J. S. Bach's "Prelude in C Major" from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* was recognized by 19th-century piano students as a study piece. It took the talent of Charles François Gounod, a composer of great church and operatic music, to further explore the possibilities of this prelude. Using Bach's piece as an accompaniment, Gounod constructed a long, flowing melody above it which he called "Meditation," but which has come to be known as "Ave Maria."









