

**OLDHAM CHORAL
SOCIETY**

Gounod: Mass of St. Cecilia

Fauré: Requiem

Cantique de Jean Racine

Soloists:

Katriana Fenech [Soprano]

Keith Latham [Baritone]

Hubert Francis [Tenor]

Conductor: Nigel Wilkinson

Organist: Douglas Butters

November 19th 2000
OLDHAM PARISH CHURCH

MUSIC

OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

Oldham Parish Church

THE main work on this all-French programme was Gounod's "St Cecilia Mass", receiving its first performance by the choir.

The work is anything but solemn. Operatic in style, it is reminiscent, at times, of the composer's "Faust".

Despite a slight imbalance between the male and female voices the choir did not disappoint, offering the delicacy and fervour the settings demand.

The Gloria and the Credo were very exciting, and the soloists blended well with the choir, particularly in the opening kyrie.

Confidence

Katriana Fenech (soprano) had a lovely voice which floated angelically with the choir in the Benedictus, while Hubert Frances provided a penetrating tenor in the Sanctus.

Gabriel Faure's famous Requiem is a regular item in the choir's repertoire, and they conveyed the devotional aspect of the work beautifully.

The best known item, the Pie Jesu, was performed with immense beauty and

A Mass with an operatic quality

confidence by Katriana Fenech. At the same time, Keith Latham gave a vigorous rendering of the Hostias.

A great contribution to the success of the evening was that of organist Jack Pickford, head of music at Crompton House School, who deputised at short notice for the indisposed Douglas Butters.

He managed to convey the Gounod, scored for a big orchestra and transposed for organ, splendidly.

The choir's young conductor, Nigel Wilkinson, proved once again — with his sincerity and enthusiasm — what an asset he is to the society. DS

21/11/00