

Matt Geer

In Sede Vacante

for string quartet and chimes

2025

Programme note

In Sede Vacante is a meditation on the silence and hidden labour of the Church as she waits for the election of a new pope. The music unfolds through pairs of string instruments, violin and violin, viola and cello, exchanging dyads in a slow, delicate hocket, like scattered thoughts and prayers echoing in the stillness of the conclave. Intermittently, a chime sounds, marking time not in urgency but in sacred patience. Through its quiet persistence and spare textures, the piece reflects the Church's longing and trust during the vacancy of the Holy See, when the Spirit moves unseen among her gathered servants.

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In Sede Vacante

for string quartet and chimes

Duration: 6'10"

Dedicated to the Church *in sede vacante*

Note:

- *All string notes are played as harmonics, natural or artificial, whatever is easiest.*
- *Any suitable chimes or digital chimes sound may be used.*

In Sede Vacante

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♩ = c. 60

All notes are harmonics

Violin 1
pp delicate
All notes are harmonics

Violin 2
pp delicate
All notes are harmonics

Viola
pp delicate
All notes are harmonics

Cello
pp delicate
All notes are harmonics

Chimes /
chime-like sound
pp delicate

accel.....

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

♩ = 80

.....

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

rit.....

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

♩ = c. 60

.....

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

accel.

Vln 1
Vln 2
Vla
Vc.
Chim.

.....♩ = 80

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

rit.....

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

♩ = c. 60

.....

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 1 through 6. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 3/4, then 5/4, 3/4, 4/4, and finally 6/4. The Violin 1 part features a melodic line with a sharp sign on the second measure. The Violin 2 part has a similar melodic line. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes. The Chimes part provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

accel.

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 7 through 12. The time signature changes from 6/4 to 5/4, 3/4, 6/4, and 4/4. The Violin 1 part has a melodic line with a sharp sign. The Violin 2 part continues the melodic theme. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment. The Chimes part provides harmonic support.

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Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 18. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4, 4/4, 3/4, 6/4, and 5/4. The Violin 1 part has a melodic line with a sharp sign. The Violin 2 part continues the melodic theme. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment. The Chimes part provides harmonic support.

♩ = 80

First system of musical notation (measures 1-4). The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 4/4, then 6/4, then 3/4, and finally 5/4. The Vln 1 part features a melodic line with a sharp sign in the third measure. The Vln 2 part has a similar melodic line. The Vla and Vc. parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and rests. The Chim. part has a rhythmic accompaniment.

rit.

Second system of musical notation (measures 5-8). The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 6/4, then 3/4, then 4/4, and finally 5/4. The Vln 1 part continues its melodic line. The Vln 2 part has a similar melodic line. The Vla and Vc. parts provide harmonic support. The Chim. part has a rhythmic accompaniment.

Third system of musical notation (measures 9-12). The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 6/4, then 4/4, then 3/4, and finally 6/4. The Vln 1 part continues its melodic line. The Vln 2 part has a similar melodic line. The Vla and Vc. parts provide harmonic support. The Chim. part has a rhythmic accompaniment.

♩ = c. 60

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

accel.....

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vla

Vc.

Chim.

♩ = 80

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 6/4 to 4/4, then 5/4, 3/4, and back to 6/4. The music features melodic lines in the violins and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower strings and harp.

rit.....

Musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 3/4, 4/4, and back to 6/4. The music features melodic lines in the violins and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower strings and harp.

♩ = c. 60

Musical score for the third system, measures 9-12. The score includes staves for Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Vc., and Chim. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 4/4, 3/4, and back to 6/4. The music features melodic lines in the violins and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower strings and harp.