Jessye Norman - Sacred Songs (1990)

01. Messe solennelle de Ste. Cécile - Sanctus 02. Ave Maria 03. Panis Angelicus 04. Repentir (O Divine Redeemer) 05. The Holy City 06. Amazing Grace 07. Greensleeves 08. Let Us Break Bread Together 09. I Wonder As I Wander 10. Sweet Little Jesus Boy 11. Gesù Bambino Jessye Norman – soprano Christopher Bowers-Broadbent – organ Ambrosian Singers Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Alexander Gibson – conductor

Heaven must be missing an angel because she's here with us-singing on this disc. This is arguably one of the most beautiful recordings of sacred music ever made. Ms. Norman brings a lifetime of experience to this genre-she joined her church choir at 4! The warm acoustics make you feel like you are sitting in your favorite pew-albeit with a magnificent vocalist in the choirloft. Jessye has conquered the world's opera houses in the most demanding roles-one of which garnered her a fifty-five minute standing ovation (Salzberg). But she is most resplendent in the music of her youth. The majestic voice soars over the orchestra and chorus to deliver the full beauty of the music. Ms. Norman also performs selections with organ accompaniment-appropiate since her voice has often been compared to the king of instruments-"with all the stops pulled out"! You will hear why she is one of the most acclaimed recitalists of our time. Her expansive vocal range encompasses every nuance of the music heard here. We are taken on a journey through the entire spectrum of the category starting with a classical Mass, moving through an American spiritual and finishing with a Christmas carol that will keep you in a festive mood year 'round. Amoung the gems on this disc is an Ave Maria sung in German and arguably the most powerful solo recorded performance of "The Holy City" ever. If you want to hear what the heavenly choir sounds like before entering the pearly gates-listen to this disc. Brava Jessye! ---Billy Spargo, amazon.com

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