

## Programme Notes

The Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Organ Scholarship Programme commenced in June of 2023, with the aim of nurturing a new generation of young church organists, modelled in part on a similar programme in Perth led by Jacinta Jackovcevic. This Adelaide programme is somewhat unique in accepting beginning keyboard students, not just those with a strong piano background.

It is pleasing to follow the progress of these beginning organists as they develop the techniques of co-ordinating hands and feet, the use of the expression pedals, changing manuals, and choosing stops which produce sounds that suit the music. In this concert we have students who have just begun learning a keyboard instrument through to students with many years of piano experience. The students have been learning the organ for two years or less.

Music of the Baroque composers Balbastre (1724-1799 French) and Rathgeber (1682-1750 German), provide simple and exciting organ pieces for beginners. The set of Eight Short Preludes and Fugues, formerly attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach, provide excellent studies of short Baroque organ preludes and fugues, contrasting with pieces in French Romantic style such as those composed by Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911). Learning to play hymns to lead a congregation as they sing praises to God is an important part of the scholarship programme.

2025 marks the 340<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of both Handel (Sunday February 23<sup>rd</sup>) and Bach (Friday March 21<sup>st</sup>), thus it is fitting to close the recital with a work by one of these great composers. Johann Sebastian Bach's Fugue in Eb Major, BWV 552 is commonly nick-named "Saint Anne", as the main theme is similar to the English hymn tune St Anne, set to the hymn text "O God Our Help in Ages Past". The Eb major Prelude is the first movement, and Fugue the final movement of Bach's Clavier-Übung III; a collection of 27 compositions considered Bach's most significant and extensive work for organ. Both the Eb major Prelude and Fugue focus on the trinitarian nature of God, with a key signature of 3 flats, and fugue in three distinct sections, representing Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*- Programme Notes prepared by Gina Dutschke*