

MIDLANDS CHORALE

(CONDUCTOR RICHARD LAING)

present

SACRED MUSIC AT THE CATHEDRAL

(6 centuries of Motets by great European
Composers)

SATURDAY 17TH APRIL 7.30PM

at

Shrewsbury RC Cathedral,
Town Walls

Music by

DESPREZ MONTEVERDI
ANERIO SCHUTZ MOZART
BRUCKNER
MENDELSSOHN GLINKA
ARENSKY RACHMANINOV
CASALS

Tickets £8 (£5 students, under 16 free)

from

Theatre Severn Box Office 01743 281281

In aid of the Shrewsbury Lourdes Group

The **Midlands Chorale**, founded in 1978, draws its singers from all corners of the West Midlands. The choir has performed with distinction a wide repertoire across the country, and made several recordings. Since September 2003, under the direction of Richard Laing, the choir has given acclaimed performances of many major works in Birmingham, Leicester, Shrewsbury and across the West Midlands. In association with the Leicester Bach Choir in recent years, they have performed Brahms German Requiem, Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem, and Elgars The Music Makers, accompanied by full orchestra. The choir's concerts generate several thousand pounds a year for different charities. Midlands Chorale is Registered Charity No. 1108506. Visit www.midlandschorale.org.uk for more information.

Richard Laing is director of the Midlands Chorale, the Leicester Bach Choir, the acclaimed opera company Operamus, and several orchestras around the Midlands. He is a frequent guest conductor with the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chandos Symphony Orchestra. In 2001 Richard won the ViVA Scholarship to the Birmingham Conservatoire, and a year later he graduated with a Master's Degree, a Postgraduate Diploma in Conducting and the Postgraduate Prize. He has given concerts throughout Europe and has conducted for Kent Opera, Dartington Festival Opera and Birmingham Conservatoire Opera. Richard is in demand as a leader of orchestral and choral workshops across the UK, and has lectured at universities in America and Australia.

Sacred Music at the Cathedral is a rare opportunity for music lovers to hear examples of many of the great schools of European choral composition down the ages, performed together in a single concert. The concert features some of the greatest choral motets written for the Church in each of the six centuries from the 15th to the 20th inclusive, by composers from many countries across mainland Europe. Italy is represented by Anerio (1560 – 1614) and Monteverdi (1567 – 1643); France by Desprez (1440 – 1521); Germany by Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847) and Schutz (1585 – 1672); Austria by Bruckner (1824 – 1896) and Mozart (1756 – 1791); Spain by Casals ((1876 – 1973); Russia by Arensky (1861 – 1906), Glinka (1804 – 1857) and Rachmaninov (1873 – 1943). The pieces by the German composers will be sung in German, and those by the Russian composers, in Russian. The beautiful Pugin-designed RC Cathedral in Shrewsbury provides a fitting acoustic for the performance of this collection of choral masterpieces.

The Lourdes Group. The Diocese of Shrewsbury organises an annual pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine in Lourdes, France. A lot of the pilgrims who go are either sick or infirm and require personal care and/or assistance with mobility. To this end, the diocese arranges for volunteer medical staff (doctors, nurses and carers) to accompany the pilgrimage and care for the pilgrims. However, the transporting of the pilgrims and some personal care tasks are carried out by youth volunteers. From boarding the coach at their local pickup point until they return a week later, the youths help the pilgrims. Their main duty is pushing wheelchairs but they also help in the hospital by working in the dining room, cleaning the ward and helping nurses to deliver personal care. One of their main tasks is to talk to but more importantly listen to the pilgrims. For some pilgrims this is the only opportunity for them to leave their house each year and is a great opportunity for them to interact with the younger generation and have some fun.

For the last 12 years or so a group of youth volunteers has gone from Shrewsbury Cathedral, and we have arranged a variety of events to raise the funds needed to support them in their valuable work helping the less advantaged fulfil their pilgrimage. This year we're hoping to take a group of 10, and also fund the trip for one sick / infirm pilgrim for the first time. We are grateful to Midlands Chorale for putting on this performance to help us to achieve our target and we encourage you to come along on the evening