

0323. MOZART¹ TO PADRE GIOVANNI BATTISTA MARTINI,² BOLOGNA

Most Reverend Padre and Maestro,

[Salzburg, 4th September 1776]

My most esteemed Master,

The veneration, the esteem and the respect which I bear towards your most worthy person presses me to inconvenience you with the present letter and to send you a [5] feeble piece of my music, submitting it to your masterly judgement. Last year, at Carnival, I wrote an opera buffa |: La finta Giardiniera :| in Munich in Bavaria. A few days before my departure from there, His Electoral Highness³ desired to hear some of my contrapuntal music: I was thus obliged to write this motet⁴ in haste to give them time to copy the score for His Highness, [10] and to extract the parts so as to be able to perform it the following Sunday during the Offertory in the High Mass. Dearest and most esteemed *Sgr. Padre Maestro!* You are urgently requested to tell me frankly, and without reserve, your opinion. We live in this world in order to learn with constant diligence, and to illuminate each other by means of discussions, and to make constant efforts to advance the [15] sciences and the fine arts. Oh, how very frequently I desire to be closer, to be able to speak and reason with you, most Reverend Father. I live in a country where music brings the most scanty of fortunes, although, alongside those who have abandoned us, we still have fine professors and especially composers of great depth, knowledge and taste. In the theatre we are in a [20] poor state, for lack of singers. We do not have musicians, and we shall not get them so easily, since they wish to be paid well: and generosity is not our weakness. In the meantime I entertain myself by writing chamber music and for the church:⁵ and there are two other most distinguished contrapuntalists here, that is, *Sgr. Haydn*⁶ and *Adlgasser*.⁷ My father is Master of the Metropolitan Church, which gives me [25] the opportunity to write for the church as much as I want. Moreover, my father, having been in service at this court for 36 years now and knowing that this Archbishop cannot and will not see older people promoted, does not take this to heart, and has applied himself to literature, which was moreover his favourite study earlier. Our church music is quite different to that of Italy, and furthermore [30] a Mass with everything = Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, the sonata for the Epistle,⁸ the Offertory or, alternatively, the motet, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, and even the most solemn – when the Prince says the Mass himself – must not last more than 3 quarters of an hour at most. A special study is needed for this kind of composition, which nevertheless has to be a Mass with all instruments – military trumpets, [35] timpani, etc: Ah! How far apart we are, dearest *Sgr. Padre Maestro*, how many things I would have to tell you of! – I greet with devotion all the gentlemen of the Filarmonia: I commend myself at all times

¹ BD: Letter entirely in Italian and in Leopold Mozart's hand.

² BD: Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784), specialist in the theory and history of music. Taught Mozart during his stay in Bologna as preparation for admission to the Accademia filarmonica.

³ "S: A: Elettorale": the Elector of Bavaria.

⁴ BD: The Offertorium de tempore "*Misericordias Domini*" KV 222 (205a), probably performed in Munich on 5th March, 1775.

⁵ BD: In 1776, Mozart composed not only divertimenti, notturni, serenades and clavier concertos, but also a number of sacred works, including the Litany KV 243 and four Masses: KV 262 (246a), 257, 258, 259.

⁶ BD: Johann Michael Haydn (1737-1806), brother of Joseph. Employed at court in Salzburg from 1763.

⁷ BD: Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729-1777), pupil of Eberlin. Salzburg court organist and composer. He married three times; Leopold was a witness at two of the weddings.

⁸ BD: The so-called church sonatas which Mozart had composed for in 1776: KV 224 (241a), 244, 245, 263. BD VII: 17 complete church sonatas by Mozart are known usually for two violins, organ, violoncello and bass, occasionally with wind instruments.

to your favours and do not cease to feel affliction in seeing myself so distant from the person that I most love, venerate and esteem in the world, and to whom I proclaim that I am inviolably,

[40]

Venerable, most Reverend Father,

Your most humble and devoted servant

Wolfgango Amadeo Mozart.

Salzburg, 4 September, 1776

If you deign to write to me, be so good as address it

[45]

via Trent to

Salzburg