



L'Ascension ("The Ascension") is a piece for orchestra, composed by **Olivier Messiaen** in 1932-33. Messiaen described it as "4 meditations for orchestra".

The orchestral piece is in four brief sections:

1. *Majesté du Christ demandant sa gloire à son Père* ("The majesty of Christ demanding its glory of the Father")
2. *Alleluias sereins d'une âme qui désire le ciel* ("Serene alleluias of a soul that longs for heaven")
3. *Alleluia sur la trompette, alleluia sur la cymbale* ("Alleluia on the trumpet, alleluia on the cymbal")
4. *Prière du Christ montant vers son Père* ("Prayer of Christ ascending towards his Father")

A complete performance takes around 27 minutes.

Olivier Messiaen: *L'Ascension*, Four meditations for orchestra:

Performance of **Leopold Stowkowski** and the **New York Philharmonic Orchestra** [[MusicMe](#)]

Performance of **I'Orchestre de l'Opéra Bastille**, **Myung-Wung Chung** conducting [[musicMe](#)]

Organ version:

In 1933-34, Messiaen made a version for solo organ. The first, second and fourth movements are arrangements of the orchestral pieces, but Messiaen composed a new third movement, *Transports de joie d'une âme devant la gloire du Christ qui est la sienne* ("Ecstasies of a soul before the glory of Christ, which is its own glory"), usually just known as *Transports de joie*

Olivier Messiaen, *L'Ascension*, Four meditations for organ:

Click on the name to go to performances by **Charles Krigbaum**, **Hans-Ola Ericsson**, **Thomas Trotter** and **Olivier Latry**.



The music for **Choral Eucharist on Ascension Thursday** is by **Hans Leo Hassler**. [Click](#) to go to a selection of Hassler's music.



John Singleton Copley, *The Ascension*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1775

[Click](#) to go to music for the **Ascension** composed by **Palestrina, Gowers** and **Finzi**.

Charles Tournemire, *L'orgue mystique: Easter Cycle, Op. 56: Nos. 22 and 23*



Performance on the 4-manual 1890 Cavallé-Coll organ of the former Abbey of Saint-Ouen, Rouen

Mass of the Feast of the Ascension

Prelude for the Introit [\[YouTube\]](#)

Offertory [[YouTube](#)]

Elevation [[YouTube](#)]

Communion [[YouTube](#)]

Paraphrases on a Choral [[YouTube](#)]

Click for the entire performance of *L'Orgue mystique* by **Georges Delvallée**.

Click to go to *Bach Cantatas for Online Listening*.



Benjamin West, *Ascension*, 1801

Bach Cantatas for Rogate (6th Sunday of Easter):

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Wahrlich, wahrlich, ich sage euch / Truly, truly, I say to you*, Cantata 86, with performances by **Gardiner**, **Harnoncourt**, **Leusink** and **Rilling**.

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen / Until now you have asked nothing in my name*, Cantata 87, with performances by **Harnoncourt** and **Leusink**.

Bach Cantatas for the Ascension:

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Lobet Gott in seinen Reichen / Praise God in his kingdoms*, Cantata 11, with performances by **Gardiner**, **Harnoncourt**, **Leusink**, **Parrott** and **Richter**.

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Wer da gläubet und getauft wird / Whoever believes and is baptised*, Cantata 37, with performances by **Gardiner**, **Harnoncourt**, **Koopman** and **Leusink**.

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Gott fährt auf mit Jauchzen / God ascends with shouts of joy*, Cantata 43, with performances by **Gardiner**, **Harnoncourt**, **Herreweghe**, **Koopman**, **Leusink** and **Suzuki**.

Click to go to **Johann Sebastian Bach**, *Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein / On Christ's ascension [journey to heaven] alone*, Cantata 128, with performances by **Gardiner**, **Leonhardt** and **Leusink**.