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# SACRED MUSIC

SUMMER 2007  
VOLUME 134 No. 2





# SACRED MUSIC

Summer 2007

Volume 134, Number 2

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## EDITORIALS

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# Et Erit In Pace Memoria Ejus Richard J. Schuler 1920–2007†

By Robert A. Skeris



ou would have been impressed by some of the young priests praying with him on his deathbed, singing Latin chants from memory ! . . . Fr. Twin Cities Catholic Chorale even sang part of the 'Nos autem' by heart. . . ."

"As far as church music goes, he is one in ten million."

". . . had Mons. Schuler's 10:00 Sunday High Mass been the one adopted by the universal Church after the Council it is unlikely there would have been such an urgent need for traditionalist counterrevolution."

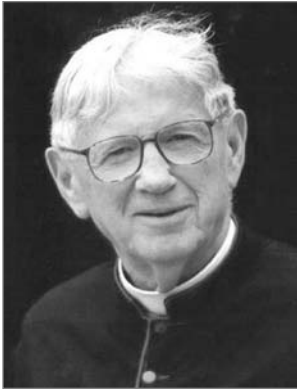
". . . I will never forget the beauty of Holy Mass at St. Agnes. He . . . and the liturgy he promoted so beautifully were major factors in the rebirth of my Catholic faith."

"Palm Sunday 1992 was the first time I visited St. Agnes church. I had been away from the church, in no small part due to the banality of liturgy—though I didn't know there could be anything better. On a recommendation from a friend I visited the parish. I had never been to a Latin Mass. I had never heard a sung Mass. That day I felt like I was being introduced to my religion for the first time. . . . That was my first Latin Mass. I returned for Holy Thursday and the Vigil before I had to return to college. I didn't understand then the Latin of the Mass, but it was clear that the faith expressed in those liturgies was total, and I needed to be there. I'd had it with half-way Catholicism. At St. Agnes the faith was on display gloriously. Here the faith seemed as ancient as it did strong and vibrant. And from that Holy Week I determined that I was going to learn and do my part to preserve the Gregorian melodies. . . ."

"It was during a visit to St. Agnes Church on an October weekend in 1993 that my life was changed forever. A weekend of Mons. Schuler's wonderful hospitality was crowned by Holy Mass with the Mozart 'Missa longa' as the musical offering. The seeds for the N.N. Catholic Chorale were sown that day. By the grace of God we are now in our tenth year and still growing. Suffice it to say that there would be no N.N. Catholic Chorale without the inspiration, guidance and prayers of our beloved Mons. Schuler. He was of great courage and example in a bleak time. He was a good friend. May he rest in peace."

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Rev'd Professor Dr. Robert A. Skeris is chairman of Dom Mocquereau Fund and Director of the Centre for Ward Method Studies, B. T. Rome School of Music, The Catholic University of America. [rskeris@sbcblg.net](mailto:rskeris@sbcblg.net). Many articles by Msgr. Schuler are available at [MusicaSacra.com](http://MusicaSacra.com)



“It was a great privilege to have met Mons. Schuler albeit only once. He kept the flame of the Sacred Liturgy alight in a very dark age indeed and passed that light on to many others to whom he was a father and a guide. May Almighty God reward this disciple of the true liturgical movement—this pioneer of the new liturgical movement ! R.I.P.”

Even this small sampling of voices from the world wide web<sup>1</sup> gives eloquent testimony to the enormous beneficial effects of Richard Schuler’s priestly life and work. And what (we ask) was the vital force which sustained that life and impelled those achievements?

Surely it was his firm and lively faith in God, in God’s Son become man, in the Church he established on the Rock of Peter. There can be little doubt that this is the key to understanding the four score and seven years of Mons. Schuler’s earthly sojourn.

It explains his path to the altar of God who gave joy to his youth, his academic training and teaching career, his founding of the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale in 1956, his decades of notable collaboration in national and international church music organizations. That faith and loyalty to the church and the Vicar of Christ also marked his pastoral efforts at St. Agnes parish from 1969 until 2001. Those efforts were best described in his own words.

In every way, what is done at Saint Agnes is in perfect accord with the directives of the Holy See and the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Liturgy at Saint Agnes is not a home-made activity. Rather it is the action of the Church, which is the Mystical Christ; and therefore, the liturgy is the very action of the Redeemer himself. Only the church, the Mystical Christ, can determine what that is to be. It remains for the priest and the people to carry it out as the church prescribes it with as much care, reverence and solemnity as possible. From the beginning of the parish this was the intention of the pastors, and nothing was spared to make the Eucharistic Sacrifice noble and beautiful, fully in accord with the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church.

In these words lies Richard Schuler’s legacy, here his lesson for all who come after him.

How often have we heard it said that “no one is irreplaceable?” That claim may be true when it applies to certain positions in the life of men and society. But if the statement refers to the inner core of a person as an individual, to his originality and his personality—then “irreplaceable” is a rather superficial word.

To the extent that every person is a unique creation of God, every person is in himself irreplaceable, because one of a kind. But for others, a man can be irreplaceable if during his life he was able to enrich others from the heart



<sup>1</sup>The online guest book can be signed until April 20, 2008: <http://tinyurl.com/3557k4>.

of his own personality, to form and shape and mould them. In that sense, for those of us who knew him well as fatherly friend and counselor, the late lamented Richard Schuler is indeed irreplaceable. For us, there will come situations in which we can no longer ask his advice because Richard Schuler has left us for a better place. Our sorrow is great because we no longer have him as a man, can no longer hear his voice or feel his friendly handshake, can no longer see his impressive priestly figure.

But he has built himself a monument in the hearts of those to whom he was priest, teacher, mentor, and friend. His image should remain in our memories and in our hearts, so that he continues to influence and inspire us.

Together with the company of comrades from the American Society of St. Caecilia (1956/64), the *Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae*, and the Church Music Association of America (1964 ff.), I say farewell to Richard Schuler with a word we so often exchanged after long evenings of conversation both serious and cheerful . . . on the Burgmauer or on Lafond Street, at Campo Santo Teutonico in the Vatican or at Fr. Siegfried Reh's hospitable rectory in Holzgau in the Lechtal: "I'll see you in the morning!"

Yes, indeed, in the morning . . . in the morning when that Morning Star arises which knows no setting—he who returning from the grave serenely shone forth upon mankind, bringing to you, old friend, and to all of us redemption and everlasting life ! ☩



# On the Apostolic Exhortation

By William Mahrt



n February 22, the Feast of the Chair of Peter, Pope Benedict issued an apostolic exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, a document resulting from the Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist, meeting in Rome last Autumn. In it the Holy Father summarizes salient points of discussion from the synod with recommendations for teaching and practice.

At first the document seems a bit of a potpourri, because it ranges widely through a great diversity of topics discussed by the synod. Some have already criticized it for having no teeth, no regulations, without which its discussions will remain in the realm of theory. Some have excused its lack of regulations as being an act of collegial reportage from the synod. Some have complained that it did not include their own desiderata; we musicians, for example, would have liked to have found more authoritative statements on the implementation of a greater return to Gregorian chant and polyphony.

But that is not his method. Benedict is no longer in charge of overseeing issues of doctrinal orthodoxy. He is now universal shepherd, and his method seems to be to establish first the fundamental principles as a basis for practical applications. Already we have seen it in *Deus Caritas Est*. Here he had the wish of Pope John Paul II that charitable works throughout the world be encouraged, which formed the second part of the encyclical. The first part, however, established a strong theoretical basis for the second by a quite original discussion of *caritas*. The traditional discussion of the two types of love had mainly drawn distinctions between *caritas* (*agape* in Greek) and *amor* (*eros* in Greek), but Pope Benedict explored the interrelation and the mutual interaction between these two kinds of love in an exemplary and inspiring exposition of fundamental principles which formed the foundation for the more practical discussion which followed.

The same is true for the apostolic exhortation. Whoever seeks the most fundamental issue behind the present practice of the Mass in the parishes will likely conclude that it all too often focuses upon the congregation and too infrequently upon God. Indeed, it was one of my principal criticisms of *Music in Catholic Worship* that this document was almost exclusively anthropocentric and not sufficiently theocentric.<sup>1</sup> From this any number of difficulties flow, including the incorporation of popular secular musical styles into the liturgy with a resulting loss of much of the tradition of sacred music and a general desacralization of the liturgy.

Pope Benedict in *Sacramentum Caritatis* meets such a situation head-on by dealing with the most fundamental reality: the Eucharistic liturgy must be Christocentric. This places the apostolic exhortation alongside *Deus Caritas Est*, where the Eucharist is the most profound expression of Christ's love for us. There follows a rich exposition of the Old Testament precedents of the Eucharist and their fulfillment in the sacrifice of Christ—in the relation of the Eucharist to the other sacraments, to the last things, and finally to the Virgin Mary.

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<sup>1</sup>William Mahrt, "Toward a Revision of Music in Catholic Worship," *Sacred Music*, 134, no. 1 (Spring 2007), 57.

On the ground that there is a binding relation between belief and practice, between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*, he develops this relation by discussing the role of beauty in liturgy:

The liturgy is inherently linked to beauty: it is *veritatis splendor*. . . . In Jesus we contemplate beauty and splendor at their source. This is no mere aestheticism, but the concrete way in which the truth of God's love in Christ encounters us, attracts us and delights us, enabling us to emerge from ourselves and drawing us towards our true vocation, which is love. . . . Beauty, then, is not mere decoration, but rather an essential element of the liturgical action, since it is an attribute of God himself and his revelation. (§35)

Pope Benedict addresses the question of popular participation. He understands that it must be more than externally active participation:

The active participation called for by the Council must be understood in more substantial terms, on the basis of a greater awareness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life. (§52)

Preparation for this more substantive participation ought to include a cultivation of inner dispositions, aided by recollection and silence, by fasting, even by confession. Moreover,

“the primary way to foster the participation of the People of God in the sacred rite is the proper celebration of the rite itself.” (§38)

If all of this were understood well, our everyday liturgical problems would admit of much easier solution. If beauty is a compelling need in the liturgy, then we must choose the most beautiful music possible. If the focus upon Christ is the all-encompassing theme, we should comprehend more easily the reasons that the pax should be given with reserve immediately before we are to receive him in the sacrament. Pope Benedict draws such practical applications, including some quite specific recommendations for the use of chant and Latin (included in the section of documents, below).

Actually, we cannot expect everything from one document. It is, after all, an apostolic exhortation following upon the synod of bishops. It responds to the discussions of the synod, and it is true that collegiality calls for a kind of reportage from the wishes of the bishops. This does not mean that Pope Benedict does not express his own wishes, for on numerous occasions he turns to the first person and says “I ask,” “I reaffirm,” “I wish.” But he is also clear what the fathers of the synod wanted, and so when it comes to Gregorian chant,

I desire that, in accordance with the request advanced by the synod fathers, that Gregorian chant be suitably esteemed and employed as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy. (§42)

This we had already heard from the preparatory documents for the synod; it is still good that it comes to us now with his authority and with his desire. But we have not heard the last from Pope Benedict concerning liturgy and music. What we have heard, though, is a continuing commitment to Gregorian chant as the proper music of the Roman Rite, now in the context of a Eucharist ecstatically focused upon the love of Christ and this as the source of beauty in the liturgy and thus of music. It behooves us to read the whole document carefully for this central vision and not just the paragraphs on music, for it expresses the deep foundations of our liturgy and music. ❧



## ARTICLES

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# The Life and Meaning of the Sequence

By Lázló Dobszay



he sequence (also known during the Middle Ages as *prosa*) cannot strictly be considered one of the Gregorian genres but belongs to wider sphere of plainchant or *cantus planus*, i.e., the medieval monodic liturgical chant which grew out of Gregorian chant. It was not part of the *Ritus* and *Cantus Romanus*, transmitted to Francia and the many churches in Europe; rather, these new church families of Christendom enriched the liturgical repertory with the sequence.

After the heritage of the Bible, the liturgy and the apostolic doctrine had been carefully interpreted and implanted in the living faith during the age of church fathers. The eighth and ninth centuries saw the elaboration of this heritage in its every detail, its assimilation and transmission in textbooks, tracts, and summarizing volumes to the multitude of Christians, both to the literate and, indirectly, to the illiterate. An excellent means for this elaboration and transmission was the chanted “commentary” integrated into the celebration of the liturgy: the canonic parts of the Bible used during the liturgy were exposed and explained in the tropes (insertions or additions interpolated into the prescribed set of ecclesiastical chants).

As to the contents of the tropes, they gave artistic form to the patristic explanations, and musically they used the framework of the traditional melodies, while also stretching its limits. Just as in medieval law textbooks, where the authentic text is written in larger letters and the master’s comment is recorded around the main text in small letters, so the tropes complemented and commented on the authentic text and music of the ancient liturgical chant.

Their role was, however, more than explanatory. They conceded a legitimate means for the creativity of man to find expression in the liturgy: a *canticum novum* appeared, which was, however, not intended to displace the *canticum sacrum*.

A great many tropes *introduced* an obligatory liturgical chant. Other tropes *interpolated* explanatory phrases between the individual sections of the main chant. The most favored method, however, was to graft a text onto a melismatic section of a piece: for each note of the melisma a new syllable was composed. In fact, the melisma itself could figure as a trope; in some genres the ancient *melizmatikus* formulae inspired the singers to ornament some chants with new-style long melismas. For example, the repeated section (*repetendum*) of the new responsories was often adorned with a melisma, sometimes as long as forty or fifty notes.

Likewise the jubilus of the alleluia sometimes featured such prolonged melismas. In the melismatic interpolations of the age of the Franks and the following centuries, there was a preference for motivic repetitions. The melisma starts with two or three notes on a given syllable of the official piece; then on the vowel of the syllable, an independent melody appears, with

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Lázló Dobszay is a musician and head of the Church Music Department at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music and a prolific writer on liturgical matters. This article is based on the introduction the author’s book on the sequences intended to be used as a textbook in the Department. laszlod@zti.hu

a well-formed cadence; this motive is repeated, and then there follows another phrase with repetition. As many as three or four such phrases or motives could succeed one other, concluded by an independent phrase without repetition, which led back to the text and also to the appropriate place of the official melody.

The inserted melisma is more intense and dynamic if the length of phrases is not equal, i.e., if they are prolonged or shortened, though in most cases their length rarely changes in the repetition. These melismas, having become more or less independent and self-contained, are eminently suitable for “syllabization.” The syllabic form may replace the melisma, but more often the texted variant alternates with its purely melodic equivalent. As a consequence of the structure of melismatic trope in such cases the trope consists of couplets: the same melody carries two different texts, with the same length and articulation, and the following couplet brings a new melody.

The sequence may have originally appeared as just such a trope. The closing melisma of the alleluia (jubilus) may have been prolonged when repeated after the alleluia verse, and a syllabic trope could have been chanted to its individual notes. However, the new genre soon took on a life of its own, and the alleluia motive became no more than a point of departure, followed by a long poem in the style of syllabified tropes. Finally the genre departed completely from the basic “method,” living and blossoming until the end of the Middle Ages as an independent poetic form—the only one as such within the Mass.

*Musicologists have put forward several theories on the origins of the sequence but nothing can be said for certain.*

#### *The Origins and Spread of the Sequence*

Musicologists have put forward several theories on the origins of the sequence but nothing can be said for certain. Some suspect an eastern influence; others emphasize its links with the alleluia. Still others again accept the account of the first sequence-composer known by name, Notker, according to whom the sequence was nothing more than a tool to fix the notes of the melisma and serve as a memory aid. The idea is that after learning a melisma with its syllabic text, the notes will more easily be remembered, even without the text. In actual fact, however, we have no concrete historical data on the origins, and probably the oldest extant sequences were not the first in the history of the genre. Notker himself recounts that the sequence won his approval as a memory aid when he came across some sequences composed earlier. It was then that he felt the desire to compose a collection extending over the whole year.

As far as we know, the origins of the sequence can be dated back to this period, the eighth and ninth centuries. It is possible that during experiments with the trope, in some cases alleluia tropes may also have been created, simultaneously in different parts of the continent though in different styles and structures. Regarding the reworded early alleluias, there are conspicuous discrepancies in repertory and manner between Italian, Gallic, and southern German sequences.

Nor was this repertory unified during the spread of the genre. True, there are twenty or thirty old sequences (mostly from the Notker collection described below), which became relatively well known in almost all Latin Europe. In addition in each region there was another group (again of twenty or thirty pieces), typical in the region but appearing only randomly further afield. And there were also sequences in use only in a limited area. Yet of all of them it can be said, that—unlike the ancient liturgical chant—there was freedom regarding many aspects of their use.

The medieval manuscripts differ greatly in the size of their *sequentionale*, how many pieces are included and how they are selected from the available repertory. This shows that the sequence was not regarded as an essential part of the liturgy. In spite of the fact that at the end of the missals or in the ordinary books of the dioceses there was an indication as to the sequence to be sung on a given day, it was not obligatory in the sense of the chanting of an introit or offertory. The number of sequences found in the various areas of Europe is astonishing: one is dealing with a repertory of many hundreds. Yet of these many hundreds, only a few manuscripts contained more than eighty or ninety, and most even fewer.

The liturgical position of the sequence is shown in their notation. In some areas the sequence was recorded in the appropriate place (i.e., after the alleluia) of the day. In most cases, however, they were collected in the appendices of books of chant for the Mass (graduals, missals); elsewhere again they were gathered into separate books (*sequentionale–sequentiary*, or *prosarium–prosaary*), sometimes along with the tropes (*troparium*).

### *The First Epoch of the Genre*

The earliest sequences are found in three regions: The Italian sequences are short pieces consisting of four or five couplets. In Gallia longer sequences can be found, which are closely linked to the alleluia. The most renowned and widespread southern German (St. Gall) sequences are the compositions of Notker Balbulus (Notker “the Stutterer”) and his followers working in this famous Benedictine abbey. The pieces in Notker’s collection constitute the core of the central European repertory, but they were also popular in northern Italy, and some of them even appear in almost every area of Europe. With regard to their dissemination, the sequences of the first epoch can be characterized by the Notkerian repertory.

These sequences often name the alleluia to which they are linked; elsewhere they have curious titles (perhaps referring to a poem performed to the same or a similar tune). Generally the sequence starts with a single verse, or with a long line of which only the second half is repeated. The “unpaired” element is frequently related to the chant for the alleluia.

This opening is followed by pairs of lines. Each melodic element is sung to two different texts. The articulation of the melody may be a little different in the repeat, and sometimes a new motive may be inserted or a motive may be omitted (see the *Placitus ut ipse* section in the *Sancti Baptistae Christi praeconia* sequence). The piece closed with another single line (which corresponds to the closing element in the melismas that led back to the main melody after the repeated motives). The full formula is thus: A BB CC DD . . . X.

The length of the couplets varies greatly. Long phrases with many internal articulations may alternate with very short ones. Sometimes the lines of the couplets are interwoven: two or three short phrases (with internal repetition) form a longer unit, and this whole is again repeated. A good example of this is the *Multiplices victorias* section of the *Petre summe Christi pastor* sequence, which can be described with the following formula: a a b a b.

The text as a whole, then, does not follow a set pattern. This is understandable, since the structure of the chant melismas was not regulated by any kind of preconceived scheme, and so the freedom of the length and structure of the phrases is also preserved in the syllabic form. The effect of this technique is that the sequence resembles speech: a chanted sermon, as it were. Though the poet should accurately follow the syllable count of the “a” verses in the “b” verses (because the melody is identical in the two sections), and the structure of internal articulation should also be more or less the same, when the complete item is pronounced or chanted the impression is that of a free oratoric (rhetoric) style of performance. For example (with the syllable counts in parentheses):

Captivitatemque / detentem inibi / victor duxit secum (6+6+6)  
 Et redivivus / jam suis se praebuit / servis et amicis, (5+7+6)  
 denique saltum dederat / hodie maximam, / nubes polosque / cursu perpeti  
 trans volans (8+6+5+8)  
 celebret ergo populus / hunc diem credulus, / cujus morbida / Iditun corpora /  
 et semetipso / altis sedibus caeli / invexit Dei Filius. (8+6+5+6+5+7+8).

(In this last couplet the section *cujus morbida . . . corpora* repeats the other section *denique . . . maximam = celebret . . . credulus*), and then the section parallel to *transvolans* is considerably prolonged: *caeli invexit. . .*)

The poet may accept another obligation: the ends of the couplets sound together in a weak rhyme, in fact, there are cases of the lines carrying on the rhyme throughout an extended section. For example: the Christmas sequence *Eja recolamus* keeps the a-rhymes derived from the last vowel of the alleluia: *digna - gaudia - gratissima - nebulosa - umbracula - stella - gaudia - pavet ipsa - mortua - antiqua - spolia - abducta - gaudia - agmina - caelestia - decima - inventa - beata - natura - omnia - femina - natura - induta - natura - humana*, then after an interruption: *propria - spicula - tela - divisa - spolia - praeda sua - fortissima - vera - aeterna*.

The combination of form, style, and content gives the impression of a solemn sermon, elevating, but penetrating in its theological depth. As for the content, it is built on the sermons of the old church fathers, but represents an artistically condensed summary of them. It makes no concessions to popularity; it is often very concise, making only passing references, supposing that the audience is familiar with the symbolism of the liturgy and also theological terminology. The grammar of the sequences is elliptic, occasionally to the verge of obscurity (reminiscent of the style of the ballads). One reason for this may be the technical limitations: the melisma articulated in short motives urges the poet to use short, five- or six-syllable textual groups, heaping one upon the other, or even interrupting one with another. This technical requirement, however, intensified the fierceness of diction, its pathos and elevated solemnity, and corresponds to the liturgical inspiration: utter the ineffable. The following extract serves as an example:

*Postremo victis omnibus barbaris ad arcem summi pergitis culminis, germinos discordes sub jugum Christi pacatos jam coacturi. Ibi Neronis feritas principes apostolorum praeliis plurimis victores diversae te, Petre et Paule, adduxerat paenae mortis.*

Translated word for word: "Finally, convincing the barbarians, they walked into the citadel of the highest peak, there the dissident twins under Christ's yoke to pacify. There Nero's wildness you, Peter and Paul, in many battles victors, Apostle-rulers shall lead to different death penalty."

The condensed grammar (particularly with regard to the Latin) needs no commentary. "Barbarians" in the religious sense are the pagans, since they do not belong to the Covenant (cf. Psalm 113). The citadel of the highest peak is Rome. The dissident twins are Romulus and Remus, who disgraced the founding of the city with a murder. The new "twins" are Peter and Paul, who brought peace to the city and the world (*Urbi et orbi*). During Nero's persecution Peter was crucified, Paul beheaded; in spite of the differing methods of execution, their common fate made them the new founders of the city.

*The combination  
of form, style, and  
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solemn sermon.*

The Notkerian sequences provided proper sequences for all major feasts of the year, and though these feasts later received new chants too, the old repertory held its own up to the end of the Middle Ages. Together with the Notker repertory, a short Christmas chant (*Grates nunc omnes*) became part of the European tradition. Neither its form nor its content is similar to the sequences (originally it may perhaps have been a short trope to an alleluia), but throughout Europe it functioned as a sequence: in fact, as the most well-known sequence, in vernacular translations it became part of the sixteenth- to eighteenth-century congregational hymnals.

### *The Century of Transition*

During the eleventh century there emerged sequences that were the outcome of some kind of poetic "regulation." This process did not result in a typical form for the composition, but made the use of rhyme more consistent, and the length of the single lines more or less even. The individual lines and the resulting composite patterns are different in each case; one may surmise some kind of experimental period, when it was precisely in the formal artifice that the composer took delight.

The consistent presence of rhyme alongside lines of varying length can be clearly seen in a well-known Easter sequence, *Victimae paschali* (anonymous, attributed to Wipo). Although the piece still starts with an unpaired line, the equivalent closing line is already missing. The length of lines and rhymes of the verses are as follows:

- A 6 (paschali) 9 (Christiani)
- B1 7 (oves) 7 (Patri) 10 (peccatores)
- B2 7 (duello) 7 (mirando) 10 (vivus)
- C1 6 (Maria) 7 (via) + D1 8 (viventis) 10 (resurgentis)
- C2 6 (testes) 7 (vestes) + D2 8 (spes mea) 9 (Galilaeam)
- E1 (strophe omitted from the sixteenth century on!) 8 (soli) 6 (veraci) 9 (fallaci)
- E2 8 (surrexisse) 6 (vere) 10 (miserere).

A playful pattern of rhyme and rhythm is adopted in the Christmas sequence *Laetabundus*. There is no single line either at the beginning or at the end:

- A1 and A2: 4 + 8 + 4
- B1–B2, C1–C2, D1–D2, E1–E2: 7 + 7 + 4
- F1–F2: 6 + 6 + 5 + 4.

The rhyme scheme throughout is a+a+b. The four-syllable closing motive at the end of each line echos the last syllable of the strophe A1 (*Alleluja, res miranda, sol de stella, semper clara*, etc.), and at the end of the poem the name "Maria," or the synonym *Puerpera* (parent) rounds off the sequence of "a"-rhymes.

Still more regulated is the Pentecost *Veni Sancte*. Three-line, isosyllabic strophes (of seven syllables) are used throughout the whole piece. The rhyme scheme is a+a+b, while the b-rhyme is carried on to all strophes (*radium, cordium, refrigerium, solatium, fidelium, innocium, saucium, devium, septenarium, gaudium*).

One of the most popular sequences of the Middle Ages was *Mittit ad Virginem*, a Marian hymn for the Advent season. It has a peculiar scheme: every strophe contains five iambic lines, each with six syllables. The rhymes are: a-b-a-b-c / d-e-d-e-c.

Concerning the content there is no essential difference compared to the early sequences, although they become less concise. Phrases of address are repeated and accumulate (perhaps

because of the rhyme). The poem as a whole adopts a lyric or narrative tone rather than an oratorical declamation; it can be said to express a milder and more intimate emotional approach.

### *The Second Epoch of the Genre*

The new style of sequence, which emerged some time in the mid-12th century, can be regarded as the endpoint of the experimental transitory period. The first significant works were produced in the St. Victor Augustinian monastery in Paris (near the cathedral of Notre Dame), and are often (in order to distinguish them from the Notkerian style) called Victorine sequences. In this monastery worked the two outstanding composers of the repertory: Adam and Hugh of St. Victor.

The Victorine sequence adopts a standard strophic pattern; if there is any change, this serves a conscious artistic intention (see below). The single line is absent both at the beginning and the end, in other words, the poem consistently adheres to the couplet scheme. The basic pattern in all strophes is:

8+8+7 / 8+8+7, with rhymes: a-a-b / c-c-b (the rhymes themselves change in each couplet).

The point of departure for this form may perhaps have been the trochaic *versus saturninus* (8+7 syllable count) characteristic in processional hymns (e.g., *Pange lingua*). The addition of an eight-syllable line and the concatenation of two three-line strophes by the rhymes of their third lines extends the narration. The effect is highlighted by adding a line with a masculine close (ending on a stressed syllable) after two feminine ones (ending on an unstressed syllable).

This basic pattern, however, can be varied for sake of variety and artistic effect. A good example of this is the structure of the *Lauda Sion*. After the first and second strophic pair a double-pair is inserted: the regular 8-8-7 member (*Sit laus plena*) is followed not by its pair, but a strophe with 10+10+7 syllables (*Dies enim solemnis agitur*); then follows the regular pair of *Sit laus plena* (*In hac mensa*), and as the pair of *Dies enim* a strophe with 7+7+7 syllables (different in syllable count from *Dies enim*, but with the same melody).

Subsequently, regular strophes follow until the ninth pair of strophes, where an aggregation of eight-syllable lines seems to heighten the emotional content, and the accumulated rhymes protract the rhyme of the closing line. Initially only three eight-syllable lines appear in the place of one (e.g., *Ecce panis angelorum*), the last pair, however, contains five lines, i.e., four eight-syllable lines delay the last seven-syllable one (*Bone pastor panis vere*).

The first great model for the new style was the sequence to the Holy Cross by Adam of St. Victor (*Laudes crucis attollamus*). The new form came into fashion: musicians, charmed by the new, fresh tone imitated it. (E.g., King Béla III of Hungary sent his clerk Elvinus to Paris just to study this *nova melodia*.) At first the sequence was taken and its melody adapted (with some variations) to new texts. With this same melody is coupled, e.g., the *Lauda Sion* for Corpus Christi, in Hungary the sequences about the king saints (*Novae laudis attollamus* on St. Ladislaus, *Corde voce mente pura* on St. Stephen). Yet the last section of the *Laudes crucis* became independent: the Marian sequence *Mira mater* was written in Hungary as the contrafactum to this closing section (first notated in the Codex Praianus, shortly after the *Laudes crucis* was disseminated). At the feast of Corpus Christi the last member of *Lauda Sion* was intoned in Hungary by the celebrant, while he showed the Sacrament to the faithful (*Ecce panis*).

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It may be due to the melody of the *Laudes crucis* that there was a greater proportion of modes VII–VIII (Tetrardus) in the new style repertory, but new style sequences can also be found in the other modes (e.g., mode I–II: *Missus Gabriel de caelis*).

The former alleluia-tropes had, then, become substantial, independent poems. In addition, the Victorine sequences became much longer, sometimes extending to ten or twelve pairs of strophes. But the nature of their contents also changed. The lyric tone and intimate devotion of the transitory period remained, but the rhetorical style of the old sequence was replaced by more profound theological explications. It should be borne in mind that the origins of the new Paris sequence coincided with the great era of Parisian theology, the birth of Scholasticism. Though the themes were defined by the liturgy, the texts frequently recall the terminology and ideology of the theological tracts. While influenced by the language of theology, this does not make for a dry style; on the contrary, it inspired the poets to pen vivid turns of phrase, and sometimes a plethora of allegories, images, contrasts, and wordplay. Poets were led in this direction by rhyme too, which is more effective when it couples “interesting” words. But the rigidity of rhymed poetry drove the poets to invent phrases with parallel thoughts:

Virga sicca sine rore  
novo ritu novo more  
fructum protulit cum flore  
sic et virgo peperit.

Benedictus ille fructus  
fructus gaudii non luctus  
non erit Adam seductus  
si de hac gustaverit.

(Roughly translated: “The dry branch without dew, by a new custom, a new manner brings forth fruit together with flower; so bears the Virgin her child. This fruit is blessed, the fruit of joy and not of mourning, and Adam will be not misled when he tastes it.” The expression “dry branch” is a reference to Numbers 17.)

This technique was an object of poetic ambitions, as is shown in the frequent use of internal rhymes (rhymes between the four-syllable parts of the full eight-syllable line). The example clearly demonstrates that this accumulation of rhyme is linked usually with some kind of emotional movement. For example:

Sit laus plena, sit sonora,  
sit jucunda, sit decora . . .  
. . .  
caro cibus, sanguis potus,  
manet tamen Christus totus . . .  
. . .  
mors est malis, vita bonis,  
vide paris sumptionis . . .

### *The Disappearance of the Sequence*

Sequences retained their popularity up to the end of Middle Ages; what is more, new compositions were added to the repertory, although most of the texts and melodies from this period are rather a matter of routine: some customary verbal flourishes and phrases were reiterated and tacked together anew. Some of the old sequences, however, were revived in vernacular translations; suitable items found their way into the chantbooks of the Renaissance and Baroque eras,

and some even found their way, via translation, into the early Protestant liturgy. For example, the gradual books of the Hungarian Protestants preserved nearly a dozen old sequences for successive generations.

Rome herself was already rather hesitant regarding the sequence, even during the Middle Ages, just as regarding any kind of liturgical production which diluted the old Roman repertory. When the Council of Trent decided to favor liturgical reforms that aimed to restore the ancient, pure state, rather than introducing innovations, this led to the liturgy in the strict sense being purged of the additions of the Frankish period and the subsequent centuries. The Divine Office lost the rhymed *historiae*, tropes were removed from both the office and the Mass, and no place remained in the Mass for the sequence either.

And yet the genre did not disappear totally. Those who formed the post-conciliar liturgy were, for various reasons, forbearing regarding a few items. The deciding factor was not the liturgical aspect, i.e., the rank of a feast: while the sequence remained on Easter and Pentecost octave, other feasts of the same rank, like Christmas, Epiphany, and Ascension, were deprived of their sequences. *Victimae paschali* and *Veni Sancte* escaped the abolition, perhaps because of the related great festivities; *Lauda Sion* was kept out of respect for St. Thomas Aquinas and the profound theological content of the sequence; *Dies irae* remained in use perhaps because of its popularity in the late Middle Ages. To these four items one more was added in the eighteenth century, *Stabat mater*, a late-medieval sequence in honour of the new feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The sequences for Easter, Pentecost, and Corpus Christi were ordered for the whole octave of the feasts; *Dies irae* was prayed or chanted on All Souls' Day and in the Requiem Mass immediately following a death.

The reform after the Second Vatican Council went still further when it prescribed only *Victimae* and *Veni Sancte* as obligatory (and only on the feast day); *Lauda Sion* (or optionally its last section) was permitted but not obligatory; *Dies irae* and *Stabat mater* were ousted from the Mass and both texts made use of in the Divine Office. Otherwise, this council did not concern itself with the sequence, and there is not a single word about it in the post-council documents. The Council neither prohibited the others nor liberalized them. It was simply not a consideration of the Fathers or the *periti*.

#### *The Music of the Sequences*

The melismas that served as a basis for early sequences did not adopt the narrow-range ornaments of the classic style, but rather broad melodious phrases, often aiming to express emotion. When the melismas were split into individual notes, they lost their smoothly flowing character, and became declamatory in character. Most of the sequences, however, used the melismas only as starting points and spun them out in such a way that by gradually widening the range the melody became similar to chanted speech. Frequently large intervals are linked together, or there may be a series of leaps in the same direction. The range of the short motives and lines becomes also wider. The melody serves a long text and it is regulated by the melodic repetitions of the couplets; it can avoid monotony only if the range moves in a well-thought-out manner, both upwards and downwards. In most cases the pieces move in a large range, sometimes even nearly exceeding the limits of the human voice. The modality of the starting line still can be defined. Further on in the piece, however, the melody crosses the usual border notes of the

*The Council of Trent favored liturgical reforms rather than introducing innovations and it led to the liturgy in the strict sense being purged.*



mode, and is regulated only by the final (*tonus finalis*), or rather, a basic interval (generally a fifth) which holds the whole tonality.

In other words, the authentic and plagal modes belonging to the same finals are fused. These melodies cannot be classified in the regular eight-mode system, and are named according to the finals (D-, E-, F-, G-melodies); alternatively a number (marked by Roman numerals and the Greek name) is linked to each final. Modes 1 and 2 become I protus; modes 3 and 4 become II deuterus; modes 5 and 6 become III tritus, and modes 7 and 8 become IV tetrardus. From this point the use of such names as Dorian-Aeolian, Phrygian, Lydian-Ionian, and Mixolydian is quite justified. Only one step from here is the insertion of altered leading notes, and the formation of the “modern” major-minor system.

*The first flowering of the new medieval melodiousness is reflected in the Victorine sequences.*

The extension of the range can be also used by the composer to structure the overall form of the piece. Often the melody first moves around one point, with a modest extension of the range; then the skeleton of the melody rises; quiet, lower-range episodes are interposed, and the final sections rise still higher to the octave or above. There are also sequences that end on the fifth of the base note, as if the melody had risen into a higher sphere. Later, it will be shown that this rise may have had a liturgical meaning.

In addition to these observable stylistic markers, small motives deviating from the Gregorian norms, unusual combinations of notes or intervals also lend the sequences a kind of “excited state,” a counterpoint to the calm tone of ancient melodies. The syllabic form, the poetical text, the structure of micromotives may result in unmeasured rhythmic patterns. There frequently appears, for example, a three-note cadence of lines or strophes (C-D-D or F-G-G), which may be performed in a long-short-long rhythmic pattern (the so-called Gallican cadence).

Variety is achieved mainly by the amplitude and positioning of the melodic movement; as to the structure, most sequences are monotonous: the cadences come to rest on the final or on the fifth. This (with the stylistic features above) links the sequence to the characteristics of the new chant style, as manifested also in other genres, though the individual form and syllabic development of the sequence enhances their effect.

The first flowering of the new medieval melodiousness is reflected in the Victorine sequences. The strophes are song-like in construction; but a well-planned alternation of the ranges keeps the great form alive. See for example the structure of the *Lauda Sion*. It is a masterpiece, which gives emphasis to the last—poetically extended—strophes (*Ecce panis, Bone pastor*) musically too, with a new combination of the phrases used previously.

The text and music of the sequences with their pure, well-defined shapes draw so near to what is beloved and understandable for European musical sensibilities, that some scholars suspect the influence of secular or folk music behind the new style. The truth is, however, that the poetical, musical (and even theological) constructions are used in a rather scholarly way, sometimes with a refinement that shows the sequence to be rather the product of a highly educated elite.

The sequence, with its size and complexity, rarely inspired composers and singers to create or perform polyphonic settings. Only a few examples are known of from the age of early polyphony, where a *vox organalis* or a *discantus* part is added to the *cantus firmus* of a sequence. An exception to this is Dufay’s delicate series of sequences (for *alternatim* performance). The situation changes from the Renaissance on. Josquin de Prez, Palestrina, and others, composed music in their personal style to the text of sequences, sometimes even using their melodies as a

*cantus firmus* hidden in the texture. The five sequences used that survived from after the 16th century (especially the impressive *Dies irae* and *Stabat mater*) inspired the composers of the Baroque, Classical, or Romantic periods to take texts from this sequence repertory, but with little regard for their liturgical character.

### *The Performance of the Sequences*

In contemporary texts, no hint can be found as to the performance of the sequences. The most frequent way may have been to sing them alternately between two half-choirs or smaller groups of singers. This alternation was emphasised by the distance between the two bodies, i.e., a kind of “stereophonic” effect. The texts of certain old sequences call for children or instruments to join in the praise of God. Some scholars believe these phrases refer to a performance indication, but it is probably nothing more than a poetic device. The participation of boys, however, can be assumed even regardless of these texts—not through their joining in only at certain sections, but because they were present in both sides of the choir. The use of instruments is unlikely, excepting the organ, which could sound the melody in its own fashion simultaneously with the singers or following the customs of *alternatim* performance.

The *alternatim* performance is a norm for current practice too. But the alternation can give rise to many different solutions. The important thing is to make the change between the couplets clearly audible. The old-style sequences can be started by a soloist or group A, and from strophe 2a groups A and B alternate, singing together in the last strophe. In the new-style pieces the alternation starts right from the beginning, and the two choirs join only in the amen-alleluia section.

Possible alternation methods are:

left side choir	—	right side choir
male voices	—	high (children and/or female) voices
male voices	—	tutti (with high voices)
high voices	—	tutti (with the male voices)
small group	—	full choir
solo(s)	—	choir
1st solo	—	2nd solo

This last arrangement is recommended mainly for the old sequences of rhetorical qualities, provided there are two singers with good performing ability. Ideally the two singers should stand at the communion rail, symmetrically, at some distance from one another, and they pass, as it were, the chant to one another.

The didactic nature of the sequences allows for their being performed simply read aloud, if need be. Here too, the two readers should answer one another, standing facing the congregation in a symmetrical position. As a “modern” addition the organ may accompany the reading very quietly, (to signal that it is not a reading, but a chant), and the singers join only at the closing section (e.g., at the strophes from *Ecce panis angelorum* in the *Lauda Sion*). If this is done, the text should be read in a voice approaching the recto tono recitation and the organ prepares for the sung section with an appropriate modulation.

*The didactic nature of the sequences allows for their being performed simply read aloud, if need be.*

A well-trained congregation may join in the singing of b- strophes, especially since they will have already heard the melody during the 1-strophe. But there are simple ways to guide even a congregation with more modest capabilities through the singing of a sequence. If the text is written in the same strophic form throughout, the melody of two strophes can be selected (perhaps one in the lower and another in the higher range), and the full text is chanted alternating these. The performance in this case sounds as follows:

Melody 1	a) solo or schola	b) congregation
Melody 2	a) solo or schola	b) congregation
Melody 1	as above, etc.	

The second method is for the sequence to be sung throughout by the schola, the congregation joining in at the end with the amen-alleluia or with a strophe of a folk hymn appropriate in both music and content. This approach is justified by a historical example: the sequence *Victimae paschali* was often sung in medieval Hungary with the attached hymn *Christ is erstanden / Krisztus feltámadá*.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Sequence and the Liturgy*

The sequence emerged as an extension of the closing melisma of the alleluia. Its name probably alludes to this fact: something that follows (*sequitur*) the alleluia; furthermore perhaps the other name, *prosa* may have been a contraction of the expression: *pro sequentia* (for a sequence). Its place in the liturgy is justified both musically and psychologically. The sequence appears as the transformation of the great melismatic singing of the alleluia into a solemn hymn. The new

rubric which suggests taking first the sequence and then the alleluia cannot be supported by historical, musical, or liturgical arguments (this anomalous arrangement is omitted from the recent authentic Roman chant books).

### *The sequence emerged as an extension of the closing melisma of the alleluia.*

Liturgists remind us, however, that not only does the sequence follow the alleluia, but it also introduces the gospel. This relates to the liturgical-mystical meaning of this genre. The last section of many sequences

has an eschatological perspective: it directs the attention to the last things, to the final glorification, to the heavenly choirs and Christ's second advent. It may be that the expansion and ascension of the music (sometimes with a melody climbing up at the end to the higher range) is to express the prophetic meaning of the close, the contemplation of the future glory, for the liturgical sensibilities of the Middle Ages regarded the gospel not primarily as an intellectual teaching, but rather some kind of apparition of Christ.

For this reason, the gospel book is carried in a procession, accompanied by candles and surrounded with incense. In this interpretation the sequence steps out of the life of the church on earth, leaves aside the bethinking-meditating approach and, in the last strophes, opens the door to the entering Messiah.

The medieval sequentarium covered large parts of the liturgical year. (In the following description examples will be taken from the customs of the old Hungarian church.) During

<sup>1</sup>See Lázló Dobszay, *Éneklő Egyház: Római Katolikus Népelektár* [The Singing Church] (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1991), no. 547.

Advent (or, at least in the Rorate Mass) a sequence was sung on the Annunciation by the Angel. For Christmas two or three sequences were given, some of which were also sung in the Marian Masses celebrated between Christmas and Purification. From the pre-Lenten period on, the sequence was omitted, of course, along with the alleluia. All the more sequences were available for the Easter season, since not only on the Day of Resurrection, and in its octave, but during the whole forty-day period the sequence was part of the daily Masses.

The books offer two or three items for the Ascension, still more for the octave of Pentecost. The temporale is closed by three sequences: one for Trinity Sunday, one for Corpus Christi and one or more for the Dedication of the Church. On ordinary Sundays normally the *Veni Sancte* was used, but in Hungary a special sequence was in use for such occasions (*Omnes una celebremus*). In Italy some of the ordinary Sundays had a proper sequence with reference to the daily gospel.

The sequentiarium contained *commune* pieces for the feasts of saints (apostles, evangelists, one or more martyrs, one or more confessors, virgins, widows). The most eminent saints, however, had proper sequences. The largest set was assigned to the Marian Masses, and was used also in the votive Masses every Saturday. Feast days with proper sequences were: St. Stephen the Martyr, St. John the Apostle, the Holy Innocents, the Conversion of St. Paul, Purification of the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, Sts. Peter and Paul, the Commemoration of St. Paul, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Lawrence, the Assumption and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Holy Cross, St. Michael the Archangel, All Saints, St. Martin, and St. Andrew. To this were added the sequences of the patron saints of a diocese, country (in Hungary for example St. Stephen the King, St. Emerich, St. Ladislaus, and St. Elisabeth), or a religious order and the saints honoured in a given region.

*Only in the late  
Middle Ages  
were sequences  
introduced into  
the Requiem  
Mass.*

Only in the late Middle Ages were sequences introduced into the Requiem Mass, not necessarily *Dies irae*, for *Audi tellus* was perhaps more popular.

### *The Sequence Today*

The liturgical regulations today prescribe a sequence for only two days (Easter and Pentecost) and recommend it for one (Corpus Christi). The singing of sequences on other days is, however, not prohibited. This means that anyone who wishes to raise the dignity of the feasts, to penetrate more deeply their essence, and also keep this valuable part of liturgical heritage alive, may sing a sequence after the alleluia on greater feast days, provided that they are able to convince the local priest, and provided the choir or soloists are able to sing them in a fitting manner.

After all, centuries old Christian tradition has always allowed a relatively long interval for quiet music between the readings (suffice to think of Bach's cantatas, the polyphonic graduals in the Catholic liturgy, or the epistle sonatas). If the alleluia is followed by a sequence, the priest and the congregation listen to it while seated, and the procession for the gospel starts only at the last section (agreed in advance).

If the sequence is not sung in its rightful place, it can be inserted at some other point of the Mass "free" for music to be chosen. The offertory is not an obligatory part of present-day Mass, so it can be replaced by a sequence; or a sequence can be sung—as a meditation over the mystery of the feast—also during the time of thanksgiving after the communion.

Furthermore the sequence can be fittingly sung at certain points of paraliturgic devotions, meditations, catechetical hours, either as an introduction or close, or as a separation and repose between spoken sections.

Of all the monophonic liturgical repertory, the sequence is one of the most fitting chants to include in a programme of church music concerts. In length it is quite appropriate; the choir can display its abilities; and the meaning of the text can be expounded either with bible verses or explanation by the presenter.

The sequences supply excellent didactic material for the explanation of the feasts of the ecclesiastical year. They can be used in homilies, catechesis, and in the preparation of choirs and other groups for the feasts.

Finally, let us not forget the cultural importance of the genre. Though not part of the basic stuff of the liturgy, and many wished to remove them from the liturgy, they should be appreciated as monuments of a high theological, literary, and musical culture. The creative power of the Middle Ages is manifest in them, and both theological-philosophical education and music history would be incomplete without them. Indeed, the sequence well deserves its rightful place in education, in school cultural events, and also in the private learning of all who strive for a higher spiritual level. ❧

## Ornamented Chant in Spain

By Lorenzo Candelaria



Modern musicians rarely give a second thought to the diversity of plainchant melodies, performance practices, and the sensitivity with which chant should be performed—a pause here, an inflection there. Typically, when one hears plainchant performed at all—more often than not, as the intonation to a polyphonic Gloria or Credo on the concert stage—the listener is subjected to a lifeless, perfunctory warbling of a text that is inherently passionate and meaningful: “Glory to God in the Highest” (*Gloria in excelsis Deo*); “I believe in one God” (*Credo in unum Deum*). But whether we are talking about a religious house or a concert stage, plainchant today is often performed with a numbing monotony that is directly at odds with the celebration of the word that it should be.

Much to the contrary, chant in Toledo, Spain, was recognized in the sixteenth century for the lively manner in which it was performed. A few writings have survived to give us some sense of what it might have sounded like.<sup>1</sup> An anonymous sixteenth-century treatise titled *Arte de melodía sobre canto lano y canto d’organo* (*The Art of Melody Concerning Plainchant and Polyphony*) is

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<sup>1</sup>See the discussions by Karl-Werner Gumpel, “El canto melódico de Toledo: Algunas reflexiones sobre su origen y estilo,” *Recerca musicológica*, 8 (1988), 25–46; and Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, “El canto toledano, estrato musical in la polifonía sacra de la catedral de Las Palmas y otras iglesias de España,” *El museo canario*, 54 (1999), 305–38. I am grateful to Prof. Fernández de la Cuesta for providing me a copy of his article.



FIGURE 1

troped). These may be seen in succession over the incipit to the Kyrie *Summe Deus* on fol. 5 (see Fig. 1). The first (over *Summe*) is a bent note with two tails pointing up. The second (over *Deus*) is a bent note with two tails pointing down. According to *The Art of Melody*, these were known respectively as a *tocus* and an *uncus*. “The *tocus*,” the treatise says, “is a figure like a breve with two plicas pointing upward and it was invented to signal that the voice should be repelled upward and then return to the same point in the melody.”<sup>5</sup>

Alternatively, “the *uncus* is a figure like a breve with two plicas pointing downward and it was invented to repel the voice downward then return to the same point.”<sup>6</sup> *The Art of Melody* goes on to say that the two were collectively referred to as an “*estrunto*” in Toledo<sup>7</sup>—a word undoubtedly related to the modern Castilian *estrucendo*, meaning a sudden noise or disruption.

These two notes—the *tocus* and the *uncus*—were the equivalents of what musicians would call “double grace notes” today. Based on the description in *The Art of Melody*, we can derive some idea of what the friars at San Pedro Mártir heard when the text “*Summe Deus*” was chanted. To illustrate, it is transcribed here with the *estrunto* (Ex. 1a) and then without it (Ex. 1b).

<sup>2</sup>Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, Ms. 1325. A modern edition of the treatise is given in Gümpel, *El canto melódico*, 38–45. The original was consulted here.

<sup>3</sup>“con que el canto lano pareciesse más dulce cantando, como parece en las cantorías de la missa mosarue antiquísimas en Toledo y su yglesia.” Barcelona, Ms. 1325, fol. 21. The “Mozarabic Mass” refers to a Catholic liturgy celebrated by Christians in Toledo while they were living under Muslim rule from the early eighth century until the Roman rite was reintroduced after the reconquest in 1085. For relevant studies on the Mozarabic liturgy, see Don Michael Randel, *The Responsorial Psalm Tones for the Mozarabic Office*, Princeton Studies in Music 3 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), and Clyde W. Brockett, *Antiphons, Responsories, and other Chants of the Mozarabic Rite*, Musicological Studies 15 (New York: Institute of Medieval Music, 1968).

<sup>4</sup>Lorenzo Candelaria, *The Rosary Cantoral: Ritual and Social Design in a Chantbook from Renaissance Toledo*, Eastman Studies in Music Series (Rochester, N.Y.: The University of Rochester Press, 2008), forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup>“Tocus es figura sicut brevis con dos plicas azia riba [diagram], fue inventada en senyal de repelar la vos aza riba y tornar al mesmo punto en lugar de melodía.” Barcelona, Ms. 1325, fol. 21v.

<sup>6</sup>“Uncus est figura como brevis con dos plicas azia baxo [diagram], y fue inventada para repelar la voz azia baxo y tornar al mesmo punto.” Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>“Y estas dos laman en Toledo estrunto.” Ibid.

EXAMPLE 1

a) b)

Sum - me de - us Sum - me de - us

Kyrie “Summe deus” (incipit), Rosary Cantoral, fol. 5., with the *tocus* and *uncus*;  
 b) “Summe deus” (incipit) without the *tocus* and *uncus*

*Estruntos* appear throughout the Rosary Cantoral: as ornaments to a melody with several repeated notes (Ex. 2a), as an ornament to enliven an upper or lower neighbor (Ex. 2b), as the decoration to a cadence (Ex. 2c), or—as we have seen in the Kyrie *Summe Deus*—as ornamental notes to help fill the empty space of successive leaps in a melody.

#### VARIOUS USES OF *ESTRUNTO* IN THE ROSARY CANTORAL

a)

ornamenting a monotonous melodic line, fol. 1v

Rex vir - gi - num

#### EXAMPLE 2

b)

ornamenting a lower neighbor, fol. 2v

O pa - ra - cli - te

c)

ornamenting a cadence, fol. 4v

e - - - le - y - son

Other methods of adorning plainchant were not exclusive to Toledo. For example, the Rosary Cantoral contains instances of *mensural chant*, which can be found throughout Europe.<sup>8</sup> Contrary to the notion of plainchant as free-flowing and unmeasured, mensural chants are chants that were performed with a rhythmic lilt and sometimes a steady beat. One good example is a chant for the Gloria that was inserted into the Rosary Cantoral at a later date (see Fig. 2), probably in the early seventeenth century. The chant is an *unicum* insofar as no corresponding melody has been discovered thus far. It is preceded by the sign for *tempus imperfectum* indicating that the chant would have been performed in a moderate duple meter (see Ex. 3 on the following page).

<sup>8</sup>See the relevant discussion on rhythm in chant in Richard Sherr, “The Performance of Chant in the Renaissance and its Interactions with Polyphony,” *Plain-song in the Age of Polyphony*, ed. Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 178–208.

## EXAMPLE 3

Et in ter-ra pax ho - mi-ni-bus bo-ne vo-lun - ta - tis Lau-da - mus te  
 Be-ne-di - ci-mus te A - do - ra-mus te Glo-ri-fi - ca-mus te Gra-ti-as  
 a-gi-mus ti-bi prop-ter mag-nam glo - ri-am tu - am Do - mi-ne De-us rex ce-les-  
 tis De-us pa-ter om-ni-po-tens Do - mi-ne fi-li u-ni-ge-ni - te Je - su Chris-  
 te do - mi-ne de-us ag-nus de - i fi - li-us pa - tris Qui tol-lis pec-ca-ta  
 mun-di mi-se-re-re no-bis Qui tol - lis pec - ca-ta mun - di sus - ci - pe  
 de-pre-ca - ti - o - nem nos - tram Qui se-des ad dex-te-ram pat-ris mi-se-re-re  
 no - bis Quo-ni-am tu so-lus sanc - tus Tu so-lus do-mi - nus Tu so - lus  
 al - tis - si - mus Je - su Chris - te Cum sanc-to spi - ri -  
 tu in glo - ri - a De<sup>3</sup> - i pa<sup>3</sup> - tri - s A - men.

Transcription of a mensural chant for the Gloria, Rosary Cantoral, fols. 54-55v.





FIGURE 2 (L TO R),  
FIGURE 3 AND FIGURE 4

In addition to being mensural, the tune is also much more diatonic than older chants tend to be; here, there is a marked bent toward the melodic minor. Notably, the scalar melody with its occasional leap is more idiomatic of keyboard music than the voice. This suggests that this particular chant was neither monophonic nor *a cappella*, but perhaps the internal line of some polyphonic Gloria for the organ that accompanied it.<sup>9</sup>

This Gloria aside, there are two instances in the Rosary Cantoral that certainly involved the interaction of plainchant and polyphony. These are considered next.

#### *Two Ornaments of Renaissance Polyphony*

The art and music of the Rosary Cantoral make clear that it was very much a product of high-Renaissance sensibilities. Its opening folio (see Fig. 3), illuminated in the new Ghent-Bruges fashion, incorporates an image inspired by a masterwork of Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528)—his *Das Meerwunder* from 1498 (see Fig. 4). Dürer was arguably the most celebrated artist of the Renaissance, and, as fitting musical counterparts, we find two polyphonic compositions in the Rosary Cantoral—one by a celebrated Renaissance composer, and another that followed a celebrated Renaissance tradition. Like the mensural chant for the Gloria seen above, both were probably inserted in the early seventeenth century.

The first of these is a four-part *Et incarnatus est* from the Credo of the *Missa sine nomine* by Josquin Des Prez (ca. 1455–1521).<sup>10</sup> This was introduced into the manuscript at some point after its initial compilation and is, at present, the only Josquin Mass material preserved in manuscript form in an American library. It appears on fol. 99 with a clear attribution to “Jusquin”—a spelling frequently encountered in Spanish sources (see Fig. 5).<sup>11</sup> The second polyphonic fragment is also

<sup>9</sup>On this point, see the relevant observations in Jack Eby, “Chant-inspired Music in the Chapel of Louis XVI,” in *Chant and its Peripheries: Essays in Honour of Terence Bailey*, eds. Bryan Gillingham and Paul Merkley, *Musicological Studies* 72 (Ottawa: The Institute of Medieval Music, 1998), 391. I am also indebted to organist Ed Pepe, of Oaxaca, Mexico, for his thoughts on the role of plainchant in Spanish and Mexican organ music.

<sup>10</sup>Albert Smijers, ed., *Werken van Josquin Des Prez, Missen XVII, Missa sine nomine* (Amsterdam: Vereniging voor Nederlandse Musiekgeschiedenis, 1952), 177–78.

<sup>11</sup>The Josquin fragment was first identified by Craig Wright in “A 16th Century Plainsong Manuscript at Yale,” an unpublished paper delivered at a conference in honor of David Hughes at Harvard University in 1990.



FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6

EXAMPLE 4

a) Anonymous, "Et incarnatus est" on L'homme armé, Rosary Cantoral, fol. 101v. [text underlay added]; transcription of Figure 6;

a)

Et in - car - na - tus est de spi - ri - tu san -  
 Et in - car - na - tus est de spi - ri - tu  
 Et in - car - na - tus est de spi - ri - tu san - cto  
 Et in - car - na - tus est de spi - ri - tu san -  
 - cto ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne  
 san - cto ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne  
 ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne  
 cto ex Ma - ri - a vir - gi - ne

b) "Et incarnatus est" of a Marian Credo, Rosary Cantoral, fol. 64v.

b)

Et in - car - na - tus est

a later addition. It appears on fol. 101v and is untexted and unattributed (see Fig. 6). As my transcription shows, however, this too was included as a polyphonic *Et incarnatus est* (see Ex. 4a, see previous page). Indeed, the alto voice paraphrases the *Et incarnatus est* of a Credo for the Virgin Mary that appears earlier in the Kyriale (see Ex. 4b).<sup>12</sup> The paraphrase of this Marian Credo helps explain why there is only enough polyphony to accommodate the text up to “ex Maria Virgine,” rather than the more customary “et homo factus est” as seen in the Josquin excerpt.

What makes this anonymous fragment so remarkable is that the two lower voices were clearly derived from the famous *L’homme armé* tune (see Ex. 5) that inspired no fewer than thirty-five polyphonic Masses between 1450 and 1600.<sup>13</sup>

## EXAMPLE 5

(A)

L'hom - me l'hom - me l'homme ar - mé l'homme ar - mé

L'homme ar - mé doibt on doub - ter doibt on doub - ter

(B)

On a fait par - tout cri - er Que chas - cun se

vien - gne ar - mer D'un hau - bre - gon de fer

(A)

L'hom - me l'hom - me l'homme ar - mé l'homme ar - mé

L'homme ar - mé doibt on doub - ter doibt on doub - ter

Anonymous, *L’homme armé*.

<sup>12</sup>“In festis beatissime virginis marie” (fol. 64v). A tab sewn onto the folio labels the chant in Castilian as “Credo de Nuestra Señora.”

<sup>13</sup>On the *L’homme armé* phenomenon in Renaissance music and culture, see Craig Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior: Symbols in Architecture, Theology, and Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 164–205, and the conspectus of *L’homme armé* Masses on p. 288.

L'homme, l'homme, l'homme armé, l'homme armé,  
 L'homme armé doibt on doubter, doibt on doubter.  
 On a fait partout crier,  
 Que chascun se viegne armer  
 D'un haubregon de fer.  
 L'homme, l'homme, l'homme armé, l'homme armé  
 L'homme armé doibt on doubter, doibt on doubter

The man! The man! The armed man! The armed man!  
 The armed man should be feared! He should be feared!  
 Everywhere the cry has gone out,  
 That everyone should arm himself  
 With a hauberk of iron.  
 The man! The man! The armed man! The armed man!  
 The armed man should be feared! He should be feared!

This Rosary Cantoral's polyphonic fragment on *L'homme armé* represents a new and previously unknown Spanish Mass on this famous tune. It does not correspond to any *L'homme armé* Mass identified thus far and is quite ambitious in setting the "A section" of the tune in the tenor while the "B section" unfolds simultaneously in the bass.<sup>14</sup> (Compare the sections labeled accordingly in Ex. 4a and Ex. 5.) The paraphrase of the Marian Credo (see Ex. 4b) in the alto voice evidently forced a compromise of the signature ascending fourth that begins *L'homme armé*. To avoid leaping into a major second between the alto and tenor on the downbeat of m. 2, the composer substituted a contrapuntally correct, but much less satisfying, B-flat for the C-natural that should otherwise have been there.

These fragments of polyphony provide valuable new concordances for music by Josquin and for music based on *L'homme armé*, but, more broadly considered, such settings of the *Et incarnatus est* are not at all unusual in Hispanic chant sources. In fact, they are rather common as this section of the Credo was the only part of the Mass Ordinary typically performed in polyphony during the seasons of Advent and Lent in Spain and in territories subject to her rule.<sup>15</sup>

The effect of chant suddenly blossoming into polyphony is quite dramatic from a purely musical standpoint. But it also served to illustrate the magnitude of a central tenet of the Credo and, indeed, of the Christian faith—the fundamental idea of the Word made Flesh: "Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est" (And he was made flesh by the Holy Spirit, through the Virgin Mary, and became man).<sup>16</sup> In such instances as we find in the Rosary Cantoral, the *Et incarnatus est* is literally fleshed out by additional singers who create a polyphonic texture that vividly captures the sense of the phrase. Upon its conclusion, the performance reverts to plainchant. A Kyriale now at King Philip II's (1527–1598) palace-monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial (42 km northwest of Madrid, Spain) provides a more modest example of the

<sup>14</sup>There is a celebrated precedent for setting the tune against itself in the third Agnus Dei of Josquin's *Missa L'homme armé sexti toni*. Josquin's example is far more complex, however, since he set the prime form of the "B section" in the tenor against a simultaneous unfolding of the "A section" in retrograde in the bass, then reversed the process from the midpoint of the movement to the end; that is, with "B" moving in retrograde in the tenor against "A" unfolding in its prime form in the bass. See Wright, *The Maze*, 189.

<sup>15</sup>François Reynaud, *La polyphonie tolédane et son milieu des premiers témoignages aux environs de 1600* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1996), 272, 279; and Robert J. Snow, ed., *A New-World Collection of Polyphony for Holy Week and the Salve Service: Guatemala City, Cathedral Archive, Music MS 4*, *Monuments of Renaissance Music 9* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 29.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. John 1:14.

practice with a polyphonic *Et incarnatus est* derived from the appropriate section of the “Credo Cardinalis” (Vatican Credo IV).<sup>17</sup> Here the chant is “fleshed out” by means of straightforward faburden and an added bass line to complete the four-part texture that was more customary for the period (see Ex. 6).<sup>18</sup>

The image shows a musical score for a four-part polyphonic setting of the 'Et incarnatus est' section of the Credo. It consists of four staves. The top staff is a soprano line with a treble clef, containing a series of half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff is an alto line with a treble clef, containing a series of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics 'Et in - car - na - tus est' are written below this staff. The third staff is a tenor line with a treble clef, containing a series of half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bottom staff is a bass line with a bass clef, containing a series of half notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3.

EXAMPLE 6

Polyphonic “Et incarnatus est”  
(incipit), El Escorial, Cantoral  
210, fol. 86v.

The very simplicity of this texture suggests that polyphony was probably often improvised at the *Et incarnatus est*, even if only with three voices. (That is, as strict faburden without the added bass line.) Insertions of more complex polyphony such as the fragments found in the Rosary Cantoral might have been substituted for simple faburden at the *Et incarnatus est* on especially grand occasions.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the ornamented style of plainchant performance discussed earlier in this article, the two polyphonic fragments for the “Et incarnatus est” brought a special element to the Credo chants of the Rosary Cantoral. Altogether, these represent ways in which the compilers of this magnificent chant book from around 1500 sought to create something *extraordinary* for the friars of San Pedro Mártir de Toledo. As debates continue over the state of church music today, they also serve as timely reminders of our rich musical heritage, particularly, the treasures of chant books from the Hispanic world which we have only recently begun to discover and interpret. ❧

<sup>17</sup>El Escorial, Cantoral 210, sign. S-1, fol. 86v-87. I am very grateful to Fr. Jafet Ortega, OSA, for allowing me to see this manuscript during a period of renovation at El Escorial.

<sup>18</sup>The inclusion of this faburden is interesting in light of the on-going debate regarding the use of polyphony at El Escorial. Philip II seems to have prohibited its use in the Escorial’s letter of foundation dated 1567—a position he reaffirmed in 1592. According to José de Sigüenza’s important chronicle of El Escorial from 1605, however, the Jeronimite monks did “raise the voice and the spirit to the Lord with a plain consonance which they call *fabordones*” (levantasen la voz y el espíritu al Señor con una consonancia llana que llaman *fabordones*). Sigüenza, *La fundación del monasterio de El Escorial* (1605; repr. Madrid: Aguilar, 1963), 333. The *Et incarnatus est* discussed here supports Sigüenza’s observation and provides us with at least one instance during which such *fabordones* were performed. For differing views on the use of polyphony at El Escorial, compare Michael J. Noone, *Music and Musicians in the Escorial Liturgy under the Habsburgs, 1563–1700* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 1998), 87–90, 187; and José Sierra Pérez, *Música para Felipe II Rey de España (Homenaje en el IV centenario de su muerte)* (El Escorial: San Lorenzo de El Escorial, 1998), 23–26.

<sup>19</sup>The regularity with which the *Et incarnatus est* was performed polyphonically might account for the absence of text underlay in the excerpt on *L’homme armé* transmitted by the Rosary Cantoral. It is telling that several polyphonic manuscripts at Toledo cathedral include settings of the *Et incarnatus est* section alone. There are two by Cristóbal de Morales (ca. 1500–1553) in Toledo, Biblioteca Capitular, Mss. B.16 and B.33. Another by Ginés de Bolunda (ca. 1545–after 1604) is in Toledo, Biblioteca Capitular, Ms. B.33. Both Morales and Ginés de Bolunda served as chapelmasters at the cathedral of Toledo.

## REPERTORY

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### The *Alternatim* Alternative

By Susan Treacy



hoirs who are either just getting started introducing sacred music into their parishes or choirs who have been involved for some time may want to consider “the alternatim alternative.” The Latin word *alternatim* means “alternately,” and the practice involves the alternation of two different groups of musicians. The origin of this practice is firmly rooted in the church and historically involved various configurations of Gregorian chant, polyphony, and organ.

#### *Alternatim in Gregorian Chant*

The earliest instances of alternatim in the church singing can be traced, not surprisingly, to the antiphonal chanting of the psalms, which itself can be traced to the biblical witness of Jewish practices.<sup>1</sup> Philo of Alexandria, a first-century Jewish philosopher, described the antiphonal chanting of psalms by men and women of the Therapeutæ, a Jewish, or perhaps Jewish-Christian sect. In the course of the development of the Benedictine office [alternatim chanting of the psalms]—either antiphonally or responsorially—became well established. The antiphonal chanting back and forth of psalm verses from one choir to another is familiar even to many present-day Catholics who chant the Liturgy of the Hours or who have visited a monastery. Perhaps even more familiar to modern-day Catholics is responsorial chanting, when there is alternation between a cantor (or cantors) and a larger group (schola, choir, or congregation). The Sunday responsorial psalm is most familiar, but the Gregorian gradual and alleluia chants are also responsorial chants.

Other types of chants—ordinary chants, sequences, hymns, and canticles—may also be sung using the alternatim alternative. Modern choirs and scholas may want to try some of these. If you have ever wondered about those double bars in Gregorian chant books like *The Gregorian Missal*, wonder no more. The double bars in the chant books indicate, among other things, where to alternate choirs. When a choir or schola is learning a new Gregorian Gloria or Credo, the director can have the schola alternate with the congregation, so as not to place too heavy a burden on the faithful to learn such long chants in a short amount of time. A mixed schola singing without congregational collaboration may also alternate between men and women.

The same type of alternatim is traditionally applied to sequences, the strophes of which are separated by double bars. *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, the sequence for Pentecost, furnishes a good example of this; each stanzaic invocation of the Holy Spirit can be divided between men and women or between schola and congregation; likewise with *Lauda Sion*, the sequence for Corpus Christi. This alternatim performance is a tradition that began understandably, when one considers a typical structure of the sequence, which often features paired strophes, each member of the pair sung to the same melody. Evidence of this can be found in a medieval sequence text for the feast of Saint Stephen, which refers to alternatim singing in the opening pair of strophes.

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<sup>1</sup>In Isaiah’s vision of the Lord (Isaiah 6:1–4), even the Seraphim sing antiphonally.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1a. Præcentórum<br/>succentorúmque turma<br/>concentorúmque pia<br/>personet laude una.</p> <p>Let the devout choir (crowd)<br/>of precentors, succentors,<br/>and concentors, resound<br/>with one song of praise.</p> | <p>1b. Psallat Christo<br/>neumata regi compta<br/>concordi symphonia<br/>vota reddens debita.</p> <p>Let it sing to Christ the King<br/>melismas adorned with<br/>concordant symphonies,<br/>returning due devotion.</p> |
|--|---|

Richard Hoppin surmises that the names of the three different sections of the choir give a key to their connections with *alternatim* practice, and he cites the medieval theorist Regino of Prüm (d. 915) as confirmation of this. According to Regino, the *præcentóres* (“fore-singers”) start and are answered by the *succentóres* (“after-singers”)—they are clearly engaging in *alternatim* practice. The “concordant symphonies” result when the *concentóres* sing together with either the *præcentóres* or the *succentóres*, or with both.<sup>2</sup>

An interesting variant can be applied to the Easter Sequence, *Victimæ paschali laudes*, which includes a dramatic dialogue. It can be sung strictly *alternatim*, by strophe, or as shown below.

**All:**

Víctimæ pascháli laudes ímmolent  
Christiáni.

Agnus redémit oves: Christus ínnocens  
Patri reconciliávit peccatóres.

Mors et vita duello conflíxere mirándo:  
dux vitæ mórtuus, regnat vivus.

To the paschal Victim, Christians, offer a  
sacrifice of praise.

The Lamb has ransomed his sheep; the  
innocent Christ has reconciled sinners  
with the Father.

Death and life confronted each other in a  
prodigious battle; the Prince of Life, who  
died, now lives and reigns.

**Men:**

Dic nobis María, quid vidísti in via?

“Tell us, Mary, what did you see upon  
the way?”

**Women:**

Sepúlcrum Christi vivéntis, et glóriam  
vidi resurgéntis:

Angélicos testes, sudárium, et vestes.  
Surréxit Christus spes mea: præcédet  
suos in Galilaéam.

“I saw the sepulcher of the living Christ;  
I saw the glory of the Risen One.

I saw the angels, his witnesses, the  
shroud and the garments. Christ, my  
Hope, is risen; he will go before his own  
into Galilee.”

**All:**

Scimus Christum surrexísse a mórtuis  
vere: tu nobis, victor Rex, miserére.

We know that Christ is truly risen from  
the dead; O Victorious King, have mercy  
on us.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Hoppin, *Medieval Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), pp. 170–71.

### Gregorian Chant & Polyphony

Other opportunities for alternatim singing involve the alternation of Gregorian chant and polyphony. One example is the Compline hymn *Te lucis ante terminum* as set by Thomas Tallis (1505–85) and other composers.<sup>3</sup> The hymn has only three stanzas, so the polyphonic setting is used for the second stanza, with the chant framing the polyphony.

Another well-known Gregorian hymn that can be easily sung alternatim with polyphony is the Advent Vesper hymn *Conditor alme siderum*. Guillaume Dufay (1397–1474) composed a beautiful three-voice polyphonic setting of the hymn, with the chant melody in the top voice and the lower two voices providing a simple note-against-note accompaniment known as *fauxbourdon*. The same setting is used for all the even-numbered stanzas of the hymn, so the choir will not have a great deal of intricate music to learn.<sup>4</sup>

Palestrina and Victoria both published anthologies of hymns for the liturgical year, all of which conformed to the standard Renaissance practice of alternation between chant and polyphony. This same practice extended to performances of the Magnificat. Palestrina and Victoria both composed some Magnificat settings for four voices. Orlando di Lasso's *Magnificat octavi toni*, for SATB choir, has polyphony on the even-numbered verses and chant on the odd, and it is readily available through the Choral Public Domain Library.<sup>5</sup>

### Gregorian Chant and Organ

Alternatim practice between choir and organ is also an option that began to be used with frequency during the fifteenth century. The verses of Gregorian hymns were frequently alternated with organ versets, a practice that continued right into the twentieth century. Such an example is the Marian hymn *Ave maris stella*, with organ versets by Marcel Dupré (1886–1971). Michael Lawrence has written eloquently in this journal of the practice of organ-choir alternatim in "The Organ and the Roman Rite."<sup>6</sup> His practical suggestions as an organist are invaluable and offer many attractive options to organists and choral directors.

These are only a few examples of the different types of alternatim singing that are available to parishes. The alternatim alternative is one that can enrich and possibly lead to exponential growth of your parish's musical life. ☩



<sup>3</sup>See Susan Treacy, "Compline with Tallis," *Sacred Music*, 132: no. 3 (Winter 2006), 42–46.

<sup>4</sup>It can be accessed at the Choral Public Domain Library in an edition by John Henry Fowler. <http://wso.williams.edu/cpdl/sheet/duf-cond.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Orlando di Lasso. *Magnificat octavi toni*, edited by Ulrich Alpers. [http://icking-music-archiv.org/scores/lasso/magnificat\\_octavi\\_toni.pdf](http://icking-music-archiv.org/scores/lasso/magnificat_octavi_toni.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Michael E. Lawrence, "The Organ and the Roman Rite," *Sacred Music*, 132, no. 3 (Fall 2006), 10–14.



## Sequentia — Psallat Ecclesia

*Sequence for the Dedication of a Church*



Psallat Eccle-si-a, \* mater il-libata et virgo sine ruga honorem hu-ius  
Sing praises, Church, mother inviolate & virgin without wrinkle, to the honor of this



eccle-si-æ 2a. Hæc domus aulæ coe-lestis probatur parti-ceps 2b. in  
temple. This house is esteemed for sharing, with the celestial court, in



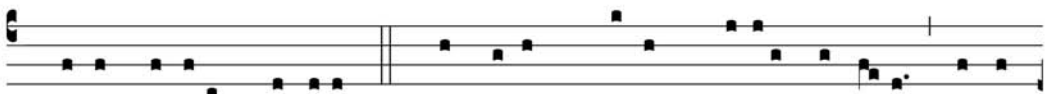
laude Regis coe-lorum et ceremoni-is 3a. Et lumine continu-o æm u-  
the praise and ceremony paid to the King of heaven. And light continual, emu-



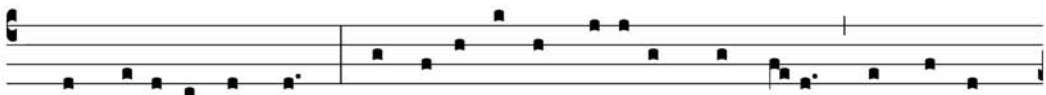
lans civi-tatem sine tenebris. 3b. Et corpora in gremi-o confovens ani-  
lating the city without shadows. And cherishing in her bosom the bodies of souls



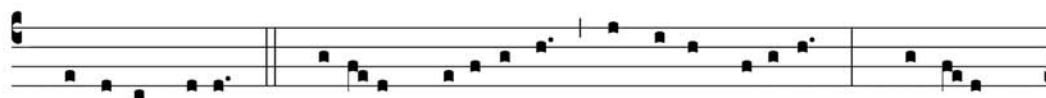
marum quæ in coe-lo vivunt. 4a. Quam dextera protegat De-i. 4b. Ad  
that in heaven live. May God's right hand protect her, to



laudem ipsi-us Domini. 5a. Hic novam pro-lem gra-ti-a partu-rit, foe-cun-  
the praise of this same Lord. Here the new progeny of grace is born, made fruitful



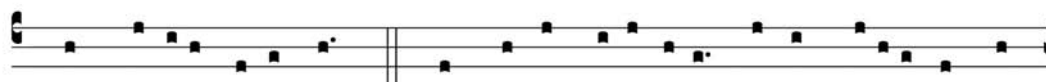
da Spi-ri-tu Sancto. 5b. Ange-li ci-ves vi-si-tant hic su-os, et corpus  
by the Holy Spirit. Angels here visit their fellow citizens, and the body



sumi-tur Iesu. 6a. Fugi-unt universa corpo-ris nocu-a. 6b. Pe-re-unt  
of Jesus is received. All that can harm the body flees; the guilt of the



peccatricis animæ crimina. 7a. Hic vox læ-ti-ti-æ p ersonat; 7b. Hic pax  
sinful soul is destroyed. Here the voice of gladness resounds; here, peace



et gaudi-a redundant. 8. Hac domo Tri-ni-ta-ti laus et glori-a semper  
and joy overflow. To the House of the Trinity, let honor and glory always



re-sultant.  
resound.

Let the Church, a mother inviolate, and a virgin without wrinkle, psalm the honor of this temple.

This house is esteemed for sharing with the heavenly court in the pageantry and praise paid the King of heaven:

Emulating with its ceaseless light the city without darkness, and cherishing in her bosom the bodies of souls that live in heaven.

May God's right hand long protect her, to His glory!

Here, grace, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit, brings forth a new progeny; here the angels visit their fellow citizens, and the Body of Jesus is received.

All that can harm the body flees; the guilt of the sinful soul is destroyed.

Here the voice of gladness resounds; here peace and joy overflow. &

## ARCHIVE

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# The Young Will Discover Chant: An Interview with Monsignor Richard Schuler

[This interview was conducted by Thomas Woods, and printed in *Christi Fideles*, 4 (March 1997).]

TOM WOODS: What is your music program at St. Agnes and how does it stand out?

MONSIGNOR SCHULER: We have five Masses on the weekend. The evening Mass on Saturday is about once or twice a month, a sung Mass in Latin with a group which we call our Chamber Choir that sings mostly Renaissance things and Gregorian proper. The 10:00 a.m. on Sunday is a Solemn Mass with orchestra (about twenty-five players) and the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale, which is about sixty voices. And we sing the Viennese classical Masses: Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and so on. There are about twenty-four Masses in our repertoire.

WOODS: I understand that the fruits of your work include a good number of vocations.

SCHULER: We've done pretty well there. In the last fourteen or fifteen years, we've had fifteen first Masses here. And at the present time we have ten kids from this parish in the seminary.

WOODS: Is there a connection between what you're trying to do at St. Agnes and their own discernment of a vocation?

SCHULER: I think there's a connection, and many have said that. For the last twenty years we've sung Vespers every Sunday afternoon, and I find a good number of people who show up for that indicate a vocation, in time.

WOODS: Some of the most distasteful aspects of the ongoing liturgical changes have been advanced in the name of making the Mass more appealing and accessible to the young. Do your own people generally appreciate what you're trying to do at St. Agnes?

SCHULER: I think so. In our high school, for example, the students are very interested in religious music. In fact, they've got a concert coming up tomorrow which is entitled, "A Survey of Religion and Music." Moreover, we have a lot of altar boys. We have about fifty servers out of the grade school. They're in teams, and for our Sunday High Mass, we always have fifteen servers. There's a lot of competition.

WOODS: You have argued that there is nothing inherent in music or in a particular instrument that makes it either religious or secular, sacred or profane.



*Monsignor Richard Schuler*

SCHULER: Well, by sacred, we mean what man has over the centuries come to regard as that. We can't say that a flute is not sacred, or that it is sacred; or a violin or an organ. The organ has come to be thought of as a sacred instrument only because it's been used mostly in churches. It's the connotation of a thing that determines whether it's sacred or secular, and that connotation isn't built up over night.

WOODS: Some people maintain that you go further and are willing to say that even in the realm of pop culture, for example, it is inadmissible to argue that a particular genre is inherently evil.

SCHULER: I think some of the stuff that comes out in hard rock is so totally associated with evil that there is something evil in it. I don't think you can have what you can call "Christian Rock."

WOODS: That was my next question.

SCHULER: I don't think that the text is going to baptize what is bad. There are some who would like or say that you can Christianize rock music. I don't think that you can. Music can't become holy because it's tacked onto a sacred text.

WOODS: What about the use of hymns in the liturgy?

SCHULER: The hymn has not been a part of the Mass liturgy. You don't find hymns in the missal. There are hymns in the breviary, the part of the Liturgy of the Office of the Hours, but the use of hymns in Mass is tacked on.

WOODS: I understand that all the Masses you celebrate are in the new rite.

SCHULER: Yes.

WOODS: Where do you stand on the question of the traditional Mass? I understand your view is that to fight to restore it would be to concede that the liberals have given us a modernist liturgy. And you refuse to do that. You want to present a sacred celebration of this new Mass.

SCHULER: Right. The Novus Ordo is given to us by the Church, and I think we're committed to accepting that. There may be things we'd like to see changed. For example, there's no Octave of Pentecost any more, no Octave of Epiphany. A few things are missing that I would like to see come back and they could be put back. But by and large, the changes that were put into the Novus Ordo are not bad. If we would do what is there and not make up our own rubrics, that could be a perfectly good thing, as I've hoped to have demonstrated at St. Agnes.

WOODS: Do you think there is a role for the traditional Mass movement to play in trying to restore a sense of the sacred to the liturgy, or would you rather see the people who favor the traditional Mass work simply toward reverent celebrations of the Novus Ordo.

SCHULER: The Church has allowed it, (traditional Latin Mass), there's no question about that. But I have the feeling that it's done because these people who ask for it were so appalled by the irreverence that was coming out in what was called the "new" liturgy, that they said, give us back what we had. To save their souls, the Holy See said fine. But I think that the new ordo is here to stay and that we should use it to the best of our ability. Work for certain changes, like that calendar change that I suggested. But I don't like to see two missals in use.

WOODS: What would you say to somebody who notes that the introduction of the Novus Ordo seems to have taken place simultaneously with the introduction of bad music?

SCHULER: There is a term I use, the *piccolomini*, which in Italian means the little men. I claim that's who took over the whole liturgical reform. They got in the driver seat and they did it as they wanted, not as the church has directed. What we have in most places is the operation of *piccolomini*. This was true in church music. The people who are writing so-called church music today are not the best-educated people in music or in liturgy. They're not trained, they have no notion of the history of this thing. They are the "little guys." That's in everything: art, architecture, church decoration, all that sort of thing.

WOODS: Are you claiming this is a powerful minority of the liturgical establishment?

SCHULER: I think it is the liturgical establishment.

WOODS: How is it that the *piccolomini* have had such a mind-boggling success?

SCHULER: I'm not a person who finds trouble under every rug, but there was undoubtedly some kind of organized effort or conspiracy. And this thing spread instantly, via some of these national groups, the bishops' conference groups. They're full of what I call the "DP": dumb priests. They accepted this as if it were the documentation of the council.

I've got an article in the next issue of *Sacred Music* in which we show that Monsignor Frederick McManus, of all people, has admitted that *Environment and Art in Christian Worship* (the document that has been used to tear most of our churches apart) is no more than the opinion of those who wrote it. No legal status whatsoever, yet we've ruined the churches of our country, holding that document up as if it were the Bible.

WOODS: Have you encountered any hostility from anyone for what you're trying to do?

SCHULER: The Archbishop here in St. Paul has been very friendly. But there have been the bureaucrats—some have asked about our Masses at the main altar *ad orientem*. They wanted to know what kind of permission I had to get to do what I was doing. I told them we are just fulfilling the law of the church. I have a story to tell. I was at a meeting of some priests, for Confirmation, and I was seated across from the Archbishop, and down at the other end of the table a priest hollered up, "How's your Latin High Mass going?" And I said, "Oh, fine, we get a good crowd every Sunday." And the guy next to me said, "How can you have a Latin High Mass?" And the Archbishop looked at him and said, "Father, he doesn't have to explain why he has a Latin High Mass; but those who don't must explain why they don't."

WOODS: What happened to Gregorian chant? I know Vatican II said it should be given pride of place, but this has been ignored.

SCHULER: It seems to be a dislike of Latin. You chant in Latin, you can't put Gregorian chant in the vernacular. They outlawed the Latin, therefore they lost the Gregorian chant. We do Gregorian chant here for all the Latin Masses we celebrate.

WOODS: As we know, there are many perfectly good reasons to retain Latin.

SCHULER: Certainly, if only to keep Gregorian chant. I'm all for the vernacular, it was a great privilege given to us, but I think Latin ought to be retained for the sung liturgy. One of the difficulties in so many countries is that they don't have any composers and few musicians. With Latin, they could use what was composed in Germany, France and Italy and Yugoslavia, whatever, because it came out in Latin, and it could be used all over the world. But once the vernacular

replaced the Latin, then what are you going to do with German vernacular? We don't want any of that here, we don't want any Hungarian music here. It is restricted to its own place. Chant, on the other hand, is universal.

WOODS: We're essentially asking this age to come up with a whole new corpus of Catholic music.

SCHULER: We don't have any composers, nor do we have any who can sing the music. Part of the problem with any kind of music creation and publication is that you've got to have somebody who can do it, perform it. With the disbanding of choirs, there was no one to sing it anymore. Then there was no one to buy it, therefore there was no one to publish it, and therefore there was no one to write it. So they've killed the whole system and all the previous repertoire we had accumulated over centuries by getting rid of the Latin.

WOODS: It occurs to me that it was relatively easy to abandon Latin.

SCHULER: We were forced to. I don't know if you've ever seen that book I put out called *Music and Liturgy Reforms After Vatican II*, but in there I took a survey of the bishops in the country and asked if they were maintaining Latin as the church had asked. Practically everyone of them said they had forbidden it. I can't understand how a diocese can forbid something that is ordered by a universal church law of a council.

*One thousand years of  
Catholic theology in Latin  
and these people who are  
studying it today, don't  
understand it at all.*

WOODS: It's easy to abandon the Latin, it's much more difficult to bring it back.

SCHULER: Oh, yes, because they don't study Latin anymore. The seminaries, which are presumed to be on the graduate level of studies, are studying theology, and they don't know a word of Latin. One thousand years of Catholic theology in Latin, and these people who are studying it today don't understand it at all.

WOODS: There's also the problem that the laity, especially the rising generations, are entirely unfamiliar with even the most common church music.

SCHULER: That's true. There's nothing taught in schools. But it's a simple thing. You can teach a crowd of kids the Kyrie Eleison in Gregorian chant in a matter of ten-fifteen minutes. And the Sanctus is the same way. There was such a hatred of Latin among these *piccolomini* people. They don't want it, it's Roman, and you do away with the Latin. And of course, if you do away with Latin, you do away with what was most of the Roman Rite.

WOODS: It certainly wasn't the laity that hated Latin.

SCHULER: No, it was the clergy.

WOODS: The laity, though, does not put up much of a fight when changes are made.

SCHULER: We were trained all the way through to do what we were told, and this is what they played on. The laity would do what they were told.

WOODS: Perhaps that can work to our advantage, on the other hand, if Latin is to be revived.

SCHULER: I think so. Certainly nobody is trying to go back to where everything would be in Latin, spoken and sung. But once we get back to using it for special occasions, for one Mass out of three or four, and when Masses that are sung have Latin music, then there will be a swing back.

WOODS: As editor of *Sacred Music*, where do you see church music headed? Do you see signs of a revival in chant, for example?

SCHULER: Well, it can't be much worse, so it must go the other way. The young will eventually discover there is something they have been deprived of, and they're going to say, where is all this? And come back to it. There was a Gregorian chant congress in Paris about five years ago, and a young fellow came up and said, "We discovered this, we've been deprived of what is a thousand years of our country's musical history and we want it back; we want to know why we weren't told about it."

WOODS: I might add that no one expected the monks of Santo Domingo de Silos to sell eight million copies of their Gregorian chant recording.

SCHULER: Not far from where I live now is St. John's Abbey, and we used to visit up there every summer when I was a boy. We always went to Vespers, which was sung in Latin, and while I didn't know what they were doing, still there was something about it that told me this was the way you got to heaven. There was a connection with heaven: the beauty of that music. We sat there for hours, and it had an effect on me. I think chant has something in itself that creates that peace, belief, all that we want.

WOODS: Thank you, Monsignor. ☩

## STUDY TOUR 2008

### *Gregorian Chant in the Heart of the Alps*

"Gregorian Chant in the Heart of the Alps—The Early Middle Ages" is the theme of a study tour to be led by Fr. Robert Skeris to Switzerland, Italy, and Germany from July 21–August 1, 2008, with lectures, workshops, and sung services. Twelve days, three- and four-star accommodations, some meals.

Limited to 15 singers; music will be provided. Price \$3,016 plus taxes, etc. Itinerary includes the yjr Island of Reichenau, Abbey Maria Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek St. Gallen, Konvent St. Johann in Müstair, Stift Marienberg in Malles/Venosta, with visits to sites associated with the ancestors of the CMAA: John B. Singenberger's church of baptism and Franz Xaver Witt's grave in Landshut. Details: contact [rskeris@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rskeris@sbcglobal.net).

## DOCUMENTS

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### Excerpts from *Sacramentum Caritatis*

Pope Benedict XVI

¶ 42. In the *ars celebrandi*, liturgical song has a pre-eminent place. Saint Augustine rightly says in a famous sermon that “the new man sings a new song. Singing is an expression of joy and, if we consider the matter, an expression of love.” The People of God assembled for the liturgy sings the praises of God. In the course of her two-thousand-year history, the church has created, and still creates, music and songs which represent a rich patrimony of faith and love. This heritage must not be lost. Certainly as far as the liturgy is concerned, we cannot say that one song is as good as another. Generic improvisation or the introduction of musical genres which fail to respect the meaning of the liturgy should be avoided. As an element of the liturgy, song should be well integrated into the overall celebration. Consequently everything—texts, music, execution—ought to correspond to the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, the structure of the rite and the liturgical seasons. Finally, while respecting various styles and different and highly praiseworthy traditions, I desire, in accordance with the request advanced by the Synod Fathers, that Gregorian chant be suitably esteemed and employed as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy.

¶ 62. None of the above observations should cast doubt upon the importance of such large-scale liturgies. I am thinking here particularly of celebrations at international gatherings, which nowadays are held with greater frequency. The most should be made of these occasions. In order to express more clearly the unity and universality of the Church, I wish to endorse the proposal made by the Synod of Bishops, in harmony with the directives of the Second Vatican Council, that, with the exception of the readings, the homily and the prayer of the faithful, it is fitting that such liturgies be celebrated in Latin. Similarly, the better-known prayers of the Church’s tradition should be recited in Latin and, if possible, selections of Gregorian chant should be sung. Speaking more generally, I ask that future priests, from their time in the seminary, receive the preparation needed to understand and to celebrate Mass in Latin, and also to use Latin texts and execute Gregorian chant; nor should we forget that the faithful can be taught to recite the more common prayers in Latin, and also to sing parts of the liturgy to Gregorian chant. ❧



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This official translation was accessed on [Vatica.va](http://Vatica.va) April 6, 2007. The translation has been revised at least once since the date of initial publication.



# Why We Sing Gregorian Chant

By Fr. Lawrence Donnelly

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I have written and spoken to you about Gregorian chant before and the reason why we sing it in our parish. Here are some excerpts from Vatican documents that make clear the mind of the church. At the Vatican Council II, in 1964, which began a reform of the liturgy, the church allowed that Mass could be said in the vernacular tongue.

Although Mass could now be said in English, that in no way was meant to abolish Latin at Mass, or singing in Latin. In fact, the Vatican II liturgical document allowing English, written in 1964, says: "the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites." (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, ¶36). (*Nota bene*. When official church documents refer to "Latin rites" it is referring to Catholic dioceses where the official language of the liturgy is Latin, such as for Roman Catholics.)

Regarding the use of Gregorian chant, the same document reminds us: "The church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman Liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services." (¶116).

To further the reforms of the council, the Vatican came out with an instruction on liturgical music in 1967 called *Musicam Sacram*. Obviously allowing for the use of the mother tongue at Mass, it also quotes Vatican II: "According to the Constitution on the Liturgy, 'the use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites,'" and orders that: "Pastors of souls should take care that besides the vernacular 'the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.'" (n.47). About the chant, it repeats Vatican II: "Gregorian chant, as proper to the Roman liturgy, should be given pride of place." (¶50).

Pope Paul VI would later insist on the use of the chant seven years later, in 1974. He had the Congregation for Divine Worship send to all the bishops a booklet of Gregorian chants that all Catholics should know along with a letter saying:

Our congregation has prepared a booklet entitled, 'Jubilare Deo,' which contains a minimum selection of sacred chants. This was done in response to a desire which the Holy Father had frequently expressed, that all the faithful should know at least some Latin Gregorian chants, such as, for example, the Gloria, the Credo, the Sanctus, and the Agnus Dei. It gives me great pleasure to send you a copy of it, as a personal gift from His Holiness, Pope Paul VI. May I take this opportunity of recommending to your pastoral solicitude this new initiative, whose purpose is to facilitate the observance of the recommendation of the Second Vatican Council "steps must be taken to ensure that the faithful are able to chant together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them." (*Voluntati obsequens*).

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The ability of Catholics from all over the world to be able to sing together Latin Gregorian chant, for Paul VI, was a sensible expression of the unity of the church. The letter goes on: "Down the centuries, Gregorian chant has accompanied liturgical celebrations in the Roman Rite, has nourished men's faith and has fostered their piety, while in the process achieving an artistic perfection which the church rightly considers a patrimony of inestimable value and which the Council recognized as 'the chant especially suited to the Roman liturgy.' . . . Those who are trying to improve the quality of congregational singing cannot refuse to Gregorian chant the place which is due to it." (ibid.).

Pope John Paul II, in 2003, writes to commemorate the 100 hundredth anniversary of an instruction of Pope Saint Pius X, in which the saint back in 1903, already had seen the importance of restoring the use of Gregorian chant in churches.

Among the musical expressions that correspond best with the qualities demanded by the notion of sacred music, especially liturgical music, Gregorian chant has a special place. The Second Vatican Council recognized that "being specially suited to the Roman Liturgy" it should be given, other things being equal, pride of place in liturgical services sung in Latin. Saint Pius X pointed out that the church had "inherited it from the fathers of the church," that she has "jealously guarded [it] for centuries in her liturgical codices" and still "proposes it to the faithful" as her own, considering it "the supreme model of sacred music." Thus, Gregorian chant continues also today to be an element of unity in the Roman Liturgy. (*The Fitting Role of Sacred Music in the Holy Liturgy*).

My motive for having you all learn to sing the chant is part of my priestly fidelity to lead you more deeply into the mind of the church on sacred music and ultimately to enter into the true spirit of the Mass, which the chant, in its beauty, movement, and text is geared to do. Admittedly it is a challenge for us all, but once we gain a familiarity with this great treasure of the church, we will find consolation and spiritual benefit. ✠

## The Problem of Utility Music

By Gary Penkala

Most Reverend Bishop, Monsignor Moroney, and distinguished liturgists and musicians, "one shudders at the lackluster face of post-conciliar liturgy as it has become, or one is simply bored with its hankering after banality and its lack of artistic standards." These strong words written in 1981 by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger echo what many of us musicians feel about how far from Rome and the Council we have come in our pursuit of an American liturgical music.

It's the contention of CanticaNOVA Publications that an unfortunate neglect has been paid to the official propers of the Mass. This is one specific area in which the liturgy and music of the

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church has been jettisoned for what Pope Benedict has called “the frightening impoverishment of utility music”—songs, easy melodies, catchy tunes. Early English hand missals for the people willingly printed the introit, offertory, and communion antiphons, often with an appropriate psalm verse.

In time, these propers disappeared until eventually, by official decree, they had to be included even in missalette-style worship aids. And there, they have found an unfortunate grave, where they are musically ignored by millions of Catholics on a weekly basis.

Can something be done to resurrect these proper chants? We believe the following possibilities should be considered: Composers should be encouraged to set these particular texts; publishers should also be encouraged to include proper settings in their catalogs. While the issue of safeguarding the authenticity of texts is important, publishers are currently being inundated with extra paperwork and fees for using proper liturgical texts. This clearly gives them an incentive to print music with original texts, since it is much easier to do so. Clear and common distinction should be printed in published music when text is specifically culled from official liturgical books.

Thank you for allowing us this opportunity for discussion. May our interaction here bring about the true reforms that were envisioned by the prophetic Second Vatican Council. ☩

## With the Mind of the Church

By Susan Treacy

The subcommittee would do well to pay close attention to the conciliar and post-conciliar documents of Vatican Council II, especially *Sacrosanctum concilium* (Chapter 6), *Musicam sacram, Voluntati obsequens*, the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (2003), and the 2003 Chirograph on Sacred Music of John Paul II. *Music in Catholic Worship* pays lip service to the above-mentioned documents that were in existence in 1972, the year of the publication of *Music in Catholic Worship*'s initial publication, but then it simply ignores them and lays out a completely new vision of Catholic liturgical music that is at odds on several points with the accumulated wisdom of the church and the fathers of Vatican Council II.

Esteemed advocates of *Music in Catholic Worship* who were present at the Chicago consultation on October 9, 2006, spoke as if they were trying to introduce something new and refreshing to the church, in contrast to the old, “rigid” establishment of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony, but the fact is that they have been the establishment for the last forty years and that scarcely any parishes in the United States sing the Mass and use Gregorian chant or sacred polyphony (old or new).

Bob Hurd, for example, spoke about keeping a “principle of balance” versus a tendency towards polarization; developing diverse values, preserving tradition, and being open to new things. This is good, if that is actually what happens, but, so far, experience has shown that tradition is usually cast aside in favor of “new things,” and that advocates of *Music in Catholic*

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*Worship* do not seem to realize that tradition can be developed organically to introduce new music that is “in continuity with tradition,” to quote Benedict XVI.

It is vital that bishops, priests, and seminarians learn to chant the celebrant’s chants. Seminaries ought to have every Mass as a sung celebration so that all seminarians, especially those not literate in music, can memorize these chants.

The propers—in contrast to what *Music in Catholic Worship* states—are still to be retained at Mass. The *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* says of the introit—and it could be said of the propers as a whole—that “the purpose of this chant is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers.” Our faith can be deepened significantly and our progress in sanctity. ☩

## The Church’s Abundant Heritage

By Helen Hull Hitchcock

I’m grateful for this opportunity to have this consultation, in part so we can meet others who are deeply engaged and deeply concerned about sacred liturgy and sacred music, as we all are here today. I’m sure we all agree, too, today that we hope that the direction our conversation will be truly helpful and fruitful in our experience of Catholic liturgical music. They reflect our common dedication to the church, her teachings, and her mission to the world.

In the words of the 1958 instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*, “as everyone realizes, sacred music and sacred liturgy are so naturally interwoven, that laws cannot be made for one without affecting the other, and because of this every Christian should have some instruction in sacred liturgy and sacred music, in accordance with his station in life.”

I believe we all also agree that *Music in Catholic Worship* and *Liturgical Music Today*, both dating from early period of the liturgical reform after the council, have almost solely provided the direction our music has developed. We also agree that they need to be replaced in order to incorporate more fully the church’s abundant heritage of sacred music and the insights and directives both from Catholic history and recent Church documents, from the emerging new era of liturgical reform.

However, if we agree on this, we don’t always agree about how that should take place. It’s been over one hundred years since Pope St. Pius X wrote about active participation (*participatio actuosa*) and encouraged a renewal of Catholic music. It has been nearly 40 years since *Musicam Sacram* attempted to do that after the Council, but as we know these things have not been fulfilled and they’re waiting for our generation to bring some unity there.

I think one thing we have going for us in this room is that we all believe in the power of music and the power of beauty and truth, and if we combine beauty, truth, and music together, then everyone would be drawn to the Catholic liturgy. We just must do it. ☩

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**Helen Hull Hitchcock** is the cofounder of Adoremus: Society for the Renewal of Sacred Liturgy, and editor of the *Adoremus Bulletin*. These were her opening comments at the Consultation on a Revision of *Music in Catholic Worship*, held under the auspices of The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on the Liturgy, Subcommittee on Music in the Liturgy, October 9, 2006. [helenhitchcock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:helenhitchcock@sbcglobal.net)

## NEWS

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### The Moment and the Momentum

By Jeffrey Tucker



Most of us have a sense that liturgical life in American Catholic parishes has taken a turn for the better. Evidence is all around us that the worst of times are coming to an end, and efforts are proceeding apace toward rebuilding after so much post-conciliar confusion concerning music and liturgy.

In March 2007, for example, Fr. Martin Fox of St. Mary Catholic Church in Piqua, Ohio, posted a notice out of sheer curiosity. His parish was using a Latin ordinary for Lent. He wondered how many other parishes were doing something similar, and he invited comments. Within 36 hours, more than 200 reports came in that they too were using a Latin sung ordinary for Lent.

Lacking any scientific means for gauging what is going on in the average Catholic parish, this type of report has to suffice. They add up to a growing momentum, by which I mean that it is a *new* trend (fifteen years ago, this was not the case) and it is *expanding* geographically and demographically.

More evidence comes from the National Registry of Gregorian Scholas established by MusicaSacra.com, the website of the Church Music Association of America. It features more than one hundred points on a map of the United States. It is only a guess how many are new but most appear to be. Certainly fifteen years ago, nothing on this scale existed.

Another measure is web traffic. MusicaSacra.com offers relentless updates on the current state of Catholic music, church news documents, job openings, and the like, in addition to instant downloads of communion chants. It famously hosts the full text of the *Graduale* 1962 and the *Antiphonale* from 1912, and many other books.

And how many people visit the site? In March 2007, the site exceeded one hundred ten thousand visitors. The traffic has been growing remarkably since November 2006. It is ranked in the top one hundred thousand websites, a rank far higher than any other Catholic music site. That is five times higher than the most trafficked site of the leading Catholic music publisher.

The effort to restore sacred music would be a worthy one even without such as evidence that trends are headed in the right direction. But the Western mind likes evidence of progress to confirm our hopes. We like to know that our wanderings in the desert are coming to an end at some point. Such evidence attracts us and spurs us on to work harder.

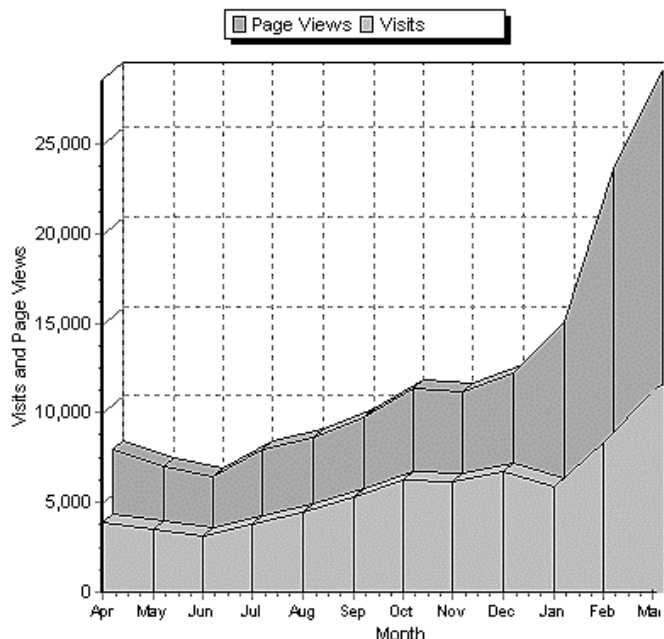
What's more impressive, however, is the desire to work and push forward even in times when progress is not evident. I'm thinking particularly of those who have been with this cause through the 1980s and 90s, when the vogue for commercial styles in liturgy was at its height. That takes a special degree of courage and conviction.

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One exemplar is Kurt Poterack of Christendom College. This issue of *Sacred Music* is now the sixth on which I've served as managing editor, and I find myself ever more in awe of the wonderful job done by him during the 90s. He was the sole editor of this journal from 1998 to 2005, and now writes the "Last Word" column in each issue. He took the journal through the difficult times when budget constraints were impossibly tight, the movement for sacred music was probably at a low point, and there seemed to be very little hope for change in the future.

And not only that: he composed music, directed an excellent choir, and kept up his writing and teaching schedule. At my own parish, we use his psalm-tone setting of the Mass Ordinary, as published in the *Adoremus Hymnal* (Ignatius Press, 1997) and it has served the parish well. At the summer colloquium, he is always available to assist in singing chant, and his expertise becomes obvious when listening to him sing. Those who know Dr. Poterack know too that he is a humble and self-effacing person who would never seek credit. And that is exactly the type of person who deserves more than he usually gets.



### *It Usually Begins at Lent*

Every movement must go through stages, and the chant-restoration movement in our time seems to have started with Lent. There might be a very practical reason for this. The pastor may feel that he has a better chance with success in Lent, when people come to expect different things that feel really Catholic.

Avoiding parish political problems is a good enough reason (many pastors live in fear of the music question). But there is one very bad reason: the belief that chant is suitable for penitential liturgies but not others. Mainline Catholic publishers have fostered this impression by publishing as the "Chant Mass" the Sanctus and Agnus settings from what the *Graduale* lists as "Missa pro Defunctis," that is, the Mass for the Dead.

Is chant only for the dead? Look at *Christus vincit, Te Deum*, or just the opening antiphon for Palm Sunday, *Hosanna filio David* (which echoes the introit on Christmas morning). Or even a communion from the fourth week of Lent, *Oportet te*: here is the song of a father whose son has come home from long absence. He is dancing.

These all express joy, but also emotions that are richer and more complex and more challenging. They reveal elation, celebration, praise, triumph. In any case, they are far from "depressing" unless anything short of pop music strikes one as depressing.

Back to my point: it would be tragic if the chant movement became stuck in Lent and never moved forward to Easter and Pentecost and beyond, indeed, to the whole church year. In fact, apart from prudential reasons, I can see no particular reason why Lent should be chosen more than any other season, though of course Lenten chants are wonderful. But so are thousands more from every other season.

Each chant is beautiful in particular ways, but what continually strikes me is the liturgical significance of them and the weighty meaning of each of the melodies. This past Palm Sunday, I was again struck by how Palm Sunday's *Hosanna filio David* is re-visitation of Christmas morning's introit *Puer natus est*. Both welcome the king, the Rex Israel who reveals in his death and resurrection that he is Rex Caelestis.

So let's please do all we can to move to stage two, beyond Lent. Chant isn't just for penance. It is the song of every liturgical emotion and, indeed, the paradigm song to express everything of true importance.

### *The Diversity Question*

An interesting feature of the site run by Catholic author Amy Welborn is a weekly post called "What did you see and hear?" The variation in reports is striking. One Mass will have all propers and ordinary in Latin, with excellent motets and attention to liturgical detail. In the same town, and sometimes even in the same parish, a Mass will feature the greatest Catholic hits of 1976 and very little attention paid to the ebb and flow of the liturgical year.

Seasoned Catholics know the routine. We are no longer shocked. When we travel and seek to fulfill our Mass obligation, we brace ourselves for what we might find. The only real alternative is to prepare far in advance and sometimes drive to far-away neighborhoods. Miss the recommended Mass by an hour or so and you find yourself in the world of shag carpet and tie-dye.

There is probably more variation in Catholic liturgy today than there is in Methodist or Baptist worship. Some people praise this reality as a healthy diversity. That's one way to put a good spin on it, and there is a certain point to diversity within a uniform structure and shared ideals, both of which are sadly lacking. Few people in the know imagine that there will be anything other than this for a period of a decade more or even much longer. There has been so much

confusion and even chaos in the last few decades that no amount of pronouncements or even good management by bishops can provide a near-term fix.

*Chant isn't just for penance. It is the song of every liturgical emotion.*

What we need to develop in the face of this is patience and a greater degree of tolerance than people with elevated tastes are inclined to offer. But let us remember that opponents of sacred music consistently accuse us of setting out to homogenize the liturgy, ban

their favorite ditty, or otherwise squelch the creative impulse. Before we make a case for doing exactly this, consider the approach taken by William Mahrt at the USCCB meeting. Several speakers expressed the fear that their contemporary Catholic music would be suppressed. Mahrt emphasized that the goal was not suppression but the establishment of a clear sense that not all music is admissible to liturgy, and that there needs to be greater clarity on the priorities within the framework of liturgy. Gregorian chant is the model and the ideal against which all other music is to be judged. There is no merit to "diversity" as such but unity on ideals produce a diversity of a more coherent kind.

### *We Are All in Transition*

Some readers have written to say that they wished their own parishes had liturgies as wonderful as those managed by people associated with *Sacred Music*. This is a misunderstanding of the underlying realities. Everyone who is working toward the ideal is in transition. We all have struggles. We deal with difficult pastoral environments. We have personnel problems in our choirs. There is always and everywhere a shortage of funds. Rehearsal time is scarce and the music is difficult. Congregations don't sing as they should. There are always a few who complain,

sometimes bitterly. Given all this, there is simply no way a regular parish, except in the rarest of cases, can do all the propers in Gregorian chant or a polyphonic Mass every week. We must all make compromises.

We do what we can when we can—and always look toward the future: the next rehearsal, the next liturgy, the next season, the next year. We add a bit each time. Sometimes it is two steps forward, one step back. Sometimes there are two steps back, as when there is a dramatic change in pastoral leadership or the schola director pushes too hard in one direction without taking account of mitigating circumstances. Musicians in the Catholic Church today must be convinced of need for beauty and have the burning desire to bring to life as much of our heritage as possible. But we must also be wise, prudent, and humble.

#### *A Service Ethic*

In a recent case I know of, a schola was founded a year ago with the support of the pastor. They were growing stronger and learning more. They became excited about all the music that had newly opened to them. Each week they were pushing harder for new propers, new hymns, new ordinary settings. Holy Week came and their demands became ever more intense. At some point, the pastor decided that he had had enough of it, and, in a fit of temper, he fired them wholesale.

Probably many readers can point to similar cases. The first tendency is always to blame the pastor, decry his ignorance, and write him off as an enemy of the sacred. That impulse, however, must be suppressed. There is something for the musicians themselves to learn in such cases. They should examine their own hearts and ask whether there is anything that they might have done to contribute to the problem. After all, they can't control the pastor but they can control their own attitudes and practices.

This type of internal reflection can be a humbling experience, but it is absolutely critical. Being fired wholesale is the worst possible outcome. It is better to make necessary compromises, curb one's ambitions, and think strategically so that the parish and the pastor can continue to be supportive. If this means doing an English creed or Gloria for a time, so be it. If it means having to sing the introit as a prelude rather than a processional, that is something we have to live with, perhaps not forever but for now. In these conditions, showing deference and respect for leadership and the existing parish culture will go much further than citing encyclicals and treatises on rubrics. There is always and everywhere room for the perfection of what is possible.

#### *Our Literature is Back*

Anyone who has sung chant for some period of time might have wondered why there are not more extended commentaries on each chant. I was so fortunate that someone alerted me to the existence of a wonderful book by Dom Dominic Johner, first published in 1928: *The Chants of the Vatican Gradual*. He writes essays on a vast number of the chants that make up the Gradual. His musical commentary is valuable but what is most striking are his observations on the relationship between the liturgy, the music, and Catholic theology. It is a true classic and a constant source of inspiration.

Unfortunately, it has been nearly impossible to find a copy. That is why it is the first book to appear in a new publishing program of the Church Music Association of America. The edition is a precise reprint of the original, and though Dom Johner wrote for the preconciliar *Graduale*, nearly all of it still applies in the new *Graduale*. Reading his comments helps one reflect more on

*A new publishing  
program from  
CMAA.*



the chants being sung, and understanding the meaning behind the chant cannot but improve performance.

Dom Johner also wrote a wonderful book on the history, meaning, and performance of Gregorian chant as liturgical music. It was written before his commentary book, and it remains an outstanding resource of chant according to the Solesmes tradition. It is *A New School of Gregorian Chant*. It is the second book in the CMAA book series.

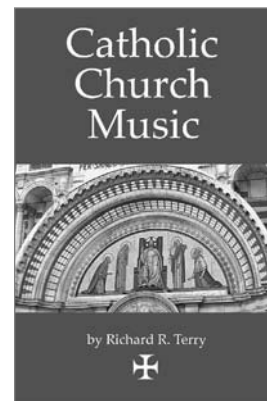
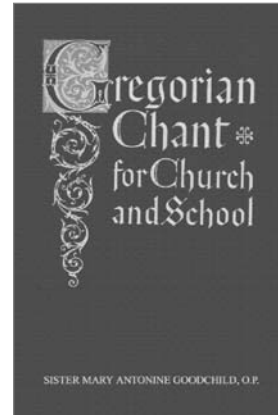
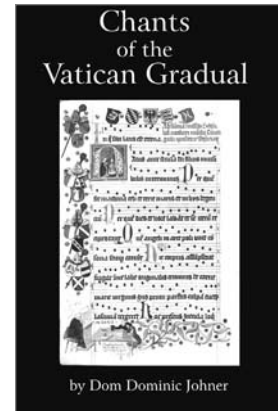
There are several other books that assist singers in a similar way. In 1930, Dom Suñol published the book that became the standard textbook for understanding how to sing Gregorian chant. It remains today the most thorough explanation of tonality, rhythm, and, especially, the psalm tones, to appear yet in print. It is both pedagogically effective and theoretically definitive. Herein you find the most thorough explanation of how it is that Solesmes came to set the standard for chant for the entire world. It is *A Textbook of Gregorian Chant*, also in the CMAA series.

Marie Pierik too devoted her scholarly life to the explanation, defense, and promotion of Gregorian chant in line with the method and practice of the Solesmes tradition. In a learned and erudite work in the CMAA series called *The Spirit of Gregorian Chant*, she provides a complete overview of its history, theological meaning, and practice in the framework of Catholic liturgy. At once deeply informative and startlingly poetic, this book is an expression of intellectual accomplishment and deep faith. There is so much that our current generation can learn from her research and enthusiasm.

If what you are looking for is an introduction to the basics concerning rhythm, tonality, modes, and style, along with a substantial amount of basic repertoire, the best book I've seen comes recommended by Fr. Samuel Weber. It is the 1944 book *Gregorian Chant for Church and School*, by Sr. Mary Antonine Goodchild. What a wonderful find this is: an ideal textbook on chant for junior high, high school, or really any age. It is mercifully free of verbiage or exaggerated detail. It is short and super clear on all aspects of learning to chant (notes, rhythm, Latin, style), and it contains a vast amount of the basic repertoire, in neumes and with English translations. It even has study questions. The CMAA has priced this one for wide distribution.

Then there are the music primers that were the foundational books of the entire American chant movement of the twentieth century: the four books on the Ward Method, with First Year having been published in 1920. These are true treasures. The newer editions, have a modern feel and are more elaborate in their illustrations but there is something edifying about the originals that the CMAA has made available again.

Scott Turkington has long treasured his rare copy of Sir Richard R. Terry's *Catholic Church Music* published in 1907. It is an inspiring and erudite treatise that is delightfully written for the



regular church musician. Terry was the director of choirs at Westminster Cathedral in London, and responsible not only for building the music program there but also for editing and publishing many volumes of English church music written by and for Catholics.

His book covers the case for the old music, explains how to form a choir, how to inspire the singers and help the choir grow, how to overcome financial problems, and to think about the role of music in liturgy. He offers fascinating details about the fate of Catholic music after the English Reformation and maps out an agenda for the future. In fact, it is amazing how a book a hundred years old could be so up to the minute.

The book has been nearly impossible to find—until the CMAA reprint that is now available in our series of books.

Finally, there are liturgical books as part of the series: a Kyriale in soft and hard cover for the pews, the 1961 Graduale in two volumes, and a complete book of preconciliar Holy Week music for the Mass and Office. It is called *Officium Majoris Hebdomadae, et Octavae Paschae, cum Cantu*, and it is the bestselling book on the list (which tells you something about CMAA's buyers).

Truly, we never would have imagined a year ago that all of this would be possible. But modern technology has made such strides in recent times, such that even budget-poor organizations like ours have the means to get the word out.


All can be obtained at [MusicaSacra.com/books](http://MusicaSacra.com/books). 

## The Forum on Music and Christian Scholarship

The Forum on Music and Christian Scholarship held its Annual Meeting at the Institute of Sacred Music of Yale University on March 9 and 10, 2007. This is an organization which had its genesis in the annual meetings of the American Musicological Society and has now grown to the point of hosting its own independent meeting.

The program presented a variety of papers all on music since the Reformation. (Previous years had included papers on chant.) Among the sessions were those on Concepts of Art and Religion, French Society and Religious Discourse, Analysis and Musical Meaning, Religion and Nation, Popular Music and the Sacred, Bach, and Messiaen.

Twenty-three papers were on the program. Among the more interesting papers were: Robin Leaver, an exploration of discussions by Lutheran writers on music and religion, what the writers on music had to say on religion and what the writers on religion had to say on music; Connie Lau, on the Requiem of Cherubini (1816), commissioned for the annual commemoration of the death of King Louis XVI; Bogumila Mika, on a 13th century Song to the Virgin, incorporated in recent Polish compositions; Steven Crist on theology and music in Bach's arias; and Peter Mercer-Taylor, on how the melody of a hymn can carry signification. A plenary address by Thomas Troeger, a noted theologian and preacher, analyzed the papers for method in relating music and theology by proposing six ways in which they have been related: complementarity, functionality, conflict, acculturation, metaphor, and illumination—an all-together illuminating presentation. The strongly interdisciplinary character of many of the papers gave good justification for having this new organization.

The organization will hold its next annual meeting at Baylor University; it is now electing officers and soliciting memberships. Further information can be found on their web-site ([www.fmcs.us](http://www.fmcs.us)). 

## LAST WORD

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### Hymns or “Hymns”?

By Kurt Poterack

*“Our liturgical hymns are easily the finest in the world, our popular ones are easily the worst.”*  
Fr. Adrian Fortescue



These sentiments, expressed in 1916, were meant largely to contrast the sentimental vernacular hymnody of the nineteenth century to the church’s official liturgical hymns. However, these words have a much broader application. In the Latin of the church’s official documents, there is a linguistic distinction between the two types of hymns. “Popular hymns”—the largely vernacular hymns which most people think of when they hear the word “hymn”—are actually referred to as *“cantus popularis religiosus”* (religious song of the people). The word *“hymnus”* is what is used to refer to the official liturgical hymns of the Divine Office.

The first type, the vernacular “popular” hymn, is not referred to at all in the modern papal liturgical writings on sacred music until Pope Pius XII’s 1955 encyclical, *Musicae sacrae disciplina*—somewhat late considering that the first landmark document of this series was Pope Pius X’s 1903 *Motu proprio*. In a sense this should not surprise us since the concern of the popes was *liturgical* music and popular hymnody has always, properly speaking, had its place *outside* the liturgy.

Even Pius XII, in speaking about and praising such hymns says that they are suited for use “in churches during non-liturgical services and ceremonies . . . [and] especially on the occasion of pious processions and pilgrimages . . . [and] in the work of instructing boys and girls in Catholic truth, in societies for youth and in meetings of pious associations.” Perhaps one could say that this type of hymn is “popular” rather than “public.” In other words it has its primary place outside of the liturgy, being by its nature *popular* (of the people), but more so in a domestic or devotional (even educative) way—as opposed to that which is for the people in the sense of solemn *public* worship.

What are some examples of this sort of hymn? Some that readily come to mind would be “Holy God We Praise Thy Name,” “Faith of Our Fathers,” “Jesus Christ Is Ris’n Today,” and “Holy, Holy, Holy.” Some other examples—ones Fr. Fortescue would have disapproved of—would have been “To Jesus’ Heart All Burning,” “Bring Flowers of the Rarest,” and in our own day, “On Eagles Wings,” and “Be Not Afraid.”

Why is it, then, that these “popular” hymns—which are supposed to be *outside* the liturgy—are so totally *inside* the liturgy today that your average Joe or Jane Catholic would be shocked at the notion that such hymns are really not a part of the liturgy? (If you do not believe me, look

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at any of the official liturgical Mass books, *The Roman Missal*, *The Roman Gradual*—whether in the original Latin or English translation—and you will nowhere find any such hymns.)

The short answer—if I recall correctly—is that in the Late Middle Ages in German and Slavic-speaking countries vernacular hymnody was introduced during the Mass which approximated certain parts of the official Latin of the Mass which was being recited simultaneously in the sanctuary by the priest and servers. This was to allow an easy form of popular involvement in the Mass. Of course, the vernacular hymn was ultimately something that—already existing—Luther and the Protestants picked up and ran with, taking it in a different direction. From the Catholic standpoint, this Medieval practice—which persisted by means of custom and legally permitted indulgence among certain ethnic groups—was extended to the church at large, at least at low Mass, by the 1958 Instruction *De Musica sacra et sacra liturgia*. However, these hymns were still sung while the official liturgical text at that particular moment was recited by the priest in the sanctuary. Unfortunately, as has been noted in the pages of this journal, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal of 1970 permitted various parts of the proper of the Mass to be replaced *in toto* by what it termed “*alius cantus aptus*” (i.e., another appropriate song).

The result is that, for example, on Laetare Sunday in probably 95 percent of all Roman Rite Catholic churches today, instead of hearing the Introit *Laetare Jerusalem*—after which the day is named—Catholics will hear, at best, “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days,” or more likely “Ashes” or “Amazing Grace.”

So aside from the fact that Catholics are being deprived of their own liturgical heritage *at the liturgy*, there are other problems with the use of popular hymnody at Mass. Popular hymns tend to be of more recent origin—many of them having emerged since the 16th century as part of the so-called *devotio moderna* and thus tend to represent that more subjective, personal approach to the faith. While it is not invalid—and even essential as Pope Pius XII was at pains to stress in *Mediator Dei*—this is not *liturgical* piety, properly speaking.

Another problem is that these hymns tended to originate somewhere in the no-man’s land between the church and the world. Sometimes this origin can disappear, as few now know that the melody for *O Sacred Head Surrounded* was at one time a secular melody set to the words *Mein G’müth ist mir verwirret* [My feelings are all mixed up (over a young maid)]. Other times, the superficialities of the age remain in both the text and the tune. Just take what many today would consider a traditional Catholic hymn, “O Lord, I Am Not Worthy” and contrast it with an official office hymn like the *Te Deum* (“Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee. The noble army of martyrs praise thee.”) One would have to admit that the first of the two has more than a touch of the effeminate “come to Jesus” treacle of nineteenth century Victorian Protestant revivalism to it—despite the fact that it is a Eucharistic hymn. The *Te Deum* on the other hand is downright manly—and timeless.

And popular hymns have always been a way by which heretics promoted their doctrines.

In the end, a better solution has to be found to promote and regulate the use of such hymnody, so that they have their proper place in the life of Catholics, and that Catholics also develop a healthy liturgical piety. ❧

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