

# CANDLEMAS

*A Tudor Mass & an Elizabethan Enigma*  
Byrd, Tallis, Dowland, Shakespeare

## KAMARIKUORO UTOPIA Andrew Lawrence-King

Blessing of the Candles: *O nata lux de lumine*  
Gloria Tibi Trinitas

Thomas Tallis *Cantiones Sacrae* (1575)  
Tallis

Introit: *Suscepimus Deus - Magnus Dominus*  
Kyrie  
Gloria

William Byrd *Gradualia* (1605)  
Byrd *Mass for 5 voices* (c1695)

*The Phoenix & the Turtle*

William Shakespeare (1601)

Gradual: *Suscepimus Deus - Sicut audivimus*  
Alleluia: *Senex puerum*  
Tract: *Nunc Dimittis*

Byrd *Gradualia*

Lacrime Pavan  
Galliards: *Mr Nicholas Griffiths, The Battle, Earl of Essex*

John Dowland *New book of Tabliture*  
(1596)

Credo

Byrd *Mass*

*Farewell to Arms*  
*If ye love me, keep my commandments*  
Fantasy

George Peel (1590)  
Tallis *Certaine notes set forthe* (1565)  
Dowland

Offertory: *Diffusa est gratia*  
Sanctus & Benedictus  
Elevation: *Ave Verum Corpus*

Byrd *Gradulia*  
Byrd *Mass*  
Byrd *Gradualia*

Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens  
*O Death, rock me asleep*  
Third Mode Melody

Dowland *Lachrimae* (1605)  
Anon/ Anne Boleyn (1536)  
Tallis *Archbishop Parker's Psalter* (1567)

Communion: *Responsum accepit Simeon*  
Agnus:

Byrd *Gradulia*  
Byrd *Mass*

The Queen's Alman  
*O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen*  
The most sacred Queen Elizabeth, her Galliard  
*Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace*

Byrd (c1580)  
Byrd  
Dowland *Varietie of Lute Lessons* (1610)  
Byrd *The Great Service* (c1597)

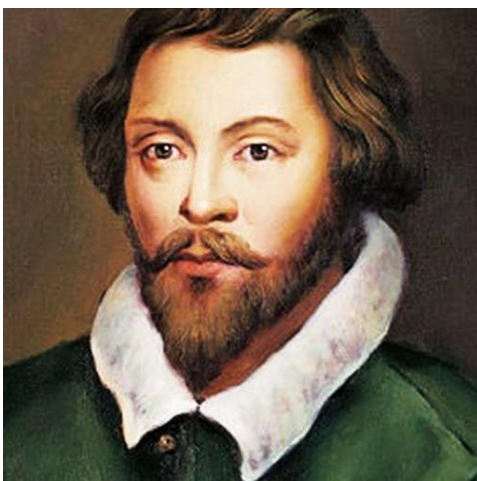
# CANDLEMAS

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## **Candlemas in context**

Our concert program presents the choral music of a Tudor Candlemas, which in private households and secret Catholic ceremonies might have been sung by women and men, rather than by the boys' choirs of the Anglican rite. Avoiding the now discredited 20<sup>th</sup>-century musicology that suggested this repertoire should be sung at very high pitch and with the fake solemnity of slow tempi and romantic legato, we recognise and revel in the rhythmic drive of William Byrd's counterpoint, and share the robust strength of his commitment to the meaning of Latin and English texts, no less dramatic than the plays of his literary contemporary, William Shakespeare.



William  
Byrd

William Shakespeare



Whilst this glorious polyphony might be heard as a plausible reconstruction, the interspersed solo songs, poems and instrumental pieces are most definitely not part of the sacred liturgy. Rather they offer a glimpse of the historical context, the inner world of the Tudor mind, full of cultural cross-connections: European cosmopolitanism and English boldness, Catholic complexity and Protestant sincerity, faith and fire, rich poetry and complex polyphony, secret allusions and enigmatic references, luminous joy and hidden melancholy.

## Twelfth Night & Candlemas

January 5<sup>th</sup> 2019 is Twelfth Night, the traditional end of Christmas celebrations, and the religious feast of Epiphany, the revelation of Christ to the Three Wise Men. But in Shakespeare's England, the festive mood continued until the feast of Candlemas (February 2<sup>nd</sup>), at which the liturgy completes the story of the Nativity with the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. The old man, Simeon, lifts up the Baby and declares him to be "a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*" – his words became the evening canticle *Nunc Dimittis*, one of the cornerstones of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (1662, and still current).



The Presentation  
of Christ in the Temple  
by Hans Holbein (c1500)



St Anne Line

## Light & Darkness

But in the year 1601, English Catholics had to celebrate Candlemas in secret. Services in Latin were forbidden, Catholic Priests would be captured and killed. Father John Gerard, a Jesuit secret agent in England, had set up a safe house for Catholics in London, managed by Anne Line, a widow and 'a woman of much prudence and good sense'. There, as Father Francis Page was about to begin the ceremony of Blessing the Candles, the watchmen arrived and arrested Anne. She and two priests were hanged the next day; Father Francis was executed a year later. All four martyrs were later canonised as Saints.

## The Phoenix & the Turtle

Shakespeare's enigmatic (1601) poem of mystical love between the legendary Phoenix (a fire-bird reborn from its own ashes) and the Turtledove (symbol of love) remains a subject of academic debate. One theory is that it celebrates the secret love between Queen Elizabeth I and Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex. Another interpretation is that it commemorates the Candlemas martyrs, referring to Anne Line's love for her late husband Roger – she died childless. In this reading, the poem's opening line 'Let the bird of loudest lay' alludes to the composer, William Byrd.

## Byrd & Tallis

In 1575 Elizabeth I granted Byrd and Thomas Tallis a monopoly to 'set *songe or songes in parts*', and, as life-long Catholics, their first publication was a set of Latin motets. Byrd's three settings of the Latin Mass (in three, four and five parts) together with his *Gradualia* (settings of the particular texts proper to each religious feast) provided Catholic sympathisers in Elizabethan England with all the music needed for the complete liturgical year. Both composers also wrote anthems and canticles on English texts for the Anglican church, and their settings show the poignancy of certain words in the context of religiously-divided Tudor England: Byrd's significant pause between *unam sanctam catholicam* and *apostolicam ecclesiam* [one holy, catholic... and apostolic church]; Tallis' descending scales, bringing 'the Spirit of Truth' down from heaven.

