

Faith as Treason

A workshop for singers, tutor: Dr Emma Gibbins, Director of Music at Chelmsford Cathedral
Music by Byrd, Philip de Monte, Richard Dering, John Dowland
Saturday 30th May 2026 10am–4.30pm, registration from 9.30am
At the Great House, Clytha, near Abergavenny, NP7 9BW

This workshop focuses on the repertoire reflecting the dangers of being a Catholic and writing music for the Mass and in Latin in 16th century Britain.

In the febrile atmosphere of Tudor and early Jacobean England, to be a Roman Catholic was to be in constant danger of betrayal, exposure, arrest and possibly execution. Queen Elizabeth I was a pragmatic ruler, and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 officially took some of the sting out of religious antagonism, but it was a temporary stopgap rather than a permanent solution. On our workshop day, our tutor will be telling us more - for instance, how choristers should be recruited who are "quiet and honest men, learned in the Latin tongue...", and about the Chapel Royal becoming under increasing scrutiny in the early 1560s.

Composers for this workshop include those who either stayed in England, like William Byrd, and others who simply left for more favourable surroundings. Richard Dering spent his productive life in Catholic Flanders whilst John Dowland worked abroad but did return to England to serve under King James. In Byrd's setting of the Agnus Dei in the Mass for Four Voices, the cry for peace is deep-felt and movingly set to the most sublime music, especially in the words "dona nobis pacem". Our music will include:
 Byrd - Agnus Dei (Mass for Four Voices), Ne irascaris Domine, Quomodo cantabimus
 Philip de Monte - Super flumina Babylonis. Richard Dering - Factum est silentium
 John Dowland - Flow my tears. White - Lamentations. Tallis - In ieiunio et fletu

Please contact the workshop organiser **Andrew Morton** if you have any questions, email: mortonae@hotmail.com

Prior booking is essential. Either book online at www.bmemf.org.uk, or print out the form below and return it to **Sue Weber**, Old Bakehouse, The Street, Bishops Cannings, Wiltshire, SN10 2LD.

Fee: £22 for members of Early Music Fora; £26 for non-EMF members; £5 for students, under-18s free. All under 18s must be accompanied by an adult.

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Voice/s S1 S2 A1 A2 T1 T2 B1 B2 (please circle which)

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