

OXFORD

*SATB choir and organ*

Wilberg

**Mack Wilberg**

Jesu, the very  
thought is sweet

Mack



oxford sacred music

Commissioned by Dr. David Berning for the Westminster Oratorio  
Choir and Orchestra, Westminster Presbyterian Church,  
Des Moines, Iowa, Randal Buikema, conductor

# JESU, THE VERY THOUGHT IS SWEET

For Mixed Choir (SATB) and Organ  
(or Two Flutes, Organ and Strings)\*

Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153)

J.M. Neale (1818–1866), *trans.*

Mack Wilberg

With expression, yet simplicity (♩ = c. 88)

Organ

*p* (celestes)

7

*p* (celestes to pedal 8' only)

13

Sopranos *mp*

Je - su, the ve - ry

\*This piece may be performed by mixed choir and organ, in which case the organ reads from the part presented in this octavo. If performed with flutes and strings, the organ reads from the separate organ part included in the set of parts accompanying the full score (available on rental).

4

19

(S.)

thought is sweet; in that dear Name all heart - joys meet;

This system contains measures 19 through 24. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower two staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time. The lyrics are: "thought is sweet; in that dear Name all heart - joys meet;".

25

But O than hon - ey sweet - er far the glimps - ses of his

This system contains measures 25 through 30. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower two staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time. The lyrics are: "But O than hon - ey sweet - er far the glimps - ses of his".

31

Pres - ence are.  
(solo flutes)

*mp*

This system contains measures 31 through 36. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower two staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time. The lyrics are: "Pres - ence are." followed by "(solo flutes)". A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is present in the piano part. The piano part includes a section for solo flutes.

37

Musical score for measures 37-42. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The piano part features a complex harmonic texture with many accidentals and ties. The vocal line is mostly rests, with some notes appearing in the final measure.

43

Tenors *mp*

No word is (-solo)

+16'

Musical score for measures 43-48. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one flat. The vocal line is labeled "Tenors" and "mp". The lyrics "No word is (-solo)" are written below the vocal line. The piano part continues with complex harmonies. A rehearsal mark "+16'" is present at the end of the system.

49

sung more sweet than this; no name is heard more full of

Musical score for measures 49-54. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one flat. The vocal line contains the lyrics "sung more sweet than this; no name is heard more full of". The piano part continues with complex harmonies.

bliss; No thought brings sweet - er com - fort nigh, than Je - sus,

This system contains measures 55 through 60. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, and a separate bass line in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

Son of God most high.

This system contains measures 61 through 66. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, and a separate bass line in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

Sopranos, Altos *mf*  
Je - su, the hope of

Tenors *mf*  
Je - su, the hope of

This system contains measures 67 through 72. It features three vocal parts: Sopranos and Altos (top staff), Tenors (middle staff), and a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs (bottom two staves). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

73

musical score for measures 73-76. It features two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and a piano accompaniment with grand staff notation. The lyrics are: "souls for - lorn! How good to them for". The music is in a minor key with a common time signature.

souls for - lorn! How good to them for

souls for - lorn! How good to them for

77

musical score for measures 77-80. It features two vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "sin that mourn! To them that seek thee,". The music continues in the same minor key and common time.

sin that mourn! To them that seek thee,

sin that mourn! To them that seek thee,

81

musical score for measures 81-84. It features two vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "O how kind! But what art thou to". The music concludes with a double bar line and repeat sign.

O how kind! But what art thou to

O how kind! But what art thou to

85

(S.)

**poco rit.**

**a tempo**

*mf*

them that find? Je - su, thou sweet - ness, pure and blest,

(A.)

them — that find? Je - su, thou sweet - ness, pure — and blest,

(T.)

them that find? Je - su, thou sweet - ness, pure — and blest,

(B.)

Je - su, thou sweet - ness, pure and blest,

**poco rit.**

**a tempo**

91

life's Foun-tain, Light of souls dis - tress'd; Sur - pas - sing all that

life's Foun-tain, Light of souls — dis - tress'd; — Sur - pas - sing all that

life's Foun-tain, Light of souls — dis - tress'd; — Sur - pas - sing all that

life's Foun-tain, Light of souls dis - tress'd; Sur - pas - sing all that

97

heart re - quires, ex - ceed - ing all that soul de - sires.

heart re - quires, ex - ceed - ing all that soul de - sires.

heart re - quires, ex - ceed - ing all that soul de - sires.

heart re - quires, ex - ceed - ing all that soul de - sires.

*p*

103

A few Sopranos *mp*

(S.) No mor - tal can ex - press, no let - ters write its

No tongue of mor - tal can ex - press, no let - ters write its

(A.) No tongue of mor - tal can ex - press, no let - ters write its

(T.) No tongue of mor - tal can ex - press, no let - ters write its

(B.) No tongue of mor - tal can ex - press, no let - ters write its

*mp*

*mp*

109

bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ Who hath thee in \_\_\_\_\_ his heart \_

bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ A - lone who hath thee in his heart

bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ A - lone who hath thee in his heart

bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ A - lone who hath thee in his heart

bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ A - lone who hath thee in his heart

*mf*

*mf*

The musical score consists of five vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are arranged in a five-part setting. The lyrics are: "bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ Who hath thee in \_\_\_\_\_ his heart \_" for the top voice, and "bles - sed - ness; \_\_\_\_\_ A - lone who hath thee in his heart" for the other four voices. The piano accompaniment is in the bottom system, featuring a treble and bass clef. It includes a *mf* dynamic marking and a crescendo hairpin.

115

Je - sus, what thou art. **All Sopranos**

knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art. A-lone who hath thee in his

knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art.

knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art.

knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art.

*p*

*p*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 115. It features five vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are arranged in a choir setting, with the top staff specifically marked for 'All Sopranos'. The lyrics are: 'Je - sus, what thou art. knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art. A-lone who hath thee in his knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art. knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art. knows, love of Je - sus, what thou art.' The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano). The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a common time signature.

**poco rit.**

heart knows, love of Je - sus, what thou

Knows, love of Je - sus, what — thou —

Knows, love of Je - sus, what — thou

Knows, love of Je - sus, what thou

**poco rit.**

**a tempo**

art.

art.

art.

art.

**a tempo**

*mp*

*mp*

133

Musical score for measures 133-138. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass staff. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some notes beamed together. The piece concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

139

poco rit. a tempo, but slightly slower

Musical score for measures 139-144. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It consists of three staves. The music is characterized by sustained chords and melodic fragments. Above the first staff, the tempo markings "poco rit." and "a tempo, but slightly slower" are indicated. The piece ends with a fermata.

145

(solo flutes) rit.

*pp*

Musical score for measures 145-150. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It consists of three staves. The first staff is marked "(solo flutes)" and "rit.". The music features sustained chords and melodic lines. The dynamic marking "pp" (pianissimo) is indicated with a hairpin crescendo leading to the notes. The piece concludes with a fermata.