

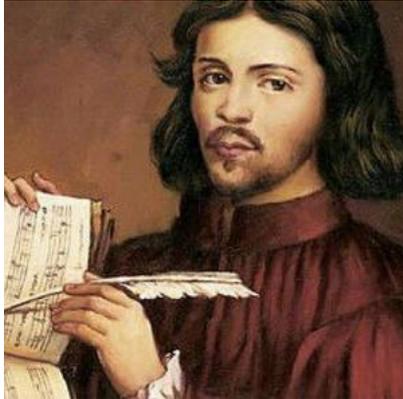
Music for Sunday 1 August

Communion Voluntary:

A Sad Pavan: for these distracted times (1649) Thomas Tomkins
(1572-1656)

Postlude

Fantasia in C (1647) Thomas Tomkins



A pupil of William Byrd, Tomkins became Organist of Worcester Cathedral in 1596 and was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1603. He was the last composer of the important school of Tudor and Jacobean keyboard music that had included Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, John Bull and Orlando Gibbons.

Worcester was one of the first casualties of the civil war: the cathedral was damaged by Parliamentary troops in 1642, and in the following year Tomkins' house received a direct hit by cannon shot, rendering it inhabitable for many years, destroying his household goods and probably a number of his musical manuscripts.

Further conflict and a siege in 1646 caused further damage to the City. With the cathedral closed, and services suspended, Tomkins turned his genius to the composition of some of his finest keyboard and consort music, including the pieces which to be played in today's service.

A Sad Pavan: for these distracted times, dated 14 February 1649, is a memorial to the recently executed Charles I. The Pavan has a sense of calm resignation, its long and sustained lines recalling the texture of Tomkins' cathedral anthems.

Tomkins' richly contrapuntal **Fantasia in C** is composed on four distinctive 'points' or short themes, each including an upward leap 4th. The Fantasia develops from a spacious opening into increasingly lively writing, closing with a characteristic display of florid passagework.

Thomas Morley's book 'A Plaine and Easie introduction to Practicall Musicke', 1597 of which Tomkins' owned a signed copy, describes the Fantasia thus: "The most principal and chiefest kind of musicke, which is made without a dittie is the fantasie, that is, when a musician taketh a point at his pleasure, and wresteth and turneth it as he list, making either much of little of it according as shall seem best in his own conceit. In this may more art be showne than in any other musicke, because the composer is tied to nothing but that he may adde, diminish, and alter at his pleasure".