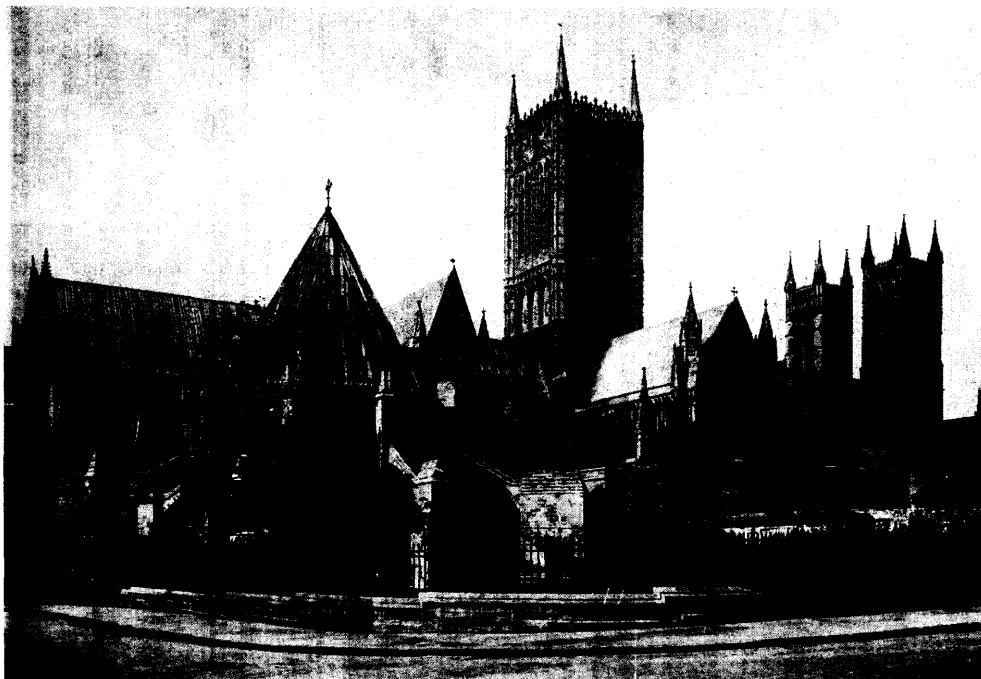


SACRED MUSIC

Spring 2002

Volume 129 No. 1





View From Northeast, Cathedral, Lincoln Gothic. XIII-XIV Cent.

SACRED MUSIC

Volume 129, Number 1, Spring 2002

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Job Openings

While the current clerical sex scandal in the United States is a profound moral disgrace, it also points to a leadership crisis of monumental proportions. That the church's leadership (bishops, priests, seminary professors, theologians) engaged in, encouraged, allowed, or even protected such shameful behavior for so long is a serious dereliction of duty. It is the duty of such men to preserve pure and intact the Deposit of Faith, yet most of us know that many of these guardians of Sacred Tradition have shown little respect for the precious treasure they were supposed to be guarding.

What does all this have to do with liturgical music? The connection is that, while Sacred Tradition consists of teachings on faith and morals received, protected, and handed on, it also consists of liturgical customs. Admittedly these liturgical customs are subordinate, but subordinate only in the sense that they are *supportive*. They are not irrelevant nor are they separable. Here we need to take a page from our Eastern Christian brethren for whom *all* of Sacred Tradition is a seamless garment. They would no more think of having a Teen Life Rock-n-Roll Divine Liturgy than we would think of jettisoning faith and morals but keeping the Tridentine Mass. The two things go together.

The upshot is this: Any guardian of Tradition who shows a serious, sustained disrespect for orthodox faith or morals is not doing his job. Similarly, any guardian of Tradition who shows a serious, sustained disrespect for liturgical customs (including the treasury of sacred music) is not doing his job. In the secular world what usually happens when a guardian is found seriously deficient in his duties?

Paul Brentwood

The Eternal High Priest

Jesus Christ,

The Lord of life and death
Called home to His peace
The

Right Reverend Monsignor Dr. Johannes Overath, P.A.

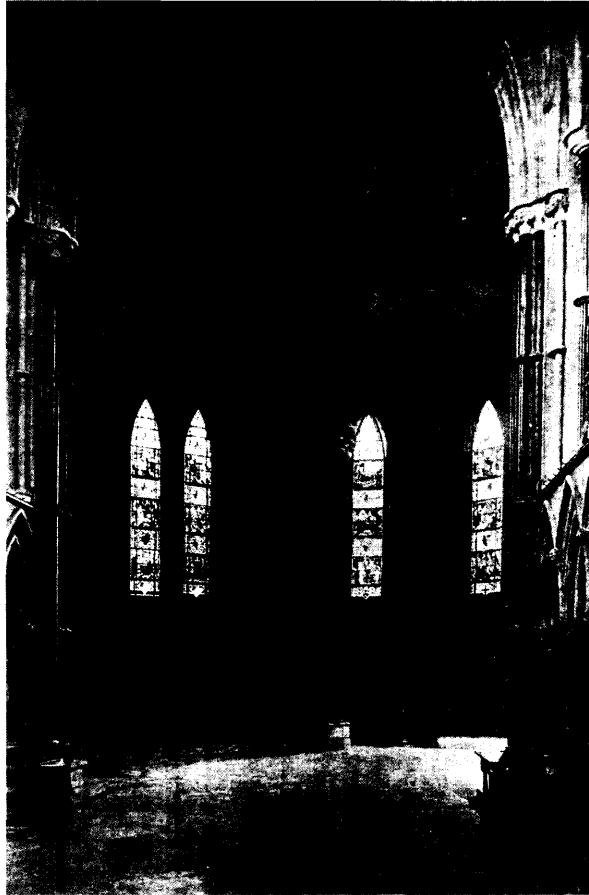
Professor emeritus
Canon Honourary of Cologne and Palestrina Cathedrals,
Honourary President—General of the
Federated Caecilian Societies of Germany,
President *ad honorem* of the Consociatio Internationalis
Musicae Sacrae and the
Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, Rome;
Member of the Royal Belgian Academy of Sciences,
Literature and the Fine Arts;
Honourary Member of the Pontifical Roman Theological Academy

On 24 May 2002, at the beginning
Of his 90th year of earthly life.
The Requiem Mass was chanted at 1000 hours on 05 June 2002
In the Cathedral of Cologne.
RIP

To a great many people, Johannes Overath was a fatherly and priestly
friend
And teacher capable of inspiring and admonishing with vigour and skill.
His unflagging love and fervent concern—particularly as a *peritus*
Of the Second Vatican Council—were directed
To the preservation and promotion
Of a liturgy worthy of the God we worship, and of its *musica sacra*.
The Church Music Association of America
Requests the alms of an Ave for the repose of his soul.
With great gratitude we shall hold his memory
In high honour.

For the CMAA

Reverend Robert A. Skeris, KCHS
President
01 June 2002



Chapter House. Cathedral, Lincoln Gothic. XIII Cent.

MUSIC FOR ALL SEASONS: THE BYRD *GRADUALIA* REVISITED

"If I have set to these holy words music not entirely unsuitable, let the honor be God's (as is fitting), but let the pleasure be yours."

—William Byrd, preface to *Gradualia* I (1605)¹

It is easy to associate the great music of the Renaissance with contemporary centers of power and privilege—richly endowed chapels and splendid courts, flourishing with the support of royal patrons. William Byrd composed his *Gradualia* in quite different circumstances. This year-long cycle of Mass propers and Office music for the Roman rite was, to put it plainly, underground art. As England entered the seventeenth century under what amounted to a state-run church, religious nonconformity was an offense against the Crown and loyalty to the Pope was considered treason. Taking part in Catholic worship on English soil was punishable by heavy fines, exile, or worse. Priests caught celebrating Mass were sometimes executed. When Mass took place, it was not in the cathedrals, or even in the parish churches, but in well-hidden domestic quarters or the prison cells where clergy were often confined.² Amid such difficulties,

BYRD *GRADUALIA*

Byrd wrote a collection of Latin liturgical music—109 pieces in all—“to adorn divine things,” as he explained in his preface, “with the highest art of which I was capable.”³

In the course of the year 2000, a small group of musicians at Stanford University sang the twelve principal sets of feast-day Mass propers from *Gradualia*, each in the context of a sung Latin Mass. We soon found that this music had lost none of its power to inspire in the intervening four hundred years. As we worked through the music for each feast, watching the annual cycle slowly take shape, it became clear we were engaged with a unique masterpiece of liturgical art.

Singing this repertoire brings a different set of demands than, say, singing a cycle of Josquin Masses. The style of *Gradualia* reflects the precarious situation of English Catholic liturgy in Byrd’s day. Unlike many of his non-liturgical earlier works, these pieces are lean, compact, often jewel-like—more Hilliard miniatures than vast decorative tapestries. The music is resilient enough to be sung by a cast of dozens in a large Gothic cathedral, but it was written for the intimate, even secretive atmosphere of domestic worship, to be performed by a small group of musicians and heard by a small congregation. We tried to recreate something of this ambience: singing in a modest, non-echoing space with one voice to a part, discussing the texts in informal rehearsals and attempting to express them through their musical settings.

This article is essentially a set of notes on our “revival” of the *Gradualia* cycle. We hope it may inspire other singers and choirmasters who are interested in long-range liturgical projects. It covers three general topics: first, a brief account of the historical context; second, the structure and content of the collection; and last, some practical observations on its performance, both in Byrd’s day and in our own.⁴

The background of Byrd’s Latin liturgical music

The two books of *Gradualia* were the culmination of a long, varied musical career. Like most professional musicians in Renaissance Europe, Byrd took up his trade at an early age. He almost certainly sang in the Chapel Royal during Mary Tudor’s reign (1553-1558), “bred up to music under Thomas Tallis.” This placed him in the best choir in England during his impressionable years, alongside the finest musicians of his day, who were brought in from all over the British Isles, from the Netherlands, even from Spain. Queen Mary spent her brief reign reacting to the excesses of Protestant austerity under her predecessor Edward VI. One of the more pleasant aspects of this was her taste for elaborate Latin church music. The old Catholic festal calendar was restored, with all the attendant ceremony and music for both Mass and Office. Byrd seems to have thrived on the exuberant, creative atmosphere; there is even evidence of his beginning to compose during these years. This revival of intensive liturgical culture appears to have left a lasting mark on the young musician.

He was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1570 by the staunchly Protestant Queen Elizabeth, and returned to the court, where he worked as a singer, composer and organist for more than two decades. Even as he won fame for his Anglican music, he was writing bitter Latin motets about the plight of the English Catholic community. He eventually tired of compromise and left the court, keeping his position at the Chapel *in absentia*. In 1593 he moved with his family to the small town of Stondon Massey, Essex, near several sympathetic enclaves of Catholic gentry, and spent the remaining thirty years of his life there, devoting himself more and more to music for the Roman liturgy. He published his three famous settings of the Ordinary between 1592 and 1595, and followed them in 1605 and 1607 with the two books of *Gradualia*. He continued to write secular songs, madrigals, and keyboard pieces until the end of his life, but his later church music, composed during the years in Essex, is exclusively Latin. He died on July 4, 1623, and is buried in an unmarked grave in the Stondon churchyard.

Every stage of Byrd’s career was affected by the political and religious controversies of his day. In such volatile times, the outward practices of worship were often the only touchstone for inward loyalty—and in the new English church, disloyalty to the established religion was also disloyalty to the state. The majority of recalcitrant Catholics were not punished as dissenters per se, but as “recusants,” those who “refused” to take part in approved public worship and instead cultivated their own alternatives. The principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi*—how people worship reflects, even determines, what they believe—was a driving force of the era, and public prayer was, as it had been for centuries in pre-Reformation England, inextricably linked with music-making. By composing music for the Mass and Office on the most important feasts of the year, many of which had been abolished in the Protestant reform of the calendar, Byrd situated himself at the center of the debate over religious practice. He also joined in the defiant self-definition of the recusant community, people who clung to the old feasts and their right to celebrate them as they saw fit.

“Notes as a garland” to crown the year: structure of the *Gradualia* cycle⁵

The music in *Gradualia* falls into four general categories: a) propers for the Mass; b) propers for the Office; c) other ritual items; and d) a small number of freely chosen pieces.

The primary cycle of Mass propers covers twelve principal feasts of the year—the twelve feasts we sang in 2000—and provides, with judicious shuffling, the materials necessary for eight more. In addition to these twenty holidays, Byrd provided music for the seasonal votive Masses of the Virgin Mary, the “Lady Mass” so beloved in the English tradition. He also included the necessary pieces to adapt the Corpus Christi proper into a votive Mass of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the year. The music for Mass is more or less evenly distributed among the 1605 and 1607 volumes of *Gradualia*; the cycle is summarized here in Table 1.

Table 1: the Mass propers of *Gradualia*

Feast	Date	Scoring and mode	Book
Christmas	December 25	4 voices (SSTB) ⁷ , d	2
Epiphany	January 6	4 voices (SSTB), d	2
Purification	February 2	5 voices (SMATB), d	1
Annunciation	March 25	5 voices (SMATB), d	1
Easter	variable	5 voices (SSATB), d	2
Ascension	40 days after Easter	5 voices (SSATB), C	2
Pentecost	50 days after Easter	5 voices (SSATB), G	2
Corpus Christi	2nd Thurs. after Pentecost	4 voices (SATB), [G] ⁸	1
S.S. Peter & Paul	June 29	6 voices (SSATTB), C	2
[S. Peter’s Chains] ⁶	[August 1]	[6 voices (SSATTB), C]	2
Assumption	August 15	5 voices (SMATB), d	1
Nativity of Mary	September 8	5 voices (SMATB), d	1
All Saints’ Day	November 1	5 voices (SSATB), F	1

Additional Marian feasts provided for, though not named by Byrd:

Visitation (July 2); Our Lady of the Snows (August 5); Presentation of Mary (November 21); Conception of Mary (December 8); the octaves of the Assumption and the Nativity; and the vigil of the Assumption.

Votive Masses of the Virgin Mary:

Advent, Christmastide, Lent, Eastertime, after Pentecost

Votive Masses of the Blessed Sacrament:

Lent, Eastertide, *per annum*

Each set includes the full complement of proper items: the introit, the gradual, alleluia, tract and/or sequence, the offertory, and the communion. The prevailing tonality, and (with a minor exception at Christmas) the set of vocal ranges, remains the same within any given day. The music (again, with a few minor exceptions) does not draw on the pre-existing chant settings, or on other set themes, though there is a subtle thematic unity running through each Mass. Every day has a distinctive flavor of its own, created by the intersection of its unique set of texts and Byrd's musical response to them.

Polyphonic Mass propers are relatively rare in the history of music.⁹ The main reason is of course a practical one. The five movements of the ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus/Benedictus, and Agnus Dei) are fixed and suitable for almost any liturgical occasion. The proper is usually specific to one day in the calendar, which makes it a luxury item both for musicians and for their patrons. It is telling that even Josquin composed few. Systematic proper settings, where they do occur, tend to coincide with an environment of special care and concern for liturgical propriety, beyond the all-purpose splendor provided by ornate settings of the Mass ordinary. The English Catholic community in Byrd's day, despite all hardship, was such an environment.

The Office music in *Gradualia* is of two types. There is a cycle of antiphons for major feasts, running parallel with the cycle of Mass propers; it is reminiscent, on a much smaller scale, of the dazzling repertoire cultivated for the sung Office at the Chapel Royal under Queen Mary. These feast-day antiphons are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: the annual Office cycle of *Gradualia*

Title	Feast	Antiphon to	Book
Hodie Christus natus est	Christmas	Magnificat, 2 nd Vespers	2
O admirabile commercium	Circumcision	First psalm, Vespers/Lauds	2
Senex puerum portabat	Candlemas	Magnificat, 1 st Vespers	1
Hodie beata Virgo	Candlemas	Magnificat, 2 nd Vespers	1
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia	Easter Eve	Psalm, Vespers	1
Vespere autem sabbati	Easter Eve	Magnificat, Vespers	1
O Rex gloriae	Ascension	Magnificat, 2 nd Vespers	2
Non vos relinquam	Pentecost	Magnificat, 1 st Vespers	2
O quam suavis	Corpus Christi	Magnificat, 1 st Vespers	2
Ego sum panis vivus	Corpus Christi	Benedictus, Lauds	2
O sacrum convivium	Corpus Christi	Magnificat, 2 nd Vespers	1
Tu es Pastor ovium	Peter & Paul; P ad Vincula	Magnificat, 1 st Vespers	2
Quodcunque ligaveris	Peter & Paul; P ad Vincula	Benedictus, Lauds	2
Hodie Simon Petrus	Peter & Paul	Magnificat, 2 nd Vespers	2

The remainder of the Office music is primarily for the Little Office of the Virgin, which was said or sung by a large number of English recusants in Byrd's day. He set all four of the relevant hymns (*Quem terra, pontus, aethera; O gloriosa Domina; Memento salutis auctor;* and *Ave maris stella*), as well as the four standard Marian antiphons (*Alma redemptoris mater, Ave regina caelorum, Regina caeli,* and *Salve Regina*). He also included a number of related pieces, such as *In manus tuas*, the compline prayer *Visita quaesumus*, the response *Deo gratias*, the Litany of the Saints, and the intriguing *Salve sola Dei genitrix*, a humanist paraphrase of the *Ave Maria* in hexameters.

Both volumes of *Gradualia* also contain a handful of other liturgical and para-liturgical items. Although they fall outside the scope of the present discussion, they share the same ethic and aesthetic as the main cycles listed above. The well-known *Ave verum corpus*, a prayer prescribed by English devotional handbooks to be said at the elevation, is appended to the Corpus Christi propers. The psalm-motet *Ecce quam bonum* exhorts brethren to dwell together in unity (a recurring problem among the small, beleaguered recusant community); *Adoramus te Christe* and *Christus resurgens* evoke the mysterious hours between Byrd's setting of the Good Friday Passion choruses and his Easter Mass propers; *Plorans plorabit* laments over the "Lord's flock taken captive" in the bluntest of terms, while *Laudate Dominum* and *Venite exsultemus* are invitations to praise in joyous six-voice polyphony. Not a single piece, whether in the feast-day cycle or apart from it, appears to be out of place in the collection.

Some reflections on performance

The most rewarding aspect of singing the *Gradualia* propers was the opportunity to watch the repertoire unfold through the liturgical seasons. What looked to us like a daunting endeavor when sketched out on the calendar turned out to be quite manageable from one feast day to the next. The natural spacing of the festal cycle gave us time to rehearse each Mass as it approached, though the pace did quicken somewhat during the month of June because of the late date of Easter that year, which brought the six-voice music for Sts. Peter and Paul immediately on the heels of the Ascension / Pentecost / Corpus Christi set. Each Mass generally got four full rehearsals (conducted, in domestic Elizabethan style, around a dining-room table) and one "dry run" in the church.

It is clear from Byrd's own statements that he reflected very deeply on the text as he was composing these pieces, and we know that the people who sang them, or who heard them in the congregation, were steeped in the rhetoric and images of the liturgy. We discussed the texts among ourselves, and made detailed programs with translations, attempting to be completely literal and let the words speak for themselves. To translate the Scripture readings, we used the original Douai-Rheims version (an English Catholic project of the same generation as the *Gradualia*), which follows the Vulgate text almost to a fault.

Putting together these liturgies was to some extent a process of stripping down. As befits a solemn High Mass, all texts (including the lessons) were sung rather than read, with no amplification beyond the human voice and the acoustic of the church. Like our seventeenth-century counterparts, we were very fortunate to have a priest (Fr. Christopher Dietz, OFM Conv.) who was a fine singer and enjoyed the task. The one audible text not sung was the Roman Canon, which was said softly, interrupted only by the ringing of bells—seven or eight minutes that became the favorite of several musicians and listeners who were otherwise unfamiliar with the liturgy. There was also a fair amount of silence, which was a valuable counterweight for the intensity and concentration of Byrd's polyphonic settings. Each service fell into four more or less equal parts: one-quarter Byrd, one-quarter chant, one-quarter singing by the priest, and the remainder prayerful silence. At least one person complimented us on the silence instead of the music, which made us unexpectedly happy.

The ordinary was sung in Gregorian chant by the musicians and the congregation. We celebrated all twelve feast days at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in downtown Palo Alto, California, home of the St. Ann Choir (directed by William Mahrt) and of a congregation well-versed in singing chant ordinaries. We used four settings:

- *Lux et origo* (I) for Easter, Ascension and Pentecost
- *Fons bonitatis* (II) for Epiphany and All Saints
- *Cunctipotens genitor* (IV) for Corpus Christi and SS. Peter & Paul
- *Cum iubilo* (IX) for the four Marian feasts

At our final Mass, on Christmas Day, we celebrated the completion of the cycle by singing the Byrd ordinary for four voices.

It became apparent over the course of the year that Byrd had thought of all the little things. There are always sufficient places to breathe, even when singing one-on-a-part, which can hardly be said for the rest of the Renaissance sacred repertoire (or even for the rest of Byrd.) When there are two Masses close together in the calendar, such as Christmas and Epiphany or Ascension and Pentecost, the two are for the same arrangement of voices. This made even more sense in 1605, when the pace of travel was slower and major feasts exposed Catholics to the risk of capture, but it is still convenient for singers in our day. The music changes when special circumstances require it, such as the procession with candles on Candlemas, which takes place in winter in a darkened room. The Mass proper for that day is in five parts, but the piece for the procession, *Adorna thalamum tuum*, is only in three. As we quickly found out, this change in scoring frees up two of the singers to lead the two lines of the procession and intone the first processional chants, while the other three stay behind in the better-lit choir area to sing the music provided by Byrd.

A surprising link between seventeenth-century and modern performances of *Gradualia* is the fact that women appear to have taken part in this repertoire from the very beginning. The obvious parallel is with the domestic performance of madrigals and other secular music. The English Catholics pursued girls' education, especially when it came to subjects such as Latin or singing that helped preserve their religious heritage. Some of their most famous authors, patrons, and martyrs were women. Hundreds went overseas to live in English convents, which became renowned for their intellectual and artistic life. The nuns there cultivated music at the highest levels: the liturgy at the English Benedictine convent in Brussels, for example, was served by the renowned composer and organist Richard Dering in the early seventeenth century. At home in England, recusant landowners were often imprisoned or forcibly exiled, leaving their wives to manage the house and its round of clandestine worship. A report survives from as early as 1586 that Byrd was visiting a Catholic house with "male and female choristers, members of the household." One of the original copies of *Gradualia* is signed with some flourish (on the cover of the alto partbook) by a woman named Jane Staunton. This appears to have been the first time in history that men and women sang this kind of liturgical music together: a small point, but arguably an important one.

One famous patron of the liturgy was the wealthy Lady Montague, an acquaintance of Byrd. The description of her domestic church is worth quoting at some length.

She built a chappell in her house (which in such a persecution was to be admired) and there placed a very faire Altar of stone, wherto she made an ascent with steps and enclosed it with railles: and to have every thing conformable, she built a Quire for singers, and set up a pulpit for the Priests, which perhaps is not to be seene in all England besides. Heere almost every weeke was a sermon made, and on solemne feasts the sacrifice of the Masse was celebrated with singing, and musicall instruments, and sometimes also with Deacon & subdeacon. And such was the concourse and resort of Catholikes, that sometimes there

were 120 together, and 60 communicants at a time had the benefit of the B. Sacrament.¹⁰

She continued to cultivate the arts for many years, and after she died in 1608, Byrd composed an elegy for her. It was one of the last pieces he wrote.

The Montague house was of course a rare, even a unique, case of recusant liturgical propriety, “perhaps not to be seene in all England besides.” This was far from the norm. We have a number of accounts of sung feast-day liturgies among the English recusants, but it is difficult to know if, and when, Byrd’s great musical cycle was truly done justice. Hundreds of copies of *Gradualia* were printed; only a handful now survive. Contemporary manuscripts copied from these books reveal a jumble of correct and incorrect groupings, scribal alterations, and thoroughly non-liturgical arrangements for the lute. The most solid evidence we have on their reception is the record of an unfortunate Jesuit who was arrested in a London pub, in the aftermath of the 1605 Gunpowder Plot, in possession of “certain papistical books written by William Byrd, and dedicated to the Seigneur Henry Houardo, earl of Northampton”—a clear reference to the first set of *Gradualia*.¹¹ The more successful uses of this music have, by their very nature, remained undetected.

These works have also had a mixed reception in our day. They sit uneasily in both standard categories of sacred polyphony, the Mass and the motet. Well-meaning critics in the late twentieth century have berated, or sympathized with, Byrd for not achieving the same expressive results with set liturgical texts as he did with the impassioned *Cantiones sacrae* of his earlier years. One author laments the fact that pieces from *Gradualia* “found their way for the first time into choral evensong only during the nineteenth century”¹²: an accurate observation, though a slightly odd criterion for the acceptance of Roman liturgical music. The great Anglican choral tradition has cultivated short free-standing works (including even Latin motets) as “anthems,” pieces *ad libitum* to be sung at the conclusion of a service such as evensong; the reform of the Communion service in England removed the need for musical settings of the proper. Being neither anthems nor motets, the *Gradualia* propers, with the exception of a few well-known pieces, have often gone unnoticed even in their own country.

Placing (or replacing) this music in its ritual context has been a rewarding project, though we, like Byrd’s contemporaries, are far from exhausting its possibilities. The excellent five-volume *Gradualia* series of the new Byrd Edition, edited by Philip Brett for Stainer & Bell, was completed only in 1997. Our own reconstruction of the main feast-day cycle barely covered three-fifths of the music. We are continuing with other services—most recently a Byrd compline using a number of the Office items, including *Visita quaesumus*, *In manus tuas*, *Deo gratias*, *Salve Regina*, and the Litany. We hope to perform the votive Masses in the future, as well as the Passion choruses and other largely undiscovered riches.¹³

“The expressing well of our songs,” Byrd once wrote, “is the life of our labours.” Many thanks are due to the musicians who gave their time and talent to the *Gradualia* cycle in 2000. Lois Gerber (soprano), Jeff Hoel (tenor), and William Mahrt (bass), along with the present author (alto and director), formed the core of the group and sang throughout the year. Deborah Barney, Walter Baxter, Robert Busch, Joanne Dadd, Virginia Hancock, Lisa Meteyer, and Kaneez Munjee all took part in one or more of the five-part and six-part Masses. The project was made possible by our intrepid celebrant, Fr. Christopher Dietz, who would have been the pride of any recusant chapel.

NOTES

¹*Byrd Edition* vol. 5, ed. Philip Brett (London, 1989), xxxii.

²The best evocation of these years is still Philip Caraman's *The Other Face: Catholic Life under Elizabeth I* (New York, 1960). The opening chapters of John Bossy's *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London, 1975) provide a good deal of historical and cultural background; see especially "Separation of Meats and Days: Feast and Fast," 110ff., and "Separation in Worship: Recusancy and the Mass," 121ff.

³*Byrd Edition* vol. 5, xxxii.

⁴The most complete scholarly account of the cycle is found in Joseph Kerman's *Masses and Motets of William Byrd* (Berkeley, 1981), 216-340. Its liturgical complexities were first untangled by James Jackman in his 1963 article "Liturgical Aspects of Byrd's *Gradualia*," *Musical Quarterly* 49, 17ff.

⁵The "garland" metaphor (or, more broadly, "decorative flourish": *notulas pro coronide*) is from Byrd's 1607 preface to the second book of *Gradualia*.

⁶This Mass uses the same propers as the greater feast of SS. Peter and Paul, with the exception of the alleluia verse *Solve iubente Deo*, included by Byrd in *Gradualia* II.

⁷Byrd's introit *Puer natus* is scored for SATB, the only such irregularity in the proper sets; this and other unusual traits point to the Christmas pieces having been among the composed.

⁸Corpus Christi is in fact G mixolydian, with an F-natural in the key signature and a pervasive pull toward the subdominant.

⁹A handful of splendid exceptions prove the rule, chief among them the medieval *Magnus Liber Organi* and the *Choralis Constantinus* of Heinrich Isaac.

¹⁰Richard Smith, *The Life of the most honourable and vertuous lady the La. Magdalen Viscountesse Montague* (S. Omer, 1627), 28-29.

¹¹Edmund Fellowes, *William Byrd* (London, 1936), 43.

¹²John Milsom, "Sacred songs in the chamber," in *English Choral Practice 1400-1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge, 1995), 178.

¹³Recordings of *Gradualia* are still somewhat spotty, especially outside the central group of Mass propers. The complete set of Marian Masses was recorded by Gavin Turner's William Byrd Choir in 1990 (Hyperion); this valuable CD has recently been re-released. A new set of recordings is now in progress, sung by The Cardinal's Musick under the direction of Andrew Carwood and David Skinner (ASV). It will eventually encompass the complete Latin works of Byrd. At the time of writing, about one-third of the Mass propers and associated music have been recorded in this series.

KERRY MCCARTHY



Nave, Looking East. Cathedral, Lincoln Gothic, XIII Cent.

INTERVIEW WITH CALVERT SHENK (JUNE 22, 2001)

Kurt Poterack: *Tell me about how you got started in church music and your career up to this point.*

Calvert Shenk: Like many people I began with piano lessons as a small boy which rather early migrated to organ lessons—about age twelve—and that, more and more, became an interesting thing to me. I ended up majoring in organ and church music in college at Northwestern where I took my Bachelors in Music in 1962 and my Masters in 1963, and from that point on was a full-time church musician with one or two small interruptions. That was an interesting time to do that, of course, because pretty much the same time I graduated from college I came into the Church. In 1962, to be exact, just the year that they began the Council. So I prepared a pre-Conciliar repertoire and approach. About the time the Council was in full swing, I was drafted into the army in 1964 and came out in 1966 to find that everything had pretty much been swept away—at least for the time being. I had a full-time church job in Battle Creek, MI, for quite a long time (18 years), in Milwaukee for about five years, and for eleven years I was director of music at the Cathedral in Birmingham, AL. And then, about a year ago, I took up my present position at the major seminary in Detroit as director of music and associate professor of music.

KP: *You said that, in a sense, you were trained for the pre-Conciliar Church.*

CS: That would be a bit of an over-statement in that my actual training as a church musician was not under Catholic auspices at all. I had to train myself to a large degree as far as specifically Catholic elements in regard to chant and liturgy (and things like

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that) but whatever formation there was in relation to Catholic Church music was certainly of that time.

KP: *So you weren't trained at Northwestern to be a Catholic Church musician specifically, but did they have any training in chant there, or were you completely self-taught?*

CS: Not any practical training. Northwestern was a big school for music history and musicological research so the discussion of the chant was from an academic standpoint—virtually nothing about its performance.

KP: *But when you taught yourself chant did you take any sort of a summer course, or do readings, or listen to recordings?*

CS: I did a good deal of reading and consulting with other people who knew quite a bit about it, but I was perhaps a bit of an anomaly amongst “old timey” Catholic church musicians. I never had any formal course work in the chant, which I regret, but that's the case.

KP: *Now, was your advanced degree a masters in church music?*

CS: Yes, Northwestern offered specific degrees in church music—a masters and bachelors. The distinction between that (a masters in church music) and a masters in organ performance was almost non-existent. A few courses were different in the curriculum but people were encouraged to get the church music degree rather than a straight organ performance degree in the belief that it would help them in getting church jobs.

KP: *Does anything like that still exist? It seems to be a current concern of the AGO, and others, that too many organists are trained as organ performers and not as practical church musicians.*

CS: It is a concern of mine as well and my impression is that Northwestern still offers pretty much the same kind of curriculum. I know things have changed much since I was there, but I still think that it is the Department of Organ and Church Music. It was quite a well-rounded program. You could take all kinds of courses like liturgics, church choir repertoire and hymn-playing, service playing, and improvisation. These were all required courses for that major and if you were a straight organ major you would take some, but not all of these courses.

KP: *Now, you are a composer as well. Did this come about as a result of formal study or did it flow naturally from your knowledge of theory and experience as an organist?*

CS: Partly, the church music major at Northwestern required four years of music theory and in the later stages of that there was a great deal of composition of a sort involved. I did a great deal of improvisation which I studied in college and which is a particular interest of mine. But I would say that mainly I write things because when I first started working in church music after the Council there was almost nothing suitable for the vernacular liturgy that I thought worth performing. So I started out with doing lots of responsorial psalms and Introit settings and lots of Mass Ordinaries—purely practical things for my own use with the church I directed. Though I knew much music theory I was a bit of an autodidact in that I learned a lot by writing lots of music as opposed to taking lots of courses in composition.

KP: *As you said, you came into the Church at a very interesting time; you caught just the tail end of the pre-Conciliar liturgical “atmosphere,” you were in the army for a few years, and then came out to find, in a sense, that everything had changed. Did you have any idea things would change that dramatically?*

CS: I think hardly anyone thought things would change that rapidly or, indeed, that dramatically. We were assured in 1962 when everyone was very excited about the

prospects of a Council, that this would set the seal on the wonderful achievements of the Church in the Twentieth Century and continue current thinking and trends in the Church. The Council would endorse and institutionalize the ideals of the classic liturgical movement. In fact I remember clearly, because I was working in Chicago at the time of the council, when Cardinal Meyer came back from a session of the Council to assure his seminarians that despite the new document on the liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) the canon of the Mass would never be celebrated in any language in the Roman Rite other than Latin. But the ideas that were in the air were pretty much things like having the readings almost always in the vernacular and perhaps simplifying some of the ceremonies. The idea of a whole different kind of music was not thought of much at all before the Council by anybody as far as I know, with the exception of perhaps a few very advanced European types like Pere Gelineau.

KP: *In your current position at the seminary in Detroit you have seminarians—future priests—in your charge. What do you consider the most important thing(s) to teach them?*

CS: There are three, really. The rector of the seminary has pretty much outlined his idea of what should be going on. The first, very practical, is that everyone who graduates from the seminary be able to sing the Mass. There are required courses on this on both the college level and the graduate level. Secondly, there is a great desire on the part of the rector to instill in the seminarians the basic principles of sacred music. Again there are two required courses, one on the undergraduate level and one on the graduate theology level on the principles, history, development, and philosophy of liturgical music from the point of view of what the Church actually requires and encourages. Thirdly, there is an exposure to sacred music of various styles, but all safely within the parameters of the Church's actual mandates in the daily services—Mass and Office in the Chapel. Hence, there is an emphasis upon singing the actual text of the liturgy at Mass as opposed to substituting a lot of hymns. There is a considerable emphasis on chant and polyphony about which the seminarians are quite eager. In general I try to provide seminarians with a sense that there is more to sacred music than what they may hear in their local suburban parishes so that when they emerge as the clergy of tomorrow they will be able to influence the course of church music in this country. That is a part of the rector's mandate to me. He likes to say that he wants everyone who graduates from his seminary to be able to explain to people why the *Vexilla Regis* is a better hymn than the *Old Rugged Cross*.

KP: *You have seminarians from the Archdiocese of Detroit, and from where else?*

CS: From a number of other dioceses in Michigan including Gaylord, Marquette, Kalamazoo, and Lansing, from a couple of dioceses in Illinois, from a diocese in Wisconsin, a diocese in Iowa, and a diocese as far away as Helena, Montana. Although the majority of the seminarians are from the Archdiocese of Detroit there is a rather healthy representation from other places and they expect that diversity of region to increase each year.

KP: *Is the seminary's sacred music program a draw or is it something they are even aware of?*

CS: I think that the seminary's principle draw is for its orthodoxy and academic standards. A very competent and able and solid faculty, plus the reputation of Bishop Vigneron himself—the rector—and many of his close colleagues and friends in the episcopate are influenced by the fact that he is the rector. Since I have only been in place for a year and have made some fairly significant changes in the music program I doubt that would be a draw as yet, nor do I know if it would be a significant factor initially in attracting people or not

KP: *It is somewhat unusual for a bishop (Bishop Vigneron) in this day and age to have such a particular interest in sacred music. Does he have a musical background?*

CS: I am getting glimpses of that. His principle musical background, so far as I know, was gained in his seminary days when there was apparently a very strong music program in the Detroit Seminary. That was back in the hey-day of the Palestrina Institute. He was particularly intrigued both in high school and in the college seminary by the classes in chant. To this day he can solfege the Kyrie from Mass XI with no difficulties at all and give you a fairly learned disquisition on the meaning of arsis and thesis in the rhythm of the chant. He is also a man of broad and extensive culture who listens to serious music of many kinds. He can discuss with me, for example, fairly articulately the organ music of Cesar Franck. But he is also quite capable of discussing the nuances of various Victorian novelists or the merits of various historians of either the Middle Ages or the American Catholic Church. He is rather a Renaissance man.

KP: *We had spoken previously of the vernacular and musical settings of the vernacular, do you see the development of a vernacular chant? If so, when and under what conditions?*

CS: Here is another area, oddly enough, that ties in very closely with what I am doing at the seminary for two reasons. One is that the Bishop himself has expressed grave concern on this very subject. A continuing concern of his is the need for a quick development of what he refers to as "English Plainsong" by which he does not mean at all adaptations of existing Gregorian Chant melodies but simply something analogous to the way plainsong works in the Latin Liturgy so that there is a standard vocabulary, let us say for congregational Ordinaries and the like which are not metrical or in a hackneyed style. He would like to see something analogous to the Latin chant developing in English and has frequently encouraged me to write things along those lines. In fact, virtually every day I write a simple setting of the daily communion antiphon to be sung by a small group of singers and, in some cases, even congregational in a kind of free rhythm analogous to chant. I have been doing rather a lot of that and I think there is quite a future for this.

KP: *Could the issue of the text you have to work with and the issue of translation hamper the development of a body of English chant?*

CS: Sure, if they are going to change the translations every 7-10 years there won't be much of a permanent body of work because unlike recited prayer texts, you cannot very well adapt a new text to an existing melody or at least if you try to the results are usually quite disastrous. That is a great concern, it would be nice to get a stable translation that will be around for a while.

KP: *But do you think that it is possible, given the culture and the political situations we live in? I realize there is this new document (i.e. Liturgiam Authenticam) but the atmosphere seems to be politicized in terms of those in charge and perhaps the cultural situation is not fortuitous for the production of something beautiful.*

CS: That is very likely true. We may have to be content for quite awhile with less than adequate translations. One somewhat mitigating circumstance is that generally when new translations have come out there has been a kind of understood and general permission to use older versions for musical purposes.

KP: *Would this mean being able to use a traditional English Psalm text, for example, the Douay-Rheims or the King James.*

CS: I have not usually pushed it that far, but it does certainly seem to mean that we could use the Revised Standard Version which is of course at this moment still approved text (although it probably won't be for long), but since it had been approved I don't know why it would not be instantly permissible under that kind of provision.

KP: *Do you see the development of a vernacular body of chant as a threat to the Latin body of chant?*

CS: I hope it wouldn't be a threat, frankly, its not my principle interest in life—to develop a great deal of vernacular church music. But on the other hand it is presumably going to be a necessity because we are going to have the vernacular liturgy around for a while so it would be silly to wash our hands of it and leave it in the hands of practitioners of styles we would regard as unsuitable for Church. I don't think it would be a threat to the Latin because people who go to Latin liturgies don't generally go to English liturgies and vice versa. The only way in which there could conceivably be a problem is if they develop a lot of music which would compete with the occasional Latin piece at the vernacular liturgy. But that again seems not a particularly pointed confrontation. There are reams of vernacular music which don't exactly compete with Latin Church music because usually the constituencies are different.

KP: *There have been people who have classified the current liturgical situation into either the paradigms of Msgr. Mannion or the three branch theory of Fr. Mole. At any rate there seems to be a general dissatisfaction with the state of the liturgy and there are different ideas about how to move forward. What, to you, is the way forward for those who wish to reconnect the Roman Rite with tradition?*

CS: I think that it is unfortunate that different approaches to liturgical reform or indeed, retrenchment inevitably be regarded as in competition because I do not see why it wouldn't be possible to have, to some degree, a certain coexistence. One of the more interesting ideas being spoken of, from approximately 1962-64, and then was never heard of again was the idea of trying to recover, to some degree, the diversity in Western European liturgy before the codification of the Mass by Pius V when there was a good deal of diversity of rite and usage in different monasteries, cathedrals and so on all over Europe. Different rites and uses which used to differ from each other quite a lot and some of which were considerably more elaborate than what the Roman rite has come to be since the Council of Trent. And there was not a sense at that time that we had to find out which one of these is the best and make it the official one. One of the results of Conciliar reform was supposed to be that the extreme uniformity of the then, virtually universal, Missal could be varied a good deal. And that being the case I don't see why proponents of the old rite, and of the very traditional sort of new rite, and indeed those who wish to reform in some ways the old rite but to keep it identifiably itself, cannot all three achieve their aims. That is to say, I don't see the necessity of having the Roman rite be the kind of liturgical entity where there is only one real way to do it legitimately. So I tend to shed my blessings on all these branches so long as what they are doing is legitimate practice or liturgical development sanctioned somehow or other juridically by authority.

KP: *Do you think that, juridically, this is something that would happen? For example we had the dramatic permission for the Tridentine Mass given in 1984 and then in 1989, but some might say that the tendency of the Vatican has still been of the mentality—with the one above-mentioned dramatic exception—of uniformity. A uniformity which is now being cleared up a bit (e.g. the new GIRM), but still a uniformity. Do you ever see the Vatican giving blanket permission to priests to either celebrate the 1962 Missal or to take elements of it and add it to the Novus Ordo (e.g. the prayers at the foot of the altar)?*

CS: I think it is certainly possible to project that. It would not surprise me unduly. People were surprised enough in 1984 when the first Indult permission was given. That came as a bolt from the blue both to advocates and opponents of the measure. So I would not be awfully surprised if in succeeding years, as a result of the discussions, these kinds of liturgical developments permissions along those general lines, or realignment, perhaps, of rites and books and uses of that sort were to occur. I think there is a danger of this getting out of hand, obviously, so that you have every parish church

practically having its own liturgy. So there would need to be quite clearly central control, but I don't see why the idea of rite has to be equated with one approach to the liturgy in every detail. I realize that the new rite has quite a few optional practices which are legitimate, but it is difficult to see why that sort of token plurality could not be extended to adopting a somewhat different rite of the same liturgical family and one that is quite venerable (i.e. the traditional Roman Rite).

KP: *So, in a sense, what you are saying is that if they can allow Penitential Rites A, B, or C why can't they allow the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar?*

CS: Yes.

KP: *Shifting back to the topic of church music specifically, the state of church music has been quite bad since the time of the Council. Is that, in your opinion, because things were quite bad before the Council anyway or not?*

CS: In many parishes in this country, at least, things before the Council were quite bad in the sense that inferior music was performed in an inferior way. On the other hand, in many areas, especially the city where I was working (Chicago) there were some great things going on. There were really honest and sincere attempts to implement the *motu proprio* of Pius X and later instructions. There were many parishes where the whole congregation and especially school children were encouraged to sing simple chant Ordinaries and did so with considerable success. There was a whole movement on importing lots of interesting liturgical music—choral, organ, and congregational—from leading composers in Europe which had become quite an industry in this country. Places that didn't were pretty much "Good Night Sweet Jesus" parishes as we used to call them. But there was a steady growth and there was a lot of interesting music being written much of which has been completely lost. A lot of that came out in the 40's and 50's—vast amounts of really nice things. There was a little renaissance of writing neo-model and neo-classical pieces, and sometimes even more advanced things. But serious music written by serious composers for the Church came to an abrupt halt at the end of the Council partly because people were not going to set vernacular texts which were only to be around 2-3 years.

In any case the kinds of bad church music which have proliferated since the Council are a little different from the kinds of bad church music around before. For one thing there is a great deal more freedom of text and a good deal more variety of style. The bad music before the Council tended to fall into one of two categories: the really soupy, sentimental, drawing room, ballad style hymns; and the kind of comic opera, Gilbert and Sullivan sort of Masses—the likes of Rosewig and his companions that parish choirs would sort of shriek out—both of which tended to trivialize things. The hymns were rarely used at the Sacred Liturgy, they were more likely used at devotional services. You could sing hymns at low Mass, but they tended to be more dignified

Bad church music since the Council has generally embraced a bewildering stylistic spectrum and it has never been quite so official disavowed as the worst things before the Council. Before the Council there were black lists and white lists and things that you were forbidden to perform in some dioceses because they were so wretched, or so theatrical, or so tainted with secular association. There is nothing like that now (nor do I maintain that there ought to be), but much of what comes out now—which we would regard as most unsuitable for church use—is performed under the highest auspices in the American Church in cathedrals and the like without any eyebrows being lifted except the eyebrows of people like us.

KP: *What's behind that? Have you thought about this?*

CS: A good deal because I lived through the whole era when that transition was being made rapidly. To a large degree people were simply persuaded by the usual organs of propaganda (i.e. the press, word of mouth, workshops) that this is what we are

supposed to do now. There was a concerted effort on the part of a few people who believed that all the sacred music of the past came from periods when the liturgy was celebrated in defective ways and hence was not appropriate music for the liturgy at all, much less for the new liturgy of our time. So they encouraged music which they thought would be more directly accessible to the people and especially—as it happened in the late 1960's, the culture being what it was—to the young. It seems to me it was a misapprehension of what appealed to the young but nevertheless it became pretty well-established. The word went out that this had been approved by various bishops—indeed bishops' conferences—and therefore it was perfectly legitimate to have essentially coffee house, kiddie-style music as the normal accompaniment to the Sacred Liturgy.

KP: *Are you at all familiar with the origin of the so-called "Hootenanny" or "Guitar Mass"? In a sense it sprang on the scene in 1965 but didn't it have a slightly longer history, going back to the 1950's in England?*

CS: Not so much in Catholic circles as in Anglican. There was Fr. Ian Mitchell and what was called, something like, "The Church Light Music Group." He was a rather charismatic personality who thought that he would attract the young by doing the sort of music you would find in coffee bars in London and so on. And that was all the rage for a short period, pretty much before the time that Catholics got into Guitar Masses but he had an influence and I am sure Catholics looked to him and thought, "If they can do things like that, why can't we?" I am sure they were thinking along those lines. I am not aware of a direct connection nor am I aware of any efforts at all before 1965 to play guitars in Catholic churches and sing folksy songs as liturgical music.

KP: *Would you comment on my thesis that the guitar Mass as well as other variants (the Polka Mass, the Mariachi Mass) resulted from a trickling down to the popular level of the blurring of the distinction between grace and nature which you find expressed in certain theologies such as the theology of secularization—where grace becomes simply the highest form of created nature—and thus there results an ecclesial celebration of "the common," as in that famous book from the early 1960's, John Robinson's Honest to God.*

CS: Actually the seminal book for that was one by Harvey Cox called *The Secular City* (1965), which maintained that any distinction between secular and sacred was an artificial construct and that, hence, all we do in church ought to resemble as much as possible what we do outside of church. I am parodying the argument a bit, but it tends to come down to that. So, if music in church seemed quite different from what people listened to on the radio or in nightclubs or the like, then it was almost irrelevant to their lives and was to be banned in favor of music which sounded just like what they listened to in other contexts. You would think that it would be fairly obvious that fewer people would go to church if they could get the same effect with virtually any other human activity. But this secularization theology was very popular and I am sure it influenced a lot of the people who drafted the agenda for church music back then.

KP: *You mentioned that neo-model style which was happening before the Council in the 1940's and 1950's and early 1960's. Were you speaking of such composers as Flor Peeters?*

CS: Flor Peeters, Jaeggi, Andriessen, Hermann Schroeder. In France, somewhat more advanced figures like Langlais and Alain and, indeed, Messiaen. And a few highly significant composers in Austria such as Anton Heiler and a composer named Doppelbauer who was influential at the time and who were, from the standpoint of church music, slightly more avant-garde than the other composers whom I named. Of course a few very big name composers wrote music which could be considered either liturgical music or possibly concert religious music such as Stravinsky's Mass. There is a very beautiful Mass by the American composer Vincent Persicetti which I recommend to anyone who can sing it—which is not many choirs.

KP: *These composers were, in a sense, caught up short by the vernacular (at least poor translations which weren't going to last long anyway). What about the effect of the misunderstanding of the concept of "active participation"?*

CS: Yes, that too. Big name composers were not awfully interested in writing lots of little refrains for congregations to come charging in on in the midst of a polyphonic elaboration or in the midst of any other kind of music. Not that it is disreputable to write that sort of thing and in fact it can be very useful, but it does not attract the interest, generally speaking, of serious composers whose main activity was not in the Church.

KP: *Do you see a somewhat similar situation in the Anglican Church when the Book of Common Prayer was first introduced? English composers simply switched from writing Latin polyphony to writing English polyphony like Tallis or Byrd and produced some quite respectable things but that changed as a result of what? A Puritan attitude? Or am I getting that wrong?*

CS: I think you are, frankly. There was a very brief period, shortly after the second *Book of Common Prayer* came out in the reign of Edward VI when it was almost officially mandated that English church music should be pretty much one note per syllable and preferably without accompaniment, but that was very short lived. Meerbecke's *Prayer Book Noted* was practically the only thing that we have of any consequence in that vein. After that the great Elizabethan and Jacobean composers wrote quite elaborate verse anthems and settings of the services in a style not unlike contemporary motet styles on the continent. Generally speaking, English liturgical music was not especially impoverished for very long by the introduction of the vernacular liturgy. I think this was so for two reasons. One was that a good many quite Puritanical English Protestants who had no love for Romish practices did have a considerable love for fine music. And another reason being that, of course as we know, the text of the translation of the liturgy in the English Prayer Book was one of surpassing beauty and quite glorious English prose with a good deal of the rhythmic cursus of the Latin transposed into English terms which made it a rather gratifying exercise to set to music—something which cannot often be said of Roman Catholic texts produced since the Council.

KP: *This is what I was hinting at earlier when I was talking about cultural factors. The Elizabethan Age was a high point of English culture and so a very beautiful translation of the Roman rite—albeit a theologically garbled version of the Roman rite as edited by Crammer but nonetheless a beautiful text—was produced. I don't see that we are at that stage culturally.*

CS: That's true and also for a very paradoxical reason. As Cardinal Ratzinger points out, a culture which is not informed by faith is going to be an impoverished culture. The word, of course, comes from "cult" etymologically. The cultural influences on the faith and practice are apt to be less and less rational if the culture itself is not influenced by faith. So there is a good deal to that diagnosis.

KP: *Could you say then that the prominent liturgists at the time of the Council, and especially those who were in charge of implementing the liturgical reform after the Council, were influenced by a culture which was not Christian in their reform of the liturgy?*

CS: Well, I wouldn't go that far in relation to that first generation of liturgists at the time of the Council. Many of them were primarily influenced by their reading of Christian liturgical history, which now it appears they may have been misled by historical opinion at the time. The kind of liturgical archaeologism which Pope Pius XII condemned—assuming that the earlier you go back, the purer and the worthier of emulation it is (i.e. third century liturgy or second century if you can find it), coupled with the assumption that certain practices of the early Church were universal which we now believe were rare (such as Mass facing the people) and a lot of unwarranted assumptions about what music in the early Church must have been like. Those three factors had a lot of influence and were not at all "secular" assumptions. They were held by

perfectly well-intentioned men full of faith. On the other hand, not long after that the whole culture underwent revolutionary changes in basic assumptions and probably that had a more lasting effect on actual liturgical practice and music than the theories of the liturgical historians, although they certainly got things rolling.

KP: *But wouldn't some liturgists have fit into both camps?*

CS: Later on they may well have adapted presuppositions about secularization to fit their historical views. However, early Christians would probably have run in terror from the idea that there is no distinction between the sacred and the secular. There was a clear distinction in mind especially where they were in the coliseum faced with the power of the secular state in the form of wild animals.

KP: *But I am thinking of a particular Conciliar peritus, a bona fide Patristics scholar, who addressed the Council fathers in Latin on the role of Mary in the writings of the early Church Fathers and then almost immediately turned around and started promoting Hootenanny Masses in America.*

CS: Well, I suppose he could have been thinking this was the 20th century equivalent of the simplicity of early Christian home Masses. Things being very simple and "acclamatory" and "relevant," etc.

KP: *In conclusion, is there anything you would like to add?*

CS: Yes. There are great signs of hope, but the corollary virtue of hope is patience. In my own experience teaching at the seminary virtually every student that I have met to one degree or another believes that the church desperately needs to recover her lost heritage of sacred music and beautiful worship. It will be a long time before these clerics-to-be earn positions of power, but they and a few of their immediate predecessors will some day be the influential people in the Catholic Church. So sooner or later things will happen and in a few places things are happening already. But experience shows that even where right thinking people are in charge it takes time for things to trickle down to the parish level. So all kinds of hope is called for, some of which may be fulfilled in surprisingly gratifying ways, but all kinds of patience is called for equally as well.

KP: *Thank you very much Professor Shenk.*

CS: Thank you.



Choir, Looking West. Cathedral, Lincoln Gothic, XIII Cent.

PAPAL ADDRESS ON THE LITURGY

Venerable cardinals, reverend brothers in the episcopate and in the priesthood, dearest brothers and sisters!

1. It is with pleasure that I address you on the plenary assembly of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. I greet Cardinal Jorge Arturo Medina Estevez, who guides the dicastery with generous dedication, and with him I greet the esteemed cardinals, the reverend prelates and all those who work in whatever way for this Congregation to serve the Church and her evangelical mission
2. The Sacred Liturgy, which the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* considers the summit of the life of the Church, can never be reduced to a merely esthetic reality, neither can it be considered an instrument whose aims are mainly pedagogical or ecumenical. The celebration of the Sacred Mysteries is, first of all, an act of praise of the Sovereign Majesty of God, Three in One, an expression willed by God Himself. Through this [act], man, in both a personal and communal way, appears before God to give thanks, aware that his being cannot find its full meaning if he does not praise

God and do His will in his constant search for the Kingdom, which is already present, but which will arrive definitively in the day of the *Parousia* of the Lord Jesus. Liturgy and life are two inseparable realities. Liturgy which is not reflected in life would become empty and certainly not pleasing to God.

3. The celebration of the Liturgy is an act of the virtue of religion that, consistent with its nature, must be characterized by a profound sense of the sacred. In this, man and the entire community must be aware of being, in a special way, in the presence of Him who is three times holy and transcendent. Consequently, the attitude of imploring cannot but be permeated by reverence and by the sense of awe that comes from knowing that one is in the presence of the majesty of God. Did God not want to express this when He ordered Moses to take off his sandals before the burning bush? Did not the attitude of Moses and Eli who dared not look at God *facie ad faciem* [face to face] arise from this awareness?

The People of God need to see priests and deacons behave in a way that is full of reverence and dignity, in order to help them to penetrate invisible things without unnecessary words or explanations. In the Roman Missal of St. Pius V, as in several Eastern liturgies, there are very beautiful prayers through which the priest expresses the most profound sense of humility and reverence before the Sacred Mysteries: they reveal the very substance of the Liturgy.

The liturgical celebration presided over by the priest is a praying congregation, gathered in faith and attentive to the Word of God. It has, as its primary aim, to present the Divine Majesty the living, pure and holy sacrifice offered on Calvary once and for all by the Lord Jesus, who is present each time the Church celebrates Holy Mass, and to express the worship due to God in spirit and truth.

I am aware of the strong commitment of this Congregation to promote, together with the bishops, the deepening of the liturgical life of the Church. In expressing my appreciation, I hope that such invaluable work will contribute to making the celebrations [of Mass] ever more worthy and fruitful.

4. Your plenary assembly, in view of a proper Directory, has chosen as its main theme, popular religiosity. This represents an expression of the faith which uses cultural elements of a particular environment, interpreting and questioning the sensibilities of the participants in a lively and effective way.

Popular religiosity, which expresses itself in different ways, when it is genuine, has faith as its source and thus must be appreciated and promoted. In its most authentic manifestations, it is not opposed to the centrality of the Holy Liturgy; rather, by promoting the faith of the people who consider it a natural religious expression, it predisposes the people to the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries.

5. The correct relationship between these two expressions of faith must take it on account some firm principles, and among these the most important is that the Liturgy is the center of the life of the Church and no other religious expression can replace it or can be considered on the same level. Moreover, it is important to reaffirm that popular religiosity has its natural fulfillment in the liturgical celebration, towards which, although not usually joined together, it must ideally tend. This must be shown through an appropriate catechesis.

The expressions of popular religiosity sometimes appear polluted by elements that are inconsistent with Catholic doctrine. In such cases, they must be purified with pru-

dence and patience, through contacts with responsible persons and through careful and respectful catechesis, unless radical inconsistencies make it necessary to take immediate and clear measures.

Evaluations [of these matters] pertain first of all to the diocesan bishop, or to the bishops of the region concerned with such forms of religiosity. In this case, it is opportune that pastors compare experiences in order to create common pastoral strategies, avoiding contradictions which are damaging for the Christian people. In any case, unless there are clear reasons to the contrary, bishops should have an encouraging and positive attitude towards popular religiosity.

6. I wish, finally to express my satisfaction at the work which has been completed by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments since its last plenary assembly of 1996. During this time, the third *editio typica* of the Roman Missal, the first Book of Exorcisms and that of the Roman Martyrology have been published. Also, the Instructions on liturgical translations and requests for declarations of nullity of Holy Orders have been issued.

In this regard, I urge the bishops and the Congregation to make every effort to insure that liturgical translations are faithful to the original [texts] of the respective typical editions in the Latin language. A translation, in fact, is not an exercise in creativity, but a meticulous task of preserving the meaning of the original without changes, omissions or additions.

The failure to observe this criterion on occasion makes the work of revising some texts necessary and urgent. In addition to the work already mentioned, the Congregation is occupied with priestly dispensations, and with those [dispensations] concerning marriages *ratum et non consummatum* [celebrated but not consummated], with the approval of liturgical texts of the new saints and blessedes in the particular calendars, as well as with the *recognitiones* [approval] of very many translations of liturgical texts into the various vernacular languages. This work has been carried out with noteworthy competence and diligence, and for this I want to express to the Cardinal Prefect, to Archbishop Francesco Tamburrino, to the Monsignor Undersecretaries, and to all the Members, Counselors and Commissioners of the congregation, my sincere gratitude.

I entrust this precious work and the projects of the entire Congregations to the heavenly protections of the Mother of God, and with affection I impart to all a special Apostolic Blessing.

From Castelgandolfo, September 21, 2001

JOANNES PAULUS II

A BISHOP CANNOT FORCE FEMALE SERVERS ON HIS PRIESTS

A recent letter to an American bishop from Jorge Cardinal Medina Estevez, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, affirms that a bishop cannot force a priest under his authority to use altar girls at Mass and, moreover, if a bishop permits the use of altar girls in his diocese, it is incumbent upon him to explain the pastoral necessity for the innovation to his flock.

The full text of the letter, protocol number 2451/00/L, dated July 27, 2001 and published in *Notitiae*, Vol. 37, with the following introduction, states:

“A Bishop recently asked the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments whether a Diocesan Bishop would be able to oblige his priests to admit women and girls to service at the altar. This Dicastery has considered it opportune to send this letter to the Bishop in question, and given its particular importance to publish it here.

Your Excellency:

Further to recent correspondence, this Congregation resolved to undertake a renewed study of the questions concerning the possible admission of girls, adult women and women religious to serve alongside boys as servers in the Liturgy.

As part of this examination, this Dicastery consulted the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts which replied with a letter of July 23, 2001. The reply of the Pontifical Council was helpful in reaffirming that the questions raised by this Congregation, including the question of whether particular legislation could oblige individual priests in their celebration of the Holy Mass to make use of women to serve at the altar, do not concern the interpretation of the law, but rather are questions of the correct application of the law. The reply of the aforementioned Pontifical Council, therefore, confirms the understanding of this Dicastery, that the matter falls within the competence of this Congregation as delineated by the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*, n. 62. Bearing in mind this authoritative response, this Dicastery, having resolved outstanding questions, was able to conclude its own study. At the present time, therefore, the Congregation would wish to make the following observations.

As is clear from the *Responsorio ad propositum dubium* concerning canon 230 para. 2 of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* of the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts and the directives of this Congregation, which the Holy Father had mandated in order to provide for the orderly implementation of what is set out in canon 230 para. 2, and its authentic interpretation (cf. Circular Letter to the Presidents of Episcopal Conferences, Prot. N. 2482/93, March 15, 1994, see *Notitiae* 30 [1994] 333-335), the Diocesan Bishop, in his role as moderator of the liturgical life in the diocese entrusted to his care, has the authority to permit service at the altar by women within the boundaries of the territory entrusted to his care.

Moreover his liberty in question cannot be conditioned by claims in favor of a uniformity between his diocese and other dioceses which would logically lead to the removal of the necessary freedom of action from the individual Diocesan Bishop. Rather, after having heard the opinion of the Episcopal Conference, he is to base his prudential judgment upon what he considers to accord more closely with the local pastoral need for an or-

dered development of liturgical life in the diocese entrusted to his care, bearing in mind, among other things, the sensibilities of the faithful, the reasons which would motivate such a permission, and the different liturgical settings and congregations which gather for the Holy Mass (cf. Circular Letter to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences, March 15, 1994, no. 1)

In accord with the above cited instructions of the Holy See such an authorization may not, in any way, exclude men or, in particular, boys from service at the altar, nor require that priests of the diocese would make use of female altar servers, since it will always be very appropriate to follow the noble tradition of having boys serve at the altar' (Circular Letter to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences, March 15, 1994, no. 2). Indeed, the obligation to support groups of altar boys will always remain, not least of all due to the well known assistance that such programs have provided since time immemorial in encouraging vocations (Ibid).

With respect to whether the practice of women serving at the altar would truly be of pastoral advantage in the local pastoral situation, it is perhaps helpful to recall that the non-ordained faithful do not have a right to service at the altar, rather they are capable of being admitted to such service by the Sacred Pastors (cf. Circular Letter to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences, March 15, 1994, no. 4, cf. Also can. 228, para. 1, Interdicasterial Instruction *Ecclesiae de mysterio*, August 15, 1997, no. 4, see *Notitiae* 34 [1998] 9-42). Therefore, in the event that your Excellency found it opportune to authorize service of women at the altar, it would remain important to explain clearly to the faithful the nature of this innovation, lest confusion might be introduced, thereby hampering the development of priestly vocations.

Having thus confirmed and further clarified the contents of its previous response to Your Excellency, this Dicastery wishes to assure you of its gratitude for the opportunity to elaborate further upon this question and that it considers the preset letter to be normative.

With every good wish and kind regard, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,"

JORGE A. CARDINAL MEDINA ESTEVEZ, PREFECT
CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND
THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS



Triforium of Angel Choir. Cathedral, Lincoln Gothic (Decorated) 1256—80 and Later (To c. 1320)

FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE KINGDOM: A HYMN TO ST. THOMAS MORE

Most of the saints do not have proper hymns in the Office: a multiplication of proper hymns would be counterproductive. In most cases proper hymns are not needed; the common hymns are generally acceptable, and their singing is assisted by their relative familiarity. But in those cases where the saint is the patron saint of the parish, or particularly important to parish life, the lack of a proper hymn becomes pronounced. My parish, St. Patrick's in Washington, D.C., is frequented by lawyers from the Department of Justice and downtown law firms, and by national politicians, due to our location close to the White House; the devotion to St. Thomas More at the parish is widespread. The parish recently commissioned a marble statue of More, and I thought that in coordination with the dedication of the statue, a new proper hymn to St. Thomas More would be appropriate. Thus was born "Faithful Servant of the Kingdom," by Br. Andrew Hofer, O.P., a seminarian at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington D.C. The parish commissioned Br. Hofer to write the hymn, after examining other hymns that he has written, some of which have been published in the monthly magazine *Magnificat*. I give Br. Andrew free reign as to the meter of the hymn; at the time, we had planned on setting the hymn to some well-known hymn tune. After the hymn was written, I searched for a hymn tune in 8787D that would suit the tightly-constructed form of the text: the most promising was NETTLETON, but I felt that this tune was too strongly associated with the hymn "God, We Praise You." I therefore decided to write a new hymn tune that would enhance the nuances of the beautiful text.

The result is published below. The tune is formed much like NETTLETON: the first, second, and fourth lines are constructed similarly, with a contrasting third line. This makes the tune fairly easy for a congregation to learn: indeed, the congregation at the statue dedication was able to sing the hymn heartily by the time we reached verse two.

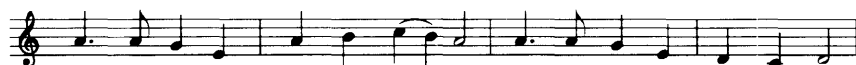
FAITHFUL SERVANT

The musical meter is irregular, and I have decided to print the tune without time signatures. The tempo should be solid and quick; be careful not to rush or drag the third line with its five-beat measure. Depending on the congregation, it may be necessary to lower the pitch by a whole step, although I much prefer the higher pitch. In addition, I wrote a choral setting of verse three; this setting makes use of a canon at the second, and at one point a canon at one beat.

The hymn was premiered at the dedication of the statue on Feb. 7, A.D. 2002 (More's birthday), and we will continue to sing it each year for the feast of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, June 22. I welcome any comments or suggestions.

BENJAMIN SMEDBERG
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FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE KINGDOM



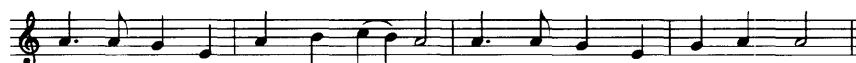
1. Faith-ful ser-vant of the King-dom ruled by God in last-ing love,
2. Chan-cel-lor of great-est learn-ing, cho-sen by His Ma-jes-ty,
3. Let us tell the mar-tyr's sto-ry Of his life's in-teg-ri-ty.
4. Praise the Fa-ther, Son, and Spi-rit. Sing to God the Three in One.



Tho-mas More, we laud and sing him, who now reigns with Christ a-bove.
 ev-ry ho-nor quick-ly earn-ing, Tho-mas proved his loy-al-ty.
 Giv-ing God Most High the glo-ry, May we live in cha-ri-ty.
 Let the na-tion see and hear it: Tell what God has said and done.



Here be-low in prayer and la-bor he ful-filled the Gos-pel's law.
 Act-ing from a con-science fer-vent, he be-came as-sailed and cursed.
 Serv-ing Christ in one an-o-ther, Just as Tho-mas glad-ly knew,
 In this man of de-di-ca-tion, faith-ful to the cross he bore,



At the ser-vice of his neigh-bor, Tho-mas filled the state with awe.
 Thus he died, the King's good ser-vant, but of God the ser-vant first.
 Nev-er may we give to oth-ers What to God a-lone is due.
 Christ did grace by His sal-va-tion, knight-ing him, "Saint Tho-mas More."

Optional Choral Verse:



3. Let us tell the mar-tyr's sto-ry Of his life's in-teg-ri-ty.



3. Let us tell the mar-tyr's sto-ry Of his life's in-teg-ri-ty.



3. Let us tell the mar-tyr's sto-ry Of his life's in-teg-ri-ty.



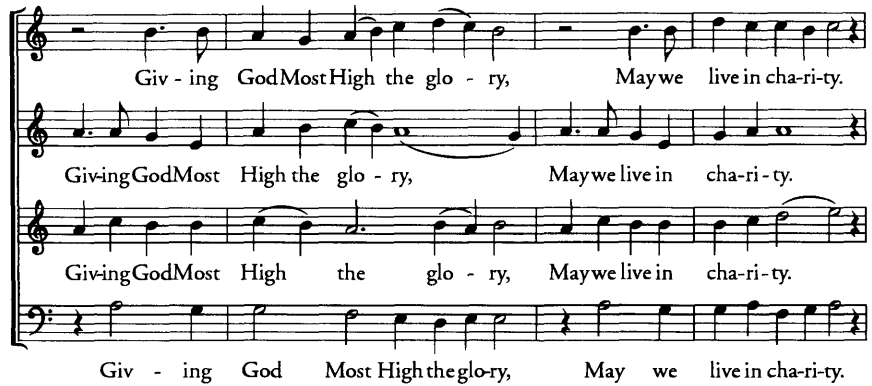
3. Let us tell the mar-tyr's sto-ry Of his life's in-teg-ri-ty.

Text: Br. Andrew Hofer, O.P. - 8787D

Tune: THOMAS MORE; Benjamin Smedberg

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Giv - ing God Most High the glo - ry, May we live in cha-ri-ty.

Giving God Most High the glo - ry, May we live in cha-ri-ty.

Giving God Most High the glo - ry, May we live in cha-ri-ty.

Giv - ing God Most High the glo-ry, May we live in cha-ri-ty.



Serv-ing Christ in one an - o - ther, Just as Tho - mas glad-ly knew,

Serv - ing Christ in one an-o-ther, Just as Tho - mas glad-ly knew,

Serv-ing Christ in one an-o-ther, Just as Tho - mas glad - ly knew,

Serv-ing Christ in one an - o - ther, Just as Tho-mas glad-ly knew,



Nev-er may we give to oth - ers What to God a-lone is due.

Nev-er may we give to oth - ers What to God a - lone is due.

Never may we give to oth - ers What to God a - lone is due.

Nev - er may we give to others What to God a-lone is due.

REVIEWS

Choral Music

This is the day that the Lord has made, by William Ferris. SATB, with brass, timpani, cymbals and organ. Paraclete Press, No. PPM00202FS.

An imaginative, large-scale setting of selected verses from Psalm 118 by the late Chicago conductor and composer, this would work well for a big festival occasion. The choral writing is quite challenging, the instrumental parts somewhat less so. This piece could be performed just with voices and organ—the trumpet and percussion parts are not essential. Ferris always responded with considerable originality to texts which appealed to him, and I find this one of his most convincing works. Choirmasters with large, technically proficient choirs should give this a try.

Prof. Calvert Shenk

Jesu, dulcis memoria by Randall Giles, Alternatim hymn for SATB, unaccompanied. Paraclete Press, No. PPM00213

The well-known plainsong tune alternates with lovely flowing polyphonic verses. The harmonies are rich and mildly dissonant, with the plainsong appearing in the soprano voice in verse 2, in the tenor in verse 4, and in the alto in the “Amen”. This should be within the capacities of most well-trained parish choirs. Caswall’s translation, extended to fit the metre, appears below the Latin text.

C.S.

NEWS

In a message to a conference held at Salesian University in Rome this February Pope John Paul II emphasized that Latin remains the official language of the Catholic Church, and expressed his desire that “the love of that language would grow ever strong among candidates for the priesthood.” The conference itself was commemorating the 40th anniversary of *Veterum Sapientia* the apostolic constitution which Pope John XXIII wrote of the importance of Latin as an important part of “the patrimony of human civilization.”

†

Holy Week ceremonies for the Latin Tridentine Community of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee included the chanting of the St. Matthew Passion by Kurt Poterack (Chronista), Gerald Saguto (Synagoga) and Fr. Robert Skeris (Christus) on Palm Sunday (March 24th) and of the St. John Passion on Good Friday with the same persons except for Mr. Robert Willard singing the *Synagoga* part. The Edmund Rubbra *Missa a 3, Op. 98* was performed on Holy Thursday and the Palestrina’s *Missa Aeterna Christi Munera* on Easter Sunday.

†

Voci del Tesoro (Voices of the Treasure), a California based mixed choir directed by Diana Dallman Silva, gave a series of Lenten concerts featuring chant, polyphony, classical and 20th century sacred music. *Voci del Tesoro* is a touring choir of professional musicians dedicated to the prayerful presentation of the Catholic Church’s finest music through sacred concerts and liturgies. The choir’s web site is www.vocideltesor.org.

†

On May 4th, the Christendom College Choir performed Palestrina’s *Missa Papae Marcelli* at a concert of sacred music held in the college’s Chapel of Christ the King and then on May 12th performed it at the Traditional Roman Rite Indult Mass at Old St. Mary’s Church in Washington D.C.

†

CONTRIBUTORS

Kerry McCarthy is a graduate of Reed College and a Ph.D. candidate in musicology under Professor William Mahrt at Stanford University, where she is active in both the theory and practice of early sacred music. She is assistant director and cantor with the St. Ann Choir in Palo Alto, California.

Professor Calvert Shenk is Associate Professor of Music at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit, Michigan.

Benjamin Smedberg is Director of Music and Organist at St. Patrick’s Church in Washington, D.C.