

Madame de Maintenon evidently felt that the music, as prepared by Nivers, was often too elaborate:

I have not been able to see Nivers. In general, I wish to tell him that there are too many chants, too much ceremony, too much procession. In a word, he does not bear in mind the scarcity of [good singing] voices among the ladies.¹⁵

In 1693, Nivers wrote a motet that Madame de Maintenon objected to as unsuitable, as reported in the memoirs of one of the *Dames*:

We prepared [for December 23, 1693] some very beautiful music, composed by M. Nivers, and based on words taken from the Song of Songs, beginning with the words *Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem*. This was sung during the Mass. It was so tender and so touching that afterwards it was sung seven or eight times for the indications which followed. Madame de Maintenon did not want it sung, saying that these beautiful songs, which were so touching, were not suitable for us ... [On November 23, 1695] the sister de Lagny took the profession ... and at the ceremony for these four ladies, the motet *Adjuro vos* was sung for the last time.¹⁶

Madame de Maintenon seems to have successfully stricken this motet from the repertory, since it is not found in *Chants et motets*.

Despite the apparent struggle between Madame de Maintenon and Nivers over the music at Saint-Cyr, Nivers remained organist and music master until his death. His liturgical chants seem to have been sung at Saint-Cyr until its closure, and a large number of his motets remained in the repertory long enough to be printed in *Chants et motets*. A more thorough look at the contents of *Chants et motets*, along with other supporting documents, will give us a clearer picture of the musical and liturgical practice at Saint-Cyr.

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