JOSQUIN DES PREZ AND LASSUS IN KNUTSFORD: OCTOBER 2012

We all look forward to welcoming David Hatcher as our tutor for what promises to be a very rewarding and enjoyable workshop at the St John's Parish Centre, Knutsford, on Saturday 13 October. David – a former student of Charles Medlam and Philip Thorby at Trinity College of Music, London – is the founder of the viol consort 'Chelys'; his recordings with Anthony Rooley's Consort of Musicke, Evelyn Tubb and Bach Collegium of Japan, and I Fagiolini are regularly broadcast on BBC Radio 3; and he also appears on the recording of Striggio's 40-part mass with Robert Hollingworth.

Our programme provides an opportunity to work in some depth on two Renaissance masterpieces, the six-part Christmas motet *Praeter Rerum Seriem* by Josquin (c.1450-1521), composed some time before 1519, and the Magnificat setting based upon it by Lassus (1532-1594), composed some decades later. The mediaeval Latin plainsong hymn on which Josquin based his motet is a reflection on the mystery of the Incarnation (the opening line can be translated as 'Beyond the natural order of things'), as well as being a characteristic expression of devotion to the Virgin Mary. Josquin's motet, one of his most famous, inspired later composers; as well as Lassus's Magnificat setting, an entire Mass setting was based upon it by Cipriano de Rore. Lassus's setting gives us a fascinating opportunity to see how one Renaissance master responded to the work of another. It is possible that the piece is associated with the revival of Marian devotion in Bavaria after 1550, and that it was composed at the request of Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria, for whom Lassus worked, and who seems to have had a particular regard for Josquin's motet.

There will be opportunities for singers in all voice parts and for players of most renaissance instruments – bowed and plucked strings, loud and soft winds (but no high shawms) and keyboards (but no harpsichords). There will be no separate parts for plucked string and keyboard players, who will be expected to read from the score. Pitch will be at A = 440