



On September 16, 2007, the church choir of Muri under the direction of Johannes Strobl will perform the newly discovered "Mass of Muri" together with soloists and Instrumentalists from the Rhoen in the Catholic pilgrimage church of Oberelsbach during the Sunday service at 10.15 am. The Swiss church choir spends his yearly holidays this time in the Rhoen due to the special invitation by the Valentin-Rathgeber-Society. The Swiss singers are especially interested in the homeland of the composer who has dedicated a mass composition to the prince abbot of Muri. The Valentin-Rathgeber-Society is happy to welcome the Swiss visitors and hopes that there will be good cooperation in the future. This "Mass of Muri" is an additional enrichment of this anniversary year.

The discovery of this mass is a piece of luck. Up till now it was a only matter of knowledge that Rathgeber dedicated a mass to Gerold Haimb, prince abbot of Muri, due to the anniversary of the abbot's benediction on October 9, 1731. Rathgeber got a 10 goulds and 20 Schilling reward. The gambist and singer Thilo Hirsch, linked to the ensemble arcimboldo/Basel, found by chance a manuscript in the music library of the monastery of Einsiedeln, dated to 1736, that contains an anonymous "mass of Muri". After comparing the manuscript with the last mass of Opus XII part II, the Valentin Rathgeber-Society could prove that both compositions are nearly identical. Thus, Rathgeber published the same composition in his volume Opus XII part II dedicated to Dr. Anton Cajetan of Unertl, the Dean of St. Peter/Munich and provost in Habach, and received double funding for one and the same composition. The manuscript is not an autograph of Rathgeber himself. The single sheets stem from distinct writers since the handwriting is different. Contrary to the printed version, the "Mass of Muri" is written in C. The

