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# Alma Redemptoris Mater

SATB a cappella with Solo Soprano and Tenor

Samuel Backman

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## Composer Notes

This haunting motet artfully wedds the Gregorian antiphon for Advent through Candlemas, *Alma Redemptoris Mater* with the German Christmas chorale *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*, commonly known in English as “Lo, how a rose e’er blooming.” These texts both tell of the mystery of the Incarnation, and their accompanying melodies are suitable for combination. Though introspective in nature, this work seeks to evoke the ecstatic joy associated with the Nativity of the Lord. Subtle shifts in voicing and texture simultaneously reflect the texts of the Latin antiphon and the German chorale. The fusion of contemporary harmonic language, Baroque contrapuntal techniques, and medieval Gregorian melodies aptly embody the Augustinian phrase “ever ancient, ever new.”

### Samuel Backman

Samuel Backman currently serves as Director of Sacred Music at Holy Cross Catholic Church, where he chairs a multi-faceted music program across three campuses, functioning as principal organist and conductor of the Holy Cross Choir, St. Helena Singers, and Tenebrae Choir. Samuel also serves as coordinator and host of an annual series of musical performances at Holy Cross. In addition to his primary role as a musician, he oversees various dimensions of the parish’s liturgical life. Prior to his employment at Holy Cross, he held positions at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Golden Valley, MN; the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Saint Paul, MN; Saint Philip’s Episcopal Church in Ardmore, OK, Saint Paul’s on the Green Episcopal Church in Norwalk, CT, and the University Church at Yale in New Haven, CT.

An active performer, Samuel has been featured as an organ recitalist for conferences hosted by the American Guild of Organists and the Church Music Association of America. His performances have also been featured on *Pipedreams*, the National Public Radio Broadcast service hosted by Michael Barone. He is also a composer and arranger of music for choir, organ, piano, and chamber ensembles and his compositions have been published by Paraclete Press. Most recently, Samuel composed a two-act musical entitled *Moonshine Abbey* with a script by Fr. Kyle Kowalczyk.

Samuel holds degrees from Saint Olaf College (B.M.), the Yale School of Music (M.M.), and the University of Oklahoma, (D.M.A.) He completed his organ studies in performance and improvisation with John Ferguson, Catherine Rodland, Martin Jean, Damin Spritzer, and John Schwandt, and he studied conducting with Anton Armstrong, Christopher Appas, Marguerite Brooks, and Timothy Mahr. Samuel is a recipient of many distinguished scholarships and awards, including Saint Olaf College’s G. Winston Cassler Scholarship, Yale University’s Mary Baker Award for excellence in organ accompaniment, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago’s Ruth and Paul Manz Scholarship Competition, and nomination to Pi Kappa Lambda, the national honor society for music.

Dedicated to Joseph Arndt and the Choir of Saint John's Episcopal Church, Tulsa, OK

# Alma Redemptoris Mater

SATB a cappella with Solo Soprano and Tenor

11th Century Anon. Marian Antiphon  
for The First Sunday of Advent through Candlemas

Samuel Backman (b. 1986)

Lento e Misterioso (♩ = 56)

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is Lento e Misterioso (♩ = 56). The Soprano part has a whole rest. The Alto part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics "Al - ma". The Tenor part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics "Al - ma". The Bass part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics "Al - ma, al - ma,".

Musical score for Solo Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The Solo Soprano part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics "Al - ma Re-demp-to - ris Ma-ter, \_\_\_". The Alto part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and the lyrics "Re-demp-to - ris Ma - - - ter. \_\_\_". The Tenor part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and the lyrics "Re-demp-to - ris Ma - ter, Ma - ter. \_\_\_". The Bass part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and the lyrics "al - ma, \_\_\_".

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S. *div.*  
Re-demp-to-ris Ma - ter, Re-demp-to-ris Ma -

A. *mp*  
Re-demp-to-ris Ma - ter, Re-demp-to-ris Ma-ter, Ma -

T. *mp*  
Re-demp-to-ris Ma - ter, Re-demp-to-ris Ma-ter, Ma -

B. *mp*  
Al - ma Re - demp - to - ris Ma -

10 Solo Tenor *mf* a piacere  
Es ist ein Rosen - sprun - gen  
Lo, how rose e'er bloom - ing

S. *p*  
-ter. Re-demp-to-ris

A. *p*  
-ter. Al - ma Re-demp-to-ris

T. *p*  
-ter. Al - ma Re-demp-to-ris

B. *p*  
-ter. Al - ma,

14 Solo Soprano *mp*

Aus ei - ner Wur - zel zart, —  
From ten - der stem hath sprung, —

S. *pp* Ma - ter, Al - - ma, Al - ma. *mf* Al -

A. *pp* Ma - ter, — Al - ma. —

T. *pp* Ma - ter, Al - - ma, Al - ma.

B. *pp* Al - ma. —

18 *con moto*

S. - ma - Re - demp - to - ris Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a cae - li por - ta

A. *con moto* - demp - to - ris Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a — coe - li — por - ta

T. *con moto mp* Re - demp - to - ris Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a coe - li por - ta

B. *con moto mp* Re - demp - to - ris Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a — coe - li — por - ta

21

ma - nes, — Et stel - la ma - ris, — suc - cur - re ca - den - ti

ma - nes, ma - nes, *mp* Es ist ein Ros' ent - sprun - gen, ent -  
Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing, e'er

ma - nes, ma - nes *mf* Es ist ein Ros' ent - sprun - gen, ent -  
Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing, e'er

ma - nes, ma - nes *mp* Es ist ein Ros' ent - sprun - gen, ent -  
Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing, e'er

25

sur - ge - re o - mi - ni - cu - ra - po - pu - lo.

- sprun - gen Aus ei - ner Wur - zel zart, Al - ma  
bloom - ing, From ten - der stem - hath sprung, *mp*

- sprun - gen Aus ei - ner Wur - zel Al - ma  
bloom - ing, From ten - der stem - hath sprung, *mf*

- sprun - gen Aus ei - ner Wur - zel zart, Al - ma  
bloom - ing, From ten - der stem hath sprung, *mp*

29 *mf*

Wie uns die Al - ten sun - gen,  
Of Jes - se's li - neage com - ing,

Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a cae - li por - ta

Re-demp-to - ris Mat - er, quae per - vi - a cae - li por - ta ma - nes et

Ma - ter, quae per - vi - a cae - li por - ta

32

Von Jes se - ram die Art.  
As an old have sung.

ma - nes et stel - la ma - ris.

stel - la ma - ris, suc - cur - re ca - den - ti sur - ge - re qui cu - rat po - pu -

ma - nes, et stel - la ma - ris.

35 **Poco piu mosso** *ff*

div. *ff*

Sur-ge - re qui cu - rat Und hat ein  
It came a

*ff*

sur - ge - re qui cu - - - rat po - pu - lo

*ff*

- lo. Quae ge - ni -

38 *ff* unison

Blüm - lein bracht lit - ten im kal - ten Win -  
flow'r - et bright A - mid the cold of win -

*f*

Und hat ein Blüm - lein bracht, Vir-go pri-us, vir - go  
It came a flow'r - et bright,

*f*

na - tu - ra mi - ran - te, tu - um sanc - tum Ge - ni - to - rem vir - go

*ff*

Vir - go



41 *sempre ff*

- ter. Vir-go pri-us ac po-ste-ri-us, Ga-bri-e-lis  
- ter,

pri - us Vir-go pri-us ac po - ste-ri-us, Ga - bri - e - lis

pri - us Vir-go pri-us ac po - ste-ri-us, Ga - bri - e - lis

pri - us ac po - ste - ri -

44 *f*

ab o-re su-mens il-lud A - ve, A - ve,  
ab o-re, Ga-bri-e-lis ab o-re su-mens il-lud A - ve, A - ve,

ab o-re Ga-bri-e-lis ab o-re su-mens il-lud A - ve, A - ve,

-us Ga - bri - e - lis

47 *mf*

A - - ve, pec - ca - to - rum mi - se - re -

*mf*

A - ve, su - mens il - lud A -

*mf* *f*

A - ve, su - mens il - lud A - ve,

*mf*

ab - - - re - su -

50 *div.* *f* *dim.*

- re. A ve, A ve Wohl zu der hal

*f* *dim.*

su - mens il - lud A - ve, A - ve Wohl zu der hal

*f*

mens il - lud A - ve, A -

*f*

- mens il - lud A - ve, A -

53 *mp* **rit.** **Tempo I** *p*

— ben Nacht. Pec - ca - to

*mp* *p*

ben Nacht. Al -

*mp* *mp*

-ve. Al - ma,

*mp* *p*

-ve. Al - - -

56 Solo Soprano *pp*

*Es*

Solo Tenor *pp*

*Es*

S. - rum mi - se - re - re.

A. pec - ca - to - rum mi - se - re - re.

T. pec - ca - to - rum mi - se - re - re.

B. - ma, Al - - ma.

59 **rit.** **Adagio**

ist ein Ros' ent - sprun - gen. \_\_\_\_\_

ist ein Ros' ent - sprun - gen. \_\_\_\_\_

*pp* Al - - ma.

*ppp* *pp* Al - - ma.

*ppp* *pp* Al - - ma.

*ppp* *pp* Al - - ma.

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