Side Notes: This melody was part of Antonín Dvorák's Symphony No. 9, in E Minor "From the New World" (Op. 95), popularly known as the New World Symphony. In his notes about the symphony, he is quoted as saying, "I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. These can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition, to be developed in the United States. These beautiful and varied themes are the product of the soil. They are the folk songs of America and your composers must turn to them."

The song was later arranged by one of Dvorak's pupils, Williams Arms Fisher (1861-1948), who adapted and arranged the Largo theme, added lyrics and published the song. It was included at one time in the French LDS hymnal. I've found that several people aren't familiar with the lyrics, so I've included some lyrics with the melody to help set the mood as you play this piece.

It is amazing to me how music helps to shape a culture, people and nation. Music which comes from the time of slavery is especially powerful. This melody has always made me think of what it must be like to return to our loved ones on the other side of the veil. No doubt there will be friends and family there waiting to see us again with open arms.

















