

The
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REVIEW**

*Assumption Mass: Signum magnum.
Puis X*



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Studies in Sacred Chant and Liturgy

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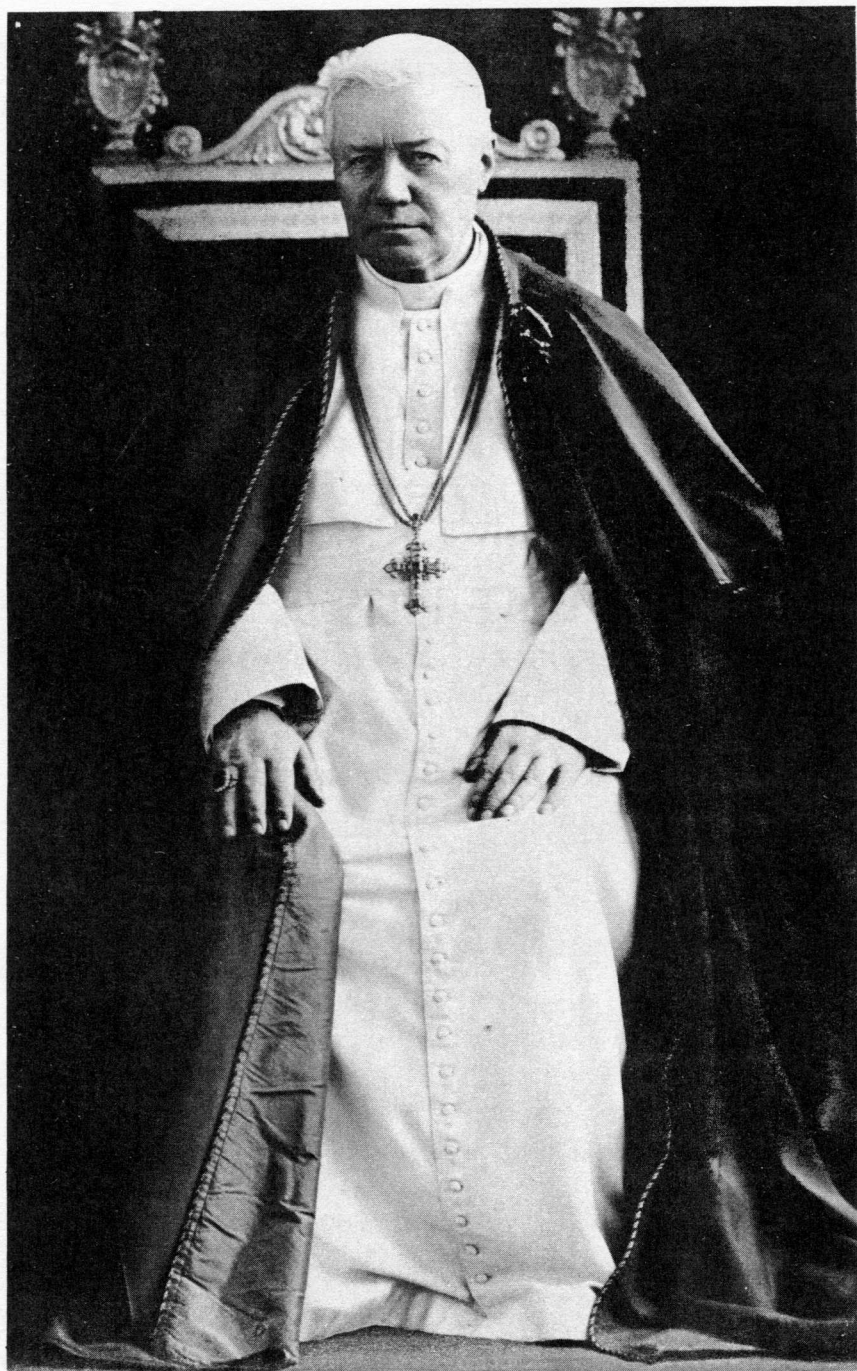
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June 11, 1954

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IN COMMEMORATION
OF
SAINT PIUS X



PIUS X

by Dom Leon Robert

The *Gregorian Review* could not let the Canonization of Pius X pass without saluting the great memory of this saintly pope and manifesting its joy at seeing him raised to the altars. Has there been, in truth, since St. Gregory the Great, a Sovereign Pontiff who has exercised a greater influence on the liturgy of the Church and more particularly on Gregorian chant? Our readers will be grateful that we evoke the venerated visage of this great Pope in these pages as well as some aspects of his life.

The first trait of the countenance of Pius X, that of which one thinks as soon as one hears his name mentioned, was a simplicity full of wisdom, of good sense, of balance, of radiant goodness, an evidence of remarkable natural gifts, and yet more than a faith, of a fullness of supernatural life, which caused him to be recognized as a saint even in his own lifetime. He had kept from his humble origin and his first education the sense of the soul of the people. He loved the common man, for he had been of his milieu. He had the same straightforward psychology, full of practical sense and thoroughly realistic. He was never, moreover, to encumber himself with obsolete traditions, with a label which nothing justified in his eyes. He would not fear to wound susceptibilities to realize a desirable good. His attitude, his open face, his glances full of goodness, his simple yet always dignified reception, revealed the man who was bound by no class prejudice, who knew how to reach the rich as well as the poor, the great lord as well as the man of the people. Then, too, few bishops have had the gift of really keeping themselves in intimate contact with their diocesans as Cardinal Sarto of Venice succeeded in doing.

Pius X has been reproached for being not enough the diplomat, not enough the politician. It has even been said of

him, with a smile of commiseration: "This is a 'country priest' ". It is a word which does not lack accuracy, and basically it is a very great homage which is paid to him. He is actually one of those who understood exactly what Leo XIII, his predecessor, had defined by the expression "Christian democracy": a sincere love of the people, and above all an intelligent love, enlightened, understanding the importance of the social question and working efficaciously to resolve it, not through demagogic means, but by recourse to the Gospel. The great catechism which Pius X composed for the faithful during his episcopacy revealed to what extent he understood the real needs of Christian people. This catechism has been translated into many languages, and it remains a model of clear doctrinal exposition, sure and complete.

The work which expresses Pius X most accurately in this respect, however, is the decision which he made to admit little children to nourish their souls with the Holy Eucharist on reaching the age of reason. This was a bold initiative, almost revolutionary, which alarmed many theologians and many prelates, but which was immediately received with limitless joy by all those who knew what the child really is. Pius X reveals himself completely in this, knowing not only the soul of the people, but also the soul of the child. No one before him for many centuries had considered it with such sympathy—one might say, with such tenderness. The word of the Lord seemed to have been forgotten wherein He asked that the little children be allowed to come to Him. Yet let us measure the consequences of this act, apparently so simple and, it would seem, pertaining only to discipline; such a measure implies a veritable return to the oldest tradition of the Church. It also implies a clarification of sacramental theology and moral theology on the subject of the most important of the sacraments. It was a break with superannuated doctrines, still more or less impregnated with Jansenism. It was a bringing into a clear light the dignity of the baptized soul, its supernatural life, its capacities and its rights. And all that was accomplished by a very simple act which obviated very complex casuistic questions in being based uniquely on a few first principles.

And just in this way, we have just described the second characteristic element of the physiognomy of Pius X. He was simultaneously a traditionalist and innovator, one might say almost, a reactionary in principles and very modern in their application. It is in this before all else that his lack of prejudices is manifested, the little value which he accorded to certain rites, to certain immemorial customs wherein administration and fonctionnaires became comfortably ensconced. He had at the same time the sense of that which does not change within the Church with the care, however, to render the immutable always more alive, more real for the present. He had, moreover, the sense of the conditions changing ceaselessly in human society in which the Church must live and which demands of her a perpetual effort of adaptation on practical grounds. She is not of this world, but of a world eternal and immutable. Yet she is in this world where everything evolves ceaselessly. If Pius X was an energetic reformist, this was, then, in order to preserve tradition.

One still recalls with what vigor he undertook the modernization of the central government of the Church. When one thinks of the enormous weight of routine and inertia which certain administrations represented, one can understand how even the Popes who were vividly aware of the exigencies of the modern world, as Leo XIII, had balked at the task.

We know that the Roman Congregations, those ministries of the government of the Church, were instituted in the course of time to answer to needs of various types, sometimes permanent, sometimes very variable or even temporary. We can see their shaping since the Middle Ages, but it was during the Renaissance that they took their present form. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the number was gradually augmented; they became perfected and underwent various reforms. All this, however, was done without any preconceived plan, according to the circumstances and sometimes with recourse to provisionary compromises which after a time became acquired rights.

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That explains how, at the end of the nineteenth century, the competence and jurisdiction respective of the diverse Congregations had come to lose something of their primitive clarity and that conflicts became inevitable. It was thus that the Congregation of the Council, that of the Bishops and Regulars of the Holy Office could declare themselves equally competent in certain questions regarding the sacraments and dispensations. In the same way, the three Congregations of the Bishops and Regulars, of the Regular Discipline, and of the State of Regulars, had just about the same powers in all that concerned the Religious. On the other hand, although originally restricted in the administrative and disciplinary order, except for the Rota and the Signature which have always been simple tribunals, many Congregations had to a certain degree come to a point of giving judiciary sentences, too. Moreover, it was forbidden to appeal a decision to a tribunal other than that which had already passed judgment.

It can easily be understood that the complaints and the demands for reform were more and more urgent. Leo XIII had already often been pressed by them. He, however, had not dared to face the task; he observed that some partial reforms had been very inadequate; it was necessary to reconstruct the entire administrative edifice, that is to say, to affect an ensemble of institutions which were certainly venerable, but obsolete, to which, however, a whole army of respectable functionaries were attached.

Pius X had not made his career in the Congregations, but he had been a bishop, and in his ministry he was able not only to form judgments of the need for the undertaking of reforms, but of what they should be: a simplification, a putting in order, the elaboration of a clear and precise program for each Congregation. What is more, the proof that he had some very set ideas on this subject since before his elevation to the Sovereign Pontificate lies in the fact that he set himself to the task in 1903. One of his first acts was, in fact, to eliminate the Congregation "De Eligendis Episcopis" which had as its purpose the choice of the bishops in Italy, passing its recommendations to the Holy Office. In 1904 he combined as one

the Congregation of Indulgences and Relics and the Congregation of Rites. In 1906 he abolished the two congregations of the Regular Discipline and that of the State of Regulars, transferring their functions to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. Finally, having prepared the ground with these preparatory works, he promulgated in 1908 the Constitution *Sapienti Consilio* which effected a general reform of the entire Curia. The Dicasteria are henceforth to be re-divided into three groups: eleven Congregations, three Tribunals and five Offices. At the same time, he endeavored to give the bureaus a more modern technique. This was much more difficult and was not to be truly realized before the reign of his second successor. In its ensemble, the result sought by Pius X was attained, and it can be said that, except for the small number of those whose routines were upset, this remarkable reform, so profound and so rapidly brought to good ends, was received with unanimous praise.¹

It was completed by detailed measures in which the Pope showed himself to be particularly modern, such as the creation of an official journal under the form of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* which publishes all the documents emanating from the Holy Father or the Dicasteria, the judicial sentences, the nominations in the ecclesiastical hierarchy or in the honorary Orders.

This reform was before all else crowned by the putting into effect of a work equally considerable whose necessity made itself felt for a long time, too, and before which the predecessors of Pius X had also balked, namely, the drawing up of a new Code of Canon Law. The holy Pope was not to see the achievement, but it remains his merit to have begun this work and to have been able to choose the one who could effect it with a remarkable talent, Cardinal Gasparri.

When one takes account of the difficulties to be surmounted in this work of reconstructing all the organs of the government of the Church, one can only be filled with the greatest admiration and recognize that the "country priest"

1. P. J. Simier, *La Curia Romaine*, 1909, p. 5-9.

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had exceptional gifts as leader and organizer. He had, however, yet to a greater degree those gifts which make the Pope the instrument best adapted to the exercise of the magisterial doctrine in the Church: he was a great doctor, a great theologian.

Here we come face to face with the event which marked the short reign of Pius X most universally, the condemnation of Modernism.

We remember the immense peril which was caused to endanger innumerable faithful at the beginning of the twentieth century by some adventurous spirits who in the name of modern philosophy, of science and of history, pretended to rejuvenate the ecclesiastical institutions, their teaching and even dogma. Foundations of a new apologetic were sought in a doctrine of pure immanence. Recourse was had to the theory of evolution to give a pretendedly scientific interpretation to the Holy Scriptures. At the same time the methods of medieval scholasticism were declared out of date, and the traditional vocabulary of theologians was overturned. Thus was arrived at, without wishing to admit it, a negation of the supernatural order. The profound need, or better, the exigencies of human nature should alone account for the fact of religion in history, and the Christian religion, considered as only the most perfect because of its being more human than the others, would have had no other origin. Following this, in order to remain the best, it should follow the evolution of humanity itself, under threat of becoming paralyzed and dying.

The dogmas, first of all, in order to remain living and principles of life should, it was said, rid themselves of the immutable formulas which had until that time prevailed. Christian truth, like the others, could only be an approximation, according to the innovators, which it was fitting to keep in harmony ceaselessly adjusting it to the progress of the sciences, philosophy and civilization. If this were not done, the Faith risked entering into contradiction with the successive conceptions which the elite of mankind made in its eyes of the

universe in the course of ages. Now the modernists found that the Church was stagnant since the end of the Middle Ages. Thus they raised a cry of alarm which, alas, achieved only too great a hearing.

Moreover, that which drew them a very large following was to a great extent their relationship with Protestants and non-believers. They pretended to understand them better and thus be able to make them understand what the Church is. The renovation of Christianity, such as they had conceived it and undertaken it, was going to permit, according to them, all men of good faith to understand the truth of the evangelical message, and they promised them, in consideration of slight adaptations, a broad acceptance, comprehensive, in the bosom of a modernized Church. In fact, the modernists were themselves prone to gain by the very errors of the enemies of the Faith.

What became particularly fearsome, moreover, was precisely that subtle blend of truths and errors which made the definition of this multiform and shining heresy very difficult. Not only did it seduce the unprepared souls, but it compromised many savants and theologians whose orthodoxy was certain, but whose works were annexed and exploited by the modernists as in conformity with their principles. At that time the progress in biblical exegesis, Thomist philosophy, positive theology and ecclesiastical history was rapid and foretold a magnificent upsurge of all ecclesiastical sciences, but the heresy came to discredit in a subtly underhanded way this movement which was so rich with hope. The task of sorting out the modernists and the good servants of the Church, between wheat and chaff, to save the good grain from any contamination, was very delicate.

It was to this arduous task, which, however, his conscience imposed on him as a duty to bring it to a good end, that Pius X consecrated the greater part of his pontificate.

He began with a profound study of this heresy which appeared beyond the grasp in the eyes of many. He described, refuted and condemned it in 1907 in the Encyclical *Pascendi* and the Decree *Lamentabili*, and until his death he

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supervised with faultless vigilance the application of the measures which he had taken to crush the heresy. It was thus that he saved the Church.

Sometimes his action has been judged to be too vigorous and not sufficiently differentiated, and he is accused of having held back the work of some excellent exegesists, theologians or historians. The Biblical School of Jerusalem, like the Bollandists, had, to be sure, to mark time for some years. There is no reason to complain against Pius X, however. Circumstances and the gravity of the peril demanded a prompt and very powerful action. We must remember that important surgical operations injure fatally, in a certain measure, some healthy tissues. Yet, once that these latter are rid of the unhealthy tissue, they take on new life with a new vigor and health. Is that not what has happened?

As to the rest, after forty years have passed, that which appears to be indisputably true is that, far from having been excessive, the repression, although it has in the all-over sense triumphed over the heresy, has not, however, torn up all its roots. In spite of the measures taken, moreover, the required antimodernist promise, the counsels of supervision organized, we have seen in our day some of the errors condemned by Pius X reappear, and in a recent Encyclical, His Holiness Pius XII has himself also been forced to condemn severely "certain false opinions which threaten with ruin the foundations of Catholic doctrine". We find again pointed out in this Encyclical something of the heritage of the pretended innovators who had wished, in the old days, to modernize the Church in her discipline, her teaching and her dogmas: the scorn of scholasticism, the doubt cast on the value of reason and the traditional apologetic methods, the thesis of evolution of dogma, the bent meaning of the Scriptures, of errors on the nature of matters and the spirit, on original sin, grace, the supernatural order. That such condemnations should be still carried out today is the ringing justification of the work of Pius X. Too, today more than ever, the measures taken by Pius X in view of promoting ecclesiastical science beyond the pale of any heterodox influence remain particularly beneficial,

notably the reorganization effected by him of the Biblical Commission, the foundation of the Biblical Institute and the impulsion given to scholasticism.

We have just admired the defender of the Faith, the infallible doctor. Now let us look at the high-priest, the man of prayer. After him who promulgated the *lex credendi*, him who also promulgated the *lex orandi*.

It was perhaps in that, more than anywhere else, that Pius X has showed that he was a perfect reformist; he renovated by returning to first sources. He understood in a marvelous way the spiritual needs of his time; he answered them, not as modernist, but as traditionalist, who knows how to adapt to the present hour the immutable laws which are the expression of the very life of the Church.

Of what was it a question, first of all? Giving back to Sunday its place in the liturgy: the first place. Think of what the first day of the week represented for the Christians of antiquity. It was the "Lord's Day", par excellence. This name is already given to it in the Apocalypse, less than seventy years after Pentecost; Sunday is, in fact, the anniversary of the creation of light and of the resurrection of the Lord. It is Easter which is commemorated each week, the triumph of life over death, grace over sin, the triumph of Christ, our Leader. This manner of understanding Sunday is so primitive and so rich in doctrine that it is difficult to imagine how, at the end of the nineteenth century, the mass and office of the "Lord's Day" had been so generally eclipsed by the liturgy of the feasts of Saints. Doubtless the Saints are members of Christ in an eminent degree, those who were so perfectly united to His passion on earth and who are already glorified with Him in Heaven. Moreover, we must not forget that it was the negations of the Protestants, of whom several sects were fiercely iconoclastic, which had, in the sixteenth century, led the Church to give still greater honor to the Saints, and most of all to the Mother of God. Whereas, however, in centuries of strong faith the honoring of a Saint carried with it no injury to the great eucharistic liturgy, at

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the time of Pius X, when the weakening of the faith was manifested among the levels of the common man, less informed souls, less fervent ones, too, let themselves be too easily distracted from the essential by special devotions, and the cult of the Saints became for them more important than the cult of God.

Pius the Tenth, since the time of his sacerdotal and episcopal ministry, had been struck by this lack of proportion among the various elements of the liturgical cult. He thought that, in the course of time, this unbalance threatened to produce a real alteration of Catholic piety, and he undertook, once he had become Pope, a complete reform of the calendar, establishing in it a new hierarchy of feasts. Before his day, the mass proper to each Sunday, of semi-double rite, was supplanted by all double feasts, and very often important feasts were moved about in order that they might be solemnized on Sunday. Let us take, for example, the Ordo for Chartres for the year 1890; there are indicated in grand total four Sundays celebrated in green vestments! Feasts such as that of St. Venantius, St. Raymond Nonnatus and St. Jerome Emilien are preferred to that. During the month of October, the three first Sundays are secondary feasts of Our Lady, and the fourth, the feast of St. Raphael. One can judge something of the reform accomplished by Pius X when one realizes that the Ordo of 1950 of the same diocese of Chartres totals nineteen Sundays in green. Pius X applied these principles: he eliminated many feasts or reduced them to simple commemorations, and he gave back to Sunday its primacy in giving it preference, even though it was always of semi-double rite, even over feasts ranked as major doubles.

At the same time, in 1912, he invited all the bishops and all the Orders of religious to reform their Propers, following the same principles. He had excluded all the feasts which had no direct relationship with the diocese or Order, and in addition established very precise rules for the admission of new Saints to the calendars. This reform was accomplished at the same time as that of the Breviary, which was quite extensively remodeled. There, too, Sunday again receives its

privileged place, the psalter is recited integrally each week following the ancient custom, legends are partly corrected, and in the ensemble, the office, which had been until then overloaded, most of all on the days when the priests had the most to do, was made shorter and better balanced.

We must recognize the fact, however, that this considerable work could not be definitive. The great current of liturgical life inaugurated in the nineteenth century by Dom Gueranger, constantly encouraged by Rome, and to which Pius X came to give new impulse, could only become still more developed, and at length require both new adaptations to a civilization which was being rapidly transformed, and a still more precise return to first sources. The transformations of the liturgy effected by Pius X were, no doubt, only the point of departure, but the direction was given with precision and the principles of reform established clearly. The recent changes in the liturgy are in the very line defined by Pius X.

* * *

We must, in this liturgical work of Pius X, set a special place for sacred music, and especially Gregorian chant. It is not to the readers of this Review, however, that it is fitting to recall the unique importance of the celebrated *Motu Proprio* of 1903. It was at the origin of the movement to restore Gregorian chant in the Church, a movement which has but become more amplified since and is still very rich with promise. We cannot overestimate the considerable influence of this restoration, for the return to a liturgical and community piety of which the world has such great need, for a deeper understanding, a more alive understanding of the liturgy and most of all of the eucharistic sacrifice, and finally for the visible manifestation of the unity of the Mystical Body in its essential work of adoration and praise.

What is less known, perhaps, is that this initiative of Pius X, taken the same year as his elevation to the Sovereign Pontificate — exactly four months after his election —, was in no way, as has been said, a response to suggestions coming from various persons, but his personal work. A legend has even circulated for a certain time saying that this *Motu Proprio*

had been in basis the work of Father de Santi, S.J., editor of religious music for *Civiltà Cattolica* and future founder of the Pontifical School of Sacred Music. Camille Bellaigue made justice of this allegation some time ago. A few days after the coronation of the Pope, he had had an audience, in the course of which he begged the Holy Father to do something for sacred music. Pius X had answered him that it was already his thought!¹ In fact, he had thought about it for a long time, and far from being an improvisation conceived as by foreign inspiration, the *Motu Proprio* appeared as the crowning of long reflections and the ripe fruit of a consummate doctrine and experience.

Pius X was a good musician, and from the beginning of his clerical life he manifested his preferences for Gregorian chant. At the major seminary at Padua, his taste for Gregorian chant and his dispositions for music led him to be soon noticed by his superiors, to such a degree that he was designated by them to be choirmaster. When he was engaged in his ministry, he consecrated much of his time to the formation of little scholae. It was noted most of all while he was pastor at Salzano. He gave lessons in chant to the young men he had grouped together, leading them to understand and at the same time to love the liturgy. "In that way, to enhance the ceremonies which were already splendid in themselves, he obtained chants executed to perfection. The clergy and people were astounded."² It was truly during these first years of his ministry that he became a master in Gregorian chant, not only to direct its execution artistically, but also to explain to the faithful people its value from the spiritual point of view.

At the same time that he was discovering and experimenting with the spiritual resources of Gregorian chant, he could not but be concerned by the nearly total discredit into which it had then fallen. This was the result of many things, the principle of which was the complete decadence of Gregorian studies and the state of formless and unsingable debris in

1. C. Bellaigue, *Pie X et Rome*, pp. 8-16.

2. B. Pierami, O.S.B., *La vie du Serviteur de Dieu Pie X*, published by the Postulation.

which a great number of liturgical melodies were to be found at the time. Moreover, hymns and polyphony were preferred to them everywhere. Father Sarto discerned this, but he knew, too, that the work of restoration of Gregorian chant had already been undertaken and that at Solesmes, where Dom Gueranger had taught the entire world to return to liturgical prayer, monks had undertaken, under his intelligent impulsion, research in the oldest manuscripts for the veritable melodies of antiquity and the Middle Ages. Father Sarto kept himself informed. He knew Solesmes. He knew its workers. In 1882, when he was professor of chant at the major seminary and dean of canons of the Cathedral of Treviso, he attended the Congress of Arezzo which had to examine the state of the Gregorian question. This Congress was, as is known, a triumph for Dom Pothier and the School of Solesmes. But that was not to the liking of everyone. In the course of the Congress it was made known to Father Sarto that certain ecclesiastical authorities under whom he worked were engaged in protecting the interests of editors which the Solesmes theories could injure, and that it would be very much appreciated that he would not give these latter his public approval. Father Sarto knew this already. He was informed as to the harsh controversies of this epoch. All the same, he had come to Arezzo. Yet he understood that this was not a simple opinion which was given to him, nor even an urgent word of advice. He received the notification as an order, and like the very disciplined priest that he was, he immediately left the Congress. He had had time, however, to let what he thought be known.

Two years later, canon Sarto became Bishop of Mantua. This time, he could manifest openly his conceptions regarding sacred music and proceed to the application of a practical program which was to show its efficacy. No doubt the reform of chant in the churches is only one element of a vast ensemble of measures taken by the new Bishop, but it was an element of great importance in his eyes, for his solicitude in this regard is manifest. In 1888, moreover, he clearly and officially expressed his thoughts in his Synodal Constitutions.¹

1. Ch. 31, No. 10, Cf. *Musica Sacra*, Milan, Aug. 15, 1903, p. 114.

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In consequence, he abolished the old profane music in liturgical ceremonies and created, at least at his cathedral, a choir of young clerics. We see that he took such interest in the formation of these young men that he went to the point of giving them lessons in chant himself. Even more, he found the time to copy the music in his own hand when there was a lack of books. Too, magnificent results crowned his efforts. And even God himself was pleased to reward a bishop so desirous of the beauty of his cult, in confiding to him a subject of the elite. It was at Mantua, in fact, that Msgr. Sarto discovered one day the young Perosi. This youth remarkably gifted for music and called to the ecclesiastical state was immediately received into the seminary where the Bishop held a very affectionate interest for him. He assured him of the most favorable conditions of study, and when he became Patriarch of Venice, he sent him to Solesmes—where Dom Mocquereau received him in July 1894—, and made him his *maitre de chapelle*.

It was as Patriarch of Venice and Cardinal that the future Pope was to reveal himself as great reformer and doctor of sacred music. To show it, it would be enough to cite that remarkable document which is the *Pastoral Letter on the Chant of the Church*, which he published on May 1, 1895, on the occasion of the centenary of the basilica of St. Mark. A few comparisons will cast a clear light on the identity of doctrine, and even of form, of this Pastoral Letter with the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. From this moment the future Pius X had a thorough experience of the benefits of religious music for parish life and for the piety of the faithful. He had a clear view of the principles on which the organization and realization of common, sung liturgical prayer must be founded. And as early as 1895 he gave from all that an exposition which, eight years later, was not to have to be completed.

Here, by way of example, are the beginnings of the two documents set up in parallel. It is the exposition of general principles of all religious music worthy of this name.

MOTU PROPRIO

LETTER OF 1895

Sacred music as an integral part of the solemn liturgy shares in its general purpose, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It contributes to the increase of decorum and splendor of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and since its principal function is to adorn with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed to the understanding of the faithful, its proper purpose is to add greater efficacy to the text itself, so that by this means the faithful may be more easily moved to devotion and better disposed to receive in themselves the fruits of grace proper to the celebration of the sacred mysteries.

Consequently, sacred music must possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, namely *holiness* and goodness of form, from which spontaneously there springs its other mark, *universality*.

It must be *holy*, and hence exclude all profanity, not only in itself but also in the manner in which it is presented by the performers.

... The Holy Church admits in its liturgy only that chant and that music which fully corresponds either to the general purpose of the liturgy itself, which is the honor of God and the edification of the faithful, or to the special end of chant and sacred music, which is to excite the faithful to devotion by the means of melody and to dispose them to recollect within themselves with greater earnestness the fruits of grace which are proper to the Holy Mysteries celebrated with solemnity.

Consequently, sacred music, by its direct union with the liturgy and with the liturgical text, must share to a sovereign degree those qualities which are proper to this text and which can be reduced to these three principles: holiness, dignity of the art, and universality.

The Church has constantly condemned in sacred music all that is light, vulgar, trivial or ridiculous, all of which is profane and theatrical either in the form of the composition or in the manner in which the performers render it: *Sancta sancte*.

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It must be *true art*, for otherwise it is not possible for it to have that effect on listeners which the Church intends to achieve in admitting the art of music into her liturgy.

But, at the same time, it must be universal, in the sense that though every nation is allowed to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those particular forms that constitute, so to speak, the specific character of its own music, still these must be subordinated in such a way to the general character of sacred music that no one of another nation may receive a bad impression on hearing them.

And one can push the comparison of the two documents to their most basic details. The manner in which they speak of Gregorian chant, religious polyphony, of the precautions to take to receive modern music into the Church, of the role of the accompaniment by the organ, of the qualities of the cantors, of the prohibition of all profane music, of the interdiction of the too lengthy musical pieces, of the interversions and repetitions which render the text unintelligible to the faithful who listen to it, of the prohibition made to the cantors to place themselves in a position too exposed to public view, all that is presented in the Pastoral Letter as in the *Motu Proprio*, almost in the same order and under the same form. Sometimes the expression is even the same in one as the other. Thus, when Pius X formulates this golden rule of sacred music: "Let one avoid as a grave abuse that in the sacred functions the liturgy appear as secondary and as though it were at the service of the music, whereas the music should be only one part of the liturgy and its humble servant".¹

1. Pastoral Letter, in *Tribune de S. Gervais*, August 1895, p. 6 — *Motu Proprio*, Art. VII, No. 23.

Finally, the two documents finish with prescriptions concerning the institution of chant choirs, of special courses in the major seminaries, and the *Motu Proprio* adds to it the recommendation to the Ordinaries to favor in every manner the reform of religious chant.

Nevertheless, the Letter of Venice has a more paternal character than the Roman document and it goes into more detail. Thus it is when the Patriarch speaks of the qualities of Gregorian chant, when he condemns a certain music unworthy of the divine service, most of all when he refutes the arguments of the adversaries of ecclesiastical chant and when he sets forth prescriptions in view of the reform of sacred music in his diocese, by the establishment of a commission charged with making his regulations observed. Sometimes, too, the Pastoral Letter is enriched by very pertinent reflections. Here is one, for example, which shows once more the true love which Pius X held for the common people. The adversaries of Gregorian chant said that theatrical music "pleased the people". And the Patriarch answered them: "Without remarking that pleasure alone has never been a legitimate criterion for judging sacred things, and that we are not to second the wishes of the people in bad things, but to raise them up,¹ I shall say that this term *the people* is too much abused, as they, in fact, show themselves as much more serious and more pious than is ordinarily believed, taste well really sacred music and do not cease to frequent the

1. For its part, the *Motu Proprio* asks that "one strive to have the Gregorian plainchant sung by the people, in order that the faithful take anew an active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the custom in earlier times" (Art. II, 3).

And here is what Cardinal Merry del Val, Secretary of State of Pope Pius X, wrote on this subject:

"One of the most ardent desires of Pius X was to promote congregational singing wherever possible, for he held it to be most instructive for people of all classes and a powerful means of arousing an intelligent interest in the beauties of our sacred liturgy, especially in regard to the holy sacrifice of the Mass. He loved to dwell in this respect upon the remarkable results achieved in parishes where the congregation had been taught to sing correctly the different portions of the Mass in plain chant and the psalms and hymns at Sunday Vespers. He frequently expressed regret that more importance was not given to a practice which enabled people really to understand and deeply to feel the significance of Catholic worship, and which, if extensively applied, would attract so many to a knowledge and fulfillment of their religious duties". Cf. *Memories of Pius X*, Cardinal Merry del Val, Westminster, Maryland, 1951, p. 53.

churches in which it is performed.”¹ One finds, finally, in the Letter of Cardinal Sarto, a very interesting remark which gives the explanation of “ridiculous prejudice” then very widespread among the clergy, and according to which the sung Office could not satisfy the precept. The Patriarch, to put it exactly, speaks only of sung Mass, or more accurately, of Masses in music, very much in vogue in Italy at this time, during which “the clergy, as though they were convinced of the profaning of such Masses by such music, had another low Mass celebrated, and this in almost all the churches.”² But there is no doubt that the weakening of the liturgical sense, and especially of the community spirit, was due in great measure to the invasion of the sanctuary by profane music.

Just as the Bishop of Mantua, the Patriarch of Venice set the example in his own cathedral, in taking care that the chants were the most worthy possible of Divine Majesty and of the House of Prayer. Thanks to him, the *Capella Marciana* reached a fine height of musical standards. This was noted as early as 1895 on the occasion of the jubilee feasts of the patriarchal basilica. During these ceremonies was heard not only Gregorian chant, but polyphonic music, too. There were, under the direction of Maestro Perosi, several hearings, which were very well received, of the principal older composers, Palestrina, Orlando de Lasso, and Giovanni Gabrieli. The reform in sacred music extended equally over the whole diocese in which were seen to rise numerous *Scholae Cantorum* in the parishes.

The ninth of August, 1903, Cardinal Sarto ascended the throne of St. Peter. Immediately he set to work in view of the reform in sacred music, an earnestness which had already been noted at Venice when he became Patriarch. At the early date of November 22, 1903, in fact, the *Motu Proprio* appeared, whose very direct relationship we have just seen—if not to say identity—with the Letter of Venice, and which

1. *Tribune de S. Gervais*, July 1895, p. 8.

2. *Tribune de S. Gervais*, August 1895, p. 4.

he gave to the Church as the "Judicial Code of Sacred Music". The eighth of December of the same year, a Letter to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome prepared new decisions concerning the liturgical books of Gregorian chant and very clearly gave the stamp of approval to the early works executed at Solesmes: "Long and attentive studies have changed the face of affairs. Gregorian chant returned in such a satisfying manner to its primitive purity, such as it was transmitted by our fathers and is found in the manuscripts of various Churches, appears soft, suave, very easy to learn"¹ The following month of January, 8, 1904, the privileges of the incorrect and altered editions were revoked by the Sacred Congregation of Rites.² The eleventh of April Pius X celebrated the thirteenth centenary of the death of St Gregory the Great, and, "in order to consecrate in some way the beginnings of the Gregorian restoration", had the Mass performed in Gregorian chant by 1,200 seminarians and religious of Rome. Dom Mocquereau was present at this Papal Mass, whose chants were taken, on the order of the Pope, from the Solesmes edition. At the altar, the Holy Father used a missal illuminated by the nuns of St. Cecilia. Finally, on April 25 a new *Motu Proprio* prescribed "the publication of liturgical books containing the chant of the Holy Roman Church". The restitution of the melodies "in their integrity and their purity, in conformity with the most ancient manuscripts"³ was in particular confided to the monks of the Congregation of France and of the monastery of Solesmes, as the Pope was to recall again to Dom Delatte, on May 22, in a Brief⁴ in which he thanks him for having turned over to the Holy See the works of the Abbey on Gregorian chant in view of this edition.

Dom Pothier, who had left Solesmes and had become Abbot of St. Wandrille, was put at the head of the Commission charged with what was to be called the "Vatican edition".

1. *Decreta Authentica* S.C.R., No. 4125.
2. *Ibid.*, 4131.
3. *Decreta Authentica*, No. 3134.
4. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Volume 37, p. 293.

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But this is not the place or the time to recount the history of the Vatican edition. Let us say only that the Gradual appeared in 1907 and that it retained a large number of improvements — one could count several thousand ¹ — brought to the *Liber Usualis* (1895) of Dom Polthier by the 1903 edition of Dom Mocquereau. It was followed by the Antiphonary in 1912. At this moment the Vatican Commission was dissolved and Solesmes alone was given the task of the editing of the melodic text of the Vatican books which remained to be published.

Let us add, in closing, that it was to Pius X that the monks of Solesmes owe the right to use rhythmic signs in their editions. We have the unequivocal proof of the benevolence of the Holy Father in this regard in the Brief addressed to the Abbot of Solesmes cited above. Here, in fact, is what is said in it: “On several occasions the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII, of happy memory, and in particular in his letter of May 1901, has wished to render praise of your work, and more recently, last February, the Sacred Congregation of Rites gave its approval to the chant books edited by you and hailed their wide diffusion. For Us, finally, who from the first hour have believed that it was Our duty to use Our authority to restore to Gregorian chant its ancient place, have We greatly valued your work, We have said so, We have recently again attested to it. Indeed, in the course of that solemn function of the centenary celebrated at the tomb of St. Gregory the Great, in order to consecrate in some way the beginnings of the Gregorian restoration, We have desired, by way of example, that the books of Solesmes be used”.² The *Liber Usualis* of Dom Mocquereau, which already carried the imprimatur of the Master of the Sacred Apostolic Palaces, dated October 9, 1903, was in fact officially declared in conformity with the *Motu Proprio* on February 24, 1904.³ The monks of Solesmes

1. See, for example, Laroche, *Le Graduel Romain et le Liber Usualis de 1903*.

2. Translation from the *Revue Gregorienne*, 1921, p. 50.

3. Praesens editio quoad textum typicae plane conformis reperta est, et quoad cantum respondet *Motui Proprio* Summi Pontificis Pii Papae X diei 22 novembris 1903, atque Decreto S. Rituum Congregationis diei 8 Januarii 1904. In fidem . . . Ex Secretaria Sacrae ejusdem Congregationis, die 24 februarii 1904. D. Panici, S.R.C. Secret.

have never hoped for more for a strictly private work, and this benevolent protection has never since been lacking. Following this, several other Decrees had, in fact, to authorize the editions ornamented with rhythmic signs.¹ Let us recall that even at the moment when the Holy Father confided anew to the Abbey of Solesmes the editing of the books of the Vatican edition not yet published, the *Regulation for Sacred Music in Rome*, emanating from the Cardinal-Vicar but in which is reflected from every page the immediate influence of Pope Pius X, recommended the use of the rhythmic signs "for a greater uniformity in the execution of Gregorian chant".²

Such are the principal documents of Pius X concerning Sacred Music. Indeed, they are not the only ones. One can count more than forty during this relatively short pontificate. And if one yet remembers the foundation of the Pontifical School of Sacred Music on which the Pope counted a great deal for the realization throughout the whole world of the prescriptions of the *Motu Proprio*, one understands how he was able to write in 1895 that the reform in sacred music was "of sovereign importance . . . for all those who truly have at heart the honor of religion and the sanctification of souls".

There now remains nothing for us to do but to recall what the government of Pius X was, his personal influence on the course of events which were taking place in the world during his pontificate. Unfortunately, we cannot go into details here. His relations with the various nations of Europe and America brought him problems even more difficult than those which caused so much bitterness for Leo XIII.

In Portugal, a revolution followed by a persecution against the Church led him to take very firm measures to set forth for the clergy and the faithful their duties in regard to the new government. In South America he took up the defense of the Indians, practically reduced to hard slavery by industrial companies. In Germany he solved the difficult question of the confessional syndicates. In Serbia he had the

1. *Decreta Authentica*, Vol. VI, Appendix I, p. 714. Cf. *Revue Greg.*, 1912, p. 166.

2. Cf. *Revue Gregorienne*, 1912, pp. 59 and 98.

good fortune to sign, after long negotiations, an advantageous concordat. In seeing the progress of democratic ideas everywhere and the unfortunate attempts made in several countries to adapt Catholic doctrine to them, he continued in this matter the doctrinal work of Leo XIII and condemned the most clamorous of the innovators. Although Pius X did not, more than his predecessor, have the honor, which nevertheless is due to the Papacy before any other power, to be invited to the great diplomatic debates of the time, at least Brazil, in frontier difficulties with Peru and Bolivia, had recourse to his arbitration. The two treaties of Petropolis in 1909 and 1910 settled these litigations to the complete satisfaction of the three States.

But perhaps it was with France that Pius X showed his alert political sense and at the same time his firmness of principles, and most of all, the loftiness of his supernatural views in the conduct of the temporal affairs of the Church. He did not have to deal with the brutal persecution of revolutionaries suddenly come into power as in Portugal. It was instead a long and difficult negotiation with crafty statesmen, often of bad faith, whose destructive passion was clothed in an outward semblance of correct legality. They wished to obtain, under the guise of neutrality, the triumph of total political atheism through the denunciation of the Concordat and the secularizing of all social, hospital and public educational organizations. It was one of the great sadnesses of Pius X, at the beginning of his pontificate, to see, in spite of his efforts and his conciliatory attitude, the complete frustration of his attempts at agreement with the French government. After the breaking of diplomatic relations, then the denunciation of the Concordat, the government tried to impose on the Church the statute of cultural associations. Certain well-meaning but poorly informed persons thought that, if necessary, it might be given a trial. Pius X refused. To those who, even today, are scandalized at the strictness of the Pope in condemning thus the Church of France to poverty, Canon Renaud has shown lately the wisdom of Pius X who understood that the Catholics of France could grow spiritually under stress and that time would make possible one day what the

state of minds and unleashed passions then made impracticable. The accepted diocesan Associations today are indeed very different from the cultural Associations of 1905. They are not an organization established by the French government alone, but the fruit of long conversations between Rome and Paris in a spirit of mutual understanding. They have been accepted by the Pope who has since then kept a Nuncio at Paris and with him at Rome an Ambassador of France. Finally, they fully recognize the hierarchal organization of the Church, the powers of the Pope and those of the bishops, which are exactly the conditions sought by Pius X. In 1905 the atmosphere of religious war forbade from accepting, on the part of statesmen who held to a decided anticlericalism, an organization which subjected the Church of France.

However, we must not imagine that Pius X accepted with lightness of heart and without apprehension the new status of the Church of France, so full of forbidding unknown elements, for he loved our country more than any other nation, after, at least, his own country, and this must be believed in the light of his protestation in 1907, that he "had given his heart to France."¹ The motives for this predilection for the eldest daughter of the Church are generally little known. One can, of course, point out the zeal of the clergy and Catholics of France, the great number of missionary vocations, the remarkable initiatives taken by the French such as the Eucharistic Congresses, the work of the Missions and above all the many evidences of attachment to the Apostolic See, the Peter's Pence, the pontifical Zouaves and so many other facts of this type. All that the Sovereign Pontiffs recognize. But for Pius X there were more personal reasons for his attachment to our country, and among them must be given first place to his gratitude for the enlightenment which he had received during his priestly education and his episcopacy. His preferred scholar, at least among the moderns, was, in fact, the friend of Dom Gueranger, Cardinal Pie, whose famous synodals had been the most penetrating denunciation of the errors of the present time and the most lucid, the most

1. P. Fernessole, S.C.J., *La Papauté et la paix du monde* (from Gregory XVI to Pius XI), Beauschesne, 1948, p. 96.

savant exposition of truth made by a theologian in the nineteenth century before the great *acta* of the infallible master. Cardinal Pie not only had a very sure doctrine, but he set it forth in admirable language. Father Sarto was nourished by it. To the end of his life he loved to read over the works of the Cardinal of Poitiers. He carried them constantly in his hand. And he who was one of the lights of the Council of the Vatican was also, after his death, the source of inspiration of the Papacy.

It will suffice, to show to what extent the works of Cardinal Pie were familiar to Pius X, to cite a single fact, small, no doubt, but so very evocative. Shortly after his elevation to the cardinalate, the bishop of Poitiers gave, on September 28, 1879, a homily on the taking possession of his presbyterial title of St. Marie-de-la-Victoire, and closed by manifesting in an eloquent and moving peroration his certitude of the return of France to her first calling. He did not hesitate to compare her to St. Paul stricken on the road to Damascus: "O France," cried he, "it is hard for thee to kick against the goad! To war against God is not in thy nature. Rise up, eldest daughter of my Church, predestined race, chosen vase, and go forth, as of old, to bear my name before all the peoples and kings of the earth!" This conviction, natural for a French prelate, Pius X shared, and himself taking up again this comparison of St. Paul and France, as though to show that he made his all the thoughts of Cardinal Pie, so great was his confidence in him, he spoke the same words before a group of French pilgrims, the same words which had resounded years before at St. Marie-de-la-Victoire. It was the 29th of November 1911, at the Consistory at which the Pope imposed the barretta on new cardinals, among whom there were some French. At the end of his speech he touched on these sons of France who groaned under the weight of persecution. But he, too, announced the return of France to her first vocation: "Her faults will not go unpunished, but she will not perish, the daughter of so many merits, so many sighs and so many tears. The day will come, and we hope that it is not too distant, when France, like Saul on the road to Damascus, will be enveloped in a celestial light and will hear a voice which will repeat to her: 'My daughter, why

dost thou persecute me?' And at her answer: 'Who art thou, Lord?', the voice will reply: 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad, because, in thine obstinacy, thou dost deny thyself.' And she, trembling and astonished will say: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?' And He: 'Rise up, wash away the blemishes which have disfigured thee, reawaken in thy breast the sentiments, the sighings and the pact of our alliance, and go, eldest Daughter of the Church, predestined nation, chosen vase, go forth to bear, as of old, my name before all the peoples and kings of the earth.' ''¹

How can one fail to see in these words a mark of the extraordinary predilection of Pius X for France? But is it enough to see in them only a testimony of affection? Now that his canonization gives all his words a new value which the Church herself invokes in her public prayer, is it not too slighting to reduce these words to the simple expression of a desire, a wish, a hope? Does not the accent of conviction, of certitude, which animates this speech make a veritable prophecy? Are there many earthly fatherlands which have had the privilege of receiving similar assurances from the mouth of a saint? How can a French Catholic heart prevent itself henceforth from praying and begging St. Pius X to hasten himself, by his intercession before God, the accomplishment of the great things which he has foretold? And in this prayer, he will very naturally be associated with the French saints whose beatifications he himself celebrated and who are so well chosen to represent our times: St. Jean Eudes, patron of Christian Schools; the Carmelites of Compiègne, martyrs of the godless; the cure d'Ars who converted so many sinners, and St. Joan of Arc, the great champion of liberty.

But this brings us to the last trait of the portrait which we have tried to retrace of Pius X, his holiness. There is no need to emphasize it very much. In these days of his glorification there is no question anywhere about it. The honors which were constantly rendered him in his tomb, the vener-

1. P. Fernessole, S.C.J., *Ibid*, p. 98.

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ated memory of him which the faithful have never ceased to maintain, finally his miracles, attest that he remains forever living in the Church and that he continues to be, from the heights of heaven, the common Father with the generous heart.

He was firstly and eminently a man of faith. Not only was this in the purity and firmness of his doctrine, but also in the exercise of his function of Supreme Pontiff. No human consideration could deter him from fulfilling his first duty which was to preserve the store of tradition, expose without attenuation the truths of salvation and to condemn without wavering all errors. And in doing this, he showed himself to be a man of heart, a man of true and ardent charity. He was radiant with the love of God. He was a moving example of what a priest should be in a world tormented like ours which has forgotten God. Forsaking the ways of a too human apostolate, he showed from the very first day the essential work to be accomplished: the *Opus Dei*, the liturgy, which renders honor and glory to the Most High.

The holiness of Pius X is also revealed in the indomitable courage with which he defended the rights and liberties of the Church. He was in no sense a politician or a diplomat. Nevertheless, he knew very well how to judge his time, and in that, too, he did it in a completely supernatural frame of mind. He appeared to all nations as a man of God, and his activity was great to contribute to the pacification of souls and to avoid war. One can even say that he died a victim of his ardent love for the people when he understood the impotence of his efforts to stop the unleashing of the world wars. Through his work in the cause of international peace he appears to us as a Pope who truly understood our times, knew our trials, sympathized with them and interceded with God for our salvation. It is for the peace of the world that we shall ardently desire to call on him.

As for the rest, his desires and works always tended towards this one goal, to regroup all men, all nations, as in the Middle Ages, under the authority of Christ and his Vicar.

Never has a Pope been so well expressed in his motto: "*In-staurare omnia in Christo!*" To submit all human authority, all institutions, and the sciences, letters, arts, finally all civilization and each of the individual souls to the sweet and light yoke of Christ. Only a soul already completely attached to Christ, as was his, wholly vibrant with faith, hope and charity, could set itself a program as magnificent and at the same time in the most complete contradiction with the tendencies of our time. But to those who have faith, nothing is impossible. And time means nothing to them.

From the beginning of his pontificate, His Holiness Pius XII, encouraging devotion to the memory of his predecessor Pius X, affirmed the reality of his active presence among us. To the pilgrims of Venice who came in 1939 to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of their former patriarch, he no longer hesitated in affirming that he was always living for all those who loved him. His body, no doubt, reposes lifeless in its crystal casket, but his soul is forever present, living, radiant. For, added Pius XII, "are not these silent and invisible remains for you and for millions of hearts a word which gives us as its echo the works and virtues of the soul of the chosen one which animated them? Does not this tomb seem to you to await in the shadow a light of holy prudence to render it open to veneration, and an omnipotent hand which will surround his brow with a halo?"¹ In canonizing Pius X, His Holiness Pius XII has himself justified his own words.

How many thousand of pilgrims came to kneel before the little cross engraved on the flagstones of St. Peter's in the Vatican, marking the place where the remains of the holy Pope reposed in the shadow of the Vatican crypts until they were transferred to the Basilica on the occasion of the recent excavations in the sub-stratum! Flowers were never lacking on his tomb, testifying to the gratitude for benefits, graces, and sometimes miracles obtained. And it was an ardently desired favor to be able to receive permission to descend into the crypt to come near this tomb. The greatness, the simplicity, the holiness of the great Pope there were translated

1. *Ibid*, p. 92.

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with a rare aptness by the modest inscription which Msgr. Joseph Cascioli had composed and which no pilgrim has ever been able to read without intense emotion:¹

PIUS PAPA X
PAUPER ET DIVES
MITIS ET HUMILIS CORDE
REIQUE CATHOLICAE VINDEX FORTIS
“INSTAURARE OMNIA IN CHRISTO” SATAGENS
PIE OBIIT
DIE XX AUG. A. D. MCMXIV

1. *Pontifical Annual*, 1915.—“Pius the Tenth, Pope, poor and rich, meek and humble of heart, firm defender of Catholicism, uniquely striving to ‘restore all things in Christ’, piously expired the 20th of August in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred Fourteen.”

THE NEW MASS OF THE ASSUMPTION

by Dom Joseph Gajard

Great was the surprise, on the morning of the first of November, 1950,—I do not mean to say deception—, of innumerable Gregorianists who were listening when the Papal Mass began. Still completely filled with emotion which had gripped them when the radio waves had carried to them, perfectly distinctly, the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff defining solemnly, *ex cathedra*, the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and in response, the endless acclamations of the crowd assembled in the square of St. Peter's, they were waiting for the joyous *Gaudeamus*, so fitting in circumstance, as they thought.

To tell the truth, except for a few very rare informed ones, most of them did not know exactly what Mass was to be sung, that of the liturgical solemnity of the day, All Saints, or that of the Assumption, but it so happens that both Masses had the same introit, *Gaudeamus*, very well-known, and which one considered as a festal occasion to hear again, as the natural echo, the ideal expression of the enthusiastic joy which filled every heart.

And then suddenly, what was intoned but an infinitely more discreet melody, familiar only to a few privileged ones who frequent the monasteries constantly, and this to unexpected words, which were only made out with great difficulty . . . When the collect came, the epistle and gradual, doubt was no longer possible; it was clearly a Mass of the Blessed Virgin, but completely new, evidently composed in honor of the new feast, or rather, on the occasion of the new brilliance which will cloth the old feast of the Assumption henceforth.

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The Assumption is actually one of the oldest feasts of the Blessed Virgin, perhaps even the oldest,¹ although it is difficult to say in the light of the imprecise terminology which prevails among the first recorders of the Marian liturgical cult.

Differing, however, from the pieces of the Office, all very old, going back, it would seem, to the primitive formula of the feast, and which we find in all the old documents and already established in the oldest Antiphonary which we know, the Antiphonary of Compeigne, without notes, from the second half of the ninth century, the pieces of the Mass in use up to the present are, except for the gradual, not at all those of early times. This is why it is, in a certain way, less regrettable to see them disappear, in spite of the very real interest which they represent as texts and as melodic adaptations.

All the old documents are in agreement in giving the feast of the Assumption the introit *Vultum tuum*, common to the feasts of the Nativity, the Annunciation and the Assumption, in short, to all the old feasts of Our Lady, the gradual *Propter veritatem*, the offertory *Offerentur*² *Regi* and the communion *Dilexisti*, which is also found sometimes for the Annunciation. All these pieces, taken from the same psalm 44, *Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum*, seem to have been composed for Our Lady, although they now figure in the common of Virgins, but it is remarkable that not one of them makes the least allusion to the fact of the Assumption itself. It seems that the feast of the Assumption was considered as the feast of Our Lady, without any specification, her *Natale*.³

1. Dom Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, Brussels, Vromant, 1935, p. X-XI, LXXX-LXXXII, CIII-CIV.

2. This is the way the manuscripts ordinarily spell the offertory *Afferentur*.

3. I take the liberty of borrowing this information, sometimes reproduced in text, from a study which has been in preparation some time for the fine work of Father Du Manoir, *Marie*.

NEW MASS OF ASSUMPTION

This ancient formula has long since given way to pieces which,¹ except for the gradual, are all nothing more than adaptations to anterior melodic types, but which, on the contrary, are all proper to the feast and very beautiful: the introit *Gaudeamus*, composed for the holy martyr Agatha and applied, thanks to a light retouching of the text, to the praise of the Blessed Virgin; the Alleluia *Assumpta est*, to which I shall return shortly, as it has been retained, — and it alone, — in the whole of the new Mass composed on the occasion of the definition of the dogma; the offertory *Assumpta est*, adapted anciently to the offertory *Posuisti*, of Martyrs, and to that of Easter Monday, *Angelus Domini*; the communion *Optimam partem*, adapted, like that of the Immaculate Conception, to the communion *Dico autem vobis*, of Martyrs, and wonderfully fresh, of youthful clarity, filial pride, and of joy and love.²

However beautiful and attachment-forming these pieces may be for the faithful and for the artist, their relatively recent admission to the liturgy takes away some of their interest all the same, and the regret to see them disappear is lessened by the fact that they do not belong to the primitive source.

An exception must be made, however, for the gradual *Propter veritatem*, which it is difficult not to feel sorry about, as much because of its proper beauty as for its truly original character, since, of all the pieces which have ever figured in the Mass of the Assumption, it was the only one which was composed expressly for the feast, with which it formed, so to

1. It seems that the present formula was definitely established by the fourteenth century, but we find its elements, separately, and even at the Assumption, much earlier. Except for the introit *Gaudeamus* (which is met with since the eleventh century in concurrence with *Vultum tuum*) and the gradual *Propter veritatem* (which replaces the *Benedicta et venerabilis* sometimes), there is plenty of variety for the choice of other pieces in the manuscripts. Nevertheless, we find the Alleluia *Assumpta est* in the eleventh century, too, the offertory of the same name in the twelfth, as well as the communion *Optimam partem* (which is also found with the melody of the communion *Dilexisti*, which was used in many places, as has just been said).
2. A more detailed analysis will be found with a musical commentary of all these pieces in the *Revue Gregorienne*, 1947, p. 134-146.

speak, a body, even though it contains no explicit allusion to the celebrated mystery. One would have much preferred to keep it rather than the new gradual designed to replace it, as it is content to take again for the body of the gradual itself, the words of psalm 44 which formed the verse.

This *Propter veritatem* was, of the whole Mass, the really contemplative piece, completely interior, enclosing itself, for a part, in an atmosphere of silence. In contrast with the other pieces, it gives before all else, in fact, a note of gravity, of recollection, something solemn, humble, profound. How, in particular can we forget the verse, that appeal, that invitation to the soul to be attentive, to listen, to watch, to forget all else, to incline its ear and all its being to the voice of the Well-Beloved who desires its beauty and wishes to draw it to Him: *Audi, filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam, quia concupivit Rex speciem tuam?* We shall find these words again, no doubt, as I have just said, in the first part of the gradual of the new Mass and with a splendid melody, too, certainly, but it does not in any way have the same accent. Although the voice is made urgent still on the words *vide, inclina*, we are no longer in the same perspective. There is no longer, in the face of the incomprehensible mystery of evoked love, particularly on *quia concupivit Rex*, the same interior recollection, that delightfully moving sentiment of respect and infinite tenderness . . .

To tell the truth, the *Propter veritatem* does not disappear completely from the liturgy; it is found again on the feast of the Holy Rosary, but it is no longer at the solemnity of the Assumption, of which it was, so to speak, the masterpiece.

* * *

The new Mass, composed on the occasion of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption and sung at Rome on November 1, 1950 at the Papal Mass, is explained evidently by the desire for a formulary more explicitly consecrated to the corporal Assumption of the Most Blessed Virgin, to which the

prayers, although Gregorian, and the readings¹ of the Mass *Gaudeamus* make no direct allusion. It contains, for the chant, only modern pieces, except for the Gradual, and, if you will, the Alleluia, which, although not primitive, is an adaptation of already ancient date, since we find it, noted in pure neumes, even though of a second hand, in some ancient manuscripts of St. Gall.

It is curious, however, to note that, in the ensemble, these chant pieces have no more direct relationship with the Assumption itself than those which they have replaced. Perhaps they have even less, for up to now three of them have made explicit mention of the object of the feast, the introit, the Alleluia and the offertory; from now on only the Alleluia speaks explicitly of the Assumption. The other pieces are related to it evidently and directly,² since their texts served in part as basis for definition of the dogma. This does not lessen the significance that this is only at the cost of theological reasoning and that they can be applied to other feasts. The better proof is that we find them in the liturgy chosen for other solemnities. The introit is an antiphon of the feast of the Apparition of Lourdes and of the new Office of the Miraculous Medal. The gradual is that primitive one of St. Cecilia. The offertory and the communion are antiphons of the Immaculate Conception.

1. Nevertheless, Dom Lambert Beaudoin notes that the Gospel of Martha and Mary is that which the Byzantine Church has utilized at the Assumption since the sixth century, and he adds some reasons which would justify, in his viewpoint, his position, as well as that of all the rest of the Mass *Gaudeamus*, for example, the octave day. (*La nouvelle Messe pour la fête de l'Assumption*, in the *Maison-Dieu*, No. 25, 1951, p. 140-144. —Cf. Dom Capelle, *La Nouvelle Messe de l'Assomption*, in *Questions liturgiques et paroissiales*, Jan.-Feb., 1951, p. 17-20. Cf. also *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, 1950, p. 354-364.
2. The text of the introit *Signum magnum* was applied to Our Lady since the Patristic Age (Cf. M. Jugie, *La mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge, Etude historico-doctrinale, Studi e Testi 114*, Vaticano, 1944, p. 40, sqq.). And we are pleased to note in this respect that it is found to be used in the beautiful Chapelle of our Eglise Abbatiale of Solesmes. This Chapelle, which dates from the sixteenth century, is one of the most original. It is a poem in honor of the Assumption and the Triumph of the Immaculate Virgin and an attempt to translate in sculpture a treatise of Marian theology. Not only is the text we are considering transcribed on the stone, but the artist has had the boldness to represent the Blessed Virgin "clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, crowned with twelve stars, not as an empress, but under the characteristics of the new Eve, whose purity suffers no veil." (D. J. Hourlier, *Les Eglises de Solesmes*, Plon, 1951, p. 78 sqq.).

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Here they are with their respective melodies which have recently been approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, on the date of June 26, 1951, and thus are the only official ones. As they are still unknown, I think we ought to put them in here for the clarification of the modest commentaries which follow.

It will be noted firstly that these are not the melodies which were sung November 1, 1950 and transmitted by radio.

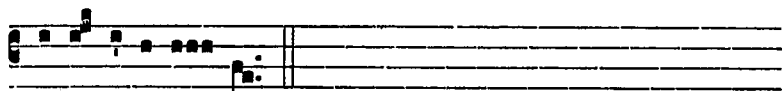
Here is the reason. The texts were decided on too late to permit the melodic composition to be done as carefully as would have been necessary. It was necessary to make an improvisation and resign oneself to something provisional. The essential was that the Mass could be sung November 1, and it was. But, to mark clearly that it was only provisional, competent authority refused to print the melodies and was satisfied to mimeograph them for the use of the singers. Then, immediately we concentrated on composing the definitive melodies, which, duly approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and published, now form officially part of the new Mass.

Intr.
7.
S

Ignum ma- gnum * appá- ru- it in cae- lo :
mú- li- er amícta so- le, et lu- na sub pé- dibus
e- jus, et in cá- pi- te e- jus co- ró- na stel- lá- rum
du- ó- de- cim. Ps. Can- tá- te Dómi- no cánti- cum no- vum :*



qui - a mi - ra - bi - li - a fe - cit. Gló - ri - a Pa - tri.



E u o u a e.

Grad.

7.

A



Udi, ff-li - a, * et vi - de,



et in-clí - na aurem tu -



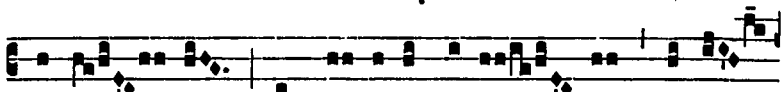
am : et concu - pí - scet rex




pulchri - tú - di - nem tu -



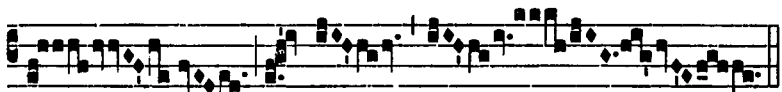
am. y. To - ta



de - có - ra ingré - di - tur ff - li - a re - gis,



textú - rae áu - re - ae sunt amí - ctus



* e - jus.

5.

AL-le-lú-ia. * *ij.*

y. Assúpta est Ma-ri-a in cae-lum :



gau-det exér-cit-us * Ange-ló-



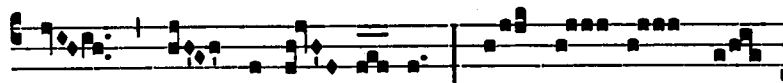
rum.

Offert.

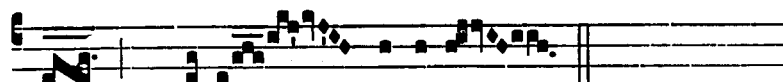
2.

I

-ni-mi-ci-ti-as * po-nam in-ter te



et mu-lí-e-rem, et se-men tu-



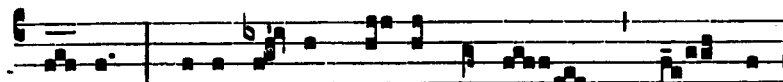
um et semen il-lí-us.

Comm.

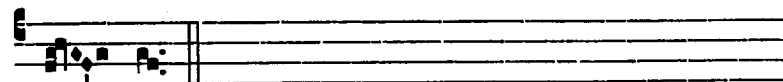
6.

B

E-á-tam me di-cent * o-mnes ge-ne-ra-ti-



ó-nes, qui-a fe-cit mi-hi magna qui pot-



ens est.

Let us say again in a word that, except for the gradual *Audi Filia*, which is ancient, the other pieces, modern ones, are only adaptations of anterior melodic types.

To whoever may be tempted to feel surprised and regret this, we answer simply, once and for all, that it was the only route to follow. Perhaps one does not imagine very clearly the real difficulty which there ordinarily is to clothe in adequate melodies, in a definite language which has its laws, Latin texts which have often been arranged with no consideration of musical order. It was a marvelous art which presided over the composition of the ancient repertoire, and we must clearly recognize that we moderns have lost the knack, that sort of genial inspiration which animated the old composers. We can only imitate them from afar, with difficulty, when it is necessary, and moreover on the condition of using their formulas or their themes, under risk of falling quickly into pretention and ridicule. It is a fact of experience, and the attempts which are sometimes sent to us by young Gregorianists in the vein of composition are the manifest proof.¹

For the rest, it was often the process of composition in the Middle Ages themselves, when such use of centonization was made, by respect for tradition and for an incomparable art which one realized oneself as being incapable of equaling.

The Introit *Signum magnum*.

The melody provisionally chosen was that of *Salve Sancta Parens*, itself adapted, but anciently (it is found in two manuscripts of the eleventh century from Northern Italy, manuscripts 186 and 124 of Verceil, probably originally from Como and Novalesa.), to the introit *Ecce advenit* of the Epiphany. It is a melody which is large and solemn in the original, all fresh and graceful in the adaptation, but which

1. "How imprudent!" said well Msgr. Romita, Secretary General of the Italian Association of St. Cecilia. "As though it were enough to know the Gregorian repertory by heart to try to introduce to it more or less well-arranged plugs, or what is more, to insert in it horrible incrustations which destroy the purity of the Gregorian "melos"! Even should there be someone who knows thoroughly the technical secrets of the Gregorian composers, who could flatter himself today that he possesses the breath of inspiration of their deep medieval religious spirit? To know the style and the manner of a composer is not the same thing as possessing his authentic inspiration." *Revue Gregorienne*, 1949, p. 40.

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could not be accepted for the much longer text of *Signum magnum* except on condition of spreading it too much and taking away from it its proportions and artistic form. Thus it was necessary to choose something else.

The version retained is a melody of the sol *mode* whose proper allure, general atmosphere lends itself admirably to the solemnity of the text and the circumstance. Grave, profound, in the lower region of its modal scale, the mode of sol freely makes itself, in the upper part, joyous, enthusiastic, even triumphant. It is the intimate compenetration of these two notes which gives its character to it, so rightfully its own.

Now the introit *Signum magnum*, although classified seventh mode because of its verse, is rather an eighth mode piece than a seventh, to employ the current terminology. It unfolds normally in the modal fifth *sol-re*, only rising above it three times and always as momentary passing notes. It reaches even the *re* only rarely, holding itself rather to the fourth *sol-do*. As a result in this piece, together with a very real note of joy and enthusiastic admiration, there is an over all character of gravity and profundity and of solemn affirmation. All these are things which go well with its role, which is to accompany the solemn entry of the Pontiff escorted by all his ministers and to open a function destined to present to our view, if I may put it thus, the glorification of Our Lady, appearing, surrounded by light and glory, in the heights of Heaven.

Let us add that this melody has the advantage of revivifying a melodic type of real beauty, practically excluded from our parochial offices, that of the introit *Probasti Domine* of the octave of St. Laurence, always eliminated by the octave of the Assumption, and of the introit *In virtute tua*, of the common of Martyrs not Bishops, which is hardly ever sung except in monasteries.

Incontestably the beginning is grave. A simple undulation around the tonic, to be sure, but the whole-tone of the

sub-tonic, touched on in passing, gives it depth and confers on it an increase of amplitude which well evokes the idea of a processional march. It is the solid foundation, I might say massive, on which the edifice of sound is to be raised and from which it will in part receive its characteristic stamp.

Indeed, the latent life which animates nevertheless the initial undulation is to immediately affirm itself on the vibrant recitation of *apparuit*, itself crowned by the rise to *mi* where it broadens. These successive and direct thirds give the phrase an elan and vigor which it is difficult to oppose, whereas the sustained note on the *do*, and most of all, the heavy drop of *in caelo*, closing with a direct fourth on the tonic, envelop it in majestic amplitude. There is there in sum an upsurge magnificent in its sobriety, a solemn affirmation, a sort of melodic condensation which the following part will only further bring out. Here there must be, obviously, with the vocal richness, a good rhythm, broad but alive, vibrant, a great protasis followed by its apodosis from the double point of view of movement and intensity. Would it be an exaggeration to see in the descent . . . *it in coelo* the inverse design of the rise (*sol-la-do do-la-do-sol*)? This would be one more harmony to point out.

Now, just as the text is about to announce in detail the vision which has just been considered globally and make a description of it, the melody is about to take up again, but much more lightly, the preceding melodic scheme, double recitation, brought about, both times, by the rise *sol-la-do*, and terminating first on a tranquil half-cadence in the low register (*sole*), then on a more important and warmer cadence on *do* (*pedibus ejus*), which partly takes up the design of *apparuit in coelo*; from this comes a new springing up, always in the same joyous and festive color (*in capite*), followed by a first heavy drop to the low *fa* (*ejus*), brought about by a very harmonious curve which is of a very authentically Gregorian line (*sol-si-do-la-la-fa*), to conclude on the definitive cadence (*stellarum duodecim*), identical reproduction this time, although more especially prepared, of that of the first phrase.

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It is clearly understood that the melody was not composed for the text, and that we are faced with a simple adaptation; it is necessary, however, to recognize that between one and the other there are some direct affinities.

Gradual *Audi filia*.

This time we have an authentic piece, from the Gregorian source-font itself, and given by the most ancient manuscripts. It is the Gradual for the feast of St. Cecilia, save for the verse, drawn like the old one and like the first part itself of the gradual, from Psalm 44, but different from that which is sung on November 22.

To avoid the confusions resulting from all these similarities of texts, I shall not concern myself first of all with anything but the first part of the gradual, the body itself of the response-gradual, up to the verse, exclusively, and shall not speak until later of the verse itself.

I have had the occasion earlier to say that the words of this *Audi filia* are no others (save variants of detail) than those of the verse of the gradual *Propter veritatem* of the Mass *Gaudeamus*, which we sang up until now; the coincidence is at least curious:

GRADUAL OF THE OLD MASS OF THE ASSUMPTION

Propter veritatem, et mansuetudinem et justitiam; et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua.

℣. *Audi filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam : quia concupivit rex speciem tuam.*

(Ps. 44, 22. 5 et 11-12).

GRADUAL OF THE NEW MASS OF THE ASSUMPTION

Audi filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam, et concupiscet rex pulchritudinem tuam.

℣. Tota decora ingreditur filia regis, texturæ aureæ sunt amictus ejus.

(Ps. 44, 22. 11-12 et 14).

GRADUAL OF THE MASS OF ST. CECILIA

Audi filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam : quia concupivit rex speciem tuam.

℣. Specie tua, et pulchritudine tua intende, prospere procede et regna.

(Ps. 44, 22. 11-12 et 5).

Naturally it was impossible to keep, for the body of the gradual, the melody of *Audi filia*, which served until now as verse. To our great good fortune, the same text *Audi filia* also exists, I just mentioned it, as a gradual properly speaking in the Gregorian repertoire, and is sung on the 22nd of November on the feast of St. Cecilia,¹ the little table above attesting to this. Thus there was nothing to do but accept it, with that much more earnestness in that the melody is really of great beauty, joyous and enthusiastic as one would have it.

One cannot keep from comparing the two melodies, both of the Gregorian golden age, which ornament the same words *Audi filia*, etc., respectively in the verse of the ancient gradual of the Assumption and in the gradual of St. Cecilia, now become the new gradual of the Assumption. In one part as in another, it is clearly an appeal, and a pressing appeal, an invitation to the soul to forget everything, to watch and answer the call which is addressed to it; but the accent is not the same. Whereas in the *Propter veritatem* the whole is bathed in a very soft atmosphere of deep interior recollection, respect and tenderness, here everything is extremely joyful, of a luminous and exuberant joy. The *sol* mode is affirmed, no longer, moreover, in the low register as in the introit, but in the upper notes of the modal scale. This is an authentic seventh mode piece with its characteristic flights.

Firstly, an initial appeal, very soft, very calm. A simple *recto tono* which, by the leap of a fourth, is concluded on the third in a graceful movement, I would say almost ingenuous.

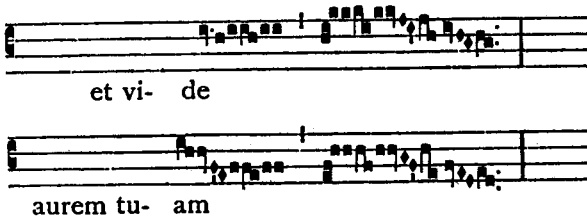
But hardly has this first appeal been formulated than the melody, after a second's hesitation, launches itself and deploys itself freely, with a suppleness which nothing hinders, in an interplay of light vocalises which command each other,

1. Several manuscripts assign this same gradual *Audi filia*, with its normal verse *Specie tua*, to the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin on September 8.

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answer each other, encompass the whole octave and seem to wish never to end; the cadences themselves are only simple rapid respirations, which, far from stopping the movement, seem to be there only to permit new and joyous reboundings (*et concupiscet, pulchritudinem*).

Melody almost beyond the sensibilities, marvelous in youthful spontaneity and fluidity, whose fantasy, however, is merely apparent, for one does not hesitate to recognize in it a constant theme which is developed, either in passing borrowings from an initial formula (for example, *et inclina* reproduces almost note for note the end of the preceding vocalise of *vide*), or by a very free imitation, like an amplification, in which the inspiration gives itself free sway, of the general design, or even by a simple transposition to lower registers of a long anterior passage:



There is nothing in this piece but harmony, joy and an opening forth; it is a lulling of the whole being in which it is infinitely good to let oneself be carried away.¹

Perhaps it would not be impossible to trace, in the course of this extraordinary vocal upsurge, some mark of the envelopment and the completely interior retention which characterize this same appeal in the verse of the gradual *Propter veritatem*. One might say that at the beginning of *et vide*, after the so very calm intonation which precedes it, the melody

1. To tell the truth, the melody is not peculiar to this gradual *Audi filia*; it is found elsewhere, for example in the very beautiful gradual *Salvum fac* of Wednesday of the second week of Lent, but perhaps with less development and richness of inspiration than here.

hesitates an instant to launch itself, which it does not do until passing the last syllable of the word; the same at the beginning of *et inclina, aurem*, one and the other more weighty; the *et concupiscet*, which pauses a moment in the low register; the final *pulchritudinem*.

It remains nonetheless true that the dominant note of this appeal of God to the soul is a wondering joy, overflowing, which does not reach attainment of and yet does not seek to hold itself in, from exultation, from pure jubilation. There is no longer an attempt to convince the soul, to cause it to decide in some manner to abandon all and render itself up. One sings with it the marvels of the love which henceforth will be its lot, the ocean of joy in which it will bathe completely for eternity.

Of course, all this calls for a light, rapid movement, and an extremely fluid rhythm, which sets well into relief the great musical line and leaves it all its infinite suppleness, without weighting it down with anything whatsoever of material nature. Let one be careful in particular not to mark the rhythmic subdivisions too much. Not that they should be ignored. They are necessary to maintain the firmness of the line and prevent it from degenerating into a sort of inconsistent and formless putty. Suppleness is not disorder, no more than precision stiffness. But these subdivisions should make themselves felt to the smallest degree possible; melt and almost disappear in the all over line, taking away from it none of its legato and flight.

It is the musical line which is to be, here more than ever, the great mistress of interpretation, which will draw after it in its orbit all the variations of tempo and intensity and communicate to them its own flexibility. Outside of a few more stressed neumes (*aurem, rex, pulchritudinem*), all the others are very light, even the re-launching *et concupiscet*, which succeeds a more marked cadence, yet very beautiful, on the low *fa*, is to be lifted up joyfully. It is only at the very last incise, and notably on the great climacus *re-do-si-sol*, that the movement draws back a little to prepare the final cadence, and again we must be very careful to avoid heaviness.

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If, in all this long lyric effusion, there is one passage in which the preceding recommendations should be applied, it is assuredly the beautiful vocalise which is found twice, on the dominant and the lower fourth (*vide* and *aurem tuam*), and which we have noted above. Let one not be impressed by the held notes and the quarter bars. A more precise notation would have indicated here trigons and distrophas, very light neumes, which accommodate themselves freely to repercussion and which, far from hampering the elan, favor it in a singular manner, on the contrary. It is evident that here the movement tends imperiously toward the melodic summit to which it is set in order. As for the quarter bars, added, no doubt, to permit a respiration which it is preferable to avoid, they would be neither more nor less disastrous if they signified, as much, moreover, as at the end, in the vocalise of *pulchritudinem tuam*, a pause or a retard, and the intensive line, calculated step by step against the melodic line, will succeed in giving this irresistible push its maximum dynamism.

Verse.

With the verse we fall back into adaptation. The *Audi filia* of St. Cecilia had as verse the *Specie tua*, v. 5 of Psalm 44. For the Assumption, verse 14 has been chosen, and in the new version of the Latin Psalter.¹

Thus it was necessary to adapt it to a gradual verse of the seventh mode. The centonizers have thought it best to restrict themselves to *Specie tua* of St. Cecilia, and we must congratulate them for the unity itself of the piece.

For this gradual melodically forms a whole. Although some of the formulas of the verse are found elsewhere, for example, in the *Oculi* of the Blessed Sacrament, it is nonetheless true that the whole of the old gradual *Audi filia* is clearly

1. It was obviously because this verse 14 does not exist in the Gregorian repertoire and that it was a question in full hypothesis of an adaptation to a pre-existing melody that the version of the new Psalter could be taken (cf. Msgr. Romita, *loc. cit.*)

from a single origin and in the same vein. Save an insistence on certain neumes, all the rest has the same lightness as in the body of the response and requires to be treated in the same way. *Procede* (*amictus* in the adaptation) reproduces even identically the beautiful vocalise of *aurem tuam* of which we have spoken earlier.

Thus there is no need to go into any great lengths on the interpretation to give this verse. Materially it falls quite well on the original, but it is clear that the melodic formulas of *intende*, *prosperere*, *regna*, with their intended and so very expressive insistence, would go better with the sense of the original text than with the adaptation, *texturae*, *dureae*, *ejus*. One should try, nevertheless, to preserve their original savor which is derived from their melodic context.

In its turn, the graceful recitations of *ingreditur filia* should, by a progressive crescendo, bring about the beautiful expressive rise of *regis*, whose summit, the high *sol*, taken by a bold leap of a fifth (this is the only time the melody touches the upper octave) demands, however, the maximum of softness and gentleness.

As for the last member, its marvelous architectural line shines forth with the first glance one casts at it. This rising progression by successive steps, *do* and *re*, from the tonic toward the upper *fa*, then the return from the *fa* to the tonic through a series of harmonious curves, yet more enveloped, arching itself across the *re*, *si* and *la* before poising itself finally on the *sol*. A magnificent picture of the ancient construction, made of a protasis and an apodosis which here covers the whole modal scale and condenses in a vibrant abridgement the whole musical economy of the piece.

We must recognize here, too, that this powerful melodic wave would better translate the *et regna* of the original than the *ejus* of the adaptation, even though the latter is also well explained, since it translates the triumphal entry of Our Lady to Paradise. Moreover, this formula is not peculiar to the *Audi filia*. It is met with also in two other graduals equally

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primitive, the *Benedicam Dominum* of the twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, and most of all the *Salvum fac* of which I have already spoken and which has many affinities with our *Audi filia*.

Alleluia *Assumpta est*.

This is, as I have said, the only piece which remains of the Mass *Gaudeamus*. Too, it is perhaps the one which formerly had the greatest success and elicited the greatest admiration. In fact, it is very beautiful, joyous, of a very simple joy, more popular, I could say freely, than that of the gradual. Enthusiastic and ringing clearly, it is truly the typical Alleluia-acclamation as it is generally conceived to be (even though most of the time the facts contradict the notion). I shall content myself with transcribing the rapid commentary which I wrote at an earlier date.

The Alleluia *Assumpta est* is an adaptation, although very old as such,¹ of the Alleluia *Te martyrum candidatus* of Martyrs. A very successful adaptation from the point of view, first of all, of the thought expressed. On one hand and the other it is a question of joyful and wondering praise, and the melody lends itself to this as completely as one might wish. As for the verbal adaptation, the two texts are grammatically almost copied one from the other, save in the second incise of the verse, *candidatus* — *Maria in caelum*, but the centonizer of the Assumption has been able to reconcile everything smoothly.

Everything is so clear in this piece that there is no reason for long commentaries. We shall be satisfied with some practical suggestions for the execution of the music.

The *Alleluia* itself, with its vocalise, obviously requires a vibrant interpretation, a warm, clear voice, a vigorous and precise rhythm. Nevertheless, it would be to make a mistake

1. It is found in some old manuscripts of St. Gall. No doubt it is in a later hand, but the fact that it is written in pure neumes, without staff lines, testifies to an already considerable antiquity.

out of context to upset or skim quickly over this fine musical phrase under pretext of joy. Ordinarily, art is made of nuances! . . . Before all else a very regular movement must be kept (which does not mean mechanical), and we must not be afraid to give it amplitude. It is, moreover, an error to think that a melodic phrase member is more solemn and enthusiastic to the extent that it is more rapid. It is, rather, the contrary which would be true, on condition, of course, that this amplitude should not degenerate into slowness, and that it be accompanied by vocal amplitude while at the same time supported by a rhythm full of life. Too, it so happens that, in the vocalise of our *Alleluia*, the manuscripts multiply the number of long notes. They are all stressed with the exception of the porrectus praepunctis *fa-la-fa* and the two notes which follow it.

Thus, in practice, rise in crescendo, joyfully, in an expressive fashion (quilisma on the *fa* of the second syllable, in the manuscripts) on the first two syllables, and lift up lightly the neumes affected by the accented syllable. Then, at the asterisk, broaden the movement openly and sing with all your heart, watching well that the upper notes are softened, and that the notes placed between the dotted notes are not hurried (they would quickly become a triplet figuration!). Descend with the appropriate decrescendo on the two climacus and rebound in crescendo with the melody at the beginning of the last incise in taking care to close softly into the high *la* and to make a diminuendo then, progressively, in movement and intensity, in such a manner as to set down without shock and in the most absolute calm this enthusiastic vocalise.

The *Verse* should start up again joyfully, simply at the beginning, with a beautiful expressive legato on the *est* and a phrase cadence, *caelum*, well prepared, without haste and well poised. Then comes the extraordinary and vibrant upsurge of *gaudet*, which requires to be sung with full lungs, with all the interior flame of which you are capable. This is the culminating point of the whole piece which imposes itself on us so much the more in that it is in no way prepared for. The first phrase is kept in the low register and is closed off almost

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heavily with a long torculus, preceded, at least in the Vatican edition, by a pes subpunctis, taking up, not without some heaviness, too, the preceding falling line. And here, almost without transition, the melody leaps up and springs in a single bound to the upper octave as though to unleash an excess of admiration and praise which it can no longer contain. It is like an explosion of joy.

Be careful, however, to take the high *do* without hardness, and to not hurry the pseudo-podatus *sido* intermediary between this dotted *do* and the following pressus, and follow well the beautiful and so very harmonious descending curve of *gaudet*, which is to bring back, on the word *exercitus*, the melody of the Alleluia with its jubilus. In sum, in this *gaudet*, all the energy should be concentrated on the *sol-la-sol* in leaning toward the high *do*, itself softened. Do not be afraid that this shading of retention will take away something from the expression of joy. On the contrary, it is the surest means of giving it its fullest efficacy in disencumbering it of any material element.

The similarity of the words *Alleluia* and *exercitus* suggest to me a remark of practical nature. The two words have identically the same melody, distributed in the same way on the syllables. Yet they are differently accented, one on the penult, the other on the ante-penult. This difference is enough to completely modify the intensive and rhythmic line, and in this very point, the interpretation.



In the word *Alleluia* the podatus *sol-si*, accented and rising, will be arsic, which in practice reduces the preceding

pressus to a thesis. On *exercitus*, on the contrary, the penult makes of this same podatus more a thetic point of turning, which leaves all the arsic force to the pressus.

It follows that the word *Alleluia* will be lifted up in a much more lively manner than the word *exercitus*, which will rise with less decision, even though the vocalise of *ci* should remain light, but without the elan of the accent *lu*. It is a question of rhythm. I would advise freely in the first case that the accent of *lu* be attacked vigorously in a very powerful arsic movement in order to lift up the seven notes of the vocalise (without, for all that, hurrying them), and to permit a light sliding over the heads of the two following neumes, whose ictuses are thus reduced to pure points of contact, almost imperceptible. This simple detail, which is only the natural resultant of the combination of the two melodic and verbal rhythms, gives the intonation a sense of flight which it would be childish to deny.

Offertory *Inimicitias*.

The offertory is very different from everything that has preceded it, as much in profound meaning as in melodic line. Both are grave, even austere.

The text, taken from the first chapters of Genesis, recalls the solemn condemnation raised against the serpent in the earthly Paradise after the fall of our first parents. This is, with the veiled promise of the Redemption, the announcement of the incomparable grandeur of the new Eve, of her absolute triumph over the powers of evil, of the irresolvable opposition created by God himself (*ponam*) between her and Satan. All the force of the text is in the definitive contrast between one and the other.

And it is precisely this contrast which is added to color the chosen melody, an adaptation of the offertory *Exaltabo te*, of Ash Wednesday, and the *In omnem terram*, of the Apostles. And it succeeds fully in this.

A second mode piece, but like the graduals of the same mode (*Justus ut palma* type), it is somewhat related to the

fifth mode, with more or less common formulas. The melody, broad and full of neumes, is not without some austerity, notably in the heavy drop to *fa* of *mulierem*. In that itself, although created originally to express a completely different thought, it lends itself very well to the idea of malediction, which here forms the background of the scene. We must not forget, indeed, that although the words of Genesis have been chosen for the Mass of the Assumption because they are the first scriptural text establishing the absolute antagonism between the Virgin and the Devil, and her total triumph over him, it is nonetheless true that this was first of all, and directly, a formula of malediction cast against Satan.

The merit of the melody is that it leaves in shadow none of these various aspects. Without even touching on the affirmative tone of the beginning and in particular of *ponam* (the shading is not without interest), it underlines wonderfully the contrast between:

on one hand, the two *persons*: *te* and *mulierem*;
and on the other, their two *races*: *semen tuum* and
semen illius;

and, while completely giving each of these two antagonists his real role, it succeeds in showing the crushing superiority of Our Lady.

Although the *inter te* develops in the upper register and thus seems very obvious, the solemnity of *et mulierem*, its somewhat strange and contorted line, its deliberate heaviness, and the very marked and somewhat unprecedented tonality of *fa*, which is established so clearly after the tonality of *la* minor in which we have been since the beginning, really solidifies this cadence and confers on it a vigor which casts the *mulierem* into singular relief. In the same way, although the first *semen*, with its swinging back and forth and its held notes draws the attention, the second, completely stressed, with its very expressive rise which covers a whole octave, imposes itself with an energy which the *illius* will increase still more, very assertive in the upper register, in opposition to the preceding *tuum*, relegated to the depths.

One should sing the whole thing with an ample movement, without affectation, but with solemnity. As has just been said, every word is meaningful; no detail should be neglected. One should watch especially that the *mulierem* be given very regularly and with firmness which will lend itself well to a slight broadening, notably at the approach to the cadence. As for the second *semen*, it is clear that it requires an allargando and a powerful crescendo, of which the final *illius* will equally partake. It would be an error to soften and mellow to any degree whatsoever this last word in which *is* is condensed for the last time the vigor of the whole piece.

Communion *Beatam me dicent*.

As for the communion, many will no doubt regret that we have not kept the melody sung at the Papal Mass of November 1, 1950. Its qualities are certainly not without value. It was that of *Optimam partem* of the Mass *Gaudeamus*, and the recollection was interesting. Also that of the *Gloriosa dicta sunt* of the Immaculate Conception, which ends, like the *Beatam me dicent*, with the same *quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est*, and is moreover, of the same dimensions. And what is more, it is a ravishing melody, clear, joyful and festive, full of filial love.¹

Unfortunately, the first part lent itself only with great difficulty to an adaptation. Also, after trials and hesitations, it was decided to give the job up. Recourse was had to a sixth mode piece to translate the joy and gratitude of Our Lady for all the benefits she received. The *fa* mode, so often affected in modern compositions, was treated by the ancients with happy facility. It, too, sounds bright, but with childlike clarity, full of grace and freshness. Essentially light, it excels in depicting spontaneous and unaffected joy which springs directly from the heart.

After a very low intonation, which undulates about the tonic, our *Beatam me dicent*, borrowing a customary formula

1. Cf. *Revue Gregorienne*, 1947, p. 144

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of the *fa* mode, rises joyfully by a series of graceful curves to the upper fourth, where it hangs a moment before falling back to the tonic. It is, however, only a temporary descent, for this first flight immediately provokes another, this one enthusiastic and direct, which in two wing-beats reaches high *do*, hangs for a moment on the word *mihi*, thus well set in relief, before the very marked recollection of *magna* in the low register, and in finishing, the vigorous affirmation of *qui potens est*.

In the original — *Ecce Dominus veniet* of Friday of the Ember Days of Advent — completely filled with the luminous joy which will accompany the coming of the Messiah (*et erit in die illa lux magna*), the *lux magna*, coming as though overlapping, rings forth brightly and makes its force felt powerfully. Here again the adaptation is fortunate, and the melody given to the lips of Our Lady in no way betrays the thought from which it originally had sprung.

In both pieces it is truly an explosion of joy, at the same time reflective and overflowing with gratitude, respect and love.

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