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The Dream of Gerontius

ELGAR

Sunday

26 April 2026

7.30pm

St Saviour's Church
South Street
Eastbourne
BN21 4UT

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra
Hailsham Choral
ES Chorus
Noteworthy Voices

Graham Jones **conductor**
Lisa Wigmore **leader**
Rebecca Hughes **mezzo soprano**
Andrew Mackenzie-Wicks **tenor**
Jozik Kotz **bass**



Verdi Requiem, April 2024

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra www.eso.org.uk

We are celebrating our 46th season, this being our 160th concert.

Graham Jones is the musical director and one of the founding members, and Lisa Wigmore was appointed leader in 1984. As well as our annual Young Soloist Competition, we perform three concerts a year. The ESO annual choral concert was established in 1983 with some 50 singers from the town and surrounding area and took place in St Saviour's Church. In 1987, singers from Eastbourne College Choral Society joined and, with over 300 singers and the 70-strong ESO, the venue became the Congress Theatre with Verdi's Requiem. By 1999 and with some 130 in the chorus, the concert had moved to Chichester Cathedral. The ESO choral concert returned to Eastbourne and to St Saviour's Church in 2010.

Our website includes archived photographs, programmes and so on of all concerts. This is our fourth performance of *The Dream of Gerontius*.

Our next orchestral concert, on Sunday 21 June, features the 17-year-old violinist Sofia Demetriades, this year's winner of our competition, who will play Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. The programme also includes Mozart's Magic Flute Overture and Beethoven's Symphony No 2.

If you are interested in becoming a donor, a sponsor, an ESO Friend, a singer or a player, or would like to help the Music Working Group, then please contact concertmanager@eso.org.uk

Hailsham Choral Society www.hailshamchoral.org

Hailsham Choral was founded in 1961 and has celebrated 65 years of music-making. We currently have around 60 singers. Jozik Kotz was appointed in 2005 as our musical director, Barbara Edwards is our assistant MD and Will Hancox is our accompanist. We perform at least four concerts a year and will be performing Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Kodály's *Missa Brevis* on Saturday 21 November in St Saviour's Church. We are also singing Evensong in Southwark Cathedral on Saturday 6 June.

We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7.30pm in the Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham.

If you are interested in joining the choir or would like more information, please contact hcsjoin@hailshamchoral.org or visit the website. If you would like to be kept informed about HCS's forthcoming concerts then you can become a Friend of the HCS, at no charge, by emailing hcsinfo@hailshamchoral.org, and we will add you to the email list.

Musical Director Jozik Kotz

Accompanist William Hancox

Assistant Musical Director Barbara Edwards

Chair Milly Clark

Sponsorship Secretary Sue Simpson

Noteworthy Voices www.noteworthyvoices.co.uk

Noteworthy Voices, tonight's semi-chorus, was founded in 2014 and is a local chamber choir of up to twenty singers. Formed to explore some of the most beautiful sacred and secular a cappella repertoire, we perform at least three concerts each year across the East Sussex area under the direction of Rachel Shouksmith. Recent highlights include Ahoy! by L'Estrange (in collaboration with pupils from St Andrew's Prep), a festive programme Christmas Around the World featuring music by Jenkins, Rutter and Stopford, and an Easter Meditation with works by Bruckner, Lotti, Wheeler and Whitacre. Our next concert, Music for a Summer's Day, will take place on Saturday 13 June at 4.30pm in St Mary's Church, Old Town. The programme will include music by Dvořák, Holst, Rutter, Saint-Saëns and Vaughan Williams, and will feature a tenor soloist.

For more information or to join our mailing list, please visit www.noteworthyvoices.co.uk. If you are interested in singing with us, we would love to hear from you as we are always keen to welcome new members, especially tenors and basses.

ESO, ES Chorus, HCS and Noteworthy Voices Working Together

The Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra and singers from the ES Chorus, Hailsham Choral Society and Noteworthy Voices are delighted to be collaborating for this choral concert.

We thank the PCC of St Saviour's Church.

For this concert, we are grateful to ticket outlet Rager and Roberts and the following sponsors. (ESO Friends and other sponsors are listed later.)

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We anticipate that the 10-minute interval will start at about 8.10pm at the end of Part One and that the concert will end at about 9.30pm.



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Graham Jones (ESO Musical Director, Conductor)



Graham attended Durham University where he was an organ scholar of Hatfield College, with responsibility for the chapel choir and college musical events. He was still at school when he first conducted an orchestra, gaining further experience at university in workshops with Sir David Willcocks and Roger Norrington. Having been appointed assistant director of music at Eastbourne College in 1976, he became director of music in 1991 and retired from the College in 2012. During his time in Eastbourne, he has been responsible for the Eastbourne Tudor Singers (1978-1988) and co-founded the Eastbourne Sinfonia (1979), now the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra.

As musical director of the ESO from its inception and first concert in January 1980, Graham has conducted the majority of the Orchestra's concerts (this concert is Graham's 135th). He has also been responsible for many of the Orchestra's initiatives including the now nationally recognised annual Young Soloist Competition (the 38th competition takes place in January and February 2026). Though his own particular interest lies in the romantic field, ESO programmes have included the standard orchestral repertoire as well as some works commissioned especially for the Orchestra.

He has worked with some of the country's leading soloists including Sarah Connolly, Simon Deller, Simon Hewitt Jones, Neil Jenkins, Freddie Kempf, Mark Le Brocq,

Anthony Marwood, Martin Roscoe, Patricia Rozario and John York, one of the Orchestra's patrons, as well as, for example, the Barbican Piano Trio.

Graham is always keen to find opportunities which encourage appreciation of music within the community, and this has led to initiatives like the biennial music-from-the-movies concert (with film clips) (working with Adam Faith, Hubert Gregg, Robin Gregory and Brian Murphy). Johnny Morris narrated one of the Orchestra's first children's concerts and Denis Quilley was the narrator in the Mari Markus Gomori series of concerts for children, which also featured percussionist Alisdair Molloy.

In his spare time, Graham is a steam-train enthusiast, an aficionado of English churches, and enjoys cooking and gardening.

Lisa Wigmore (Leader)

Lisa Wigmore has been leader of the ESO since the mid-1980s; she is also a member of the adjudicating panel for the annual competition. Born and educated in Eastbourne, at 15 she was awarded a junior exhibition to the Royal College of Music and continued her studies there under Jack Steadman in the senior department, where she gained her ARCM and GRSM. Since leaving the RCM she has studied under Tina Gruenberg.



Lisa is a well-known violin teacher in Sussex, teaching privately as well as working in the Strings Department at Eastbourne College. She also took part in a masterclass with Yfrah Neaman on behalf of the European String Teachers Association (ESTA). Lisa is involved with many local music-making groups. In her spare time, Lisa enjoys being with her family and walking her retriever in the Sussex countryside.

Rebecca Hughes (Mezzo Soprano)



Rebecca Hughes achieved a degree and postgraduate diploma in vocal performance and opera at Birmingham Conservatoire and Licentiate of Trinity College London. While at the Conservatoire she won a Kathleen Ferrier Trust Award and a Music Sound Fund Award. Rebecca has performed with Grange Park Opera and New Sussex Opera among other touring opera companies, playing roles such as Romeo in *I Capuleti e I Montecchi* (Bellini), Mad Margaret in *Ruddigore* (Gilbert and Sullivan), Fiquette in *Belle Laurette* (Offenbach). As a soloist, she has performed many major works (Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John's Passion*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and *Petite Messe Solennelle*) with a number of choral societies including Derby Cathedral Choir, Hailsham, Norwich, The Royal Free Singers,

The Royal College of Organists, Seaford, Shrewsbury and St John's College Choir. Other engagements have included Mercedes in *Carmen* with South East Opera, Seibel in *Faust* with New Sussex Opera and Guilford Opera, the Fairy Queen with Eastbourne Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and Eboli in Verdi's *Don Carlo* with Midsummer Opera. Rebecca spends most of her time singing, teaching and giving vocal workshops to choral societies in and around East Sussex. Rebecca first sang with the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra in Verdi's *Requiem* in 2024 and we welcome her back.

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Jozik Kotz (Bass)

Jozik was born in Oxford of Polish-Australian parents. After reading music at the University of York and singing as a lay clerk at York Minster, he won a post-graduate scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier, Royal Overseas League and Richard Tauber competitions. In 1993, he was winner of the South East Arts Competition, which led to his debut at Wigmore Hall. Jozik subsequently performed operatic roles with English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera Factory, Garsington and Grange Park; and in Paris, Vienna, Zurich, Madrid, Aix-en-Provence and Lisbon. He has appeared as a soloist at the Proms and with the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia and English Chamber orchestras. His CD recordings include baroque cantatas for Hyperion, Turnage's the Silver Tassie and Gavin Bryars' Doctor Ox's Experiment for Deutsche Grammophon, and Paray's Mass with the Scottish National Orchestra, which was nominated for a Grammy Award. Jozik has been Hailsham Choral Society's musical director since 2005 with a break between 2019 and 2022.

He has been a regular soloist in the ESO's choral concerts and we welcome him back and thank him for all his work with the singers from the Hailsham Choral Society.



Andrew Mackenzie-Wicks (Tenor)

Andrew began singing as a chorister at Chichester Cathedral. He attended Eastbourne College, Durham University and the Royal Northern College of Music. He has sung and understudied over fifty operatic roles for the major UK opera companies and career highlights include Cosi fan tutte for Glyndebourne Festival, Barber of Seville for Welsh National Opera, Alcina for English National Opera, Rake's progress for English Touring Opera, Night at the Chinese Opera for Scottish Opera, Boris Godunow in Russia and Violet, and The Golden Dragon for Music Theatre Wales and Israel Contemporary Players.

An international concert career includes tours with the Monteverdi Choir, Gabrieli and Kings Consorts and solo performances in China, Mexico, Russia and Singapore, and the BBC proms. He was also a member of the BBC Singers. In recent years

he has enjoyed singing on cruise ships and in the extra chorus at the Royal Opera House. The ESO is delighted to welcome Andrew back to perform with us.



Chorus

Chorus Directors Graham Jones, Jozik Kotz, Rachel Shouksmith

Accompanist William Hancox

ES Chorus

The ES Chorus comprises singers who have performed in many of the ESO's concerts over the years as well as more recent joiners.

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Anne Bonwit	Helen Cross	Jonathan Barker	Kim Adams
Marilynne Bromley	Monica Darnbrough	Elizabeth Dezille	Hugh Cosans
Judith Coe	Gerry Dawson	Elizabeth Fenn	Matthew Cosans
Sarah Corin	Gill Eves	Richard Long	Geoffrey Ellis
Elizabeth Foster	Cathy Fisher	Andrew Manning-Jones	Hugh Graham
Susan Kerrison	Jude Gooding	David Nicholson	Philip Hamlin
Nicky Moray	Alison Gourlay	Nick Weston	Nick Janmohamed
Philippa Muggridge	Vicky Henley	David Willingham	Colin Marchant
Val Roberts	Robin Houghton		Chris Thompson
Lucy Sarsfield	Pip Kirtley		John Thornley
Caroline Thompson	Caroline Kruger		
Mary Thurston	Julia La Bouchardière		
	Caroline Macready		
	Liz Moloney		
	Ursula Taylor		

Hailsham Choral Society *also part of semi-chorus

Soprano		Alto	Tenor	Bass
Jane Allen	Helen Kotz	Jane Allcorn	Nigel Baelz	Adam de Belder
Christine Baelz*	Susan Lahache	Ruth Bryant	Paul Carter	Ian Collins
Trish Brown	Susan Lewis	Milly Clark	David Gillham	Simon Dodds
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Kim Charles	Alison Maconochie*	Susan Cowling	Robert Slater	Peter Gilbert
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Catriona Dunbar	Lynn Petit	Liz Fitzpatrick		Walter Hare*
Barbara Edwards	Marion Ponting	Sheila Fox		Martin Hole
Pru Ford-Crush	Mary Reilly*	Aruna Green		David Irvine
Liz Furlong	Lailani Sargent	Fiona Koops		Ian Julier
Nancy Gillio-Terry	Lis Turner	Sarah Owen		Graham Keeley
Jack Good	Iris Warren	Sue Simpson		Paul Lewis
Sandra Grusd*	Maria Webzell	Liza Stewart		Simon Marsden
Hilary Hartley	Sue White	Fiona Tilley		Tony Pittman
Valerie Hyland	Nicola Williams	Ann Walker		Jonathan Statter
Fiona Kellett				

Noteworthy Voices Semi-chorus *also part of HCS

Soprano		Alto	Tenor	Bass
Christine Baelz*	Mary Reilly*	Wendy Bryant Funnell	John Cooper	Robert French
Julie Beaumont	Rachel Shouksmith	Angela Hobden	Lesley Ketterman	Walter Hare*
Sandra Grusd*	Elizabeth Swingle	Maia Nicholles	Rob Wicks	
Zoë Harris		Gail Winter		
Alison Maconochie*				

Friends and Sponsors of the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

In order to maintain our varied musical programme and the high quality of our performances, the Orchestra needs continuing financial support. An essential source of income is provided by the ESO Friends and Sponsors for whose generosity we are very grateful.

For Friends, a subscription of £20 per person is taken on joining and then on 1 January each year.

To sponsor the Orchestra for a year, a donation of £250 will give you two complimentary tickets to the three annual concerts and to the final of the Young Soloist Competition, and space in concert programmes for an advert.

If you would like to become an ESO Friend or Sponsor the Orchestra, then please contact our treasurer for more details.

ESO Treasurer: Richard McDonough,
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Lists updated 18 March 2026



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The ESO sends condolences to the friends and family of the late Sara Sage who was a regular player in the violin section and supporter of the Orchestra.

The Dream of Gerontius

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Ad Maiorem Deo Gloriam

‘To the greater glory of God.’ So Elgar dedicated the score with words often used by Bach. This was followed by a quotation from John Ruskin: ‘This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved and hated, like another: my life was as the vapour and is not; but this I saw and knew; this, if anything of mine, is worthy of your memory.’ Elgar instinctively knew what he was writing. It is ‘from my insides inside’ he confided to a friend. ‘You will find Gerontius far beyond anything I’ve done... I have written my own blood into the score.’

It seems curious that the greatest work to come out of this country in the 19th century should come not from the established Anglican Church but from John Henry Newman (a convert to Catholicism) and Elgar (a confirmed Catholic).

Newman wrote his dramatic poem in 1865 and it seems likely that Elgar first read it in the early 1870s. The association became stronger when, in 1889, he was given the poem as a wedding present. Newman was a master of the English language with a natural, clear and penetrating style. The poem tells of the journey of a man’s soul from judgment to purgatory. The stress is on human sin and the cleansing of the spirit. It is the culminating drama of every human soul and, as such, universal. Elgar knew that the insistence on purgatory might be prejudicial to the work’s success. Indeed, this was why Dvořák had withdrawn from setting the text in 1888. There was certainly hostility from the established Anglican church when early performances were being planned which led to Elgar’s having to remove some Catholic references in the text.

Gerontius is a name derived from the Greek word ‘geron’ meaning ‘old man’ and is a devout Everyman. Elgar describes Gerontius as ‘a man like us, and not a priest or a saint... a worldly man in his life... a good healthy full-blooded romantic... he represents me.’ We follow Gerontius from death to the threshold of eternity. It is a dream because his experiences, though real, are not perceived through bodily senses.

Sir John Barbirolli, one of the greatest interpreters of the work, described it as ‘a work, exulting and exalted, written as only masterpieces can be, in a



constant heat of inspiration.’ The influences range from plainsong to Wagner. It was the first English work in which the orchestra is as expressive as the voices: the oboe when Gerontius sings of ‘that manhood crucified’, the strings at ‘the emptying out of each constituent’, the timelessness in the string opening to Part Two, and the harp as the angel sings farewell. Also new is the use of the semi-chorus and the melodic speech rhythms of Gerontius, particularly at the beginning of Part Two, when the soul sings of its liberation from the body. The conversation between the angel and the soul that follows was described by Elgar’s friend Jaeger (pictured within the Enigma Variations as Nimrod) as ‘mystic and heart-moving’. There are massed choral effects, from the snarling demons to the mighty setting of Praise to the Holiest.

The moment when Gerontius finally sees God cost Elgar the greatest anxiety. This section was different in the first sketches. Jaeger wrote to him during a long correspondence about the work’s final shape: ‘I wanted you to suggest, in a few gloriously great and effulgent orchestral chords given out by the whole force of the orchestra in its most glorious key, the momentary vision of the Almighty.’ Elgar described it as ‘the one glimpse into the unexpressible.’

Gerontius is, in the words of one of Elgar’s biographers, Michael Kennedy, ‘a spiritual and artistic experience.’ It has a special place in the lives of those who know it. As always in the presence of great art, one feels a sense of humility in approaching the work.

It is a privilege to conduct Gerontius again (the ESO’s fourth performance), especially so as this performance is, as were our performances in 1999 (Chichester Cathedral) and 2016 (St Saviour’s Church), in a setting appropriate to the work.

Graham Jones
Written 1999 / revised 2026

PART 1

Prelude

Gerontius

Jesu, Maria - I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now,
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my brow -
(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me!)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more.
'Tis this strange innermost abandonment,
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to Thee.)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.
Pray for me, O my friends: a visitant
is knocking his dire summons at my door,
The like of whom, to scare me and to daunt
Has never, never come to me before;
So pray for me, my friends, who have not
strength to pray.

Assistants

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.
Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him,
All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy Virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Gerontius

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man;
And through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod,
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent
And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
Use well the interval.

Assistants

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord,
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.
From the sins that are past;
From Thy frown and Thine ire;
From the perils of dying;
From any complying
With sin, or denying
His God or relying
On self, at the Last;
From the nethermost fire;

From all that is evil;
From power of the devil;
Thy servant deliver,
For once and for ever.
By Thy birth, and by Thy Cross Rescue him from
endless loss; By Thy death and burial,
Save him from a final fall;
By Thy rising from the tomb,
By Thy mounting up above,
By the Spirit's gracious love
Save him in the day of doom.

Gerontius

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus, De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine.
Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three, and God is One; And I next
acknowledge duly Manhood taken by the Son.
And I trust and hope most fully In that Manhood
crucified:
And each thought and deed unruly Do to death,
as He has died. Simply to His Grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong. And I love,
supremely, solely,
Him the holy, Him the strong. Sanctus fortis,
Sanctus Deus, De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine,
And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,
Holy Church, as His creation, And her teachings,
as His own. And I take with joy whatever Now
besets me, pain or fear,
And with a strong will I sever
All the ties which bind me here. Adoration aye
be given,
With and through the angelic host,
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Mortis in discrimine.
I can no more; for now it comes again,
That sense of ruin, which is worse than pain,
That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man.
... And, crueller still,
A fierce and restless fright begins to fill
The mansion of my soul.
And, worse and worse,
Some bodily form of ill floats on the wind,
with many a loathsome curse

Tainting the hallowed air, and laughs,
and flaps its hideous wings,
And makes me wild with horror and dismay.
O Jesu, help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
Some Angel, Jesu! such as came to Thee
In Thine own agony ...
Mary, pray for me. Joseph, pray for me.
Mary, pray for me.

Assistants

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil hour,
As of old so many by Thy gracious power: -
Noe from the waters in a saving home; (Amen).
Job from all his multiform and fell distress;
(Amen). Moses from the land of bondage and
despair; (Amen). David from Golia and the
wrath of Saul; (Amen).
- So, to show Thy power,
Rescue this Thy servant in his evil hour.

Gerontius

Novissima hora est; and I fain would sleep, The
pain has wearied me ... Into Thy hands, O Lord,
into Thy hands ...

Priest and Assistants

Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo!
Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul!
Go from this world! Go, in the Name of God The
Omnipotent Father, Who created thee! Go, in
the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Son of the
living God, Who bled for Thee!
Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit,
Who Hath been poured out on thee!
Go in the name
Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in the name
Of Cherubim and Seraphim; go forth!
Go, in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets; And
of Apostles and Evangelists,
Of Martyrs and Confessors, in the name
Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
Of holy Virgins; and all Saints of God.
Both men and women, go! Go on thy course;
And may thy place today be found in peace,
And may thy dwelling be the Holy Mount
Of Sion: through the Same, through Christ
Our Lord.

INTERVAL (10 minutes)

PART 2

Soul of Gerontius

I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed.
A strange refreshment for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
And ne'er had been before. How still it is!
I hear no more the busy beat of time,
No, nor my fluttering breath, nor struggling pulse;
Nor does one moment differ from the next.
This silence pours a solitariness
Into the very essence of my soul;
And the deep rest so soothing and so sweet Hath
something too of sternness and of pain. Another
marvel: someone has me fast
Within his ample palm; ... A uniform
And gentle pressure tells me I am not
Self-moving, but borne forward on my way,
And hark! I hear a singing; yet in sooth
I cannot of that music rightly say
Whether I hear, or touch, or taste the tones.
Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

Angel

My work is done,
My task is o'er,
And so I come,
Taking it home,
For the crown is won,
Alleluia.
For evermore.
My Father gave
In charge to me
This child of earth
E'en from its birth,
To serve and save,
Alleluia,
And saved is he.
This child of clay
To me was given,
To rear and train
By sorrow and pain
In the narrow way,
Alleluia.
From earth to heaven.

Soul

It is a member of that family
Of wondrous beings, who,
Ere the world were made,
Millions of ages back, have stood around
The throne of God.
I will address him,
Mighty One, my Lord,
My Guardian Spirit, all hail!

Angel

All hail!

My child and brother, hail!

What wouldest thou?

Soul

I would have nothing but to speak with thee
For speaking's sake. I wish to hold with thee
Conscious communion; though I fain would know
A maze of things, were it but meet to ask,
And not a curiousness.

Angel

You cannot now

Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.

Soul

Then I will speak.

I ever had believed

That on the moment when the struggling soul
Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell
Under the awful Presence of its God,
There to be judged and sent to its own place.
What lets me now from going to my Lord?

Angel

Thou art not let but with extremest speed
Art hurrying to the Just and Holy Judge.

Soul

Dear Angel, say,

Why have I now no fear of meeting Him!

Along my earthly life, the thought of death
And judgement was to me most terrible.

Angel

It is because

Then thou didst fear, that now thou dost not
fear, Thou hast forestalled the agony, and so
For thee the bitterness of death is passed.

Also, because already in thy soul

The judgement is begun.

A presage falls upon thee, as a ray

Straight from the Judge, expressive of thy lot.

That calm and joy uprising in thy soul

Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,

And heaven begun.

Soul

Now that the hour is come, my fear is fled;

And at this balance of my destiny,

Now close upon me, I can forward look

With a serenest joy.

But hark! upon my senses

Comes a fierce hubbub, which would make me
fear Could I be frightened.

Angel

We are now arrived

Close on the judgement-court; that sullen howl

Mighty One, my Lord,

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Angel

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fear Could I be frightened.

Angel

We are now arrived
 Close on the judgement-court; that sullen howl
 Is from the demons who assemble there Hungry
 and wild, to claim their property,
 And gather souls for hell. Hist to their cry.

Soul

How sour and how uncouth a dissonance!

Demons

Low-born clods
 Of brute earth,
 They aspire
 To become gods,
 By a new birth,
 And an extra grace,
 And a score of merits,
 As if aught
 Could stand in place
 Of the high thought
 And the glance of fire
 Of the great spirits,
 The powers blest,
 The lords by right,
 The primal owners,
 Of the proud dwelling
 And realm of light -
 Dispossessed,
 Aside thrust,
 Chucked down,
 By the sheer might
 Of a despot's will,
 Of a tyrant's frown,
 Who after expelling
 Their hosts, gave,
 Triumphant still,
 And still unjust
 Each forfeit crown
 To psalm-droners,
 And canting groaners
 To every slave,
 And pious cheat
 And crawling knave,
 Who licked the dust
 Under his feet.

Angel

It is the restless panting of their being;
 Like beasts of prey, who, caged within their
 bars, In a deep hideous purring have their life,
 And an incessant pacing to and fro.

Demons

The mind bold
 And independent,
 The purpose free,

So we are told,
 Must not think
 To have the ascendant.
 What's a saint?
 One whose breath
 Doth the air taint
 Before his death;
 A bundle of bones,
 Which fools adore,
 Ha! Ha!
 When life is o'er.
 Virtue and vice,
 A knave's pretence.
 'Tis all the same;
 Ha! ha!
 Dread of hell-fire,
 Of the venomous flame,
 A coward's plea.
 Give him his price,
 Saint though he be,
 Ha! ha!
 From shrewd good sense
 He'll slave for hire;
 Ha! Ha!
 And does but aspire
 To the heaven above
 With sordid aim,
 And not from love.
 Ha! ha!

Soul

I see not those false spirits; shall I see
 My dearest Master, when I reach His throne!

Angel

Yes - for one moment thou shalt see thy Lord.
 One moment but thou knowest not my child,
 What thou dost ask: that sight of the Most Fair
 Will gladden thee, but it will pierce thee, too.

Soul

Thou speakest darkly, Angel! and an awe
 Falls on me, and a fear lest I be rash.

Angel

There was a mortal, who is now above
 In the mid glory: he, when near to die,
 Was given communion with the Crucified -
 Such, that the Master's very wounds were
 stamped Upon his flesh; and, from the agony
 Which thrilled through body and soul in
 that embrace, Learn that the flame of the
 Everlasting Love
 Doth burn ere it transform ...

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height

And in the depth be praise:

Angel

Hark to those sounds!
They come of tender beings angelical,
Least and most childlike of the sons of God.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!
To us His elder race He gave
To battle and to win,
Without the chastisement of pain,
Without the soil of sin.
The younger son He willed to be
A marvel in His birth:
Spirit and flesh His parents were;
His home was heaven and earth.
The Eternal blessed His child, and armed,
And sent Him hence afar,
To serve as champion in the field
Of elemental war.
To be His Viceroy in the world
Of matter, and of sense;
Upon the frontier, towards the foe,
A resolute defence.

Angel

We now have passed the gate, and are within
The House of Judgement ...

Soul

The sound is like the rushing of the wind -
The summer wind - among the lofty pines.

Choir of Angelicals

Glory to Him, Who evermore
By truth and justice reigns;
Who tears the soul from out its case,
And burns away its stains!

Angel

They sing of thy approaching agony,
Which thou so eagerly didst question of.

Soul

My soul is in my hand: I have no fear -
But hark! a grand mysterious harmony:
It floods me, like the deep and solemn sound
Of many waters.

Angel

And now the threshold, as we traverse it Utters
aloud its glad responsive chant.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise;

In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!
O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.
O wisest love! that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe, Should
strive and should prevail;
And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all divine.
O gen'rous love! that He who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo;
And in the garden secretly,
And on the cross on high,
Should teach His brethren and inspire
To suffer and to die.
Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

Angel

Thy judgement now is near, for we are come
Into the veiled presence of our God.

Soul

I hear the voices that I left on earth.

Angel

It is the voice of friends around thy bed,
Who say the 'Subvenite' with the priest.
Hither the echoes come; before the Throne
Stands the great Angel of the Agony,
The same who strengthened Him, what time He
knelt Lone in the garden shade, bedewed with
blood. That Angel best can plead with Him for
all Tormented souls, the dying and the dead.

Angel of the Agony

Jesu! by that shuddering dread which fell on
Thee; Jesu! by that cold dismay which sickened
Thee; Jesu! by that pang of heart which thrilled
in Thee; Jesu! by that mount of sins which
crippled Thee; Jesu! by that sense of guilt which
stifled Thee; Jesu! by that innocence which
girdled Thee;
Jesu! by that sanctity which reigned in Thee;
Jesu! by that Godhead which was one with
Thee; Jesu! spare these souls which are so dear
to Thee; Souls, who in prison, calm and patient,
wait for Thee, Hasten, Lord, their hour, and

bid them come to Thee, To that glorious Home,
where they shall ever gaze on Thee.

Soul

I go before my Judge ...

Voices on earth

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord.

Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

Angel

Praise to His Name!

O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe,

Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.

Alleluia! Praise to His Name!

Soul

Take me away, and in the lowest deep

There let me be,

And there in hope the lone night-watches keep,

Told out for me.

There, motionless, and happy in my pain,

Lone, not forlorn -

There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,

Until the morn,

There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,

Which ne'er can cease

To throb, and pine, and languish, till possess

Of its Sole Peace.

There will I sing my absent Lord and Love: -

Take me away,

That sooner I may rise, and go above,

And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

Souls in Purgatory

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge: in every
generation, Before the hills were born, and the
world was, from age to age Thou art God.

Bring us not Lord, very low; for Thou hast said,
Come back again, ye sons of Adam.

Come back, O Lord! how long: and be entreated
for Thy servants.

Angel

Softly and gently, dearly ransomed soul,

In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,

And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,

I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold thee.

And carefully I dip thee in the lake,

And thou, without a sob or a resistance,

Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,

Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim distance.

Angels, to whom the willing task is given,

Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou

liest; And Masses on the earth, and prayers in

heaven, Shall aid thee at the Throne of the Most
Highest. Farewell, but not for ever brother dear,

Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;

Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,

And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.

Souls

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge, etc. Amen.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest, etc. Amen.

Text by Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-90)



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