

New Organ Solo to Premiere at Blessed Sacrament

Audience members at Blessed Sacrament Church's January organ concert will hear music that has never before been performed in public. In 1988, a new Church building was dedicated for the Alexandria community. To mark the occasion, Blessed Sacrament's music ministries commissioned Brother Howard Hughes, S.M., to write a communion song using a text by parishioner Peter C. Finn. The resulting work, *Make Us One In Christ*, was introduced at the dedication liturgy, published by GIA Publications Inc., and has become a repertoire staple for parishes nationwide.

Organist Ann Sursa Carney always hoped that someone would compose an organ solo based on the tune. When that didn't happen, she decided to take matters into her own hands. Acting on the enthusiastic recommendation of fellow organist James David Christie, who shares her admiration for Hughes's composition, she approached Dallas-based composer Joel Martinson, who agreed to accept the commission. "Joel Martinson has given us a wonderful addition to the organ literature," says Carney, "and his composition works for both liturgical use and concert performance.

It opens with a beautiful, contemplative prelude that ornaments and reharmonizes the melody of *Make Us One In Christ*. The mood changes with the following fugue, which remains in familiar territory only briefly. Joel excels at fugue writing, and he has done his best work here. It is unpredictable, exciting, and fun. I love it, and I think my listeners will too." Prelude and Fugue for Alexandria will be premiered by organist Ann Sursa Carney as part of her concert on Friday, January 29 at 8 p.m. Blessed

Sacrament Church is located at 1427 W. Braddock Rd.,
Alexandria. The concert is free, and there is ample
parking