

HYMN to the HEART of JESUS

Duan Chroi Iosa

Tadhg Gaedhloch O Suillebháin

(c.1715 - 1795)

mm ~ 50

Musical notation for measures 1-4. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The tempo is marked *mm ~ 50*. The dynamics are marked *mp*. The notation includes a treble and bass clef with a brace. Measure 1 starts with a repeat sign. Measures 2 and 3 contain triplets in the right hand. Measure 4 ends with a repeat sign.

Musical notation for measures 5-8. The notation continues in the same key and time signature. Measure 5 is marked with a '5' above the staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of measure 8.

Musical notation for measures 9-13. Measure 9 is marked with a '10' above the staff. The notation features triplets in both the treble and bass staves. Measure 13 ends with a repeat sign.

Musical notation for measures 14-16. Measure 14 is marked with a '14' above the staff. The notation continues with triplets in both hands. Measure 16 ends with a repeat sign.

Musical notation for measures 17-20. Measure 17 is marked with a '17' above the staff. The dynamics are marked *rit.* (ritardando). The notation concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of measure 20.

HYMN to the HEART of JESUS

*Light of my heart / Thy heart, O Lord divine!
Pulse of my heart / Thy heart to have for mine!
And since for love of me / Thy Sacred Heart did fill
Within my heart fast-bound / Thy Heart be still!*

- Donal O'Sullivan translation

It is a fact of history that the Irish, despite the undoubted strength and resilience of their religious faith and their unquestioned skills as poets and musicians, did not compose as many pieces of religious music as might be expected. While this might appear to be a paradox, one must always remember that the historical milieu in Ireland was for centuries not favorable to such expression, as both the Irish language and the Catholic religion were viewed as seditious by those exercising political power in Ireland.

The infamous Penal Laws are the clearest evidence of this antagonism. In spite of official restrictions, however, songs of a clearly religious nature did appear and often achieved great popularity among the Catholic peasantry, although they were often at first circulated orally or in manuscript. "Duan Chroi Iosa", a composition of Tadhg Gaedhlach O Súilleabháin (= Timothy O Sullivan "the Irishman") is one such. O Sullivan was a poet from the Munster (southern) area of Ireland whose religious works were rooted in a personal conversion experienced in his mid-life.

While the words of these religious songs can usually be clearly attributed, less certain is the source of the music. In the absence of any information to the contrary, we have to presume that the the poetry and the melody to which it was set were the work of a single person; the historical evidence indicates that these pieces were so considered by those closest to them.