Nicolas Bernier (1665-1734) distinguished himself as a composer, clavecinist, theoretician, and pedagogue. He held great respect as a musician, and became perhaps the most distinguished teacher identified with the second generation of grand motet composers. Bernier is thought to have received his training in his hometown of Mantes-la-Jolie, about thirty miles downstream from Paris, and at the cathedral of Evreux, after which he studied in Rome with Caldara. He then successively served as maître de musique at the cathedral of Chartres (1694-98), and at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois (1698-1704) before accepting a post at Ste Chapelle in Paris (1704-26), where he succeeded Marc-Antoine Charpentier. In 1723 he was appointed to serve the Royal Chapel at Versailles, a post he held for the rest of his life. Bernier may be viewed as a
progressive force in French music, one that forged a good balance of French and Italian elements in his works. He probably became most famous for his secular cantatas and petits motets that became available in print, but eleven grands motets survive. At least nine others have been lost.

We do not know when Bernier composed his Benedic anima mea Domino. It is among the shortest of his grand motets; there are five numbered movements, one of which, the fourth, appears in the original manuscript in a different copying hand along with the notation "Recit adjoutte que l'on peut dire si l'on veut". --- questia.com

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