Increasing knowledge about how music and especially how sacred choral music alleviates suffering is the main purpose of the present study. The research questions posed are: 1. What does the human being experience when experiencing sacred choral music? and 2. What does sacred choral music signify to the human being and her health?

The study has its starting point in the tradition and fundamentals of caring science which have been developed at Åbo Akademi since 1986, and the study is carried out in the hermeneutic tradition of science. The empiric part of the current study is based on written listener accounts on two subjects after having listened to sacred choir music. The texts are interpreted through Gadamer’s philosophical method. In using this method within caring science, you can interpret and understand meaning and significance in relation to experience with the intention to understand the subjective in the human world.

The sacred choral music addresses the human being who will eventually be touched by it in relation to herself and the world. The sacred choral music bears an invitation to a communion; with people around you, yourself, or with God and eternity. Being able to respond to this will depend on every person’s own extent of freedom. Her interaction with herself at that which surrounds her is of consequence when regarding her ability to be addressed by the sacred choral music in the present moment. The terms of addressing touches every person in different ways, with different depths and meaning. When this occurs, a human being can experience this as being addresses by God or by eternity, by a compassionate other or by themselves.

In this study time, space and movement emerged as being present when the human being partakes in sacred choral music, and that she moves within these but can also stay apart from them. The sacred choral music starts a movement in every human being, which takes place between different layers and is unique in the moment. Further, the study shows that every person takes part of the music at different levels. The farthest level symbolises circumstances around the person, and questions about the concrete, worldly and material. This level can be seen as an expression of the body. The middle level concerns the person allowing herselfs or being allowed to partake in the sacred choral music. This level can be seen as an expression of the soul. The final and innermost level is every persons inner abode: the image of the mind. Here, every person is apart from time and space, resting in the present moment. Questions around the transcendent, divine and immaterial prevail.