

# Tower Chorale sings Faure's masterpiece Requiem

By **Sheryl DeVore**  
Pioneer Press

FEBRUARY 23, 2015, 2:30 PM

**R**ehearsing with the Tower Chorale at St. Gregory the Great Church recently, Patrick Godon suggested the choir slightly move their upper torso when singing a particular section of Gabriel Faure's "Requiem."

Godon was going for a "sweeter" sound, and the choir got it, he said.

That directing style among others is what has kept chorale member Craig Fisher of Indian Head Park coming to rehearsals for five years.

"Patrick teaches us to use our bodies. It's like yoga," said Fisher, who is looking forward to the group's March concerts, when he will join in singing Faure's "Requiem."

"It's an amazingly beautiful piece," he said. Unlike the Johannes Brahms "Requiem" which the choir performed last year, "this one is much more soothing, gentle and comforting," said Fisher, who sings bass with the group.

A requiem is a Mass sung in Latin to celebrate the souls of the deceased, and contains various sections including Kyrie Eleison, Sanctus, Agnus Dei and Benedictus, among others.

Godon said "Faure's Requiem has universal appeal. Even if someone hasn't heard it before, perhaps they can memorialize someone in their lives who has died." Coming to the concert and listening to the performance "is a good way to sit with those feelings."

The concert, called Faure's Masterworks, will also include other pieces by the French composer who wrote most of his works in the early late 1800s and early 1900s.

The Tower Chorale, a community chorus of about 90 singers includes amateurs and professionals who have performed with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Light Opera Works and other theater and music organizations. The group rehearses at Grand Avenue Community Center in Western Springs, as well as at churches where the singers perform.

Godon said he studied Faure's Requiem at DePaul University where he majored in piano performance. "I especially love the harmonies," he said. "They are so unexpected."

Faure wrote the Requiem beginning in 1887 intentionally avoiding "some of the bombastic forces of the orchestra," Brahms employed, Godon said. "Faure takes the orchestra and skims it to strings and a couple of winds and a harp and makes it much more intimate. Faure even cut some of those movements with the mention of hell."

Historical accounts also say Faure wrote the requiem in response to his father's death. It was performed at Faure's funeral in 1924.

Featured soloists at the program include soprano Kristen Frost, who has sung with the St. Louis Symphony and

baritone Tom Hall, a member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus. "Both have fabulous voices," Godon said. Members of the International Chamber Artists will provide instrumental accompaniment. Godon is a pianist with the group and has been a featured soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The Tower Chorale will join the Elmhurst Symphony and Elmhurst Choral Reunion for a combined production of Faure's Requiem on May 9 at the Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church, 149 Brush Hill Road, he added. "I love to bring groups together," Godon said.

### **The Tower Chorale performs Faure Masterworks**

4 p.m. March 1

St. Cletus Church, 600 W. 55th St., La Grange, and at 3 p.m. March 8 at St. Gregory the Great Church, 55535 N. Paulina, Chicago

\$20; \$17 seniors

<http://www.towerchorale.org>

Copyright © 2015, Chicago Tribune

---