Gabriel Faure's "Requiem"

Flower Mound United Methodist Church

Sunday, November 1st, 2026 | 7pm

Requiem — Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Introit and Kyrie
Offertory
Sanctus
Pie Jesu
Agnus Dei
Libera me
In paradisum

Crystal Rubel, soprano
Ian Granado, baritone
FMUMC Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra

Program Notes

Serving as a choir master and organist at *La Madeleine* Church for nearly 30 years, Gabriel Fauré was all too familiar with the typical music associated with funeral services. Artistic and theological considerations of the preceding time chose to focus on the 'Last Judgement' as a motif, emphasizing the weighing of souls between good and evil and Christ's conquest over demonic forces. These ideas are found throughout the traditional Latin texts of the Catholic Mass of the Dead. For example, the *Dies irae* text begins with the (translated) phrase, "Day of wrath, that day shall dissolve the world into embers…". It continues by describing the separating of sheep and goats (c.f. Matt 25:32-33), with the speaker imploring God to remember mercy and call them among the righteous and blessed. The image painted is that of a wrathful God who saves humanity through the violence inflicted on God's Son, and that violence is promised in the final days of the Earth.

Fauré brings a different artistic and theological bent to his *Requiem*. The musical character is that of a lullaby, gently guiding the souls of the departed to the next life. The musical textures are soft, slow, and tender. Fauré also changes the texts that are included. He omits the dreaded *Dies irae*, which instead only appears briefly as part of the *Libera me*. Both the *Libera me* ("Deliver me, O Lord") and the *In paradisum* ("May the angels lead you into paradise") are included in this work, brought in from the commemoration rite that usually happens after the funeral mass. The affect of these changes leads the listener to focus less on hellfire and brimstone and more on the beauty of the life to come. It should also be noted that the unusual instrumentation, omitting violins (save for a solo line in the *Sanctus*), creates a deeper, more round, and less intense sound than a typical orchestra. Throughout, the orchestra most often plays with a soft dynamic and a sweet timbre.

The opening sets a somber tone appropriate for a funeral mass, with a glacially slow tempo. The *Kyrie* has a sweet lullaby sound, with intervals in the melody that sound almost childlike. The tender tone is combined with the text "Lord, have mercy", giving the listener the sense of coming before God as a beloved child. The dissonant chords over the text "Christe" suggest the pain of death, connecting the suffering and the dying with Christ's own passion. The *Offertory* begins with a dissonant fugue in the orchestra, full of Romantic-era harmonies, which is immediately repeated by the chorus over the text "O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver me." The texture of this movement alternates between chorus alone and chorus with the orchestra, which creates a meditative feeling of repetition. Then, a section begins with the baritone soloist and orchestra, beginning with the text, "We offer sacrifices and praises…", changing the tone from somber and penitent towards adoration.

The *Sanctus* is perhaps the most "lullaby-like" movement in the Requiem. The soprano and bass alternate their gentle, sweet lines over a constant and repetitive arpeggiation in the orchestra. This movement features the only music for violin in the whole work. The material blossoms into a triumphant forte sound at the text "Hosanna in excelsis!", reflective of the angel host worshipping God without end. The *Pie Jesu* features solo soprano with organ, alternating with statements by the orchestra. The music is slow and reflective, which depicts the text, a continual repetition of "merciful Jesus, Lord, give them rest." The continued gentle nature into the *Agnus Dei* reflects the image of Jesus as a loving shepherd. As the full chorus enters, the music becomes more dissonant and striking, until the chorus sings *Lux aeterna* ("Shine eternal light upon them") in a kaleidoscope of quickly shifting major and minor chords. The musical material from the very beginning is reprised here, reminding us of the somber tone and transitioning us into the *Libera me.*

The *Libera me*, taking the place of the *Dies irae*, begins with a low repetitive bass rhythm, while the baritone soloist sings a sorrowful melody, as if a chant. Militaristic musical elements, such as the opening bass rhythm and a horn call, continue to try to impart themselves in the music, but quickly dissolve away into the gentle texture of the ensemble. The chorus picks up the sorrowful baritone melody, giving the impression of a group in prayer together.

The *In paradisum* changes the musical tone from the previous movement altogether. The soprano section sings alone, in an angelic and light tone. The image of Lazarus is depicted in the text, raised once to life by Christ and raised again to eternal life with God, as listeners are invited to imagine their loved ones, and one day, themselves, returning to the embrace of the Creator.

Various scholars think differently about Fauré's faith or lack thereof. His musical choices in the *Requiem* certainly placed him at theological odds with the leadership of the Catholic church at the time. Though many see him as agnostic because of his lesser emphasis on eternal punishment, perhaps his work shows an understanding of the afterlife that we may appreciate more today than theologians of the time. The *Requiem* depicts God as ultimately loving and

forgiving, and it serves as a prayer for the living to faithfully remember and cherish their departed loved ones.

-Tatum Earp, 2026

I. Introit – Kyrie

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.	Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion: et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem	A hymn befits Thee, O God in Zion, and to Thee a vow shall be fulfilled in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.	Hear my prayer, for unto thee all flesh shall come.
Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

II. Offertory

O Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas defunctorum de poenis inferni, et de profundo lacu:	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the bottomless pit.
O Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae libera animas defunctorum de ore leonis, ne absorbeat tartarus:	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the lion's mouth, lest they drown in the depths of hell.
O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae ne cadant in obscurum.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, neither the black abyss swallow them up.
Hostias et preces tibi Domine laudis offerimus: tu suscipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam facimus.	We offer unto Thee this sacrifice of prayer and praise Receive it for those souls whom today we commemorate.
Fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam. Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini eius.	Allow them, O Lord, to cross from death into the life which once Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.
O Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae libera animas defunctorum de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu: ne cadant in obscurum.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hells and from the bottomless pit, nor let them fall into darkness.
Amen.	Amen.

III. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabbaoth Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.	Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory Hosanna in the highest.

IV. Pie Jesu

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem, dona eis requiem, sempiternam requiem.	Merciful Jesus, Lord, grant them rest grant them rest, eternal rest.

V. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant them rest.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant them rest.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem, sempiternam requiem.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant them everlasting rest.
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine: Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.	May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord, With Thy saints forever, because Thou art merciful.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them.

VI. Libera me

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa tremenda Quando coeli movendi sunt et terra: dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.	Deliver me, Lord, from everlasting death on that dreadful day when the heavens and the earth shall be moved when Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.
Tremens factus sum ego et timeo, dum discussio venerit, atque ventura ira.	I quake with fear and I tremble awaiting the day of account and the wrath to come.
Dies illa, dies irae calamitatis et miseriae, Dies illa, Dies magna et amara valde.	On that day, the day of wrath, of calamity, of misery, On that day, that momentous day, and most bitter.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them.

VII. In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant angeli:
in tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres,
et perducant te in civitatem sanctum Jerusalem.

Chorus angelorum te suscipiat,
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
aeternam habeas requiem.

Aeternam habeas requiem.

May the angels lead you into paradise,
may the martyrs welcome you upon your arrival,
and bring you into the holy city of Jerusalem.

May a choir of angels welcome you,
and, with poor Lazarus of old,
may you have eternal rest.

May they have eternal rest.