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VOLUME 135 No. 1





SACRED MUSIC

Spring 2008

Volume 135, Number 1

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SACRED MUSIC Formed as a continuation of *Caecilia*, published by the Society of St. Caecilia since 1874, and *The Catholic Choirmaster*, published by the Society of St. Gregory of America since 1915. Published quarterly by the Church Music Association of America. Office of Publication: 12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233. E-mail: sacredmusic@musicasacra.com; Website: www.musicasacra.com

Editor: William Mahrt
Managing Editor: Jeffrey Tucker
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Typesetting: Judy Thommesen, Richard Rice
Membership and Circulation: 12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233

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Membership in the Church Music Association of America includes a subscription to *Sacred Music*. Membership is \$36.00 annually. Parish membership \$160 for six copies of each issue. Single copies are \$8.00. Send requests and changes of address to *Sacred Music*, 12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233. Make checks payable to the Church Music Association of America. Online membership: www.musicasacra.com.

LC Control Number: sf 86092056

Sacred Music is indexed in the Catholic Periodical and Literature Index, Music Index, Music Article Guide, and Arts and Humanities Index.

Sacred Music for the years 1975 to the present is available online as musicasacra.com/archives.

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ISSN: 0036-2255

Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, Alabama.

Cover: This Passion statue is outside the Eglise Notre Dame, in Marseille, France.

SACRED MUSIC is published quarterly for \$36.00 per year by the Church Music Association of America
12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233.
Periodicals postage paid at Richmond, VA and at additional mailing offices. USPS number 474-960.
Postmaster: Send address changes to SACRED MUSIC, 12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233.

EDITORIAL

Aesthetics Revisited

By William Mahrt



he music of the St. Louis Jesuits was the subject of an extended discussion by Jeffrey Tucker, reviewing a book commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of their collaboration.¹ Prof. Eleonore Stump, a distinguished professor of philosophy at St. Louis University—author of a book on St. Thomas Aquinas and a colleague of Fr. John Foley, S.J., one of the original five St. Louis Jesuits—took exception to Tucker’s treatment of the phenomenon. In subsequent correspondence with Tucker, she offered us an essay, a serious discussion of religion and aesthetics, which we gratefully accepted.²

Some readers questioned our publishing the essay, thinking that it constituted an endorsement by *Sacred Music* or the CMAA of the music of the St. Louis Jesuits, even though I had introduced the issue by saying that there would be a variety of views presented, and that the discussion would surely continue beyond the particular articles. I would like to continue that discussion briefly now, in part to assure our readers of our position, but more importantly to address some points in Prof. Stump’s essay and some decisive issues she did not address.

Prof. Stump distinguishes between a “Pythagorean” or intellectual analysis of beauty and an “incarnational” or emotional approach, but this is a false dichotomy. The “Pythagorean” approach to music explains the basis of music’s beauty in harmony—not just the harmony of the chords of conventional music but the overall harmonious motion in music, whether it be harmonic or contrapuntal music or even pure unaccompanied melody, a harmonious motion that suggests to us the constitution of all things by the creator in an ordered and purposeful state, such that we are moved to contemplate the beauty of creation in the hearing of the music. And yet it is this very harmony which we enjoy and which is the basis of the emotion we feel in the enjoyment of the music. It is an integral experience and deserves consideration and analysis as such.

Yet perhaps “enjoyment” is not the best word; I prefer the word “delight,” because it better represents the synthesis of sensible pleasure with the sense of wonder at the nature of harmonious order, a pleasure that is at one and the same time incarnational and contemplative; it better represents the synthesis of these two complementary aspects of the experience of beauty. It is crucial for sacred music that our aesthetic sense transcend simple enjoyment and seek those aspects of harmony that remind us of the Creator.

Prof. Stump’s enlightening explication of how the beauty of music may serve as a road to God curiously uses examples which are usually experienced in concert rather than liturgy, and this fact makes her argument not quite as applicable as it might be. It is true that she speaks of a number of works of sacred music, but while the Verdi Requiem is unquestionably “sacred”

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¹Jeffrey Tucker, “The Mystery of the St. Louis Jesuits,” *Sacred Music*, 133, no. 3 (2006), 27–36.

²Eleonore Stump, “Beauty as a Road to God,” *Sacred Music*, 134, no. 4 (2007), 13–26.

music, and even while it is in a liturgical form, it is better viewed as sacred concert music than as liturgical music. So what is the difference between sacred music in general and genuinely liturgical music? The answer given by the liturgical documents of the church is that it sets the texts of the Mass itself, particularly the propers of the Mass, and that its musical styles differentiate the functions served by the particular liturgical acts it sets—that it constitutes the *splendor formae* of the liturgy itself. It is the singing of the Mass, not just singing at Mass. Gregorian chant fulfills these conditions for liturgical music, while music in popular styles does not. This is why Jeffrey Tucker argues that Gregorian chant should resume its place as the normative music of the Roman Rite.

Prof. Stump objects to blocking certain kinds of music from the liturgy that are meaningful to some people, without recognizing that this is exactly Tucker's complaint as well. In the wake of music in styles pioneered by the St. Louis Jesuits, Gregorian chant—the normative music of the Roman Rite—was effectively eliminated from the liturgy. Tucker rejoices at the signs of its return, however gradual at the moment. But this is not because it is just the music he enjoys, and it is certainly not the imposition by the privileged and elite of their own taste upon the less fortunate. It is rather the restoration to its proper place of the music that has always been inherent to the rite itself. It may be that a return to Gregorian chant will at first be "enjoyed" less by those accustomed to popular styles; but the gradual restoration of chants to our liturgy will constitute the education in a sacred tradition that should be the birthright of every Catholic. This is surely an act of charity and not a violation of charity.

This brings me to the issue of the sacred and to two aspects of the sacred in music for the liturgy. One is that things sacred retain their sacredness by continuity with tradition. One reason—not the only one—we understand things as sacred is that we grew up with them. Thomas Day points out that *Glory and Praise*, a "song book" espousing the styles the St. Louis Jesuits cultivated, "did not contain anything pre-conciliar: not a single chant or hymn. . . . a repudiation of the past in every respect."

The other aspect of the sacred is that it requires some (not complete, to be sure) separation from the secular. But the music of the St. Louis Jesuits is replete with reference to secular styles—indeed, I suspect that this is a reason for some of its popularity. I remember hearing a St. Louis song that imitated the style of a piece by the Kingston Trio; the Kingston piece ended "and he'll ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston," and the St. Louis piece so clearly recalled that passage that I came away from Mass singing, "and he'll ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston," not the desired result. We cannot escape the fact that musical styles bear associations; good composers use them with purpose and sophistication. But church music based upon pop styles risks giving the wrong message: sacred music should say this is the most transcendent thing you can do, the workshop of God, and it is expressed through transcendent music; music in pop styles may say this music is just like the music of everyday, and this experience is an everyday one. Moreover, in the case of the incorporation of present popular styles, the values that the popular music represents may be quite in conflict with those of the liturgy.

Some found Catherine Pickstock's article difficult; I did myself. But for me its real value was to show that one of the great composers of the past century held a metaphysical attitude to the music he composed. Messiaen's ordering of his music was based upon making it reflect patterns observable in external reality, thus realizing that notion of harmony I mentioned above.

Our gratitude goes to Scott Turkington, Jeffrey Tucker, and Virginia Schubert for their diligent efforts in arranging the scanning of back issues of *Sacred Music*; thanks to them, thirty-three years of our journal will soon be available on line through musicasacra.com: click on "Sacred Music Mag," and either go to the right-hand sidebar under "Sacred Music Articles," then "Archives of Sacred Music," or click on "See the archives" in the text. Look then at the prodigious efforts of Msgr. Schuler and many others over the years. We hope to continue to expand this archive, eventually to include the years under the titles *Caecilia* and *The Catholic Choirmaster*. ☞

ARTICLES

Theological Problems of Church Music

By Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger



he critical situation of church music today is part of a general crisis of the church which has developed since Vatican II. We do not primarily intend to discuss the artistic crisis which is affecting church music along with all other forms of art at present. We shall rather discuss the crisis conditioned by the situation of theology, in other words the properly ecclesiastical and theological crisis of church music, which actually seems to have fallen between two widely differing theological millstones which apparently agree only in grinding *musica sacra* down to dust.

On the one side stands the puritanic functionalism of a liturgy conceived in purely pragmatic terms: the liturgical event, it is claimed, should be made non-cultic and reduced to its very simple point of origin, a community meal. Everyone knows that the Second Vatican Council described the position of the individual in the liturgy with the phrase "participatio actuosa," active participation. This concept, in itself quite meaningful, has not seldom led to the opinion that the ideal goal of liturgical renewal is the uniform activity of all present in the liturgy. Accordingly, we have witnessed the reduction of specially prominent tasks and in particular, festive church music was widely considered a sign of an inappropriate "cultic" view which appeared incompatible with general activity. On this view, church music can continue to exist only in the form of congregational singing, which in turn is not to be judged in terms of its artistic value but only on the basis of its functionality, i.e., its "community-building" and activating function. The lengths to which the renunciation of musical quality can go are illustrated by the statement of a leading German liturgist. After the Council, he declared, none of the traditional church music could satisfy the liturgical norms now in force: everything would have to be created anew. Plainly, in this view liturgical music is not regarded as art, but as a mere commodity.

This is the point at which the first millstone (which we have termed puritanical functionalism) makes contact with the second millstone, which I should like to call the functionalism of accommodation. It has been repeatedly characterized as curious and indeed contradictory, that parallel to the disbanding of church choirs and orchestras, new ensembles often appeared, to perform "religious" jazz. In terms of the impression created, these ensembles were surely no less elitist than the old church choirs. They were not subjected to the same criticism as the choirs, however. Wherever such a transfer was enforced with passionate exclusivity, there was discernible an attitude in which all church music, indeed all previous Western culture, was not regarded as belonging to the present and hence could not be part of a contemporary practice, such as liturgy can and must be. Instead, traditional culture is pushed aside into a more or less museum-like state of preservation in the concert hall. This attitude resembles the first one in its exclusively functional way of thinking, which comes into play here not merely as a theory of the

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in 2005 was elected by his fellow Cardinals to the throne of St. Peter, Bishop of Rome, Shepherd of the Holy Catholic Church as Pope Benedict XVI.

liturgy but rather with an importance which is quite basic: the contemporary world is conceived so completely in terms of the functional that the link with history is broken, and history itself can only retain any value at all as a function, namely as an object in a museum. Thus history is completely relegated to the past, and loses all her vital power to shape life today.

These reflections make it clear that in the crisis described above, we are facing a difficult and deeply rooted phenomenon which cannot be dealt with through mere polemics. We need to reflect upon the roots of this attitude, in order to be able to overcome it from within. A few of the complicated roots from which contemporary problems have sprung have become clear from what has already been said. And when we attempt to arrange and complete our insights, we find that we may well say that the problem has four levels.

The panorama of problems:

1. The first and relatively harmless, superficial level is located in the ancient dilemma of the pragmatism of parish priests versus art's claim to absolute dominion. This dilemma has always existed, and will always do so. Whether we think of St. Jerome's outbursts against the vanity of artists, or recall the archbishop of Salzburg who prescribed to Mozart the greatest permissible length of his liturgical compositions—the friction between two different claims is always identical. Here, one must try to see where each side is right in order to find the common ground upon which they can meet. Liturgy is something done in common, hence intelligibility and the ability to be executed or performed are essential requirements. In a certain sense, art is elitist activity, and thus resists subjection to a set of requirements which are not her own.

*Liturgy is not merely something
done in common, but is by her
very nature "feast."*

To that extent there is a conflict rooted in the very nature of things, but the conflict can be fruitful because the matter itself points toward an inner unity which of course must always be sought anew, namely the fact that liturgy is not merely something done in common, but is by her very nature "feast." When exaggerated meal-theories fail to take this fundamental character of the liturgy into account, they no longer explain the essence of the liturgy but rather conceal it. As feast, though, the liturgy thrives on splendor and thus calls for the transfiguring power of art. Indeed, the liturgy is actually the birthplace of art, and it was from the liturgy that art acquired its anthropological necessity and its religious legitimization. Conversely, we can thus say that where a genuine feast no longer exists, art becomes a mere museum piece, and this precisely in its most splendid manifestations. In such a case, art lives on the memory that there once existed such a thing as the feast; its tense becomes the past. But a feast does not exist without liturgy, without a warrant to celebrate which surpasses man, and thus art, too, is referred to liturgy. For its part, art exists on the strength of her willing service to the solemn liturgy, in which she is continually re-born.¹

2. As we have noted, the tension between the parish priest's pragmatism and the artist's absolutism is a perpetual problem on the practical level, though not a problem at the level of basic principles, at least not necessarily so. Much more profound is the question which we previously hinted at in passing, with the word "puritanism." In more precise terms of theology and

¹On this see Josef Pieper, *Zustimmung zur Welt: Eine Theorie des Festes*, 2nd ed. (München: Kösel, 1963) as well as Walter Durig, *Das christliche Fest und seine Feier* (St. Ottilien: EOS-Verlag, 1974) with further literature in each case.

the history of ideas one would really have to speak of the problem of iconoclasm and iconoclastic riots. In his book *Where is the Vatican Heading?* Reinhard Raffalt impressively describes the manner in which iconoclastic currents burst forth in the postconciliar church and tries to find a Biblical denominator for this phenomenon. The church as it used to be, the "old church" (as he puts it) defined its feeling of existential presence in terms of, say, the parables of the laborers in the vineyard or the lilies of the field; today, casting the sellers out of the temple or the eye of the needle which prevents the rich from entering the Kingdom of Heaven have moved into the foreground.²

As a matter of fact, church history shows that iconoclastic riots broke out repeatedly. In the seventh and eighth centuries the Church of Byzantium was excited by this problem in a manner which touched the very nerves of her existence, and thus the Orthodox Church celebrates the Second Council of Nicaea as the "Feast of Orthodoxy," because this council sealed the victory of images and thus in general the victory of art within the faith. In other words, the Orthodox Church sees in this question the salient point of the church's existence in general, for on this point the basic decision about our understanding of God, the world, and man is at stake.³

Though the Western Church was palpably convulsed by the question during the Carolingian age,⁴ it was really only the Reformation which ushered in the great iconoclastic drama, in

This makes quite clear the fact that the ecclesiastical crisis of church music cannot be separated from the present crisis of art in general.

which Luther sided with the ancient church against Calvin and the leftists of the Reformation, the so-called Fanatics or Schwärmer. The earthquake that we are experiencing in the church today belongs in this historical context: here is the real core of the theological question about the justification for images and music in the church. The main portion of our reflections will be devoted to the investigation of this question, and hence we shall temporarily postpone it. But at least this much is clear: the problem of church music is not merely a

problem for music, but a vital question for the church herself. And I would add that it is conversely a question for music as a whole and not just for church music, because when the religious ground is cut away from under music, then according to the foregoing considerations music and indeed art itself are threatened, even though this might not be immediately apparent.

3. To be sure, all of this makes quite clear the fact that the *ecclesiastical crisis* of church music cannot be separated from the present crisis of art in general. I understand that Mauricio Kagel wrote an opera some years ago which depicts in a reverse direction the history of modern times, and thus ultimately world history, as a Utopian myth: the America of the Incas, the Mayas, the Chibchas, etc., is not discovered by the Christian Spaniards, but rather Spain and Europe are discovered by the Indians and liberated from their Christian "superstitions." The myth is intended as a Utopian program: this was the direction in which history should have moved; this would

²Reinhard Raffalt, *Wohin steuert der Vatikan?* (München: Piper, 1973), esp. pp. 93ff.; idem, *Musica eterna von Palestina bis Mozart* (München: Piper, 1978), pp. 221–31.

³On this see Christoph von Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ: Fondements théologiques élaborés entre le Ie et le IIe Concile de Nicée (325/787)* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1976).

⁴See the presentation of Franz Schupp, *Glaube-Kultur-Symbol: Versuch einer kritischen Theorie sakramentaler Praxis* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1974).

have been progress toward humanity and toward the unity of the world: they could have and should have met in the Pre-Christian and the Anti-Christian. Such images are not only an expression of protest against what is Christian but are also intended as a cultural option. This disowning of Christian culture and search for new shores of cultural expression are, by way of protest, set over against the Christian world.⁵ And herein lies the symptomatic importance of such images: the demands of Christian culture and of its materializations which have grown organically within that framework actually appear as a threat to the men of a world which has once again become heathen. And many aspects of the whole art industry in recent decades can at bottom only be understood as deliberate mockery of that which previously was art, as an attempt to liberate itself from the greatness of art through mockery and ridicule, an attempt to overtake and to supersede art and to regain the ascendancy *vis-à-vis* a claim with which we are simply unable to catch up.

4. Once again, this is connected with the phenomenon of functionalism described earlier, and functionalism is in fact the best description of the way in which today's world exists. In their book *Chance and Risk of the Present*, Hugo Staudinger and Wolfgang Behler have recently examined in great detail the inclusive character of this functionalism.⁶ They make clear that typically, the machine ultimately becomes the universal stereotype for human beings, that all of reality is reduced to quantitative dimensions and that this reducibility applies everywhere and in principle. Here, there is no longer any place for artistic events which are unique, since all that is unique must be replaced by the merely calculable. Art falls under the laws of the marketplace, and the marketplace abolishes it as art.⁷

*Art falls under the laws
of the marketplace, and
the marketplace abolishes
it as art.*

All of this should have made somewhat more evident the very limited extent to which the problems of church music today are purely ecclesiastical problems. But conversely, it should also be clear that the problems of the contemporary age and of its culture have something to do with the convulsions racking all that is Christian, and in turn these problems are also strongly influenced by such shocks. Accordingly, the second part of our reflections must be devoted to illuminating the genuinely theological core of the whole question: is Christianity itself, in its very roots, perhaps iconoclastic, and did it therefore bring about artistic creation only through a "felix

⁵The most radical philosophical development of this position is by Claude Lévi-Strauss, especially in *La pensée sauvage* (Paris: Plon, 1962). An example is this sentence at p. 326: "The ultimate purpose of the anthropological sciences is not the production of man but his disintegration." Cited here according to Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prolegomena, Theodramatik*, 1 (Einsiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1973), p. 41. Instructive on the intellectual background is Gustave Martelet, *L'au-delà retrouvé: Christologie des fins dernières* (Paris: Desclée, 1974), pp. 35ff.

⁶Hugo Staudinger and Wolfgang Behler, *Chance und Risiko der Gegenwart* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1976), esp. 97–224.

⁷The attempt to escape this consequence through a "creativity" which frees itself from anything established in advance and seeks a totally new reality is futile. The intellectual underpinnings of the attempt to find in this way a new basis for art by dissolving the links to its religious origin have been most impressively elaborated by Ernst Bloch, for whom the artist is "the absolute breaker of boundaries," "the pioneer at the frontier of an advancing world, indeed a most important component of the world which is only creating itself." Genius is "consciousness which has progressed the farthest." Thus there disappears the qualitatively specific characteristic of art, which is mere anticipation of what is to come. Accordingly, Ernst Bloch's concept of art quite logically flows into the prediction of a world in which "electric power plants and St. Mark's Church" will be identical. For more details, see Friedrich Hartl, *Der Begriff des Schöpferischen: Deutungsversuche der Dialektik durch Ernst Bloch und Franz von Baader*, Regensburger Studien zur Theologie, 18 (Frankfurt: Lang, 1979).

culpa" (in the sense in which Gottlieb Söhngen called Salzburg a *felix culpa*, a princely-episcopal misunderstanding of apostolic succession, but a fortunate one)?⁸ Or, is it perhaps the iconoclastic riots which are really un-Christian, so that art and precisely church music would actually be an inner requirement of what is Christian, and thus, along with church music, music in general could constantly draw new hope from this fact?

The inner crisis of Christianity today consists in the fact that Christianity can no longer recognize "orthodoxy" as it was formulated at the Second Council of Nicaea, and actually considers iconoclastic riots to be the primeval condition. All that remains then is either the desperate schizophrenia of joy on account of the fortunate misunderstanding in history or an awakening to new iconoclasm.

The inner crisis of Christianity today consists in the fact that Christianity can no longer recognize "orthodoxy" as it was formulated at the Second Council of Nicaea.

Why is it that the experts today agree that enmity toward art, that Puritan functionalism is the genuinely Christian attitude? As a matter of fact, the idea has a twofold root. The first lies in the fact that the transition from the Old Testament to the community of Jesus Christ appears as escape from the temple into the worship of the commonplace. Jesus continues the criticism

of temple worship begun by the Israelite prophets, and indeed intensifies it to the point of symbolically destroying the temple when he cast out the sellers. The crucifixion of Jesus "without the gate" (Heb. 13:12) thus appears to his apostles as the new cult⁹ and hence as the end of all previous cults. From this, people today conclude that Christianity in the sense of Jesus Christ is opposed to temple, cult, and priesthood; that Christianity recognizes no other sacredness and no other sacred space than that of everyday life; that as a consequence Christian worship must also be "profane"—a bit of the commonplace. And wherever cult and priesthood may have once again arisen, then this is simply regression into a pre-Christian stage. Such a profane comprehension of what is Christian of course in turn provokes that twofold reaction of which we spoke at the outset. On the one hand, the festive solemnity of Christian worship must be denied, and with it all previous church music is ushered out the door, since it appears "sacred." And the other reaction is that worship is supposed to be no different than everyday commonplace activity, and music can take part in worship, so to speak, on condition that it be profane.

Such ideas were completely unknown to the growing Church of the early centuries. The epistles of the New Testament already speak of a rich and by no means profane liturgical life in which the psalms of Israel were still sung, along with Christian additions in the form of hymns and chants. Erik Peterson has shown how in many respects the Apocalypse expands the temple vision of Isaias, in which mention is made of the cries and utterances of the angels before God. Among other things, the Apocalypse reports more than mere cries: singing, calling, giving glory.¹⁰ The background for this is a differentiation in liturgical usage which opened a new dimension in cultic praise and glorification: the addition of hymnody to psalmody, of song to

⁸Gottlieb Söhngen, *Der Weg der abendländischen Theologie: Grundgedanken zu einer Theologie des "Weges"* (München: Pustet, 1959), p. 61.

⁹See my article "Weltoffene Kirche," in Theodor Filthaut, ed., *Umkehr und Erneuerung* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1966), pp. 271–91, here pp. 281ff. For more details on the entire subject of de-sacralisation, see Heribert Mühlen, *Entsakralisierung* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1971).

¹⁰Erik Peterson, *The Angels and the Liturgy*, tr. Ronald Walls (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), p. 26.

speech or recitation. In this context, Peterson refers to a noteworthy text of Origen: "Singing psalms befits men, but singing hymns is for angels and for those who lead a life like that of the angels."¹¹ This much is clear: from the very beginning, Christian worship was the worship of *God* and clearly contrasted with the everyday and the commonplace. Indeed, from the very beginning it was characterized by earnest efforts toward a new form of poetic and musical praise, and this from theological motives.

But on the other hand it is true that Christian worship presupposes a break with the temple and to that extent is more closely related to the synagogue service than to the temple liturgy, in any case in terms of its external shape. This implies the omission of instruments; it does not signify a transition into the profane, but rather a puristically accentuated sacrality. The church fathers accordingly described the entire path from the temple cult of the Old Testament to Christian worship, in fact the path from Old to New Testament in general, as a process of spiritualization. From this point of view they were devoted to a purely word-like liturgy, and at first largely

"Singing psalms befits men, but singing hymns is for angels."

adverse to liturgical splendor on all levels. This is especially true of the father of Western theology, St. Augustine, who furthermore in his area held fast to the prohibition of images as an expression of his theology of spiritualization, thus exerting a special influence upon the development of the church and of theology in the West.¹²

Of course it was by no means necessary that the concept of spiritualization produce only such effects, since great art is after all precisely the result of a maximum of spiritualization.

Here, it is rather the Platonic root in patristic thought which comes to the fore, giving its special cast to the patristic idea of spiritualization and hence also to the patristic view of the relationship between Old and New Testaments. In a certain sense Plato may be called the discoverer of the spirit in the West, and that is his lasting fame. He describes humanity as a passage from the sensible to the spiritual, as a process of de-materialization. It is from this point of view that his comprehensive pedagogical program is drawn up. As a genuine Greek, he allots to music a central position in the education of human beings, but even his music pedagogy rests upon the concept of a de-materialization of music, through which he simply desires to achieve the victory of Greek humanity over the "materializing" music of inherited religions. The basic concept as such is important, but he who constructs a perfect world in a test tube really ends up by doing violence to reality.¹³

To the fathers of the church, these concepts seemed like an anticipated explanation of the Christian passage from temple to church. And thus they too regarded the musical riches of the Old Testament and Greco-Roman culture as a part of the sensible, material world which was to be overcome in the spiritual world of Christianity. They understood spiritualization to mean dematerialization and hence understood it in a manner which more or less borders on iconoclasm. That is theology's historical mortgage in the question of ecclesiastical art, and it is a mortgage which comes to the fore over and over again during the course of history.¹⁴

¹¹Ibid., 27 (Origen, *Selecta in psalmos*, to Ps 118:71).

¹²See Frederik Gerben Louis Vandermeer, *Augustinus der Seelsorger* (Köln: Bachem, 1951), pp. 329–74, as well as my article "Zur theologischen Grundlegung der Kirchenmusik," in Franz Fleckenstein, ed., *Gloria Deo-Pax Hominibus*, Schriftenreihe des Allgemeinen Cäcilien-Verbandes für die Länder des Deutschen Sprache, 9 (Regensburg: Habbeldruck, 1974), pp. 39–62.

¹³For evidence of this, consult my article "Zur theologischen Grundlegung" (note 12), pp. 50ff., 58ff.

¹⁴Once again, see my article cited in note 12 as well as the book of Christoph von Schönborn cited in note 3, above all "Origène et les racines de la théologie anti-icônique," pp. 77–85.

The foundations of church music in the essence of the liturgy

With these reflections, we have nonetheless progressed toward an answer to our basic question: Viewed in terms of its origin, is Christianity iconoclastic and anti-art? or is it—precisely when it remains true to itself—a summons to artistic expression? We have seen that genuine liturgical activity is essential to Christianity and that precisely in its earliest phase, the New which happened with Christ seems a summons to intensified expression, which is presented as the transition from crying to singing. In order to find the correct solution to our problem, we must now pursue this point of view somewhat further. Let us return to Peterson's analyses.

He shows that the changes introduced into the Apocalypse as compared with Isaias include the appearance not only of the Seraphim but of articulated and orderly choirs of angels. This in turn is related to the fact that Isaias' vision is strictly localized in the temple at Jerusalem. Even after the destruction of the temple, Judaism has always steadfastly believed that God's glory dwelt only in the temple at Jerusalem. Christians, on the contrary, believe that during Christ's crucifixion, when the veil of the temple was rent in two, God's glory departed from the temple and now dwells where Jesus Christ is, namely in heaven and in the church which gathers with Jesus. Accordingly, heaven and earth are mentioned as the place where chants of praise are now sung.¹⁵ But this means that the church is indeed something quite different from the synagogue which had remained in Jewry after the destruction of the temple, which the synagogue never desired or was able to replace. The synagogue is the site of a purely lay worship service, which as such is also a mere scripture service. He who desires to reduce the church to scripture services conducted by laymen is not practicing that which is new in Christianity, but rather equates himself with the synagogue and omits the path which leads to Christ. The church, as church, accepts with Christ the inheritance of the temple, although in a modified way. This is expressed liturgically in the fact that the church does not assemble merely for scripture readings and prayers, but also to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice. But then this also means that in the external form of her celebration the church can and must lay claim to the inheritance of the temple. This implies that the church's liturgy, which now regards the whole cosmos as its temple, must have a cosmic character, must make the whole cosmos resound. On this point, Peterson's comment, though certainly somewhat exaggerated, is basically quite worthy of consideration:

And finally it is not by pure coincidence that the mediaeval music theorists begin their treatises by referring to the harmony of the spheres. Since the church's hymn of praise tunes in to the praises of the cosmos, any consideration of the musical element in the church's cult must also take into account the sort of praise offered by sun, moon, and stars.¹⁶

What this means *in concreto* becomes clearer when we recall the prayer in Pseudo-Cyprian which speaks of God as the One who is praised by angels, archangels, martyrs, apostles and prophets,

¹⁵See E. Peterson, *The Angels* (note 10), pp. 16ff.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 29.

*Is Christianity iconoclastic
and anti-art or a summons
to artistic expression?*

to whom all the birds sing praises, whom the tongues of those in heaven, upon the earth and under the earth glorify: all the waters in heaven and under the heavens confess thee. ...¹⁷

This text is especially interesting because it discloses, so to speak, the theological principle according to which the “organon” was understood, for it was simply called “the” instrument as opposed to all the others. The organ is a theological instrument whose original home was the cult of the emperor. When the Emperor of Byzantium spoke, an organ played. On the other hand the organ was supposed to be the combination of all the voices of the cosmos. Accordingly, the organ music at imperial utterances meant that when the divine emperor spoke, the entire universe resounded. As a divine utterance, his statement is the resounding of all the voices in the cosmos. The “organon” is the cosmic instrument and as such the voice of the world’s ruler, the *imperator*.¹⁸ As against this Byzantine custom, Rome stressed a cosmic Christology and on that basis the cosmic function of Christ’s vicar on earth: what was good enough for the emperor was quite good enough for the pope. Naturally, it is not a case here of superficial problems concerning prestige, but it is a matter of the public, political and cultic representation of the mandates received in each case. To the exclusivity of an imperial theology which abandoned the church to the emperor and degraded the bishops to mere imperial functionaries,¹⁹ Rome opposed the pope’s cosmic claim and with it the cosmic rank of belief in Christ, which is independent of and indeed superior to politics. Therefore the organ had to resound in the papal liturgy as well.

The organ is a theological instrument whose original home was the cult of the emperor.

Such a borrowing from imperial theology is not regarded with favor by contemporary theological scholarship, which considers such acceptance as “Constantinian” or as “Romanization,” which is naturally far worse than Hellenization. As a matter

of fact, what has been said thus far suffices to indicate clearly the convincing reasons for the whole process, as well as its logic within a Christian context: this detour made it possible to avoid turning the church into a synagogue and to carry out in practice the true claim of the Christian faith, which accepts the inheritance of the temple and surpasses it by far, into the very dimensions of the universal.

Furthermore, the history of the organ remained a theo-political history for quite a long time: the fact that an organ resounds at the Carolingian court is an expression of the Carolingian claim to equality with Byzantium. Conversely, the Roman usage was transferred to the cathedrals and abbey churches. Less than a lifetime ago it was still customary for the organ to play as background to the abbot’s recitation of the Pater noster in Benedictine abbeys, and this is to be understood as a direct inheritance from the ancient cosmic liturgy.²⁰

¹⁷Ibid., 22–3.

¹⁸I gratefully acknowledge here the kindness of the Rt. Rev. Abbot Urbanus Bomm of Maria Laach, who pointed out these facts and referred me to the pertinent literature: Dietrich Schubert, *Kaiserliche Liturgie: Die Einbeziehung von Musikinstrumenten, insbesondere der Orgel, in den frühmittelalterlichen Gottesdienst*, Veröffentlichungen der Evangelischen Gesellschaft für Liturgieforschung, 17 (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968); Ewald Jammers, *Der gregorianische Choral und das byzantinische Kaisertum*, *Stimmen der Zeit* Jg. 86 [167] (1960–61), pp. 445–51; idem, *Musik in Byzanz, im päpstlichen Rom und im Frankenreich: Der Choral als Textausssprache* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1962); Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

¹⁹A. Grillmeier, *Auriga Mundi*, Zum Reichskirchenbild der Briefe des sog. Codex Encyclius (458), in Grillmeier, *Mit ihm und in ihm: christologische Forschungen und Perspektiven* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1975), pp. 386–419.

²⁰For this reference, too, I am grateful to Abbot Urbanus Bomm.

And now we are in a position to formulate our thesis: church music with artistic pretensions is not opposed to the essence of Christian liturgy, but is rather a necessary way of expressing belief in the world-filling glory of Jesus Christ. The church's liturgy has a compelling mandate to reveal in resonant sound the glorification of God which lies hidden in the cosmos. This, then, is the liturgy's essence: to transpose the cosmos, to spiritualize it into the gesture of praise through song and thus to redeem it; to "humanize" the world.

Liturgy's essence: to transpose the cosmos, to spiritualize it into the gesture of praise through song and thus to redeem it; to "humanize" the world.

A final question remains: the question of sacredness, of the distinction between sacred and profane music. This distinction was very much present in the church of the early Fathers, but was almost completely buried under a mass of other problems. The first time the problem was posed quite openly was during the separation of profane from sacred culture in the fourteenth century, and then with even more sharpness in the Renaissance culture of the sixteenth century. Ever since the twelfth century and the beginnings of polyphony the question has been posed with increasing urgency, though it was the exile of the popes at Avignon which made everyone fully aware of the problem, because at Avignon "the French *ars nova* appeared at the papal court, and it must have seemed quite foreign to the officials of the curia who were so familiar with Roman musical practices..."²¹ It was time to inquire anew into the meaning of Christian spiritualization. Once again the church found herself in the dilemma between puritanical exclusion of the new developments in general, and an accommodation which both makes the church lose face and simultaneously eliminates her as a source of human reality. The constitution *Docta Sanctorum Patrum* issued by Pope John XXII in 1324–25 found a path which was more than a compromise in the sense of the arithmetical mean:

It was not polyphony in itself which Pope John XXII rejected, but rather the suppression of the Gregorian melody by a sensually effective polyphony which was far removed from the liturgical function in tonal terms as well as in terms of rhythmic movement . . . and expression.²²

The Holy Father put it this way: "the occasional use of certain consonant intervals superposed upon the simple ecclesiastical chant" was not forbidden, "but always on condition that the melodies themselves remain intact in the pure integrity of their form."²³ In other words relationship to the text, predominance of the melody, and reference to the formal structures of the chant as the point of departure for ecclesiastical polyphony, as against a concept of structure which destroys the text, as against the emphasis upon sensual sound effects.

The Council of Trent confirmed and deepened these provisions. In Masses celebrated with singing and organ music, "nothing profane should be intermingled, but only hymns and divine

²¹Karl Gustav Fellerer, "Die Constitutio Docta SS. Patrum Johannes XXII," in Fellerer, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirchenmusik* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1972), Vol. 1, pp. 379ff.

²²Ibid., 379.

²³Ibid., 380.

praises;" it should not be a matter of mere empty pleasure for the ear, but the words must be understood by all, so that the hearts of the listeners be drawn (*rapiantur*) to a desire for heavenly harmonies, in the contemplation of the joys of the blessed.²⁴

When the Council speaks of "raptus" and of "desiderium" (desire) for heavenly harmonies, it is presuming a power to enrapture which mere functional application can never produce. Such an ability to enrapture rather presupposes inspiration, which surpasses the level of the mere rational and objective. Incidentally, Hubert Jedin has recently shown that the well-known legend about the *Missa Papae Marcelli* influencing the Fathers of Trent is not mere legend, but that it has a core of historical fact, which he admittedly does not explain in any greater detail: the composition must be convincing, and not the theory, which can only follow the *composition*.²⁵

Of course, one cannot expect timeless recipes in these conciliar texts. Otherwise, succeeding doctrinal statements, such as those made in our own century by Pius X, Pius XII and Vatican II, would be superfluous. But the structure continues to remain valid: the liturgy demands an artistic transposition out of the spirit of the faith, an artistic transposition of the music of the cosmos into human music which glorifies the Word made flesh. Such music must obey a stricter law than the commonplace music of everyday life: such music is beholden to the Word and must lead to the Spirit.

Singing and organ music should not be a matter of mere empty pleasure for the ear.

Hence church music must find its way while constantly contending in two directions: in the face of puritanical pride she must justify the necessary incarnation of the spirit in music, and *vis-à-vis* the commonplace she must seek to point the spirit and the cosmos in the

direction of the Divine. When the effort is successful, it is of course a gift; but the gift is not bestowed without the preparation which we offer through our own effort. When this takes place, then it is not a matter of exercising a mere hobby without obligation, but rather of living out a necessary dimension of Christian faith and in so doing, retaining a necessary dimension of what it means to be a human being. Without both of these dimensions, culture and humanity irresistibly decay from within.

This text is reprinted from Crux et Cithara, edited by Robert Skeris (Church Music Associates, 1983; text online at MusicaSacra.com). This article was originally presented in January 1977 as a lecture to the Church Music Department of the State Conservatory of Music at Stuttgart upon the invitation of its director, Prof. Dr. Rudolf Walter. The lecture was the first in a series published under the title Church Music, a Spiritual and Intellectual Discipline (Stuttgart 1978ff.). Both the author and editor have kindly agreed to the present publication in translation. ♪

²⁴Karl Gustav Fellerer, "Das Konzil von Trient und die Kirchenmusik," in *Geschichte der katholischen Kirchenmusik* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1976), Vol. 2, p. 9.

²⁵Hubert Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient*, Vol. 4, pt. 1 (Freiburg: Herder 1975), pp. 208 and 345, note 47, where we read: "The widely publicized version of Agazzari, that the *Missa Papae Marcelli* changed the minds of the Council Fathers, was previously . . . regarded as a legend. . . . Ursprung has shown how probable it is . . . that this 'legend' is not entirely lacking in foundation."

A Primer on Hymn Playing

By Michael E. Lawrence



Hymn playing is considered by many to be one of the most necessary skills for the church organist. Yet many organists have not been properly trained in this art. Like every other musical subject, there is a great diversity of opinion on this. It goes without saying that the author's own opinion will influence what he has to say here; nevertheless, it is hoped that this piece proves helpful to those who might be looking for fundamental advice on hymn playing.

So without further delay, here are some areas on which an improving organist should concentrate:

1. Preparation

As with all music, it helps to break a hymn apart when beginning the learning process. Separate the hands and the feet. Learn the right hand, then the left, then the pedal alone. Then combine the left hand with the pedal. (This last step may prove crucial for beginners, as often there is confusion between the left hand and pedal.) Then combine the right hand with the pedal. After you've done all that, put everything together at a slow tempo.

2. Articulation

It is important in the process of preparation to incorporate the articulation that is going to be used. The various voices should not always receive the same articulation at the same time. For instance, repeated notes in the lower voices are most often tied together. Not so for the melody, however, in which repeated notes should each be re-articulated. When chords in the same position are repeated, one might employ the alternative method of re-striking not only the melodic notes but also the notes in the tenor, while tying the alto and bass.

Another aspect of articulation is the treatment of the ends and beginnings of phrases. One can of course lift all voices, but often this has an undesirable, abrupt sound even in some lively acoustic spaces. Usually a more becoming result is achieved by lifting only the soprano and tenor voices, or even lifting only the soprano voice. Other combinations are possible, too. Experiment to see what works with the available instrument in the acoustical space.

3. Phrasing

This is a real flash point for many when it comes to the singing of hymns. Although there are singers who insist on breathing at every comma, we need only ask the question: Do we breathe or pause at every comma when we speak? Generally it seems to be a good idea to follow the musical phraseology, though there will be occasional exceptions, since text and music do on occasion trade places in terms of which is more important. Mid-phrase commas might sometimes be treated without breaking the phrase with a slight lift, perhaps lifting only the soprano. All of this must be worked out judiciously. When confronted with the temptation to use

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some kind of unusual phrasing, it is important to ask: Will the congregation ever figure out what I'm trying to do?

4. Tempo

It is important when playing hymns to establish a firm tempo. It's also important not to be martial about it. Listen to the way people sing when they sing spontaneously. Yes, they drag, and the pitch sags, but besides that, listen to how they treat ends and beginnings of phrases. They take their time and most certainly do not rush into the next line. Take this into account when playing hymns. The organ is not a metronome. This does not mean that the congregation directs the organ. Just keep in mind that it's okay to push and pull the tempo a bit in an organic fashion.

The selection of overall tempo depends on many things. More live acoustics often demand somewhat broader tempi. The style in which the organ is built might suggest one tempo as being more appropriate than another. A thinner musical texture will allow for quicker tempi; a thicker one, particularly one with a fast harmonic rhythm (relatively more chord changes within a unit of time), will require a broader tempo. Finally, factors such as weather and the age of the congregation have a role to play in all this as well. Dreary weather, or a dropping barometer in general, may require quicker tempi, as will an older congregation, which does not have the lung capacity of a younger congregation. Smaller congregations tend to do better with quicker tempi, as well.

*Listen to the way people sing
when they sing spontaneously.*

5. Registration

When registering the organ for hymn playing, it is important to remember that the organ, if it is used for hymn singing, leads the hymn singing. It does not accompany the congregation or the cantor. It leads them all. Consequently, whatever registration is used must be sufficient for this task. Generally this will include foundation stops (8' principals, flutes, and strings that are not celestes) and at least some upper work (4', 2', mixtures) on at least one manual coupled to the pedal. There are very few organs whose scaling allows for the omission of upper work on hymn playing. It should be noted that it would be better for the organ to be omitted than for the registration to be inadequately loud, since no one follows an unassertive leader.

Sometimes it will be necessary or desirable to solo out the melody, e.g. when the texture calls for it, or when the hymn tune is unfamiliar. Any number of possibilities come into play here. One to keep in mind is the use of the separable cornet (8' principal or flute, 4' principal or flute, 2 2/3', 2', 1 3/5') for the melody, while playing the other voices on a secondary manual and pedal. Organists who are lucky enough to have one of those wonderful Romantic organs with a large-scale, singing 8' Diapason might wish to make use of it as a solo stop (most often coupled to a secondary manual). In the right circumstances this can be very effective. It may also be beneficial at times simply to play the melody in octaves, particularly on hymns that are new to the congregation.

Experiment to see what works on each instrument. Just avoid one thing: never use the celestes or tremolos. Tremolos create a vibrato effect on the organ, and celeste stops are deliberately tuned slightly sharp to create a similar undulating effect in the sound. These are not conducive to finding and keeping the pitch. It's also inconsistent with the needed texture for hymns.

6. Introductions

Again, there are a number of possible approaches. For hymns that are not familiar, one might wish to play a whole verse as an introduction. It's also acceptable to do it this way merely out of preference. For more familiar hymns, the first line might suffice, or the first and last lines together. On some longer tunes, such as *Wie schoen leuchtet der Morgenstern*, it might be best to play straight through the verse but to skip over the repeated material. This allows for a thorough introduction that is not at the same time unduly long.

Be sure that the tempo in the introduction is the same as the tempo at which the hymn is intended to be sung. Once a tempo is established, there's no turning back. Also, avoid what American football fans might call the "no-huddle" introduction: banging on a few notes then plowing into the piece. Omitting the introduction would be better than that.

Keep in mind that when we're singing hymns, we're singing music.

7. Remember: This is music

Keep in mind that when we're singing hymns, we're singing music. These are not pedal exercises in the Ritchie-Stauffer organ technique book. Therefore don't be afraid to play beautifully. Learning the proper technique is important, but when that has been done, don't forget to ask, "What will make this hymn sound *beautiful*?"

It's also important to note that, while culturally expected in many places, the organ is not necessary for hymn singing. There is plenty to justify the existence of the organ in the church besides hymns. Sometime, you may wish to try a well-known hymn, or at least one verse of it, without the organ. The results may surprise you. ♪

Communion

Ps 90: 4-5

III

S Cá- pu-lis su- is * obumbrá- bit ti- bi, et

sub pen- nis e-jus spe- rá- bis: scu- to cir-

cúm-da- bit te vé- ri-tas e- jus.

INTERVIEW

Sacred Music and Salvation: An Interview with Wilko Brouwers

By Arlene Oost-Zinner



amous conductors of our day wave their batons in front of big city orchestras, compose electrically charged film scores, and attract adoring crowds. But there is more than one path to greatness. Others follow in the footsteps of Palestrina and Bach with their deliberate commitment to truly sacred music that is truly art. They understand the intimate relationship between music and holiness, and work to make that connection real in our religious lives.

Wilko Brouwers, conductor, composer, and teacher, is a man for whom great music is inseparable from that which is sacred. He understands that it alone is this connection with the Creator that make music worthy of our best efforts, most specifically, within the context of the Catholic liturgy. Mr. Brouwers is unassuming in stature, but immense in artistry, insight, and the relentless pursuit of perfection in the service of the faith.

A native of the Netherlands, Brouwers studied choral conducting at the Music Academy of Arnhem and the Liszt Academy in Budapest, and is the director of the Ward Center Holland, an institute for music education. He has conducted the Monteverdi Kamerkoor Utrecht since 1989, a group which performs in the Netherlands and abroad, has made recording, and earned top honors in the Dutch Choir Festival's mixed choir category in 1997 and 2000. He also directs the Strijps Kamerkoor, the Kinderkoor Keysershoff, the professional chamber choir Cantiere Vocale Utrecht, and the Schola of the Cistercian Abbey De Achelse Kluis in Belgium.

Mr. Brouwers has twice served as choral conductor for the Church Music Association of America's Sacred Music Colloquium. The aim of this annual meeting is to assist church musicians in maintaining the highest artistic standards in composition and execution, and to preserve the Church's treasury of sacred music, especially Gregorian chant. Mr. Brouwers was interviewed Arlene Oost-Zinner during the 2004 Colloquium in Washington, DC. His email is wilko.brouwers@iae.nl

OOST-ZINNER: How did you first encounter Gregorian chant?

BROUWERS: At a monastery of Benedictines. I was a little boy, and my father took me there, and I heard the monks sing. The next week I went on my bicycle, and I asked the name of the monk was who was conducting. Fr. Michael came out and introduced himself, and I asked him to teach me what they were doing. He took me into a wood and we sat on a large stone, and I remember very distinctly what he said to me: "There is a world of melody, and a world of rhythm."

OOST-ZINNER: Did you understand what he meant?

Arlene Oost-Zinner is co-director of the St. Cecilia Schola Cantorum in Auburn, Alabama.

BROUWERS: Not really, but he said it with such a sense of mystery that I was sure that he was right. I went back many times and he explained to me all about the notes and the groups and the chants. He explained about the ictus, and how this is not meant as an accent, but an invisible moment. You can imagine how the world was opening up for someone who had up until then only played the piano, where every tone is percussive. I was thirteen or fourteen years old.

OOST-ZINNER: Were you a singer at the time?

BROUWERS: I was too shy. I started singing with Fr. Michael. Slowly I discovered its beauty. Later, of course, in the music academy, I continued learning Gregorian chant. I sang with the schola.

OOST-ZINNER: And today?

BROUWERS: I'm a conductor, teacher, and composer. I conduct three choirs and a schola.

OOST-ZINNER: And you teach as well.

BROUWERS: The teaching I do is for the Ward Center. We teach courses for music teachers who want to use the method. I teach in the schools, too. I want to keep this contact with real work, and to feel how it is to do this work with children week after week. And composing, hmm, I do whenever I have a free hour or a free morning or a free week. It is mainly choral music.

OOST-ZINNER: Is it all sacred music?

BROUWERS: No. Now I do other things as well. I try to use the Dutch language, where Dutch composers don't want to use their own language. They write in English. They want to be international composers; they want to be sung outside the country. But I think the Dutch language is nice to write in, that I have decided to put an emphasis on it.

OOST-ZINNER: Do you approach sacred and profane musically differently?

BROUWERS: No, to tell the truth, when I choose the text for a profane piece, there is always something sacred in it, too. Some poetry contains a higher life, and tells of a life beyond this one. I always try to find texts with depth. In general the idea of composition is the same, only when you compose directly for a particular church choir, and you know that they are not the very best choir, you have to keep that in mind.

You also have to be careful that you are not—how should I put it?—showing your art. You shouldn't be the vain one who says "listen to my piece." That is what I have tried to do with the *Missa Alma Pater* (sung at this colloquium). There is a lot of silence in it; it is prayerful composing. Humble isn't a good word, but you know what I mean.

OOST-ZINNER: Do your chamber choirs sing chant?

BROUWERS: Yes, I often combine chant with polyphony in a concert. Of course you feel it when the chant is not part of the sacred action. Still, people buying a ticket and hearing the chant might be touched. Something of the sacred enters in.

OOST-ZINNER: Should all singing in church be a capella?

BROUWERS: Good accompaniment can add something to singing in a church. I am not talking about merely picking out the melody. That is what you usually hear, and this doesn't take much skill. What I like to do is pick up the melody in the alto or the tenor line, and lead the singing in an indirect way.

OOST-ZINNER: How is this effective?

*I often combine chant
with polyphony in a
concert.*

BROUWERS: A person listens to the music and finds the melody buried within it. And once he has found it, he can sing it himself. I once had a gentleman come up to me and motion to his throat and he said, "When you play, I can sing. I don't know what you do, but I feel I can sing." He was overjoyed. I was too.

OOST-ZINNER: You also inspire people with visual imagery. You use this when you are conducting a choir.

BROUWERS: Oh, you noticed?

OOST-ZINNER: Of course.

BROUWERS: It is a way of working. I like to read and write poetry, so I try to inspire people by giving them some kind of image, and then they can do what needs to be done. Only giving them technical information, about your throat and mouth and lips, can cause everything to become very empty. But a good image inspires you to do something a certain way.

OOST-ZINNER: You do the same with children, I assume.

BROUWERS: There is not much difference to me. I work with children as if they were adults, and they respond to this very well. I like to use humor and imagery. Of course there are always some people who tell me that they want more technical information. But the goal, I think, is for people to bring their experiences and their inspiration into the musical work.

The goal is for people to bring their experiences and their inspiration into the musical work.

OOST-ZINNER: All of this assumes, of course, all of your choir members are showing up at rehearsal. How do you deal with attendance issues?

BROUWERS: Yes, that can be a problem. I like to make it the responsibility of the choir itself and not me who tells them they have to come. I remind them that we had all agreed to be there. We all agreed. If you do not come, it is not only that you are causing a problem for me, because my instrument is not complete, but you are causing a problem for everyone who agreed to be there.

OOST-ZINNER: Making attendance an individual responsibility is the answer?

BROUWERS: To be honest, I don't have the type of problem that people aren't coming without good reasons. When it does happen, you have to draw great attention to it. Choir singing demands a certain attitude, and you often have to teach this to people. Not everyone comes in with this attitude.

OOST-ZINNER: Do you perceive any trends in attitudes toward liturgy and liturgical music in the Netherlands right now?

BROUWERS: I can't say there is anything characteristic. There are so many different types of churches, including Catholic churches, with different profiles. This is typically Dutch, too, especially these days. There is a great variety of things, and people have the possibility to find their way in this variety. Everyone can find a place where he is at home.

OOST-ZINNER: Where are you most at home?

BROUWERS: I like to go to Sunday Mass at the monastery where I conduct weekly and sing Gregorian chant. It is right on the border of Holland and Belgium. One can say that when one sits in the dining room, one side of the table is in Holland and one in Belgium. This is really a place of silence. The music is surrounded by silence.

OOST-ZINNER: You have mentioned silence now several times.

BROUWERS: Yes. I think silence is a sacred thing in music. It is as important as the notes themselves.

OOST-ZINNER: What else moves you, as a conductor?

BROUWERS: A very good question. The thing that makes me say “wow!”? It is the *Vespro della Beata Vergine*, by Monteverdi. That is the thing. That is it. We did it three years ago with fantastic instrumentalists, soloists, and I had the best time of my life. It begins with the same motif as that that begins the opera “Orpheus.” It was so great, with tenors standing far away to create an echo.



Wilko Brouwers

OOST-ZINNER: Was this a convention of the seventeenth century?

BROUWERS: Yes, Monteverdi had asked for it. The tenor stands in front of the people, and it creates the effect of a real echo. Just fabulous.

Something else I would like to conduct, and I haven’t done it yet, is the B-Minor Mass by Bach. There is nothing like standing in front of your group and a piece is so big that it is not about you or your group or the singers or the orchestra. It is about something much bigger. You forget yourself completely.

OOST-ZINNER: How can you direct if you lose yourself in a piece of music?

BROUWERS: You have to deal with the details during rehearsal, but during the concert, the details need to come from the singers. I use a pencil to mark a few places on my score where I am needed, but during a concert, the details need to come from the group. I don’t conduct those.

OOST-ZINNER: What was your most memorable conducting experience at this Colloquium?

BROUWERS: I think the Durufle *Pater Noster* was very nice. I felt that people were really watching my hands, and treating the piece very tenderly.

OOST-ZINNER: Was not watching a problem with the other pieces?

BROUWERS: There wasn’t enough time. When the choir knows the piece well and can watch me, there is a great feeling: the feeling of bodies and minds being connected. But if the choir is not ready and still has to read, we cannot make this contact. When we started the Sweelink’s *Venite exultemus Domino*, bodies began to wake up. It is very energetic.

Oh, and do you know what I enjoyed very much? I enjoyed standing in the Crypt Church of the Shrine during rehearsal on the Di Lasso *Improperium*. It gave you that feeling of “aha!” You could feel the music coming to life.

OOST-ZINNER: What can you say of your experience with this Colloquium in general?

BROUWERS: Of course I was honored when Fr. Skeris invited me to come. It was an exciting opportunity, but I didn’t know what to expect. I didn’t know if there would be a choir at all. And then to find out on the first evening that we had nine sopranos, nine altos, six tenors, and six basses! I was very happy.

OOST-ZINNER: What about the quality of the singing?

BROUWERS: I think everyone was so open, and so motivated to do a good thing. Every day the choir grew in sound and concentration. Although the performances may not be for a recording or the radio, it doesn’t matter. We had a good experience with all of the pieces. The most important thing is that there are moments in your rehearsal, or in your performance when you capture the spirit of the piece.

*When the choir knows
the piece well, there is a
great feeling.*

OOST-ZINNER: Have you had any personal revelations this week?

BROUWERS: I had many conversations with many people, and it was very interesting to me to see how people try to find their way. They are often quite alone in what they want. I didn't meet any bitter or disappointed people. I meet them in Holland more often.

It was very inspiring for me to see that everyone had his own flame of inspiration still burning. It was also interesting for me to see that the European culture is so highly esteemed: in the liturgy, and in the architecture, for example.

OOST-ZINNER: Was this regard for European culture something you hadn't anticipated?

BROUWERS: I didn't know. I thought American culture was something of its own. In this group, as Fr. Skeris said in one of his lectures, our roots are in Europe. That is interesting for me. What kind of feeling is that, to live here, but to say that your cultural roots are elsewhere. Does it feel that you are in exile?

OOST-ZINNER: "In exile" is an interesting way to put it.

BROUWERS: Do you feel that you are in exile, or do you feel at home here. Does it feel like something foreign that you are trying to make your own?

OOST-ZINNER: Oh, are you asking me?

BROUWERS: Yes, sorry!

OOST-ZINNER: Well, I can only speak for myself. My parents were both European, so I spent a great deal of time in Europe as a child. I've always lived with both cultures. In my case, I feel I came to a point where I had to decide where I belong, and where life will continue.

BROUWERS: I wouldn't have known this.

*Many modern composers
over organize, thinking
only about the construction
of the piece.*

OOST-ZINNER: As an artist, in what ways are

you aware of your own cultural heritage?

BROUWERS: Well, my wife is a good example. She is from Hungary. I lived in Hungary for a year, and after we were married we decided to move to Holland. We have been living in Holland for sixteen years. She feels at home in Holland, but there is always a part of her soul which is still in Hungary. And when we go to Hungary for the summer holidays, part of her soul is in Holland. She combines the two influences very well. As for myself, I live in the village where I was born.

OOST-ZINNER: Where is that?

BROUWERS: In Eindhoven. It is in the south, near the Belgian border. I, for instance, like to compose in my own language. But I try to compose in Hungarian, too. You have your own roots, but you always have something else which attracts you. Orlando Di Lasso, for example, combined everything. He combined all of European culture in his music.

OOST-ZINNER: How does this come into play when you are composing for the church? On the one hand you want to compose something that, like the chant, is universal. On the other hand, you are dealing with an independent and inevitable set of cultural influences.

BROUWERS: You don't do what you do consciously. My wife might come in while I am composing and say, "that sounds Hungarian." And I ask, "does it?" Or I might be composing something in a certain mode without realizing it. Of course with the *Missa Alma Pater* I was working from something already given, but for the most part, the music just comes about. It is in your blood.

OOST-ZINNER: What is it in Sweelink's work that makes it Dutch?

BROUWERS: I think that Dutch composers, as Dutch people in general, like to organize things. Dutch music is very organized. Every note is in the right place, and has a very clear structure. Many modern composers over organize, thinking only about the construction of the piece. There comes a moment when you don't feel any soul, or any blood in the piece.

OOST-ZINNER: Is this a danger?

BROUWERS: Yes, but it doesn't have to be. Look at the works of the Dutch composers. Look at Josquin Desprez, Sweelink or course, or Orlando di Lasso, whom I mentioned before.

OOST-ZINNER: Di Lasso was a Dutchman?

BROUWERS: Well, yes, but he worked everywhere. Di Lasso was a "European," *avant la lettre*.

OOST-ZINNER: Was Sweelink a contemporary of Monteverdi? There was something modern about the piece we worked on.

BROUWERS: Yes, I have that same feeling with Monteverdi. He is so modern, still. That is why in one of my choirs, The Monteverdi Chamber Choir Utrecht, we sing Monteverdi and contemporary music, and sometimes within the same program. You feel the spirit of the composer. You are so surprised by his ideas and expression and knowledge of the human soul. I feel this in Sweelink, too.

OOST-ZINNER: Can music save a soul?

BROUWERS: Yes, it can. In one sense all good music is religious. It is in this sense that it contains this one and only message: Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. It is the language of comfort.

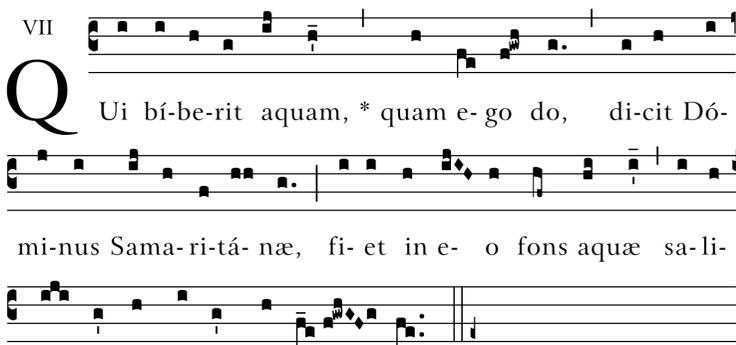
OOST-ZINNER: What music is your avenue to salvation?

BROUWERS: The big organ works by Bach that I listened to as a little boy. They told me that music is the language of heaven, that there is a great world beyond the one we live in every day. They made me decide to make music my profession, and to make my life worth living. ♪

Communion (melodia altera)

Jo 4: 13, 14

VII

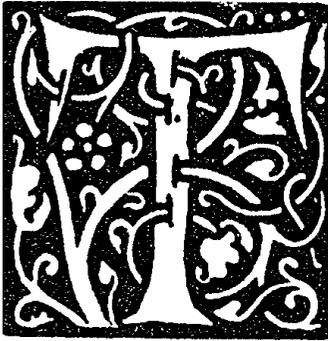


Q Uí bí-be-rit aquam, * quam e-go do, di-cit Dó-
 mi-nus Sama-ri-tá-næ, fi-et in e-o fons aquæ sa-li-
 én-tis in vi-tam æ-tér-nam.

REPERTORY

Byrd's Music for Candlemas

By Michael Procter



The *Gradualia* of William Byrd form one of the great treasuries of sacred music from the Renaissance. Published in two volumes, the first in 1605, the second in 1607, once the excitement (and danger) aroused by the Gunpowder Plot had subsided, the collection presents Mass propers, as well as a great deal of music for the office, for all the major feasts of the church year, as well as music for the Lady Mass—the Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin—throughout the year. Joseph Kerman, in his masterly if idiosyncratic study,¹ sadly long out of print, discusses in detail the liturgical organization of the collection, to which attention was first drawn by Jackman.²

In this short notice I would like to consider the music for the Feast of the Purification, Candlemas, one of the loveliest of our Mary celebrations.

The various parts of the proper are provided by Byrd in a building-block system familiar to anyone who puts together the liturgy from the chant books, continually referring to material first printed earlier in the book. In the case of the Purification, there is an added complication, for the feast can fall after Septuagesima—as indeed it does this year. The elements of the music are all in Book I of the *Gradualia*—which opens with the five-voice Marian Masses—as follows:³

Introit	1	Suscepimus Deus. V. Magnus Dominus. Gloria Patri. Suscepimus Deus.
Gradual	1	Suscepimus Deus 2. V. Sicut audivimus. Alleluia
+ Alleluia	3	V. Senex puerum portabat. Alleluia
After Septuagesima:		
Gradual	1	Suscepimus Deus 2. V. Sicut audivimus. (No Alleluia)
+ Tract	4	Nunc dimittis V. Quia viderunt V. Quid parasti V. Lumen ad revelationem
Offertory	22	Diffusa est gratia
Communion	5	Responsum accepit Simeon

Even at first glance the complications of Byrd's system are apparent. The opening of no.1, *Suscepimus*, is reused both as introit and as gradual. The sequence of pieces in the print is apparent

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¹Joseph Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

²James L. Jackman, "Liturgical Aspects of Byrd's *Gradualia*," *Musical Quarterly*, 49 (1963), 17–37.

³The table is from Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, 250.

nonsense, for the Alleluia (no. 3) can never be followed by the Tract (no. 4). And why is the offertory not no. 5 but no. 22? There are a number of factors at work here. The basic principle, as mentioned above, is that of interchangeable “building blocks,” so that the music of *Suscepimus* is simply reused for the opening of the gradual. *Diffusa est* is placed, not here where it is first needed, but as the gradual for the feast of the Annunciation: there it is followed by its verse (*Propter veritatem*), with the result that the setting of *Diffusa est* ends on the dominant. This is one of the handful of examples of Byrd’s system failing him, for the abrupt ending thus provided for the Purification offertory is quite unsatisfactory—and in fact the concluding text “et in secula saeculorum. Amen.” is missing completely. In my edition I have provided two possible endings (see below).

A peculiarity of Byrd’s settings is that he consistently sets the opening Alleluia as a final section to the gradual (see table). The verse *Sicut audivimus* ends on A major, leading beautifully either into the Alleluia in A minor, or into the tract.

The music of the *Gradualia* is almost all difficult. It is concisely, even densely composed, rhythmically complex, and not superficially attractive. It is music composed for celebrations of the Mass which, if they took place at all, did so under conditions of secrecy and grave danger. The music was apparently at the printer just as the Gunpowder Plot was exposed, and it is not surprising that the printer delayed issuing the books until three years later. There was no question of “choral” performance, rather of single voices: surely similar performing forces to those involved in vocal chamber music in the great houses of England. There seems little doubt that the *Gradualia* were in the first instance composed for clandestine masses at the home of Lord Petre of Ingatestone—which neatly explains why the only six-voice Masses are those of Sts. Peter and Paul, and of St. Peter ad Vincula.

There seems little doubt that the Gradualia were in the first instance composed for clandestine masses.

In the case of the Purification Mass, Byrd gives us a string of jewels, perhaps not consistently of the first water, but all unmistakably from a great composer in his prime (even though Byrd seemed to imagine that his life was nearing its end, whereas in fact he still had almost twenty years ahead of him).

The introit *Suscepimus Deus* is broad and spacious as befits the text “misericordiam tuam.” There is a close at “fines terrae,” where the gradual respond ends: in the introit this leads to a splendid homophonic setting of “justitia plena est dextera tua.” The verse *Magnus Dominus* is set, typically, for three voices, the Gloria Patri is tutti and again mostly homophonic. With the repeat of the antiphon the introit lasts almost six minutes—little sign of the fear and haste we might expect under the circumstances of the original performance—or was Byrd indeed composing for a longed-for reinstatement of the Catholic Church and ideal circumstances?

The Gradual group *Suscepimus–Alleluia–Senex puerum portabat* contains one of the loveliest (and least-known) pieces in the entire collection. The short verse *Sicut audivimus* is notable chiefly for its long rising scale on “in monte sancto ejus” and for the curious entry of the medius for the final five bars. The opening of *Senex puerum portabat* is perfect and beautiful. Kerman writes it off as “hasty,”⁴ but just see how perfectly balanced the phrase is:⁵

⁴Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, 252.

⁵Note that in all examples the music is given transposed down a fourth from the high-clef original pitch.

65

men ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um,
 lu-men, lu-men ad re-ve-la-ti-
 men, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-
 men, lu-men ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-
 men ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um,

70

gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um,
 o-nem gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-
 o-nem gen-ti-um, gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem
 ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem
 ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um, gen-ti-

75

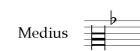
ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um,
 um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um, et glo-
 gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um, et
 gen-ti-um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem gen-ti-um, et glo-ri-
 um, ad re-ve-la-ti-o-nem, gen-ti-um, et

It is unfortunate that what I consider the loveliest of this set of pieces, *Diffusa est gratia*, is incomplete. As noted above, the piece appears correctly later in the collection as the opening of the gradual and tract of the Annunciation, where its text is shorter and where its half-cadence leads into the following verse. To do duty as the offertory for Candlemas it requires further text. I have provided a setting which I offer for those wishing to sing this lovely piece liturgically:

Offertorium: Diffusa est gratia

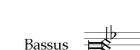
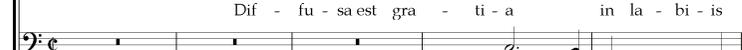
with optional editorial ending

Superius   5
Dif - fu - sa est gra - ti - a in la - bi-is tu - - is,

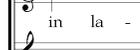
Medius   Dif - fu - sa est gra - ti -

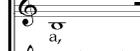
Contra tenor   Dif - fu - sa est gra - ti - a in la - bi - is

Tenor   Dif - fu - sa est gra - ti - a in la - bi - is

Bassus   Dif - fu - sa est gra - ti -

 10
in la - bi - is tu - - is, dif - fu - sa est gra

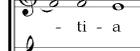
 a, gra - ti - a in la - bi - is tu - - is,

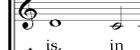
 tu - - is, in la - bi - is tu - - is,

 tu - - is, in la - bi - is, in la - bi - is, in

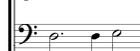
 a in la - bi - is tu - - is,

 15
- ti - a in la - bi - is tu - - is: pro - pte - re -

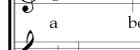
 is, in la - bi - is tu - - is: pro - pte - re - a be -

 in la - bi - is tu - is: pro - pte - re - a be

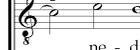
 la - bi - is tu - - is: pro - pte - re - a

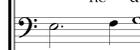
 in la - bi - is tu - - is: pro - pte - re - a be - ne

 20
a be - ne - di - xit, be - ne - di - xit te De - - us, in ae - ter - num,

 ne - di - xit te De - - us, te De - us in ae - ter -

 ne - di - xit te De - us, te De - us in ae - ter -

 be - ne - di - xit, be - ne - di - xit te De - - us in ae - ter -

 di - xit, be - ne - di - xit te De - - us in ae -

Passer Invenit: A Communion On A Simile

By William Mahrt



ne of the most beloved communion chants of the year is *Passer invenit*, sung on the Third Sunday of Lent in the extraordinary form; in the ordinary form it is sung on the same Sunday, unless the Gospel of the Samaritan Woman is read, and on the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time as well.

Passer invenit from *Graduale Romanum*¹

P Asser * invénit si-bi domum, et turtur nidum, ubi
 repó- nat pul-los su- os: altá- ri- a tu- a Dómi-ne
 virtú- tum, Rex me- us, et De- us me- us: be- á-ti
 qui há-bi-tant in domo tu- a, in sæ- cu-lum sæ-
 cu-li lau- dábunt te.

For the sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtledove a nest where she may lay her young ones: Thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord: they shall praise thee for ever and ever.

The text is from Ps. 83 (Vulgate numbering), whose first verse suggests the topic of the whole psalm: "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" The present verse is identified by Casiodorus as a simile:

Here we find that he has set down these two species of birds to recommend to us a type of simile. A sparrow flies exceedingly swiftly, and cannot bear to dwell in

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¹*Graduale Romanum* (Sablé sur Sarthe: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1974), p. 306; the pitches of this version are essentially in agreement with those of the Montpellier Codex, the earliest pitch-specific source for the Gregorian tradition, *Paléographie musicale*, VIII (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1901-05; reprint, Berne: Herbert Lang, 1972), pp. 45–6.

forests but longs to seek for itself a home in holes in walls. When it has found such a home, it is delighted and glories with great joy, for it believes that it is no longer in danger of ambush from various enemies. The soul finds joy in a similar way, when it realizes that a lodging is prepared for it in the kingdom of heaven. The turtle is most chaste in his controlled abstemiousness, for he is content with a single mating and is known to build a nest for his fledglings; he does not seek a home readymade as the sparrow does, but hastens to fashion a new one for himself from odds and ends. . . .

The phrase “Thy altars, O God of Hosts” is to be attached the words of the first verse of the psalm, “How lovable they are!” This figure is known as *apo koinou* or “in common” when an earlier phrase is matched with a later one.²

Thus just as the sparrow and the turtledove find a dwelling-place, so we find one in the altars of the Lord, and ultimately in heaven.

One reason choirs especially cherish this chant is the charming *onomatopoeia* (word-painting) on *turtur*, where three liquescent neumes in a row imitate the cooing of the turtledove, especially the two which represent the r in the repeated syllable “tur.” They love to sing these liquescent notes and do not fail to miss the very concrete imitation of something in the text, which in turn makes the attractiveness of heaven all the more concrete.

But there is hidden in this unusual melody a more profound representation of the text: the descent of a bird to its nest, a simile of the soul finding repose in the dwelling-place of the Lord, is represented by a melody whose overall contour is a persuasive descent. Moreover, this descent is emphasized by involving a very unusual shift of mode. This involves the transposition of modes, even the main mode of the piece, mode one, transposed from D to a.³

The three modes used in the piece need to be understood from their finals in transposition and their reciting notes:⁴

Passer invenit sibi domum, et turtur nidum: as it is initially heard—mode two, transposed up an octave; final: d, reciting note: f;

ubi reponat pullos suos: mode three, transposed up a fourth (with a b-flat above its final making a striking Phrygian cadence; final: a, reciting note: f, so that in retrospect, the whole initial phrase can be viewed as suggesting mode three on a;

altaria tua Domine virtutum: back to mode two on d;

Rex meus et Deus meus: the most striking shift, since the b-flat at “pullos” is now replaced by a b-natural, making this phrase be mode one, transposed to a; final: a, reciting note: e; this is the point that the focus of the piece drops from the final on d down to a final on a;

Beati qui habitant in domo tua, in saeculum saeculi laudabunt te: this final phrase reviews the entire range of the piece in a broad arch contour, with another graceful melodic descent, emphasizing each tone of the scale in succession aa down to a, as follows:

²Cassiodorus, *Explanation of the Psalms*, 3 vols., tr. P. G. Walsh, Ancient Christian Writers, Vol. 51–3 (New York: Paulist Press, 1990–91), Vol. II, pp. 314–15.

³I am using the Guidonian letter names to designate the octaves of the scale: A–G fall within the bass clef, a–g around middle C, and aa–ee within the treble clef.

⁴Reciting notes are principally the notes in each mode upon which the preponderance of syllables is sung in recitative psalmody, i.e., psalm tones; but they also have their place in discrete chants as the principal focal pitch above the final, such as the pitch f on “-ser invenit” of the present chant.

aa gf e e d c b a
 in domo tu- a, in saeculum saeculi laudabunt te.

Even here, the b-natural comes as a bit of a surprise, and it must be reiterated (four occurrences) for the cadence on a to be unambiguously in mode one.

This unusual modal mixture was the subject of theoretical commentary in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, where such chants were analyzed as beginning in one mode, passing through a second and ending in a final mode. The reason for setting this mode-one chant on a rather than on D is evidently to allow for both b-flat and b-natural in both mode three and mode one on a, b-flat being the only “accidental” allowed in the scale used for the chants.⁵

There are a number of chants with such mixed modality. They probably stem from a time before the systematic redaction within a fixed scale system, and it is suspected that their final writing down may have altered some pitches, even at that, to get them to fit the diatonic system. In any case, it is clear that such pieces caused problems for musicians of the time, as witnessed by two variant versions of this chant.

Passer invenit from the *Graduale* of *St. Yrieix*

I
P Asser invé-nit si-bi do- mum, et turtur
 ni- dum, u- bi repó- nat pul-los su- os: altá- ri- a
 tu- a Dó- mi- ne virtú- tum, Rex me- us, et
 De- us me- us: be- á- ti qui há- bi- tant in domo tu- a,
 in sáecu- lum sáecu- li lau- dábunt te.

⁵The Guidonian gamut allows a flat or a natural at b and at bb, but not at B—there only a natural. Dom Johner notes that introit, offertory, and communion of the Third Sunday of Lent all involve modal mixtures, though his analysis differs somewhat from mine, and he does not mention the liquescence or the striking descent created by the mixture; Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B., *The Chants of the Vatican Gradual* (Toledo, Ohio: Gregorian Institute of America, 1948; reprint, Richmond, Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2007), p. 136.

The first is the communion chant with this text in the *Gradual of St. Yrieix* of the eleventh century.⁶ Aside from its being in the same mode (mode one, but untransposed) and assigned to the same day, it appears at first to be a composition independent from the Gregorian communion discussed above. But closer inspection shows a couple of places in common: "Rex meus" is identical for the first four notes. In the Gregorian piece, this is the crux of the shift of mode, a memorable moment in the chant, expressed by a memorable melodic figure. The subsequent phrase "et Deus meus" is almost identical; the difference is that between the two phrases "Rex meus," and "Et Deus meus," the cadence tones have been reversed, D then C in the Gregorian version; C then D in St. Yrieix. In both versions, the final phrase beginning "beati . . ." rehearses the entire range of the piece in a broadly arching contour, but without any exact melodic correspondences, until the last phrase, "laudabunt te," which corresponds exactly. Thus in the St. Yrieix version the part of the Gregorian piece that was in other modes is entirely new, but the part that was in mode one reflects fragments of that melody. How can this have happened? Was it an intentional recomposition to avoid the mixed mode, or did the mixed mode of the Gregorian version cause such confusion in oral transmission that at some point, singers had to temporize by making up a coherent mode-one melody. One can only speculate, but something like the latter alternative seems more likely.

Passer invenit from *Graduale Cisterciense*

I
P Asser invé-nit si-bi do-mum, et turtur ni-dum,
 u-bi repó-nat pullos su-os: altá-ri-a tu-a, Dó-mi-
 ne virtú-tum, Rex me-us et De-us me-us:
 be-á-ti qui há-bi-tant in domo tu-a; in
 sǎ-cu-lum sǎ-cu-li lau-dábunt te.

⁶*Paléographie musicale*, XIII (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1925; reprint, Berne: Herbert Lang, 1971), p. 94; this source does not indicate B-flats, but one would naturally take a B-flat on "domum" in the first line and "virtutum" in the second, by the rule that an ascent to B should use the flat if the melody goes down to F before it goes up to C.

⁷The standard work on this subject is P. Solutor Marosszéki, S.O.Cist. [Ralph March, S.O.Cist.], *Les Origines du chant cistercien: Recherches sur les réformes du plainchant cistercien au XIIIe siècle*, *Analeca sacri ordinis cisterciensis*,

There is a version, however, that explicitly “corrects” the modal mixture. The reform of the Cistercian chants in the twelfth century set out to eliminate modal irregularities, and this chant exemplifies this correction.⁷ The chant is presented as in mode one on D. Its beginning, with some slight variation is a transposition down an octave from the Gregorian version, except that the telling shift down to mode three on “pulos,” has been kept on D. At the phrase “Rex meus . . .” the shift to a transposition down a fourth is made; this confirms that this is the place of the shift of mode in the Gregorian version, since the shift keeps the piece in mode one on D. Finally, at the point that the Gregorian version reviewed the shape of the whole piece, “in domo tua,” this phrase segment is transposed down a fourth, confirming that this segment in the Gregorian version had also touched on the original mode two on d (the octave above); the following material, “in saeculum . . .” falls back to the normal transposition, emphasized by a prominent mode-one figure, D–a–b-flat–a. This has been a careful but clear retransposition of all the elements of the original version. Its value is mainly as a witness of what twelfth-century theorists saw to be the modal mixture needing correction.

That modal mixture in the original Gregorian version, then, has three striking points of descent: 1) the descent to mode three on “pulos suos,” a beautifully affective shift because of the Phrygian cadence (b-flat to a); 2) the shift down to mode one on a, emphasized by the comparison of its b-natural with the previous b-flat; and 3) the repeat of the descent from mode two on d to mode one on a at “in domo tua.”

It should be recalled that the normal contour of Gregorian chants is an arch—beginning low, rising to a peak, and descending to the source. When this contour is not used one should look for a reason in the text.⁸ Here, the reason is clear—a long-term descent from a prominent high beginning to a graciously approached point of arrival represents at one and the same time the descent of a bird in fulfillment of its need of a place to put its chicks and the finding of a place of repose by the soul in the altars of the Lord, even in heaven. ❧



Annus VIII, Fasc. 1–2 (Rome: Tipografia Polyglotta Vaticana, 1952); Marosszéki does not mention this chant; the version I present here is from *Graduale Cisterciense* (Westmalle, Belgium: Typis Cisterciensibus, 1960), p. 120; that this is the same as that produced by the reform of the twelfth century is indicated by its occurrence in a nearly identical version in the Dominican chant tradition which stems from the Cistercian chants of that time; cf. *Graduale juxta ritum sacri ordinis praedicatorum* (Rome: Santa Sabina, 1936), pp. 109–10.

⁸I have shown this in my “Word-Painting and Formulaic Chant,” in *Cum angelis canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honour of Richard J. Schuler*, ed. Robert A. Skeris (St. Paul: Catholic Church Music Associates, 1990 [1992]), pp. 113–144, especially pp. 120–123.

DOCUMENTS

Hymns of the Breviary and Missal

Here is the Preface to Fr. Mathew Britt's *Hymns of the Breviary and Missal*, a magisterial work first published in 1922 by Benzinger Brothers. Despite the editor's humility evident in this preface, it is a major scholarly accomplishment, not only providing excellent translations of hymns but also in giving a detailed historical background to each. It is newly in print from the Church Music Association of America, and available for \$25 (plus S&h) at musicasacra.com/books.



he purpose of this volume is to provide an introductory to work on the hymns of the Roman breviary and missal. In its pages will be found all the hymns in the Breviary since the Bull *Divino Afflatu* of Pope Pius X (1911), together with the five sequences of the Missal, and a few other hymns. There is at present in English no work that even approximately covers this ground.

Many thoughtful men have long felt that something should be done to make our liturgical hymns better known and better understood. The *Dies Ira*, the *Vexilla Regis*, the *Stabat Mater*, the *Lauda Sion*, and the *Pange Lingua* are of incomparably greater value to the Christian than the greatest of pagan odes. However, the study of the ancient classics and of Christian hymns may and should go hand in hand. Each has its own purpose; there is no quarrel between them. The one serves to cultivate a delicate and refined taste, the other enkindles in the soul the loftiest sentiments of religion. The study of the former prepares one for a fuller and more generous enjoyment of the latter.

The present volume is intended as a manual for beginners—for those who have no access to the many excellent works on Latin hymns edited in other languages. The editor has no new theories of authorship to propound, no new historical facts to announce, and in general no new interpretation of disputed passages in the hymns. For historical data he freely acknowledges his indebtedness to many existing works, especially to the *Dictionary of Hymnology* so ably edited by the late Rev. Dr. John Julian, and the Rev. James Mearns, M.A.

The translations referred to throughout the volume are metrical translations. There are no prose translations in English, if one excepts a considerable part of the hymns of the Proper of the Season, which are found in Abbot Gueranger's great work *The Liturgical Year*. The metrical versions given here represent the work of more than sixty translators, some of whom flourished as early as the seventeenth century. In the selection of these translations many hymn-collections and many of the finest hymn-books have been laid under tribute. Catholic and Anglican scholars, especially since the days of the Oxford Movement, have vied with one another in rendering our Latin hymns into English verse.



Both in the number of translators and in the quality of their work the honors are about equally divided. It is worthy of note that Catholic scholars have ordinarily translated the Roman Breviary text, while Anglicans have generally rendered the Original text as found in the Benedictine and Dominican Breviaries. Much time was spent in the selection of the translations that accompany the Latin hymns. Despite the great wealth of translations the editor is inclined to believe that the number of really good versions of any particular hymn is not great. A translation, to be worthy of the name, must combine good idiomatic English with a literal rendering of the original. The retention of the meter of the original is also very desirable. Some translators have excelled in one of these qualities, some in another; few have successfully combined all of them. In not a few instances it was found necessary to restrict the choice of translations to those made directly from the Roman Breviary text. Often however the two texts while differing verbally do not differ greatly in sense. In such instances translations of the Original text by J. M. Neale and others are freely given.

It was a part of the instruction given the revisers of the hymns in 1632 that the meter and sense of each line should be preserved, and that expressions should not be fundamentally altered. It need scarcely be said that this instruction was not always followed.

Whenever ascertainable the name of the translator of each hymn is given. Statements as to authorship do not as a rule include doxologies, Latin or English. Considerable liberty was taken in the selection of English doxologies.

The number of English translations is given under each hymn. The number of translations credited to a hymn is based in great part on the versions mentioned in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology* and in Duffield's *Latin Hymn-Writers*. To these lists have been added several recent translations. All such lists are necessarily incomplete.

The editor is not unconscious of the many shortcomings and imperfections of the present volume; but if it will serve to enkindle in the hearts of beginners, especially of young men studying for the priesthood, a love for the hymns of Holy Church, it will have accomplished the chief purpose for which it was undertaken. Its preparation has been both a pastime and a labor of love. The result is cheerfully submitted to the judgment and correction of the proper ecclesiastical authorities. The pointing out of any inaccuracies will be duly acknowledged and greatly appreciated by the editor. ❧



Questions and Answers about Latin in the Modern Roman Liturgy

By Fr. Christopher Smith



hy Latin? The following Questions and Answers were distributed to parishioners of St. Peter's Church in Beaufort, South Carolina.

Q. Didn't Vatican II abolish Latin?

The first document of the Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, states "The use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rite" (§36). Further it states, "Care must be taken that the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertains to them." The council's liturgy document stated, "since the use of the

mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants" (§36). The council is clear that Latin should continue to be used in the liturgy, while the vernacular is an option. Therefore, even if we have vernacular in the Mass, we should still also have Latin in the Mass as well.

Q. But isn't going back to Latin a bad thing? Shouldn't we be moving forward?

The Mass is actually still in Latin; we just experience in many of our parishes the full extent of permission to use English. The church never abandoned the Latin, although in many places parishes did not fulfill the express will of the council fathers. There is no question of going back; we are actually just now beginning to do what the council asked.

Q. Isn't Latin exclusive, though? Won't it split us up as Catholics?

Latin belongs to all Catholics. The Catholic Church is a universal church, open to everyone. The use of a common language in worship is more inclusive, because it does not assume that everyone has to worship according to any one language or culture. Using only vernacular languages actually "ghettoizes" divine worship according to national and ethnic boundaries. Latin transcends borders and emphasizes the international and multicultural character of the church.

Q. Isn't the use of Latin just an historical anomaly that lasted way too long anyway?

Almost all world religions have a sacred language for worship. Muslims always read the Qu'ran in Arabic. Jews say all of their prayers in Hebrew. Hindus use Sanskrit or Pali, which no one speaks colloquially. Until the nineteenth century, Hebrew was virtually lost even among Jews. The Zionist movement made it a badge of religious identity, and a century later, an entire country has what was once a dead language as its official tongue, and Jews throughout the world can all communicate in one language. Dead languages do come back to life because of religious reasons.

Q. Doesn't 1 Corinthians 14.14 not say, "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful"?

Saint Paul is not speaking on liturgical language, but makes reference to the Corinthians who were trying to speak in tongues without having that gift, who were essentially falsifying a gift of the Holy Spirit. Catholics should learn the basic prayers of the Mass in Latin as part of

their normal religious education, so it is not unknown. That is why translations are provided, so that they can learn them.

Q. How can I get anything out of Mass if I can't even understand every word?

Remember that God is a mystery beyond our intelligence. In the Eastern tradition, the mystery of God's otherness is expressed by a large part of the service being done behind a wall of icons and a series of veils. The people still actively participate, but they do so fully aware that the God they are worshipping is not immediately accessible to them. In the West, the function of icons and veils is taken in part by language. It emphasizes the mystery and the transcendence of a God who, despite his closeness to us, is still always beyond our reach.

That said, people shouldn't underestimate just how much one can come to understand the Latin prayers. By the faithful praying these same Latin prayers over and over, Sunday after Sunday (often with the benefit of a missal which also translates those prayers) they do become very familiar with them and know, intensely, that which they pray. In fact, because Latin is not our first language, it can actually help us to be more conscientious about what we are praying as we focus even more upon how that prayer translates and thereby more potentially ponder the spiritual depths of its meaning.

The Mass is not about us. It is about the worship of God.

Q. Are there any advantages to using both Latin and the vernacular in the Mass?

Yes! With the readings, the homily and certain prayers in the vernacular, the faithful can feel God calling to them in words that are familiar; the nearness of God is made present by the immediate comprehension of certain prayers and rites. We can foster a community spirit with a language which is used by some if not all of the worshippers in our parish church. But the Latin reminds us that the church is not just our parish, and exists not just in one nation; that she is for all people and all times. The Latin also reminds us that we cannot "own" God; that he is a mystery not to be figured out, but to be adored.

Q. Is it wrong if I don't feel the same when parts or the whole of Mass is in Latin?

The Mass is not about us. It is about the worship of God. If it were about us, then we would be adoring ourselves, and putting ourselves in the place of God. The Mass is the re-presentation of the sacrifice of Christ in obedience to his Father on Calvary for the salvation of the world. It is not entertainment. Worship is not having an attractive emotional experience that I design according to my likes and dislikes. It is receiving the gifts of that Holy Sacrifice and uniting my whole being with the great hymn of praise offered by the whole church. Religion is not about us and our feelings; it is about offering to God the praise which is his due. And he asks us to praise him according to the ritual forms as celebrated by his church.

Q. How can I learn more about my Catholic faith and its rich liturgical heritage?

In Matthew 13:52 we read, "Every scribe who has become a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven is like the head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old." Veneration steeped in the tradition should make us even more aware of new and creative ways to live our faith. If we are open to studying our Catholic faith, the documents of the church, and cooperating with our priests in living out the liturgical riches of our church, we have so much to gain!

Q. If you could recommend one book for me to read about this, what would it be?

Pope Benedict XVI's *Spirit of the Liturgy*. Read that, and then ask Fr. Smith whatever you want! It will change your life and also give you a clear sense of the direction that the church is really going. What an exciting time to be a Catholic! ☩

COMMENTARY

The Furious Power of Music

By Fr. Anthony Manuppella

Sometimes it takes a stranger to help us recognize something about ourselves that loved ones could never let us see. In this case, the stranger is an atheist music critic from *The New York Times*. What is he telling us about? The importance of sacred music at Holy Mass. Perhaps an atheist intellectual might convince some Catholics, where Mother Church's exhortations have fallen on deaf ears.

Here is an excerpt of Mr. Bernard Holland,

Beauty of musical color, elegance of harmony, soundness of construction, and exquisiteness of originality once worked as the lure that would draw the faltering worshiper nearer. Music, as well as architecture and visual art, represented heaven to the earthbound, something dazzling and unapproachable, an advertisement for a paradise still held at arm's length.¹

Show me a liturgy office that has written something like that recently. I'm waiting.

Of course, the traditional Mass long understood this symbiotic relationship between music and the world of the sacred. It appreciated the furious power of music to shape man's soul—for good or bad. So it is that Holy Church required only Latin chant or polyphony at Mass. Latin, because of its sacral associations, and the enchanting melodies of a music impossible to be mistaken or utilized for any purpose save God's adoration. Musical forms in currency today at many churches are interchangeable with lounge music. Such a switch could never be present at the traditional Mass.

Truth to be told, the nature of sacred music ought to be no different for the *Novus Ordo Missae* (the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite). Listen to Bishop Edward Slattery of the Diocese of Tulsa.

I ask . . . to pay special attention to the council's liturgical norms . . . and what the council fathers actually wrote concerning the requirements of proper liturgical music, and in particular the principle which places the text in importance over the melody, thus acknowledging the primacy of Gregorian chant among the church's musical traditions, not merely from the position of its great venerability and beauty, but also because chant, having no rhythm, never forces the text to be rewritten to fit a specific meter. Chant allows us a certain sacred space within which that Word which God spoke in ancient times can be heard today with greater clarity and fidelity.²

For those who think narrowly, music in church is a kind of mood setter, cute but irrelevant. The more ample Catholic mind recognizes that music in church ought to act like an earthquake upon the soul, unleashing the powerful forces that make it crave intimacy with the Blessed Trinity. Our Catholic faith does not rest on gauzy sweet nothings, or the musical equivalents.

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¹*New York Times*, September 23, 2007.

²*Eastern Oklahoma Catholic*, March 6, 2006.

Faith stands upon towering truths. If a soul is fed on musical sap, its soul will turn to sap. Music at Mass is not meant for us to sway to and fro, or to smile sweetly at each other as though a dreamy Barry Manilow tune were playing. Music at Mass should make us tremble. At least a bit. It should drive itself directly into our soul, leaving us thunderstruck.

Even pagan Plato realized this. In *The Republic* he teaches, "No change can be made in styles of music without affecting the most important conventions of society." And we might add, the perfect society of the church. Music's power is so potent that it can arouse passions prompting heroic actions or debased ones. Almost twenty years ago the Port Authority of New York decided to play only soft classical music throughout its Manhattan bus depot because psychologists had proven it would lower crime. On the other hand, nightclub owners know to play loud, percussive music, piquing the passions and producing the emotional abandon that sells liquor and facilitates sexual license. No human heart is exempt from the racing at the stanzas of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* or John Philip Sousa. Music has its own grammar and vocabulary. All this applies to sacred music as well.

Man is never so intoxicated than when he is surrounded by sacred music. This music transforms him. It pierces his soul to its very depths. Often it produces a contrition so profound that a man's life can take a wholly different course. St. Augustine attests to this in Book IX of the *Confessions*, "how I wept to hear your hymns and songs, deeply moved by the voices of your sweetly singing Church! Their voices penetrated my ears, and with them, truth found its way into my

The Catholic mind recognizes that music in church ought to act like an earthquake upon the soul.

heart; my frozen feeling for God began to thaw, tears flowed and I experienced joy and relief." Do you really think that *Kumbaya* could inspire such words?

For all of this, Mother Church has insisted upon and encouraged the most exquisite sacred music known to man. Not only that: she has felt it her grave obligation to *protect* it. After all, she recog-

nizes that man's soul hangs in the balance. If the music is wrong, the teaching of the church will be wrong, and men will go wrong. Thus in this century, the popes have devoted such energy in defining and carefully regulating the conduct of sacred music. She stood as a mighty wall against subjectivism and sentimentality.

It was this awareness that clearly inspired Saint Pope Pius X to promulgate his tour de force on sacred music, *Tra le Sollecitudine*, whose one hundredth anniversary Pope John Paul II celebrated in November, 2003. There he taught that the three properties of sacred music are *universality*, *goodness of form*, and *holiness*. He taught that these properties are alone perfectly fulfilled in the Gregorian chant of the church. They also become the paradigm of all sacred music. They raise it above idiosyncratic cultural forms (*universality*); possesses the marks of the grand music of the ages (*goodness of form*); and excite in souls a hunger for God (*holiness*).³

St. Pius X teaches, "The church has constantly condemned everything frivolous, vulgar, trivial and ridiculous in sacred music—everything profane and theatrical both in the form of the compositions and in the manner in which they are executed by the musicians: *Sancta sancte*, holy things in a holy manner."⁴

Sacred music transports us beyond the stars to the throne of the Blessed Trinity. Beware of music at Mass that leaves us only *Dancing with the Stars*. ❧

³*Tra le Sollecitudine*, ¶2, 3.

⁴*Tra le Sollecitudine*, ¶13.

The Problem of Catholic Musical Illiteracy

By Jeffrey Tucker

Comics are rather fashionable among young people and have been for many decades. But as a way of understanding where we are in music in the Catholic Church today, let's imagine a world in which people never really went beyond them. No novels, no poetry, no non-fiction. Just comics. Maybe not even words. Just pictures.

Who would be surprised when the generation turned out to be illiterate? Let this situation run for three or four generations, and you would suddenly wake up to a world in which no one could really read and, more shockingly, no one could teach people to read either. The technical capacity would have been nearly vanquished from the earth.

At this point, you might expect people suddenly to realize what they have done. A major part of the foundation of civilization had been inadvertently smashed. If we could easily do a before and after analysis, we would be shocked more so than if we live in the midst of transition.

While it is happening, however, each generation knows less than the previous generation and increasingly there are fewer and fewer people around to even notice that there is a problem. Those who complain are in the minority, and nearly regarded as cranks. Most people do not even know what they do not know, nor even that the problem needs to be corrected.

This, I fear, is pretty much what has happened in the area of Catholic music—not entirely but we have approached that fate and perhaps might be saved from it with massive efforts today.

It's hard to say when the problem began, but it is clear when it intensified to the point of crises.

From the middle 1960s to the middle 1970s, the idea of an entertaining and serviceable music came to dominate the impulse to strive for beauty and excellence in liturgy. Before, nothing was perfect, and plenty of bad music was extant. But all evidence suggests that the skill and the desire to improve was there and rising. Then one day, everyone said: down with skill, down with all these standards, let's just sing whatever comes to mind and makes us feel good.

The Protestant Church seems to have had a delayed reaction, plunging into "praise music" by sometime in the early and mid 1970s. I recall these days well. My own father was there, as a church music director in a Baptist church. He felt a sense of freshness and liberation that came with the rock beats and the new styles. He composed some of them. He believed that these would help draw in the youth to Christian worship. His enthusiasm lasted about two years, when it dawned on him just how shallow this material is. He saw how the kids were drawn to it quickly and then left it quickly, how it "met them where they are," but didn't change them. He realized that the music had an infantilizing effect, alienated the old, and became stale absurdly fast. He left it rapidly, and spent the rest of his life regretting his brief flirtation with it.

*Down with skill, down with all
these standards, let's just sing
whatever comes to mind and
makes us feel good.*

Three decades later, all Protestant friends are despairing at what happened. They grew up in a world in which all hymnals were written in four voices, and people in the congregation sang these parts. Regular people, even when they weren't singing in the choir, defined themselves as altos or tenors or basses. Choirs in medium-sized churches had fifty to eighty members, and they weren't distinguished so much by their ability to read and sing (most everyone could) but rather by their willingness to commit a fantastic amount of time to learning large cantatas for performance during holiday seasons.

But now, my Protestant friends tell me, several generations that have been raised on praise choruses, which might be compared to musical comic books. There is a role for them, to be sure, and no one wants a world without them completely. The problem is that they came to set the standard, and now my friends are panicked. Not only are there fewer and fewer singers left; there are fewer and fewer people around who can teach or play at all.

You can name a thousand factors for this—how convenient to blame the very existence of recorded music—but the most obvious one is rarely stated: the music they embraced as the core

repertoire requires no skills and inspires no striving for anything beautiful. When triviality dominates, ideals disappear; the result is a universal dumbing down of aesthetic and then religious culture.

When triviality dominates, ideals disappear.

Of course Catholics were never that well off—for special historical reasons. Nonetheless, there were singers and readers and people who knew the repertoire, could navigate printed music, and

looked to certain ideals. Today Catholic music directors talk about what it is like to worship in churches where there are only a few musicians for every several hundred worshippers. There is a pervasive lack of ability to sing, of the capacity to hit a pitch and hold it, of the cognitive understanding of what it means to read notes going up and down, of a rudimentary knowledge of rhythm—all of this has been seriously undermined in the course of the decades of relentless artistic decline. Now, it's like living in a world without readers. The great works of literature sit on the shelves and no one knows what to do about them.

Of course one way to deal with this problem is to change the ideals, which then permits us to deny the problem. Who cares about all this old Palestrina stuff anyway? Was it really any good, or was it just the best they could do at the time? Wasn't this just music for the elites? Who has time anymore for this hard music anyway? It was fine in an age of faith and ignorance, but our world of reason and prosperity demands something else entirely. As for chant, that stuff is fine for a world of poverty, sickness, and the black death, but we live in gleaming cities and spend our leisure hours at modern health clubs. Different times call for different music.

But how different are the times really? The externals are different. The internals, to which the liturgy must speak most directly, are the same now as in all times—a universal (everywhere and timeless) faith addressing and accounting for a universal human nature with the assistance of a universal art form, all directed toward universal adoration.

I'm inclined to think that many attacks on the historical treasure of sacred music are really just fancy rationalizations for our generation's laziness and lack of talent capital. Something can be done about this, but we must first realize that we have a problem. Then we have to set about fixing it.

What is the most important factor in changing the problem of musical illiteracy? Do we need training before we take on the serious music, or do we need to hold and see and hear the serious music and in the hope that it will inspire us to improve our own skills? The relationship between these two factors—external and internal resources—is complicated.

Light can again be shed through the metaphor of the comic-book culture. We can change illiteracy but not without having access to high-quality books, even before they can be read. We need them as inspirations. We need to have the ideal and goal always before us. We need to learn to value those who can read and ask them to read for us and point the way.

The point is that we need to confront the problem head on. As for those who read this and think "I'm part of the problem," know that this isn't necessarily true. Not everyone can be a singer, nor should everyone strive to be. All musicians are drawn to the idea of universal musical literacy, but there is a role for the division of labor.

At the same time, I'm inclined to think that people tend to underestimate their potential as singer rather than overestimate it. To anyone who wants to learn, I would suggest the *Square Notes Workbook* (Angelus Press, originally published in 1968) and some recordings of simple chants as a way of getting started. The best foundation for music education of any sort is chant. It is chant that teaches the navigation of whole steps and half step, and teaches pitch and rhythm and other basis aspects of music theory.

The series of books written by Justine Ward (recently republished by MusicaSacra.com) were based on this idea. The goal was not so much Catholic music education but just music education in general. To be a great Catholic artist one must be a great artist.

Let us never forget that it was the Catholic Church that gave birth to the principal advances in music for the last two thousand years. We can do it again, first by adopting high standards for our highest and then by showing the world the way. &

*The best foundation for
music education of any
sort is chant.*

Communion

1 Cor 11: 24, 25

VIII

HOC cor- pus, * quod pro vo-bis tra- dé- tur:

hic ca- lix no-vi testamé-nti est in me- o sán-gui-

ne, di- cit Dó-mi- nus: hoc fá- ci-te, quo-ti- escúm-que

sú-mi- tis, in me- am commemo-ra-ti- ó- nem.

Sing to the Lord

By William Mahrt

Sing to the Lord,¹ a thoroughgoing replacement of *Music in Catholic Worship*, was approved by the bishops' conference at their meeting last November. It had been the subject of consultation in October 2006,² and had been redrafted extensively. At the actual meeting, according to a report of Helen Hitchcock in *Adoremus Bulletin*,³ the bishops reviewed over four hundred amendments, but they voted on the document without seeing the amended text. Originally it was proposed as binding liturgical law for the United States, which would have required Vatican confirmation, but it was decided not to present it as binding law but only as recommendation, thus avoiding the necessity of submitting it to the Vatican. The previous year, the bishops approved a directory for hymn texts and sent it for Vatican confirmation, which confirmation is

Everyone will find something in the document to like.

yet to be received. It seems unlikely that the Vatican would have confirmed the present document, and thus they settled for a lesser status. The result is a document with extensive recommendations about the employment of music in the liturgy. It incorporates the views of many without reconciling them: Everyone will find something in the document to like, but the astute will notice that these very things are in conflict with other statements in the same document. Essentially, it states the status

quo, with the addition of principles from Vatican documents; what comes from Vatican documents, however, does represent binding liturgical law.

There are distinct improvements over the previous document, most notably, that it takes seriously the existing liturgical legislation. There are copious citations from major sources of liturgical law.⁴ Yet these citations often seem to be imposed upon a document already written without them, and some authoritative statements, after being cited, are ignored in subsequent discussion

One of the most positive and fundamental statements in the document is that the priest celebrant⁵ should sing the most important parts that pertain to him. "The importance of the priest's participation in the liturgy, especially by singing, cannot be overemphasized" (§19). Seminaries should give sufficient training in singing, so that future priests can confidently sing their parts in the Mass (§20). In my opinion, this is the lynchpin of a successful sung liturgy. When the

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¹Available at <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/> (Paragraph citations in the text are from this document, occasionally specified as SttL.)

²See William Mahrt, "Toward a Revision of *Music in Catholic Worship*," *Sacred Music*, 134, no. 1 (Spring 2007), 54-60.

³Helen Hull Hitchcock, "Bishops Approve Three Liturgy Items at Busy Baltimore Meeting," *Adoremus Bulletin*, 13, no. 9 (December 2007-January 2008), 4.

⁴A quick tally produces the following results: sixty-nine citations from *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (hereafter cited as GIRM), twenty-four from *Lectionary for Mass*, twenty from *Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 1963, SC)*, and thirteen from *Musicam Sacram (Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, 1967, MS)*

⁵The term in the document is celebrant and not presider. Presider has always seemed to me to imply that the priest is just one of the congregation chosen to represent the people, as the president of a secular assembly is usually elected by the assembly, a view not entirely consistent with priestly ordination, the call from Christ, and the role as *alter Christus*.

priest sings his parts, the parts of congregation and choir fall naturally into place as integral parts of an organic whole. When the priest speaks these parts, the parts the congregation and choir sing seem to be less integral to the liturgy. That the parts are all sung gives them a continuity that binds them together into a coherent liturgy.

This notion goes back directly to *Musicam Sacram*, where three degrees of the employment of music are delineated: 1) the dialogues with the congregation (at the beginning, before the preface, before communion, and at the conclusion), the Sanctus and the Lord's Prayer, and the collects—principally the priest's parts plus the most central congregational parts; 2) the rest of the Ordinary of the Mass and the intercessions—principally the rest of the congregation's parts; 3) the sung Propers of the Mass (introit, gradual, Alleluia, offertory, communion) —principally the choir's parts, and possibly the lessons. *Musicam Sacram* proposes that these be instituted in order, that is, the first degree should be in place before the second and third degrees (MS ¶28–31).

Musicam Sacram places these degrees in the context of a general statement about the sung Mass: "The distinction between solemn, sung, and read Mass . . . is retained. . . . However, for the sung Mass different degrees of participation are put forward here for reasons of pastoral usefulness, so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing, according to the capabilities of each congregation" (MS ¶28). This compromise of the notion of a completely sung Mass, a high Mass, was allowed to permit congregations gradually to add sung parts according to their abilities, the ideal being gradually to achieve the high Mass. Since then, however, a new principle has been extrapolated, that of "progressive solemnity." *Sing to the Lord* proposes that the amount of singing be used to distinguish the most solemn feasts from the lesser days. The document cites *Musicam Sacram*, ¶7, but not the more pertinent ¶28, where the context is to achieve a completely sung Mass, not to differentiate the days.

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solemnity.*

It is quite true that traditionally, there was a principle of progressive solemnity, by which the chants of the Ordinary of the Mass were more or less elaborate according to the solemnity of the day; likewise the use of instruments was restricted during the seasons of Advent and Lent as a sign of the penitential character of these seasons. On the other hand, the chants for the penitential seasons are sometimes more elaborate and more beautiful. But there is nothing in the tradition that omits the singing of a text as a sign of lesser solemnity, except for, perhaps, the very depth of Holy Week. It is true that the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* concedes that parts of the Mass usually sung need not always be sung (¶40), but this is in the context of weekday Masses and for the accommodation of the abilities of the congregation. *Musicam Sacram* articulates the principle in ¶10, but this conflicts with its ¶28.

As a practical matter, progressive solemnity may be useful; the gradual introduction of sung parts is a much more realistic strategy than the sudden imposition of a completely sung service upon an unsuspecting congregation. Yet, there is good reason to be consistent about which pieces are sung from day to day, and the differentiation of the solemnity of days should be achieved principally through the kind of music employed, rather than how much. As a matter of principle, I would suggest that "progressive solemnity" does not properly serve the sung liturgy, since it omits the singing of certain parts of the Mass which should and could be sung and thus gives up on the achievement of a completely sung service. The result is what I have called the "middle Mass," neither high nor low, in which the beautiful and purposeful differences between the musical parts of the Mass are overshadowed by the more obvious differences between the spoken and sung parts.

It is encouraging that the document mentions the singing of the lessons;⁶ until now, this has been swept under the carpet. Traditionally in the high Mass, the lessons were always sung; the present document seems to recommend them on more solemn days, but there is no reason not to sing them as a matter of course. The continuity from prayer to lesson to chant at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word contributes to an increasing climax the peak of which is the gospel. When the lessons together with the authentic Gregorian gradual and Alleluia are sung and a gospel procession is made, a splendid progression of increasing importance is depicted in the liturgy.

It is encouraging that the document mentions the singing of the lessons.

Another positive statement and a distinct improvement in the present document is the acknowledgement of the role of Gregorian chant, quoting the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, which gives chant “pride of place in liturgical services,” (SttL ¶72)⁷ and citing the council’s mandate that the faithful be able to sing the Ordinary of the Mass together in Latin (¶74), and even asserting a minimum: “Each worshipping community in the United States, including all age groups and all ethnic groups,

should, at a minimum learn Kyrie XVI, Sanctus XVIII, and Agnus Dei XVIII.” A second stage of learning then includes Gloria VIII, the Credo, and the Pater Noster (¶75). Though the document does not mention it, the latter two are particularly desirable for international gatherings, especially for papal audiences, where everyone can participate in a common expression of worship. There is a touching story from the time immediately following the Second World War: Two trains arrived at the same platform, one from France and one from Germany, and the tension between the two groups disembarking was palpable. Then someone intoned “Credo in unum Deum,” and the entire crowd spontaneously continued singing the whole Creed, expressing a common faith which transcended the recent history of animosity. Would enough people today even know the Credo, were the same event even to occur now?

The normative status of chant is, however, qualified by citing the council’s “other things being equal.” This is elaborated (¶73) by saying that every bishop, pastor, and liturgical musician should be sensitive to the reception of chants when newly introduced to a congregation. Who could dispute that, in principle? Yet why is such a qualification made only for chant, when it should apply equally well to any music newly introduced? How many of us have heard “other things are never equal,” when we ask to sing the church’s normative music?

The endorsement of chant is thus not as strong as it could have been, and should have been. Several reasons in support of chant are given, reasons of tradition, universality, and contemplation. The principal reason, however, is not given—that the chant is integral to the Roman rite, it sets its normative texts, and that it uniquely expresses the nature of each of its liturgical actions.⁸ Pope John Paul II expressed it succinctly:

⁶¶153; there was no mention of it in *Music in Catholic Worship*, though *Musica Sacram* provided for it with reservations (¶31e).

⁷SC ¶116; it should be noted that the Latin for the phrase “pride of place” is *principium locum*. All too often, this phrase seems to have been taken to mean a place of honor, when, if it were given a stronger translation, it would mean first place.

⁸See William Mahrt, “Gregorian Chant as a Paradigm of Sacred Music,” *Sacred Music*, 133, no. 1 (Spring 2006), 5–14.

Liturgical music must meet the specific prerequisites of the liturgy: full adherence to the text it presents, synchronization with the time and moment in the liturgy for which it is intended, appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite. The various moments in the liturgy require a musical expression of their own. From time to time this must fittingly bring out the nature proper to a specific rite, now proclaiming God's marvels, now expressing praise, supplication, or even sorrow for the experience of human suffering which, however, faith opens to the prospect of Christian hope.⁹

This is, of course, a problem that is wider than the present document. Ever since *Musica Sacra* (1967), the admission of *alius cantus aptus*, "the anthrax in the envelope" according to Lazlo Dobszay, any other suitable song in place of the proper chants, has meant in practice the virtual abandonment of the Gregorian proper. The present document even represents a progressive erosion of the priorities: for example, the Alleluia verse: "The verses are, as a rule, taken from the lectionary for Mass," (¶161) but the General Instruction states "the verses are taken from the lectionary or the gradual," (GIRM ¶62a) without expressing a preference.

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There has, in fact, been a progressive conversion of the Alleluia into another genre that is prejudicial to the Gregorian Alleluia. The present document refers to it only as the gospel acclamation, stating its function to be the welcoming of the Lord in the gospel by the faithful. But the Gregorian Alleluia has two functions: it comes as a meditation chant following upon the reading of the second lesson; as such it is even more melismatic than the gradual, and this contributes to an increasing sense of anticipation of the singing of the gospel, and this is its second purpose—to prepare the congregation to hear the gospel. This is a function more fundamental to the liturgy than the act of the congregation welcoming the Lord, since it prepares the congregation internally as well as externally for the high point of the whole liturgy of the word, the hearing of the gospel—the congregation welcomes the Lord best by being prepared sensitively to hear the gospel.

The problem, wider than the present document, is that the ultimate in Gregorian chants, the gradual, tract, and Alleluia, chants whose liturgical function represents a profound entrance by the congregation into the ethos of the liturgy of the word, have gradually been replaced by, at best, pieces from the divine offices, which were composed for quite different purposes—e.g., the antiphon with the three-fold Alleluia as a text from the Easter Vigil—or, worse, mediocre refrains, repeated too frequently. The congregation's rightful participation in the liturgy of the word is the sympathetic and in-depth hearing of the Word itself. I have consistently maintained and continue to maintain that this fundamental participation is achieved in a far better and more profound way when they hear a gradual or Alleluia beautifully sung than when they are asked to repeat a musically impoverished refrain with similarly impoverished verses. I concur with the notion that these parts should be sung, but I maintain that their simpler forms are only an intermediate step in achieving their singing in the authentic Gregorian forms, where possible, or a practical solution for Masses where a choir cannot yet sing the more elaborate chants or does not sing at all.¹⁰

⁹*Chirograph for the Centenary of the Motu Proprio "Tra le Sollecitudini" on Sacred Music*, ¶5
<http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20031203_musicasacra_en.html>

¹⁰I will address this issue more substantially in a subsequent article.

Much discussion of repertory throughout the document passes over the facts that Gregorian chant sets the normative texts of the liturgy and that it uniquely expresses the nature of each liturgical action. A particular case in point has to do with the texts of introits and communions. The texts in the *Graduale Romanum* are not the same as those of the *Missale Romanum*, and it is those of the missal which are printed in the disposable missals used in the parishes. I have often been asked, "Where can I find the Gregorian chants for the introits and communions in the missal?" The answer is, you cannot find them, because they were provided for use in spoken Masses only. Christoph Tietze, in these pages, sets out the documentation of this issue: for sung settings, even to music other than Gregorian chant, the texts of the *Graduale Romanum* are to be used.¹¹ The present document says only that they may be used (§77). The bishops were to have voted upon a proposal to amend the American text of the GIRM to prescribe the texts of the *Graduale Romanum* for all sung settings, but for some reason, this proposal was withdrawn. However, with the growing incorporation of Gregorian chants into our liturgies, missal publishers should now be persuaded to include both texts.

One is grateful that the place of the organ is asserted: among instruments, it is accorded "pride of place" (§87). It is praised for its role in accompanying congregational singing, improvisation to accompany the completion of a liturgical action, and playing the great repertory of organ literature, whether for the liturgy or for sacred concerts. The recommendation of other instruments, however, raises a few questions. Instrumentalists are encouraged to play music from the treasury of sacred music, but what music for instrumentalists is meant? Is it the church sonatas of the seventeenth century, requiring an ensemble of string players and keyboard? One hopes it is not a recommendation that the treasury of organ music be played upon the piano or that secular piano music be played.

A curious omission from the document is that there is no mention of the special status of sacred polyphony.

The wider issue that this raises is the suitability of other instruments. The document does not state the principle reason for the priority of the organ: it is primarily a sacred instrument. Other instruments do not share that distinction. A citation of Old Testament usage of "cymbals, harps, lyres, and trumpets" (§89) begs the question of their associations in the present culture. The document proceeds to allow "wind, stringed, or percussion instruments . . . according to longstanding local usage, provided they are truly apt for sacred use or can be rendered apt" (§90).¹² This avoids the vexed issue of whether instruments with strong associations with popular music, such as those of a rock band, but even the piano, are really apt for sacred use.

A curious omission from the document is that there is no mention of the special status of sacred polyphony, as stated by the Constitution on the Liturgy.¹³ It mentions a general use of the treasure of sacred music among musics of various periods, styles, and cultures (§30), and again, in a general statement about the role of sacred music in Catholic schools, music from the past is mentioned alongside other repertories (54), but with no hint that there should be any priority.

¹¹Christoph Tietze, "Graduale or Missale: The Confusion Resolved," *Sacred Music*, 133, no. 4 (Winter 2006), 4–13.

¹²§393; This citation is from the English translation, which includes authorized American adaptations; this paragraph in the original *Institutio Generalis* (2000) mentions only "instrumenta musica," without further specification.

¹³"Other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action." SC §116.

There are, alas, some more negative aspects to the document, most of which are survivals from *Music in Catholic Worship*. Perhaps the most pervasive of these is the anthropocentric focus upon the action of the congregation and its external participation, rather than being in balance with a theocentric focus upon giving glory to God. Paragraph 125 states “The primary role of music in the liturgy is to help the members of the gathered assembly¹⁴ to join themselves with the action of Christ and to give voice to the gift of faith.” It must be acknowledged that this comes after having said that “the praise and adoration of God leads to music taking on a far greater dimension,” but the emphasis in the document is mainly upon what the congregation does, and how music expresses their faith; even the action of Christ is mentioned in the context of how the assembly joins itself to it. I would have said that music has three functions in the liturgy, to give glory to God, to enhance the beauty and sacredness of the liturgy, and to assist in the aedification of the faithful. But a quotation of the purpose of music from the council is even more succinct: “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.”¹⁵ Both of these things are theocentric, the first focusing upon the object of what we do, the second focusing upon what God does for us. Neither focuses only upon what we do.

Related to this is an emphasis upon external participation. A good example is the discussion of music during the communion procession. “The singing of the people should be preeminent” (¶189). The purpose of the music is “to express the communicants’ union in spirit by means of the unity of their voices, to show joy of heart, and to highlight more clearly the ‘communitarian’ nature of the procession to receive Communion.” It is recommended that they sing easily memorized refrains, “limited in number and repeated often.” (¶192) There is no mention of Who is received in communion or the possibility of singing praise and adoration of Him. The focus is upon the attitude of the congregation. There is no addressing

A tendency to over-manage the congregation seems to be in evidence.

of the problem that a devout person may not want to be providing the musical accompaniment to his own procession, but rather be recollecting for that moment when the Lord Himself is received. “Easily-memorized refrains . . . repeated often” is a prescription for triviality. A tendency to over-manage the congregation seems to be in evidence.

There is, however, a statement about the need for participation to be internal, and it is strengthened by a quotation from Pope John Paul II (SttL, ¶12):

In a culture which neither favors nor fosters meditative quiet, the art of interior listening is learned only with difficulty. Here we see how the liturgy, though it must always be properly inculturated, must also be countercultural.

The context of this statement is even more powerful, and would have made an even stronger statement about listening:

Active participation does not preclude the active passivity of silence, stillness, and listening; indeed it demands it. Worshipers are not passive, for instance,

¹⁴The document consistently uses the word “assembly,” rather than “congregation;” while these terms generally have the same meaning, the difference is that the first is principally used in secular contexts, the second in sacred; why do we use the term that has greater secular contexts?

¹⁵SC ¶112.

when listening to the readings or the homily, or following the prayers of the celebrant, and the chants and music of the liturgy. These are experiences of silence and stillness, but they are in their own way profoundly active. In a culture . . .¹⁶

Music in Catholic Worship famously proposed three judgments: musical, liturgical, and pastoral, and even suggested by placing it first that the musical judgment was prior to the other two, though not final. It made a statement about the artistic quality of the music:

To admit the cheap, the trite, the musical cliché often found in popular songs for the purpose of “instant liturgy” is to cheapen the liturgy, to expose it to ridicule, and to invite failure.¹⁷

This statement turned out to be prophetic, for who has not heard the cheap and trite regularly performed in the liturgy? who would have thought that such a statement had been made in 1972? The seeming priority of the musical judgment in the 1972 document was relegated to the dustbin before the ink was dry on it. So nothing will change, because the present document

The musical judgment in the 1972 document was relegated to the dustbin before the ink was dry.

denies the priority of any of the three judgments, placing the musical judgment last, devoting the least attention to it, and giving the criterion of excellence no more than the statement quoted above, this in a document ostensibly about music.

The discussion of the musical judgment is concluded by a serious misquotation of the Second Vatican Council. “The church has not adopted any particular style of art as her own” (SC ¶123), concluding that the church freely welcomes various styles of music to

the liturgy. There are two things wrong with this statement: it comes from the chapter on sacred art and was said about art and architecture. The church has not adopted Romanesque or Gothic or any other style as canonical, but when it comes to music, the church has acknowledged the priority of Gregorian chant and to a lesser degree polyphony. These are styles and they do have priority.

Similarly, even though the document regularly uses terms like sacred music and sacred liturgy, there is practically nothing about what constitutes the sacred and its role in the liturgy. This would be, of course, a controversial topic, since so many of the styles now adopted into liturgical practice are blatantly secular. It seems that as long as the texts are acceptable, no judgments from this document will concern the acceptability of musical styles, however secular—until it comes to weddings and funerals. Finally, a statement comes forth in the context of requests by parties to a wedding that their favorite song be included: “Secular music . . . is not appropriate for the sacred liturgy” (¶220). The same statement is repeated for funerals (¶246).

The discussion of funerals is the occasion of another misrepresentation—in the statement about the purpose of funerals: “The church’s funeral rites offer thanksgiving to God for the gift of life that has been returned to him.” If one examines the proper texts for the funeral Mass, one finds quite a different picture: there among reminders of eternal life and the resurrection are prayers for the repose of the soul of the departed. Nowhere in the fourteen paragraphs on the music for funerals does this even receive a mention. Even for those of the strongest faith, the death of a beloved is a deprivation, and the funeral must be the occasion for mourning. Likewise,

¹⁶Address of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska, October 9, 1998, ¶3.

¹⁷*Music in Catholic Worship*, ¶26.

the Gregorian chants for the Requiem Mass are among the most beloved of chants still cherished by the Catholic faithful, because the need for the objectification of mourning is so strongly fulfilled by the chant. There is not a peep in the discussion of funerals about chant. I remember the rather secular university service held upon the death of a young woman on the faculty, for whom my choir subsequently sang a Requiem Mass. I later saw a colleague from the woman's department—an expert on Nietzsche—who said that he had been to the university service and it had torn him apart; he had then come to the Gregorian Mass and told me that although he was not a believer he had found consolation in it, “a fitting closure to a life.”

In spite of the fact that this is a document on music, there is precious little discussion of intrinsically musical matters. Only ¶124 asserts the affective side of music, as difficult to describe, even though it is very important and should be taken into account. So much more could be said about the intrinsic musical characteristics of chant, polyphony, hymnody, and instrumental music in a sacred context. *Sacred Music* will continue to address such issues, particularly since they are crucial to decisions about what music to incorporate into the liturgy. There is even less about beauty, a crucial criterion for liturgy, in my estimation. A couple of references in passing (¶83, 118) show tantalizing possibilities, but they are not realized.

*We will all find the paragraphs
we like and quote them, but
their authority is ambiguous.*

Although the bishops have rightly been concerned about the soundness of the texts being sung in the liturgy, there seems not to be a similar concern about the quality of the music; the document seems to encourage the continuation of existing repertoires, with little further attention to quality. Still, our task is to work for the improvement of the intrinsic qualities of liturgical music. This is an educational function; one searches in vain for any statement in the document that the function of a musician is to educate the congregation in what is sacred and what is beautiful, to raise their level of participation in the liturgy by giving them better music that they can receive as their own.

What, then, are we to make of this document? We will all find the paragraphs we like and quote them, but their authority is ambiguous: when the document quotes established liturgical law, such as *Musica Sacram* and the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, their authority is secure; we might as well quote the respective documents. For the rest, since the bishops did not submit them for ratification to the Vatican, they are in a kind of limbo, not liturgical law, but ratified by the bishops. But perhaps like the doctrine of limbo itself, the document will find itself obsolete in due time. We might view it as a transitional document—the revival of Gregorian chant and excellent liturgical music will progress apace, and a subsequent document, though it may only restate the status quo, will have to accommodate those things *Sacred Music* has perpetually advocated: the sacred and the beautiful as represented by the priority of Gregorian chant and classical polyphony in the service of the liturgy.¹⁸ ❧

¹⁸I have addressed only a few of the many issues Sing to the Lord raises, the ones I have thought most pertinent, but discussion of this document will continue for some time. I would be interested in the views of readers, who could contact me at mahrt@stanford.edu.

The New Youth Mass

By Arlene Oost-Zinner and Jeffrey Tucker

People deserve better liturgy. The Church's public prayer needs to be heard and sung without the intervention of pop styles and personality displays. However, a change imposed from above, without sufficient preparation, could provoke a backlash.

During Advent, our schola was invited to participate in an interesting experiment. Several priests in Montgomery, Alabama, were ready to forge ahead in a new liturgical direction. They hoped to provide a demonstration project for the parish (St. Bede's) that would be compelling enough for parishioners themselves to push for change from below.

This hope stemmed from what is essentially a pastoral concern. A Tridentine option was not viable in this case. It would be attended only by a handful, and the rest of the mainstream of the parish Masses would be left unchanged. They couldn't risk a failed experiment that might have doomed the prospects for long-term reform.

Here is what these priests decided to do. They considered the Sunday Mass schedule and the possibility of using one of the regularly scheduled Masses as the experiment. They settled on the one they considered to be most open to new things: the youth Mass at 5pm on Sunday evening. The next step was for the priests to invite the St. Cecilia Schola from Auburn, 45 miles north of Montgomery.

The Church's public prayer needs to be heard and sung without the intervention of pop styles and personality displays.

We were charged with putting together a music program, not as a performance group but as teachers and helpers. Our goal was to construct a program that could be self-sustaining after we left: a musical wire frame.

The priests wanted no musical instruments, and singing without them is our specialization. The idea here is to reduce to the fundamentals and let the primary liturgical instrument, the human voice, carry the entire liturgy.

Our first step, in view of the Roman Rite ideal, was to reduce the number of hymns to its bare most minimum. Instead of a processional hymn, we used a variation of the Psalm-tone propers found in the *Anglican Use Gradual*. We changed some words so that they would accord with modern Catholic usage ("Holy Ghost" to "Holy Spirit"). We did the same with the sung offertory proper. (There is no official translation of the sung propers of the Roman Gradual, so this was not an issue.)

The communion chant from the Roman Gradual is what we chose as the teaching tool for the parish schola. We sang the full chant and psalms each week. In addition, we taught them several chant hymns suitable for Advent. In each case, singers were asked to read the neumes and four-lined staves, not modern notes. This way, they could quickly overcome the intimidation factor.

For the recessional hymn, we used no accompaniment. We also taught and sang simple motets such as "Lord For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake" by Richard Farrant and "Laudate Nomen Domine" by Christopher Tye. (An edition is offered below.)

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The Gospel was sung. The Canon was sung. The Our Father was sung. The ordinary setting we used began with Kyrie XII, which was easily learned by the congregation.

VIII

K Y-ri- e * e- lé- i-son. iij. Christe e-lé- i-son. iij. Ký-ri- e e- lé- i-son. ij. Ký-ri- e * e-lé- i-son.

The remaining ordinary parts, Mass XVIII, were not our favorites simply because they are overused. The idea, however, is that they are somewhat familiar to people, and because there was so much else new, these settings would keep the liturgy grounded in what people felt comfortable with.

There was plenty of incense on hand, and liturgical torches were borrowed from a parish in town that had them leftover from the old days. The Mass was said mostly in English.

Most dramatically, the Mass was said *ad orientem*. On the First Sunday of Advent, the reason was explained in detail. Mass is shaped around the idea of a people of God in procession toward the East, as led by the priest *in persona Christi*. The homilist explained further that he finds looking at people from the altar to be a distraction for him, and he suspects that his own face and the personality it reveals is a distraction for the people, who should be praying.

Though new to the congregation, this aspect of the liturgy turned out to be completely non-controversial in the end. Indeed, each successive week was more crowded than the last. The final liturgy was the most packed of all of the Masses, and the youth were particularly engaged. In the entire season of these beautiful Masses, there was not one word of complaint, and the priests received unrelenting praise.

We were particularly struck by how beneficial it was for them to have tutoring on three successive weeks (the fourth Mass was done entirely by the parish schola). As valuable as weekend workshops are, the experience of preparing Mass over several weeks is much more so.

One final sociological note that we found fascinating. At the first rehearsal, a young man who looked to be about 19-years old walked up to sing. He held a blue book in his hand: the *Graduale Romanum* for the ordinary form, and had a look of great confidence and anticipation on his face.

We welcomed him and embraced him. In fact, we had already developed a name for this archetype because we've seen them coming to so many workshops: "chant jock." The term well describes this new generation of young men who see sacred music as a venue through which to serve the faith. ☞

Laudate nomen Domini

Christopher Tye

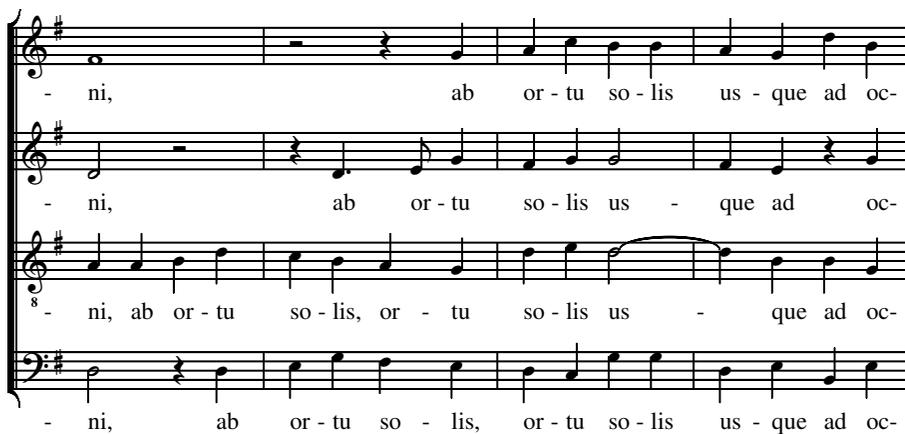


Soprani
Lau - da - te no - men Do - mi - ni, vos ser - vi Do - mi -

Contralti
Lau - da - te no - men Do - mi - ni, vos ser - vi Do - mi -

Tenori
Lau - da - te no - men Do - mi - ni, vos ser - vi Do - mi -

Bassi
Lau - da - te no - men Do - mi - ni, vos ser - vi Do - mi -



- ni, ab or - tu so - lis us - que ad oc-

- ni, ab or - tu so - lis us - que ad oc-

- ni, ab or - tu so - lis, or - tu so - lis us - que ad oc-

- ni, ab or - tu so - lis, or - tu so - lis us - que ad oc-

- ca - sum e - jus. De - cre - ta De - i jus - ta sunt, et

- ca - sum e - jus. De - cre - ta De - i jus - ta sunt, et

- ca - sum e - jus. De - cre - ta De - i jus - ta sunt, et

- ca - sum e - jus. De - cre - ta De - i jus - ta sunt, et

cor ex - hi - la - rant. Lau - da - te De - um,

cor ex - hi - la - rant. Lau - da - te De - um,

cor ex - hi - la - rant. Lau - da - te De - um, De - um, prin -

cor ex - hi - la - rant. Lau - da - te De - um, prin - ci -

- da - te De - um, prin - ci - pes et om - nes po - pu - li.

prin - ci - pes et om - nes po - pu - li, et om - nes po - pu - li.

- ci - pes et om - nes po - pu - li, po - pu - li.

- pes et om - nes po - pu - li, et om - nes po - pu - li.

NEWS

The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale's Thirty-Fourth Season

By Virginia Schubert

On October 21, 2007 the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale began its thirty-fourth season of singing the great Masses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with professional orchestra in the context of the sacred liturgy of the Mass for which they were composed. This season is dedicated to our founding director, Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, who died on April 20, 2007.

The Chorale has sung at the 10 a.m. Sunday Latin High Mass at the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, Minnesota since 1974. Every year it sings between twenty-five and thirty Latin High Masses with orchestra from October through the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, excluding Advent and Lent, when instrumental accompaniment is restricted. The Chorale is under the direction of Dr. Robert L. Peterson, Director of Choral Music at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Peterson was Monsignor Schuler's assistant for the last several years and was selected by Monsignor to carry on his work with the Chorale.

The St. Agnes Schola, under the direction of Paul W. LeVoir, sings the Gregorian Proper of the Mass every Sunday and is featured at the High Masses on the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the summer when the Chorale does not sing. Mary E. LeVoir is the organist.

The Chorale's thirty-fourth season began at the 10 a.m. High Mass on October 21, 2007, with the singing of Joseph Haydn's *Pauken Mass*. This Mass is especially meaningful to the Chorale because it was during the singing of this Mass by the Chorale in 1974 at the Alte Peterskirche in Munich that Monsignor Schuler was inspired to begin the program of orchestral Masses at St. Agnes. The Chorale and the Dallas Catholic Choir were on a pilgrimage throughout Europe at the time which culminated at the Sixth International Church Music Congress in Salzburg where they represented the United States. During the current season the Chorale sang the Mozart *Requiem* for the evening High Mass on the Commemoration of All Souls. The Mozart *Requiem* will also be sung at a Mass in memory of Monsignor Schuler on April 22, 2008. Other highlights of the repertory include Gounod's *Saint Cecilia Mass* on the feast of St. Agnes, January 20, 2008, and a Mass (opus 87) by Heinrich von Herzogenberg on April 20, 2008.

The repertory of the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale corresponds to the magnificent and acoustically superb Baroque Church of St. Agnes. The parish was founded in 1887 to serve the German-speaking community, many of them immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1909. The building was modeled after Kloster Schlägl, a Praemonstratensian abbey in Upper Austria, not far from the Bomerwald, an area from which many St. Agnes people had emigrated. The beautiful onion tower, rising some 205 feet above the street, beckons worshippers as do the bells, which call the faithful to Mass. The interior of the church is a magnificent space, which was completed in authentic Baroque style for the centennial of the parish in 1987 when Monsignor Schuler was pastor.

The Latin High Mass at St. Agnes is carried out with great reverence and solemnity using the 1970 Missal of Pope Paul VI. At each High Mass the celebrant is assisted by two deacons and there are 13 vested altar boys. In all more than 70 altar boys are trained to serve Mass at St. Agnes. Fr. John L. Ubel, pastor of the Church of St. Agnes, is most often the celebrant of the High

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Mass. He is a great supporter of the Chorale and the music program at St. Agnes. In addition to the Chorale and the Schola, a Chamber Choir, directed by Donna May, sings Renaissance polyphonic Masses once a month at the anticipated Mass on Saturday evening.

We would like to invite readers of *Sacred Music* to consult the St. Agnes website, www.stagnes.net, for the full music program. The program of the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale is financially supported to a large extent by the Friends of the Chorale. All contributions are tax deductible. The Chorale's mailing address is: Twin Cities Catholic Chorale, P.O. Box 4234, St. Paul, MN 55104.

Report on Rocky Mountain Region Workshop

The Rocky Mountain Region Sacred Music Workshop, St. Mary's Cathedral in Colorado Springs, Colorado, January 18–19, 2008, was very well attended, with over one hundred registrants—about eighty of whom were able to sing for the Mass with the bishop presiding on Saturday afternoon.

The first singing session was led by Scott Turkington of the Stamford Schola Gregoriana, who began by introducing the attendees to singing chant with the Kyrie XI (Orbis Factor). The method of introducing the group (many of whom were newcomers to the chant world) to chant by the "rote" method was very effective. By doing this, all were able to hear the simplicity and beauty of the unison chant and also see that they, too, could sing it without being overwhelmed by the difference in the notation.

After the introduction, Turkington dug into explaining the way the notation is written and how to read it. Over the course of the weekend, the attendees learned the basics of understanding the neumes, and several other wonderful chant pieces that were used for the Mass on Saturday. The chants sung included a very nice psalm setting from the Chabanel psalm project online, the Alleluia proper for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Sanctus XI, and the Gloria XV. A wonderful setting of a combination of the English translation of the proper introit—*Omnis Terra*—and the Latin introit (sung by our two conductors) was also prepared. The two conductors also sang the proper communion chant, *Laetabimur*.

Dr. Horst Buchholz, of St. John Vianney Seminary, the Denver Cathedral, and the Denver Philharmonic directed the polyphony for the weekend. The choir was able to sing some beautiful polyphony (a cappella) and get a sense of some of the possibilities available to us in digging into the church's beautiful motets. The pieces we sang for the workshop included: *Iubilate Deo* (Lassus), *All People that On Earth Do Dwell*, *Agnus Dei: M.L'hora Passa* (Viadana), and *If Ye Love Me* (Tallis). As a postlude, Dr. Buchholz played a wonderful organ selection.

Dr. Horst Buchholz gave a very interesting lecture entitled "Benedict XVI on Music" in which the attendees were given a very clear and thoughtful presentation of Pope Benedict's writings on Music in the liturgy.

Prior to the Saturday afternoon Mass, a question and answer session was also offered. Many practical questions about the application of what we learned and how to move forward toward liturgical reform were asked and answered.

The acoustics of the cathedral were very nice, perfectly suited to the chant and polyphony. Those same live acoustics also made it difficult at times to stay precisely in time with each other with such a large group participating and spread out across the space. This was a great learning experience for us all. Most Rev. Michael Sheridan, Bishop of Colorado Springs, was very gracious in his comments about the music during the Mass. The attendees sincerely appreciated the support the Diocese of Colorado Springs offered to this project.

The hospitality, organization, schedule, meals, and planning by the hosts of the workshop were wonderful. Many wonderful publications and recordings of chant were made available by Aquinas and More Catholic Goods of Colorado Springs. As part of the packet of materials, the attendees each received a copy of the *Liber Cantualis*, the *Jubilare Deo* booklet, and a copy of the book, *A Gregorian Chant Handbook*, by William Tortolano. With these tools, all attendees can continue their path to learning to sing chant after the workshop as well.

Report on San Diego, California, Workshop

Gregorian Chant may have “pride of place” among all forms of liturgical music, according to Vatican II, but few contemporary Catholics are able to sing it.

That is something that Mary Ann Carr-Wilson, and primary instructor at the workshop, Kathy Reinheimer of Reno, Nevada, both of whom led a recent Gregorian Chant Workshop in San Diego, would like to change.

The workshop, titled “An Introduction to Sung Prayer,” was held December 1, 2007, at Mission San Diego de Alcalá. Some 40 people attended the workshop, which included two separate presentations, several opportunities for singing, a Mass celebrated by San Diego Auxiliary Bishop Salvatore Cordileone, and a question-and-answer session.

“I think a workshop like this is way overdue, decades overdue,” said Bishop Cordileone, who describes Gregorian Chant as a “treasure of the church” that “shouldn’t be hidden, kept under a bushel basket.”

“I see the purpose of this workshop as trying to finally get around to doing what the church has been asking us to do for over 100 years,” the Bishop added, referring to the calls of both the Second Vatican Council and popes since Pope Pius X.

Wilson hopes that such workshop can continue in San Diego. She said she also hopes the future will bring workshops specifically tailored for priests and seminarians, choir directors, singers, and others with a connection to liturgical music.

Report on the Shreveport, Louisiana, Workshop

The Cathedral of St. John Berchmans in Shreveport, Louisiana, held a Sacred Music Workshop on November 30–December 1, 2007. Attended by 40–45 singers, it was a great success for our schola. The first such workshop offered at the cathedral, it focused mainly on Gregorian chant and included some simple polyphony. Saturday afternoon, at the end of the workshop, participants sang for the 4:00 pm Novus Ordo Latin Mass at our beautiful cathedral.

Organized and sponsored by the Schola Cantorum of St. John Berchmans, a CMAA parish member, it was directed by Dr. Kurt Poterack of Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia. Dr. Poterack also lectured on “Recent (1903–present) Papal Documents on Liturgical Music” and “Pope Benedict XVI on Sacred Music.”

At this first of what we hope will be many workshops, we had many attendees not familiar with reading chant notation or the singing techniques unique to chant. Dr. Poterack helped all the attendees get a sense of the unique Gregorian chant sound we try to achieve. His teaching was of great benefit to the schola, who had only been singing together approximately ten months.

During the workshop, the group was split into more- and less-experienced chant singers at certain times. One of Dr. Poterack’s former students, Matthew Dittert, who is a music director at a parish in Houston, Texas, assisted with the chant ordinaries with one group, which allowed Dr. Poterack to work with a smaller group learning the introit, Alleluia and communion proper to

the First Sunday in Advent. The entire group sang the Kyrie, Sanctus and Agnus Dei from Mass XVII, as well as Credo III, Pater Noster and all Mass responses in Latin.

In addition to chant pieces, the group sang a Seasonal Psalm setting by Dr. Poterack, Palestina's Alma Redemptoris Mater, and a setting of Veni Emmanuel by Father Robert Skeris.

Attendees hailed from Louisiana, primarily from the Shreveport diocese, with several parishes represented. We were also very pleased to have visitors from the Lafayette, Louisiana area, including schola members from Our Lady of Fatima (a CMAA parish member) visiting. Father Jason Vidrine, from Our Lady of Wisdom in Lafayette, attended and concelebrated the Mass with our rector, Father Peter Mangum.

One of our schola members was able to record the workshop, including lectures and the Mass. We expect to edit the recordings and distribute CD's to attendees who wish to have copies.

According to feedback received from attendees, they benefited enormously from Dr. Poterack's skillful directing and teaching. Attendees expressed a wish that they could have had more time. We also greatly appreciate the assistance given by Matthew Dittert, which allowed us to split the group and use our time more effectively.

We learned a great deal from this first Sacred Music Workshop. It gave a renewed sense of energy and enthusiasm to our schola and a desire to continue to improve. We have a great feeling of gratitude toward Father Peter Mangum for providing the impetus and encouragement for the formation and continuation of the schola. Without his support, it is doubtful that our schola would even be in existence, much less having the opportunity to host such a workshop.

Report on Kokomo, Indiana, Workshop

Weeks before the workshop we notified, by mail, all the parishes in our diocese in Indiana of the upcoming workshop. Amy Zuberbueler was our instructor for the one-and-a-half-day event. There were twenty participants in attendance, fifteen from our parish, four additional from our diocese (Diocese of Lafayette in Indiana) and one from the Indianapolis diocese in Indiana.

On Friday, Amy began with a brief history of chant, then introduced the registrants to legato, ensemble sound, scales, and solfege. On Saturday, the focus was on learning the modes and neumes, rhythm and conducting, using a bit of the Ward Method. Breakfast and lunch were provided for all participants.

We learned the Mass XI (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei) as well as the communion (Dominus Regit Me) for the Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time. We also learned an "Alleluia" and psalm tone for mode 8, as well *Jesu Dulcis Memoria*. The workshop culminated with the Saturday night vigil Mass in our beautiful church.

Other hymns sung were Elgar's *Ave Verum* (our schola learned this at the colloquium) and *Panis Angelicus*.

Our schola has been singing for about 4 years, so our parishioners are somewhat familiar with hearing and appreciating the traditional sacred chant and we were pleased to be able to host the workshop for those interested in learning the very basics of chant.

Report on Auburn, Alabama, Workshop

The fifth year of the sacred music workshop of the St. Cecilia Schola, attached to St. Michael's Catholic Church in Auburn, Alabama, was a tremendous success. Seventy singers from all across the region, under the direction of Maestro Wilko Brouwers of the Netherlands, gathered to sing

Gregorian chant and music of the Renaissance. The workshop began on Friday morning February 1, and culminated in a vigil Mass the next evening at which the workshop choir sang the music they had learned and practiced.

The workshop began with a tutorial on the basics of Gregorian chant: reading and singing chant notation, style and text, and the place of chant in the Roman Rite. The following day focused on the music that grew out of chant: polyphony. But types of music were specifically named by the Second Vatican Council as appropriate for Catholic liturgy. Chant in particular was cited as holding pride of place.

Maestro Brouwers, director of the Monteverdi Kamerkoor Utrecht and the Ward Center in Holland, led the sessions with his legendary mastery and charisma. A notable feature of this year was the enhanced level of expertise of the singers themselves. Probably as many as half of the attendees had experience in chant. Many others were starting chant scholas in their parish and were looking to broaden their abilities to read, sing, and conduct, and, most of all, to understand the way in which chant and polyphony can be integrated into the structure of the Mass.

The repertoire was more ambitious than in previous years. Three propers of the Mass were sung in accordance with Roman Rite liturgical books: the introit *Laetetur cor quaeretium*, the offertory *Bonum est confiteri*, and the communion *Beati mundo corde* (which was unusually long and difficult). For offertory, the chant, sung with psalm verses from the Nova Vulgata, was followed by a spectacular, 5-part setting of the same proper text by G.A. Palestrina. His *Bonum est confiteri* was the most challenging task that the workshop undertook in two days. The result of singing both the chant and the polyphony setting of this text was a rare instance in which the music achieved something close to the ideal model as presented in the musical rubrics of the Roman Rite.

Following communion, the choir sang a *Magnificat* setting by Orlando di Lasso. Though this piece is also from the Renaissance tradition, it had a different sound and feel from the Palestrina piece. In addition, two English hymns were sung as a meditation and a recessional.

The Ordinary of the Mass was taken from several parts of the *Kyriale*, the Church's book of chant for the people. The Kyrie was from Mass XII (*Pater Cuncta*). The Gloria was the Ambrosian melody, sung with alternating high and low voices. The Sanctus was from Mass XIII. The Agnus was also from Mass XIII. The psalm was sung according to psalm tone written by a member of the St. Cecilia Schola and the verses were adapted from an eighteenth-century choral setting. The Alleluia was from the *Graduale Simplex*. The Pater Noster was sung in English with a setting that reflected the original Gregorian melody.

A casual session over lunch covered many issues in sacred music today, such as what liturgical books choir members need, the widespread confusion over language in understanding parts of the Mass, and the practical difficulties and solutions that come with the goal of starting a parish schola.

The celebrant of the liturgy was Monsignor William Skoneki, who thanked both the director and the workshop choir for their hard work and contribution to preserving and enlivening the liturgical tradition of the Church.

The St. Cecilia Schola hopes to continue its educational work in the future with additional programs and workshops. For more information, write contact@ceciliaschola.org

William Byrd Festival, Summer 2007

The Tenth Annual William Byrd Festival was celebrated in Portland, Oregon, August 11–26, with services, lectures, and concerts. The music was sung by Cantores in Ecclesia, Dean Applegate,

director; the principal conductor of festival performances was Richard Marlow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

The services included Pontifical Masses celebrated by Bishop Basil Meeking, Bishop Emeritus of Christchurch, New Zealand and special assistant to Francis Cardinal George of Chicago. Three Masses were in the Ordinary Form on the Sundays, with William Byrd's Masses for three, four, and five voices sung by Cantores in Ecclesia directed by Dr. Marlow with chant sung by the children's choir of Cantores in Ecclesia, directed by Dean Applegate; that for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was a Solemn Pontifical Mass in the Extraordinary Form, with a plainsong ordinary and Byrd's propers from the *Gradualia*, directed by Kerry McCarthy of Duke University; an Anglican evensong included the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis from Byrd's *Great Service*, psalms arranged after Byrd by Richard Marlow, and motets by Byrd.

Lectures included "Byrd's Unpublished Motets" by David Trendell, King's College, London; "Byrd's Great Service: the Jewel in the Crown of Anglican Music" by Richard Turbet, University of Aberdeen; "Extremes Within the Gradualia: Easter Versus Saints Peter and Paul" by William Mahrt, Stanford University; as well as a pre-concert lecture by Kerry McCarthy and pre-Mass lectures by William Mahrt.

Concerts included "Framed to the Life of the Words," a concert of Byrd's works from *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets* (1611) by mezzo-soprano, Clare Wilkinson, accompanied by organist and harpsichordist, Mark Williams, with London actor, Mark Denham reading from selections from the pen of William Byrd; and an organ recital "Byrd and his Tudor Friends," keyboard music from late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, by Mark Williams. The Festival Concert, included music from William Byrd's *Gradualia* of 1607, observing the four-hundredth anniversary of its publication—Dr. Marlow conducted Cantores in Ecclesia in two sets of liturgical pieces, the complete cycles for Easter Sunday and the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul as well as *Venite exsultemus*, the Venite from the Great Service, and *Peccavi super numerum*. Organ works of Byrd played by Mark Williams complemented the pieces for the choir.

The Eleventh Annual Byrd Festival will take place on August 9–24, 2008, and will continue the focus upon works from the *Gradualia*, with lectures, liturgical services, and additional concerts. A Festschrift observing the beginning of the second decade of the festival will be produced including the lectures from the first ten years of the festival. For more information, consult <http://byrdfestival.org/>

CMAA News

We are very pleased to be offering a chant intensive conducted by Scott Turkington, June 9–13, 2008, Loyola University. This is the week before the colloquium. By the time you receive this note, it might be full since the intensive is limited to fifty. But please check the website to know for sure: www.musicasacra.com

The CMAA is very much in need of funds to offer scholarships to the colloquium this year. If you can assist with a \$200 contribution, please write us.

It's thrilling that thirty years of Sacred Music are now online, in beautiful scans, available to the world. These scans are very high quality and completely searchable. Thank you to benefactors!

The CMAA has several new books in print, including *The Bugnini-Liturgy and the Reform of the Reform* by Laszlo Dobszay, *A Dictionary of the Psalter* by Matthew Britt, and *The Hymns of the Breviary and Missal* by Matthew Britt. Please browse all titles at www.musicasacra.com/books 

LAST WORD

Whither *Summorum Pontificum*?

By Kurt Poterack

What will the outcome of Pope Benedict's *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* be? What influence will it have? On the laity? On the clergy? On the seminaries? On the ordinary usage of the Roman Rite? On the spiritual life of Catholics? . . . On liturgical music . . . ?

This last question is key for readers of this journal. I do not claim to have any certain answers. It is too early. I do wish to raise some concerns on this front, though. Already, at the time of writing—less than six months after the implementation date of the *motu proprio*—one thing has become apparent. There is a dearth of people trained in the official music of the Roman Rite (i.e., Gregorian chant). So, if someone wishes to do a true *Missa Cantata* (let alone a Solemn High Mass) with chanted propers and ordinary—and there is an increasing desire to do it right—often one has to “share” a local schola. For example, the college schola which I direct sings every Sunday during the academic year at the college Latin Mass according to the “ordinary usage” and then, once a month, travels across town to the local parish to sing at the weekly Mass according to the “extraordinary usage.”

The parish has tried to begin its own schola, but for now can only draw from the few alumni of the college in the parish who used to sing in the college schola.

And herein lies an answer to this problem. Only those “schooled” in Gregorian chant—and that of course is what the word *schola* means—can even begin to perform this rather difficult artistic, cultic music. Of course, some chants—the responses, hymns, and many ordinaries (some after sufficient repetition)—can be performed relatively easily by unschooled people. The propers, especially the gradual and Alleluia verses—even some offertories—are an entirely different matter (and let's not even get into tracts and sequences!).

To perform an entire set of propers *well* and to lead a congregation in the singing of an ordinary—for example Mass IX with its virtuosic Gloria—is no mean feat. This requires a musical culture, one in which the basics of music are taught in the early years, one in which many people practice singing as an avocation. As I have pointed out before (*Sacred Music*, 133, no.1), many “indult Mass” choirs were (and continue to be) similar to what many a pre-Vatican II parish choir was like: “five middle-aged-to-old women (with screechy voices) and two men singing (or better yet, croaking) the Rossini psalm-tone propers and, maybe . . . the Henry Farmer *Mass in B^b*.”

In fact, I have before me—as I prepare the propers for the Feast of the Epiphany—an old copy of the *Liber Usualis* that I acquired from a used book dealer and that had probably been last used sometime in 1964. Underneath the text of every single Epiphany proper—as well as many of those for other feasts and Sundays—are two inverted “V's” for every phrase. Clearly the last person (and the group in which they were singing) sang the propers to psalm tones, rather than singing the actual chants. The purpose of the inverted “V's” was to indicate the syllables upon which the mediant and final cadences of the psalm tone occurred in each phrase. The singers could then mentally supply the psalm tone, reading the text out of the book.

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Sadly this was the state of Catholic liturgical musical culture in many—certainly not *all*—but many parishes in America before Vatican II. For those of us not old enough to have memories of this time it is important to repeat: there was not some high level of musical culture universally practiced from which the Church fell forty years ago. The liturgical musical culture of the Roman Rite, though it certainly continued to exist on the books and was preserved in some places—and there were valiant efforts being made to restore it—had been in decline for some time. Not decades, but centuries. To quote Professor Laszlo Dobszay,

Medieval Europe was able to create and support the corporative bodies and institutions, which guaranteed [the performance of the corpus of chants] . . . An essential element of the medieval school system was the teaching of music, and so the “chorus,” which assured the chanting of the propers making them resound all over the *orbis catholicus* . . . in cathedrals and larger churches the chapter, priests, clerics, schoolboys and their instructors; in the village church perhaps no more than the priest, a teacher and three or four lads. . . . The available personnel made it possible to celebrate the liturgy in its entirety day after day . . . Financial resources were at hand to keep the whole system alive and maintain it without interruption. This liturgical “network” was very important, efficient, and its beneficial effects also reached the congregation both directly and indirectly. As these conditions began to diminish, the very celebration of the *Opus Dei* began to shrink as well. . . . The final stage of this evolution is the “Tridentine” silent Low Mass and the priest’s personal obligation to the private reading of the Breviary.¹

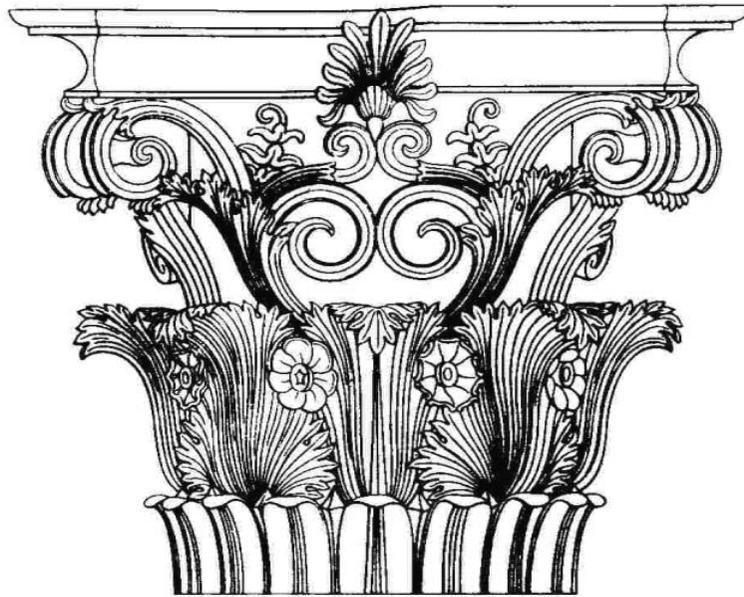
*A return to the old
silent low-Mass culture
will not do.*

It is therefore a little bit disturbing when I find among enthusiasts for the “Tridentine” Mass today, those—sometimes half my age—who want to establish as normative the old silent (i.e., non-dialogue) form of the low Mass. It is precisely a culture in which *both* the “specialists” (the choir) and the “non-specialists” (the congregation) sing—and respond—that is a culture in which sacred music will flourish. You cannot “school” people (that is, give them specialized training) in Gregorian chant unless there is a basic interest in singing among the majority of the people. Now do not get me wrong. I know that “active participation” properly understood is first and foremost internal. I know that one can participate in great sacred music by listening. I have made all of these arguments myself. However, I have attended far too many Tridentine Masses in which a huge congregation (upwards of 400 people) have been absolutely stone silent refusing to say even “Amen” or “Et cum spiritu tuo”—and even sometimes shushing people who do so.

In order to sustain a high liturgical culture with well-trained singers to perform the church’s challenging “treasury” of sacred music, there has to be a large pool of singers from which to draw—many of whom will be quite average. A return to the old silent low-Mass culture will not do. It was a sign of decline. Now we have a chance to start afresh. Let us make sure we do it right. ❧

¹László Dobszay, *The Bugnini-Liturgy and the Reform of the Reform*, Musicae Sacrae Meletemata, 5 (Front Royal, Virginia: Catholic Church Music Associates, 2003), p. 104

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