

INTRODUCTION

Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704) composed *In honorem Sancti Xaverij canticum* (H.355), and, subsequently, *Canticum de Sancti Xaverio* (H.355a), an abbreviated version of the former, while in the employ of the Jesuits at the Church of St. Louis in Paris.¹

Catherine Cessac assigns both Saint Xavier motets to her category of “Motets in Honor of Saints.”² Included in this category are the *grand motets* in honor of Saints Louis, Borgia, Xavier, and Joseph. The only extant source for H. 355 is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France.³

Performance Suggestions

This performing edition is scored for two flutes, violin, two violas, basso continuo, chorus and vocal soloists (two sopranos, tenor and bass). The tenor soloist sings the role of St. Xavier. The original instrumentation is as follows:

2 flûtes seules
haut-dessus
bas-dessus
haute-contre
basse
violon
haute-contre de violon
taille de violon
basses de violon
orgue

I chose to designate the strings in the modern orchestration as violin I, viola I, viola II, and violoncello.⁴ The work begins and ends in B-flat major. Various sections of the

¹ C. Jane Gosine and Erik Oakland, “*Docere, delectare, movere*: Marc-Antoine Charpentier and Jesuit spirituality,” *Early Music*, 32 (2004): 511.

² Catherine Cessac, *Marc-Antoine Charpentier*, trans. E. Thomas Glasgow, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly, (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1988), p. 253. Of the later version, Cessac notes, “It is distinguished from the previous work by its length (150 bars shorter), its instrumentation (additions of oboes and bassoon), and a different arrangement of the text.”

³ *Fr-Pn Rés. Vm*¹ 259, Vol. 9 – fols. 44r – 51r, digital image. The work is also published in the Minkoff facsimile edition of Charpentier’s autographs, vol. 9.

⁴ For the performance of this motet at Xavier University in June of 2006, I used the following forces: string quartet, two flutes, organ, soloists and a chamber chorus of twenty.

motet are set in related tonal areas, though the key signature never changes. Conductors, who intend to perform this work, may find Charpentier's chart on the properties of the modes to be useful in their score preparation.⁵

Editorial Procedures

The instrumental parts in this edition have been adapted from the original to reflect modern performance practice and player availability. Original clefs and instrument names are inserted prior to the first measure. Charpentier marks a reprise in the original score, which has been written out here (mm. 292-323). A simple realization of the figured bass in the organ part has been provided. It is mostly derived from the choral and instrumental parts and is intended primarily as an aid to the singers. Present-day vocal and instrumental beaming conventions are observed to facilitate modern performance. Passages written in void notation in Charpentier's autograph (mm. 88-216, 224-240, 265-302, and 314-345) have been converted to 3/2 meter.

Notes on Charpentier's performance instructions

Acc[ompaniment] seul – the organist alone should provide the accompaniment. This typically occurs during solo vocal sections in the piece.

Orgue avec les tailles (basses de vio[lo]n, etc.) – the organ should follow the indicated line of music.

⁵ James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau*, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1997), p. 231. Anthony translates Charpentier's properties as follows:

- Properties of the Modes
- C major: Gay and warlike
- C minor: Obscure and sad
- D minor: Grave and pious
- D major: Joyous and very warlike
- E minor: Effeminate, amorous, and plaintive
- E major: Quarrelsome and peevish
- E-flat major: Cruel and severe
- E-flat minor: Horrible, frightful
- F major: Furious and quick tempered
- F minor: Obscure and plaintive
- G major: Quietly joyful
- G minor: Serious and magnificent
- A minor: Tender and plaintive
- A major: Joyous and pastoral
- B-flat major: Magnificent and joyous
- B-flat minor: Obscure and terrifying
- B minor: Lonely and melancholy
- B major: Severe and plaintive.

Silence tourner a l'aize pour la suite – observe a moment of silence before commencing the next section of music.

Sourdines – this term has been widely debated by scholars. The most recent research by Shirley Thompson suggests that the term likely signifies a softer playing style rather than the use of actual mutes.⁶

Suivez a l'aize – a pause before continuing to the next section of music.

Tournez vite pour la suite – turn the page quickly for the following; this warns the performer(s) that no general pause is intended at the page turn.

Text, Sources and Translation

The text of the motet is based on Biblical passages. Table I provides the original text and a translation. Table II demonstrates Clementine Vulgate references as well as selected passage translations from the King James Version (KJV), the New American Bible (NAB), and the Douay-Rheims (DR)⁷. The librettist for the work is unknown, though it was likely one of the Jesuit priests at the church of St. Louis in Paris.⁸

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Michael H. Marchal of St. Xavier High School in Cincinnati, Ohio and Rev. Gary Wright, S.J. for their translations of the Latin text. Rev. Wright has also produced a scriptural commentary which is appended to this text. I am indebted to Jane Gosine for her expertise and advice in the preparation of this edition. In particular, I am grateful for her willingness to share information regarding Charpentier's terminology.

Thomas G. Merrill
Xavier University
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⁶ Shirley Thompson, "A mute question: Charpentier and the sourdines," *Bulletin de la Société Marc-Antoine Charpentier*, 17 (2000): 7-18.

⁷ I am indebted to Rev. Gary Wright, S.J., for his translation and study of the text.

⁸ Cessac, *Marc-Antoine Charpentier*, 253.

Table I: Text and Translation

IN HONOREM SANCTI XAVERII CANTICUM	CANTICLE IN HONOR OF SAINT XAVIER
<p>PREMIER DESSUS</p> <p>Vidi Angelum volantem per medium coeli splendor in capite ejus. Et pedes ejus tanquam columnae ignis. Et habebat in manu sua Evangelium aeternum. Ut evangelizaret gentibus. Et posuit pedem suum dextrum super mare sinistrum autem super terram.</p>	<p>FIRST SOPRANO</p> <p>I saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, a brilliant light on his head, and his feet like pillars of fire. And he had in his hand the eternal Gospel to proclaim to the nations. And he placed his right foot upon the sea and his left upon the land. Rev. 10:1-2, 14:6</p>
<p>SECOND DESSUS</p> <p>Vidi solem ascendentem super oceanum et egressus ejus versus orientem. Exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam nec est qui se abscondat a calore ejus.</p>	<p>SECOND SOPRANO</p> <p>I saw the sun rising over the ocean, and his going forth toward the east. He rejoiced like a champion to run his course, and there is no one who can hide from his heat. Ps. 18 (19):6-7</p>
<p>LES DEUX</p> <p>Populi sedentes in tenebris, habitantes in umbra mortis, accedite ad eum et illuminami et erudimini.</p>	<p>BOTH</p> <p>People sitting in darkness, dwelling in the shadow of death:¹ come to him, and be enlightened² and instructed.³ 1. Mt. 4:16, Is. 9:2 2. Ps. 33 (34):6 3. Ps. 2:10</p>
<p>TOUS</p> <p>A Domino factum est istud. Et est mirabile in oculis nostris. Lux orta est nobis et veritas illuxit nobis. Quomodo ferebamur in abyssum! Quomodo trahebamur in profundum! Cantabimus canticum laudis, quoniam lux orta est nobis et veritas illuxit nobis.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>By the Lord has this been done, and it is marvelous in our eyes.¹ Light has arisen for us,² and truth shone upon us.¹ How we were being swept into the abyss! How we were being dragged into the depths!³ We will sing a song⁴ of praise, because light has arisen for us, and truth shone upon us. 1. Ps. 117 (118):23, 27 2. Mt. 4:16, Is. 9:2 3. Ex. 14:25, 15:5 4. Ps. 136 (137):4</p>
<p>XAVERIUS</p> <p>Ecce Domine quos tradisti mihi, respice super populum tuum et confirma quod operatus est in eis. Ego autem libentissime impendam et super impendar ipse pro animabus fratrum meorum pro quibus Christus mortuus est. Quis poterit extinguere charitatem meam? Tribulatio, an angustia, an fames, an nuditas, an periculum, an persecutio, an gladius, an mors?</p>	<p>XAVIER</p> <p>Behold, Lord, those you gave to me;¹ look upon your people² and strengthen what has been wrought in them.³ I will most gladly spend, and be utterly spent myself, for the souls⁴ of my brothers for whom Christ died!⁵ Who can extinguish my love?⁶ ⁷ Tribulation, or distress, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or persecution, or the sword, or death?⁷ 1. Jn. 17:6 2. Ex. 33:13 3. Ps. 67 (68):29 4. II Cor. 12:15 5. I Cor. 8:11 6. Songs 8:7 7. Rom. 8:35, 38</p>
<p>TOUS</p> <p>Positus est praedicator et apostolus et magister gentium. In signis et prodigiis et virtutibus.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>He was appointed preacher and apostle and teacher of the nations,¹ in signs and wonders and mighty</p>

Stetit et mensus est terram. Et egressus est in salutem populorum, caeci vident, claudi ambulant, surdi audiunt, muti loquantur, mortui resurgunt.	deeds. ² He stood and surveyed the earth. And he went forth for the salvation of the peoples: ³ the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the mute speak, the dead rise. ⁴ 1. II Tim. 1:11 2. II Cor. 12:12, Acts 2:22 3. Hab. 3:6, 13 4. Mt. 11:5, Is. 35:5-6
PREMIER DESSUS Aspexit et dissolvit gentes; contriti sunt montes saeculi, incurvati sunt colles mundi.	FIRST SOPRANO He looked at the nations and they melted. The age-old mountains were humbled; the hills of the world were bowed down. Hab. 3:6
PREMIER ET SECOND DESSUS - TOUS Et adduxit filios Domini de longinquo et filias ejus ab extremis terrae.	BOTH SOPRANOS - ALL And he brought the sons of the Lord from afar, and His daughters from the ends of the earth. Is. 43:6

Table II: Text, Translation, Vulgate Text References and Biblical Reference Passages

IN HONOREM SANCTI XAVERII CANTICUM	CANTICLE IN HONOR OF SAINT XAVIER	SCRIPTURE SOURCES (Clementine Vulgate)	KJV=King James version. DR=Douay- Rheims. NAB=New American Bible
<p>PREMIER DESSUS Vidi Angelum volentem per medium coeli splendor in capite ejus. Et pedes ejus tanquam columnae ignis. Et habebat in manu sua Evangelium aeternum. Ut evangelizaret gentibus. Et posuit pedem suum dextrum super mare sinistrum autem super terram.</p>	<p>FIRST SOPRANO I saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, a brilliant light on his head, and his feet like pillars of fire. And he had in his hand the eternal Gospel to proclaim to the nations. And he placed his right foot upon the sea and his left upon the land. Rev. 10:1-2, 14:6</p>	<p>Rev 14:6 et vidi alterum angelum volentem per medium caelum habentem evangelium aeternum ut evangelizaret sedentibus super terram et super omnem gentem et tribum et linguam et populum</p> <p>Rev 10:1 Et vidi alium angelum fortem descendentem de caelo amictum nube et iris in capite ejus et facies ejus erat ut sol et pedes ejus tanquam columnae ignis 2 et habebat in manu sua libellum apertum et posuit pedem suum dextrum super mare sinistrum autem super terram</p>	<p>DR And I saw another angel flying through the midst of heaven having the eternal gospel to preach NAB Then I saw another angel flying high overhead, with everlasting good news to announce</p> <p>KJV And I saw another mighty angel... a rainbow [was] upon his head... and his feet as pillars of fire: 2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and [his] left [foot] on the earth</p> <p>DR He hath set his tabernacle in the sun... hath rejoiced as a giant to run the way... and there is no one that can hide himself from his heat. NAB God has pitched there a tent for the sun; it... like an athlete joyfully runs its course... nothing escapes its heat.</p>
<p>SECOND DESSUS Vidi solem ascendentem super oceanum et egressus ejus versus orientem. Exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam nec est qui se abscondat a calore ejus.</p>	<p>SECOND SOPRANO I saw the sun rising over the ocean, and his going forth toward the east. He rejoiced like a champion to run his course, and there is no one who can hide from his heat. Ps. 18 (19):6-7</p>	<p>Ps 18:6 exsultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam suam 7 a summo caelo egressio ejus et occursus ejus usque ad summum ejus nec est qui se abscondat a calore ejus</p>	
<p>LES DEUX Populi sedentes in tenebris, habitantes in umbra mortis, accedite ad eum et illuminami et erudimini.</p>	<p>BOTH People sitting in darkness, dwelling in the shadow of death:¹ come to him, and be enlightened² and instructed.³ 1. Mt. 4:16, Is. 9:2 2. Ps. 33 (34):6 3. Ps. 2:10</p>	<p>Mt 4:16 populus qui sedebat in tenebris vidit lucem magnam et sedentibus in regione umbrae mortis lux orta est eis [quoting Is 9:2 populus qui ambulabat in tenebris vidit lucem magnam habitantibus in regione umbrae</p>	<p>Mt 4 NAB the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen. KJV The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of</p>

<p>TOUS A Domino factum est istud. Et est mirabile in oculis nostris. Lux orta est nobis et veritas illuxit nobis. Quomodo ferebamur in abyssum! Quomodo trahebamur in profundum! Cantabimus canticum laudis, quoniam lux orta est nobis et veritas illuxit nobis.</p> <p>XAVERIUS Ecce Domine quos tradisti mihi, respice super populum tuum et confirma quod operatus est in eis. Ego autem libentissime impendam et super impendar ipse pro animabus fratrum meorum pro quibus Christus mortuus est. Quis poterit extinguere charitatem meam? Tribulatio, an angustia, an fames, an nuditas, an periculum, an persecutio, an gladius, an mors?</p>	<p>ALL By the Lord has this been done, and it is marvelous in our eyes.¹ Light has arisen for us,² and truth shone upon us.¹ How we were being swept into the abyss! How we were being dragged into the depths!³ We will sing a song⁴ of praise, because light has arisen for us, and truth shone upon us.</p> <p>1. Ps. 117 (118):23, 27 2. Mt. 4:16, Is. 9:2 3. Ex. 14:25, 15:5 4. Ps. 136 (137):4</p> <p>XAVIER Behold, Lord, those you gave to me;¹ look upon your people² and strengthen what has been wrought in them.³ I will most gladly spend, and be utterly spent myself, for the souls⁴ of my brothers for whom Christ died!⁵ Who can extinguish my love?^{6,7} Tribulation, or distress, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or persecution, or the sword, or death?⁷</p> <p>1. Jn. 17:6 2. Ex. 33:13 3. Ps. 67 (68):29 4. II Cor. 12:15 5. I Cor. 8:11 6. Songs 8:7 7. Rom. 8:35, 38</p>	<p>mortis lux orta est eis.] Ps 33:6 accedite ad eum, et illuminamini Ps 2:10 et nunc reges intellegite erudimini qui iudicatis terram</p> <p>Ps 117:23 A Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris. v.27 Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis [quoted in Mk 12:11 & Mt 21:42] Lux orta est: see Mt 4 & Is 9, just above. Ex 14:25 et subvertit rotas curruum ferebanturque in profundum Ex 15:5 abyssi operuerunt eos descenderunt in profundum quasi lapis Ps 136:4 Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena</p> <p>Jn 17:6 manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus quos dedisti mihi de mundo Ex 33:13 respice populum tuum Ps 67:29 confirma hoc Deus quod operatus es in nobis 2 Cor. 12:15 Ego autem libentissime impendam, et super impendar ipse pro animabus vestris 1 Cor 8:11 frater propter quem Christus mortuus est Songs 8:7 aquae multae non potuerunt extinguere caritatem Rom 8:35 quis ergo nos separabit a caritate Christi? tribulatio? an angustia? an fames? an nuditas? an</p>	<p>death light is sprung up Ps 33 DR Come ye to him and be enlightened Ps 2 KJV Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.</p> <p>Ps 117 NAB By the Lord has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. KJV Mk This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. DR v27 The Lord is God, and he hath shone upon us. Ex 14 DR and they were carried into the deep Ex 15 NAB The flood waters [the abyss] covered them, they sank into the depths like a stone. Ps 136 DR How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?</p> <p>Jn 17 NAB I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world Ex 33 DR look upon thy people Ps 67 DR Confirm O God what thou hast wrought in us. KJV strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us 2Cor NAB I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your sakes. DR But I most gladly will spend and be spent myself for your souls 1Cor NAB the brother for whom Christ died Songs KJV Many waters cannot quench love. Rom DR Who then shall separate us from the love</p>
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<p>TOUS</p> <p>Positus est praedicator et apostolus et magister gentium. In signis et prodigiis et virtutibus. Stetit et mensus est terram. Et egressus est in salutem populorum, caeci vident, claudi ambulant, surdi audiunt, muti loquantur, mortui resurgunt.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>He was appointed preacher and apostle and teacher of the nations,¹ in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.² He stood and surveyed the earth. And he went forth for the salvation of the peoples:³ the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the mute speak, the dead rise.⁴</p> <p>1. II Tim. 1:11 2. II Cor. 12:12, Acts 2:22 3. Hab. 3:6, 13 4. Mt. 11:5, Is. 35:5-6</p>	<p>periculum? an persecutio? an gladius? v.38 neque mors</p> <p>2 Tim 1:11 in quo positus sum ego praedicator et apostolus et magister gentium</p> <p>2 Cor 12:12 signa tamen apostolatus mei facta sunt super vos in omni patientia, in signis, et prodigiis, et virtutibus.</p> <p>Acts 2:22 Iesum Nazarenum virum adprobatum a Deo in vobis virtutibus et prodigiis et signis quae fecit per illum Deus in medio vestri</p> <p>Hab 3:6 stetit et mensus est terram...</p> <p>Hab 3:13 Egressus es in salutem populi</p> <p>Mt 11:5 Cæci vident, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur, surdi audiunt, mortui resurgunt, pauperes evangelizantur [quoting Is 35:5-6 ...et aperta erit lingua mutorum]</p>	<p>of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword?</p> <p>2Tim KJV appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles</p> <p>2Cor DR Yet the signs of my apostleship have been wrought on you, in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.</p> <p>Acts 2:22 NAB Jesus the Nazorean was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs</p> <p>Hab3:6 NAB He pauses to survey the earth KJV He stood, and measured the earth</p> <p>Hab3:13 KJV Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people</p> <p>Mt 11 NAB the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised DR The blind see... Is35 the tongue of the dumb will sing</p>
<p>PREMIER DESSUS</p> <p>Aspexit et dissolvit gentes; contriti sunt montes saeculi, incurvati sunt colles mundi.</p>	<p>FIRST SOPRANO</p> <p>He looked at the nations and they melted. The age-old mountains were humbled; the hills of the world were bowed down.</p> <p>Hab. 3:6</p>	<p>Hab 3:6 stetit et mensus est terram aspexit et dissolvit gentes et contriti sunt montes saeculi incurvati sunt colles mundi ab itineribus aeternitatis ejus.</p>	<p>NAB He pauses to survey the earth; his look makes the nations tremble. The eternal mountains are shattered, the age-old hills bow low along his ancient ways. DR He stood and measured the earth. He beheld, and melted the nations: and the ancient mountains were crushed to pieces. The hills of the</p>

<p>PREMIER ET SECOND DESSUS - TOUS</p> <p>Et adduxit filios Domini de longinquo et filias ejus ab extremis terrae.</p>	<p>BOTH SOPRANOS - ALL</p> <p>And he brought the sons of the Lord from afar, and His daughters from the ends of the earth.</p> <p>Is. 43:6</p>	<p>sIs 43:6 dicam aquiloni: da; et austro: noli prohibere: affer filios meos de longinquo, et filias meas ab extremis terræ. Is 60:4 filii tui de longe venient et filiae tuæ de latere surgent 9 ut adducam filios tuos de longe</p>	<p>world were bowed down by the journeys of his eternity.</p> <p>Is 43:6 NAB I will say to the north: Give them up! and to the south: Hold not back! Bring back my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.</p>
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APPENDIX

Marc-Antoine Charpentier's CANTICLE IN HONOR OF SAINT XAVIER: A Commentary on the Scriptural Background by Rev. Gary Wright, S.J.

I started out to write this in praise of Charpentier's skill with scripture and his theological vision in constructing the text of the Cantic. But recently I attended a Jesuit meeting where I happened to run into T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Boston College)—music historian, and author of a recent monograph about music in the Jesuit missions.¹ I talked with him at some length about this text, and found out that it is extremely unlikely that Charpentier wrote it himself. For most of the pieces from this period, one of the Jesuits would write the text, and the musician would write the music. The Jesuit authors usually remained anonymous. It is unlikely that a layman in that period, even one who worked closely with the Jesuits, as Charpentier did, would have the theological and scriptural education to create a text like this. Kennedy said one could attribute the text to Charpentier himself only if there is some kind of note in the original manuscript explicitly indicating authorship of the text (as opposed to the music); otherwise, one should presume the text was written by an unknown Jesuit.

This unknown author was an expert at “cut-and-paste” long before computer word processors! His artistic creativity included a marvelous ability to free-associate across the vast corpus of the Bible, drawing together the most disparate passages into a harmonious composition. This very brief text honoring St. Francis Xavier, famous first-generation Jesuit missionary to India and Asia, consists of about twenty-five snippets of verbatim or adapted scripture passages, many only a few words long—completely unrelated in the Bible, yet woven together in this composition to form a beautiful, coherent, and richly-theological text.

The theology of the Cantic is simple but elegant, and very much in the tradition of the Jesuits' mission-oriented spirituality. For the most part, the author selects biblical texts, which describe, or have been applied to, the saving mission of Jesus Christ, especially in its universal aspect of bringing light and salvation to all the peoples² of the world.

Even the passages from the Hebrew scriptures, which refer in their biblical contexts to the people of Israel, are used in the Cantic in such a way that they are made to point toward God's universal love for all. The passages from the writings of St. Paul bring out the self-sacrificing character of that universal salvation as it was lived out by Jesus Christ, and then by St. Paul (and the other apostles) after Him. Taken all together, the texts imply that the life and work of Xavier stands in the tradition or line of “apostles” who continue to carry on the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. This was very much the vision of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who founded the Jesuits together with his friend Xavier, and his other earliest followers. They desired to live and work according to the example of those first apostles gathered and sent forth by Jesus; hence their chosen name, the *Compañía de Jesús* (in English, the Society of Jesus). Ultimately, this is a mystical

spirituality in which the follower of Jesus is so selfless and totally surrendered that Christ Himself lives and acts in and through the disciple. As St. Paul writes, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” It is as if the Canticum proclaims: “It is not Xavier who lived, but Christ Himself who lived and worked in him.”

Another powerful aspect of the Canticum’s artistry is its use of scripture passages drawn from very familiar Psalms and Lections of the sacred liturgy. Anyone with a good knowledge of the Catholic liturgy, upon hearing only a few key words, would immediately associate those texts with their corresponding liturgical feasts and seasons, and thus be brought into affective contact with that aspect of the Christian *mysterium* celebrated therein.

For example, the second and third paragraphs contain texts from Matins and Midnight Mass of the Nativity (Christmas). The implied message: just as the birth of Jesus Christ brought the presence and salvation of God into the world, so too did the arrival of Xavier. The fourth paragraph draws on Ps. 117, the preeminent psalm of the Easter season. This liturgical use of the psalm suggests that just as the psalmist overcame the nations surrounding him, so too Christ by his death and resurrection overcame his enemies who rejected him, to become the cornerstone of a new people. Its use in the Canticum implies that Xavier also accomplished marvelous deeds, to become a cornerstone of the Church’s mission to the nations, by the power of God and the Risen Lord working in him. The final paragraph is based on a passage from Isaiah which is nearly identical to a similar Isaiah text used as the Lection for the feast of the Epiphany, celebrating the revelation of the Christ to all the nations beyond Israel. The implication again: Xavier’s life continued the revelation of Christ to all the nations.

I only wish I had the time to comment on the theological significance of each line and paragraph. But I will take up one paragraph in detail, since it is my favorite demonstration of the creativity of the author’s cut-and-paste method of biblical theology: paragraph five, the one in Xavier’s own voice. Here the author manages to combine seven entirely separate and unrelated scripture passages, each from a different book of the Bible, into four compact, unified sentences.

The beginning of the first sentence is drawn from St. John’s Gospel, where Jesus prays for his disciples, those entrusted to him; and from Exodus, it also draws on Moses’ prayer for the people of Israel in his care. Thus in a half sentence, the author identifies Xavier’s pastoral care for his people with the care Jesus and Moses had for their own. In the next sentence, two texts of St. Paul are quoted, again with the effect of identifying Xavier with the self-sacrificing love Paul had for those in his care.

With this groundwork set, the author now moves on to quote St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans. But in a brilliant cut-and-paste maneuver, he morphs Paul’s first line (“Who will separate us from the love of Christ?”) into a line from the Song of Songs (“Flood waters cannot extinguish love”). The result (“Who can extinguish my love?”) beautifully fuses together the “endure-any-suffering” toughness of Romans (traditionally used for martyrs’ liturgies) with the tender, passionate love poetry of Songs (used in the marriage liturgy) – thereby re-orienting the sense of the rest of the Romans text which follows. It conveys not so much, as Paul intended, a litany of human sufferings, which cannot separate us from Christ’s love, but rather that such sufferings could not extinguish

Xavier's tender love for his people. Which love, from the mystical viewpoint, is in fact the love of Christ Himself, being lived out in and through the person of the Cantic's honored subject, St. Francis Xavier.

¹ "Music and the Jesuit Mission," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, v. 39, n. 3 (Autumn 2007). The Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality, St. Louis MO.

² The word "peoples" calls for a note on my translation of one key word in the Latin of the Cantic: *gens* (*gentes, gentium, gentibus*). The note is not merely technical, but intimately related to the theology of the Cantic. This word has been variously rendered as "Gentiles," "pagans," "tribes," "nations." Each of these words has connotations –many pejorative– in contemporary English, which should not necessarily be attached to the word in its biblical context. In the ancient world, *gens* meant simply a group of people sharing a common homeland, language and culture, that is, what we would call today an ethnic identity. These groups were the precursors of the medieval and modern "nations" – but that word did not carry the meaning it does in today's world of clearly-bounded, highly-structured geopolitical nation-states. Nevertheless, "nations" seems the most neutral and least judgmental of the English terms available, so I have chosen it, especially since the Cantic's whole thrust is to express the Divinity's respectful and tender love for all the "nations" and peoples of the world.