

# AVE VERUM CORPUS

Op. 2, No.1

Music: Edward Elgar

Arrangement for SSA Choir: E. Feeley

**Largo**

Soprano *p* *legato*

A - ve ve - rum cor - pus, na - tum de Ma - ri - a Vir - gi -

ne, ve - re pas - sum im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi - ne.

*pp*

A - ve ve - rum cor - pus na - tum de Ma - ri - a Vir - gi -

Ped.

ne, ve - re pas - sum im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi - ne.

Cu - jus la - tus per - fo - ra - tum ve - ro flu - xit san - gui -

*senza Ped.*

ne; es - to no - bis prae - gus - ta - tum, mor - tis in ex - a - mi - ne.

*f* *p* *f* *dim.*

Cu - jus la - tus per - fo - ra - tum, ve - ro flu - xit san - gui -

*pp* *cresc.* *pp* *cresc.* *pp* *cresc.*

*Ped.*

ne; es - to no - bis prae - gus - ta - tum, mor - tis in ex - a - mi -

*f* *p* *rit.*

**Piu lento**

ne. O cle - mens, O O pi - e,

*pp* *pp* *pp* *dim.*

dul - cis Je - su, Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, Ma - ri - ae.

*f* *pp* *f* *pp*

## Notes:

In 1885, Elgar succeeded to the post of organist at St George's Roman Catholic Church in Worcester, and the move gave him an even more regular platform for his religious compositions. It was in this role that he produced a charming trio of works: *Pie Jesu*; *Ave Maria* and *Ave Maris Stella* - works which held such a lasting appeal for the composer that twenty years later he orchestrated them, giving them Opus Number 2, and re-working the *Pie Jesu* into this *Ave Verum*.

William Allen, a member of the congregation at St George's and a musical friend of the Elgar family, was a solicitor in whose office Elgar briefly worked at the age of 15. Allen died on 27 January 1887 and the following day, Elgar wrote a *Pie Jesu* for soprano and organ for the choir at St George's to sing at the funeral, basing part of the melody on a Kyrie he had sketched the year before. Poignantly, it was sung many years later, to honour the death of the composer himself.

In 1902 he re-arranged it as an *Ave Verum Corpus* for full choir, expanding it by repeating each half and adding a coda. Scored for SATB and organ, it is a simply set, attractive, small-scale melody, led by sopranos, where each verse is repeated by the full choir. There is a short coda, with antiphonal effects between sopranos and tenors, and altos and basses. Elgar described it as "too sugary, I think, but it is nice and harmless and quite easy."