

Triumphant concert by Opus Dei Choir

By JOAN GANDIER

Opening with the majestic brass "Fanfare for a solemn occasion" by Sir Arthur Bliss (Eng. 1891-), the performance at St. Peter's Anglican Church here by the Massachusetts-based Opus Dei Choir was strikingly triumphant. The 50-voice mixed choir was aesthetically sound and moving. The placement for the different range of voices on the platform was such that a well-balanced sound resulted throughout.

A large repertoire included works by Palestrina (It. 1525-1594) and Messaien (Fr. 1908-), among others, providing the early sounds of the Gregorian chant to contemporary rhythmic notes.

The English composer E. W. Naylor's (1867-1934) "Vox Dicentes: Clama" was sung in Latin. The choir's pronunciation was achieved with exceptional excellence, and the composition received considerable recognition from the audience.

The climax of the program was 20th century composer Maurice Durufle's (Fr. 1902-) "Requiem" with cello and organ accompaniment. Of particular beauty were the Introit and Kyrie. They were very moving and handled with a minimum of arm movement by the conductor, Mrs. B.C. Pugsley. The Sanctus was full of refined vocal emotion and blending. Durufle's work is often compared to that of the French composer Faure, whose forte was expressing, in musical form, tender experiences of life.

Organist James Jordan's rendition of "Chorale in B Minor", by Caesar Franck (Belg. 1822-90) was decidedly the work of a masterful player. Jordan adapted himself to the organ of St. Peter's Church with remarkable ease.

The entire concert was a model of technical and musical superiority. The choir's ability to sustain their soft notes was extraordinarily well done.

The choir recently completed choral training at St. John's College, Cambridge. While in England they sang in a number of cathedrals including Westminster Abbey.

The concert was sponsored by Grenville Christian College.