

**Wednesday, November 13, 2019**

## **A Recording of the Dominican *Libera me*, *Domine***

GREGORY DIPIPPO

On All Souls' Day two years ago, I published a post about [the Dominican version of the responsory \*Libera me\*](#) which is sung at the Absolution over the catafalque; at the time, there was no recording of it available on the internet. Yesterday, I received an email from the directress of vocations at the Dominican Monastery of St Jude in Marbury, Alabama, letting me know that [they have just posted a recording of it on their website](#). Below the video is the full text in Latin and English, followed by some notes on the ceremony which Sister very kindly sent in as well.

Many medieval Uses expanded the *Libera me* by adding more verses, and there are dozens of variants recorded. The Dominican version as sung on All Souls' Day, which had three additional verses; the last and longest of these is particularly beautiful. Note that the verses *Tremens factus sum* and *Dies illa* are in the opposite order from the Roman version, and the Dominicans do not sing the words *Requiem aeternam ... luceat eis* with any of the responsories in their Office of the Dead. (The verses *Quid ego miserrimus* and *Nunc Christe* are sung only on November 2.)

**R.** *Líbera me, Dómine, de morte aeterna in die illa tremenda, \* Quando caeli movendi sunt et terra, \* Dum véneris judicáre saeculum per ignem.*

**V. j.** *Dies illa, dies irae, calamitátis et miseríæ, dies magna et amára valde.* **Dum.**

**V. ij.** *Tremens factus sum ego et tíneo, dum discussio vénerit atque ventúra ira.* **Quando.**

**V. iij.** *Quid ego misérrimus, quid dicam, vel quid faciam, cum nil boni pérferam ante tantum* júdi-cem? **Quando.**

**V. iv.** *Nunc, Christe, te pétimus, miserére, quæsumus; qui venisti redímere pérditos, noli* damnáre *redemptos.* **Dum.**

**V. v.** *Creátor omnium rerum Deus, qui me de limo terrae formasti, et mirábiliter proprio sáanguine redemisti, corpusque meum, licet modo putrescat, de sepulchro facies in die judicii resuscitári: exaudi, exaudi me, ut ánimam meam in sinu Abrahae, Patriarchae tui, júbeas collocári.* **Repetitur** **R.** *Líbera me.*

**R.** Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death on that awful day \* when the heavens and the earth shall be shaken, \* when Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

**V. j.** That day shall be a day of wrath, of calamity and misery, a great day, and exceeding bitter. **When** the heavens...

**V. ij.** Trembling do I become, and fearful, when the trial and wrath shall come. **When** Thou shalt come...

V. *iii*. What shall I say or do, most wretched man that I am, since I have no good to bring before so great a judge? When the heavens...  
V. *iv*. Now, o Christ, we ask Thee, have mercy, we beseech Thee; Thou who came to redeem the lost, condemn not the redeemed. When Thou shalt come....  
V. *v*. Creator of all things, o God, Who formed me from the slime of the earth, and wondrously redeemed me with Thy own Blood, and, although it now rot, will cause my body to be raised up from the grave on the day of judgment: hear, o hear me, that Thou may command my soul to be placed in the bosom of Abraham, Thy Patriarch. Repeat Deliver me, o Lord...

Sister writes, "In our new booklet for the *Libera*, we included these rubrics from the *Ceremonial for the Use of the Dominican Sisters of the Second Order*, compiled by the Rev. Father Marie-Ambroise Potton, O.P. (our copy doesn't have a date, but it was around the 1860's):

Each week after the weekly Mass of the Dead, and after the Mass of the four Anniversaries, a procession for the dead is made in the Brother's Convents. The Sisters are not bound to this procession, even when they have not had the Mass applied for the intentions of the Order. . . .

After Mass the two Chantresses begin the singing of the *Libera*, and the Sisters leave the Choir processionally, preceded by the holy water, Acolytes and Cross. They may make their single station near the grave-yard or vault in which the Sisters are buried, or in the cloister or Chapter hall, as may be fitting. The two Chantresses or two other Sisters, sing the verses Dies illa, Tremens and Creator; and the Sisters sing the resumption, and after the last verse, the body of the responsory. Then is sung Kyrie eleison. The Hebdomadarian turned towards the Cross sings the two words Pater Noster. During the recitation of the "Pater" in secret, the Hebdomadarian may sprinkle the ground with holy water, if such be the custom of the Convent. Afterwards, the Hebdomadarian sings: Et ne nos, A porta, Domine exaudi, and the two prayers marked in the Processional: Deus veniae (Deus indulgentiarum if it is an Anniversary) and Deus cujus miseratione, under one conclusion. She adds Requiescant in pace, to which the choir responds, Amen; and the procession returns to the Choir, singing on the tone of the psalm De Profundis, or the psalm Miserere, if the station is distant from the Choir. Several stations may be made instead of one; in this case the responsories, versicles, and prayers marked in the Processional are used. Although there have been changes in our way of life since his day, this is essentially how we make the *Libera* Procession each week. On All Souls Day the procession is basically the same, although there are extra verses (the "Quid ego miserrimus?" and "Nunc, Christe,") and special orations, and we always process down to our monastic cemetery if the weather at all permits.