Lift High the Cross

A Lenten/Easter Cantata Arranged
by Lloyd Larson

Code No.
8362  Score
8363  Listening CD
8364  Accompaniment CD
8365  Instrumental Parts: Conductor’s Score, Flute,
       Oboe, French Horn, Violin, Cello, Electric Bass,
       Percussion & Synthesizer String Reduction)
8366  Value Pack (10 listening CDs)
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FOREWORD

To say that the final week of Jesus’ life is a study in contrasts is a significant understatement. The entire emotional spectrum is experienced by Christ and his followers during the final hours of his earthly journey. Observe the pinnacle of joy as Jesus rides into the crowded streets of Jerusalem to shouts of “Hosanna to the King!” contrasted by the quiet despair of a lonely judgment hall where no voices of support are heard. Witness the heart-felt affirmations of loyalty in an upper room filled with Christ's closest friends only to see them segue into acts of betrayal and rejection a few hours later. Take note of the moments of Christ’s intimate worship with God in the Garden of Gethsemane only to be exchanged for excruciating hours of desertion on a barren cross at Golgotha.

We, like those earliest followers of the Master, experience the same pendulum swing of emotions as we again journey to the cross of Christ. Thankfully, though, that journey has a triumphant conclusion, for it ultimately ends in the promised resurrection of Jesus. Death is overcome by life. Evil is defeated by good. In many ways this story parallels that of the Christian sojourner. Our journey is marked by contrasts — the highs and lows of life and faith. It is never scripted quite the way we would choose to make it happen. However, thanks to the power of the Living God, the concluding chapter is a triumphant one for the believer because of the resurrection of Jesus.

Lift High the Cross is an invitation to take the journey of faith. It is a powerful message filled with eternal hope. And it is punctuated with the challenge to “Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.” In a world of change and contrast, the one constant is the Living Christ!

— Lloyd Larson

PERFORMANCE NOTES

By design, Lift High the Cross is a versatile cantata for Lent, Holy Week or Eastertide. In its entirety, this 30-35 minute work begins with Jesus entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and concludes with the resurrection. If desired, the opening Palm Sunday selection may be bypassed with the story beginning at the Passover feast. Another option is to begin with Palm Sunday and conclude at the death of Jesus just prior to the Easter anthem. Several of the anthems will also stand alone and may be used throughout this holy season as individual choral selections.

The accompaniment may be provided by piano alone, chamber orchestra, or an accompaniment CD track arranged by Mark Kellner.