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The Didache Prayer, & Notes on the Score

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The Didache is an early church document dating from the late first or early second century. This version of the Didache premiered at the Thursday liturgy for Saint John’s School of Theology-Seminary. It was decided that this ancient prayer be used in a new context. The idea was that it serve liturgically as both the closing prayer of the Thanksgiving liturgy and as the “Marana tha” gathering prayer. One of the most striking features of the text is its recurring use of two refrains: “to you be the glory forever” and “for yours is the glory and the power forever.” In addition to serving as formal markers, these refrains offered a chance for the congregation to participate actively by singing the refrains in response to the choir.

Another formal consideration was the piece’s ending. Generally, thanksgiving liturgies are more exultant than contemplative liturgies. This dramatic necessity initially seemed at cross-purposes with the text, which closes with a series of sporadic prayers, no longer united by a refrain. In order to achieve a fuller ending, the final phrase, “Marana tha” was used as a re-gathering point. Initially sung by a single, unac-
companied voice, the other singers enter at will, improvising repeatedly on the given melody. The hope was that, in addition to meeting a liturgical need, this setting would evoke some of the ecstatic associations of this early invocation.
The Didache Prayer

from The Didache
trans. Br. Lewis Grobe, OSB

Timothy Dusenbury
November 2013

We thank you, Our Fa-ther, for the Ho-ly Vine of Da-vid your son,

whom you made known to us through your son Je-sus; to you, be the glo-ry for-ev-er.

Freely
Solo

All w/Congregation

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We thank you, Our Father, for the life and knowledge which you made known to us through your son Jesus; to you be the glory forever,
to you be the glory forever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and gathered into one,

may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom;
We thank you, Holy Father, for your holy name,

which you have prepared in our hearts,

and for the knowledge and faith and immortality,

We thank you, Holy Father, for your holy name,

which you have prepared in our hearts,

which you have prepared in our hearts,

which you have prepared in our hearts,
which you have made known to us through your son Jesus;

which you have made known to us through your son Jesus;

which you have made known to us through your son Jesus;

which you have made known to us through your son Jesus;

to you be the glory forever,
to you be the glory forever.

You, Almighty Master, created all things for the sake of your name, and you gave food and drink.
to the sons and daughters of men for enjoyment.

But to us you gave spiritual food and drink

and eternal life through Jesus your son.

Above all things we thank you, above all things we thank you, above

Above all things we thank you, above all things we thank you, above

Above all things we thank you, above
all things we thank you because you are
all things we thank you because you are
all things we thank you because you are
all things we thank you because you are

Maestoso

powerful; to you be the glory forever, to
powerful; to you be the glory forever, to
powerful; to you be the glory forever, to
powerful; to you be the glory forever, to

w/Congregation
you be the glory forever. Amen.

you be the glory forever. Amen.

you be the glory forever. Amen.

you be the glory forever. Amen.

G
g

Remember, Lord, your church,

Remember, Lord, your church,

Remember, Lord, your church,

Remember, Lord, your church,

to deliver it from all evil

to deliver it from all evil

to deliver it from all evil

to deliver it from all evil

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and to perfect it in your love,
and to perfect it in your love,
and to perfect it in your love,
and to perfect it in your love,
and gather it from the four winds, having been sanctified,
and gather it from the four winds, having been sanctified,
and gather it from the four winds, having been sanctified,
and gather it from the four winds, having been sanctified,
in your kingdom which you have prepared for it;
in your kingdom which you have prepared for it;
in your kingdom which you have prepared for it;
in your kingdom which you have prepared for it;
for yours_ is the glo-ry and the pow-er for-ev-er,
for yours_ is the glo-ry and the pow-er for-ev-er,
for yours_ is the glo-ry and the pow-er for-ev-er,
for yours_ is the glo-ry and the pow-er for-ev-er.
Solo

May grace come, and this world pass away.

Amen. Solo

Amen. Hosanna to the God of David.

Amen.

Solo 2

If any one is holy, let him come;

Solo 3

if any one is not, let him repent.

Solo 4

let him repent.
First entrance
Solo

1. singers should enter individually
2. they may repeat boxed text or alternate between them
3. singers should freely alter the note values given
4. they may also improvise freely in the mode
5. in general the improvisation should rise and quicken as it continues
6. the organ enters last and repeats its boxed measure three times
7. singers continue improvising through the organ’s m. 63

Last entrance
On pedal alone, in successive repeats add staves