

Blackburn Cathedral Music & More online Supplement No. 8

3 February 2013

A Sequence of Words and Music for Epiphany to Candlemas

It is always an inspiration to come to special services in Blackburn Cathedral (but *all* services are special, of course!) for they are so meticulously prepared not only liturgically, by **Canon Andrew Hindley**, but also, of course, musically, by our gifted team of musicians, led by **Samuel Hudson** and **Shaun Turnbull**.

But today's services were especially demanding upon our splendid team of dedicated **Virgers** for they had set up the Nave chairs in collegiate form for the morning service, and erected platforms for the choirs at the West end of the Nave. Everything had to be dismantled and re-arranged for the evening service – and candles and orders of service had to be put on every chair. Our Virgers work non-stop for us. *Thank you!*

We were honoured that evening by the presence not only of many Mayors from our diocese, but also by Mr Peter Mileham DL and Mrs Mileham, the Chairman of Lancashire County Council and his Lady, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn with Darwen Council. The congregation was headed by Her Majesty's Vice Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, Mr **Rodney Swarbrick DL** and Mrs **Diane Swarbrick**.



The Girls' Choir and the Gentlemen of the Cathedral Choir began the service by singing, in the North transept, *Arise, shine*, by Palestrina, adapted by Francis Jackson and Philip Moore. What a wonderful sound they made!

Everyone joined in the singing of the processional hymn, *From the eastern mountains*, as the choir moved to their position at the West end of the Nave. (For this service was not only full of music but also full of movement for choir and congregation alike!)



Canon Hindley had welcomed our distinguished guests and all members of the congregation (gold chains were in evidence as far as the eye could see). The sight of everyone holding lighted candles was magical.

The choir sang some magnificent music, including:

Tribus miraculis (Three miracles) by Luca Marenzio

Three kings from Persian lands afar by Peter Cornelius. (Soloist Derek Crompton.)

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day by John Gardner (a wonderfully rhythmic setting!)

Cana's Guest, by Richard Allain (b.1965)

This was most moving – beginning with mysterious low chords *ppp* building up to a high *forte* and then dying down again.

Ubi caritas by Maurice Duruflé

Senex puerum portabat by Palestrina, and a lovely setting of the *Nunc Dimittis* by Samuel Hudson which was sung in the middle of the reading of the account of the aged Simeon meeting the Holy Family, when he spoke the words: *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant...* This was full of quiet joy.

The entire congregation, with clergy and choir, processed to the south Transept for the renewal of their Baptism vows, led by the Bishop of Burnley.



Everyone still held their lighted candles.
And Mr & Mrs Swarbrick were there amongst us.



The service ended with Charles Wood's ebullient setting of *Hail, gladdening light*.

Shaun Turnbull played *Bach's Toccata in F* as we recessed, and made our way to the crypt for one of our legendary times for refreshment.



It was a most glorious evening.