

# Welcome Pope Francis

## Papal music reflects joy and wonder

By PAUL CHU

If you are planning to take a walk through the woods along the shores of Lake Zoar, the music you hear may prove to be more than bird songs.

"The trails are my studio and a lookout high over the lake is my office. It's easy to write music when God has blessed me with such inspiring surroundings," said composer and Monroe resident Julian Revie, whose Mass of the Divine Shepherd premiered at Carnegie Hall this past June. The Canadian-born Revie, a 2002 Yale graduate, returned to Connecticut in 2014 as composer-in-residence at the Center for Music and Liturgy of Saint Thomas More Chapel at Yale University. His commitment to music for liturgy, however, reaches back much further. "I've been performing pretty much weekly as a church organist since I was eleven," Revie admitted.

This month, however, Revie will really be seeing his music brought out into the open air—but in a far different setting than the Monroe woods. His composition "The Love of God," based on the seventh



"THE LOVE OF GOD," a meditation on Christ's ultimate sacrifice, will be performed during the Papal Mass in Philadelphia on September 27. The selection is part of the Mass of the Divine Shepherd by Composer Julian Revie, which premiered at Carnegie Hall in June. A Monroe resident, Revie is part of the Catholic community at the St. Thomas More Chapel at Yale.

movement of Mass of the Divine Shepherd, has been selected as the Communion antiphon for the Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in Philadelphia, marking the conclusion of the World Meeting of Families, on September 27.

The Mass, which is itself the culminating public event of the papal visit, will likely attract as many as two million congregants to Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The piece will be sung by a massed choir of over three hundred adults and a children's chorus, accompanied by the 90-member Philadelphia Orchestra,

under the direction of conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

"This spring, I traveled to Philadelphia to work with the children's choir at the cathedral in preparation for the Mass of the Divine Shepherd. It was at that point that I was first invited to submit music for the papal Mass. The official acceptance for the The Love of God antiphon came in mid-June," Revie explained. "I am grateful to everyone at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for this wonderful

opportunity to offer my gifts to the glory of God."

This has already been quite a year for Revie. The June 29 premiere of his Mass—the first major setting of the Mass in the revised English translation—was performed by over 650 choristers,

personally, is the entrance of the children's chorus, which is saved for the final part of the piece. The children, to me, represent the pure of heart, who shall see God. Once the children enter, they immediately take the lead, with all the other voices following, as if the act



instrumentalists and bell-ringers from around the world, and played to a nearly sold-out Carnegie Hall. Among those in attendance was Bridgeport's own Bishop Frank J. Caggiano

"I believe that the concert was a graced moment for everyone who attended. The music was magnificent, and the people who attended were clearly moved on many levels by their participation in the event," Bishop Caggiano later commented.

"The Carnegie premiere, by itself, would have been a once in a lifetime experience. The prospect of my music literally reaching millions is almost unimaginable," Revie reflected. "Yet there is something that ultimately strikes me even more.

"I wrote The Love of God as a meditation on Christ's ultimate sacrifice of love. As such, it is written to assist the congregation in worthy preparation for communion. It begins with the chorus singing alone; then they are joined by the orchestra. But the real point of the piece, at least for me

of radical, sacrificial love to which the children counsel were echoing through all humanity."

"That this moment—the very moment when my music is being sung and played—coincides with Pope Francis as celebrant receiving the Eucharist... this intimate moment of communion between our Eucharistic Christ and His Vicar on earth... that's just awesome to me."

The Pope himself provides Revie with a particular point of inspiration. He adds, "In his recent encyclical *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis describes how 'the Lord was able to invite others to be attentive to the beauty that there is in the world, because he himself was in constant touch with nature, lending it an attention full of fondness and wonder.' Over hundreds of hours composing, walking the trails, I do feel I've grown closer to the Lord. Perhaps, by my music, I can share some of the inspiration of the lakes, birds, and trees of Monroe with Pope Francis and with the whole Church." ■

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