A Josephine Hymn
Teach Me Dearest Lord to Pray
For Soprano and Organ
Hobart - 1844

Joseph Gautrot
France, c. 1783 – Sydney, 1854

Edited by
Richard Divall

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Introduction

Joseph Gautrot is a fascinating and yet enigmatic figure. According to sources he led an adventurous life, and spent time in out of the way colonial outposts. He composed music seemingly of substance, and for ensembles normally associated with higher class music, yet despite this, we have only one work surviving by this active musician and prolific composer. Much of his life and professional activity has been thoroughly explored in Graeme Skinner’s important thesis on early Australian composition.¹ More is found in his website of Australian composers, and the accompanying chronology of Australian composition.² Both sources are important documents.³

The birth date of Joseph Gautrot is unknown, but there are various mentions of his early life and career in an obituary in Bell’s Life of 4 February 1854.⁴ In the obituary he was cited as being a member of Napoleon’s Imperial Guard, probably as a musician, and was present during the Russian Campaign of 1812. A Gautrot was awarded the Legion d’Honneur on 17 March 1815. A violinist of some distinction, Gautrot married a soprano who was an accomplished singer. We do not know her Christian name, but she made many appearances in concerts with her husband. There are records of his being a chef d’orchestre in Bourbon France, and he spent some time in Cape Town before leaving for Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies. There he was the leader of the opera orchestra in that city, and from 1836 of an opera troupe under the impresario and singer Minard.

The Minard Company and the Gautrot couple came to Sydney in 1839 and began a season of performances on 15 March. Included in their repertoire of one act French opéra-comique were performances of Nicolò Isouard’s 1803 work Le Medecin Turc.⁵ From that time onwards Gautrot travelled between Sydney, Hobart and Melbourne, and there are numerous references to compositions by the composer from 1839 to the year of his death in 1854. These include quintets, sextets and septets for various instrumental combinations. The violinist is known to have played in many concerts in Sydney and Hobart with the violinist John Phillip Deane, and with the clarinettist and pianist, Joseph Reichenberg in Hobart.

Gautrot experienced numerous instances of financial difficulties, including one occasion where he had to sell his own violin. He died in Sydney on 30 January, aged 70 or 71, and although his wife continued to perform after his death; she vanishes from any colonial records from mid-1855. We know that Gautrot composed the Josephine Hymn for his wife to sing, and although it is naive in parts it is charming and spiritually honest. He was painted by the colonial artist Charles Rodius (1802–1860), but although his portraits of both [Sir] Henry Parkes and the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt survive, Rodius’ portrait of Gautrot has vanished.

Gautrot’s one composition survives in a set of photocopies that are held in the library of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in Glebe Point, in Sydney, and there are sites to the work on Trove at the National Library of Australia, and in Graeme Skinner’s

³ http://www.graemeskinner.id.au/biographicalregister
⁴ Graeme Skinner provides the date of birth as 1775 whereas the obituary in Bell’s Life gives his age in 1854 as 71.
⁵ The Australian 11 April 1839.
A Josephine Hymn – First Part

Verse II

Thou knowest, O Lord! Without Thy aid
A debt to Thee cannot be paid,
No act of love be ever made,
Nor thought nor word can profit me,
Unless it come, dear Lord, from Thee.

III

Without Thy love no prayer can,
Under Thy anger’s awful ban,
Avert Thy wrath from guilty man,
Nor even should considered be
As worthy to ascend to Thee.

IV

Thy love, O Lord! itself is prayer,
Preserving us from Satan’s snare,
And making beauteous, perfect, fair,
According to Thy own decree,
All that we say or do for thee.
V

May Thy love, then, my heart to raise,
Disgusted with all sinful ways,
With benediction, thanks, and praise,
Above whatever on earth we see,
That it may ever live with Thee.

VI

May the spirits who reign above,
O'ershadowed by the mystic dove,
Who live and breathe upon this love,
Unite with us in praising thee,
Ever glorious Trinity. Amen!

A Josephine Hymn – Second Part

Verse II

Oh! do remember what was done.
Just as his mortal course was run,
By this thy dearest dying Son,
When fastened to the gibbet tree
He gave us, with Saint John, to thee.

III

Under the Cross who could despair,
Mercy to gain, by love and prayer,
Seeing the penitent Mary there;
Who from the Cross would never flee,
But faithful ‘till death remain with thee.

IV

That in thy sorrows She might share,
Deep and dreadful as they were,
Augmented by love, supported by prayer.
A mother afflicted ‘tis grievous to see,
But never was mother afflicted like thee.

V

Next, after thine, his aid we claim,
Whom wishing to be unknown to fame,
The Spirit of Love the “Just” did name,
Who caress’d and cherished on his knee
Bethl’em’s sweet babe that was born of thee.
The Josephine Hymn is respectfully inscribed to The Most Reverend Count Polding, Archbishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of Australasia. An English Benedictine, John Bede Polding (Liverpool 1794-Sydney 1877) arrived in Sydney as the first Catholic Bishop. Ordained in 1819, Polding was appointed ‘bishop of Hiero-Caesarea in partibus infidelium and vicar-apostolic of New Holland, Van Diemen’s Land and the adjoining islands’ in 1834. He was a friend and supporter of Fr Therry and hence the direct and honest dedication to his religious superior and colleague. Around 1842 and during an ad limina visit to Pope Gregory XVI (1765-1846), in Rome, Polding had been despatched by the British Government of the Church on a ‘diplomatic’ mission to Malta, or possibly to secure Maltese priests to migrate to the Australian Colonies. His task was so tactfully managed that he was created a Count of the Holy Roman Empire by the Emperor Ferdinand I. Polding was a tireless administrator and his dedication prompted the Australian poet Henry Kendall (1839-1882) to pen the long and moving poem entitled John Bede Polding. He assessed the priest and man as:

A lord of scholarship whose knowledge ran
Through every groove of human history, you
Were this and more – a Christian gentleman;
A fount of learning with a heart like dew.

Ending with the following tribute from the writer:

Such hope, O Master, is light indeed
To him that knows how hard it is to save
The spirit resting on no certain creed
Who kneels to plant this blossom on your grave.

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Richard Divall
June 2014

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Polding's mission to Malta was to liaise between the British Administration on Malta and the Maltese Church over the homilies of a Polish Jesuit Priest, Fr Maximillian Ryollo. In this Polding was unsuccessful, but the bestowal of the title of Count for his services seems unusual. Ryollo later died in Khartoum in 1845. Frances O'Donoghue The Bishop of Botany Bay. The Life of John Bede Polding. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1982), 62-63.
John Bede Polding – Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney

Fr John Joseph Therry
JOSEPHIAN HYMN,
(on Prayer and Divine Love)

WORDS
by
The Rev. J. J. Therry.

MUSIC
Arranged by
Mons. Gautrot

and respectfully inscribed to
The Most Reverend Count Polding
Archbishop of Sydney
and
Metropolitan of Australasia.

FESTIVAL OF ST. JOSEPH
1844

T. Blissett Lithog. Liverpool Street, Hobart Town.
CRITICAL NOTES

There are no editorial notes.

The Editor
Frà Professor Richard Divall AO OBE is a Vice-Chancellor's Professorial Fellow at Monash University, an Honorary Principal Fellow in Music at The University of Melbourne, and Visiting Professor at The University of Malta. He is Chairman of the Marshall-Hall Trust and is a Knight of Malta in Solemn Religious Profession. He was awarded a D.Lett. (Hon Causa) in 1992 by Monash University, and a Doc. Univ. (Hon Causa) by the Australian Catholic University in 2004. He holds a PhD in Theology from the University of Divinity on eighteenth-century sacred music on Malta that includes an edition of the complete sacred works of Nicolò Isouard (1773-1818), and is an Honorary Research Fellow at the same university. Richard Divall has edited early Australian music since 1967.
Josephine Hymn
(on prayer and Divine Love)

Hobart - 1844
Dedicated to The Most Rev John Bede Polding
Archbishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of Australasia

Fr John Joseph Therry 1790-1864
Joseph Gautrot France 1783? - Sydney 1854
Edited by Richard Divall

Josephine Hymn - First Part

Josephine Hymn - Dedicated to The Most Rev John Bede Polding
Archbishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of Australasia

Josephine Hymn - First Part

Teach me dearest Lord to pray,
What I should think,
And what I should say.
That I may praise Thee night and day.
That my every thought and word may be,
A pleasing sacrifice to...
Symphony to the end and the beginning of the first five verses

Thee.

Symphony to the end and the beginning of the first five verses

Amen.

Symphony to the final verse.

Symphony to the final verse.

Amen.
Josephine Hymn - Second Part

Chaste

Moderato

1

Moderato

6

pp

10

p

14

spouse of love! Sweet Vir-gin Queen, Re-mem-ber what thy Son hath been, The

Lamb whose blood, as thou hast seen, On Cal-v'ry's mount did make us

free, and as a Mo-ther gave us Thee.
Symphony to the first five verses

To the last Verse

A - men.