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EDITORIAL

A Future of Chant

by William Mahrt

The mission of *Sacred Music* and of the Church Music Association of America is a constant. Its constancy is witnessed by the editorial which over thirty years ago initiated the admirable tenure of Msgr. Richard J. Schuler as editor; it is still as valid as it was then. We have included this editorial, “What We Profess,” in the section of documents; it constitutes a perennial statement of our purposes.



Our mission is summarized in the title of our journal: *Sacred*: The greatest need of liturgy today is the restoration of the sense of the sacred. Music has a principal role, since it expresses that sense of the sacred and sustains it through time. Already over a hundred years ago, St. Pius X in his *Motu proprio* articulated the principle that Gregorian chant is the norm against which sacred music should be judged: the intimate relation of chant to the sacred action means that it is the paradigm of liturgical music. My article in this issue of *Sacred Music* explains how Gregorian chant represents this link, how, because of this intimate relation between music and the sacred action, Gregorian chant is the *splendor formæ*, the beauty of the liturgy. The restoration of Gregorian chant is thus the key to the restoration of the sacredness of our liturgies.

A principal concern of St. Pius X was the indiscriminate incorporation of theatrical music into the services—an aria from a favorite opera with sacred words replacing its original and often amorous text. Thomas Day pointed out a similar phenomenon—the prevalence of the style of Irish-American barroom ballads in the traditions of devotional Catholic hymnody in our country; now it is anything from Broadway musicals to—yes, it still persists—the Kingston Trio. Some have pointed out that secular music was incorporated into the Masses of the Renaissance, and no one raised an eyebrow. Yet, there is a difference; the secular tune of the Renaissance was transformed by being incorporated into a sacred style. But today, it is possible that the sacredness of the liturgy is being compromised by the incorporation of untransformed secular styles, just as in the time of St. Pius X. The autonomy of the sacred in the liturgy requires an autonomous sacred style, for which Gregorian chant must serve as paradigm.

Music: there is a corresponding need to improve the quality of the music sung in our churches. Whether it be Gregorian chant, classical polyphony, or more recently composed music, standards of artistic excellence, both in composition and in performance, must be re-established and strengthened. The Second Vatican Council mandated the preserving and fostering of the treasure of sacred music, naming “the musical tradition of the universal Church . . . a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art” (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, ¶114, 112).

To this end, I am introducing into *Sacred Music* a series of studies of repertory, especially of Gregorian chant and classical polyphony, both motet and Mass; these will aim to explore expressive and technical aspects of important pieces, both to encourage the performance of excellent works and to stimulate similar exploration of other such works. Kerry McCarthy initiates this series with an essay on William Byrd's *Ave verum Corpus*.

The mission of improving music in the churches must take place on two levels simultaneously, the level of the paradigm and the level of gradual improvement. The paradigm, the ideal, is a high Mass completely sung with Gregorian chant proper and ordinary, together with motets from classical polyphony, assisted by the organ playing prelude, postlude, and perhaps interludes, and accompanying where necessary. Where possible, this ideal should be available as a regular part of the church's worship. The ideal can take a variety of forms, but when the resources permit, it may even include the singing of a polyphonic ordinary. Only when such liturgies are regularly sung can the ideal be experienced as a model for all other sacred music, a model in which there is an intimate link between the music and the sacred action.

The other level is that of gradual improvement. Over the last few years the summer colloquium of the Church Music Association of America has changed; there is now a larger number of actually practicing parish musicians, seeking with optimism and dedication to improve what they do from Sunday to Sunday. For many, the best possibility is gradually to introduce better and more fitting liturgical music, a piece at a time, slowly educating congregation and clergy in the treasure of sacred music and its liturgical values.

Some begin to introduce the propers by singing the Gregorian communion antiphon with psalm verses at communion time in addition to the existing hymn. Some add a Kyrie or Agnus Dei in Gregorian chant, counting on its repetition over several Sundays to solidify its reception and singing by the congregation. Many include a polyphonic motet at offertory or communion. Some include a well-played prelude or postlude on the organ to elevate the tenor of the service and to underline the sacredness of the place. Both these levels of improvement are absolutely necessary in the context of the practice of the whole Church, and are fundamentally complementary—where one can be achieved, the other benefits by comparison.

In this my first issue of our journal, I wish to thank Kurt Poterak for his years of labor for *Sacred Music*. We are delighted that he will remain in the capacity of editor at large. Likewise, Jeffrey Tucker deserves a large vote of thanks, for undertaking the task of managing editor. We hope that it will not be a thankless task, but rather will bring rewards of dedication and fulfillment. ☒

ARTICLES

Gregorian Chant As A Paradigm Of Sacred Music

by William Mahrt

We could all agree that the liturgy should be beautiful, yet this is a question that rarely receives much attention, and this lack of attention has meant that some important aspects of the role of music have been forgotten. But what constitutes the beauty of the liturgy? What, even, do we mean by “beauty” in the context of the liturgy? The scholastics gave complementary definitions of beauty, “those things which when seen please,”¹ and “splendor formae.”² The first describes what happens when beauty is apprehended—delight; the second gets at what it is that delights us—showing forth in a clear and radiant way the very nature of the thing. In the liturgy, music has a fundamental role in showing forth its nature, a role which traditional liturgical documents support.

One of the most fundamental papal documents about sacred music is the *Motu proprio* of St. Pius X, *Tra le sollecitudini* of November 22, 1903. It contains formulations which have been the basis of papal statements ever since. In it, St. Pius gives three characteristics of sacred music; these are often summarized as holiness, beauty, and universality, but their specific wording is instructive. His statement is usually translated “Sacred music must, therefore, possess in the highest degree the qualities which characterize the liturgy. In particular it must possess holiness and beauty of form: from these two qualities a third will spontaneously arise—universality.”³ Yet this is not quite an accurate translation, for the original Italian reads “bontà delle forme,” very literally, “excellence of forms” in the plural (“bonitate formarum” in the Latin text).⁴ The plural is later evoked in a more explicit statement: “Each part of the Mass and the Office must keep, even in the music, that form and character which it has from tradition, and which is very well expressed in Gregorian chant. Therefore introits, graduals, antiphons, psalms, hymns, the *Gloria in excelsis*, etc, will be composed each in their own way.”⁵

All three of St. Pius’s qualities are intimately related to the music of the liturgy. *Holiness*: Music is an intrinsic part of the projection of the sacredness of the liturgy. “Sacred” means being set aside for a particular purpose, in the liturgy the establishment of its unique purposes, “the glorification of God and the edification and

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¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, tr. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger, 1947), Pt. 1, Q5, Art. 4, Reply Obj. 1; Vol I, p. 26.

² St. Albert the Great, *De pulchro et bono*, I, 2c; cf. Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, tr. Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 45, 234; and Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism*, tr. J. F. Scanlon (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1947), p. 20.

³ St. Pius X, *Tra le sollecitudini*, 2, in *Papal Teachings: The Liturgy*, selected and arranged by the Benedictine Monks of Solesmes, translated by the Daughters of St. Paul (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1962), pp. 179–80.

⁴ *Acta sanctae sedis*, 36 (1903), pp. 332ff.

⁵ *Tra le sollecitudini*, ¶10, p. 183.

sanctification of the faithful.” It does this in two important ways: By setting the texts of the liturgy to singing, even the prayers and lessons, it provides the entire liturgy an elevated tone of voice that conveys its special character, presenting its texts “as on a platter of gold,” in the words of Fr. Jungmann.⁶ The sense of the sacred is also conveyed by the fact that the music does not resemble anything from the everyday world, but conveys the clear impression that what is taking place belongs to its own special realm.

Universality: Gregorian chant is universal in two different ways. By being a sacred musical language, it is supra national, accessible to those of any culture equally. But its traditional place in the sacred liturgy has always insured that the members of the Church grew up hearing this sacred musical language so that it was received naturally as a part of the liturgy.

Bontà delle forme: The sense of St. Pius’s text surely admits a principal role for the beautiful in general. Indeed, the beauty of music is a crucial element in the “edification and sanctification of the faithful.” Beauty is the glue that holds the truth and goodness to their tasks; to paraphrase Hans Urs von Balthasar, without beauty, the truth does not persuade, goodness does not compel.⁷ Beauty is that which synthesizes diverse elements into a unity, and that is the general function of music in the liturgy, to draw together a diverse succession of actions into a coherent whole. Likewise, the beauty of music is capable of serving a range of sacred expressions, praise, lamentation, exaltation, and so forth. Still, I propose that St. Pius’s wording has a more precise sense: the differentiation of forms is an essential part of the beauty of liturgical music; each chant has its own musical and textual form as it functions as an introit, gradual, and the like, and its liturgical beauty, its *splendor formae*, includes distinguishing that part from the others, while at the same time it projects a significant feature of that part itself.

Pope John Paul II has expressed this intimate connection between music and liturgical actions in his *Chirograph on the Centenary of the Motu Proprio*:

Liturgical music must meet the specific prerequisites of the Liturgy: full adherence to the text it presents, synchronization with the time and moment in the Liturgy for which it is intended, appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite. The various moments in the Liturgy require a musical expression of their own. From time to time this must fittingly bring out the nature proper to a specific rite, now proclaiming God’s marvels, now expressing praise, supplication or even sorrow for the experience of human suffering which, however, faith opens to the prospect of Christian hope.⁸

The intimate relation of music and liturgy in Gregorian chant was proposed as a model by St. Pius X; to this end he articulated a specific rule: “the more closely a Church composition approaches Gregorian Chant in movement, inspiration, and

⁶ Josef Andreas Jungmann, S.J., *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, tr. Francis A. Brunner, 2 vols. (New York: Benziger, 1951, 1955), Vol. I, p. 409.

⁷ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, Vol. I: *Seeing the Form*, tr. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis, ed. Joseph Fessio, S.J., & John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), p. 19.

⁸ John Paul, II, *Chirograph for the Centenary of the Motu Proprio “Tra le Sollecitudini” on Sacred Music*, November 22, 2003, ¶5 [http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20031203_musica-sacra_en.html]

⁹ *Tra le sollecitudini*, ¶3, p. 180.

feeling, the more holy and liturgical it becomes; and the more it deviates from this supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.”⁹ This establishes Gregorian chant as a paradigm of sacred music—a model to which all other sacred music is to be compared. I shall attempt to demonstrate how this is so in the following.

It is sometimes said by well-meaning commentators that Gregorian chant is the ideal setting of its text; nothing could be farther from the mark, for each Gregorian genre shows a distinctly different manner of setting the text—each Gregorian chant is an ideal adaptation of its text to its specific liturgical purpose. This variety of text setting can be described in terms of two specific musical characteristics: syllabic density and melodic placement. By syllabic density, I mean how many notes occur on a syllable. This can be distinguished by four categories: 1) recitative—several syllables to a single pitch, as in a psalm tone; 2) syllabic—each syllable receives a single discrete note; 3) neumatic—several syllables receive a group of notes, two, or three, or sometimes a few more, a neume; and 4) melismatic—some individual syllables receive a long series of notes, a melisma. These differences correspond to the different ways the music is important to the delivery of the text. For example, recitative—the reiteration of many syllables on a single pitch—is important when texts are to be delivered for their own sake, as in the psalms in the divine office or the lessons at Mass. On the other hand a melismatic style—many notes to certain few syllables—is important when the text is the basis for an effect of reflection and meditation, such as at the gradual of the Mass.

By melodic placement, I mean where important pitches or melismas fall in the text. Take for example two settings of the following psalm verse (Ps. 91:12):¹⁰



Jústus ut páлма florébit: sícut cédrus Líbani multiplicábitur.



Jústus ut páлма florébit: sícut cédrus Líbani multiplicábitur.

The first is the melody to which this verse might be sung as part of the singing of the whole psalm in the divine office. Aside from the recitative delivery of most of the text, the music makes an inflection on the last accented syllable of each half-line of the text, its cadence; the final cadence includes a preparatory inflection of two syllables before the accent. This takes account of what is intrinsic to the text; it articulates the bi-partite structure of the psalm text and allows for a fluid performance of a whole psalm without significant delay. The second melody is a setting of the same text as it is used as a versicle and response in the divine office. Here, the text serves a secondary purpose: its function is articulation—at the conclusion of a major section of the office, it functions like a musical semicolon or period. Now the melodic activity is added to

¹⁰ These melodies on this text were first discussed in Peter Wagner, *Gregorianische Formenlehre: Eine choralische Stilkunde*, Einführung in die Gregorianischen Melodien: Ein Handbuch der Choralwissenschaft, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1921; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970), pp. 7–13.

the final unaccented syllable of the text; its function is decorative, and the slight prolongation of the unimportant syllable quietly emphasizes its decorative function. In the first melody, the melodic inflection underlines a significant aspect of the text—its cadence accent; in the second, the melisma is added to the text only when the text has been completely stated. This end-melisma is an important aspect of Gregorian music and can be seen in a number of different contexts below. Thus the music can underline the rhythm of the text by projecting its pattern of accented and unaccented syllables, or it can depart from the text by placing melismas upon the final unaccented syllables of words; the use of one or the other of these is a significant point of differentiation of the styles and thus of the liturgical function of Gregorian music.

Recitative is the style of the singing of the lessons for the Mass. This allows these texts to be projected clearly in a natural speech rhythm free from the exaggerated emphases sometimes heard from inexperienced readers; it projects the sacred character of the text and, through characteristic melodic patterns, differentiates the three kinds of lesson. These melodies consist of a reciting tone, with a cadence for the middle of a sentence and one for the end.¹¹



For prophecies, the middle cadence descends a half step; the final cadence, a fifth. The descending cadences recall the slightly negative character of prophecy. The descent of a fifth imitates the call of a trumpet and suits the prophecy. The middle cadence, being only a half step, rings over in a live acoustic and projects a slight harshness, also a suitable character for a prophecy. The tone for an epistle has quite a different character, one that reflects the hortatory tone of epistles, especially those of St. Paul. Its formulae are based upon the last two accented syllables, thus reflecting the pattern of a formal Latin cadence, and this is the basis of its rhetorical effect, suited to that of the epistle. The Gospel tone is surprisingly simple, having only an inflection for the end of a sentence. This inflection is independent of the accent of the text, falling on the fourth last syllable of the line, and its motion is ascending. The simplicity of this tone projects well the simplicity of the Gospel, and its independence from accent gives the rising cadence an element of elevation that perfectly suits its text. The succession of these three lection tones creates a sense of progression, the first whose cadences fall, the second, whose cadences rise more than they fall, and the third, whose cadences unambiguously rise, privileging the gospel as the culmination of the sequence of the lessons.

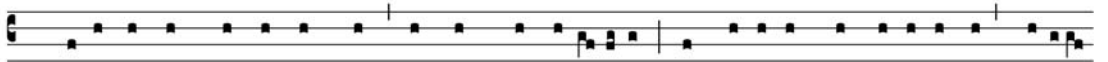
The tones for the prayers of the Mass set three quite different kinds of prayer: the collects, the preface, and the Lord's Prayer, and they do this by differentiating these three types in importance, progressing from a simple recitative style for the collects to a completely syllabic melody for the Lord's Prayer.

¹¹ For the details of singing these lesson tones, see *Liber Usualis* (Tournai: Desclée, 1962), pp. 102–107.

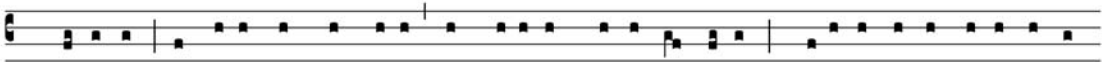
Collects: Ancient solemn tone Festal tone¹²



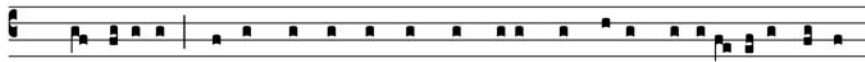
Preface:¹³



Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias

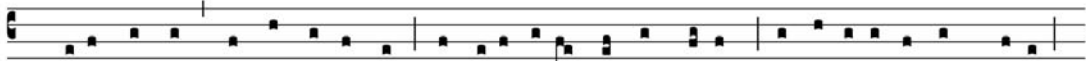


agere: Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens æterne Deus: Quia per incarnati verbi

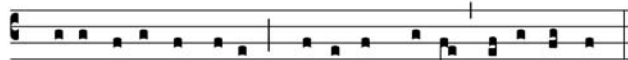


mysterium nova mentis nostræ oculis lux tuæ claritatis infulsit:

Lord's Prayer¹⁴



Pater noster, qui es in cælis: sanctificetur nomen tuum: adveniat regnum tuum:



fiat voluntas tua, sicut in cælo, et in terra.

The collects are bipartite texts with a close logical connection between the two clauses, following a general pattern, O God, who . . . , grant that . . . , with the petition relating to the attribute addressed in the first clause. This connection is expressed in the melodies, which at the cadence in the middle bring the tone around to the second clause. The ancient solemn tone makes use of a whole step formula, while the more modern festal tone uses a minor third inflection. Together, these two tones comprise the principal pitches of all the prayer melodies: G-a and a-b-c. The preface is a much more rhetorical prayer and more extended than the collects; its melody is also more rhetorical; while it is recitative in its projection of its texts, its cadences make use of neumes to create greater emphasis and motion at the cadences. The fact that the melody uses the same pitches as the collects makes it easy for the listener, without having to reflect upon it, to realize that this prayer has a continuity with those which went before, and yet, because its melody is more elaborate, that this prayer is more important. The Lord's Prayer makes use of the same vocabulary of pitches as the previous prayers; but this is a completely discrete melody, not just a recitation formula; it is almost entirely syllabic in its setting. Again, the common repertory of pitches makes the comparison evident: this, the most developed of the three prayer

¹² For the details of singing these prayer tones, see *Liber*, pp. 98–102.

¹³ *Missale Romanum*, editio typica tertia (Vatican City: Typis Vaticanis, 2002), p. 156.

¹⁴ *Missale Romanum*, p. 597.

melodies, comes as a culmination of all of these prayers, that prayer taught by Our Lord himself, occurring upon the completion of the Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass.

The genre with the simplest syllabic style is that of the psalm antiphon in the divine office; one such antiphon sets the same Ps. 91:12 as illustrated above.¹⁵



Jús-tus ut pál-ma flo-ré-bit: sí-cut cé-drus Lí-ba-ni mul-ti-pli-cá-bi-tur.

The extensive repertory of psalm antiphons¹⁶ represents a remarkable solution to a musico-liturgical problem. The problem is: what kind of music suits the singing of all hundred fifty psalms in a week? The historical answer is the Gregorian psalm tone: eight very simple recitative tones to which all the psalms are sung.¹⁷ The simplicity of these tones means that the efficient singing of the psalms is not hindered by the need to pay much attention to the melodies; rather, they serve as a neutral medium for the elevated delivery of these texts by a community singing in common, answering back and forth antiphonally. Their bipartite structure neatly provides for the characteristic *parallelismus membrorum* of the typical psalm verse,¹⁸ and their gentle rise and fall with a silent pause in the middle implies a motion of the soul upwards. The very neutral character of these melodies, though, suggests why there are antiphons to be sung before and after the performance of the whole psalm. These antiphons complement the neutral psalm tones by providing an interesting melody with a characteristic musical expression; what is lacking in melodic interest in the psalm tone is made up for by the antiphons. The antiphons themselves are for the most part quite modest melodies; in their proper place in the divine office, however, the musical complementarity they create is a unique feature of these offices.¹⁹

The differences between Psalm antiphons and Mass propers can be seen by comparing this antiphon with four different Mass proper chants, each of which sets that same text. The introit *Justus ut palma* differs remarkably from the psalm antiphon:²⁰



Jú- stus ut pálma floré- bit: sícut cédrus Líbani multiplicá- bi- tur.

¹⁵ *Antiphonaire monastique, XIIe siècle, Codex 601 de la Bibliothèque capitulaire de Lucques*, Paléographie musicale, IX (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1906; reprint, Berne: Herbert Lang & Cie., 1974), p. 524 [481].

¹⁶ The Roman antiphonary for the day hours contains 1256 antiphons; the night office, 483; *Antiphonale sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ pro diurnis horis* (Tournai: Desclée, 1949) and *Nocturnale Romanum: Antiphonale sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ pro nocturnis horis* (Cologne: Hartker Verlag, 2002).

¹⁷ For example, the eighth tone shown above for Ps. 91:12. For the system of psalm tones, see *Liber*, pp. 112–118 and pp. 128–220.

¹⁸ Cf. Erich Werner, "Psalm, I:3," in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Macmillan, 1980), Vol. 15, p. 321; Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

¹⁹ The intimate relation between musical style and liturgical function suggests that these psalm tones are not suitable for the responsorial psalm of the Mass, a topic I will return to in a later article.

²⁰ *Liber*, 1204.

In the psalm antiphon, the purely syllabic style is exceeded only upon a few accented syllables, which thus receive a two-note neume; in the introit, the neumatic style prevails, some of the accented syllables receiving five or six notes, many receiving more than one. The music of the chant extends the performance of the text substantially, and upon reflection, one must conclude that something more solemn and important is happening at this point in the liturgy than during the psalm antiphon. Indeed, the introit chant accompanies the entrance of the ministers into the church, their approach to the altar as the place of the Mass, the central liturgical act of the day, and the marking of the altar as a sacred place by incensing it. This processional act consists of purposeful motions, and the music itself projects a sense of motion. The neumatic style is best suited to this: the accentuation of the text is heightened by neumatic motion, but the text moves continually through its syllables, at a solemn, but motion-filled pace. The overall contour of the melody projects a sense of motion as well, particularly at “sicut cedrus Libani multiplicabitur,” where the melody rises from its lowest note to an octave higher upon the focal accent of the phrase, “ca-” of “multiplicabitur.” Seeing these two settings of “Justus ut palma” in juxtaposition makes it clear that their musical styles are quite distinct and serve very different liturgical purposes.

The offertory chant based upon the same text shows yet a further distinction of liturgical and musical style:²¹



Now the first syllable receives a melisma of twelve notes, and immediately the listener is alerted to a difference: this is a more extended chant even than the introit. Moreover, the last (unaccented) syllable of “palma” receives a melisma of sixteen notes. Here the principle of end-melisma is seen, and the chant departs slightly from its simple function of projecting the accent of the text; rather, the musical expression of the moment takes on a life of its own, the music departing ever so slightly from its text. In these circumstances, the expression is a more purely musical one. The differences between the introit and the offertory liturgically are two: the offertory precedes the more solemn part of the liturgy, and the motion at this point is much less than at the introit. True, the altar is incensed again, but if there is any procession, it is one of considerably less motion than at the introit. Rather, the mood at this point is one of greater reflection and introspection in preparation for the more solemn moments immediately to come. This more melismatic style perfectly reflects the mixture of processional motion with reflective anticipation characteristic of the offertory.

The truly melismatic chants, however, are the gradual and the alleluia. These serve a quite different purpose, complementing the singing of the lessons. The

²¹Liber, 1193.

gradual on “Justus ut palma” shows a very different relation between melismas and the rest of the chant:²²



Here several syllables follow in a row in recitation until the accented syllable “ré-” is reached, which then receives a melisma of eleven notes; these could have been distributed so that each syllable received a couple of notes; rather, the melisma is saved for the accent of the word “shall flourish.” Likewise, “Libani” receives a longer melisma upon its final unaccented note—a perfect example of end melisma. The rest of the chant proceeds likewise: the final melisma of the respond is thirty-one notes long; melismas in the verse are up to thirty-seven notes long. In this very different melismatic style, the purpose must also be very different. My own observation about the gradual is that with the singing of these chants under optimal conditions, all ambient noise in the church ceases, no rustling, no coughing; a pin-dropping silence witnesses to the fact that the attention of the entire congregation is upon listening to the music, and the effect of listening to it is one that elicits a kind of meditation: all distractions are set aside, the person is at repose, but thoroughly attentive. I have seen this effect only with melismatic chants, and I infer that this is an essential part of its liturgical purpose: this attentive repose elicited by the chants is a perfect preparation to hearing the lessons. When the lessons are sung, the continuity between the melismatic chants and the recitative lessons is established, and their complementarity is evident.

The alleluia is the quintessential melismatic chant. In fact, the word alleluia has as part of its music a *jubilus*, a long melisma sung on the last syllable of “Alleluia.” In the case of the alleluia that has the verse “Justus ut palma,” this melisma is fifty-one notes long. In the verse itself, there is one central melisma, on “cedrus”:²³



With this melisma, it becomes very clear that the point of the music is not simply to set forth the text, but, as patristic commentators on the alleluia called it, “*jubilare sine verbis*,” to jubilate, or to sing a melisma, without words, to depart momentarily from the word in purely musical jubilation.²⁴ There is never any question about the presence of the text; it is always there in its syllable, but I suspect that the composer has pushed the envelope to just before the breaking point—the melisma is long enough that the listener is almost ready to have forgotten what the word was. This extended melismatic writing serves two functions: first, it extends the purely musical aspect of the piece even farther than the gradual did; second, this, in turn, makes its

²² *Liber*, 1201.

²³ *Liber*, 1207.

²⁴ Cf. Walter Wiora, “*Jubilare sine verbis*,” in *In memoriam Jacques Handschin*, ed. Higin Anglès et al. (Strassburg: P.H. Heitz, 1962), pp. 32–65.

purpose absolutely unambiguous: a more modestly melismatic chant might have been mistaken to have been just for the projection of its text, but here the melisma has been developed to the extent that one must acknowledge the alternate purpose—the alleluia is a meditation chant, whose melismatic style elicits an attentive repose that provides an effective, purposeful reflection on the lesson that has just been heard and a preparation for the hearing of the gospel which follows. Moreover, the progression from gradual to alleluia creates an increase of intensity that effectively underlines the sense of climax of which the singing of the gospel is the peak.

When it comes to the Ordinary of the Mass, a different principle obtains. Here the degree of elaboration characterizes the solemnity of the day. Melodies for the Ordinary allow some choice, there being eighteen sets of such melodies plus some optional alternatives *ad lib*. These sets of melodies are arranged in a generally hierarchical order, beginning with the most solemn. As a rule, the higher the degree of the feast, the more elaborate the chants for it. If the congregation sings the Ordinary, then, they are afforded a sophisticated manner of participation: they are asked to sing more elaborate chants on higher feast days, and this enhances their role by making them participants in the substantive expression of the solemnity of the day.

The range of syllabic density demonstrated above suggests a further reflection upon the sacred character of the chant. If the normal pace of the delivery of the text is that of the chanting of a psalm to a psalm tone, then the somewhat slower pace of the Mass propers represents a slowing down of the time of the psalm. When it comes to the gradual and alleluia, the pace of the psalm text is considerably slowed down; this is a pace one can experience readily, since it is placed in direct juxtaposition with the lessons, which are sung at a recitative pace, just like the psalms of the office. In the case of the gradual and alleluia, this slowing down of the sacred text approaches at times a kind of stasis, and this stasis is as close as we may come to a sense of the suspension of the passage of time. In turn, this sense of the suspension of the passage of time is an intimation of the experience of eternity. In the contemplative state, things are viewed *sub specie æternitatis*, outside the passage of time; the liturgy provides this glimpse of eternity as a context for the hearing of the words of the sacred scripture.

Music thus contributes several things to the ordering of the liturgy: 1) it provides an elevated tone of voice that takes the texts out of the everyday and confirms them as sacred; 2) it differentiates each part of the liturgy from the other by musical styles that suit the very character of that part, allowing each to be perceived in its own liturgical functionality; 3) by distinguishing each part from the other, it clarifies the *bontà delle forme*, the excellence of the forms, contributing to the *splendor formæ* of the whole liturgy, its beauty; 4) this, in turn, when seen, pleases; it adds delight to prayer; and 5) it places the liturgy in the context of the transcendent and the eternal; this can only be through the use of music of the highest artistic quality and of uncompromised sacred character. It can only be through the use of music that is not mere utility music. Cardinal Ratzinger spoke of utility music:

“A Church which only makes use of “utility” music has fallen for what is, in fact, useless. . . . For her mission is a far higher one. As the Old Testament speaks of the Temple, the Church is to be the place of “glory,” and as such,

too, the place where mankind's cry of distress is brought to the ear of God. The Church must not settle down with what is merely comfortable and serviceable at the parish level, she must arouse the voice of the cosmos and, by glorifying the Creator, elicit the glory of the cosmos itself, making it also glorious, beautiful, habitable, and beloved.²⁵

Thus, the intimate relation of musical styles to liturgical function, whether in lessons or prayers, proper chants or ordinary, is a most purposeful use of music in showing forth in a clear and radiant way the nature of the liturgical actions themselves; it is the most fundamental projection of the beauty of the liturgy. The other arts, architecture, painting, vestments, and the arts of movement each contribute to and support the beauty of the liturgy, but still the art of music is "greater even than that of any other art," because it "forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy,"²⁶ because it is so intimately bound to the sacred action, defining and differentiating the various parts in character, motion, and importance. ■



The Ward Method: Chant from the Ground Up

By Amy Zuberbueler

The Ward Method of Music Instruction is a progressive method of teaching elementary school children music theory, composition, and conducting through vocal instruction. The Method was developed to teach American Catholic school children the fundamentals of music so that they would be able to sing the vast repertoire of sacred music which is a part of the Roman Catholic Church's tradition. The Ward Method is unique in that it has a basis in Gregorian chant.

Origins

Justine Ward, the founder of the method bearing her name, was born on August 7, 1879. In 1904 she converted to Catholicism and in gratitude for her conversion, Ward decided to support and promote the reform of sacred music begun by Pope Pius X. She developed her method in response to a request from Fr. Thomas E. Shields, chairman of the first Department of Education at The Catholic University of America.



Justine Bayard Ward
(1879-1975)

In writing her method, Ward combined the philosophy and pedagogy of Shields and the music methods used by Fr. John B. Young, S.J. Originally from Alsace, Fr. Young had been sent to America in the 1870s and was instrumental in Ward's conversion. When Pope Pius X was elected and the reform of sacred music began

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²⁵ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Church Music," in *The Feast of Faith*, pp. 113-126 (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), p. 124.

²⁶ Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶112, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982), p. 23.

in Rome, Fr. Young helped support these efforts in New York as music director for St. Francis Xavier Church in New York City.

Fr. Young assisted Ward with many of the musical elements of her method, the number notation and intonation and vocal exercises, which he had learned through the French music educators, Pierre Galin and Émile Chev , and the *bel canto* school of teaching voice. The first editions of the Ward Method, Music First and Second Year, were published in 1913.

In 1920, Mrs. Ward met Dom Andr  Mocquereau, the founder of the Solesmes Method or the rhythmic interpretation of Gregorian chant. Through his influence she revised the rhythmic portions of her method during the 1920s and established the Method as it is known today.

Education in Truth and Beauty

One of the first educational psychologists in this country, Fr. Thomas Shields believed that from the earliest years, the child's emotions must be developed to lead to the formation of worthy character. Writing in the *Catholic Educational Review*, he once said, "The real foundations of character are not to be found in the intellect, but in the emotions and the will properly enlightened through the intellect, and it is through music and art that the imagination and the emotions may be reached and effectively developed." Fr. Shields perceived this both as a psychologist and as a Catholic priest.

The Catholic Church has, throughout its history, promoted the arts. Knowing man to be composed of both body and spirit, the Church understands man's need for sensible, tangible things to relate body and spirit. Through the Ward Method children are exposed to truth and beauty through music so they will respond to emotional stimulus of a higher order.

That All May Sing

Fr. Shields taught that information must be presented to a child in a manner which conforms to the child's stage of development. If a child is given the correct stimulus at the right time in development, any child should be able to learn. The subject matter should be broken down into fundamental principles. Each lesson must include the process of relating the known to the unknown. The child can then be stimulated to use these new truths through personal experience.

Ward applied these principles to music by separating the musical elements of each lesson. The children discover vocal and intonation exercises, count meter, and experience rhythm as movement. They creatively use each musical element through exercises, games, and their own compositions. Thus, when the children are presented with a new song at the end of the lesson, they are easily able to separate and then rejoin the musical elements it contains.

The Rhythmic Methods Of Solesmes

Solesmes Method Founder Mocquereau did not invent rules to be followed when singing the chant. His ideas were more complex than this. He redefined rhythm in

light of his study of ancient and medieval theory.

Rhythm, according to Mocquereau, does not consist of varied patterns of strong and weak beats. It is not a matter of intensity, but of movement. Rhythm becomes, not a material thing, a matter of strong and weak beats in succession, but a series of undulations. The touching point, which marks the end of one series and the beginning of another undulation, is Mocquereau's controversial "ictus." He did not create it; he defined it. He gave a name to something already in the music.

There is still much controversy about the rhythm of chant and the Solesmes Method, and many critics fail to understand Mocquereau's approach.

Ward, however, was able to take the principles of rhythm and, through movement of the body, express them in such a way that a child of six can begin to grasp them. Mocquereau praised Ward for the revision of her method. As his pupil Ward had not only assimilated her teacher's knowledge, but expanded and developed it. His doctrine was now accessible to all people, children and adults who make up the Church's congregations.

Growth

During the 1920s use of the Ward method spread throughout the United States. In 1925 Ward brought her Method to Holland. Under the direction of Joseph Lennards, it spread throughout both Catholic and Protestant schools in the Netherlands. Dutch government officials became interested in the Method and provided subsidies to educate teachers. The Method began to be used in government schools.

The Method was next introduced in Belgium and France and then extended to England, Ireland, New Zealand, China, and Italy. During World War II its use spread throughout Central and South America. Following the war it was used in Canada, Africa, and the Far East. In 1972 the state of Israel introduced the Ward Method, offering a course for the top classes of the State College for Music Teachers in Tel-Aviv.

Turbulent Times

The Method spread and was widely used in Catholic schools throughout the world until the Second Vatican Council. In the wake of this Council, but contrary to its explicit wishes, many persons promoted the view that all worship services were required to be in the local language, not in Latin. Under such circumstances, Gregorian chant was no longer wanted or used. In fact, a cultural revolution was taking place throughout the world, often intensified by the controversy surrounding the Vietnam War.

During these turbulent years, the Catholic Church and its entire Catholic education system were being challenged. Accordingly, the system was failing to attract clientele, and thus lost financial support. At the same time, priests, nuns, and brothers who made up the bulk of the virtually unpaid personnel of the American Catholic educational system were abandoning their professions and, indeed, the religious life in a great many instances. Lacking support, the Ward Method met with almost total eclipse.

Resurgence

On June 19-22, 1983 an International Symposium on Gregorian Chant in Liturgy and Education was held at Catholic University. Ambassadors from various countries came to speak on the revival of Gregorian chant throughout the world. During the symposium, Prof. Theodore Marier, then director of the International Center for Ward Method Studies at Catholic University, demonstrated a Ward lesson with students from the Boston Archdiocesan Choir School which he had founded.

In the 1980s, Marier went on to revise and update the Ward Method instruction manuals. He consolidated Ward's eight books into four, and promoted their use by offering classes in Ward Method Pedagogy and Gregorian chant throughout the 1980s and 90s at Catholic University.

The Method continues to be introduced to new generations each year. Courses are taught every summer at The Catholic University under the direction of Rev. Robert A. Skeris of the International Center for Ward Method Studies, and at numerous Ward Centers in the United States and throughout the world. ☒



A Lively and Systematic Approach to Learning Music

By Gisbert Brandt

The Ward Method was developed in the 1920s by American music teacher Justine Bayard Ward (1879-1975), in cooperation with The Catholic University of America, with the purpose of providing a music curriculum suited to the needs of Catholic elementary schools across the nation. It was Mrs. Ward's vision that all children, not just a gifted few, should be offered a solid musical education. Since that time, the method has been, through application, continually updated and improved. The Ward Method provides today's music teachers a decades-tested and certain solution to offering children the kind of musical education upon which they can build for a lifetime.

Singing First

The Ward Method focuses on singing as the foundation of musical instruction. Children learn to express themselves musically in much the same way that they do in the spoken word. The method makes no use of extraneous musical instruments, but relies instead on a child's own experience with singing and body movement.

The structure of method itself comes from the knowledge that elementary aged children (especially in the first and second grades) do not learn in generalities, but tend to focus, instead, on specific parts of a whole before applying knowledge more broadly. The Ward method makes use of this fact in that it subdivides music into

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discrete elements which are taught individually before combining them to make a whole:

1. Voice Production

The goal in teaching voice production is to guide children in finding their own melodic and well-tuned instruments: with the help of simple exercises, the child gains a sense of his own singing voice. The vocal compass is developed step by step, all the while paying attention to correct placement of the voice and beauty of sound.

2. Ear Training

The goal of ear training is twofold: it aids the child in the formation of notes and sharpens his ability to imagine the different notes of a scale. The Ward Method makes use of a system known as Solfège, wherein a note is thought of not in terms of an absolute pitch, but in terms of its position relative to other notes in a given scale. The child’s attention is steered toward clean intonation. Ear training, in addition, assists a child in developing his musical memory.

Ward Method lessons begin with building the major scale, starting with the tonic and moving up to the dominant (do re mi fa sol). The lessons continue by starting at high “do” and moving back down to the dominant (do ti la sol) before moving on to the third step of combining the two to form the complete scale.

Through this division of the notes of the pentachord (do re mi fa sol) and tetrachord (do ti la sol), children develop a sense of the tension between tonics and dominants early on. Furthermore, it makes way for an easier understanding of the relationship between plagal and authentic forms of a scale at a later time.

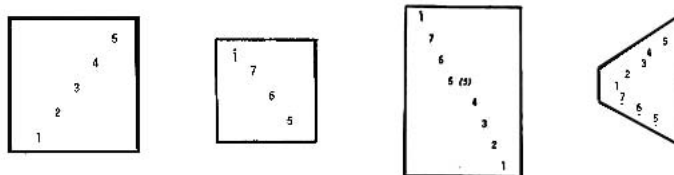


Diagram 1: systematic introduction of the notes of a scale where 1=do, 2=re, 3=mi, etc.

As a help in the development of a musical imagination and memory, the Ward Method introduces specific hand motions, or *melodic gestures*, whereby each note is attached to a particular position on the body.

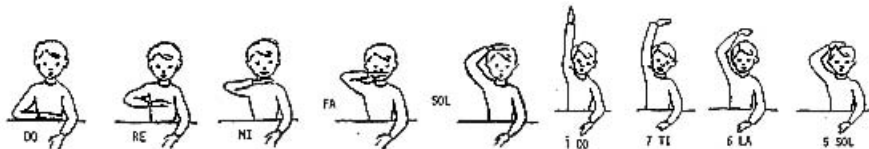


Diagram 2: *melodic gestures*

3. Rhythm

The method imparts a sense of rhythm to the children through the use of a prescribed set of dance-like movements. Children stand up at various intervals during class time and mimic movements made by their teacher, whose body is

positioned in mirror image to those of the children.

This is all done in time to music or song. The idea is that the children learn to feel the music in their whole bodies, from the lift of their feet and the bend in their knees up through the sweeping movement of their arms. Applying movement to what is audible informs a precise understanding of different note values and fosters an intuitive sense of the musical line.

4. Notation

The children learn oral and notational means to aid in melody retention. They learn the simple forms with the same ease that accompanies their learning of written language. In other words, their learning to “read music” corresponds directly to their learning to read letters. Child-friendly and simple forms of notation prepare them for more complex forms of musical notation.

The Ward method assigns a number to each of the syllables of found in the Solfège system. This approach makes sense, because most children can read the numbers one through seven by the age of six. With the addition of dots either above or below these numbers, a range of three octaves can be easily rendered.

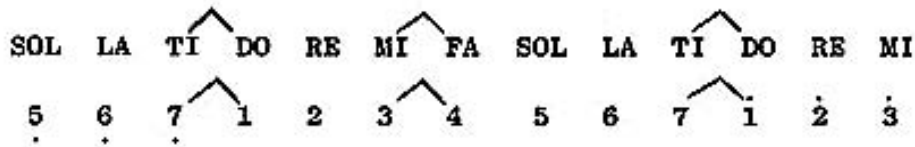


Diagram 3: number notation applied to the syllables of Solfege;
the caret indicates the position of the half step

The Ward Method teaches children to read and write down metrical patterns as well. Metrical notation takes a *stroke/dot* format, with the stroke indicating a sung note, and the dot indicating that the note before appearing before it is to be held that additional length of time.

Children can combine metrical patterns arbitrarily. Longer metrical sequences consisting of more than one line are the end result. These, in turn, can serve as a basis for a melody.

Here is an example of a combination of patterns in 2/4:

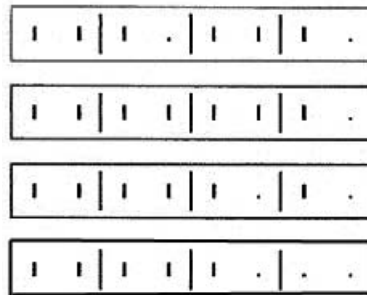


Diagram 4: metrical pattern

These metrical patterns can also be expressed through *metrical language*. Each individual value unit is assigned a sound syllable: half note: *long*; quarter note: *la*; eighth note: *li-ra*. Children learn hand gestures, or *metrical gestures* which correspond to these sound syllables. They learn to sing the sound syllables “la” and “long” while counting the same into the palms of their hands.

The Ward Method’s *number* and *stroke/dot* notation systems are useful in teaching beginners because they are one dimensional. *Number* notation addresses only one aspect, pitch, and the rhythmic *stroke/dot* notation, likewise, addresses only duration. This makes it easy for children to concentrate on each of the aspects individually. The two forms of notation (*number* and *stroke/dot*) can then be easily combined, resulting in a *number* notation with an added element of dimensionality:



Diagram 5: a four-line melody

5. Improvisation

An important objective of the Ward Method is for each child to develop musical independence. Students should not only be able to reproduce music, but should be able to articulate their own musical ideas. They learn to improvise and generate small compositions through the use of familiar melodic and rhythmic material.

6. Melodies and Songs

The songs and melodies contained in the Ward Method are carefully selected to correspond to the children’s level of proficiency. The above-mentioned elements necessary to the making of music are brought together in a meaningful synthesis.

The Ward Method Lesson

These different elements are introduced in rapid succession within a single Ward lesson. This prevents a loss of interest or fatigue that can come about by drilling one thing too long. This approach also lends a balanced sense of importance to each aspect of music learning, with no one element being prized over another. The focus on specific elements will shift every two or three minutes within a twenty minute lesson. The benefit is that the lesson remains playful, which in turn has a positive effect on a child’s motivation.

From lesson to lesson, the difficulty of the material, i.e., the range of melodic and

rhythmic tools available for the children's use, is progressively increased.

The aim of the lessons is for the children to exhibit musical independence. They learn a melody or song under the lively guidance of their teacher, but without the teacher's having sung the material to them over the course of the lesson. The teacher acts as a facilitator in their ever growing ability to solve musical problems on their own.

Music for everyone

The Ward Method should be taught to students in their first few years of school – not necessarily by specially trained music teachers, but by classroom teachers as well, making music a normative part of every child's educational experience.

Classes in teaching the Ward Method are conducted every summer at The Catholic University of America, and at various Ward Centers throughout the world. These courses are intended for all who wish to teach the method, not just those with a formal musical background. The only prerequisites are the love of music, and most of all a love of singing. ■



REPERTORY

A Motet for Lovers of Music

By Kerry McCarthy

Ave verum corpus by William Byrd (c. 1540–1623):

Byrd's *Ave verum corpus* is a motet for four voices. Its text is an anonymous medieval prayer to the Blessed Sacrament.

Ave verum corpus, natum
de Maria Virgine,
vere passum, immolatum
in cruce pro homine,
cujus latus perforatum
unda fluxit sanguine:
esto nobis praegustatum
in mortis examine.
O dulcis, O pie,
O Jesu fili Mariae,
miserere mei.
Amen.

Hail, true body, born
of the Virgin Mary,
who truly suffered, sacrificed
on the cross for man,
from whose pierced side
blood and water flowed:
may we taste you before
the trial of death.
O sweet, O kind,
O Jesus, son of Mary,
have mercy on me.
Amen.

Kerry McCarthy is assistant professor at Duke University. Her book on the Graduale of William Byrd is being published by Routledge.

4. VOC. V. SUPERIVS.

Ave verum cor-
pus, natum de Ma-
ri a Virgine, ve re passum, im mola tum in
cruce pro ho mi ne: Cuius la tus per fo ra tum, vn de fluxit san guine.

The soprano part of Byrd's *Ave verum* in the original edition of 1605.

This poem was a primer text of the sort taught to children, an easily memorized rhyme. Most English Catholics of Byrd's day would have said it hundreds or even thousands of times in the course of their lives. It was recited at the elevation during Mass (when Mass was available in post-Reformation England) and cultivated as a private prayer. Byrd did not set many rhymed Latin poems of this kind. His taste ran more toward dramatic prose — from Savonarola and Augustine to the prophecies of the Old Testament and, later in life, the proper of the Mass. We know from his own testimony that he took time to reflect on “the very sentences” when he composed, “diligently and earnestly turning them over in his mind.” We can see that process at work in this little motet, which was written over four hundred years ago but has lost none of its expressive power. Byrd appears to have put a lot of thought into it: it went through at least two revisions before he published it in final form in 1605.

Soprano
A - - - ve ve - rum Cor - - - - pus,
Alto
A - - - ve ve - rum Cor - - - - pus,
Tenor
A - - ve ve - rum Cor - pus,
Bass
A - - - ve ve - rum Cor - - - - pus,

The beginning of Byrd's *Ave verum*.

The central event of this first phrase is the pungent harmonic shift from D major to F major, underscoring the all-important word *verum*, “true” — a controversial claim when speaking about the Eucharist in Byrd’s day. (Even if you are familiar with the motet, play the chord progression on the piano or organ and let it surprise your ear.) The phrase unwinds gradually, with the sting of the cadential seventh in the tenor followed by the serene major third of the last chord. Accented syllables get longer notes, and unaccented syllables get shorter ones, but the rhythm is never regular or formulaic.

Byrd finishes his first musical phrase before the first line of poetry is done: like Mozart two centuries later, he respects the natural syntax of the prayer rather than its set poetic form. Even the contour of his soprano melody reflects the ebb and flow of the text. The effect is of hushed recitation rather than public proclamation.

The first half of the piece goes on with short and mostly simultaneous phrases. At *O dulcis, O pie*, the soprano is set off against the rest of the choir, the other three voices echoing it in a lower register. These are unusually heartfelt invocations. In the original soprano partbook, Byrd gave them exclamation points, a detail sometimes ignored by modern editors. At *miserere mei*, he finally breaks into four-part polyphony. When the prayer shifts from the plural (*nobis*) to the singular (*mei*), the music dissolves into a multitude of individual petitions. The overlapping entries create some bittersweet dissonances when rising F-sharps in the tenor collide with falling F-naturals in the bass. Byrd repeats the whole last section note-for-note and finishes with a deceptively simple *Amen*. This ABB form, with a somewhat less austere B section, was typical of English Renaissance secular music, including many of Byrd’s own songs. It was also common in 16th-century English Protestant anthems, which drew on the everyday tradition of English songs in the vernacular — the elegant little anthem *If ye love me*, by Byrd’s teacher Thomas Tallis, is a classic example. Despite its very Catholic text, *Ave verum* owes more to the pared-down style of early Anglican church music than any other Latin motet Byrd ever wrote.

In the preface to the book containing *Ave verum*, Byrd offers his work to all “true lovers of music” who “enjoy singing to God in hymns and spiritual songs.” It is worth recalling that he composed his “Latin songs” for the chamber rather than the cathedral. Public Catholic worship (and, for all practical purposes, singing in Latin) had been outlawed in England. When Mass was celebrated there, it was celebrated in homes and private chapels. Byrd responded by cultivating a new kind of sacred music, tailored for small groups in an intimate atmosphere. *Ave verum* belongs to the Renaissance tradition of domestic music-making in a way the Latin motets of Palestrina or Victoria (or even the young Tallis) do not. This music was sung by the same people who sang madrigals around the table. It works unusually well with one voice on a part.

Some of Byrd’s vocal music is notorious for its wide ranges, up to two octaves at times, and its unpredictable twists. *Ave verum* offers none of these difficulties. An amateur group can easily sing it on a rehearsal or two. Choirs who enjoy it may wish to try Byrd’s Mass ordinaries (one each for three, four, and five voices) or his seasonal Mass propers (including a full set for the feast of Corpus Christi, to which he added

Ave verum as a sort of bonus.) All of this music is concise, delightful to sing, and suitable for liturgical use. Ambitious singers will also enjoy his earlier works, the fierce penitential motets and colorful songs of rejoicing in his *Cantiones sacrae*. For those who want to explore his Latin-texted music further, a complete 12-CD set is being recorded by the Cardinal's Musick under Andrew Carwood. Nine of the CDs are available as of spring 2006. The most recent one features *Ave verum* and the Corpus Christi propers.

Practical notes:

- *Ave verum* was edited by Philip Brett in volume 6a of the new *Byrd Edition*. The book can be ordered from Stainer and Bell: <http://www.stainer.co.uk/acatalog/byrdedition.html>.
- A clear, accurate, and free score is available online from the Choral Public Domain Library: <http://wso.williams.edu/cpd1/sheet/byrd-avc.pdf>.
- Ranges: soprano d'-d'', alto f-g', tenor f-f', bass F-b-flat. Some groups may find it useful to sing the piece a step higher.
- Approximate duration: 4 minutes. 🎵

Reflections on *Kyrie Orbis factor*

by William Mahrt

Ky-ri e * e- lé- i-son. ij Chri-ste e- lé- i-son. ij

Ky-ri- e e- lé- i- son. ij Ky-ri- e e lé- i- son.

In encouraging the participation of the entire congregation in the music of the liturgy, there is an important principle: “singing means singing the Mass, not just singing during Mass.”¹ The participation of the people is all the more authentic when they are singing the central and essential parts of the liturgy. This applies particularly to the Ordinary of the Mass, for two principal reasons. First of all, the people’s parts of the Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei) are generally liturgical actions in and of themselves, and not the accompaniment of another action.

While an introit may be a significant text, its place in the liturgical action is as an accompaniment to the procession; the procession is the action, not the introit chant. The opposite is true of the parts of the Ordinary: the Kyrie is the liturgical action and not the accompaniment of any other action; it is what is being done at the time. Thus, it is appropriate for the congregation as a whole to sing this part. Second, since the parts of the Ordinary are unchangeable, they can be repeated often, learned well, and

¹ International Committee on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963–1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982), p. 1299, R4.

thus sung without difficulty by a congregation.

This also means that these pieces for the congregation need not be limited to the simplest chants. The Kyrie from Mass VIII (de Angelis), not a particularly simple chant, can usually be sung by an average Catholic congregation, since it has been sung so often and remains in the collective memories of innumerable congregations.

But there is another Gregorian Kyrie than deserves attention in this context: *Kyrie Orbis factor*, from Mass XI, for the ordinary Sundays of the year. This is a chant of modest scope, easily learned by a congregation, but of considerable beauty—an important feature of an often-repeated chant. I have sung this chant many Sundays a year for over forty years, and it has retained all its freshness and depth over this repetition. I will try to explain some of the aspects of its beauty and practicality in the hope that many will want to incorporate it into the singing of their Sunday congregations.

In approaching the beauty of a chant, one can address concrete elements of symbolism as well as abstract elements of melodic design. Kyrie melodies have a characteristic melodic contour, which reflects something of the meaning of their texts. The characteristic contour of Gregorian chants in general is the arch,² beginning upon or near its lowest pitch, rising to a peak and then descending back down to its final. This reflects the basic aspect of prayer, rising in aspiration to a high point and returning to the point of origin.

Kyrie melodies very often show a slightly different contour—beginning at a higher pitch and descending to a low point, a gesture of humility suitable to such a plea for mercy. The initial invocation of *Kyrie Orbis factor* has this kind of contour—from its beginning note, it touches upon the half-step above, the half-step being a particularly expressive interval; then turning around the initial note, it skips downward a fifth to the final; this is followed by an ascent upward to the top note of the half-step interval and a filling out of the whole range of the fifth back down to the final, touching upon the note below it. Thus “eleison” confirms and amplifies the initial pitches of the invocation. The turn to Christ at “Christe” moves to a higher pitch, expressing a more intense address of the Son of God.

The seventh and eighth invocations return to the melody of the first, but the final one focuses upon the lowest part of the range; the contrast with the higher range of the previous lines conveys a sense of equanimity and repose that gives the chant a pleasing rounded-out quality. These matters of contour are unusual in Gregorian chants, but quite characteristic of Kyrie chants; and their effect, though subliminal, surely contributes to the quality of the plea for mercy on the part of the congregation.

The other aspect of the beauty of such a chant is that of melodic design. This chant received its final formulation only in the fourteenth century,³ and its melodic structure is more rationalized than some of the earlier melodies. The basis of its structure is the pair of intervals, the fifth and the fourth: the octave of the authentic Dorian mode comprises a fifth D-A and a fourth above it A-D, with a single note (C) below it. The

² Cf. Peter Wagner, *Gregorianische Formenlehre: Eine choralische Stilkunde*, Einführung in die Gregorianischen Melodien: Ein Handbuch der Choralwissenschaft, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1921; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970), pp. 9, 286.

³ Two versions of this melody are given in the chant books, one from the tenth century and one from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, *Liber Usualis* (Tournai: Desclée, 1962), pp. 46, 85; *Graduale Romanum* (Sablé-sur-Sarthe: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1974), p. 748; *Gregorian Missal* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1990), p. 113.

first Kyrie is based upon the fifth, with a half-step above it; the response “eleison” begins at the mid-point of the fifth (F), rises to the top, adding the half-step above, then descends stepwise to the bottom of the fifth, adding a note below it; the fifth is thus bordered by a single pitch at its top and bottom. The Christe adds the fourth above (A-D), but its principal notes are A-C, with neighboring notes above and below this third, complemented then by “eleison,” the same melody as before.

The final invocation is based upon the lower portion of the range, being centered upon the third, D-F, with a neighboring note above and below it, just as in the Christe. In fact, the final Kyrie repeats a good bit of the Christe melody down a fifth: Christe: D-C-D-C-A-G-A; final Kyrie: G-F-G-F-D-C-D. The three melodies are clearly distinguished in range by being centered on first the fifth, then the fourth above, and then the minor third at the bottom of the fifth, and emphasis upon these main notes is created by adding neighboring notes around them.

There is something surprisingly symmetrical to this melody. If one counts notes, one sees it: Kyrie (6 notes) eleison (12 notes); Christe (9 notes) eleison (12 notes); final Kyrie (13 notes), eleison (12 notes). Thus, in the first invocations, a proportion of one to two, in the second, three to four, and in the last, one integer over one to one (a superparticular proportion, in medieval terms). Of course, one does not have to count the notes to appreciate the proportionality involved.

There is an interesting point in the early history of the Kyrie that bears its traces in this melody. In the oldest *Ordines Romani*, ceremonial books for the early Roman liturgy, the performance of the Kyrie is described in some detail. It was what has been called a Latin-texted Kyrie, since the initial word Kyrie is replaced by a Latin phrase that amplifies “Kyrie,” Lord. In this piece the first line was “Orbis factor, Rex æterne,” maker of the world, eternal King. This was sung by deacons, and the choir responded with “eleison,” have mercy. There would be an unspecified number of invocations, but at the end the master of ceremonies would give a sign to conclude; the deacons would then sing the last invocation to a different melody, indicating that this was the final one. Our Kyrie melody shows these characteristics: while the invocations differ in melody, the response, “eleison” is always the same; and the last invocation is notably different from the foregoing ones.

The Kyrie, as sung in the Carolingian period and later, consisted specifically of nine invocations, three times three, symbolic of the Trinity, and usage until the reform of the Second Vatican Council retained this “nine-fold” arrangement. In books after the council the Kyrie is six-fold, but the rubrics allow the nine-fold for musical reasons. I find that three invocations are just enough to give a congregation not familiar with the melody a chance to pick it up by the third statement. Thus, for the sake of the congregation’s participation, the nine-fold arrangement may be used advantageously. Moreover, the reduction to a six-fold arrangement was to accommodate the dialogue between priest and congregation, each stating the invocation once; this six-fold arrangement seems to have been devised for the low Mass and need not be retained in the high Mass.

Sometimes the phenomena of the Middle Ages are instructive in thinking about how to perform a chant. Chants were performed in the earlier Middle Ages without

the aid of musical notation, being passed on intact by oral tradition long before they were written down, and scholars have often reflected upon the phenomenon of oral transmission as a factor in the nature of the chants. It is possible, even with a group of singers today, to replicate this oral transmission: A certain segment of the chant is sung to the group and they are asked to sing it back identically; eight or ten notes can be retained in the short-term memory and easily sung back. Then the next segment is sung to them and they repeat it, then these two together. Since the portion of the melody on “eleison” is the same for each invocation, it does not have to be relearned. In quite a short time, the whole melody can be sung by a large group totally without the aid of any notation.

In my experience, this is faster than simply having the group read the piece from the notation, because they can pick up the rhythmic inflection of the chant immediately. Still, the notation ought to be a useful aid as well, and I have found that one can ask a group to look at the notation as the piece is lined out and sung by imitation, just as I have described above, and they learn it all the quicker. If one is allowed a brief rehearsal time before Mass, this can be done with a congregation very efficiently. I would not do it often, but on occasion it is a very effective way to introduce a piece to be sung in that morning’s Mass.

This is thus a chant with interesting symmetries and melodic design; together with the symbolism of its descending motion, these features contribute to a piece that will bear considerable repetition and retain its uniqueness, freshness, and beauty over a long period of time. ■

NEWS

A Fitting Celebration

By Duane Galles

A solemn Mass to mark the 60th anniversary of the priestly ordination of the Very Rev. Msgr. Richard J. Schuler, Ph.D, was celebrated on October 31, 2005, at the Church of Saint Agnes in Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA. It was a *novus ordo* Latin Mass. The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale assisted by members of the Minnesota Orchestra sang Haydn’s *Paukenmesse*. The celebrating clergy were clad in festal gold vestments—*Ad incrementum decoris et divini cultus splendoris*. The principal celebrant of the Mass was Msgr. Schuler’s nephew, the Rev. Richard Hogan, PhD, who also preached. The Rev. John T. Zuhlsdorf served as assistant priest, and the Rev. Messrs. Bernard Peterson and Harold Hughesdon were deacons for the Mass.

Present in the prelate’s chair and in choir dress was the Most Rev. Harry Flynn, Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, who heartily congratulated Msgr. Schuler, praised the beauty of the music, and reminded those present that at the heart of it all was the ontological reality of the Sacrament. His excellency pointed out that the Mass he would celebrate later that day at the local prison without any attendant ceremonies would render Christ sacramentally present just as at this very grand celebration of the liturgy.

Duane L.C.M. Galles a member of the American Bar Association and the Canon law Society of America.

Present as well in alb and stole was the Rev. Fr. George Welzbacher, pastor of Saint Agnes Church, who likewise offered hearty congratulations to Msgr. Schuler, as did the concelebrants, perhaps a half dozen of the dozens of young priests whose priestly vocations Msgr. Schuler has nursed over the past two and a half decades.

The Very Rev. Msgr. Aloysius R. Callaghan, STL, JCD, the new Rector of the Saint Paul Seminary, was likewise in attendance in cassock and surplice. Presently, one fifth of his seminarians come from Saint Agnes. A great number of other priest friends of Msgr. Schuler were in attendance, and there was an honor guard supplied by the Knights of Columbus.

The Mass (except for the presence of the Archbishop and therefore the processional anthem, *Ecce sacerdos magnus* and also the presence of concelebrants) differed little in kind from the ordinary *novus ordo* Latin Mass regularly celebrated at Saint Agnes. For example, on the previous Sunday (and marking felicitously the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar) the Chorale had sung Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*. The texts are regularly sung in Latin except for the lessons, the sermon, and the bidding prayers. The propers of the Mass (including the Gradual) are sung in Latin and Gregorian chant from the revised Graduale by the Saint Agnes *Schola*, led by Paul LeVoir. Mary LeVoir, DMA, is the organist. A dozen altar boys clad in cassock and surplice assisted at the Mass. The Mass Servers have all been well trained by the Rev. Mr. Harold Hughesdon who is Master of Ceremonies at Saint Agnes. A reception for the Jubilarian followed in the Church Hall. ☒

DOCUMENT

The Praise of God Demands the Chant Remarks of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI To the Choir of the Pontifical Chapel, the "Sistine" Chapel

Sistine Chapel

Translated by Daniel G. Fulton

Tuesday, December 21, 2005

Dear Maestro, Mr. Liberto,

Dear boys of the Sistine Chapel Choir,

Dear singers, teachers, colleagues, and assistants,

I did not find the time to prepare a statement, but my thoughts are very simple to say. In these days before Christmas, it is the time to give thanks for gifts. Thank you for how much you give all year, for this great contribution to the glory of God and for the joy of men on the earth.

On the night of the birth of our Savior, the angels announced to the shepherds the birth of Christ with the words "*Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus.*" The story says that the angels did not simply speak to the men, but that they sang so that there would be a song of divine beauty, which revealed the beauty of heaven. The choirs of pristine voices have made an angelic and resonant song for us to hear. And

it is true that in the chant in the Sistine Chapel, in the great liturgies, we are able to hear the presence of the heavenly liturgy, a little of the beauty inside which the Lord wishes to communicate his joy to us.

In reality, the praise of God demands the chant. That is why in all of the Old Testament, with Moses and with David, in the end of the New Testament, and in the Apocalypse, we have heard chants of the heavenly liturgy, which offer a teaching for our own liturgy in the church. For this, your contribution is essential for the liturgy: not a peripheral ornament, but the liturgy demands this beauty, demands a song to praise God and to give joy to the worshippers.

For this great contribution, I wish to give thanks to you with all my heart. The liturgy of the Papacy, the liturgy in Saint Peter's, must be an exemplary liturgy for the whole world. We hope that with television and with radio, today in all the parts of the world many may follow this liturgy. They learn from here, or perhaps not learn, what is liturgy, and how they themselves must celebrate the liturgy. Therefore, it is very important, not only that our ceremonies show them how to celebrate the liturgy well, but also that the Sistine Chapel may be an example of how they themselves must give beauty into chant for the praise of God.

I know, since my brother has given me a little hint, that the beauty of a choir of pure voices demands much work and also a great sacrifice on your part. You boys must get up early to arrive at school; I know the traffic in Rome, and therefore I imagine how difficult it often is for you to arrive on time. Then, you must work yourselves hard until the end of the day, so that you might realize this perfection, which we now have heard.

For all this, I thank you. Also because during holidays, while your schoolmates take wonderful vacations, you must remain in the Basilica to sing and all the time patiently waiting for a break. And still, you are always eager to give your contribution through singing.

I feel this gratitude every time I hear you, and, on this occasion, I wish to communicate it to you. Christmas is the feast of gifts. God made for us the greatest gift. Christ was made man in the flesh, and he was made an infant. God gave us the true gift, and so he also invites us to give, to give with all our hearts; to give to God, and to promise a little of our ourselves, and also to give a token of our goodness, and to offer wishes of joy unto others.

And so, I have tried to make my gratitude clear. I hope that I have conveyed this well, as my words come short of expressing my gratitude. ☒

What We Profess

by Msgr. Richard J. Schuler

[Originally published in *Sacred Music*, 102:3 (Fall, 1975), p. 3f.]

With a change of editors it is perhaps a good time to restate the policy of *Sacred Music* as a journal dedicated to fostering the liturgy and music of the Church in accord with the authentic decrees emanating from the proper ecclesiastical authorities.

The policy of *Sacred Music* cannot be described by the words conservative or liberal. Rather it is Catholic—Roman Catholic—bound to the directions given by the Church. Nor can it be called traditionalist or progressivist, since it holds the directives of the Second Vatican Council that the traditions of the past are to be maintained and fostered at the same time that new directions and styles are encouraged. Nor is it committed to the old and not the new, or the new and not the old in music.

In primacy of place always we put the Gregorian chant as it has been ordered by the council and re-issued in the latest Roman chant books. Likewise according to the direction of the council, we value and foster the polyphonic developments in music through the thousand years that the Roman *Missa cantata* has been the focus of great musical composition, both in the *a cappella* tradition and with organ and orchestral accompaniment. We heartily encourage the singing of our congregations as the council demands, but we just as energetically promote the activities of choirs as the council also ordered. Finally, as men of our own century, we welcome the great privilege extended by the Vatican Council for the use of the vernacular languages in the liturgy along side the Latin, and so we encourage the composition of true liturgical music in our own day in both Latin and the vernacular. We see no necessary conflict between Latin and English, between the congregation and the choir, between new and old music; there cannot be, since the council has provided for both.

Knowledge of what the Church wishes and has decreed, both in the council and in the documents that have followed its close, is of the utmost importance to both composers and performers, to musicians, and to the clergy. So much of the unhappy state of liturgy and sacred music in our day has come from a misunderstanding of what the Church in her authentic documents has ordered. Too much erroneous opinion, propaganda, and even manipulation have been evident, bringing about a condition far different from that intended by the council fathers in their liturgical and musical reforms. *Sacred Music* will continue to publish and repeat the authentic wishes of the Church, since the regulation of the liturgy (and music in an integral part of liturgy) belongs to the Holy See and to the bishops according to their role. No one else, not even a priest, can change liturgical rules or introduce innovations according to his own whims.

But beyond the positive directions of the Church for the proper implementation of her liturgy, there remains always the area of art where the competent musician can exercise his trained judgment and express his artistic opinions. While the Church gives us rules pertaining to the liturgical action, the determining of fittingness, style and beauty belongs to the realm of the artist, truly talented, inspired, and properly trained. Pope Paul himself made a very useful distinction on April 15, 1971, when he addressed a thousand Religious who had participated in a convention of the Italian Society of Saint Caecilia in Rome. The Holy Father insisted that only “sacred” music may be used in God’s temple, but not all

music that might be termed “sacred” is fitting and worthy of that temple. Thus, while nothing profane must be brought into the service of the liturgy, just as truly nothing lacking in true art may be used either (Cf. *Sacred Music*, 98:2 [Summer 1971], pp. 3–5.)

To learn the decrees of the Church in matters of sacred music is not sufficient. Education in art—whether it be in music, architecture, painting, or ceremonial—is also necessary. For the composer talent alone is not sufficient; he must also have inspiration rooted in faith and a sound training of his talents. When any one of these qualities is missing, true art is not forthcoming. So also the performer, in proportion to his role, must possess talent, training, and inspiration.

A quarterly journal can never attempt to supply these requirements for true musicianship. It can only hope to direct and encourage the church musician who must possess his talents from his Creator, his training from a good school of music, and his inspiration in faith from God’s grace given him through Catholic living. But through reading these pages, information on what is being accomplished throughout the Catholic world, directions from proper authorities, news of books and compositions can serve as an aid to all associated with the celebration of the sacred liturgy. ☒

LAST THOUGHTS

Rome, Ecône, and the Traditional Liturgy

By Kurt Poterack

For the past six months some of us have been following, with great fascination, the news of a possible reconciliation between the Saint Pius X Fraternity of priests (popularly known as the “SSPX,” whose chief seminary is in Ecône, Switzerland) and Pope Benedict XVI. As head of the Congregation for Divine Faith in 1988, Cardinal Ratzinger had been intimately involved with the negotiations between Rome and Archbishop Lefebvre who had founded the SSPX. The negotiations failed, and this led to the Archbishop’s consecration of four bishops to succeed him and Rome’s declaration that, by this act, Archbishop Lefebvre and the four new bishops had incurred the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*. Archbishop Lefebvre died three years later.

For almost the whole decade of the 1990’s relations between Rome and Ecône were cold to non-existent, but in the last years of Pope John Paul’s pontificate things began to change. There was even talk of an imminent SSPX reconciliation after the Campos, Brazil traditionalist priests (connected to, but not members of, the SSPX) were regularized and given their own Apostolic Administration and bishop. However, nothing came of this. Soon after, Pope John Paul became increasingly debilitated and many Vatican projects stalled until his death in April of 2005.

With the election of Cardinal Ratzinger as Pope Benedict XVI and the August meeting between himself and the current head of the SSPX, Bishop Bernard Fellay, negotiations seem to be back on track. In fact, a February 13th meeting between the Pope and his curial advisors—according to reliable reports—seems to have been devoted to the issue of

regularization of the SSPX's situation with a March 23rd meeting scheduled to continue the discussion.

What does this have to do with liturgical music? Well, one of the stipulations the SSPX has is that Rome show its seriousness as a dialogue partner by declaring a "universal indult" (i.e. that Rome acknowledges the right of every Roman Rite priest to celebrate the traditional Roman Rite Mass). According to public interviews with two curial Cardinals last fall—Cardinals Medina Estevez and Castrillon Hoyos—the Holy Father would be disposed to do this—and apparently this issue was debated at the February 13th meeting with the Cardinals.

Exactly what the Holy Father's curial advisors told him and what he will decide will not be clear until sometime after the March 23rd meeting. However, even if a "universal indult" is allowed this will not guarantee a Tridentine Mass in every parish for two reasons: 1) most Roman Rite priests are now incapable of and uninterested in such a thing, and 2) the bishop is still the "chief liturgist" of the diocese and in charge of all public celebrations of the Mass (i.e. he could simply forbid the *public* celebration of any Tridentine Masses, even though his priests would have the right to celebrate it privately). Nevertheless, there probably would be a marked increase in the celebration of the Traditional Roman Rite if a universal indult were declared.

Even if there is no declaration of a universal indult, there may be an Apostolic Administration in the works for traditional Catholics or, at the very least, some sort of a strengthening of the Indult. At any rate, it certainly looks like the Tridentine Mass is a "growth industry," and it is reasonable to predict it will show a "growth spurt" in the near future.

We of the Church Music Association of America should be interested in this for at least two reasons: 1) it was the Pius V Missal which was the "womb" within which much of the polyphonic and modern sacred music of the Roman Rite was "conceived" and nurtured, and 2) the current state of liturgical music within many existing Indult Masses is—*abysmal*.

From personal experience and reports I have heard around the country it is not unusual for an Indult choir to consist of five middle aged-to-old women (with screechy voices) and two men singing (or better yet, croaking) the Rossini Psalm Tone Propers and, maybe if you are lucky, the Henry Farmer *Mass in B^b*. In other words many Indult Masses tend to be, not exemplars of *musica sacra*, but nostalgic museums of the way Mass was celebrated at a typical parish in 1962—precisely the accusation made by detractors. And this music is, often enough, controlled by a certain type of layman whose talent and knowledge is in inverse proportion to his psychological desire to control. (i.e. there is a firm resistance to any attempts to improve the music—or to being dislodged from the choir loft).

We simply cannot allow this situation to continue when such a possibility—a new "field of growth" for the practicing of sacred music—seems to be coming into sight on the horizon. Without shirking our commitment to the promotion of *musica sacra* for the 1970 Pauline Missal, the CMAA should devote itself to a more detailed analysis of the pros and cons of the Traditional Rite Mass Movement and strategies for improving *its* music. ☒

