

PipeNotes

American Guild of Organists – Milwaukee Chapter

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Volume 67 – November 2020



Happy Thanksgiving



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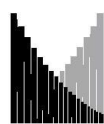
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AGO Milwaukee Chapter Upcoming Fall Programming 2020

Monday, November 16, 6:30 pm
Virtual Chapter Meeting
Check your email for a link to the meeting



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JOHANNUS



PipeNotes is published monthly, with the deadline for articles the 20th of the preceding month.
pneditor@agomilwaukee.org

November 2020

11(Wed) 12:15 Dr. Simone Gheller, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

16 (Mon) 6:30 pm Chapter Virtual Meeting
Check your email for a zoom link

18 (Wed) 12:15 Erin Booker-Miller, Harp
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

25 (Wed) 12:15 Bruce Bengtson, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

December 2020

2 (Wed) 12:15 New Milwaukee Consort
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
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9 (Wed) 12:15 Joseph Kucharski, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
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November 2020

Sometimes we run, quite literally, from one thing to the next. Ever grateful for the chance to visit with others, take a lunch out, go to a concert, teach, accompany, perform, sing, play, worship, make dinner, prompt children in their studies, hem a chasuble, we can sometimes stop and question what we have gotten ourselves into!

Music inspired by “Holy Minimalism” was just what I needed this past Sunday afternoon at St. Francis Parish in Milwaukee with David Bohn at the historic Schuelke. It gave my mind (and body) time to rest and regroup. As I was listening, *random* thoughts entered:

David is really giving this historic instrument in need of repair a chance to speak from its heart.

Simply Christmas?!.

The piece “Drone” by Rodrigo Baggio: Life drones on....oh! there was a moment.....will it come again?.....there it is.....and then finally the same motif with the final note leading to heaven perhaps?

Sometimes we want to do more than what is possible. Focus on what you can do and trust that God will bring you to your purpose.

Rest. Rest in God alone. Enjoy.

Another opportunity to join us by Zoom will be held on Monday, November 16th. Watch for details! We so enjoyed visiting at our first session and believe that the upcoming session will run smoothly! Share how you are and any thoughts or suggestions you have for our chapter. We treasure the opportunity to hear from you and to get to know you better!

Blessings! I look forward to connecting with you at our upcoming Zoom gathering, Monday, November 16th!

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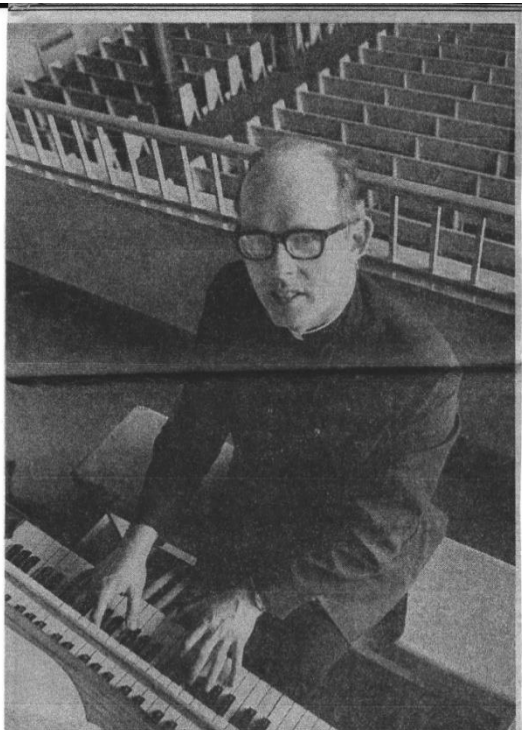
Only five you say in the history of the Wisconsin/Milwaukee Chapter...

In the early days of the Wisconsin Chapter as it was getting itself organized members wore multiple hats/titles/positions and gathered informally. From what I discovered in the archives, there is only one position in the Chapter's 100 years that has been filled by five (5) individuals. I know, you say this can't be true, but it is. The position is Chapter Chaplain. The first inclusion of a Chaplain appeared in the 1949 Yearbook with Rev. Francis F. Fisher serving from 1949-1951 with Rev. Hoover T. Grimsby following from 1951-1969. Rev. Elmer Pfeil served from 1969-1972. In 1972 Rev. Thomas Lijewski stepped into the position until 1985 with Rev. Connie Miller following from 1985-1988. Rev. Thomas Lijewski was reappointed in 1988 and continues to serve as our Chaplain for 46 years!! Besides serving as the Chapter's Chaplain he has shared his talents on various committees and music endeavors promoting the mission of the chapter and committee work. Father Tom has served on the Program Committee 1974-1975; Executive Committee 1980; Patron Committee 1980; Chairperson of the Yearbook 1982-1983, 1983-1984 and 1984-1985; Program Committee 1983-1984; Advertising for Yearbook and PipeNotes 1983-1984 and 1984-1985; Program Committee 1987 and 1988; Executive Committee 1989 and more. In the late 1980s Father Tom had a column in PipeNotes entitled "Between Pulpit and Organ Bench." In 2012-2013, Father Tom worked to bring together "The Milwaukee Organ Book" project into print and print on demand. He certainly continues to be an active member while serving as our Chapter's Chaplain.

So when did Father Tom's music interests begin? His interest in music began at St. Matthew School at age 8 with piano lessons. From piano lessons, he started organ lessons at age 12 at St. Vincent de Paul School and at age 16 took additional organ lessons at Alverno College. It was after his ordination by Archbishop Cousins on May 23, 1970 that Father Tom started taking college music courses at Alverno College to achieve a degree as an Organ Performance Major.

FATHER TOM AND "NIGHT MUSIC"

I found an article in the archives from the Milwaukee Journal dated Tuesday, April 14, 1981 by Edward S. Kerstein highlighting an interview with Father Tom. The article is entitled "Night Music—Priest Practices for Degree." Two of the partial requirements for Father Tom's degree along with coursework were a Sophomore and Senior



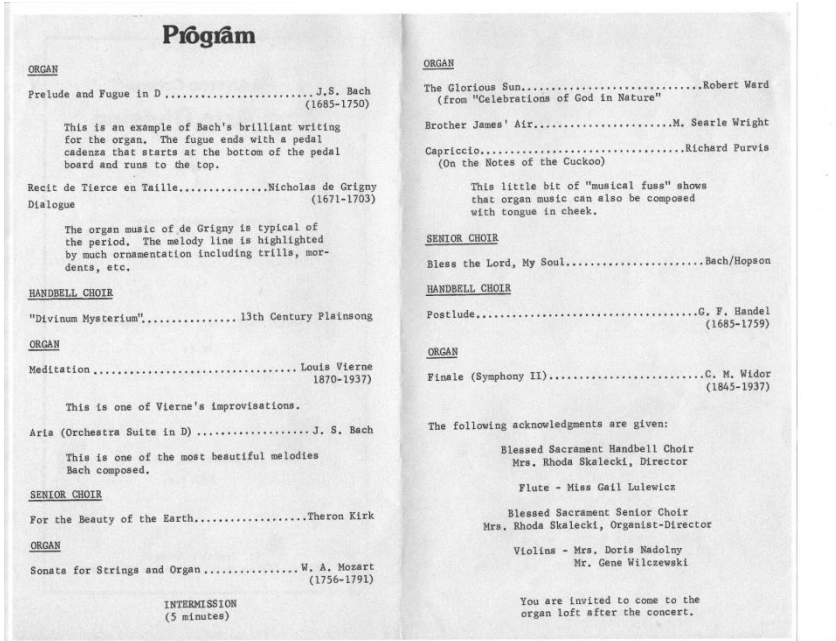
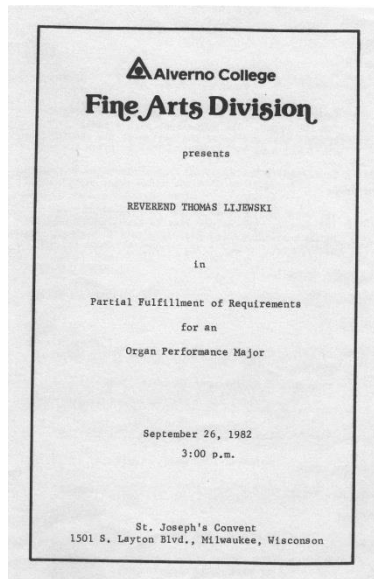
recitals. In September of 1979, Father Tom prepared and presented his Sophomore recital combining his talents with those of the parish of Blessed Sacrament. This Sophomore recital blended works for the organ, choir, hand bells and two violins. With an audience of 400 in attendance, they offered him support, praise and a standing ovation. As his studies continued, he felt to really understand the organ literature he took a tour of European countries. He wanted "to broaden his knowledge and appreciation of organ music" and studied the "historical church organs in England, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France." This offered him the opportunity to play organs in at least 50 European churches, some dating back to 1501.

He shared with Edward Kerstein that his Senior recital was tentatively planned for September of 1982 at St. Joseph's Convent. This would be his most important recital because it counted toward his music degree. Hence "Night Music" became the norm at Blessed Sacrament Church. In the late hours of the night, when

most of the city was sleeping, in the darkened church, a single light beamed upon his score piercing the darkness. Father Tom was "practicing at the church organ" recording his pieces to be able to "evaluate his ability and detect any flaws. His chief critic, however, was his organ teacher, Sister Mary Hueller, of the Alverno College

music faculty.” He shared that his study of “organ music and my studies were a great diversion or hobby that eases the daily stresses confronting any parish clergyman.”

The months of Night Music practice came to close as Father Tom’s Senior recital was played on September 26, 1982. I included his recital program showing the diverse musical offerings. With his Senior recital played, he was getting closer to completing his studies. After eighteen years of music study, Father Tom was awarded a certificate in Organ Performance from Alverno College.



The Milwaukee Chapter has been fortunate to have had all of the Chaplains on the roster through the decades. Their presence to us in church ministry has and is a treasure in the ever evolving and revolving work of the church. Father Tom has been present in countless ways as a member, musician, friend and Chaplain. He has journeyed with the chapter through good and challenging times. He has a good listening ear, offering his guidance individually and collectively for new perspectives to be learned. He has supported us to carry onward in music ministry, our communities, the arts and our chapter. This spring Father Tom celebrated 50 years of his priestly ordination. This golden anniversary is an extra special life event. Since it is not possible for us to gather right now to celebrate, we, the Chapter, send you Father Tom our blessings.

Note to Father Tom--

For all the times you led us in prayer, been there for us in times of sorrow and joy, journeyed along with us to workshops, recitals, conventions, organ crawls and worship, you brought your gift of presence and guidance through the decades.

We shower you with this blessing prayer.

Members—

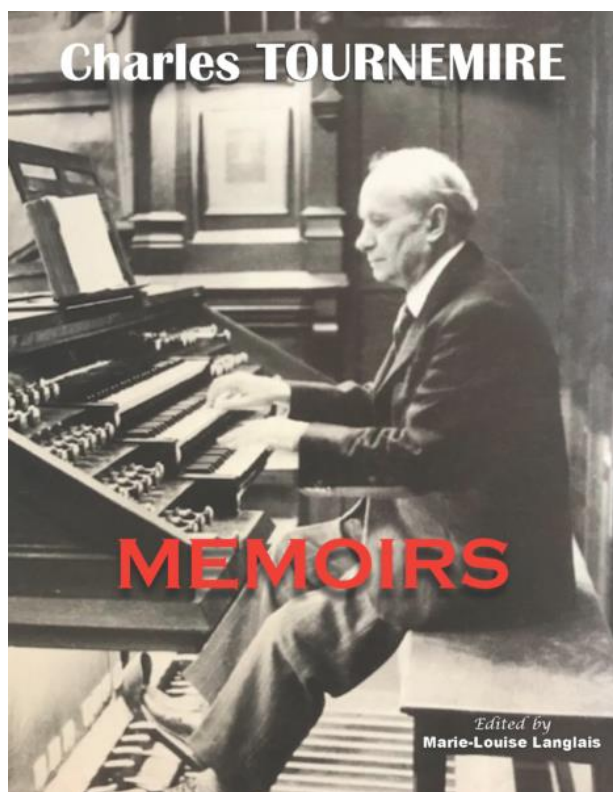
Show your blessing of gratitude over Father Tom.

*The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you.*

Numbers 6:24-25

“Thank You Father Tom,” may you continue to receive blessings upon blessings in your service to the Lord and the Milwaukee Chapter.

Memoirs



The AGO is pleased to provide a link to the digital publication of the selected memoirs of Charles Tournemire in English, edited by Marie-Louise Langlais, translated by Susan Landale.

“In 2014, I edited the French long version of Tournemire’s Memoirs, but I then had the idea that an English translation of this text, limited to material relating to music and the world of the organ and organists, would be useful and welcomed. This is that work.” –Marie-Louise Langlais.

[Read](#) Memoirs by Charles Tournemire.

Paris, Monday July 27, 2020
TO : American Guild of Organists
James Thomashower, Executive Director
Bill Valentine, Director of Information, Technology and Digital Communications

Dear Sirs,

My sincere thanks to the AGO, this great association that provides constant support to organists and the organ world. It has enabled *The Memoirs of Charles Tournemire* to appear here on the internet, for free, in my edited version, translated into English.

One can thus get an idea of the way that Tournemire viewed his own work, his personal life, his contemporaries, and the historical period in which he lived. This great composer, who was born 150 years ago and who died tragically at the beginning of World War II, was one of the major figures of the 1930s, a particularly rich period in the history of the organ in France, a period whose importance and influence have never dimmed.

The date of this publication of Charles Tournemire *Memoirs* coincides with that of an important Conference in honor of Vierne and Tournemire, scheduled for presentation at The Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, but unfortunately postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Marie-Louise Langlais, Ph.D.