

10-11-05

Dear Fr. Joe.

I suspect that you no longer practice the ministry at least actively but that doesn't matter because I always have considered you a first rate teacher and mentor. I lost track of you after Columbus and all I was able to find out was that you had left the Salesians.

My life has managed to weave its own tangled web: a stint with the U.S Army (64-67), followed by three years of booze, girls, and wild parties followed by 20 years of a very unhappy marriage. Finally in 1989 I discovered that happiness could actually be found in this life when I met my current wife and fell madly in love. I am retired but still have kids and dogs and cats all over the place. I continue to keep you in mind. I keep telling Cyn (Cynthia) that I'm too old and slow and could not possibly catch any other female so she is stuck with me for the duration of my life.

My exposure to music was so greatly enhanced by your constant desire for perfection; after all doesn't God himself play the bassoon? From my three years at DBC it was only through your insistent desire for a decent choir and a somewhat so-so orchestra that we were able to see a glimpse of what we could achieve. I know that the violins sucked, and the base viols were tin-eared and the French horns were at best Rumanian, and the reeds were from Mississippi. Still it doesn't matter because the music produced was certainly up to DBC standard.

I remember that you considered me the second tenor par excellence and that no amount of control could conceal my unabashed exuberance and my desire to follow my own way with the section. During practice for the "Haec Dies", a favorite Palestrina piece performed at Easter Mass, you had us mark the "Exultate et Laetetur" as a pause. I, on the other hand did not feel that a pause was appropriate so I lead the entire tenor section into a lead after you had paused the choir. I never forget the look on your face when I burst forth with "Exultemus" and you about flipped out. God I loved that moment.

Your affectionate friend always

Dominic

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