



Worth Abbey

ORGAN MUSIC

Easter V: May 1-2, 2021

Saturday 1 May 2021 5pm Mass

*Communion
Voluntary*

**Prière à Notre-Dame - from Suite Gothique, Op.25
Menuet Gothique - from Suite Gothique, Op.25**

**Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)
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Today, two movements from a standard and perennially popular work of the repertoire: Boëllmann's Suite Gothique.

Born in the Alsace region of France (hence his Germanic name), Boëllmann entered the École Niedermeyer in Paris at the age of 9: there his teachers included Gigout who later, following the young man's wedding to his niece, and having no children of his own, was to adopt him. Although his life was tragically short life – he died from Tuberculosis at 35 – his professional career was, even though only some 16 years, most fruitful: under the wing of Gigout, he moved in elevated Parisian musical circles, becoming respected in his own right as a fine teacher, music critic, composer and performer.

For most of his career his was Organist at the imposing church of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul – a great edifice some may have seen, it being just 5 minutes' walk from the Gare du Nord (where the Eurostar arrives) - an association begun when he was 19 and newly graduated.

His music is forgotten today, and his reputation rests almost singly on his Suite Gothique which he composed in 1895, which aimed to evoke the majesty and splendour of a great Gothic cathedral. We hear two movements: during Communion the wistfully lovely Prayer to Our Lady (appropriately as May is the month of Mary) and the second movement, the grandly dancing (albeit on the heavy-side - the 19th century's view of the minuet being much more grand than dainty) Menuet Gothique, a piece which aptly displays the genial nature for which its composer was known.

Sunday 2 May 2021: 9.30 Mass

Voluntary

Marche Religieuse (March upon Handel's "Lift Up Your Heads"), Op.15 No.2

Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Gallic grandeur and swagger are displayed by Guilmant in his homage – on the big, 19th century scale - to Handel, one of the few composers whose popularity has never faltered.

The Handel's presentation has changed (and continues to change) throughout the ages... Today, he may be presented with small groups of musicians, yet in bygone time his music was played by huge forces: choirs and orchestras of 1000s performed his ever-popular "Messiah", the orchestral forces augmented and bolstered with a dazzling arrays of extra brass and strings. It is in this vein that the great Guilmant - one of France's titan organists - wrote this stirring march.



**D'Arcy Trinkwon
Abbey Organist**