

## Cantique de Jean Racine: Music to Touch Your Spirit

by Jason Jedlinski

Among my most treasured gifts are the feelings and mindsets evoked by sacred music. Today, I invite you to take five minutes and reflect upon text written in 1688 by French playwright Jean Racine, paraphrasing a fourth-century Latin hymn. Nineteen-year-old Gabriel Fauré set it to music in 1865; his undulating triplet rhythms winning first prize at the Niedermeyer School in Paris.

Because the original text and English translation both have meditative and spiritual merit, I offer both here as you enjoy this choral masterpiece. May the centuries-old text and music performed virtually by the 93-voice Choir of Radio France this summer remind you of humanity's enduring faith.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ9eg->

[jbcdY&feature=youtu.be&t=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ9eg-jbcdY&feature=youtu.be&t=7). [See the English translation at the end of this reflection.]

## LE MARDI A MATINES.

*Coñsors paterni luminis, etc.*

**V**ERBE, égal au Très-Haut, notre unique espérance,  
Jour éternel de la terre et des cieux,  
De la paisible nuit nous rompons le silence :  
Divin Sauveur, jette sur nous les yeux.

Répands sur nous le feu de ta grace puissante ;  
Que tout l'enfer fuie au son de ta voix ;  
Dissipe ce sommeil d'une ame languissante,  
Qui la conduit dans l'oubli de tes loix.

O Christ, sois favorable à ce peuple fidele,  
Pour te bénir maintenant assemblé ;  
Reçois les chants qu'il offre à ta gloire immortelle,  
Et de tes dons qu'il retourne comblé.

*Word of God, one with the Most High,  
in Whom alone we have our hope,  
Eternal Day of heaven and earth,  
we break the silence of the peaceful night;*

*Savior Divine, cast your eyes upon us!*

*Pour on us the fire of your powerful grace,  
that all hell may flee at the sound of your voice;  
banish the slumber of a weary soul,  
that brings forgetfulness of your laws!*

*O Christ, look with favor upon your faithful people  
Now gathered here to praise you;  
Receive their hymns offered to your immortal glory;  
May they go forth filled with your gifts.*