum fecísti.

#### 11

Alleluia, lustus ut palma florébit. et sicut cedrus multiplicábur.

#### 12

Sancti baptístae Christi praecónis Solémnia celebrántes móribus ipsum seguámur, Ut ad viam quam praedixit asséclas suos perdúcat. Devóti te, sanctíssime hóminum, amíce lesu, flagitámus ut gaúdia percipiámus, Appárens quae Zacháriae Gábrihel repromísit, qui tuam celebrárent obséquiis nativitátem. Et per haec festa aetérna gaúdia adipiscámur. Qua sancti Dei sacris delíciis laeti congaúdent. Te qui praéparas fidélium corda Ne quid dévium vel lúbricum Deus in eis invéniat. Te depóscimus ut crímina nostra Et facínora continua prece stúdeas absólvere. Placátus ut ipse suos semper invísere fidéles Et mansiónem in eis fácere dignétur Et agni véllere, quem tuo dígito Mundi monstráveras tóllere crímina, nos velit indúere. Ut ipsum mereámur ángelis assócii In alba veste segui per portam claríssimam. Amíce Christi, Iohánnes.

of your divine breath, O Spirit, Today you yourself -Endowing the apostles of Christ with a gift exceptional and incredible to all ages -Made this day glorious.

#### 11

Alleluia. The just one will flourish like the palm tree; like the cedar of Lebanon, he will be multiplied.

12 As we celebrate the solemnities of the holy Baptist, Of the herald of Christ. let us follow him in our ways of living. So that he might lead his followers to the way that he proclaimed. We – devoted to you – entreat you, O holiest of men, you friend of Jesus Christ, that we might receive the joys That Gabriel – appearing to Zachariah – promised in return to those who would celebrate your birth with devoted attendance, And that, through this celebration, we might gain joy eternal, This celebration in which the saints of God together rejoice in transcendent delights. You, who prepare the hearts of the faithful, Lest God discover in them something aberrant or impure, You we implore, that through our continual prayer You might strive to obtain forgiveness for our sins and offenses. So that He, thus satisfied, might deign always to visit his faithful And to make a dwelling place in them, And that He, whom you point out with your finger - He who takes away the sins of the world may see fit to enfold us in the fleece of the Lamb. So that we might be worthy to follow him. - as his angelic companions -Clothed in white raiment, through that resplendent gate, O John, friend of Christ.

Petre summe Christi pastor
et Paule, géntium doctor:
Ecclésiam vestris doctrínis
illuminátam
Per círculum terrae precátus
ádiuvet vester
Nam Dóminus, Petre, caelórum
tibi claves dono dedit.
Armígerum, Béniamin, Christus
te scit suum vasque eléctum.
Mare planta te, Petre,
Christus conculcáre tuae dedit caritáti;

Umbram tui córporis infírmis debilibúsque fecit medícinam. Spermólogon philósophos te, Paule, Christus dat víncere sua voce: Multíplices victórias tu, Paule, Christo per pópulos adquisísti. Postrémo victis ómnibus bárbaris Ad arcem summi pérgitis cúlminis germános discórdes sub iugum Christi pacátos iam coactúri. Ibi Nerónis féritas príncipes Apostolórum, proéliis plúrimis victóres, divérsae te. Petre'et Paule. addixerat poenae mortis. Te crux assóciat, te vero gládius cruéntus mittit Christo.

#### 14

Laurénti David magni martyr milésque fortis Tu imperatóris tribúnal Tu manus tortórum cruéntas. Sprevísti secútus desiderábilem atque manu fortem Qui solus pótuit regna superáre tyránni crudélis Cúiusque sanctus sánguinis pródigos facit amor mílites eius

#### 13

O Peter, Christ's supreme pastor,
O Paul, the gentiles' teacher,
May your prayer
support the church –
Enlightened through your teachings –
throughout the whole earth.
For the Lord gave you, Peter,
the keys of heaven as a gift,
Christ recognises you, Benjamin,
as his bearer of arms, and as his chosen vessel.
To your love, Peter,
Christ granted that you
tread the sea under your foot;
He made the shadow of your body

He made the shadow of your body a remedy for the infirm and helpless.

And you, Paul – just a babbler – Christ grants that you conquer the philosophers with His voice;

Paul, you won many victories for Christ, throughout the nations.

Finally, with all the barbarians overcome, You reach the citadel of the highest peak

You reach the citadel of the highest peak

– two unlike brothers – to be brought together
in harmony under the yoke of Christ.

There the savagery of Nero sentenced the princes
Of apostles – victors in so many conflicts –
O Peter and Paul,
to the penalty of different deaths.

You [Peter] the cross joins –
you [Paul] the bloodstained sword sends – to Christ.

#### 14

O Laurence, martyr
and mighty warrior of the great David:
The emperor's tribunal,
The bloodstained hands of the torturers
You held in contempt, for you followed the one to be desired,
the one mighty in combat,
He who alone could overcome
the kingdoms of the cruel tyrant,
And whose sacred love
makes his warriors prodigal of their blood

Dúmmodo illum líceat cérnere dispéndio vitae praeséntis Caésaris tu fasces contémnis et iudícis minas derídes Cárnifex úngulas et ustor cratículam vane consúmunt Dolet ímpius urbis praeféctus victus a pisce assáto Christi cibo Gaudet Dómini convíva favo

conresurgéndi cum ipso saturátus. O Laurénti mílitum David invictíssime regis aetérni Apud illum sérvulis ípsius deprecáre véniam semper Martyr milésque fortis.

#### 15

Stirpe, María, régia Procreáta, regem génerans lesum, Laude digna angelórum sanctórum, Et nos peccatóres tibi devótos intuére benígna! Tu pios patrum mores osténtas in te. sed excéllis eósdem. Patris tui Salomónis in te lucet sophía. Et Ezéchiae apud Deum cor rectum, sed numquam in te corrumpéndum. Patris Iósiae adimplévit te religiósitas Summit étiam patriárchae te fides totam possédit, patris tui. Sed quid nos istos recensémus heróas, Cum tuus natus omnes praecéllat illos atque cunctos per orbem? Nos hac die tibi gregátos serva, virgo,

in lucem mundi qua prodísti paritúra caelórum lumen.

Provided they be allowed to discern Him as they give up this present life.

You belittle Caesar's symbols of power, and jeer at the threats of the judge.

In vain the executioner and torturer exhaust their claws and gridiron.

The impious city-prefect mourns, vanquished by a roasted fish, the food of Christ, While the companion at table with the Lord rejoices in honeycomb, for with him he will rise again, filled to satiety.

O Lawrence, of David's – of the eternal King's – warriors, most invincible:

In His presence continuously beseech mercy for His humble servants.

#### 15

O martyr and mighty warrior.

O Mary - begotten from a regal lineage, You who bore Jesus the King, Worthy of the praise of holy angels -Look also kindly upon us sinners devoted to you! You reveal in yourself the holy virtues of the fathers. vet these you surpass. The wisdom of your father Solomon shines in you, As does Hezekiah's upright heart before God but in you it was never to see corruption. The religious observance of your father Josiah has filled you: The faith of the greatest patriarch possesses you utterly - he who is also your father. But why do we recount these heroes, When your Son excels all of those and all brave men throughout the universe? Watch over us, O Virgin, the sheep of your flock assembled for you. on this day on which you came forth into this world's light to bring forth heaven's light.

Magnum te, Michahélem, habéntes pignus Cívium nostrórum, si tamen servi studeámus esse Dei. Póscimus, ut tuis précibus consórtes mereámur fíeri Eórum beatitúdinis ineffábilis. quam in Dei conspéctu eos habére confídimus. Qui est beatitúdo vera sanctórum perpétuo. Quod quia scimus non posse fíeri, Nisi bonis studeátur méritis. Póscimus, ut Deum sanctos mores nos instrúere semper póstules. Ut introíre valeámus aulam, quae non recipit ullam máculam. Tu, qui Dei caritátem rétinens Immortális perdurásti, Míchahel, post mortem réquiem nobis deprecáre.

#### 17

Psallat ecclésia, mater illibáta Et virgo sine ruga, honórem huius ecclésiae. Haec domus aulae caeléstis probátur párticeps In laude regis caelórum et cerimóniis Et lúmine contínuo aémulans civitátem sine ténebris. Et córpora in grémio cónfovens animárum quae in caelo vivunt. Quam dextra prótegat Dei Ad laudem ípsius diu. Hic novam prolem gratia párturit foecúnda Spíritu Sancto: Ángeli cives vísitant hic suos et corpus súmitur lesu. Fúgiunt univérsa córpori nócua: Péreunt peccatrícis ánimae crímina.

#### 16

You, great Michael, we who are holding the pledge Of our fellow-citizens beg even while we are striving to be God's servants -That through your prayers we might merit to become coheirs In the inexpressible beatitude. which we trust is shared by those in the presence of God -That presence which is the true beatitude of the saints everlasting. Yet since we know that we cannot attain this Unless it be approached through just rewards. We beg you to plead that God ceaselessly teach us ways that are holy, So that we might be able to enter that dwelling place that admits no blemish whatsoever. You, Michael, who - holding fast to the love of God -Endure immortal. that we might find rest after we suffer death.

#### 17

Let the church, mother unblemished And virgin without wrinkle, sing psalms in honour of this church! For this house is considered a participant in the celestial temple Through its praise of the king of heavens and in its sacred rites. And with its continuous light it imitates that city without darkness, And it cherishes within its bosom the bodies of the souls that live in heaven. May the right hand of God long protect this house devoted to his praise! In this place grace, nurtured by the Holy Spirit, brings forth the new offspring: Angels visit their fellow-citizens, and the body of Jesus is taken. All things noxious to the body flee; The guilt of the sinful soul perishes.

Hic vox laetítiae pérsonat: Hic pax et gaúdia rédundant. Hac domo trinitáti laus et glória semper resúltant.

#### 18

Alleluia. Beatus vir qui timet Dóminum: in mandátis eius cupit nimis.

Sacerdótem Christi Martínum Cuncta per orbem canat ecclésia pacis cathólicae Atque íllius nomen omnis heréticus fúgiat pállidus. Pannónia laetétur génitrix talis fílii; Itália exúltet álitrix tanti iúvenis Et Gálliae trina divísio sacro certet litígio cuius esse débeat praesul: Sed páriter habére se patrem omnes gaúdeant Turóni soli eius corpus fóveant. Huic Francórum atque Germániae plebs omnis plaudat, Quibus vidéndum ínvexit Dóminum in sua veste. Hic célebris est Aegýpti pártibus, Gréciae quoque cunctis sapiéntibus, Qui ímpares se Martíni méritis séntiunt atque eius medicámini; Nam febres sedat daemonésque fugat, paralýtica membra glútinat Et mortuórum sua prece trium reddit córpora vitae prístinae. Hic ritus sacrilégos déstruit. et ad Christi glóriam dat ígnibus ídola; Hic nudis mystéria bráchiis confíciens praéditus est caelésti lúmine. Hic óculis ac mánibus in caelum

In this place ecstatic music resounds: In this place peace and joys overflow. In this house re-echo to the Trinity praise and glory without end.

Alleluia. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord: he delights exceedingly in his commandments.

Let the whole Church at universal peace throughout the world sing the priest of Christ, Martin! And let every pallid heretic flee from the name of this one! Pannonia, his motherland, should celebrate a son such as this; And Italy, who nursed the great youth, should glory. And let Gaul, divided in three, contend in sacred dispute concerning whose bishop he should be: Yet likewise let all the citizens of Tours rejoice to have him as their father and alone cherish his body. This one the people of the Franks and of Germany should applaud. Those to whom he introduced the Lord in his own cloak – that He might be seen. He is known throughout regions of Egypt, as well as among all the wise men of Greece. Who recognise that they cannot equal Martin

in acts of service and cures: For he calms fevers and scatters demons. he glues back together paralysed limbs, And through his prayer he brought again the bodies of three dead souls to life. He destroys rites that profaned the sacred. and to the glory of Christ gives idols to the fires; When celebrating the sacred mysteries with unclothed arms he was endowed with celestial light. With eyes and hands raised to heaven,

et totis víribus suspénsus terréna cuncta réspuit; Eius ori numquam Christus ábfuit sive iustítia vel quicquid ad veram vitam pértinet. Ígitur te cuncti póscimus, O Martíne, ut qui multa mira hic ostendísti, Étiam de caelo grátiam Christi nobis supplicátu tuo semper infúndas.

#### 20

A solis occásu usque ad exórtum Est cunctis nomen tuum, Deus, laudábile, Qui inde novum solem mittis mira lege. Qui lustret orbem rádiis Et fotu terras végetet. Hic Columbánus nómine columbínae vitae fuit. Dignus habére Spíritus Sancti pignus in hac vita. Hic terram cum Ábraham relíquit et cognátos propter Deum. Hic cum lohánne regis incéstum increpáre non métuit. Huic pastum dat Deus in desérto cum Móyse. Huic caelum óbsegui est parátum cum lósue. Hic feras mansuefácit et corvos ut Helías et Dánihel Hic persecutiónes cum apóstolis Christi perpétitur Huic ipse veritátis hostis nutu Dei Testátur, quod hic veritátis cultor foret.

Nos ergo tete póscimus, Beáte, quo nos Dómino Tu comméndes.

- indeed with all his strength he renounced all things of earth; Christ, justice, or that which pertains to the true life. was never absent from his lips. And so to you, O Martin, we all pray, that you - who revealed many miracles on earth -Also in heaven – through your supplication – may continually fill us with the grace of Christ.

20 From the setting of the sun to its rising Your name, O God, is worthy of praise by all people, You who send forth a new sun by miraculous law. Who illumines the globe with its rays And with its warmth invigorates the earth. This man, named Columbanus, was dovelike in his life. And he was worthy to hold the pledge of the Holy Spirit in this life. Like Abraham, for the sake of God he relinguished his land and his kinsmen: Like John, no fear kept him from rebuking the incest of the king. Like Moses, to him God gave nourishment in the desert: Like Joshua, it was intended for him to serve heaven. Like Elijah and Daniel he tamed beasts and ravens: Like the apostles of Christ he endured persecution. Of this one, the enemy of truth himself - by the will of God - bears witness. that he was guardian of truth. Thus to you we call,

O blessed one, that you Commend us to the Lord.

Deus in tua virtúte

sanctus Andréas gaudet et laetátur

eádem comitátus

Piscátio nati tui ipse primum,

factus piscátor populórum:

Myrmidónes idolátras

diu fluctivágos

reti cepit fídei.

Is légibus Acháïam tuis Deus

victor íllius subiugávit

Et trópheum Christi tui

fixit ibi bonum

se osténtans mílitem

Miráculis, virtútibus, doctrínis quacúmque

quaesíta spolia

tibi O rex áttulit

Atque suo cruóre triúmphi

inscrípsit títulos

tui regum Dómine.

Istum crucis sócium

et regni crédimus

Christi fílii tui

atque fratérculum.

Nos ígitur peccátis nostris

graváti te Deus póscimus

Ut íllius qui tua semper

sectátus praecépta tibi placet

Nos intercessióne

tueáris in aetérnum.

#### 22

Agóne triumpháli

mílitum regis summi

Dies iste célebris est pópulis

ipsi regi crédulis

Hi delectaméntum

respúerant mundanórum

Et crucem tunc turpem

cottídie baiolárunt

Hos núllius féritas a Christo séparat

Quin ad eum mórtibus millénis próperent

#### 21

O God, in your strength

saint Andrew rejoices and is glad,

ever sustained by that same strength.

A catch of your Son, this man

- the first made a fisher of men -

caught the Myrmidon idolaters -

long tossed about by the waves -

in the net of faith.

This conqueror of those, O God,

then brought Achaia into obedience of your laws

And there - proving himself a good soldier -

planted the standard

of your Christ.

Through miracles, acts of bravery,

and sound teachings he returned

all manner of sought after spoils to you, O King,

And with his own blood

he wrote out the inscription of your triumph,

O Lord of Kings.

We believe him to be a companion both

of the cross and the kingdom,

And a brother Of Christ,

your Son.

Thus we, burdened by the weight

of our sins, pray to you, O  $\operatorname{\mathsf{God}}$ ,

That, through the intercession of this one,

who always following your precepts is pleasing to you,

You might protect us

throughout eternity.

#### 22

Through triumphant contest

of soldiers of the most high king,

This day is one of celebration for the people who follow that king/believing in the king.

The heroes of this day have rejected

the delights of worldly things,

And in exchange have day by day taken up

the cross - once a sign of shame.

No one's savagery can separate them from Christ,

Indeed they hasten to him through death in their thousands.

Non carcer ullus aut caténa mólliunt fórtia in Christo péctora; Sed nec ferárum morsus diri mártyrum sólidum éxcavant ánimum Non ímminens cápiti gládius térritat Fortíssimos mílites óptimi Dómini Nunc manu Dei compléxi persequéntum insúltant furóribus quondam crudélibus Et plebi Christi solámen suppéditant in cunctis labóribus lúbrici saéculi Vos Christi mártyres Nos valde frágiles Précibus nos iusto iúdici sincéris iúgiter commendáre curáte.

### 23

Quid tu, virgo mater, ploras, Rachel formósa, Cuius vultus Iacob deléctat? Ceu soróris anículae Lippitúdo eum iuvet! Terge, mater, fluéntes óculos! Quam te decent genárum rímulae? Heu, heu, quid me incusátis fletus incássum fudísse? Cum sim orbáta nato, paupertátem meam qui solus curáret: Qui non hóstibus céderet angústos términos quos mihi lacob adquisívit: Quique stólidis frátribus, quos multos, pro dolor, éxtuli, esset profutúrus. Numquid flendus est iste, Qui regnum possédit caeléste? Quique prece frequénti míseris frátribus apud Deum auxiliátur!

Notker Balbulus 2—4 6—10 12—17 19—23 Traditional liturgical texts 1 5 11 18 No prison nor chain softens the resolve of these hearts brave in Christ; Indeed even the dreadful bites of wild beasts do not eviscerate the staunch spirit of martyrs. Nor does the sword threatening their head terrify these bravest soldiers of the Lord most high. Now, enfolded in the hand of God, they mock the once cruel ravings of persecutors, And they offer solace to the people of Christ, those remaining in all the labours of this transient world. You, O martyrs of Christ, Us, the utterly weak, Please continually through your sincere prayers take care to commend to the just judge.

#### 23

Why are you weeping, O virgin mother, beautiful Rachel, You whose face delights Jacob? As though he were pleased by the bleary eyes of the elderly sister! Cover. O mother, those weeping eves! How can traces [of tears] on your cheeks adorn you? O woe, woe! Why do you chide me with having poured forth tears in vain? Since I am deprived of my son, of him who alone attended to my poverty: He who did not yield to the enemies the meagre territories which Jacob gained for me: And he, who was to be a support to those foolish brothers. the many who, alas, I exalted. Surely this one, who has gained the kingdom of heaven, should not be so lamented? This one who, with his recurrent intercession, supports those poor brothers in the presence of God?

English translations: Calvin M. Bower from Bower, C. M.: The Liber Ymnorum of Notker Balbulus (Henry Bradshaw Society, 2016)

### **Schola Antiqua of Chicago**



Schola Antiqua of Chicago is a professional Early Music collective that prepares and performs insightful and wide-ranging programmes of pre-modern music. The ensemble takes pride in presenting the highest standards of performance, informed by research on historical music from the European Renaissance and earlier. Founded in 2000, the organisation has received invitations from an array of institutions, including museums where it has provided live and recorded music in connection with major art exhibitions around the United States. In 2012, Schola Antiqua received the Noah Greenberg Award from the American Musicological Society for outstanding contributions to historical performing practice, and its ties to the academic community can be seen in collaborations with scholars from around the world.

Notker Balbulus, also known as Notker of St Gall or Notker the Stammerer, was a renowned Benedictine monk at the Abbey of St Gall in Switzerland who made substantial contributions to both the music and literature of his time. These include the *Liber ymnorum*, which forms an important collection of early musical sequences that celebrate special moments in the liturgical calendar. As the 'very long melodies' of the liturgical sequences were a formidable challenge to memorise, Notker created these texts as an aid to holding the melodies within the mind and memory. They are performed here by the acclaimed and insightful Schola Antiqua of Chicago.

## **NOTKER BALBULUS**

(c. 840-912)

# Liber ymnorum

1 Alleluia. Dies sanctificatus		2 Sancti baptistae Christi praeconis	3:14
illuxit nobis	2:13	13 Petre summe Christi pastor	2:51
2 Natus ante saecula	3:21	14 Laurenti David	2:55
3 Laus tibi, Christe	3:16	<b>15</b> Stirpe, Maria, regia procreata	2:20
4 Gaude, Maria virgo	3:11	16 Magnum te, Michahelem	2:05
<b>5</b> Alleluia. Benedictus es	1:33	17 Psallat ecclesia	2:11
6 Festa Christi omnis		18 Alleluia. Beatus vir qui	
christianitas celebret	3:42	timet Dominum	1:44
<b>7</b> Virginis venerandae	1:51	19 Sacerdotem Christi Martinum	4:05
8 Iudicem nos inspicientem	2:01	20 A solis occasu usque ad exortum	2:40
9 Summi triumphum regis	3:35	21 Deus in tua virtute	2:18
10 Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gratia	4:08	22 Agone triumphali	2:35
11 Alleluia. Iustus ut palma florebit	2:31	23 Quid tu, virgo	2:10

# Schola Antiqua of Chicago • Michael Alan Anderson

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet • The Latin sung texts and English translations are included in the booklet, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/579169.htm

Recorded: 5-8 August 2022 at St Josaphat Parish, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Producer and engineer: Bill Rohlfing • Editors: Michael Alan Anderson, Calvin M. Bower

Booklet notes: Calvin M. Bower

Edited by Calvin M. Bower: *Liber ymnorum of Notker Balbulus* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2016) Cover: *Notker Balbulus*, from a 10th-century medieval manuscript (Alamy Stock Photo)

P & © 2025 Naxos Rights (Europe) Ltd • www.naxos.com