

NEWBURY  
**Choral**  
SOCIETY

Summer Season 2022

# *Vive la Renaissance!*

A selection of sacred music from the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, featuring music by Palestrina, Victoria, Tallis, Byrd, and others.

Conductor: Cathal Garvey  
Organ: Steve Bowey

Saturday 2nd July 2022, 7:30pm  
Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton

**Tickets £15, under 16s £5, available online  
at [www.newburychoral.org.uk](http://www.newburychoral.org.uk) and from  
choir members**



After the success of their Spring concert, with its focus on two giants of the Classical era, Newbury Choral Society will be going back in time to explore the glories of Renaissance music. Our Summer concert sees us return to Douai Abbey, where the programme of sacred music will resonate to advantage.

The music that flourished between 1450 and 1600 seems to have shown the same curiosity and sense of individual exploration and adventure seen in other art forms. The advent of printing and the potential for greater circulation of music enlarged the ranks of both composers and performers. Educated people were expected to have some musical training.

Against this backdrop, there developed a form of music that was chiefly polyphonic, with typically four, five or six voice parts of nearly equal melodic interest, producing each musical idea or theme in turn, as in a round. The bass register began to be more prominent, resulting in fuller, richer harmonies. By its nature, Renaissance choral music did not need accompaniment, but even so, instruments were often combined with voices.

In Renaissance music, voices were more important than instruments, as composers strove to explore the close relationship between words and meaning: the music was designed to enhance the meaning and emotion of the text. As Roger Kamien puts it, however, "Despite this emphasis on capturing the emotion and imagery of a text, Renaissance music may seem calm and restrained to us. While there *is* a wide range of emotions in Renaissance music, it is usually expressed in a moderate, balanced way, with no extreme contrasts of dynamics, tone colour and rhythm."

The concert will include works by many of the acknowledged masters of the age, such as Palestrina, Victoria, Tallis, Monteverdi, Byrd, Lotti and Gibbons, as well as equally moving works by numerous lesser-known composers. Concert-goers will be able to experience this uplifting music in a wonderful acoustic that seems tailor-made for these inspiring sacred works.