

Introduction to “Ordo Cantus Missæ” (1988)
Introduction to “Graduale Romanum” (1974)
an unofficial translation

Translator’s note

The liturgical book *Ordo Cantus Missæ* (“Order of Chant for the Mass”) is one of the authoritative books constituting the *Missale Romanum* as reformed after the Second Vatican Council. It has been published in two editions (copyright 1970 and 1988). However, to my knowledge, as of 2020, there is no official English translation of this book.

Its **Introduction** (Praenotanda) contains informative norms and directions for priests and church musicians, so I have prepared an unofficial translation of it. This same Introduction is also printed in the 1974 Solesmes publication *Graduale Romanum*, except for paragraphs 19-21, so this document may also be used in reading the Introduction there.

For readers unfamiliar with the *Ordo Cantus Missæ* (OCM), a brief explanation. The OCM is not a complete book of chant for the sung Mass like the 1961 *Graduale Romanum*. Instead it lists the assignments of chants from the 1961 *Graduale* to the celebrations in the revised General Roman Calendar. In a few cases, the OCM presents chants from other sources for specific celebrations. The OCM also includes chants for the revised Order of Mass.

The 1974 Solesmes *Graduale Romanum* follows the specifications in OCM, with the exception of omitting certain optional neo-gregorian melodies retained in the OCM. (Cf. the footnote on p. 8 of the 1974 *Graduale*.)

The official text in Latin of *Ordo Cantus Missæ* was published by Libreria Editrice Vaticana. This translation was prepared in 2010 and revised with small improvements in 2020.

Contents:

The introduction to *Ordo Cantus Missæ* contains: (1) an explanation of changes to the Church’s Gregorian chant repertoire as used in the Mass, (2) basic directives on the rites to be observed in sung Masses, (3) instructions for using the *Ordo Cantus Missæ*, and (4) additional instructions on the singing of Psalms during Holy Communion.

Richard A. Chonak
Stoneham, Massachusetts
September 8, 2020
Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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ROMAN MISSAL

Revised by the decree of the Holy and Ecumenical Second
Vatican Council

Promulgated by authority of Pope Paul VI

ORDER OF CHANT FOR THE MASS

Second edition

Libreria Editrice Vaticana
MCMLXXXVII

First edition, 1970
Reprinting, 1974
Second edition, 1988

The new typical edition of the Order of Chant for the Mass contains directions regarding chants not found in the prior edition: for the sprinkling of holy water at Sunday Mass, for the Prayer of the Faithful, for the Votive Mass for the Church.

Directions are added for chants for two celebrations that were entered into the General Roman Calendar after the year 1969: celebrations for St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, August 14, and the Holy Martyrs of Korea, September 20.

Furthermore, sources are indicated for old chants that were newly added in the year 1969 and were not found in the old *Graduale Romanum*.

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SACRED CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. n. 631/72

DECREE

The treasure of Gregorian chant, which tradition has conveyed to our era, is to be observed reverently and applied fitly, declared the Second Vatican Council in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (no. 114 and 117).

So that this norm be brought to effect, especially after the new liturgical books were issued, having been revised according to the mind of the same Vatican Council, this Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship has considered it opportune to indicate somewhat, to what aspects of the new arrangement the Graduale Romanum is to be adjusted, that no text of the authentic treasury of Gregorian chant be lost.

Therefore, this Sacred Congregation, by order of the Supreme Pontiff PAUL VI, has established that whoever conducts a eucharistic celebration in the Latin language, is to follow this new ordering in the disposition of chants pertaining thereto.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the edifice of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, the 24th day of June 1972, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

ARTURUS Card. TABERA

Prefect

+ A. BUGNINI

Titular Archbishop of Diocletiana

Secretary

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. 1140/86

DECREE

After the liturgical books were issued, revised by the authority of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the Congregation for Divine Worship, in order that the ROMAN GRADUAL would be suitably adjusted to aspects of the new arrangement, in the year 1972 issued the text of the ORDER OF CHANT FOR THE MASS, which is to observe reverently and fitly apply the treasury of Gregorian chant, conveyed from ancient times unto our age, in eucharistic celebrations.

Fourteen years having passed from that previously issued text, now a second edition of the ORDER OF CHANT FOR THE MASS is coming to light, suitably revised, so that those who use the Latin language in the eucharistic celebration follow this present ordering in the disposition of chants pertaining to the Mass.

The Congregation for Divine Worship makes this new edition of public law and declares it to be the typical edition.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the edifice of the Congregation for Divine Worship, the 22nd day of November 1986, the memorial of St. Cecilia, virgin and martyr.

PAULUS AUGUSTINUS Card. MAYER
Prefect

+ VERGILIUS NOE
Titular Archbishop of Voncaria
Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I. The revision of the Graduale Romanum

The revision of the general Calendar and the liturgical books, especially of the Missal and Lectionary, has resulted in some necessary changes and adjustments, including to the Graduale Romanum. Because some celebrations in the liturgical year have been suppressed, such as the season of Septuagesima, the octave of Pentecost, and the Ember Days, their corresponding Masses were set aside; in addition, as some Saints have been transferred to other times of the year, appropriate adaptations were to be made; and then, on the other hand, where new Masses have been introduced, proper chants were to be provided. Also the new ordering of the biblical readings required that some texts, for example, communion antiphons which are closely connected with those readings, be transferred to other days.

In this way a new ordering of the Graduale Romanum was made, keeping in view what was taught by n. 114 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: “The treasury of sacred music must be preserved and fostered with the greatest care.” Thus the authentic Gregorian repertory has not suffered any harm; but rather it was renewed, in a way; more recent imitations were set aside and ancient texts were more suitably set in place through some additional norms, which will make the use of that repertory easier and more varied.

Above all, care was taken to preserve the authentic Gregorian treasury in its integrity. Accordingly, chants pertaining to Masses which no longer had a place in the liturgical year were assigned to form other Masses (for example, for the weekdays of Advent, for weekdays between Ascension and Pentecost), or were substituted for others that occurred more than once in the year (for example, in Lent or on Sundays of Ordinary Time), or if appropriate to their character, were assigned to the celebrations of Saints.

As well, about twenty authentic Gregorian texts, which had been taken out of the repertory through various changes made in the course of time, were restored to it. Provision was made that none of the authentic chants were disfigured or mutilated, excepting certain elements that perchance were inappropriate to the liturgical season, such as *Alleluia*, which occurred in the text of antiphons with notes that constituted an integral part of the melody.

Moreover the removal of pieces that display later *neo-gregorian* imitations, particularly in the feasts of the Saints, has made it possible that only Gregorian melodies be retained, although it is always permitted that those who prefer may retain and sing those *neo-gregorian* melodies. None of these is completely expunged from the Graduale Romanum. Indeed, for some that have been accepted into universal use (e.g., in the Solemnities of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, of Christ the King; of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.), no substitution has been made. In the place of others, however, selected chants from the authentic repertory have been placed, bearing the same texts, when possible.

Lastly, care was taken to more suitably arrange the authentic Gregorian repertory, purged of inauthentic melodies, so as to avoid repetitions of their texts as much as possible, and let other pieces of the best form, that only occur once a year, assume their places. Hence in every way effort was made whereby the Communions were enriched, gathering into those chants everything that was not strictly proper to some Saint, and hence can be taken up for all the Saints of the same order. Furthermore, the commons have been enriched with various chants, derived from the Proper of Seasons, which were rarely used. The rubrics present a more ample permission to draw from the newly arranged Commons, so that pastoral needs can also be more generously satisfied.

For like reason permission is given to choose among pertinent chants of the Proper of the Seasons, as for the proper text of the day another text of the same season may be substituted, if appropriate.

Also, norms for chant in the Mass already present in the introduction of the *Graduale Romanum*, are thus reexamined and amended, so that the function of each chant may be shown more clearly.

II. The Rites to be Observed for Chant in the Mass

1. When the people have been gathered, and the priest is approaching the altar with the servers, the Introit antiphon is started. Its intonation can be made shorter or longer as appropriate, or, better, the chant can be started by all at once. Hence the asterisk which is found in the *Graduale* marking the part of the intonation is only to be taken as an indication.

When the antiphon has been sung by the choir, a verse is presented by one or more cantors, and then the antiphon is repeated by the choir.

In this manner, the alternation of the antiphon and verses can be as long as is necessary to accompany the procession. However, before the antiphon is repeated at the end, *Gloria Patri*, *Sicut erat*, can be sung as a final verse, in the same manner as one of the verses already sung. If the *Gloria Patri* has a particular melodic ending, that same ending is to be used in all the verses.

If it happens that the chant, without the verse *Gloria Patri* and the repetition of the antiphon, becomes too protracted, the doxology is omitted. If the procession is shorter, only one verse of the psalm is used, or even the antiphon alone, with no verses added.

When a liturgical procession precedes the Mass, the Introit antiphon is sung when the procession enters the Church, or else it is omitted, as is provided in the specific cases in the liturgical books.

2. The acclamations *Kyrie, eleison* can be distributed among two or three cantors or choirs, if appropriate. Each acclamation is to be sung in a two-fold manner, yet a greater number is not excluded, especially considering reasons of musical art, as indicated below, n. 491.¹

When the *Kyrie* is sung as part of the penitential act, brief tropes are placed before the individual acclamations.

3. The hymn *Gloria in excelsis* is begun by the priest, or, if appropriate, by a cantor. It is presented either by a cantor and choir in alternation, or by two choirs responding to one another. The division of verses, marked with a double line in the *Graduale Romanum*, need not be preserved if a more suitable manner is found that can be combined with the melody.

When the rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water is used in Sunday Masses, this rite takes the place of the penitential act.

4. When there are two readings before the Gospel, the first reading, which is usually taken from the Old Testament, is presented according to the tone for readings from the Prophets, and is ended with the customary form for a period. The conclusion *Verbum Domini* is also sung with the same form for a period. Then all respond *Deo gratias*, in the customary way at the end of readings.
5. After the first reading, the Gradual Responsory is sung by the cantors or by the choir. The verse is presented by the cantors up to the end. Hence there is no reason to have the asterisk, by which is indicated the resumption of the chant to be made by the choir at the end of the Gradual verse, the *Alleluia* verse, and the last verse of the Tract. However, when it is seen as suitable, it is permitted to repeat the first part of the Responsory up to the verse.

In Paschaltide, the Gradual Responsory being omitted, *Alleluia* is sung, as described below.

6. The second reading, which is taken from the New Testament, is sung on the Epistle tone, with its proper final cadence. It can also be sung on the tone of the first reading. The conclusion *Verbum Domini* is sung according to the second melody notated in the common tones, and then all respond *Deo gratias*.
7. The second reading is followed by the *Alleluia* or the Tract. The *Alleluia* chant is arranged in this way: *Alleluia* is sung completely, with its melismatic neume, by the cantors and is repeated by the choir. If appropriate, it can even be sung by all. The verse is presented by the cantors, up to its end; after that is done, *Alleluia* is repeated

¹ Section 491 of *OCM* is included below under the heading *Kyriale*.

by all.

During Lent, in place of *Alleluia* the Tract is sung; its verses are sung in alternation by two parts of the choir responding to each other, or by a cantor and choir. The last verse can be sung by all.

8. The Sequence, if there is one, is sung after the last *Alleluia*, in alternation by cantors and a choir, or by two parts of a choir, omitting the Amen at the end. If the *Alleluia* is not sung with its verse, the Sequence is omitted.
9. When there is only one reading before the Gospel, the Gradual Responsory is sung after it, or the *Alleluia* with its verse. In Paschaltide, either one of the *Alleluia* chants is sung.
10. At the singing of the Gospel, after the final proper cadence, the conclusion *Verbum Domini* is added, as notated in the common tones; then all respond: *Laus tibi, Christe*.
11. The *Credo* is sung in the customary manner either by all or in alternation.
12. The Universal Prayer [Prayer of the Faithful] is carried out according to local custom.
13. After the Offertory antiphon, verses can be sung according to tradition, though they can be omitted also at any time, even in the antiphon *Domine Jesu Christe*, in the Mass for the Dead. After each individual verse, part of the antiphon is repeated, starting at the place indicated.
14. After the Preface has been completed, all sing the *Sanctus*; after the consecration is made, all sing the anamnesis acclamation.
15. When the doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer has been completed, all respond: *Amen*. Then the priest, alone, presents the invitation to the Lord's Prayer, which all sing with him. He alone supplies the embolism, which all conclude with the doxology.
16. When the breaking of the Bread and the commingling are being carried out, the invocation *Agnus Dei* is sung by the cantors, with all responding. This invocation can be repeated as many times as necessary to accompany the breaking of the Bread, keeping the musical form in view. The last time, the invocation is concluded with the words *dona nobis pacem*.
17. When the priest receives the Body of the Lord, the Communion antiphon is begun. The chant is carried out in the same manner as the Introit chant, and in such a way that the cantors also may receive the sacrament.
18. After the blessing by the priest, the deacon presents the dismissal: *Ite, missa est*, and all

give the acclamation *Deo gratias*.

III. How to use the Order of Chant for the Mass

19. Since a great variety of readings has been introduced to the Missale Romanum, while the chants of the Mass from received tradition cannot be changed, the assignment of chants is being brought into accord with the various readings, according to the three-year cycle (A, B, C) of the Lectionary established for Sundays.

Also, for ferial days, the chants of the preceding Sunday are repeated, and they are being brought into accord with the readings assigned to each day of the special seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, as well as with the first readings during Ordinary Time, according to the two-year cycle (I, II).

If a chant appears that is joined in a more or less strict relation to some readings, it ought to be brought with them if the readings happen to be transferred.

20. Any exceptions that may be added to the Proper of Seasons are represented in this Order, after each basic assignment, by the following written abbreviations:
- A, B, C for Sundays, solemnities and certain feasts;
 - I and II with the numbers of weekdays (Saturday is indicated with the number 7) for ferial days in Ordinary Time;
 - numbers of weekdays alone for the ferias of other seasons.

The abbreviations written in this way are placed in another part of this book, where all the exceptions are linked together, no. 136-141.

21. The chief norm which this Order of Chant for the Mass follows is that it strives to observe the Missale Romanum as much as possible in its ordering. For this reason some of the assignments of chants are being transferred or altered.

Psalms at Communion

22. The numbers of psalms and of their verses are taken from the «Nova Vulgata» edition (Vatican Polyglot Press, 1969). The verses and parts thereof are arranged as in the book of the Liturgy of the Hours (Vatican Polyglot Press, 1971).
23. An asterisk placed after the number of a psalm indicates that the antiphon was not taken from the psalter, and that the psalm was assigned to it ad libitum. In that case, another psalm can be substituted, if it is more pleasing, for example, psalm 33, which has been used at communion from ancient tradition.

When psalm 33 is indicated as the psalm at Communion, there is no preference among the verses to be selected, any of which is very suitable.

Kyriale

1. For chants occurring in the Order of Mass the Kyriale Romanum and Kyriale simplex are to be observed.

It is permitted for the selection of chants to depend first of all on the ability or capacity of the singers; more ornate melodies are preferred in more solemn celebrations.

2. Pertaining to the chant of the *Kyrie*, when nine invocations are notated fully, the musical «form» requires that they be sung in their entirety. In contrast, when one melody is to be repeated for the first invocations of *Kyrie*, this invocation is only sung twice. Similarly for the following invocations *Christe* and *Kyrie* (for example, *Kyrie V*). When the final *Kyrie* is written with a distinct melody (e.g., *Kyrie I*), the *Kyrie* preceding it is only sung once. In this way the general rule of repeating each invocation once is preserved.
3. When the *Kyrie* is employed as a response to some invocation in the penitential act, the melody of this response should be chosen either from *Kyrie XVI* or *XVIII* of the *Kyriale Romanum*, or a melody from the *Kyriale Simplex*.
4. In Sunday Masses, when the rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water is done in place of the penitential act, the antiphon *Asperges me* is sung, or in Paschaltide, *Vidi aquam*.