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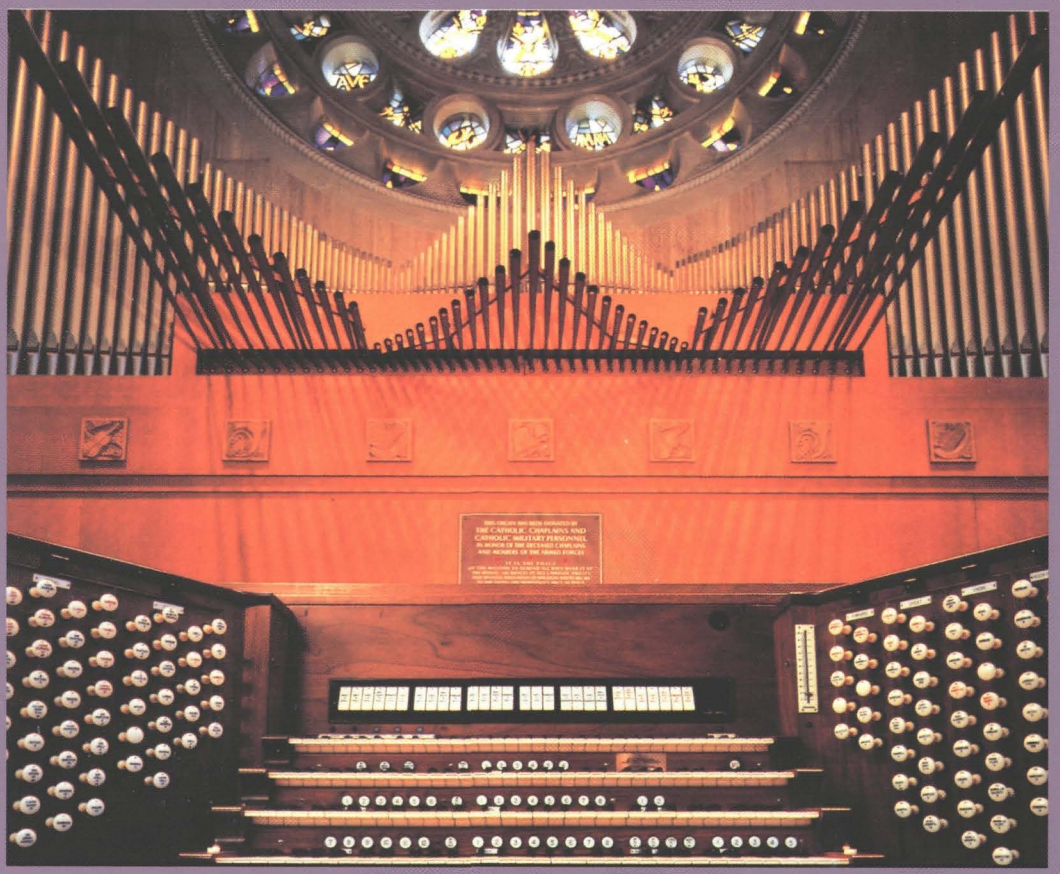

East End. Cathedral, Exeter
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FROM THE EDITOR

Rumors have been circulating for the past several months that the Pope will grant a universal indult to all Roman rite priests to celebrate Mass according to the traditional Roman Missal whenever they wish without having to seek the permission of their local bishop. Though this may be true—and some of us have our doubts—it seems likely that the Vatican will be strongly encouraging the more frequent celebration of Mass according to the 1962 Missal in the near future. As support for this we would cite the May 13th report by Robert Moynihan on the *Inside the Vatican* website of his interview with Congregation for Divine Worship prefect Cardinal Francis Arinze. According to this interview a major disciplinary document on the liturgy, which is currently in draft form, will be issued between October and Christmas of this year which will contain "stricter guidelines for celebrating the liturgy, and the mandate to celebrate the old Latin Mass more widely, even on a weekly basis, in every parish in the world."

There is little reason to doubt the authenticity of this report. What remains to be seen is whether this bombshell passage makes it into the final draft. Even if it does, it does not seem likely, in our humble opinion, that the world's bishops would countenance what they would perceive as an end run around their authority. A universal indult is highly unlikely. The "mandate to celebrate the old Latin Mass more widely" will most likely be left firmly in the hands of individual bishops to implement. Still this would be progress. Tradition-friendly bishops (e.g. Bruskewitz) will implement it; conservative but non-traditional bishops (e.g. Chaput) will make a sincere effort to implement it; depending on the final wording and pressure from the Vatican, even other bishops will make some effort to implement it for those who strongly desire it.

What does this have to do with sacred music? An awful lot. Even though the two "crown jewels" of the Roman Rite's traditional "treasury of sacred music" (chant and polyphony) can and should be used within the context of the new missal, the fact is that this is not done very often. We would be surprised if more than five percent of the parishes and oratories in this country have a regular Latin Mass with chant and/or polyphony. We have and will continue to encourage this and to this end have published an article by Jeffrey Tucker and Arlene Oost-Zinner on "bringing chant and polyphony to a small parish" in this issue. Practically speaking though, if the Vatican does strongly encourage the more frequent celebration of the Traditional Missal, associations such as ours will be in greater demand. Bishops, pastors, priests and music directors (even ones who do not particularly like us) will turn to us because they will have to—they will need our skills! We will be in demand. This could be a great blessing. *Oremus*!

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THE MAY 24TH MASS AT ST. MARY MAJOR

As reports and commentary on Cardinal Hoyos' Pontifical Tridentine Mass at the Roman Basilica of St. Mary Major come in, it is becoming clear that the Vatican is preparing a significant shift in its view of the Tridentine Mass. What had been officially referred to as something for "persons attached to certain previous liturgical and disciplinary forms of the Latin tradition" is now being referred to as a rite which "preserves its right of citizenship within the multiplicity of Catholic rites, both Latin and Oriental." In other words, it looks like we are no longer dealing with an "indulgence" for people attached to something from the past—even if it was supposed to be granted to them "widely and generously." What we will be dealing with is a *bona fide* rite to which Latin rite Catholics will have a right, just as Eastern rite Catholics have a right to their liturgies.

It has not been uncommon for certain very good Catholics to say such things as, "Those who like the Tridentine Mass are not really 'with the Church'—they are stuck in the past. They are just a bunch of old fogies (or even young fogies) who are being accommodated for pastoral reasons—but this is not where the Church is at anymore." This opinion will no longer be tenable. Not only was this made clear by the fact of a sitting curial Cardinal celebrating according to the 1962 Missal in a Roman Basilica but also because, according to Fr. Ignacio Barreiro who consulted qualified persons in Rome, the Cardinal's homily did not reflect his "own personal opinions, but rather the official positions of the Holy See." (on www.CatholicReform.org)

What will happen next? According to Fr. John Zuhlsdorf "the next logical step in the sequence of this campaign [would] be to have a Pontifical Mass in the Vatican Basilica of St. Peter, perhaps *coram Pontifice*." (in *The Wanderer*, June 5, 2003) While this would be quite delicious to contemplate, the rough and tumble politics of St. Peter's Basilica may not make this possible at present. At any rate what is evident is that, in the end, there will have to be concrete measures to legally establish the permanence of this rite and insure that it is available to all that desire it. Will this happen by the end of the year?

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Nave, Looking East. Cathedral, Exeter
Gothic. 1270—13.9

BRINGING CHANT AND POLYPHONY TO A SMALL PARISH

The only Catholic parish in this Southern college town is a small, brick church-in-the-round, built in 1965 and looking somewhat like a large cupcake. It is ten minutes before the first Mass of Sunday begins and people have already begun to take their places in their pews, genuflecting toward the altar though the tabernacle is toward the side altar. The seasoned Catholic knows all-too-well what kind of music to expect here.

But a surprise awaits. Unseen, unamplified, unaccompanied, four men from a 10-voice choir gently begin the ancient plainsong hymn "*Ubi Caritas*," without vibrato and at a slower tempo than one might expect, singing with no effort and no intention to attract attention. At the end of each phrase, the text seems to evaporate like incense lifting upwards, and, between each phrase is silence. Mixed voices, a bit louder sing the refrain before a long pause in which the sound is permitted to completely vanish. The women begin the second verse, again singing a tempo slower than one has ever heard this piece. And so it continues, the trade off between high and low timbres and the white space of silence between phrases and verses, for a full ten minutes before Mass.

The effect is unmistakable: reverence, solemnity, contemplation, prayer. The chant has freed people in this round building from the problem that afflicts every such building, the feeling of being in a fishbowl in which everyone is staring at everyone else. Instead, heads are lowered in prayer and preparation. Even those who are only fulfilling their obligation to attend are brought along into a sense of where they are and why they are there.

The processional begins, all rise, and ends, before the celebrant announces that it is the feast day of the Baptism of the Lord. The sprinkling rite begins, as does the Latin *Asperges* sung by the choir, with more strength. Neither the text nor the tune is in the hymnal—it hasn't been sung here for probably thirty years—but young and old hear

and feel the "Catholicity" of the music. When the drops of water hit each person, and everyone makes the sign of the cross, the mind and heart begin to their journey out of limits of time to touch something eternal. It is not so much an intellectual process as it is a spiritual one, assisted by the sounds of ancient prayer in song.

Can It Happen?

This was the beginning of beautiful liturgy, the only one of five for that Sunday that would employ chant and polyphony (the choir sang music by Giovanni Croce and Claudio Monteverdi later) in additions to hymns. For those who attend, the peace and solemnity of the music at this liturgy becomes a source of grace in itself, a time to experience the sacred in a world where such opportunities are too rare.

In large parishes in major urban areas, parishioners can often choose between liturgical styles, among which is one with Latin-language music, which at least allows people who are burned out on 70s-style praise music to have a solemn and serious option rooted in Catholic history. But this is not usually the case in small and medium-sized parishes (think of those from 30 to 500 families). Here, the practical obstacles to introducing chant and polyphony are immense. The treasury of sacred music has almost completely disappeared from these parishes, and neither are there detectable efforts to restore it. The tendency in small parishes, in suburbs, small towns, and even urban areas, is toward the comfortable but dreary mix of the "contemporary" hit songs that, as Thomas Day says, "died a few years ago—from sluggish tempos, overexposure, and the indifference of bored congregations" but somehow "are among the few musical 'traditions' that many parishes are permitted to keep."

The practical obstacles to introducing chant and polyphony in the smaller parish setting—something completely new and foreign in many parishes, remembered only by an aging set—are cultural, musical, pastoral, political and technical. But with enough drive and patience, and attention to avoiding certain errors, these obstacles can be overcome. What follows are some insights and observations—nowhere near approaching an infallible blueprint—drawn from our experience in which a small, new-rite parish, in the course of a year, went from having five contemporary or mixed Sunday liturgies to permitting one of them to offer the full range of chant and polyphony on a consistent basis, and doing so to waves of approval from those who choose to attend. The presence of just one liturgy where traditional sung prayer has quietly but dramatically, over time, had an impact upon the entire culture of the parish.[1]

Cultural Obstacles and Solutions

In seeking to introduce serious Catholic music into parishes, one must first deal with the stark reality that our heritage in music and Latin language has been largely destroyed. Three generations have been raised in the faith without the sounds of chant. In many parishes, thirty-plus Pentecosts have come and gone without the "*Veni Creator*," and thirty plus Lents without a single "*Parce Domine*." The "*Ubi Caritas*" is unfamiliar, unknown to most. The Marian plainsongs of "*Ave Maria*," "*Regina Caeli*," and "*Salve Regina*" have no meaning, musically or textually or anything else to most anyone under the age of 50. Not even the "*Tantum Ergo*" has made it into the hymnbooks in most common use. When the *St. Anthony Messenger* surveyed its readers on their favorite Catholic hymns, the top three answers were startling: 1. "Be Not Afraid" (contemporary song and the bane of all who seek traditional music); 2. "Amazing Grace" (protestant traditional); 3. and "How Great Thou Art" (protestant traditional). Of the top twelve picks among readers, only two were traditional Catholic ("Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" and "*Panis Angelicus*").[2] It is not that the survey takers were rejecting traditional Catholic music; it is just not known to them.

This point is emphasized because it is not at all clear just to what extent many who have long complained about the state of Catholic music understand the current situation. In larger cities, options are available that allow the partisans of traditional ritual to

find peace, so it becomes easy to forget that this is not the mainstream experience. In the typical smaller parish, today, there is no real struggle over music; the battle has been won by the forces of "contemporary" music. When we speak of "traditional Catholic music," most people in the pews have no clear understanding of what this means. When we speak of music that "has stood the test of time" many think that means "Eagles Wings," "Be Not Afraid," and "One Bread, One Body." No longer can people be expected to understand (without experience and explanation) the difference between good, solid music that lends itself to worship, and the commercial pop material that dominates Catholic music publishing today. What the partisans of chant find utterly revolting in contemporary music, many Catholics in the pews find perfectly harmless and even warm and nice. Many Catholics are perfectly happy to like both contemporary music and chant (if they know what it is) and sense no requirement that they choose sides. It is a tactical error to assume that because a person loves "Yaweh, I Know You are Here," that the person could not, under the right circumstances, also love "*Audi Benigne Conditor.*"

Not having exposure to solemn music at Mass, a common reaction among people is to regard it as depressing and exclusivist. This is, once again, a reflection of the reigning pattern of liturgical socialization that has taken place for so many decades. The purpose of most Catholic music written since 1970 has not been to draw attention to the sacramental meaning of what is taking place on the altar but rather to bring people together in a spirit of community praise. Under the right conditions, chant can accomplish the latter, but that is not its primary purpose, and so long as people are looking for community uplift versus holiness, chant will not win out. It takes time to draw people into a new sense of what it means to worship and what Catholicism can and should sound like.

Though there is very little discussion of the intent of music in liturgy in parishes—the academic debates having limited if any impact in this venue—the view that music at Mass should be drawn from popular idioms, should be exuberant, and should produce a feeling of community togetherness is deeply entrenched in parish life. The attempt to revive Latin music of Catholic history will necessarily require an explanation that music of a more traditional pedigree can be exuberant and bring people together but also achieve higher ends: it can facilitate prayer and internal reflection and preparation.

Regardless, any attempt to restore even the slightest bit of chant or polyphony will be treated as a radical project, one that must bear the burden of proving to be useful and/or popular in liturgy, or at least not an invasive imposition. Those favoring chant are not "conservatives," strictly defined as those who favor the status quo over change, but people who favor upsetting what is most likely a settled order of mediocrity and contemporary tedium. It is sad to say, but the truth is that it is the chant and polyphony partisans who are the innovators, the people seeking to upset the established order of things. There is little rhetorical advantage that comes with the demand for "traditional music" in any case. One must be prepared to make the argument for new music, new approaches. Indeed, there is no reason not to adopt the same language that the Catholic left once adopted when it decried parish liturgy as "stilted" and "anachronistic." What better way to describe a liturgy still dominated by guitars and the St. Louis Jesuits?

As for singers themselves, there are fewer and fewer Catholics with musical ability in smaller parishes, simply because the decline in music has been so precipitous. The biographies of most great American singers include warm reflections on their early years singing in a church choir, and being raised up through the ranks to eventually become an important voice within the worship life of their hometown church. Today, however, children's choirs are not exactly common in Catholic parishes. And where they do exist, they are not singing the kind of music that educates people in the basics of reading music, hearing pitches, staying in tune, or singing in parts.

The longer this is the case, the fewer and fewer people there are within the parish who are even in a position to read music, much less sing it with any competence, and even

less to distinguish quality music from pop refuse. This also means fewer people who can serve in leadership positions by directing a children's choir, playing piano or organ, or rehearsing and directing a piece of serious polyphony. The musical capital of the average Catholic parish has been depleted, and the loss of musical knowledge feeds on itself. The congregation becomes less and less interested in authentic hymnody. There are fewer singers to sing stand-alone choral pieces. In 1977, it was said that in typical parishes that "one hears only unison singing"[3] and twenty-five years later, the lack of musical competence has become ever more widespread.[4]

What's more, many small parishes are not likely to have more than one choir, and that choir will be unused to singing anything but these standards at the main Sunday Mass. These groups are excessively dependent on electronic enhancements (or possibly folk guitars, even after all these years) and tend to resist any new material. They are likely to have a dearth of male voices and a plethora of would-be pop soloists and frustrated performers who cannot read music. The singers are not likely to feel a draw to solemn musical that does not feature individual talent but rather exists to serve the sacraments.

As for the few people who may openly long for chant or polyphony, they are not typically involved in the parish musical efforts at all. Their main posture is non-involvement, and their role is to sit and sulk in the pew, attending Masses without music whenever possible and otherwise sneering at the well-intended but misguided efforts of the musical insiders. This is an understandable reaction but it is not constructive. It takes more than opposition to the status quo and a longing for the past to institute a positive program of musical innovation, within the framework of tradition, that can be sustained. All efforts must begin small and those involved must be prepared for many setbacks and many years of work.

There are no shortcuts. It is no solution, for example, to persuade the pastor to hire a full or part-time director of music with a salary (as versus just paying an organist or pianist). The way parish hiring guidelines are, the pastor will most likely need to hire someone with middle-brow musical credentials as well as experience in the world of Catholic liturgy. This can be a fateful step. Those who qualify come with agendas taught to them by the Catholic music establishment, which is still tightly wedded to a liturgical agenda that excludes chant and polyphony or uniformly solemn worship. Once they are hired, it becomes impossible to dislodge them from their seats of power.

Neither will one win friends and influence people in the parish by aggressively campaigning against guitar players and jazzy piano players. Such efforts might be seen as personal campaigns and could tend to diminish personal capital in times when principled stands for quality are neither understood nor appreciated. Rather than negative campaigns, the efforts most likely to produce fruit are those narrowly focused on gaining a new approach to music that goes beyond hymns, introduces a special focus on solemnity, and reclaims the ancient Catholic musical heritage, the purpose of which is to revive a form of music that links all generations of Catholics in a unified song. To phrase one's agenda in these terms holds out a greater prospect for success.

Choosing the right words are not a magic bullet for success but doing so can avoid many pitfalls of parish politics that might otherwise doom the effort to introduce Latin chant and polyphony. One can cite the documents of Vatican II in defense of the project but there is little sense in insisting that such music is the only kind that orthodox Catholicism should ever permit. After all, it is well known that contemporary music, and even raucous rock music, is employed in every diocese in the country, at the North American College in Rome, and at World Youth Day where the Pope presides. To claim that the Latin repertoire is the only true path to Catholicism is to set oneself up for being easily shot down. Such arguments have a place in the scholarly press but not in parish polemics.

In any case, remember that the purpose here is not (in the first instance) to convert people to orthodox Catholicism or persuade people of a historically rooted theological outlook. The goal, at least short term, is to improve the liturgy, period, and every step in

that direction should be counted as success. As for the other goals, *lex orandi, lex credendi*.[5] The belief in the doctrinal infrastructure underneath this music is more likely to be accomplished once the music is in place. Opponents are more likely to be placated and those in the middle won over if one's agenda is seen as narrow and focused rather than broad and threatening to widely held theological assumptions. Remember that contemporary music does not exist in a vacuum; it is part of a larger process of doctrinal decay. The rebuilding effort will not and cannot take place overnight. If tolerable and solemn liturgy is what one seeks, it is enough to take small steps in that direction rather than take on the direct task of rooting out heresy as such.

This brings us to the issue of diversity and tolerance—two watchwords of the current cultural milieu in nearly every Catholic parish in the country. As insipid as much popular contemporary music may be, it is not going away soon. No matter how much success one has in introducing chant and polyphony, it will continue to exist side by side in most parishes with other styles. For that reason, and in most cases, to introduce chant and polyphony will not involve replacing one style of music with another. It will be to find one Mass during a weekend Mass schedule that is open to accommodating a different approach. Most likely, this will be the early Mass on Sunday morning, which is typically the one that attracts older people. There is not reason to get in a rush. A polyphony choir or chant group should take any available spot, even if it is a daily Mass. The opportunities for singing at major liturgies will come later.

Five Steps to Chant and Polyphony

No claim is being made that the following blueprint will work in every parish, only that it is one path to making success more likely than failure. There are several factors that can doom chant from the outside. For example, one can have a pastor who is a hard-core opponent of the genre. This is the type who has made himself clear that he will tolerate Latin and traditional music under no circumstances. There is little one can do to get past such dogmatism, but one can at least prepare for the future by laying the necessary groundwork.

A word of caution, however: do not be quick to conclude that the pastor is a dogmatic opponent of traditional music. Such a case would be highly unusual. It is far more likely that he just needs persuading that traditional music is not incompatible with his ministerial responsibilities, from his own point of view or from the point of view of the chancery, which he knows can be put on alert by signs of "reactionary" liturgical trends in any parish. Moreover, from seminary through current-day priest retreats, many priests work within a clerical setting in which old-church practices are relentlessly caricatured and disparaged, while all new practices and trends, including pop music, are praised as pastorally sound and popular with the people. It may be that he has a bias that can be overcome with a carefully crafted demonstration project.

Step one is to decide that one will quit complaining and start singing. That requires a serious sense of purpose and some degree of private study. It's time to stock up on hymn books and CDs and learn the basic chants of the faith, from the Marian hymns to the major chants of each liturgical season. It is impossible to teach chant to others if one does not know it oneself, and one must know it well enough to not falter or stutter over the Latin. Even if one goes not further than to take this first step, it provides a spiritual benefit to all Catholics to undertake this private discipline. Do it for the children and grandchildren.

There is no need to become a scholar or to be ready to answer every objection to the effort to revive the treasury of sacred music. To begin, all one needs is the ability to sing the basic Latin hymns and chants with confidence enough to produce compelling versions for others, preferably by memory. It need not be beautiful, only competent. To test one's ability to teach, approach friends and family members to be used as test cases. There is no better way to learn chant than to teach to it forgiving students.

Step two is to make amends. Most parishes have factions, and music can often a play a role in parish divisions, with one camp of activists calling for a full lurch into "Life Teen Masses" and the other still regretting the loss of the preconciliar Roman Rite. These disputes become personal and can last for years. A battleground of this sort is not a likely setting in which innovative steps toward traditional music are going to take root. One might consider making personal amends with any music staff that one might have offended over the years and sincerely seek out common bonds. Not only is this a good practice in its own right; it makes strategic sense in the parish for one's likely opponents to not have their guard up against those working for Latin music in liturgy.

Can the Eagles-Wings strummer and the Latin chanter be friends? Vast chasms separate people with these two sensibilities. One believes that the primary purpose of liturgical music is to involve people in joyful worship through singing various pleasantries with a popular feel, the effect of which is to draw attention to the music at the expense of what is taking place on the altar.[6] The other believes that the purpose of music at liturgy is not to draw attention to music but *away* from all individual actors, whomever they may be, and toward the primary focus of the altar, so that the community gathered might better comprehend the transcendence.[7] And yet there is one bond: an appreciation of music itself. This alone can serve as the basis of friendship, or, at least, civility and peace, to prerequisites to progress in parish life.

Step three is to find singers. It may at first seem counterintuitive to take this step before the pastor has granted any approval for new chants to be sung, or for the director of music to open up a Mass for the possible use of Latin. But there are several important reasons why putting together a schola of any size, whether 2 or 20 people, before approaching the pastoral team is crucial. Having something in place already removes the major objection from being invoked, namely, that there is no choir that can sing this material and no one in the current music program has an interest in this music. And it is certainly true that the technical aspects of singing the unfamiliar must be overcome. People besides the leader of the chant-movement need to be excited about the prospect of singing. Success is more likely if a group is already in place. If people can be persuaded to get together to sing just for the fun of it, it is far more likely that they will stick with the task should the opportunity present itself for singing in the liturgy.

The group (which need not be limited to Catholics) is best assembled by word of mouth rather than through the church bulletin. This path avoids unnecessary provocation and permits a greater degree of quality control. As for standards for singers, they should be able to read music, or at least not be steadfastly against learning, and be willing to adopt a new approach. Everything else can come in time. There is no need for an accompanist; not having one can even be an advantage insofar as reinforces the primacy of the human voice in liturgy.

Apart from prayer (the group should adopt a patron saint), the main ingredient for success here is enthusiasm leading to a sense of group purpose and cohesion[8]. The new group can meet in a home or, ideally, it would meet in the church social hall for one hour a week at a designated time. The advantage of the social hall is that it establishes a presence within the parish. Again, all of this should be done before the idea is broached to sing in liturgy. The goal for the first six months might be to master all the basic chants of the church, as found in the *Jubilate Deo*, in any older hymnal, or in many current hymnals like the *Collegeville Hymnal* and the *Adoremus Hymnal.* Even the Oregon Catholic Press includes a few Latin hymns in its *Music Issue*.

As for polyphony, all the music that one will ever need is available for quick download at the Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL.ORG). It can be instantly and legally printed and distributed, and most of the music has sound samples. Tallis's "If Ye Love Me," Palestrina's "*Adoramus Te*," and Croce's "*O Sacrum*" can be sung by any group in a few rehearsals. If the singers are not available for four parts, three- and even two-part settings of motets by Di Lasso or Byrd can be chosen. In the early stages, it is a good idea to avoid large Mass settings, if only because the conviction that the assembly should

participate in the singing of these is very intense in modern parish life. Instead, the focus should be on motets for general use. Mass parts (the Ordinary) can come in time. Small chants and motets hold out the most prospects for success in the early stages.

Step four is to build support in the parish, proceeding with no prejudgments concerning who will be supportive and who will not. Broad support can be fostered by having the group sing at private parish gatherings in homes. Invite the pastor to a schola party, and someone can casually suggest that the group sing a bit. Practicing in the social hall during the lunch hour is helpful. The group can sing for the sick, or otherwise assist in the ministry of the parish to the aging or those who are homebound. Other ideas include finding a good acoustical space in which to make a recording and produce CDs which can be given away or sold to parish members. All of this establishes the schola as a burgeoning if informal ministry of the parish—and it can all be done without having to seek any kind of official sanction or funding. It can all take place within the framework of the freedom of association and without unnecessary provocation or expense. The group can grow this way and come to persuade people of the merits of this repertoire. With enough hard work and dedication, this group can become as accomplished and more so than the already established choir or choirs of the parish.

At some point in this process, the next step becomes a kind of historical inevitability.

Step five is to request a time to sing at liturgy. It could be just a special occasion, say, Good Friday. It could be at a daily Mass or at evening Benediction and or Vespers. It could be just the summer when everyone else is on vacation and music for Mass is needed. Whatever opportunities present themselves, they should be seized. Ideally, the demand for the schola to do more along these lines will come from within the parish. Finally, at some point along this path, a Mass could be established that will permit the Schola to sing. And the schola should make it clear that an integrated liturgy is necessary (good hymns, along with dignified Mass parts), not a mixed program of traditional and contemporary[9]. Every effort should be made to keep out contemporary hymns and settings in Masses assisted by the Schola, if only so that that the people can observe the difference between the solemnity of the Schola-assisted Masses and the others. This demonstration project, carried out over time, will secure the schola in the life of the parish.

How long will this process take? It depends on the local situation. It could be a month or it could be two years. But no matter how long it takes, it is worth the effort. Introducing this music can draw new people to the faith, reinforce the faith of those already there, draw people to a greater understanding of Catholicism, introduce a new generation into real Catholic music and tradition, and lift the hearts and rekindle the fire in the souls of older Catholics who remember it all from childhood. As the process continues, every effort should be made to maintain good relations with everyone in the parish, even those from opposing factions, and to not be a problem to the pastoral team. If all of this sounds contrary to the temperament of those who want chant and polyphony—after having been assaulted with bad music for decades—it is because it is. But one must never loose sight of the goal, which is not to achieve a personal victory or to score debating points against "liberal" Catholics, or to point to the bad taste of the liturgical team, but simply to glorify God in the creation of sacred space.

In the experience of our own schola, we have found that the best way to make a case for musical diversity that includes the treasury of sacred music is to set a high standard for excellence in every liturgy in which we have had the opportunity to sing. There is little room for error, because the burden of proof falls so heavily on those who are seeking to do something different. The Latin schola is judged more harshly and there are always those who would gain pleasure from failure. For that reason, great attention must be given to good intonation and solemnity in style (slow, deliberate tempos with space between verses and phrases). The schola should not be front and center but in the balcony or the back of the church, if at all possible. In the end, it is not the music that will carry the day so much as the silence and space this repertoire provides for people to

pray and experience a sensibility far different from that provided by a contemporary choir. Once people get a taste of participating in liturgy through prayer and preparation[10], and coming to understand that music can point to God and not just to the community, the rest will take care of itself.

Objections and Responses

As the process of introducing solemn music proceeds, a number of questions will arise for which answers must be given. Some will object nobody knows this music. Possible answer: the best way to assure that this continues to be the case is not to allow people to have the chance to learn it. (The schola should also make translations freely available.) Some will fear that this music will bring back a caricature of preconciliar Catholicism. The answer to this is that Vatican II specifically called for chant and polyphony, and for Latin to take "pride of place." Others may just object on the general grounds that this is not the way our parish does things. Answer: That's true but our sense of the faith must develop; we cannot get stuck in a time warp.

More serious opponents of restoring sacred music are quick to argue that the new structure of the Mass is incompatible with large Mass settings of days gone by. This point should be taken seriously. A schola that early on attempts a full Mass setting is going to bump up against apparently contrary demands of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (which recommends against too much choral singing to the exclusion of assembly singing) as well as a host of practical problems. The once-clear distinction between propers and the ordinary is no long operative, at least not to the same degree, as even the editor of the *Adoremus Hymnal* concedes.[11] In the old-rite structure of the Roman Rite, large settings of the ordinary (thinking here of 16th and 17th century settings, and leaving aside controversies over 18th and 19th century settings) did not interrupt the flow of the liturgy because so many of the prayers by the Celebrant were said *sotto voce* and it was clear that the schola was, in practical terms, not the primary liturgical actor but necessarily secondary. The new rite, however, is more linear in this sense that these separate theatres of liturgical action are collapsed into a single voice alternatively exercised by the priest and people. When the schola sings a Gloria, for example, the celebrant does not say a separate one but defers to the music. The same is true of all parts of the Mass.

This regrettable reality creates many practical problems for adapting old-rite music to the new-rite structure. In the new rite, there is no opportunity to separate the Sanctus from the Benedictus with the consecration. During the Agnus Dei, the people are not kneeling but standing, waiting for it to end, making long settings unwieldy. A large setting of the Credo seems out of the question for most assemblies in smaller parishes. Nor does the schola want to appear to be responsible for having somehow taken parts of the Mass like the Gloria from the people. What this means in practice is that the schola will have to settle for simple chants of the "*Missa de Angelis*" that can be quickly taught, learned, and sung by everyone. The polyphony done by the schola must take place during preludes, the offertory, and communion, which means not Mass parts but motets. Now, clearly, there is an element of tragedy here[12]. And yet it is a reality that any attempt to restore sacred music must deal with. The rite has changed and, with it, the tolerance that the Mass structure itself has for complex artistic development.

This plan presumes that something can be done to eliminate usual musical Mass settings used in the new rite ("Mass of Creation," "Mass of Hope," "St Louis Jesuits Mass"). This should indeed be a priority. There are few parts of any of these settings written in the last thirty years that are stylistically compatible with the aesthetic and liturgical sensibility of chant and polyphony. The two biggest problems of all these new settings arrive at the "Memorial Acclamation" and the "Great Amen." With a musical setting, the former detracts from the consecration, while the latter too often sounds like a seven-second ending of a Broadway hit song. Both of these should be replaced by the simplest possible chant, English or Latin, preferably without accompaniment. In fact,

the rule in favor of simplicity over complexity, a cappella over accompaniment, and less over more generally, should be observed as much as parish culture permits. The simpler the settings of the Psalm and Alleluia are to be preferred over more complex ones.

Humility and Deference

So many of the struggles in smaller parishes turn on questions of ego, personality, and control over liturgy—a consequence of the mistaken but too-often-encouraged view that liturgy should be structured or organized like a political democracy, with all its attendant pressure groups and agendas, including ones that deal with the music. The attempt to bring chant and polyphony to a parish cannot and should not be a approached as a matter of control, as it is precisely the point that our musical heritage is not power and authority but humility and deference to the sacrament. The goal is not to draw attention to the music or musicians but precisely the opposite: to remove every obstacle to sacramental understanding and create a setting most suitable for forgetting what is not important and remembering what is. Music in liturgy can point outside of itself to Truth, and, in the end, that is the best reason to work to find a place for the Catholic musical heritage in every parish in a church whose name means universal.

Adoro Te

The homily ends, as do the prayers of the faithful, and the offering is collected. The music begins again, this time the "*Adoro Te Devote*." Each phrase is sung with loving attention and careful deliberation, treating this simple song as tenderly as one might handle a priceless vase. Men and women trade verse for verse, silence and an unspecified amount of time between each verse, and the wine and bread are brought forward and handed to the celebrant, as the music grows.

One parishioner closes his eyes and listens to the voices, voices he couldn't name but had still somehow always known. These are the sighs and sounds of angels, those closest to the Creator, gladly and tenderly loving the Son and praising his name. He opens his eyes, looks upward, seeking a vision of eternity, a glimpse of this realm from which the voices came, a universe of happiness and perfect light. Sunshine shines in the windows and dances about the walls of the church, mimicking the pulse of the timeless strains, its rhythm one with the voice of the choir as it lovingly chants this ancient song. He knows that soon, right here in this room, ordinary bread will become the Body of Christ.

JEFFREY TUCKER AND ARLENE OOST-ZINNER

NOTES

[1] Thomas Day, *Where Have You Gone, Michelangelo? The Loss of Soul in Catholic Culture* (NY: Crossroad, 1993), p. 157.

[2] *St. Anthony Messenger*, May 1996, Feature Article 2.

[3] Msgr. Robert Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music: 95 AD to 1977 AD* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1979), p. 408.

[4] For an account of the decline of musical expertise, see Peter Jeffery, "What's Wrong with Catholic Liturgical Music in the U.S. Today," unpublished report available at http://www.music.princeton.edu/~jeffery/Whatswrn.rtf.

[5] For an analysis of how ritual and reverence transform the personality, see Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Liturgy and Personality: The Healing Power of Formal Prayer* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1993 [1943, 1932]. pp, 47-58.

[6] For a critique of this view, see Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco, Ca: Ignatius Press, 2000), pp. 136-156, and J.A. Tucker, "The Hidden Hand Behind Bad Catholic Music," *Crisis Magazine*, January 2002.

[7] Aidan Nichols, *Looking at the Liturgy: A Critical View of Its Contemporary Form* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1996), pp. 49-86.

[8] One of our first steps was to produce a T-shirt with a new group logo on the front and a copy of the Gregorian "Asperges" on the back.

[9] Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Liturgy and Personality: The Healing Power of Formal Prayer* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1993 [1943, 1932], p. 127-135.

[10] On active participation, see Michael B. Hoerig, "Reflections on Catholic Church Music," Sacred Music, Volume 125, Number 2, Summer 1998, p. 12.

[11] Kurt Poterack, "Open Letter to Antiphon," *Sacred Music*, Volume 125, Number 2, Summer 1998, p. 22.

[12] Msgr. Robert F. Hayburn is correct that to lose this vast repertoire, for it to fall into complete disuse, is analogous to a world leader who "would destroy all the great cathedrals of Europe." Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music: 95 AD to 1977 AD* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1979), p. 408.

View From Southeast. Cathedral, Gloucester
Gothic (Perpendicular). Rebuilt 1329—C. 1450

WILL THEY KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS? SACRED MUSIC, SACRED THOUGHT

What is sacred music? What makes any piece of music "sacred"? Traditionally, a distinction has been made between "sacred music" and "religious music." Sacred music is that music which is admitted to the Divine Liturgy. Religious music is the much broader category of music which draws its inspiration from sacred things. Pius X, in the beginning of this century, articulated the distinct character of sacred music in his *motu proprio, Tra le Sollecitudini*: "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."[1]

I believe that much of the music in *Glory and Praise, Gather*, and the missalettes so prevalent in today's churches, is not suitable to the Divine Liturgy, precisely because that music does not have the character of sacred music. I will therefore attempt to present the criterion by which a piece of music can be judged "holy" and "good in form"; I will then give a local example of how these principles have unfortunately been neglected.

HOLINESS

Why do we sing at Mass? Sacred music is not merely a pleasantry, added to the Mass for our aesthetic benefit. "The material world is expected and required to co-operate in the glorification which the Church renders to God through the Liturgy."[2] Sung worship is a fundamental response of the human person to God's gifts. The importance of sacred music was articulated by the Second Vatican Council in no ambiguous terms: "The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn litur-

gy."[3] Following from the intimate connection of Sacred Music and the Divine Liturgy, there are two liturgical criteria for a piece of music to be admitted into Divine Worship.[4]

First, the music must be fitting to the liturgical occasion. Thus, no piece can per se be sacred music; it is only in the context of its function in Divine Worship that a piece is considered "sacred." Any music which, by its virtuosity or style, has the effect of turning the Divine Worship into a concert must be firmly excluded from the liturgy. This has been a problem more in the past than in present times. This requirement does not mean that large-scale works with full orchestra are prohibited at Mass; they must be carefully planned, however, to effect their true end, which is God's greater glorification.

Second, the musical text must be worthy of Divine Worship. Our present Pope stated in 1988: "On occasion there have been noted . . . songs which are not conducive to faith or to a sense of the sacred."[5]

[One] corruption of texts [is] a listless paraphrasing of Scripture, necessarily adapting it to the Procrustean bed of popular, secular melody. Although this loose rendering of the Scripture is often identified by terminology such as "text based on Psalm . . . ," frequently the text is only remotely similar.[6]

While paraphrasing Scripture into metrical forms is often necessary in order to set it to music properly, this technique has in many cases been abused. Another form of textual abuse abounds in contemporary gospel-style songs. No longer do the musical texts focus primarily on God's praise and glorification; instead they are sentimental expressions of community consciousness. Examine, for example, the first verse of "We Come to Your Feast," contained in *Gather Comprehensive*:

> We place upon your table a gleaming cloth of white;
> The weaving of our stories, the fabric of our lives;
> The dreams of those before us, the ancient hopeful cries,
> The promise of our future: our needing and our nurture lie here before our eyes.
>
> Refrain:
> We come to your feast, the young and the old,
> The frightened , the bold, the greatest and the least.
> We come to your feast with the fruit of our lands and the work of our hands
> We come to your feast.[7]

Although the text of the verse makes a grammatical attempt at the language of offering, it is nevertheless almost exclusively self-centered. How much more worshipful would it be to say in the refrain, for instance:

> We bless you, O Lord, the young and the old,
> The frightened, the bold, the greatest and the least.
> We bless you, O Lord, for the fruit of our lands and the work of our hands.
> We bless you, O Lord.

This modification changes the entire thrust of the text, placing the textual emphasis on blessing God, in the traditional prayer form of a Hebrew Berakah.

The final textual difficulty in many contemporary songs, and the one that I find most distressing, causes the assembly to sing in the first person as God. "I am the Bread of Life" is the most egregious example of this form of congregational narcissism. The worst effect of this type of text is not that the faithful will think that they are God (they are smarter than that): the worst effect is that the singing is no longer directed to God; it is directed to other members of the congregation. This form of singing has no basis in Christian tradition and should be discarded.

There is also an ongoing controversy regarding the use of Latin and the vernacular at Mass. While any extensive discussion of this controversy is beyond the scope of this ar-

ticle, I would like to point out that use of Latin has a marvelous unifying effect when peoples of different cultures come together. Teaching the people the ordinary of the Mass in Latin (Kyrie, Gloria, [Credo,] Sanctus and Agnus) is not especially difficult and was mandated by the Council.[8]

Goodness of Form

Having articulated the sacred character of liturgical music, we must now turn to its musical character. Most fundamentally, sacred music must be in the highest degree true art. It is difficult to apply such a general principle, however, because of the human nature of art:

It is indispensable to a clear understanding of music that the basic fact be first acknowledged; and that is that music—its melody, rhythm, harmony, and form is an abstract medium. As such, it is neutral. There is no such thing as a sacred triplet, or a sacred dominant chord.[9]

This does not mean, however, that any musical material or style is appropriate to sacred music: "Art is essentially form. An art cannot properly be called sacred solely on the grounds that its subjects originate in a spiritual truth; its formal language also must bear witness to a similar origin."[10] But how, one might ask, can music's form correspond to its sacred nature? As Titus Burckhardt argues: "It is tradition that transmits the sacred models and the working rules, and thereby guarantees the spiritual validity of the forms."[11]

What, then, are the traditional forms of sacred music? First, we must make clear what sacred music is not:

The ultimate objective of sacred art is not the evocation of feelings nor the communication of impressions; it is a symbol, and as such it finds simple and primordial means sufficient; it could not in any case be anything more than allusive, its real object being ineffable. It is of angelic origin, because its models reflect supra-formal realities. It recapitulates the creation the "Divine Art" in parables, thus demonstrating the symbolical nature of the world, and delivering the human spirit from its attachment to crude and ephemeral "facts."[12]

The "simple and primordial means" of sacred music traditionally advocated by the Church have been the Gregorian chants: "The individual parts of the Mass and Office must keep, even musically, that meaning and form which ecclesiastical tradition has given them and which is quite well expressed in Gregorian chant."[13] It is because the chants do not attempt to "evoke feelings" or "communicate impressions" but rather only seek to further the Divine Worship, that they can have such a powerful effect on our lives. In no way does this mean that all sacred music must sound like chant; the music must, however, avoid the temptation to musical impressionism or romanticism.

Another musical criterion that must be satisfied in sacred music is the absence of elements that are specifically profane. Performing dance music, or singing a Broadway tune at Mass, for example, even if the text is impeccable, is by the nature of sacred music inappropriate.[14]

Sometimes, even an entire style of music must be proscribed from the Divine Worship: Piano music in the bar-room style has such strong connotations in many people's mind that to admit this style into the liturgy would be inappropriate.

There are, of course, practical but less essential aspects of sacred music which must not be overlooked. One of the key roles of sacred music, emphasized by Vatican II, is its capacity to foster the active participation of the faithful. In the rhythmic and melodic unity of the music, the faithful can unite themselves in God's praises: "[T]he unity of hearts is more profoundly achieved by the union of voices."[15] It is therefore a practical necessity that the rhythm and melody of a song be suited to congregational singing.

Having been required to accompany many of the songs in both *Gather* and *Glory and Praise*, I can attest that most of these songs are not musically suitable to congregational singing. One of the most common deficiencies of many contemporary songs is the in-

constancy of their rhythm; either syncopations make the rhythm overly complex, or chopped-up phrases break up the rhythmic unity of a piece; "One Bread, One Body" is a classic example:

> One Bread, [pause] One Body, [long pause] One Lord of all, [long pause]
> One cup of blessing which we bless. [long pause]
> And we, though many, [pause] throughout the earth [long pause]
> We are one body in this one Lord. [long pause]
> We are one body in this one Lord. [long pause]
> Gentile or Jew, [pause] servant or free, [pause] woman or man [pause] no more [exra long pause, and back to refrain.]

Even the trained performers of this song cannot often decide how long these pauses should be, and the result rarely corresponds with the printed music. In most parishes, the congregation is left singing half-heartedly, if at all. A good congregational song will have a solid, rather blocky rhythm and a melody that has few melodic contortions; the traditional test for a good tune is to discover whether the people are able to sing it without accompaniment (a capella). If they cannot, it is most unlikely that adding an accompaniment will make the tune more secure.

One other difficulty affecting much of the contemporary literature is the musical predominance and necessity of the cantor, especially if amplified through a sound system. The choir, not the cantor, should serve as the basic building block of liturgical music; the cantor is indeed an added aid, but is not a necessity.[16] Having the cantor stand in front of the congregation, facing them, and "invite" them to join in the liturgical singing, should be avoided if possible; it is intensely distracting and musically unnecessary. In fact, if it can be arranged, it is often best to have all the musicians behind the congregation, as an added musical support, and to prevent distraction from the primary action of the Mass, which is the Sacrifice at the altar. There is great benefit in the choir-loft placement of musicians.

Liturgical Music Run Amok: An Example

Lest these criteria for sacred music seem disconnected from lived Christian experience, I wish to present an example of the destruction of sacred music at which I unfortunately played a part. I have, for a long time, played the organ for a Catholic organization responsible for offering the Holy Mass: It was in this capacity that I helped coordinate music for a celebration of Ash Wednesday one year. The planning of the music committee was carried out hastily, and compromises were quickly reached between the "traditional" and "contemporary" members of the committee. As a result, the following song was chosen as the "gathering" song:

1. We rise again from ashes, from the good we've failed to do.
   We rise again from ashes, to create ourselves anew.
   If all our world is ashes then must our lives be true,
   An offering of ashes, an offering to you.

2. We offer you our failures, we offer you attempts,
   The gifts not fully given, the dreams not fully dreamt.
   Give our stumblings direction, give our visions wider view,
   An offering of ashes, an offering to you.

3. Then rise again from ashes, let healing come to pain,
   Though spring has turned to winter, and sunshine turned to rain.
   The rain we'll use for growing, and create the world anew
   From an offering of ashes, an offering to you.

4. Thanks be to the Father, who made us like himself.
   Thanks be to the Son, who saved us by his death.
   Thanks be to the Spirit, who creates the world anew
   From an offering of ashes, an offering to you.[17]

The literary and musical quality and theological intent of this song are regrettable. In the first three verses, there is no specific mention of God, although there are a few references to an unidentified you; meanwhile, there are twelve references to 'we' and 'our.' In fact, other than the implied Christian symbolism of ashes, there is nothing specifically Christian in the first three verses of the song! We are somehow going to "create ourselves anew": Contrast this sentiment to the psalm: "Create in me a clean heart, O God."[18] We are also told to "create the world anew," but without any sense that our creation of the world can only be a participation in God's providence. The final verse of the song, while certainly adding the traditional Christian doxology, introduces a functional view of the Trinity, which is an unfortunate reduction of the individual personhood of the Three-In-One. If you were to examine the tune of this song, you would find that it is only unpleasant insofar as it is monotonous; the frequency of dotted rhythms and the static melodic contour of each line makes it very easy for the piece to stagnate. Overall, I believe that this song is an excellent example of what is wrong with many contemporary songs written for the liturgy.

Conclusion

I do not in any way mean to cast off all contemporary music: There are certainly some treasures hidden amidst the massive amounts of sentimental music written in the last thirty years. But I do believe that publishers and parish music directors need to be, in light of the true principles of sacred music, much more selective about the music that they choose to print and sing. If the faithful come to Mass expecting the music to "speak to them," then we have failed: The ultimate purpose of sacred music must always be to glorify God.

BENJAMIN SMEDBURG

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NOTES

[1] Pius X, *The Motu Proprio of Church Music of Pope Pius X* [*Tra le Sollecitudini*], translated by C. J. McNaspy (Gregorian Institute of America: Toledo Ohio, 1950), I. 2..

[2] Joseph Jungmann, *Liturgical Worship*, translated by a monk of St. John's Abbey (Frederick Pustet: New York, 1941), p. 46.

[3] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), in *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, New Revised Edition, edited by Austin Flannery (Costello: Northport, 1992), n. 1

[4] Mary Oberly Hubley, "Some Reflections on 'Contemporary' Hymns" in *Cum Angelis Canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honour of Richard J. Schuler*, edited by Robert A. Skeris (Catholic Church Music Associates: Saint Paul, 1990), p. 36. Because I have separated the musical and textual aspects of sacred music, the enumeration and distribution of criteria has been changed.

[5] John Paul II, "Vigesimus Quintus Annus, " as quoted in *Cum Angelis* Canere, p. 37.

[6] "Some Reflections on 'Contemporary' Hymns," pp. 37-38.

[7] "We Come to Your Feast," No. 850 in *Gather Comprehensive* (Gregorian Institute of America: Chicago, 1994); text and tune by Michael Joncas.

[8] *Musicam Sacram* (Instruction on Music in the Liturgy), in *Vatican Council* II, n. 47.

[9] Id., p. 35.

[10] Titus Burckhardt, *Sacred Art in East and West* (Perennial Books: Pates Manor, 1967), p. 7. Note that 'form' in this context is not the miniscule interpretation of formal musical analysis, but the larger notion of form as any unifying element in a work of art.

[11] Id., p. 8.

[12] Id., p. 9.

[13] *Tra le Sollicitudini*, IV. 10.

[14] *Tra le Sollicitudini*, Introduction.

[15] *Musicam Sacram*, n. 5.

[16] *Tra le Sollicitudini*, n. 12.

[17] "Ashes," No. 883 in *Gather Comprehensive*; text and tune by Tom Conry.

[18] Psalm antiphon from the Fifth Sunday of Lent, cycle B.

Parish Church, Iffley
Romanesque (Norman). C. 1170

MUSIC, BEAUTY, AND THE DIVINE

Many of us have had the experience of sitting at a concert or musical performance in which our spirits are moved beyond words. We feel ecstasy, joy, or sadness. But no, we tell ourselves, we must not let the music take us beyond what really is. We must not dwell on the feelings that are stirred up within us. We are musicians. We must critique the performance, analyze the form of the work, understand its historical context. But yet, through the beauty of the music we feel mysteriously drawn to something. *Something that is beyond ourselves.* But what is it that speaks to us through the beauty of music? Why is this beauty such a powerful force in our lives?

The study of musical aesthetics, which gained tremendous popularity during the Classical era, attempts to determine that which is considered beautiful in music, and carefully examines the variables of education, culture, and the elusive element called "taste." As Phillip Downs observes, in the eighteenth century

> . . . philosophers attempted to approach the problems of aesthetics—that is to say, the way in which art is experienced. As never before, tome after tome appeared in which the various arts were dissected and attempts were made to establish their proper function and their distinctions, one from another. (Downs 1992:9)

Yet such attempts to objectively quantify the experience of beauty leave an important question unanswered: "What is the effect of beautiful music in our lives?" Perhaps the Greek philosophers came closer to answering this question than the Classical aestheticians ever did. The Greek doctrine of *ethos* shared by Plato and Aristotle is the belief that music can powerfully affect human character and behavior. It recognizes music as one of the strongest influences in man's spiritual development.

But the Greeks did not have the complete picture. They venerated music as a source of power in itself, failing to consider the divine inspiration behind it. While they recog-

nized the spiritual qualities of music, the ancient Greeks denied the possibility that it could be transcendent and inherently tied to a creator-God. Centuries of later musicians, critics, and philosophers would come to experience how beautiful music reflects the grandeur of God, brings man to a desire for him, and is also a mysterious language for communication between God and man.

In tracing the divinity of beauty in music one of the most pervasive themes that appears is mimetic creativity. Though this concept is diverse in its manifestations, its foundation is that temporal beauty serves as a reflection of some superior creative being, the source of ultimate beauty. Music infused with beauty is a "mimesis" or imitation of an ultimate reality. In *The Spirituality of Music* Selina Thielemann writes:

> Every single expression of beauty, however finite and fugitive, carries in itself the dignity of a truth that exceeds all limits of finiteness . . . The heart has no excuse for being ignorant of the infinite essence concealed in each and every manifestation of finite beauty (2001:87-88).

But what is this ultimate reality or "truth"? Thielemann's idea is a startling parallel to a scriptural passage in Romans which identifies the source of this truth:

> For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. (Romans 1:20, NIV)

Many have observed, as did the apostle Paul, that God's ultimate beauty is manifest in the beauty of "what has been made" in this present world. This "finite beauty" is clearly seen in the creation of music, which draws us beyond ourselves and proves to us, if we will listen, that there is something beyond this world. In *The Divine Quest in Music*, R. W. S. Medl proposes

> So prevalent is this spiritual quality in beautiful works of art, that we can say that, as in the case of nature, the beauty is itself evidence of the existence of God. . . . There is divinity to be found in the secular madrigals of the early Italian and English Tudor composers, in the instrumental art of all ages, in the German *Leider*, in the music of the opera-house, and even in so-called 'light' music as well as that which is set to religious texts. (1957:51)

It may seem surprising that Mendl suggests the beauty of *secular* music is reflective of the creativity of God, yet this is the essence of divine revelation. The music need not be associated with religious or scriptural text or purpose. It serves, in itself, as a reflection of the glory of God.

Not only does temporal beauty point to the existence of God; it also foreshadows a fulfillment of our longing, giving us hope. The experience of beauty in music moves us to recognize our deepest desires and also believe that there must be something that will ultimately fulfill those desires. Selina Thielemann aptly notes this phenomenon:

> The poet, therefore, addresses his heart whenever he speaks of his longing for spiritual perfection, and he knows that rational explanations can never adequately answer the question about the origins of music. (2001:11)

The logical resolution to this longing for spiritual perfection will be found in being united with the source of beauty. Thielemann suggests that music moves man

> . . . to his highest spiritual goal. What is this supreme object? It is the ultimate quest of mankind: to become one with the Supreme Being . . . (14)

In an essay on aesthetic theory, John Rahn examines the element of desire through the discussion of a humanistic anthropological model. Though he does not employ the terms "God" or "Supreme Being," Rahn recognizes that experiencing beautiful art evokes feelings of desire directed toward an object that is deemed "sacred."

> The primal infinite, because indefinitely deferred, desire for the central [sacred] object becomes the basis not only for all language and religion but also for culture in general, and high culture in particular. It is high culture in its aesthetic aspects that re-evokes the originary scene by presenting an infinitely desirable and utterly unattainable object . . . (1994:61)

Arnold Schopenhauer's philosophy of representation explains how the mimetic element in music is closely tied to the nature of desire:

> Now the nature of man consists in the fact that his will strives, is satisfied, strives anew, and so on; in fact his happiness and well-being consist only in the transition from desire to satisfaction, and from this to a fresh desire, such transition going forward rapidly. For the non-appearance of satisfaction is suffering; the empty longing for a new desire is languor, boredom. Thus, corresponding to this, the nature of melody is a constant digression and deviation from the tonic in a thousand ways . . . yet there always follows a final return to the tonic. (1965:260)

Schopenhauer proposes that man hears, in the harmonic aspects of music, an imitation of the driving forces within himself. Dissonance and resolution represent desire and satisfaction, the primary forces at work in our spiritual lives. Just as in tonal music there is a "final return to the tonic" we recognize that God created each of us with a desire that carries with it a promise of fulfillment.

Perhaps the most deeply personal experience of music is seen in the way it serves as a divine language. God speaks to man through music, and man, in response, uses music to worship God. As a two-way line of communication between the earthly and the transcendent, music takes on a unique spiritual quality which the term "beauty" falls far short of capturing. Aestheticians and philosophers have come to call this quality the "sublime." Kurt Sander describes sublimity as dealing with the "mystery of the spiritual world." He believes that "sublimity looks to convey those things which are a mystery to us by using elements that run contrary to our reason—contrary to natural phenomenon" (1998:2). In his book *The Musician's Soul*, conductor James Jordan speaks of the mysterious experience of a choral ensemble speaking with one voice "that will be characterized by the sublime beauty of all the elements of music . . ." (1999:77).

In man's experience of music, the "sublime" is that which stirs the soul. Such beautiful music possesses a transcendent quality, moving the listener to a realization of the supernatural realm, and in some cases, God himself. In Book X of his *Confessions*, St. Augustine testifies to the role music played in his conversion:

> . . . when I remember the tears I shed at the Psalmody of Thy Church, in the beginning of my recovered faith; and how at this time I am moved, not with the singing, but with the things sung, when they are sung with a clear voice and modulation most suitable, I acknowledge the great use of this institution. (*Confessions*, 229)

Augustine emphasizes the role that music plays in his "recovered faith" to the point of expressing fear that he sins by taking pleasure in it:

> . . . in those melodies which Thy words breathe soul into, when sung with a sweet and attuned voice, I do a little repose. . . . But this contentment of the flesh, to which the soul must not be given over to be enervated, doth oft beguile me . . . (228)

His confession reveals his conviction that God draws men to himself through music.

Augustine's encounter was a specific personal experience of God's divine revelation. Others have also experienced this sense of a calling from God through the beauty of music.

> The Supreme Divinity embodies the sweetest essence of love, and His call of love resounds in multicolored strains of musical cadences. (Thielemann 2001:3)

Here Thielemann has experienced more than a general sense of God's creative nature. She sensed his divine love drawing her to him; a calling conveyed to her through beautiful music.

The power of music is not only seen in the conveyance of spiritual truths to man; it is also demonstrated in man's response to God. Music has always been an intrinsic element in man's expression of adoration and praise to his creator.

> . . . music is necessary to Christian worship. Its use throughout Christian history bears witness to its ability to communicate a spiritual message. Even in the infancy of the Church St. Paul tells us to be 'filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.' (Sander, 1998:1)

The importance of music throughout Christian history is reinforced in the Second Vatican Council, in which the fathers write

> The musical tradition of the universal church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. (in Guettler 1995:6)

This portion of the constitution on the sacred liturgy is based on the church fathers' understanding that music is a language which transcends the earthly, connecting mortal man to God. Amy E. Guettler sums up the dual role of music in her article "Music As Prayer:"

> The sacred liturgy with its sacred music has been used by the Church not only to lead men to God, but more importantly to act as the highest form of praise and worship of God. (Guettler 1995:7)

Numerous accounts of praising God with music are found in the Bible. Men and women from both the old and new testaments found that their most natural form of thanksgiving to God came through singing or playing instruments. The words of the psalmist David seem to capture most accurately the unique role of music in worship: "How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!" (Psalm 147:1, NIV). The experiences of generations of worshippers tell us that there is something about the communion with God through music that is intrinsically fitting and pleasing to man's spirit.

The history of music aesthetics has primarily been concerned with beauty as a measurable entity. Thus, aestheticians have continually struggled with the mysterious, spiritual quality of music. The discipline most closely approached a spiritual understanding of beauty in developing the concept of the sublime. But traditional paradigms of music

criticism, even including consideration of supernatural concepts such as the sublime, allow little room for acknowledging the deeply personal experience of God through music. History reveals that music is one of the most powerful forces in man's spiritual pilgrimage and points to God's involvement with his creation, yet many music scholars continue to ignore the possibility of divine inspiration and the important role of personal faith in an integrated approach to the study of music. Perhaps it is time to promote a new reception to the spiritual element in musical aesthetics. Musicologists will not compromise their academic integrity in exploring the deeper issues of beauty related to their art. On the contrary, they will build upon a wealth of music history and literature which strongly supports the spirituality of music.

STEPHANIE MILLER

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REVIEWS

Compact Disc

Maestro di Capella: Music of Elzéar Genet (Carpentras) Suspicious Cheese Lords.

This recording of the music of Elzéar Genet (c. 1470-1548) by the up and coming male vocal group "The Suspicious Cheese Lords" is highly recommended. Elzear Genet sang in the papal chapel under Pope Julius II, and thereafter in the court of the French King Louis XII. He became the first composer to be named Master of the Papal Chapel. This CD includes several of his motets and the Mass *Missa "Se Mieulx Ne Vient."* Those wishing to purchase it can order it on Amazon.com or on the website www.cheeselords.org.

CALVERT SHENK

NEWS

On 11 January 2003, the Lord of life and death called to her eternal reward Sr. Miriam Joseph Larkin C.S.J. of the California Province of the Sisters of St. Joseph, in the fifty-second year of her religious profession. A trusted collaborator of Timothy Cardinal Manning, she organized the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission at his request, serving as its Executive Secretary from 1974/86. During those often-difficult post-Vatican II years, Sr. Miriam Joseph directed the formation of liturgical ministers and diocesan implementation of the conciliar Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, through the planning of conferences and workshops; the development of prudent and pastorally sound liturgical guidelines, and the creation of an excellent liturgical and theological resource library.

A native Angelino, Sr Miriam Joseph entered the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet after the Second World War, in the fall of 1945. She made her first profession of vows on the feast of St. Joseph in 1948; final vows followed on Our Lady's Assumption in 1951. Sr Miriam Joseph received her undergraduate degree in music from Mt. St. Mary's College, and her Masters in music from USC. She also took advanced courses at St. Pius Tenth School in New York, and at the Abbey of St. Peter's in Solesmes.

Her entire life of service was spent in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Sr. Miriam Joseph taught at Mt. St. Mary's College where she chaired the Music Department;

At St. Mary's Academy in Inglewood, and for many years at the Novitiate House of the Order. In her retirement, and in spite of recurring health problems, Sr. Miriam Joseph continued to teach music at St. Martin of Tours School in Brentwood and St. Jerome School in Westchester. Her love of music was as great as her expertise, which covered a broad spectrum. "She could present Gregorian chant with the same ease, authority and mastery as she could the more playful nursery rhymes and songs for children. Her love of learning coupled with her great sense of humour endeared her to her students—grade school, high school and college" Mons. Francis J. Weber, archdiocesan archivist and a long-time friend who preached the funeral sermon, did not fail to note that "She probably touched more lives and influenced more decisions than a swarm of other, more loquacious people. Her vocation was that of an earlier vintage. It was anchored to the notion of service." The preacher recalled a striking example of this: "So dedicated was she that in the last year or so, she had to tape a wooden tongue depressor to one of her (arthritically) frozen-in-place fingers just so she could hit all the keys of the organ. Probably most of you didn't notice that."

When Sr. Miriam Joseph retired from the Liturgical Commission (now: the Office of Worship), Cardinal Manning wrote that "You have unceasingly dedicated yourself and your exquisite talents to the service of the Church in our office. The nobility of our liturgical celebrations derives from your inspiration and preparation" which gave the diocese "a foretaste of the great liturgies that lie ahead of us in the eternal sanctuary." The sacred music for the exsequies was provided by the St. Charles Borromeo parish choir from North Hollywood: the Gregorian Requiem; motets of Palestrina, Victoria and Paul Manz. The conductor was one of Sr. Miriam Joseph's oldest friends and most prized pupils, Paul Salamunovich. May her example inspire others, and may she rest in peace ! FS

CONTRIBUTORS

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