

PROGRAMME NOTES: I composed "Watching With Jesus" -- both text and music -- at the invitation of COSI (The Centre of Opera Studies in Italy). Here it is premiered by four COSI soloists, whom I accompany on the organ during a concert devoted to vocal music of Passiontide.

The work begins with a duo recitative setting of a biblical passage which describes a scene from the Garden of Gethsemane ("Will you not watch with me one hour?"). Then the quartet sings a poem reflecting upon the implications of watching with Jesus and being true to him.

TEXT:

RECITATIVE: When Jesus arose from prayer, he came to his disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, "Why do you sleep?" And he said to them, "So would you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation". (from: Luke 22, Matthew 26)

POEM:

Will we watch with our Lord?
Will we pray with our Lord?
Will we stay with our Saviour?
Will we follow our Saviour?
Will we be true to Christ?
Will we suffer with Christ?
Will we die with our Lord?

Will we forgive like Jesus?
Will we bring peace like Jesus?
Will we love like Jesus?
Will we teach like Jesus?
Will we bless like our Saviour?

For we rise like our Saviour,
We transcend death with our Conqueror,
We will glorify our Jesus.

John Laing