

Commissioned by Devon County Junior Choir

Song for St. Thérèse

Commissioned for a summer evensong in Exeter Cathedral which would coincide with its 2012 Majesty Flower Festival, I was drawn to the idea of nature as a reflection of God's love and a metaphor for His power. Passages from across the Old Testament were brought together to explore this theme, with versions of the Bible carefully selected for their linguistic directness, to make it more meaningful for younger singers. St. Thérèse of Lisieux, whose strong faith grew from a young age, is also known as the "Little Flower of Jesus". Her words conclude this work, which is dedicated to her and her belief in the simplicity and beauty of faith.

The harmony is primarily modal, though unconventional. It is a folk-inspired approach befitting the subject of nature. That is, until the words of St. Thérèse, where an uplifting major tonality directs our eyes to Heaven. Though composed with a junior choir in mind, it would be equally suited to an all-female chorus.

Anna R. Matthews, April 2012

*Winter is past, the rain is over and gone:
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing is come.*

*For the Lord God is a sun and shield:
The Lord will give grace and glory.
The grass withers and the flowers fade,
But the word of our God stands forever.*

*I will let fall a shower of roses.
I will spend my Heaven doing good on earth.*

Song of Songs 2:11-12 (Darby Translation), Psalm
84:11-12 (King James Version), Isaiah 40:8 (New
Living Translation), Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897).

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Copies of the score are available direct from the composer
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