

Tallis: Gloria Tibi
Hrv 256 1²
0:21

Gloria be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning so be it now and forever. Amen. Praise be to God for the clay and for the weather, for the sky and for the earth and all ^{creatures} ~~his~~ on land, in the sea and in the air.... I don't know what it is, but there is something about this time of the year in Hong Kong that seems to turn my thoughts, anyway, towards the sky and those friends of St Francis, the birds — maybe it's having the festival day of St Francis this week, or the recent mid-Autumn with its lanterns and lights are full-moon (even if it wasn't visible on the night): the cooling air, maybe, after the long summer heat: or just being aware of the changed flight-patterns of swallows and swifts and martins as they prepare to emigrate. "Preparant to emigrate" — there's a ring of finality, of ending, about that phrase: in the present H.K. context and climate, something sad and uncertain and diffident. But the swallows will come back: it's just that their going makes you notice the sky and its feel of autumn, bright & clear and warm (not hot) as it may be. And I think of Jesus Our Lord noticing the sparrows, and telling His followers not to worry: you are, He said, of much more worth than many sparrows — the Father feeds them, and not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. The wheeling swallows are, maybe, a sign of the times: but their journeys too are in God's hands.... and they do return, to herald new growth and freshness in the spring. Swallows, and sparrows: they do speak to us of God's world, tell us in some way about God himself and our place in His

scheme of things — look up, look around you these days, if you can get even a little bit away from the jungle of concrete and glass, and let the birds trigger your prayerful reflections, your memories of the scriptures, of how Jesus noticed, and your prayer for your friends who are going) have gone away, and for everyone who fears, who's losing hope, who's (maybe) forgetting to trust in the One who cares. Sparrows & swallows — they also both come into one of the loveliest of the psms, Ps 84, which is a pilgrimage song too, a song of praise to the Lord who gives happiness & forgiveness in His holy Temple, a song of trust & longing. The sparrows & the swallows know a thing or two: they make their homes within the Lord's temple, close to His altar — learn from their ways: "They are happy who dwell in your house, Lord". Ps 84: BQ. Brev. [284]

— Ps 84. In music now.

OL.V.685 from the same psalm, from Brahmi Sama Region [How lovely is His dwelling... place]

24. Roma
4:59 Tab. Cl
Philad. Org
Ced. Ormandy

MUSIC

ORIT { HYMN (Brev. [284])
PRAYERS (Brev. [288])

Ps 84 pictures the

sparrows and the swallows building their nests close to the Temple precincts, just as they do in fact build under eaves of buildings and nearby to where people are. For the psalmist, they're an image of the peace and security to be found in the house of the Lord. It is, too, to the Lord's house that people come to

And peace of soul and to pray. From their work in factory, office, home, people come, like homing birds, to the dwelling-place of God, the sacred place, to receive renewal of spirit, protection and help. And when they leave this holy place, this material building or space, they know their hearts have become the dwelling-place of God. His grace and power has enriched them, thro' that presence living in them. In such ways are we drawn from the dark valleys of materialism and lukewarmness, from the "Bitter Valley" of choking nettles, thorns and thistles, into the warm light and the high-way of Him who has lighted up the world. A sense of the protective power of God, the safety in which He holds us is something we should carry with us always, and nourish & develop. The birds in the Pt nestle near God's house; but we, by God's love, become living temples of the Holy Spirit, wherever we are.

0:35