

Notes from the Choir

A PUBLICATION OF THE PATRONS OF SACRED MUSIC - ST. JOHN CANTIUS CHURCH, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

FALL 2015 EDITION

THE PATRONS OF SACRED MUSIC WORK WITH THE AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM FOUNDATION
TO RESTORE THE SACRED MUSIC OF THE CHURCH "FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD."

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THE ODESSEY OF CORRADO CAVALLI



In 2011, the Patrons of Sacred Music at St. John Cantius began a monumental project. We removed the old Kilgen pipe organ from Chicago's historic St. John Cantius Church in preparation for the reconstruction of the organ loft and the installation of our restored 1926 Casavant pipe organ (nicknamed "Tina Mae")—a project completed in 2013. In the midst of this \$2 million dollar organ building project (2011-2013), our principal donor, Mr. Richard Ryan, encouraged us to search for a world-renowned organist to join our parish music staff, so that this marvelous instrument might be played to its fullest capacity. Recently the Music Program of St. John Cantius Church, has had the immense pleasure to announce the addition of Mr. Corrado C. Cavalli of Turin, Italy as Principal Organist.

This announcement has been a long time in coming and the story of Mr. Cavalli's odyssey to the United States demonstrates the mutual commitment of Corrado Cavalli and of St. John Cantius Church to sacred music. The story of Mr. Cavalli's arrival begins on September 28, 2012. Mr. Cavalli had been invited to play at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C. So, to expand his visit to America, he arranged for a week of concerts in Washington D.C., Baton Rouge, Louisiana and in Chicago. For his visit to Chicago, he was invited to play at St. James Episcopal Cathedral on Huron St., the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese in Chicago. Not content to simply perform at one venue in Chicago, he "googled" search terms like "cathedral," "organ," and "Chicago" because he wanted to add an organ concert

PATRONS OF SACRED MUSIC

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in a city with many Italians. He was delighted to find St. John Cantius in the search results, and to learn of our extensive sacred music program. He emailed Fr. C. Frank Phillips, C.R., Pastor of St. John Cantius Church, asking if St. John's was interested in hosting an organ concert sponsored by the Italian Institute of Culture, Washington, D.C., on the 520th anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus at America. After listening to several of Mr. Cavalli's recordings and learned more about his formidable musical background, St. John Cantius Parish was thrilled to invite Mr. Cavalli to perform an organ concert playing Italian organ music on the chamber pipe organ we were using at that time as we awaited the installation of "Tina Mae."

Attending Mr. Cavalli's concert were members of the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius, members of the parish, several visitors, and numerous local organists. Impressed by the consummate musical skill of Mr. Cavalli, Fr. Phillips inquired if Mr. Cavalli would have any interest in becoming the principal organist of St. John's. After his concert, one of our parish volunteers, Joseph Phelps, who directs the language classes at St. John Cantius, took Mr. Cavalli to Antica Pizzeria Restaurant, where they enjoyed speaking in Italian and discussing the music program of St. John Cantius Parish. Over the three-year process during which time Mr. Cavalli worked to come to St. John Cantius, Mr. Phelps showed him tremendous support and friendship.

Mr. Cavalli returned to Turin, Italy, but kept in constant touch with his friends at St. John Cantius Parish. He was glad to hear about the progress of the installation of the new Casavant organ (nicknamed "Tina Mae"), and was pleased to discuss the particularities of joining our staff. Mr. Cavalli submitted an impressive resume, replete with musical publications and numerous recordings. Mr. Cavalli was invited to attend the inaugural concert of the newly installed Casavant Frères organ "Tina Mae" on

October 20, 2013. He came to St. John's for a three day visit. In that visit, Mr. Cavalli performed his organ audition, attended the rehearsals of the St. Gregory the Great Schola and the Resurrection Choir, gave an impromptu lesson in Gregorian chant to the brothers, and played for Mass and Vespers. On the last day of his trip, a photographer from the "Chicago Tribune," in preparation for a front-page article on our organ project, came to photograph Mr. Cavalli playing the mighty "Tina Mae."

During this same visit Mr. Cavalli learned more about the immigration process and he began working with immigration attorney Susan Fortino-Brown. As part of that process, Mr. Cavalli had to establish that he was an exceptional artist worthy of being granted a permanent visa to the United States. As part of that process, world renowned organists and musical directors attested to Mr. Cavalli's unique expertise in organ playing, organ composition, choral conducting and choral composition. Some of the comments made in support of his application were:

Mr. Edgardo Pocerobba, Artistic Director of "Organalia" & Elegia Records, wrote that Mr. Cavalli has been selected to perform regularly for the annual festival, "Organalia," drawing crowds of over 100,000 audience members annually. He is renown in our circle as one of the top organists in Europe."

Don Paolo Tomatis, Director of the Liturgical Office of the Diocese of Turin, stated: "Mr. Cavalli is one of a kind in the field of organ performance and sacred music of the Catholic liturgy. His contribution to the Sacred Music Section of the Liturgical Office of the Diocese of Turin has been incomparable, and the Commission has heavily relied upon his learned opinions in the field of sacred music."

Professor Guido Donati, National Conservatory of Torino, wrote: "Mr. Cavalli has been prolific in performance and publication, having recorded numerous CD recordings, and performed with national and internationally renowned venues as the National Symphonic Orchestra of RAI or the French Orchestra Des Alpes de la Mer."

Mr. James E. Thomashower, Executive Director of the American Guild of Organists, wrote: "The remarkable performing talents of Corrado Cavalli reveal an extraordinary finesse, as he has inspired many students through his performances, recordings, publications, and lectures, to zealously and assiduously apply themselves to this discipline of study."

Mr. James Edward Goettsche and Rev. Pierre Paul, OMV, Music Directors of the Vatican Basilica of Saint Peter, in Vatican City, Rome, wrote: "Mr. Cavalli demonstrates a rare talent of musicology and technique, within organ performance instrumentality and he focuses his technique within the field of Catholic liturgy and sacred music. By virtue of his achievements through his performances, recordings, publications and writings, Mr. Cavalli has achieved the level of extraordinary in our mutual field, in which there are only a rare few at his level of achievement."

Not only was Mr. Cavalli's expertise attested to by these major organists in both Europe and the United States, his musical training and background demonstrated his musicianship. He began his musical studies with P. Tarallo (piano). He continued organ studies at the National Conservatory "Giuseppe Verdi" in Turin under professors G. Cagnani, L. Fornero. He graduated in 2006 and won as best organ performance the Turin National Conservatory's prize "C. Silipo" because of his high marks and being awarded a diploma. He was awarded two Master's Degrees from the Turin National Conservatory in organ, *summa cum laude*, and in Choral Conducting and Choral Composition, *summa*. He attended master-classes held by the famous professors L. Tagliavini, L. Robillard, L. Lohmann and others, and the courses took place in the prestigious "Haarlem International Academy for organists" (the Netherlands). In the choral field, he studied choir conducting at the course sponsored by the Italian Choirs' Federation (FENIARCO).

In 2007 he won the 12th National Organ Competition "Città di Viterbo" (Pinchi Prize) in the concert artists' section. In 2003 he won, in the students section, the 8th edition of the same competition.

He performs in many international festivals in Italy, Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, U.K, Poland, Principality of Monaco, Slovakia and in the United States. He played with several vocal and instrumental ensembles with the Italian National Symphonic Orchestra of Rai, the French "Ensemble Orchestral des Alpes et de la Mer," and the Orchestra Filarmonica di Torino. He played Poulanc's organ concerto with the Symphonic Orchestra of the National Conservatory "Giuseppe Verdi" of Turin.

He was invited to play the reopening concert of the great organ of the Turin conservatory's Concert Hall before Turin's Cultural Minister. He recorded for the Effatà Editrice, Elledici Editrice and Elegia Records music labels and published for Biretta Books in Chicago and for Italian editions "Armeiln musica" and "Musica Practica." For four years he was director of the high-school choir "In Canto" in Turin. As musicologist and professor he held master-classes and lectures about organ music in Torino and in Italy from the nineteenth century to the present.

He is a member of the American Guild of Organists, the Church Music Association of America, and the Associazione Italiana Santa Cecilia, the latter of which a candidate for membership must be invited. Additionally, Mr. Cavalli is always in demand as an organist. Among the places he played are these:

- Washington (USA): National Cathedral.
- Los Angeles (USA): First Congregational Church.
- San Francisco (USA): St Mary's Cathedral.
- London (U.K.): St. Paul's Cathedral.
- Chicago (USA): St Cantius parish church.
- Berlin (D): Berliner Dom
- Roma (I): St Paul's within the walls.
- Canterbury (U.K.): Canterbury's Cathedral.
- Kremnica (Sk): Kremnica's Castle.
- Messina (I): Messina's Cathedral.
- Cremona (I): Cremona's Cathedral.
- Warsaw (PL): Carmelite Church (Prokatedra Warszawska).
- Torino (I): Settembre Musica – MITO.
- Blackburn (U.K.): Blackburn's Cathedral.
- Fossano (I): Fossano's Cathedral.
- Lowiczu (PL): Basilica Cathedral of Lowicz.
- Gallo-Grinzane (I): Chiesa del Gallo's International Organ Festival.
- Linz (A): Helige Famiglie.
- Dublin (IRL): Christ Church Cathedral
- Torino (I): Santa Rita's International Organ Festival.
- Udine (I): San Quirino's International Organ Festival.
- Hokksund (N): Haug Church.
- Alessandria (I): Chiesa di San Giovanni.
- Principauté de Monaco: Monacò's Cathedral with Orchestre des Alpes te de la Mere (F).



During the time Mr. Cavalli was waiting for a response on this visa application, Fr. Scott A. Haynes, S.J.C., Directory of Liturgy and Music, went with the Resurrection Choir and Orchestra on tour to Italy (November, 2013) to sing for the 500th anniversary of the Vatican's Choir. At the end of the trip, as the choir returned to Chicago, Fr. Haynes took a brief trip to Turin to visit Mr. Cavalli. Fr. Haynes resided with Mr. Cavalli's pastor, Dom Primo, and also met many of his colleagues, all of whom spoke highly of him as a consummate musician and outstanding individual. Mr. Cavalli treated Fr. Haynes to a tour of Turin's principal churches, playing several of the organs. It was very impressive!

Based upon Mr. Cavalli's extensive musical background, his concerts, and his musicianship, the United States government granted him a permanent visa based on his unique talents and his singular achievements - an immigration status (E11) granted to only the "best of the best" in various fields who can directly contribute to the cultural, scientific, sport and educational achievements of the United States. With the award of his permanent visa, Mr. Cavalli immigrated to the United States and took up residence in Chicago and the position of principal organist at St. John Cantius. Mr. Cavalli plans to finish his doctorate in organ here in the United States and to devote his efforts to the Music Program at St. John Cantius. His first public concert as principal organist will be Sunday, October 4, 2015, at 5:00 p.m. with a program of Bach, Guilment, Willan, Sibelius and others.

ORGAN RECITAL OF CORRADO CAVALLI

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2015, 5:00 P.M.

St. John Cantius Church, 825 N. Carpenter St., Chicago

CONCERT/RECEPTION TICKETS

Concert at 5:00 p.m. and Reception following.

- ◆ \$20 (Adults)
- ◆ \$15 (Seniors over 65 & Student ID)
- ◆ \$10 (Youth 6-18 years)

BANQUET/CONCERT/RECEPTION TICKETS

Join us after 12:30 p.m. High Mass featuring our choir & orchestra, and come to the Café San Giovanni (lower level of St. John Cantius) at 2:00 p.m. to enjoy hors-d'oeuvres, fine wine, choice beer, a sumptuous Italian Banquet, and a talk by Corrado Cavalli about the music he will be performing. Then after the 5:00 p.m. Concert join us for a Reception.

- ◆ \$100 per person

Get tickets at

www.cantius.org

Or call toll-free 1-800-838-3006