OTLOH OF ST. EMMERAM (ATTRIBUTED)

The Rhythmic Life of Saint Wolfgang

Vita rhythmica S. Wolfkangi

SABBATISMUS

Otloh of St. Emmeram (attributed) (c. 1010–c. 1070)
Vita rhythmica S. Wolfkangi · The Rhythmic Life of Saint Wolfgang

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A Rhythmic History

Jesus, physician of the heavens, / King who, with a word, for the ailing / Heal the veins of their eyes! / Light of wisdom,

Grant that I may duly praise / You in your saints with knowing skill, / And ever honour, for this, / The Mother of mercy.

That my heart may be enlightened, / Grant it, that the saint be praised, / Who is exalted by wondrous signs / Through which he ever shines.

Though I be in mouth and lips defiled, / A man wrapped all about / In stain, O Bishop, I praise in safety / You, Wolfgang, with all sweetness.

Nobly born of both your parents / You were, and to a master too, / When you were seven years of age, / Entrusted for the arts,

That in the garden of delights, / Among the little flowers of learning, / You might taste the clear fountain / Of the living waters.

At once the schools of masters, / Whose whole fellowship / Is charged with the virtues of conduct, / To make them known, you attend.

From there you drank so eagerly / That not only the arts you knew: / You grasped the spirit / Of the letter, as you show.

EXHORTATION

O Bishop, ennobled by your birth, / And more glorified still / With Christ! I, despised / And wretched, beg of you

That you deign to my poverty, / To my low estate, / To my blindness bring help. / As you are able, do it.

I know that you are willing, for you have mercy; / I know that you are able, for God grants it; / I know that you know how, for He teaches you: / Bring, then, to fulfilment what is given.

As once you showed it, / And show it still, you brought it to completion / When you came to the help of the sick / With the gifts of God, O heavenly one.

A father great in goodness, / You, Wolfgang, in discipline, / Patient as a lamb: / So your life proclaims you.

And that as an anchorite / You lived here, the pomp of the world / Despised, as an athlete of Christ, / The written record tells of you.

The charge, as chief shepherd, / In Regensburg then, so / Wisely in this life, / Of ruling the sheep,

You take up, though against your will. / Your former dwelling pressed upon you, / Where you had been shielded / From the clamour of men,

That alone you might serve the One alone, / God, who gives the realms of heaven, / Who by you and by all would be worshipped, / And wills it earnestly himself;

And so might keep your life / Unspotted, and not stain it, / Yours, by a single word, but stand firm / In the service of God.

Leaving the vanity of the world, / The lustre of your lineage, / The dignity of high office, / Purely for the Lord's sake,

Goods, money, honours, / Possessions of land, / And garments of rich splendour / You counted as nothing.

So you sought in secret / The place where you once dwelt, / And by God's gift you lived / Among the Alpine mountains.

In little caverns of the rocks / You dwelt, in the haunts / Of beasts; you eat the fruit of plants, / You drink the water of springs.

For five years you were / An exile; you wandered there / Until in the mountains you found / A dwelling-place.

There, blessed, you contemplate, / And plead with the Lord, / Shedding bitter tears, / For the people of the faithful.

There you gathered stones, / Carried them on your back / Into a heap; you willed / That a chapel should be made.

When you touched them with your hands / And set them down from your back, / You pressed your fingers into them / As into soft mud.

As earth gives way beneath / Your feet, so the rock too melts; / You stamped on it the image of your foot, / As can be seen today.

At last, Father, you toiled, / And with your hands you carried, / And soon you shaped the stones / For the work that was to be,

Which you yourself began; / You laid the foundation, / And you founded a church / In a wild and fearsome place.

In it, when the work was done, / Adorned all around / And wholly roofed over, / You praise God with humble

Voice, with prayer, / With holy celebration, / With devotion at Mass. / Standing firm in the law of the Lord,

You meditate by day and night, / And contemplate the things above, / And in that will you abide / In the selfsame way.

EXHORTATION

Sweet Father, salvation of my hope, / I beg that in the law of God / The sense of my understanding / May take in the light

Of truth and of Holy Scripture, / The pure, even as you did, / And that all the labour of my care / May savour the things of God.

For as the tree that, planted / Beside the stream, bore pleasing fruit, / So you bore fruit, brought forth / Here in its due season.

With God you earned the grace, / In this life you lived, / In the power of Jesus Christ, / To work wondrous signs.

Countless things, which could not / Be written down, God did there through you / For his own honour, / Enough for great volumes,

By which faith is strengthened, / The sick are healed, / And God is praised in his saints / Within the Church.

You, man of God, how good, / How great in holiness you were, / And how great in wisdom, / No one knows how to tell.

Of great kindness, / Of perfect charity, / And of wondrous humility: / God alone put this in you.

Always cheerful, serene, / And full of eloquence, / And free of hatred / Toward all the people you were.

Never envious nor harsh, / In teaching ever true, / So that all the clergy learn / In the mirror of your lips.

Illustrious in uprightness / Of life beyond all measure, / Kind in your gentle courtesy, / Farseeing in counsel,

A pattern, by your way of life, / You were to all of good living, / Setting yourself as example / In the Lord.

To me, of your servants / Truly the least of all, / Of the gifts that were given you / Would that you might will a share,

A small one, one of humility / Or else of chastity, / To win for me: well / Content I would be with the least

Share, that I might praise / God in you as I have come to know him, / As I have read in writings / And from the mouths of men

Have often heard. And so / I wish, Father, to proclaim / And tell your miracles / For the Lord's sake.

And who could think them / Other than signs of the true God, / When he who was blind yesterday / Tomorrow is flooded with light?

And whoever was withered or maimed / In hand, and cramped, / For whom there was great lamenting, / Through you tomorrow will be healed.

And those who by quartan fevers / Were racked, by tertian, / By acute and daily fevers, / Cried aloud

To you, and vowed to come / To you, to make the journey on foot, / Were wondrously / Restored at once;

And those who crawled on their hands, / Lame in both / Their thighs, when they called on you, / You gave back to walking.

Possessed by demons, / The vessels of the afflicted / By your wonders / Are restored to their former mind.

The liberator of captives / You were, of those in fetters, / And of those in chains, / In stocks and in towers;

Of sorrowing hearts, too, / The consoler, of the wretched, / Of those weighed down by poverty / Who knocked at your door with prayers.

There is no bodily pain / Of the body, nor spiritual pain / Of the soul, nor any like / To these, which a mortal man

Has suffered, but that, by God's grant, / Crying to you with a pure mind, / He has been healed of it at once, / Wounded though he was.

Countless are the deeds done / Before death and after. Touched / By faith, they were won for the world. / After these things the Almighty

Calls you, bidding you return, / And no longer linger in the wilderness, / But fulfil your office as bishop / Henceforth in obedience.

Soon on the road you fall ill; / At Pupping you are given up to death; / There your entrails then were taken out. / They remain in that same place.

From there your remains are borne / To Regensburg and laid out, / And there they are buried, / As befits a bishop.

So you rest in the Lord, / And shine with miracles; / Nor are you slow, day after day, / To work signs even now.

In Regensburg not so many, / Nor where your holy entrails lie, / Do you work signs, as many as you work / At the place of the church you built.

EXHORTATION

Come then, Father and patron, / Good son of the Father on high, / Make me a sharer in your crown / Together with the other

Priests, as we praise / God and venerate you; / Though we swim in sins, / May we be of the true light.

Give light to the eyes without; / Light still more to those within / Grant to our eyes, / Through the Giver of all.

That we may contemplate / And gaze upon the true Sun, / In whom is light from the sea / To the furthest bound of the sun.

And if the light of the understanding / Grows dim and darkens, / And the sense is bleared, there grows / Thereafter a drowsiness,

With the torpor of vanity, / The pomp of the world, the sweetness / Of praise, the favour of men: / Our awakening

Be you; if thus we sleep / In sins, of which the first / Am I, lest so we perish, / Rouse us to our health.

That we may keep watch, / And renounce the vanities / By which we have lived across the sea / Of this world unceasingly;

At last draw near to you, / Lead the flock of Christ to water, / And always stand for him / From here to the struggle of death.

Here we fear no threats, / That we may be joined to the saints of heaven / And set among them / For evermore. Amen.

A Prayer to Saint Wolfgang

O most holy Wolfgang, precious confessor of Christ! O renowned pontiff! O excellent bishop! O most radiant light of the Catholic Church, lit unquenchably by God, the true light! O prudent steward of heavenly treasures! O father of the poor! O faithful consoler of the afflicted! O glorious raiser-up of sinners! O gracious hearer of those who call upon you! To our humble and unworthy prayers, we beseech you, mercifully open the ears of your loving kindness. For since praise is not seemly in the mouth of sinners (Sir 15:9), we who live in sin, wrapped in the many miseries of our troubles and toiling in the exile of this world, flee with confidence to the glorious refuge of your goodness; and we ask that in all the needs of our body and soul you be our faithful advocate before God the almighty Father.

For you have been adorned by God with a manifold privilege of merits, and have no cause to refuse, you who, while still set upon the earth, received such great power from the Lord. For you gave back sight to the blind, their step to the lame, hearing to the deaf; nor was there anyone in danger who, calling on you as his loving patron, did not swiftly obtain the comfort of your kindness. And now, moreover, joined to the hosts of angels in the heavenly court, you joyfully

contemplate the face of God, enjoying, not undeservedly, the fellowship of the apostles, whose careful imitator you were; made worthily equal to the merits of the martyrs, you have been found worthy to exult with Christ for ever among the holy confessors and pontiffs and the holy virgins, shining like a brilliant star.

You, therefore, Saint Wolfgang, who were found worthy to hear from God so saving a word: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the eternal joys (Mt 25:21), by the love you bore to God himself, and by the joy in which you now exult with God, we call upon you and humbly implore you: deign to present the groaning of our heart to God, and to pray faithfully for us in all our needs of soul and body. So may he who deigned to say, I came not to call the just, but sinners (Mt 9:13), through your loving intercession mercifully call us back from the error of our sins, grant us time for a true and fruitful penance, and in his clemency snatch us from every evil. So may we pass through the exile of this world in this temporal life by your glorious merits, that, delivered from the desires of the flesh, from the deceits of the world and from the wiles of all our enemies, visible and invisible, and fortified at the end of our life with the saving viaticum of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a good conscience, right faith, firm hope and perfect charity, we may bring our life to a happy end; that after this temporal life we may be found worthy to attain eternal life, to reign happily with Christ for ever, by the gift and help of him who lives

and reigns for ever, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

ANTIPHON

Blessed pontiff, our Father and patron Wolfgang, who followed the Lord and, leaving all things for him, received a hundredfold in this world and life eternal: guarding with your wonted kindness the flock over which you presided, which you cherished, which you taught, never let it be deprived of your help.

PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, who gave to your people blessed Wolfgang, your confessor and bishop, as a minister of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that we who had him on earth as our teacher of life may be found worthy to have him always as our intercessor with you in heaven. Through our Lord...

SECRET

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that these offerings, which we bring to be consecrated to your majesty, may, through the intercession of blessed Wolfgang, your confessor and bishop, profit us for salvation both everlasting and present. Through our Lord...

COMMUNION

Having received your holy gifts, we pray, O Lord our God, that the unfailing protection of blessed Wolfgang, your confessor and bishop, may cherish us. Through our Lord...

ALLELUIA

V. Guard our souls at every hour, good shepherd, Saint Wolfgang, and pray to the Lord for your flock.

SEQUENCE

In Wolfgang's honour let us sing to Christ a sweet melody. / Worthy of song, the bishop on this feast day ascends to the heavens.

Born in Swabia, as a boy he scorned the trifles of this world. / Soon, excelling in the arts, his fame grew in distant lands.

After governing the schools he is compelled to the height of the deanship. / But spurning the world he becomes in the cloister a mirror of the monastic life.

Then in Pannonia he sows the heralding of the faith in vain. / The emperor makes the exile bishop of Regensburg, though he does not seek it.

Here he corrects errors, stretches out his hand to the fallen; God guides him and grants him success. / He nourishes Christ's flock with pasture, without pride; he withstands the enemy, watching against his wiles.

Victor over heretical deceit, he foretold many things prophetically, in wondrous wise. / Yield-

ing his spirit to heaven after vast merit, may he defend his flock now and for ever.

Amen.