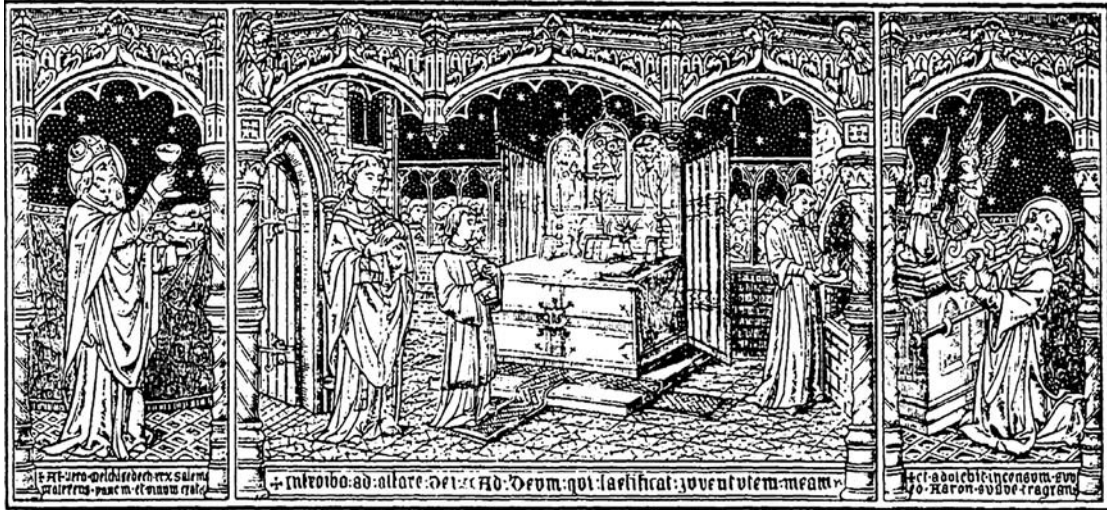


SACRED MUSIC

FALL 2008
VOLUME 135 No. 3





SACRED MUSIC

Fall 2008

Volume 135, Number 3

EDITORIAL

"Pride of Place" | William Mahrt 3

ARTICLES

Releasing the Fullness of Preaching through Music | Br. Lawrence Lew, O.P. 5
 William Byrd: Catholic and Careerist | Joseph Kerman 12

ARCHIVE

Rhythm in General | Dom Joseph Gajard 20

REPERTORY

Musical Rhetoric in Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Alma Redemptoris Mater* | Josh Hortman 27

DOCUMENTS

Colloquium XVIII: The Repertoire 33
 Vist to Heiligenkruetz Abbey | Benedict XVI 36

COMMENTARY

Singing Hymns Instead of the Proper of the Mass | Helen Harrison 40
 A Tribute to Mary Berry, C.B.E. 1917–2008 | Jeffrey Morse 48
 Chant at Mealtimes | Jeff Pinyan 51
 Israeli Hebrew and Catholic Chant | Jeffrey Tucker 53

REVIEWS

A Book to Challenge Us All | Jeffrey Tucker 55
 A Book to Challenge Us All | William Tortolano 62
 Chant for the Soul | Jeffrey Tucker 64

LAST WORD

Whither *Summorum Pontificum*? | Kurt Poterack 66

Dear Friend of the CMAA | Scott Turkington 67

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
Editor-at-Large: Kurt Poterack
Editorial Assistant: Jane Errera
Editorial Help: Richard Rice
Typesetting: Judy Thommesen
Membership and Circulation: 12421 New Point Drive, Harbour Cove, Richmond, VA 23233

CHURCH MUSIC
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
Officers and Board of Directors

President: William Mahrt
Vice-President: Horst Buchholz
Secretary: Rosemary Reninger
Treasurer: William Stoops
Chaplain: Rev. Father Robert Pasley
Directors: Susan Treacy, Jeffrey Tucker, Scott Turkington
Directors Emeriti: Rev. Father Ralph S. March, S.O.Cist; Kurt Poterack; Rev. Father Robert Pasley; Paul F. Salamunovich; Very Rev. Monsignor Richard J. Schulert

Membership in the Church Music Association of America includes a subscription to the quarterly journal *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. *Sacred Music* archives for the years 1975 to the present are available online as www.musicasacra.com/archives.

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.

Copyright © Church Music Association of America, 2008.
ISSN: 0036-2255

Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, Alabama.

Cover: Rose window stained glass, dedicated to the Madonna of the Health, located in the San Camillo Church in Milano, Italy. This wonderful "Gothic rosone" was created by an anonymous stained glass artist in the end of the nineteenth century, and gifted to the church as a sign of devotion to the Madonna of the Health, who is the protector of the unhealthy people.

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

“Pride of Place”

By William Mahrt



e frequently hear—and quote as well—the catch-words that represent the special status of Gregorian chant: “Gregorian chant has *pride of place* in the Roman Rite” (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council). Although “pride of place” has been the common translation, it may not be the best, for the original Latin is *principem locum*, “principal place,” or “first place.” The translation “pride of place” thus seems honorific but ineffective, like giving an old uncle a place at the table but not listening to what he says. I am afraid that this is all too often the case with Gregorian chant—at best, one or two pieces of chant in a heterogeneous mix of hymns, sacro-pop songs, watery antiphons, spoken texts, etc.

One rejoices at seeing a few Gregorian chants incorporated into a parish Mass—a step in the right direction, but not the ideal. The council stated the ideal, the sung Mass with sacred ministers, choir, and people each singing their parts—in the context of tradition, a high Mass, in which all the audible parts are sung. This completely sung Mass is the way Gregorian chant has principal place, for each sung part of the liturgy has its own style of chant, which characterizes that part and beautifully distinguishes it from the others. This approach to singing the Mass is encouraged by the document *Musicam Sacram* (1967) in its three degrees of the employment of music, and it is recalled in the strong recommendation in *Sing to the Lord* (2007) for the celebrant to sing his parts.

Thus in the authentic tradition of Gregorian chants, an introit is different from a communion, a gradual from an offertory, even if they both might use the same text, because through differences in musical style each characterizes and differentiates the liturgical action it accompanies. Moreover, each of the items is not just a text that happens to be set to a melody, but rather, it is an integral piece comprised of both melody and text together.

It is possible, and permissible to replace a Gregorian introit with an introit from the *Graduale Simplex*, or a setting of the introit text to a psalm tone, or a vernacular adaptation of the introit melody, or a metric hymn, but none of these replacements is any longer the Gregorian introit—it does not give Gregorian chant principal place; it is not the ideal for which the council exhorts us to strive for.

We rarely achieve this ideal in any individual celebration of Mass. What is important is that we know what the ideal is, and in each celebration of Mass, we work toward it. If we have a Mass with four hymns, we can begin to work toward the ideal by persuading the celebrant to sing his parts—the collects, the preface, and the introduction to the Lord’s Prayer, leading to the congregation’s singing of the prayer.

We can also work toward the ideal by providing the congregation the opportunity of singing the ordinary, beginning with the Sanctus and Agnus Dei or with the Kyrie. These need not only be

William Mahrt is editor of *Sacred Music* and president of the CMAA. mahrt@stanford.edu

the simplest melodies, but congregations can easily learn some of the more melodious chants, *Kyrie Orbis factor*, for example, or the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* from the same Mass XI.

We can work toward the ideal by beginning to incorporate some Gregorian propers into the celebration. The communion chants are a good place to begin. The antiphon can be sung in alternation with psalm verses, allowing the desirable repetition (a few times) to familiarize both congregation and choir with the chant. The amount of time it takes for communion allows for its incorporation without prolonging the length of the Mass or replacing other musical pieces. This is why the Church Music Association has published *Communio*, providing the psalm verses and antiphons for all the days of obligation through the year. Once the congregation has begun to sing parts of the ordinary well, other proper chants can be introduced without depriving the congregation of participation. Replacing the metric introit hymn with a Gregorian introit can make a major difference of direction for the whole Mass by projecting a sense of elevation and solemnity. All of this must be done with circumspection, testing its reception on the part of the congregation. Each circumstance is different, and progress may be slower or faster from place to place.

I am not saying that singing the introit text to a psalm tone or singing an entrance hymn is bad; I am saying that there are relative goods. Other things being equal, a Gregorian introit is better than an entrance hymn. But they are relative goods: in some circumstances, the psalm tone or the hymn may even be the best choice. But I am also saying that these are good choices, especially when they are seen as stages along the way to achieving the ideal.

The cultivation of this ideal is why the Colloquium in Chicago focused upon completely sung Masses, mostly in Latin, and mostly with Gregorian chant propers, polyphonic ordinary movements, and motets in classical polyphony—the experience of the paradigm as the ideal behind what we aim for in the parishes, no matter what the limitations are. ♪

DOMINICA PENTECOSTES

AD MISSAM IN DIE

*Communio**Acts 2: 2, 4, [11]*

VII

F Actus est repente * de caelo sonus adventantis spiritus vehementis, ubi erant sedentes, alleluia: et repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto, loquentes magnalia Dei, alleluia, alleluia.

Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, whence they were sitting; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak the wonderful words of God.

ARTICLES

Releasing the Fullness of Preaching through Music

by Br. Lawrence Lew, O.P.



In that Gospel of Matthew, which our holy father Dominic loved and carried with him, we read that after the Last Supper, Jesus and his apostles sang a hymn and then went to the Mount of Olives. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that when Paul and Silas were imprisoned in Philippi, they prayed and sang hymns to God, and the prisoners listened to them. In Colossians 3:16, St. Paul instructs the Christian community to “sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” Hence Joseph Ratzinger has said: “Right from the beginning liturgy and music have been closely related [for] wherever people praise God, words alone do not suffice.”¹ Consequently, the church musician, Joseph Gelineau exclaims: “The Christian liturgy was born singing, and it has never ceased to sing . . . This fits the fact that Christian worship is the public proclamation of the *mirabilia Dei* and of the good and joyful news, an act of thanksgiving, praise, and blessing for the freedom won for us by the resurrection.”² Indeed, he goes so far as to say that although “Christian liturgy can be celebrated without singing or music . . . this is to mutilate it.”³ This emphasis on singing is due to the fact that song is an expression of our Christian joy which cannot be suppressed, and indeed it is an expression of our love for the One who has first loved us. So, our holy father Augustine says that “only he who loves can sing.”⁴

It is interesting that the philosopher Nietzsche, who is certainly no friend of Christianity, also saw this relationship between joy, love, and music. He once said that the disciples of Christ “should look more redeemed,”⁵ by which he meant, joyful. He also said that music lets us hear “nature transformed into love.”⁶ Hence, he related music to love and saw music as an expression of love. Therefore, music is an expression of the joy of the redeemed and their love for the Redeemer. As such, it is right that music plays an important part in Christian life and worship, for music has this ability to express our Christian joy in salvation and hope of eternal life. As Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., has said, “Music overcomes the darkness and speaks a hope for what we cannot imagine.”⁷ Music is thus a powerful form of preaching.

Br. Lawrence Lew, O.P., is a Dominican student at Blackfriars, Oxford. lawrence.lew@english.op.org. This was a talk given to the Dominican family, June 28, 2008.

¹Joseph Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing, 1996), p. 141.

²Joseph Gelineau, S.J., “Music and Singing in the Liturgy,” in Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold S.J., & Paul Bradshaw, eds., *The Study of Liturgy*, revised edition (London: SPCK, 1992), p. 494.

³Gelineau, “Music and Singing,” p. 495.

⁴“Cantare amantis est” in Sermon 336.

⁵*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II, “On Priests.”

⁶Cited in Josef Pieper, *Only the Lover Sings: Art and Contemplation* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990), p. 45.

⁷Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., *What Is the Point of Being a Christian?* (London: Burns & Oates, 2005), p. 28.

This same Christian hope and joy characterizes us Dominicans as preachers of God's great gift of salvation. Paul Murray O.P., in his excellent book, *The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality*, recounts the beautiful story—one of my favourites in fact—of Blessed Jordan of Saxony exhorting the novices to laugh and be merry. Murray comments that this story “serves to underline something really fundamental about the early Dominicans and their fresh grasp of the Gospel. Throughout the preaching ministry of Dominic, a vision of Gospel joy had come to define itself over and against some very grim and very gloomy notions indeed.”⁸ He goes on to say that “the deep, almost uncontrollable laughter which springs from Gospel joy . . . is, in fact, simply an ecstasy of the inner heart . . . an impulse of surrender and delight towards the neighbour and towards God.”⁹ For Dominic, his Gospel joy is expressed in his life through his impulse to preach and I hope that this is something we, as his sons and daughters, share with him. However, the stories about St. Dominic also reveal that his joy was also frequently expressed in song, and it is reported that he sang as he traveled throughout Europe. And so, we can see that singing and preaching are closely related for both find their root in Gospel joy and in love for a God who has first loved us and saved us from “the Devil's thralldom”—to use the words of Blessed Jordan.¹⁰

Moreover, this joy that bursts forth as laughter also bursts forth as wordless song. Let us consider the words of St. Augustine in this regard. He says:

“Shout for joy . . . sing a new song” (Ps. 33:3). What would this song of joy mean? It means something that cannot be explained in words: it is what the heart is singing . . . those who start singing while they are eagerly carrying on some other work, start with the words of a song to express their joy, but then it is as though they are overcome with such happiness that words no longer can express it and they leave out the words and simply give themselves over to sounds of jubilation . . . [God who is ineffable] not only cannot be expressed in words but also cannot be passed over in silence, and so, what can one do but jubilate? For in jubilation the heart opens up to joy without words, and that joy widens out immeasurably beyond the utmost reaches of our words.¹¹

Music releases the fullness of preaching because it goes beyond words.

Echoing this insight, the philosopher Joseph-Marie de Maistre said that: “Reason speaks in words alone, but love has a song.”¹² As such, music releases the fullness of preaching because it goes beyond words and expresses the fullness of our Gospel joy and love for God. So, Joseph Pieper notes that music is understood as “the manifestation of man's will in all its aspects, as love.”¹³ St. Paul sees this outpouring of love as something caused by the Holy Spirit, and so he writes to the church at Ephesus, saying: “be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.”¹⁴ I

⁸Paul Murray, O.P., *The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality* (London: Burns & Oates, 2006), p. 48.

⁹Murray, *New Wine*, p. 49.

¹⁰See Murray, *New Wine*, p. 47f.

¹¹On *Psalms 32*, Sermon 1.8.

¹²Cited in Pieper, *Only the Lover*, p. 5.

¹³Pieper, *Only the Lover*, p. 45.

¹⁴Ephesians 5:19.

will return to St. Augustine's exhortation to wordless jubilation in due course, but for now, let us consider St. Paul's instruction.

It is noteworthy that he says we should sing to one another, for there is a sense here of holy preaching in song. If we think about it isn't this precisely what we do when we sing the Divine Office antiphonally? For then we address one another in psalms, hymns, and sacred songs, and so we recall and preach the *mirabilia Dei* to one another. Seen in this way, the sung liturgy is an important kind of holy preaching that we, gathered as the Body of Christ, can perform together. As the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours says, "If the faithful come together and unite their hearts and voices in the Liturgy of the Hours, they manifest the church celebrating the mystery of Christ."¹⁵ Moreover, this is especially true of religious who are called "the exemplar of the church which unceasingly praises God with one voice."¹⁶ Truly then, singing the office, is a kind of preaching that all of us—lay and ordained—can share in. If we consider the

Singing the office, is a kind of preaching.

liturgy as preaching, firstly to one another, and then to those who come and share in our liturgy, perhaps we will then lavish upon it the same care and attention that a preacher ought to give to preparing his sermon, singing clearly and at a speaking tempo so that the music serves and carries the text. Timothy Radcliffe has said that "the singing of the liturgy . . . discloses the meaning of our lives,"¹⁷ and this is true because our song is an expres-

sion of the joy and hope that is the bedrock of our Christian lives. Music, which is marked by form, structure, rhythm, and shape is a discipline, and so Timothy Radcliffe also suggests that it points to the kind of life we are called to lead, that is, the virtuous life. Thus, "St. Augustine thought that to live virtuously was to live musically, to be in harmony."¹⁸

Music that is harmonious is beautiful, just as virtuous lives are beautiful, and such beauty gives praise to God who is beauty. In this regard, Timothy Radcliffe says that "if the church is to offer hope to the young, then we need a vast revival of beauty in our churches"¹⁹ and we can begin with re-beautifying our church music. I would agree with Timothy that "much modern music, even in church, is so trivial that it is a parody of beauty,"²⁰ and he suggests that the church is called to be "a place of the revelation of true beauty,"²¹ for then, God is revealed, and God is preached through beauty. Joseph Ratzinger has said much the same. He says:

The church is to transform, improve, "humanize" the world—but how can she do this if at the same time she turns her back on beauty, which is so closely allied to love? For together, beauty and love form the true consolation in this world, bringing it as near as possible to the world of the resurrection. The church must maintain high standards; she must be a place where beauty can be at home.²²

Therefore, it is clear that we need to re-discover beauty in the church and particularly beauty in song.

¹⁵General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours,[GILH], ¶22.

¹⁶GILH, ¶24.

¹⁷Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., *I Call You Friends* (London: Continuum, 2001), p. 104.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹Radcliffe, *What is the Point*, p. 27.

²⁰Radcliffe, *I Call*, p. 104.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²Joseph Ratzinger, *Feast of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), pp. 124f.

As we have already seen today, beauty is a vital way of preaching and often when we think of beauty and art, we think of painting, sculpture, and architecture, those things called the fine arts whose beauty delights the eye. If I were to ask you what the greatest art treasure in the church is, what would you say? An altarpiece by Fra Angelico perhaps? Or Michelangelo's *Pieta*? Or a Gothic cathedral like York Minster? It's impossible to choose. It is interesting then to note what the Fathers of Vatican II chose. When they discussed sacred art and the beauty of art, they said the following: "The musical tradition of the universal church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of *any other art*."²³ So, Vatican II teaches us that the church has a treasury of beautiful sacred music, and it is this beauty that we ought to re-discover and reveal to the world as a kind of holy preaching, for in the beauty of sacred music God is revealed.

Let us return to St. Augustine. You may recall that he said that Christian joy spills over into an inexpressible song of joy. St. Paul sees this song as being inspired by the Holy Spirit, and one can think of the great outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Then the Spirit inspired the apos-

The musical tradition of the universal church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art.

tles to speak in tongues and to babble with joy; the Spirit filled the disciples with such joy that they burst forth in song, and so St. Ephrem compared the disciples at Pentecost to small birds. This same Spirit fills the church so that she bursts forth in song and we are singers of the church's song; we become little birds. Thus Simon Tugwell O.P. considers this kind of joyful singing as "words released in us by the Holy Spirit [which] are primordial words; words which spring from our creatureliness as deeply and simply and inexplicably as birdsong."²⁴ What is this wordless song that the Spirit inspires and what might it sound like? We can clearly hear this characteristic in Gregorian chant, whereby words give way to pure music, called a *melisma* or *jubilus*. Daniel Saulnier O.S.B. describes this as "a moment of pure music that blooms on a syllable,"²⁵ and he says that "this manner of singing and of pouring out one's inner life by means of a vocalise that transcends the limits of syllables, and therefore, of thoughts, is probably as old as humanity."²⁶ *Melisma* is of such importance to plainsong because it is a jubilation, a sacramental sign of the inner joy that inspires all Christian song; it is an expression of sacred song inspired by the Holy Spirit. When St. Augustine was a catechumen in Milan, he was so moved by this sacred chant that in his *Confessions*, he writes: "How I wept during your hymns and songs! I was deeply moved by the music of the sweet chants of your church. The sounds flowed into my ears and the truth was distilled into my heart."²⁷ Earlier, we heard St. Augustine refer to such music as a jubilation because the joy of the Spirit causes the singers to transcend words and "leave out the words and simply give themselves over to sounds of jubilation."

As song that is inspired, it was also written down and preserved for the good of the church, that it might be handed down and sung in every age. Thus, Pope Pius X said that "Gregorian

²³Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶112.

²⁴Simon Tugwell, O.P., *Did you receive the Spirit?*

²⁵Daniel Saulnier, O.S.B., *Gregorian Chant: A Guide* (Solesmes: Abbaye St.-Pierre, 2003), p. 11.

²⁶Saulnier, *Gregorian Chant*, p. 81.

²⁷Augustine, *Confessions*, IX.6.14, Owen Chadwick, tr. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 164.

chant [is] the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers,"²⁸ and so Vatican II says that it is "specially suited to the Roman liturgy."²⁹ If we recognize plainsong as inspired music that has been written and handed down, then we could perhaps see it as being analogous to the scriptures. For just as the Spirit once inspired human beings to write down sacred texts and hand them down in the church, so the Spirit also inspired human beings to write down sacred song, and it forms a vital part of the church's tradition. Both the scriptures and chant, then, are rightly used in our preaching.

Music has this ability to transcend thought and to express the depths of our being, so that when we sing and jubilate, our entire being, body and soul, is caught up in the praise of God. I

*Sacred music because it is linked
with sacred texts preaches the
truth about God.*

would suggest that singing is thus an expression of our becoming intoxicated by God's love, it is an expression of our joy, love, hope, and wonder at the *mirabilia Dei*. As Paul Murray says, "The wine of truth which Christ gives us to drink is also a wine of astonishment. What we preach, then, are not just truths about God. We preach a wine of truth which we have actually tasted ourselves, and have drunk with living faith and joy."³⁰ With these words, Paul Murray also captures the essence of sacred music, for the

church esteems her music, primarily because they are married to the sacred scriptures and texts, of her liturgical tradition. This is to say that sacred music because it is linked with sacred texts preaches the truth about God, communicates the written Word of God, but does so in a way that captures the sheer astonishment and wonder of the Gospel.

The responsory *Loquebantur* by Thomas Tallis is one such example of sacred music that communicates the wonder of the Gospel, and in this particular case, of Pentecost. This motet describes that glorious event: the disciples are filled with the Spirit and they speak in tongues (*glossolalia*) and speak of the wonderful deeds of God. Chant underpins the music, but there is a use of word-painting in the music, and the frequent alleluia's blossom with joy. What strikes me most about this music is its ability to portray *glossolalia* as ecstatic utterances, an effervescence of harmonic sounds as each voice sings out to the Lord.

To my ears, just as plainsong and its melismas capture a moment of inspired song, so we might hear polyphony as an evocation of singing in tongues that thus captures the beauty and harmony of the Pentecost moment. In polyphony, each voice is unified by the text but each sings a different melody so that together they create something greater than the sum of its parts. This musical form has something to teach us because preaching the gospel, studying theology, and the exercise of ministry in the church, I would suggest, should also be polyphonic. In this way, we mirror St. Paul's idea that the church is like a body made up of many parts who need one another and serve the growth and progress of the entire organism. This is also true when we act polyphonically, singing the same Gospel song but with the harmonious contribution of our different voices.

At this juncture, let us return to what we said earlier: that harmony is beautiful, and beauty is what the soul longs for and what the church should reveal in her liturgy and Christian witness. The theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar notes that beauty has an "intrinsic authority" and

²⁸Pius X, *Tra le sollecitudini*, art. 3.

²⁹*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 116.

³⁰Murray, *New Wine*, p. 166.

it is “self-evident” in the way that it points to truth, goodness, and indeed, to God.³¹ Thus, Timothy Radcliffe says that “you cannot argue with beauty’s summons or dismiss it.”³² If this is true, then beauty is a powerful form of preaching, especially for preachers of truth, as we are called to be, and we must not ignore it. Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, who we know is not anti-intellectual, once wrote something about this that has haunted me since I first read it. I would like to spend some time now considering his words. He begins by saying the following:

True knowledge is being struck by the arrow of beauty that wounds man . . . being overcome by the beauty of Christ is a more real, more profound knowledge than mere rational deduction. Of course we must not underestimate the importance of theological reflection, of exact and careful theological thought; it is still absolutely necessary. But to despise, on that account, the impact produced by the heart’s encounter with beauty, or to reject it as a true form of knowledge, would impoverish us and dry up both faith and theology. We must rediscover this form of knowledge—it is an urgent demand of the present hour.³³

Benedict XVI attempts to restore beauty to the liturgy.

This is an important realization and it points out to us Benedict XVI’s many attempts as Pope to restore beauty to the liturgy, and that includes a re-discovery of the beauty and riches of the pre-Vatican II form of Mass.

He then says:

Arguments so often have no effect, because too many arguments compete with one another in our world, so that one cannot help thinking of the remark of the medieval theologians that reason has a wax nose: in other words, it can be turned around in any direction, if one is clever enough. It is all so clever, so evident—whom should we trust?³⁴

Again, these words offer a challenge to us as preachers who rely on argument, persuasion, words. This multiplication of words is sometimes unnecessary and indeed, futile. The church has long recognized this and we see this in the example of Christ. Jesus *showed* us how much God loves us through the beauty of his life and the saints reflect something of that beauty in their holy lives. Note that the pope is not saying that arguments are unimportant, but beauty must corroborate what we say; people must experience the beauty of the church as well as hear her persuasions, but both together form part of our holy preaching. Thus Ratzinger continues:

The encounter with beauty can become the wound of the arrow that strikes the soul and thus makes it see clearly, so that henceforth it has criteria, based on what it has experienced, and can now weigh the arguments correctly.³⁵

Finally, he gives an example of his being struck by beauty. He says:

³¹Cited in Radcliffe, *I Call*, p. 103.

³²*Ibid.*

³³Joseph Ratzinger, *On the Way to Jesus Christ* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), p. 36.

³⁴Ratzinger, *On the Way*, pp. 36f.

³⁵Ratzinger, *On the Way*, p. 37.

For me an unforgettable experience was the Bach concert that Leonard Bernstein conducted in Munich after the sudden death of Karl Richter. I was sitting next to the Lutheran Bishop Hanselmann. After the last note of one of the great Thomas Kantor cantatas triumphantly faded away, we looked at each other spontaneously and just as spontaneously said: "Anyone who has heard this knows that the faith is true." Such an extraordinary force of present reality had become audible in this music that the audience knew, no longer through deduction, but by the impact that it could not have come from nothing; it could only have been born through the power of the truth that makes itself present in the composer's inspiration.³⁶

C.S. Lewis said that in hell there is neither silence nor music.³⁷ It is not accidental that he should link the two, because music, as we have seen, is the gift of the Spirit and it seems to me obvious then, that music is the fruit of silence. In the First Book of Kings, we recall that God's still small voice was heard in the silence. Therefore, silence is a necessary pre-condition of listening, of being inspired, or encountering the beauty of God and thus, of making music. There is a Dominican motto: *silentium pater praedicatorum*, silence is the father of preachers, and this motto draws on the same idea, for preaching and music both flow from silence, and this is to be expected, as both

The appreciation of beauty born of contemplation is something that our noisy world has to re-learn.

are inspired by the Spirit. Moreover, Josef Pieper points out that music "to the extent that it is more than mere entertainment of intoxicating rhythmic noise" creates a kind of "listening silence"³⁸ and opens up a space in which we encounter beauty, and so can experience God. Gregorian chant and the church's sacred treasury of music is precisely this kind of music that flows from silence, encourages contemplation of the Word, and opens up a space in which we can find God. Church music, then, is a kind of holy preaching because it encourages us to listen to the Word and teaches us to seek God in silence and contemplation.

The appreciation of beauty born of contemplation is something that our noisy world has to re-learn and this education begins with us in the church. Timothy Radcliffe suggests that we have lost sight of beauty because we "fall into the trap of seeing beauty in utilitarian terms, useful for entertaining people, instead of seeing that what is truly beautiful reveals the good."³⁹ I believe that Gregorian chant and polyphony challenges us to really listen, to transcend merely entertaining music, and to glimpse the mystery and beauty of God. Finally, Pope John Paul II leaves us with food for thought, something to inspire us to cultivate and to draw from the treasury of sacred music and hopefully, to pray, and contemplate with music. He said: "As a manifestation of the human spirit, music performs a function which is noble, unique, and irreplaceable. When it is truly beautiful and inspired, it speaks to us more than all the other arts of goodness, virtue, peace, of matters holy and divine."⁴⁰ And this, surely, is the hope and goal of the preacher? ❧

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷Cited in Pieper, *Only the Lover*, p. 55.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹Radcliffe, *I Call You*, p. 104.

⁴⁰Cited in *Frequently Asked Questions on Sacred Music* <<http://www.musicasacra.com/pdf/smfaq.pdf>>.

William Byrd: Catholic and Careerist

By Joseph Kerman

This lecture was delivered August 20, 2005, at the William Byrd Festival, Portland, Oregon, and appears in A Byrd Celebration, edited by Richard Turbet (CMAA, 2008).



will speak today about the secular career of William Byrd, and how it entwined with his religion.

I'll begin not at the beginning of Byrd's career, but at the end of it, with a beautiful song he wrote and published in his last songbook, the *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets* of 1611. The composer was seventy-one years old, and the language he uses is the frigid language of finance and accounting:

Retire my soul, consider thine estate—he means both the state of his soul, and what he will leave when he dies, his estate—

Retire my soul, consider thine estate
 And justly sum thy lavish sins' account:
 Time's dear expense, and costly pleasures rate,
 How follies grow, how vanities amount:
 Write all these down in pale Death's reckoning tables,
 Thy days will seem but dreams, thy hopes but fables.

"Reckoning tables" are ledgers. In a less somber mood, Byrd could have looked back with satisfaction on the career which he had forged for himself—self-fashioned, as Stephen Greenblatt would say. It had been a brilliant career. He was recognized as England's greatest musician, and on occasion praised extravagantly as such. He had acquired a good deal of land and money. He had acquired a coat of arms. Was this mere worldly self-aggrandizement, which he needed to regret, and repent? Vanities, sins, follies, fables?

Byrd, as is well known, was a self-proclaimed Roman Catholic in Protestant England, part of a substantial minority under substantial oppression. Byrd not only worked out a way to observe his faith in peace, he also found ways to support that faith tangibly. He wrote protest music on behalf of his embattled co-religionists, and he composed music for their undercover Masses. Not just composed—he also got this illegal music published and circulated around the country. And the theme of my lecture is simple: it was only the position that Byrd had achieved through his career ambition—his relentless ambition, I might say—that allowed him to contribute so much to the Catholic cause.

I will go on to outline that career and its involvement with Byrd's Catholicism.

Joseph Kerman (b. 1924) is emeritus professor of music at the University of California at Berkeley. He studied with Oliver Strunk at Princeton and came to Berkeley in 1951. He left to become Heather Professor of Music at Oxford in 1972 but returned in 1974. He was Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard in 1997 and twice winner of the AMS Kinkeldey Award.

1540: BIRTH

Now let's go all the way back to the beginning and start at the birth of William Byrd—which is the first of several dates I'll give you to remember (1540, not 1543, which used to be the date given). Byrd was born in London, and nothing much is known about his family. The most interesting thing is that they hailed from the town of Ingatestone in the west of Essex, very close to where Byrd himself would retire when he was about fifty.

Byrd's father may have been a member of the Fletchers Company in London: Fletchers were originally makers of arrows, but they did various other things at this time. A solid citizen, he started off his sons as choirboys, one way to get them a good education and future. Two older brothers are listed as choirboys at St. Paul's Cathedral, and while documentation is lacking for young William, he must have had his musical training at court. For we know he was the prize pupil of Thomas Tallis, then the leading figure in the Chapel Royal. He remained very close to Tallis till his death, both personally and professionally.

Byrd the Catholic seems never to have had any scruples about writing for the Anglican Church.

Also, there's an unusual, indeed so far as I know, unique musical document from Byrd's teen-age years: a motet written jointly by him and two other, mature Chapel Royal composers, William Mundy and John Sheppard. This is during Queen Mary's reign, and the piece is a liturgical item for Easter services in the Catholic rite. What this piece shows is not only that Byrd stemmed from the Chapel Royal but that he was a teen-age prodigy, like Monteverdi, Mozart, Arriaga, Mendelssohn, and Prokofiev. And not only that, he was someone who was already impressing important people, dealing with persons of power. This is characteristic and crucial for his whole career.

Next there's a gap. We hear nothing about our prodigy before he's appointed organist and choirmaster at Lincoln Cathedral in 1563, at the age of 23. This was a big job for which he gets a very good contract, no doubt through the good offices of Tallis—of course it was an Anglican job; Byrd the Catholic seems never to have had any scruples about writing for the Anglican Church. Over the next ten years he starts a family, tends to quarrel with the diocesan authorities, and writes some impressive music, vocal and instrumental, which starts turning up in contemporary manuscripts (such as they are). After ten years Byrd answered the call back to the Chapel Royal in London. "Gentleman of the Chapel Royal" was the most prestigious and remunerative position in English music, really the only such that existed. Byrd's career was on the march.

1575: THE TALLIS-BYRD *CANTIONES SACRAE*

Besides putting him at the nerve center of English music, the Chapel Royal provided Byrd with rich perks, as we see only three years later, in 1575, the second of the three dates I'm asking you to focus on. Byrd was born in 1540, in the reign of Henry VIII; in 1575, aged 35, he publishes a book of Latin motets and dedicates it to Queen Elizabeth, this in collaboration with his teacher Tallis. This book, called *Cantiones sacrae* (sacred songs), contains extraordinary music, yet it's even more extraordinary as a gesture. In the preface to the book the composers thank the queen for granting them a monopoly over music printing. This monopoly was to be a major factor in Byrd's fame and his influence, as well as his finances.

But that's only one thing. The book is much more than a lavish thank-you note. It's a powerful political statement in which, I am sure, the composers were sponsored by more powerful figures at Queen Elizabeth's court. For the Byrd-Tallis motet-book of 1575 is a nationalist proclamation. It announces its intent to show the world that England, the England of Queen Elizabeth, has composers comparable to the best in the world (some of whom are named—Lassus, Gombert, Clemens, Ferrabosco). All this is laid out in a Latin preface by a noted humanist and educator, Thomas Mulcaster, who had close ties to the court, and in another preface by an actual courtier, named Ferdinando Richardson. I've also detected the hand of another courtier back of it all, a Groom of the Privy Chamber named Alfonso Ferrabosco. Alfonso was an emigre Italian composer who was a close friend of Byrd's. Musicologists have traced many composers from whose works Byrd borrowed, from none so extensively as Alfonso.

The *Cantiones sacrae* was a great career move for Byrd and Tallis, then, and they subsequently received further gifts from the queen. But Byrd the Careerist took a strange turn shortly after 1575. This is the time when we need to turn our attention to Byrd the Catholic.

Henry VIII broke with Rome yet kept Britain Catholic.

Byrd was a choirboy when Henry died and Protestantism was established—transforming church services and church music along with everything else. Byrd was still a choirboy when Queen Mary effected her bloody return to the old faith, and with it the Catholic liturgy—this was when young Byrd wrote that motet for Easter services jointly with Chapel Royal composers. Church music was traditionally Catholic music, of course, and so all church musicians of Byrd's generation were Catholics. After Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1557, most musicians converted to the Church of England and wrote music for its new Anglican services, music that was sadly reduced in quantity and quality from what was wanted and heard and composed a few years before.

Yet a number of other musicians of distinction retained the old religion as best they could under difficult conditions at home, like Byrd, or emigrated to Catholic Europe. Not many, like Byrd, actually became activists working for the re-establishment of Catholicism as England's religion. They ran the severe risk of treason, torture, and execution. But this was Byrd's path. In this he joined English Catholics who had gone abroad to join the Society of Jesus in Rome, and then returned to proselytize and face execution. If I emphasize here how his career kept Byrd relatively free from risk, I don't mean to imply that he was anything but a sincere—indeed a passionate—Catholic. Of course he was. But it was only by establishing so solid a position for himself in the England of Queen Elizabeth that he was able to do so much for the Catholic cause.

What do we actually know of Byrd's Catholic sympathies or connections? Plenty, but nothing until shortly before 1575, the date of the big publication, when some remarkable personal letters show his giving music lessons to two young Catholic noblemen. One later fled the country as a traitor, but the other—and how significant this is!—came the Earl of Worcester and one of Elizabeth's most trusted servants. She famously called him "a stiff Papist but a good subject."

Worcester remained a powerful patron of Byrd to the end of his life, even more powerful and potent than we know, I would guess. We do know that he provided Byrd with a room in his London mansion for when the composer came to town, after he had retired to his farm in Essex.

After Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1557, most musicians converted to the Church of England and wrote music for its new Anglican services.

And shortly after 1575, clear signs emerge of Byrd's recusancy. A recusant was someone who refused to attend Church of England services and was punished for it. His wife is fined for recusancy at their home outside London (Byrd himself seems to have had some sort of exemption from the Chapel Royal position). A few years later his home was searched: he was suspected of harboring Jesuit priests and laundering money for them—one of his choirboy brothers was now a moneylender. Byrd attends a Jesuit retreat for priests who had been smuggled into the country—and I don't think he was there simply to do the music at their undercover services, I think he was there also because he'd been involved with the smuggling operation. A servant who had been with Byrd since his Lincoln days was caught with an incriminating letter and died in prison.

Yet Byrd had powerful friends, as I've already indicated—including the queen herself, as we've already seen. Elizabeth was a devoted musician, as you probably know. She was always praised for her playing on the virginals, and the best keyboard music around for her to play was by the star of her Chapel Royal, William Byrd—the best by far, as she must have known as well as we musicologists do, five hundred years later.

Byrd lived a double life.

Well, this is speculation, but it is a fact that Elizabeth granted Byrd some sort of liability from prosecution for recusancy. And Byrd kept his nose clean, just about, and what's more Byrd had paid his dues, and he continued to do so. Though he evidently tacked too close to the wind in connection with the Throckmorton Plot against Elizabeth in 1583, by the time the Spanish Armada was blown away in 1588, when the queen wrote an anthem of thanks she chose Byrd to set it to music. In these same years, we think, Byrd also produced the greatest piece of music ever written for the Anglican rite, doubtless for Queen Elizabeth's Chapel Royal—the Great Service, for a double six-part choir.

Byrd was living a double life. And not a few other Elizabethans were walking the same sort of tightrope. And some, like Byrd, were courting trouble by exposing their feelings in books and poems. Byrd found a way of doing this in music.

He did it in music with texts, of course, perhaps cautiously Latin texts lamenting the oppression of his fellow recusants, crying out against it, praying for deliverance from it, even evoking specific occasions and specific atrocities. The words were typically Biblical and therefore blameless yet readily understood as metaphors, as has been true over the centuries. "When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go": Byrd didn't set that particular text, but that's exactly the sort of text he did set. Here's a translation from his motet *Domine tu iurasti*:

O Lord, you swore to our forefathers that you would give their posterity lands rich and flowing with milk and honey. Now O Lord, be mindful of your promise . . . and deliver us from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and from the servitude of Egypt.

You have everything here but "Go down, Moses."

To take another one example from Byrd's music of these years—a double example, actually, but only two out of many—go to the martyrdom of the Jesuit Father Edmund Campion and two companions in 1581. This was a vicious anti-Catholic move that shocked England and the whole of Europe. Byrd set to music a famous English poem lamenting the event, *Why Do I Use My Paper, Ink and Pen?*—a poem which cost its printer his ears, but which Byrd circulated and later even published. (Of course he didn't print the openly seditious stanzas, but anybody in his right mind would immediately supply them when singing or even seeing the piece). He also wrote a Latin motet setting Psalm 78, about the destruction of Jerusalem and martyrs' bodies left to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air, a chilling reference to the body parts of the Jesuits that were

nailed to the gates at Tyburn. Included in the psalm settings are the last words that Campion spoke from the scaffold . . . the first of several such “gallows texts” that Byrd immortalized in music. Bear this in mind. Byrd later composed a gallows motet for Father Henry Garnet, the Principal of the Jesuit Order who was executed in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605.

1590: COMING RETIREMENT

Here’s the last of the three special dates: 1540, 1575, and now 1590. Actually I have to say this is an ideal date, standing in for a period from 1578–1592. The Campion motet I have just mentioned, and the Campion song, and many other motets and madrigals were collected in manuscripts from the decade of the 1580s that amount to extensive anthologies of Byrd’s music.

Four such manuscripts surface during this period of his life. These manuscripts tell us that Byrd had now become England’s premier musician. At the end of the 1580s, the composer is almost fifty years old and looking to retirement. Four years is not too many for careful retirement planning.

But first, in the years around 1590—to be precise, from 1588 to 1591—came an extraordinary effort in publishing and self-promotion, one that marked a climax in Byrd’s career (though there still was much more to come). I need to talk about this publication effort in some detail.

And I also need to go back to that earlier publication of 1575, the Byrd-Tallis *Cantiones sacrae*. This was a landmark not only for the composers but for music publication: prior to 1575 music printing in England hardly existed. A remarkable fact, since on the continent music printing had become a big business after around 1500. I don’t want to go into the qualifications here, yet before 1575 next to no elite music like masses or motets or madrigals or partsongs had been published in England.

*Byrd had become England’s
premier musician.*

Jeremy Smith has suggested that the printing monopoly that Queen Elizabeth gave to Byrd and Tallis may have been a deliberate effort to create an industry. If so, it didn’t work, at least not at first. The *Cantiones sacrae* sold hardly any copies and the monopolists didn’t risk a second book for ten years and more.

By that time two people were no longer on the scene: Thomas Tallis, the joint grantee of the printing monopoly, had died (Byrd wrote a moving musical elegy to him, *Ye Sacred Muses*), and also the printer of the *Cantiones*, a man called Vautrollier. Byrd saw that now was the time for a new start. It was an optimistic time, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. He could now pocket the full proceeds of the monopoly. And whatever business arrangements he may have had with the old printer were now void. He made new arrangements with a printer named Thomas East, a man who was both highly competent and sympathetic to Byrd’s ideas.

Byrd’s own music came out as a small flood: two English songbooks and two further books of Latin motets—plus a smaller item weighing in on a hot current debate that mattered a lot to Byrd. Was music sensual and evil, as the Puritans were always claiming, and deeply suspect, as a prominent ornament of Catholic worship? Just the reverse, Richard Mulcaster had said in the preface to the 1575 motet book. Now another learned author, one John Case, said the same in a book called *Apologia musices*. Byrd wrote a madrigal praising the man and issued it as a broadside. East also published music by associates of Byrd under his monopoly, among them two anthologies of Italian madrigals translated into English. Both include madrigals by Byrd himself, prominently advertised on their title pages. This was a monopolist who wanted everyone to know who was in charge.

Now the two new motet books by Byrd were certainly understood at the time as discrete, covert Catholic items, though of course the Latin texts were not egregiously Catholic or the composer and the printer would have been arrested. They were dedicated to Catholic patrons.

But the songbooks and the madrigal books had nothing to do with Catholicism, and were dedicated to establishment figures—who of course were Protestants. The books were secular, commercial, timed to the market, courtly, and even Protestant in inclination. Let me enlarge.

Secular: Many of the songs are moralistic and pious, it's true, yet there are also love songs, madrigals, and one positively prurient number, if you read between the lines, as Elizabethans were wont to do.

Commercial: We have good evidence the books sold very well, unlike the 1575 motet-book.

Timely: Again, we also have evidence that madrigal singing was just then becoming popular in England—and it was Byrd who provided this practice with the decisive push it needed. He himself wrote and published the first English madrigal, dedicated—significantly, once again!—to Queen Elizabeth. He was soon licensing publications of English madrigals by his student Thomas Morley, and many others were to come: Thomas Weelkes, John Wilbye, John Ward, *The Triumphs of Oriana* and so on and so on.

Byrd's publications of the 1590s period cashed in on the growing rage for madrigals.

Indeed, the most important of Byrd's own publications of the 1590s period cashed in on the growing rage for madrigals at that time. This was the much-republished *Psalms, Sonnets,*

and Songs of Sadness and Piety. After a preface which is itself a defiant little *Apologia musices*—a list of eight “Reasons to persuade everyone to learn to sing”—the book presents songs written for one voice with instrumental accompaniment—consort songs—arranged for a choir, with words in all the parts. In other words, they were specially arranged to be sung like madrigals. Musicologists today want to distinguish between consort songs and madrigals, Byrd wanted to blur the distinction. He wasn't writing for the academy, he was writing for the market.

Another thing Byrd cashed in on was the death of Sir Philip Sidney, mourned over a period of years as the country's great Protestant champion and martyr. The songbook includes two memorial songs for Sidney:

Come to me grief forever . . .
 Sidney, O Sidney is dead.
 He whom the court adorned,
 He whom the country courtesied,
 He who made happy his friends,
 He that did good to all men,
 Sidney, the hope of land strange,
 Sidney, the flower of England,
 Sidney, the spirit heroic,
 Sidney, O Sidney is dead.

The book also includes songs set to Sidney poems that had not yet been printed, and other evidence that Byrd's song repertory was rooted in the court of Queen Elizabeth. Even the ten psalms which stand solemnly at the head of the *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs of Sadness and Piety*

have a Protestant flavor—for while everyone liked psalms, Catholics and Protestants alike, it was Protestants who printed them in profusion and used them in Anglican services. When Byrd came to write a specifically Catholic publication, years later, the *Gradualia*, it was not psalms he began with, but anthems to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Sidney is most famous for his *Astrophel and Stella* and the *Arcadia* and *The Defense of Poetry*, but Sidney also made translations of the psalms. So did Stella, Penelope Rich.

And then the songbook includes *Why Do I Use My Paper, Ink and Pen?*, which everyone knew was a banned poem bemoaning the fate of Campion and his companions. A future Jesuit writes: “One of the sonnets on the martyrdom of Father Edmund Campion was set to music by the best composer of England, which I have often seen and heard.” Byrd kicked off his second songbook, in 1589, with more psalms. And his second motet-book, in 1591, contains another unregenerate reference to Campion, the setting of the sanguinary Psalm 78, *Deus venerunt gentes*: also a well known piece, it seems, a piece remembered for a long time, remembered by Tomkins in the 1600s, one of John Milson’s astonishing discoveries.

So in these publications we have the explicit conjunction of the courtly and the Catholic. One could say that the courtly is a stalking-horse for the Catholic, but I think there’s real ambivalence at work here. This man also wrote the Great Service and the anthem by Queen Elizabeth.

*Byrd proclaims that he is
writing for Protestants and
also that he is writing for
Catholics.*

To sum up: with this spate of publication in the four-year period around 1590 Byrd does several things. With the passing of Thomas Tallis, he establishes himself unmistakably as number one in English music. He more or less proclaims that he is writing for Protestants and also that he is writing for Catholics. He jump-starts a small industry, music printing. He launches a musical genre, the English madrigal. He finally gets a financial return on the monopoly he had shared with Tallis.

Byrd retires—in a way: he retires from court and from his public career. But as a Catholic composer he does not retire. All he does is redirect his formidable energies. He gives up public laments for martyred Jesuits, entreaties on behalf of Egyptian slaves, and the like. Instead he writes music to adorn private, clandestine services, such as those that he attended under the protection of his main patrons, the Petre family, at Ingatestone in Essex—for it is near there that he bought his retirement home. First he writes music for the Ordinary of the Mass, then for the Proper of the Mass for the whole series of feasts throughout the year.

This was music designed to last—not just for Ingatestone but for other estates around the country where undercover services were held. So Byrd published it; this is Catholic activism of another kind. He published his three masses one at a time in small books, more like pamphlets, without title-pages saying where they were printed and who the printer was, though the name “Byrd” is coolly written above the music. I think these small editions could have been set up in type, a small batch of copies run off, and the type struck in just a few days.

When Byrd and Tallis received the monopoly for music printing, in 1575, it was for a term of twenty-one years, up till 1596. By that time Byrd has left London, yet he has also managed to get his masses published. I don’t understand how a clandestine publication profits from a monopoly, but there has to be an angle somehow. It all makes one think of long-range retirement planning by our Catholic careerist.

The second part of Byrd’s retirement project was *Gradualia*: the comprehensive aggregation of liturgical elements for Catholic services that was so numerous it required two published volumes. And the one thing I’ll say about *Gradualia* is this, and it’s what I’ve been saying all along:

Byrd could have written all this music and sung it at the Petres' undercover services at Ingatestone Hall, but he could not have broadcast it without powerful protection. Byrd got some kind of official clearance for the publication from an Anglican bishop, no less, and we've recently learned from Jeremy Smith something about the logistics of getting the music into the hands of those who needed it. The Jesuits were directly involved, and the music was picked up directly at the printer's shop—Thomas East, who had been publishing for Byrd since the 1590s and before.

Gradualia is Byrd's *magnum opus*. His career was surely thought to be at a close. He was in his mid-60s, and had been away from London some many years. His music was considered classic, certainly, but it was way out of style by now. Yet he keeps publishing: a whole new songbook with thirty-two pieces in it, in 1611, and contributions to anthologies, vocal and (at last) instrumental: *Tears or Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soul* and *Parthenia*.

The new songbook, the *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets: Some Solemn, Others Joyful*, is fully secular and without any Catholic leanings (unless you count the fact that some of the texts are drawn from the Douai Bible). It is a retrospective collection; Byrd reprints a madrigal he had published twenty years earlier, in 1590—a madrigal in praise of Queen Elizabeth, a posthumous tribute to her patronage and, perhaps, to England's Golden Age under her rule. It's a miscellaneous collection, with something in it for everybody—songs, madrigals, a parody madrigal, psalms once again, anthems, little moralistic epigrams, and even a great fantasia for viols, a piece that's about as old as the madrigal for Elizabeth. Byrd sets poems dating all the way back to the 1550s and he sets later poems which I feel—I fancy, it would be better to say—had a personal reference for the old man:

Retire my soul, consider thine estate
And justly sum thy lavish sins' account . . .
Write all these down in pale Death's reckoning tables . . .

I wonder if Byrd was feeling pangs of guilt about all the money and land he had acquired over his long, illustrious and unremittably litigious career. There's another regretful poem with financial imagery in the songbook:

How vain the toils that mortal men do take
hoard up gold, that time doth turn to dross . . .
—forgetting that what Christ taught us was
in heaven [my italic!] to hoard our treasure,
Where true increase doth grow beyond all measure.

True increase means interest; Byrd's brother John who was once a choirboy was now a moneylender. But as I've also mentioned before, it was only the position Byrd had forged for himself that made it possible for him to register his public or semi-public protests on behalf of the Catholic recusant community and then music for practical use in their services and for spiritual solace. I don't think there was much to regret. This last songbook, of course, returns us to Byrd the Careerist, not Byrd the Catholic. The career was in no need of refurbishing—yet Byrd, like some other great composers who lived into their seventies, wanted people to know and to hear and to admire. Like Monteverdi and Verdi, Schoenberg and Stravinsky, like Milton Babbitt and Elliott Carter. I love the Preface that he writes for "All True Lovers of Music":

Only this I desire: that you will be as careful to hear [my songs] well express'd, as I have been both in the composing and the correcting of them. Otherwise the best song that ever was made will seem harsh and unpleasant. . . . Besides, a song that is well and artificially made cannot be well perceived nor understood at the first hearing, but the oftener you shall hear it, the better cause of liking you will discover.

Byrd's last injunction to us, then, is not about things spiritual, let alone things Catholic. It's about performing music and listening to it. Schoenberg couldn't have said it better. ♪

ARCHIVE

Rhythm in General

By Dom Joseph Gajard

This essay is excerpted from The Rhythm of Plainsong, translated by Dom Aldhelm Dean, first published by J. Fischer & Bro. in 1943 and reprinted by the Church Music Association in 2007. The text is drawn from a series of lectures given in French in 1935. This section appears in pages 10 through 19.



What is the fundamental definition of rhythm?

Let us dismiss at once an over-simplified explanation, which is exceedingly widespread in spite of its constant opposition to facts. For many indeed, who content themselves with readymade and “labor-saving” formulas, rhythm is a matter of intensity, and consists in the alternation of strong and weak sounds. The regular or frequent repetition of the strong sound they call the “accent,” and this, for them, produces the rhythm.

But no, rhythm is not a mere question of intensity. It is a question of *movement*—of ordered movement; it is the grouping of sounds into a synthesis. In general, rhythm is essentially a *synthesis*. Its work is to withdraw each sound from its pure individuality and blend all into one large movement. This is done by a series of units, successively bigger and more comprehensive, the lesser enshrined in the greater, combining and reaching their mutual completion in one united whole.

I have called this a synthesis, which term I would explain as follows. When I speak, just as when I sing, I break up a period into a series of successive units (syllables in speech, notes in song), which, be they syllables or notes, only become comprehensible when re-grouped into a unity. Take speech. Supposing I speak in an intelligible manner, then while I am speaking and dividing up the period into a series of units in juxtaposition, my listeners must, by an act of the intellect, re-group the sounds I utter: form my syllables into words, my words into phrases, my phrases into sentences, in such a way that, in spite of the multiplicity of syllables, they understand one SINGLE idea. The same may be said of music, which, in its way, is a language. It is the work of re-grouping, of synthesis, which we call rhythm.

I have said that this synthetic action is achieved by successive units which perfect and complete one another: syllables, words, sentences, and periods in speech; notes, simple rhythm, sections, members, phrases, and periods in the chant. Let us take a concrete example. Here is a piece that is at once simple and clear and is known to all. Admittedly it is not very authentic Gregorian chant, but it illustrates clearly the point in question: *Adoro te*.

Dom Joseph Gajard was chant director of the Solesmes monastery from the 1930s through 1950s.



A - dó - ro te de - vó - te, lá - tens Dé - i - tas,
 Quae sub his fi - gú - ris ve - re lá - ti - tas:
 Tí - bi se cor mé - um tó - tum súb - ji - cit,
 Qui - a te con - tém - plans to - tum dé - fi - cit,

Here are four members each distinct from one another, each with its own unity (intonation and cadence), and yet all blending together to form a united whole. If, when singing this piece, you fail to convey the sense of convergence of all the members towards a central point (the top *fa* of the third member), you will, so to speak, have *spelt* the melody, you will have sung four successive fragments, you will not have sung a verse of a hymn, a *single* melody.

Let us look closely. Materially speaking, the second line *Quae sub his figuris vere latitas* is an exact melodic reproduction of the first *Adoro te devote, latens Deitas*. Nevertheless, since this second line forms a transition between the first and the third, which latter contains the principal accent of the whole piece, and since the melodic trend bears constantly towards this principal material, these two lines should be joined together in a single moving crescendo, unbroken as regards expression, gradually mounting up towards the principal accent. Once this climax is past, the rhythm progressively falls away, coming to rest at last on the “final” of the mode.

You see, therefore, how the synthesis is made by the convergence of all the parts towards a common centre, which acts as the keystone of the building. This ordered movement, gathering up in its progress all individual elements and making them share in its life, tends towards the climax which attracts it; it then falls away, as it were regretfully, but still remains under the influence of the principal accent. In a word, it forms a graceful curve, a parabola, made up of a rise and a fall, a spring and a coming to rest. If you have understood this—and it is difficult to see how any musician could fail to do so—you have understood the rhythm. Rhythm, in its widest extension as in its smallest component parts, is nothing else than this regulation of movement, this synthesis, this relation of a spring and a coming to rest. This definition will be repeatedly verified.

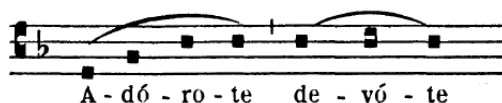
When I sang *Adoro te* just now, you must have noticed how all the notes, without exception, freed themselves from their individuality in order to be enlivened by the general rhythm. This general rhythm, the rhythm of the whole piece, is itself composed of lesser rhythms, and while respecting the unity of each of the latter, it enlarges and broadens them, bringing them to their fullest measure of cohesion by animating them with its life.

Examine the matter thoroughly. Our verse of a hymn, as we have seen, is made up of four members, each one ending with a half-bar. A careful scrutiny of the interior components of these four members shows us, as does also the examination of their individual sections and units, this same characteristic of rise and fall, the same relation of spring and coming to rest. Take the first line, with its notes, and with the half-bar that ends it:



Clearly we have a rise, its little cadence marked by the lengthened note and the quarter-bar; then a fall away. There is the spring which tends toward the accent of *devote*, followed by the gradual coming to rest: *latens Deitas*.

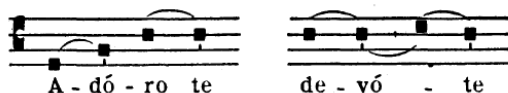
Let us continue our analysis. This member or line is composed of two sections. The first of these sections, *Adoro te devote*, can itself be sub-divided into two sub-sections:



This sub-division is equally apparent in words and melody. We have said two sub-divisions, and truly their distinction is so small that in actual singing they are intimately bound together.

But *logically*, in the analysis, the distinction between them must, and does in fact, exist. In each sub-section we again find the double movement: a spring towards a centre (*ado-*, *devo-*), and a falling to rest (*-ro te*, *-ote*).

But we can proceed even further. Our two sub-sections can, in their turn, be sub-divided, and in fact are so treated. The four notes of each section (*fa la do do* and *do do re do*), however closely joined they may be, are not expressed by a single movement, but by two successive steps:



The notes naturally group themselves into pairs, as shown by the little connecting line above them. The first note is quite evidently an *élan* or spring, a departure, the lifting of the foot to take a step; the second (marked with a little vertical sign), is a fall, a coming to rest, the placing of the foot on the ground; like a momentary rest or the recovery of balance after having previously lost it.

Thus we find at the very foundation of rhythm little steps (the smallest possible rhythmic synthesis), each one made up of a departure and an arrival, a spring and its subsequent fall. They are but little units formed by two or three notes or syllables, and which, fitting into each other, give rise to sections, a larger form of unity. These in their turn, by grouping themselves together, always with the relation of rise and fall, progressively form the members, phrases, and finally the period, which last is seen to consist, as the Greeks recognized, in one large protasis followed by one large apodosis.

Scan a line of Corneille, declaim a sentence of Cicero or Bossuet, play a piece of Bach or Mozart, and you will see that both the broadest rhythm of imposing passages and the most daring dance of a lyric poem are equally achieved only by means of their evolution through all the stages just indicated, and, in the last resort, arise from a series of steps. It is only thus that rhythm can be set in motion.

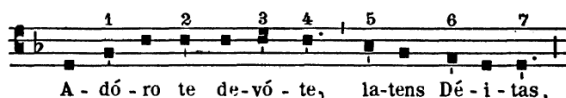
This leads us to an interesting point. Because of the essential unity of the living being, there is a close, indeed, an absolute connection between vocal rhythm and that vital rhythm which

shows itself in local movement. Personally I am of the opinion that resonant musical rhythm is nothing more than the projection into the order of sound of that vital movement which we all have within us. As long as you are unable to associate musical rhythm with your own vital rhythm, there is something wanting.

Musical rhythm is only good in the measure in which it makes you feel your own rhythm. "By rhythm alone," M. Combarieu truthfully says, "resonant matter takes a form. It is rhythm which makes it an organism, and an ordered and intelligible whole; so that the mind of the hearer, instead of wandering vaguely hither and thither, rejoices in itself, as though its own harmony had been revealed to it."¹

One more word must be added before we leave this analysis of the *Adoro te*. I said just now that for many modern people rhythm is simply a question of intensity, and consists of the periodical recurrence of strong and weak sounds. The *Adoro te* suffices to show how far is this oversimple theory from the facts.

Taking once more the first line as our example, we have observed that the down-beats are on the notes here marked with a vertical sign and numbered:



Admittedly here the down-beats 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 coincide with tonic accents, and derive a certain intensity from this fact; but the down-beats 4 and 7 fall each on the final syllable of a word, and are consequently weak. It is remarkable that the two places in this line where the coming to rest is most noticeable are precisely the down-beats 4 and 7, which are lengthened sounds and the ends of sections. Clearly, therefore, strength is in no way necessary to give this impression of coming to rest. Furthermore, we must never forget that Gregorian chant is essentially Latin, born of the Latin text, in which final syllables are always weak, almost lifeless. This is as much as to say that all the most important falling passages, ends of sections, members, and phrases, which invariably coincide with the end of a word, are weak.

If you have understood all that has been said so far, this *movement* which we have described and which is independent of all intensity (this point will be further touched upon later), you have understood rhythm. Rhythm is nothing but a work of synthesis, of grouping; it is the fusion of all the diverse elements which concur to form the phrase. Rhythm arranges these elements, blending them into a unity, giving to each its appointed place in the succession and order of movement.

In a word, rhythm is the *relation* which is established between two elements, a rise and a fall, fusing them together in the unity of a single movement. Or, more exactly still, rhythm is the unity of movement brought about by the relation established between two elements, a rise and a fall.

We have just described rhythm by making use of a concrete case, *Adoro te*. Let us now proceed further and try to discover the actual *nature* of rhythm, to find out in what it consists.

We have said that rhythm is a matter of movement and not of intensity. What does this mean? To answer this, we must first make certain fundamental distinctions, for philosophy tells us that the only way to unravel a question satisfactorily is by means of distinctions and definitions. In only too many modern "methods" of singing, one may discern, more often than not, an

¹J. Combarieu, *Theorie du rythme dans la composition moderne* (Paris: A. Picard et Fils, 1897), p. 13.

effort to draw a few comprehensive notions of rhythm out of a general study of some given melody, apparently without suspecting that this melody is a complex thing, made up of a number of elements each having its own life, character, and reactions. What wonder, then, that clarity is wanting, that one only reaches the “more or less,” and that one ends fatally in hopeless confusion?

Would it not be wiser, before studying this “whole,” first to examine separately the elements of which it is composed, and so acquire a real and accurate knowledge of each? This is an essential condition if one would realize the synthesis with the least possible chance of error. This is precisely what Dom Mocquereau did, and that is why he alone (let us admit it frankly) succeeded in introducing order and clarity into a question which had, for years and centuries, been a source of embarrassment and perplexity even to specialists.

The first distinction is of the utmost importance: In Gregorian chant, which we are here considering, there are at least two fundamental factors of rhythm: the melody and the text. The melody has, or can have, its own precise rhythm. The Latin words, by means of their tonic accentuation, have their own rhythm also, which can accord more or less satisfactorily with the melodic rhythm. Before seeing how these two could be brought into agreement, Dom Mocquereau wished to be perfectly clear about the nature of each independently. Therefore, before we examine the melodic rhythm and the verbal rhythm together, let us try to be quite clear as to what exactly is the melodic rhythm, and even pure rhythm as such. When we have done this, we shall be in a better position to discover its relations both with the melody and neums, and also with the tonic accentuation of Latin words.

*Rhythm is a part of the
organization of movement.*

The second distinction, also very important, is that of “orders.” In every piece of music, no matter of what kind, the sounds of which it is composed cannot be produced except as being subject to the qualities or physical phenomena which differentiate them from each other and which (omitting the question of *timbre*) may be reduced to three heads: pitch, intensity, and length. The sounds are high or low according to their place in the melodic scale; this is the melodic order. They are strong or weak according to their degree of intensity; this is the intensive order. They are long or short according to their duration; this is the quantitative order.

These three orders are absolutely independent of each other. Intensity, for example, may at our choice be a quality of high notes or low ones, of long notes or short. These three orders of phenomena, which are inseparable from every sound produced, are therefore very different from one another. All three are physical, material, that is to say, produced by a particular disposition of the resonant vibrations themselves. The melodic order arises from the number of vibrations; the intensive order from their amplitude; the quantitative order from their duration.

We have now reached the point where we may formally ask: With which of these three orders is rhythm, as such, to be identified? Many moderns will be quick to answer: With the intensive order. This is a grave mistake. Actually, rhythm is not to be identified with any one of the three orders—melodic, intensive, or quantitative. Rhythm is a part of the organization of movement. It is not a physical or material quality. Its perception is principally an intellectual act, of an order superior to those already mentioned; an order which dominates all the others and which, while admittedly having an intimate connection with each one, governs and regulates them as absolute master.

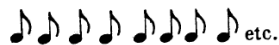
Indeed, the different results produced by the variations of pitch, intensity, and duration give rise to a whole series of relations which the most elementary musician cannot fail to see. It is precisely this which comprises the function of rhythm: to seize upon these relations, to clarify them and put them in order, in such a way as to blend them all into a unity, that unity of which we have already spoken and without which no work of art can exist. This arrangement and ordering of relations and of movement is the very essence of rhythm, and philosophers will readily grant that such an ordering of relations is not confined to the sensible order, but is chiefly a matter of the intellect.

But someone may object, if rhythm is something different from the qualities of melody, intensity, and quantity, it cannot be an objective reality at all, and we are left in pure subjectivism.

I disagree. Rhythm cannot be identified with any one of the material or physical qualities of sound—it can even dispense with some of them; but it must be determined either by one of these qualities or by something else, as we shall see later.

Rhythm must make itself known in each case, here and now, by one or other of the different elements contained or implied in the series of sounds.

We will try to make this clear. Imagine a series of sounds exactly equal in every respect:



Here we have no rhythm, but merely sounds succeeding each other, without any bond between them, what Dom Mocquereau used to call "*Une poussière de sons.*"

Suppose now we stress every second sound in a regular manner:



At once the sounds fall into groups of two. A relationship is set up between the strong sound and the weak one, and we have a *rhythm of intensity*, which nobody could deny. Suppose now that instead of giving them a difference of intensity, we give to each an equal stress but arrange them by duration, doubling the length of every other note:



Once again the sounds fall into groups of two; no longer by means of intensity but of duration. The grouping is equally real, but is formed in another manner. Just as, a moment ago, intensity without the help of duration was enough to form groups, so now duration without the help of intensity suffices to achieve a similar result, and we have a *quantitative rhythm*.

We are forced logically, therefore, to draw a conclusion: If I can obtain rhythm by means of intensity without the aid of duration, then duration is not essential to rhythm. Similarly, if I can obtain rhythm by means of duration without the aid of intensity, then neither is intensity essential to rhythm. Hence, rhythm can exist apart from intensity, apart from duration, and even apart from melody, provided it be determined by some other element. If, therefore, it can exist without any of the elements given, it is evident that it is not to be identified with any one of them.

I would go further, and say that since the perception of rhythm is not of the purely physical and material, but rather of the intellectual order, it is not absolutely necessary that there should

be, in every case, some distinguishing element in the order of sound, intensive, quantitative, or melodic, provided there be something else to determine the rhythm; as, for example, in speech, the tonic accentuation of the words. Indeed, a simple gesture made by the conductor of the orchestra or the choirmaster can be amply sufficient to make the rhythm perceptible.

Maurice Emmanuel, the eminent professor of the conservatoire and a specialist in Greek music, affirms this repeatedly and with insistence in his magnificent article on "l'Art Grec" in the *Encyclopédie Lavignac* (Tome I). According to him, the ancients considered musical art as something so delicate and supple, that in order to perceive the rhythm it was not enough to hear the melody, but one had also to watch the bodily movements of the dancers. One must remember that in those days, music was never considered by itself, but in intimate conjunction with poetry and dancing, which always accompanied it.

This brings us to our final conclusion as regards the essence of rhythm. If, philosophically speaking, the perception of rhythm can be determined as well by sight as by hearing, it stands to reason that its principle is to be found neither in the ear, nor the eye, nor in any one of our physical senses, but in our superior faculties, and, in the last resort, in our intellect. Hearing and sight provide the interior senses with those impressions on which the intellect can perform its work of abstraction and synthesis.

In other words, although rhythm is founded upon material elements, it is independent of them, and is of the intellectual order.

This again, is substantiated by Maurice Emmanuel (in accord with such unimpeachable musicians as Vincent d'Indy, Louis Laloy, et al.). When he speaks first of the rhythm of ancient times, and later, that of the music of the Renaissance, he calls it: "a living but perfectly free organism, whose perfections cannot be revealed by the ear alone; the mind must be trained to appreciate it; it is an internal organism, whose structure can only be understood by the mind."

Rhythm is not a matter of intensity but of movement.

Thus we have seen that rhythm is not a matter of intensity but of movement: it forms a hierarchy, an ordered synthesis of relations which are produced by a succession of sounds, together with the different material qualities which accompany them. We have now to examine more fully the development of this synthesis, and especially the constitution of the section, which is the first of the greater rhythmic units.

From the purely technical point of view, one might well say that the "mechanism" of the section is a synthesis of three super-imposed schemes:

First scheme: The formation of the *elementary rhythm*, through the co-ordination of two or three simple beats. The rhythmic touch, or point of rest, or "ictus," is invariably the end of the movement.

Second scheme: The formation of *compound time*, by the fusion of two elementary rhythms on the rhythmic ictus. Here the rhythmic touch remains indeed the end of the preceding movement, but becomes at the same time the point of departure for the movement which follows.

Third scheme: The formation of *composite rhythm*, through the co-ordination of little groups in compound time. Here each rhythmic touch, while retaining its own character, has a special function of *élan* or of fall in the general motion of the phrase, or of the full rhythmic synthesis. ♪

REPERTORY

Musical Rhetoric in Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Alma Redemptoris Mater*

By Josh Hortman



In recent years, Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704) has come to rival Jean-Baptiste Lully as the major figure in French Baroque music, particularly among early-music scholars and performers in France. For some, Charpentier, whose large compositional output consists mainly of sacred works, has gone from almost total obscurity to become something of a French Catholic version of the German Lutheran J. S. Bach. However, despite this new flourish of interest, Charpentier is still barely known to most American audiences and performers.¹

Parisians of the late seventeenth century flocked in large numbers to Mass and to Vespers held in the Jesuit church of Saint-Louis, in part to hear the impassioned sermons, but also because of the lavish art, architecture, and music associated with these offices.² Charpentier secured a permanent position in the employ of the Jesuits of Paris in 1688 after the death of the Duchess of Guise, a devout woman who had been his patron since the late 1660s. He wrote music to accompany the liturgical celebrations that took place in Saint-Louis, Latin oratorios to be performed at the Jesuit college, and devotional music for use in other extraliturgical events.

Charpentier's musical style was ideally suited for the unique position of *maître de musique* for the Jesuits. While many parish composers continued to write in a strict Franco-Flemish polyphonic style surviving from the Renaissance, and court composers focused all too often on flattering the monarch and catering to the taste of his courtiers, Charpentier made use of the contemporary Baroque style to serve the liturgical and devotional texts which he set. In the same way that a Jesuit preacher used the techniques of classical rhetoric to explain a passage of scripture or expound upon a Catholic doctrine, Charpentier used analogous musical techniques to interpret his Latin text in a way which was not possible in the objective *stile antico*, which was sometimes derided as lacking in taste by members of the court at Versailles.³

Seventeenth-century theorists, seeing a parallel between the art of the orator and that of the composer, often spoke of musical composition in rhetorical terms. While there is no direct evidence suggesting that Charpentier studied rhetoric, his close association with the Parisian

Josh Hortman is a musicology Ph.D. student at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. He and his wife are currently in R.C.I.A. classes at Holy Spirit Catholic Church. christiandevreich@yahoo.com

¹The general preference among scholars over the past hundred years or so for German and Italian music of the Baroque era has had a lasting effect, particularly upon the availability of editions. Charpentier's best-known compositions are probably the *Te Deum*, H. 146, and the *Messe de minuit*, H. 9.

²Described in detail in C. Jane Gosine and Erik Oland, "Docere, delectare, movere: Marc-Antoine Charpentier and Jesuit Spirituality," *Early Music*, 32 (2004), 511–539.

³Jean-Laurent Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Comparaison de la musique italienne et de la musique française, 1704–1706* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1972).

Jesuits, who dealt with rhetoric both in their teaching and in their preaching functions,⁴ would suggest that it is likely that Charpentier was at least somewhat familiar with musical-rhetorical practice, and several scholars dealing with the composer have found analysis along these lines to be fruitful.⁵

In classical rhetoric, the oratory process is described in stages: *inventio* (exploration of the subject matter), *dispositio* (organizing of material), *elocutio* (application of decorative or figurative language), *actio* (delivery of the speech), and *memoria* (commitment of the speech to memory). The application of this process to the musical composition of a liturgical vocal work is twofold. In a strictly musical sense, a parallel may be drawn between the creation of motives, their organization in time, the surface-level arrangement and development of these motives, the performance of the resulting composition, and, when applicable, its memorization by the performer. Yet, in another sense, the entire act of composition may be seen as *actio*, since it is the realized interpretation of a pre-existent liturgical text.

While employed by the Jesuits, Charpentier composed a set of four Marian antiphons, numbered H. 44–47.⁶ The antiphons are scored for two violins, four-part chorus, and basso continuo.⁷ While these texts could be intended for extra-liturgical devotions, Charpentier has copied out, in French, instructions indicating the seasonal distribution of the antiphons.⁸ Thus it seems likely that they were intended for liturgical performance in conjunction with the office of Vespers.⁹ Upon hearing the first antiphon in the set, *Alma Redemptoris* (H. 44), the listener who is familiar with the chants attached to these antiphons will immediately recognize the similarity between the opening melodic motive of Charpentier's setting, played by the violin, and the corresponding chant incipit:¹⁰

⁴The way in which the Jesuits taught rhetoric is known from the *Ratio studiorum*, the official outline of the order's curriculum. Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is specifically mentioned, along with the works of Cicero, as the basic text for rhetoric courses; see Allen P. Farrel, tr., *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599* (Washington, D.C.: Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits, 1970), pp. 72–79.

⁵Gosine and Oland, "Docere;" Annick Fiaschi, "Rhétorique et musique dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle: Les histoires sacrées de Marc-Antoine Charpentier," *Ostinato rigore*, 8–9 (1997), pp. 215–236; Fabien Guilloux, "Théologie, rhétorique et musique: les Litanies de la Vierge [H.86] de Marc-Antoine Charpentier," *Analyse musicale*, 42 (2002), 36–46; Théodora Psychoyou, "Les Miserere de Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Une approche rhétorique," in *Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Un musicien retrouvé*, ed. Catherine Cessac (Hayen, Belgium: Margada, 2005), pp. 313–346. The following analysis draws upon these sources for its methodology, in addition to Aristotle, *Rhetorics*, tr. W. Rhys Roberts, ed. Lee Honeycutt <<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~honey1/Rhetoric/index.html>> (accessed 7 July, 2008), and Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Inventione*, tr. C. D. Young, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, 4 (London: George Bell & Sons, 1888), pp. 241–380.

⁶Charpentier's works are catalogued in H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Les œuvres de Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: Picard, 1982). The set of antiphons H. 44–47 are available in modern edition from the *Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles*, Cahiers de musique 18 (www.cmbv.com). They have been recorded by Le Concert Spirituel under the direction of Hervé Niquet, on a disc entitled *Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Sacred Music*, Vol. 4, Naxos 8.554453.

⁷The choral parts are marked "seul" (solo) and "tous" (tutti); according to the edition cited above, this could mean that the work is intended for either a small chorus featuring brief solos to be sung by chorus members, or a quartet of soloists, the marking *tous* simply indicating to the singer (who would have had only his part) that the entire ensemble is performing. The first arrangement is the one chosen on the recording by Le Concert Spirituel.

⁸H. 44 reads: "Antienne à la Vierge / depuis les vespres du samedi / de devant le premier dimanche de l'advent / jusque aux complies du jour de la purification inclusivement," or "Antiphon to the Virgin / from Vespers of the Saturday / before the First Sunday of Advent / to Compline of the Day of Purification inclusive." This matches the indications given in the *Liber Usualis* (Tournai: Desclée, 1962), pp. 273–274.

⁹The *Liber Usualis* indicates that the antiphons are to follow Vespers when it is not immediately followed by Compline; if the two offices follow one another immediately, the antiphon comes at the end of Compline.

¹⁰*Liber*, pp. 273–274.



With the entry of the voice at measure 14, it becomes clear that this similarity is not coincidental, as the concluding phrase of Charpentier's setting is almost identical to that found in the chant:



Al- ma *Redemptóris Má- ter,



Al - - - - - ma Redempto - ris Ma - ter

Later in the antiphon (mm. 77ff. and again in mm. 100ff.) there is second instance of similarity between the chant melody and the melodic material used by Charpentier:



sumens íllud Ave,



Su - mens il - - - lud A - - - ve

As these examples demonstrate, Charpentier uses the chant not as an organizing principle, as a Renaissance composer might have done, but rather as a resource for musical ideas in the sense of *inventio*. Thus, in the case of *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, H. 44, the stage of *inventio* begins already with a close association between words and music, involving not only a pre-existent liturgical text but the melodic material of the chant associated with that text.

The next stage in the rhetorical process, *dispositio*, involves the organization of ideas into a coherent argument. The way in which the antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater* is organized shows a close relationship between text and music, as well as a musical structure which reflects the possible influence of classical rhetoric. The oratory tradition taught that an argument should proceed according to a more or less flexible formal structure. This structure most commonly involved the following parts: the *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (presentation of facts), *confirmatio* and/or *refutatio* (further proof and/or rebuttal), and *peroratio* (conclusion). There might also be a *digressio* (digression), and the *exordium* could be subdivided into *captatio* (something

which catches the audience's attention) and *partitio* (summation of the discussion which is to follow).¹¹

The text of the antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater* is naturally divided, simply based upon its syntax and content, into two sections. The first section invokes the Blessed Virgin Mary, names two of her attributes, and asks for her aid. The second section refers to the remarkable way in which Mary gave birth to God with her virginity intact, and concludes with a simple cry for mercy.

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia caeli
 Porta manes, et stella Maris, succurre cadenti
 Surgere qui curat populo: Tu quae genuisti
 Natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem:
 Virgo prius, ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore
 Sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.

*Kind Mother of the Redeemer, who remain the open door
 To heaven, and the star of the sea, help your falling (people),
 Who are trying to rise: You who gave birth,
 To the amazement of nature, to him who begot you:
 Virgin, before and after, from the mouth of Gabriel
 Assuming that "Hail," have mercy on sinners.*

Charpentier does, in fact, set the first half of the text apart as an independent section, preceded and followed by an instrumental prelude and postlude which, based upon the chant-derived opening melody, unifies the section. After the prelude, the *haute-contre*¹² soloist sings the phrase of invocation with the chant-based melody described above, after which the full ensemble enters with the naming of attributes and the request for help. When this structure is compared to the rhetorical tradition, one finds that it corresponds rather well to the *exordium*. As the prelude begins, it is not altogether clear whether the initial melody is intentionally based upon the familiar chant; the suggestion is only confirmed with the conclusion of the soloist's invocation. Thus the hearer's attention is caught in a musical equivalent of the *captatio*, and the remaining text of this section becomes a *partitio*, giving the listener examples of why the Blessed Virgin should be called upon, and then calling upon her for help. Charpentier is *interpreting* the pre-existent liturgical text as an argument, or even something of a miniature sermon, on the invocation of Mary.

*Charpentier is interpreting the pre-existent
 liturgical text as an argument, or even
 something of a miniature sermon, on the
 invocation of Mary.*

¹¹The sources given above (note 5), reflecting different classical and early-modern writers, vary in the number and names of the middle sections between the *exordium* and the *peroratio*. I have chosen, for the sake of clarity, to list only those sections which are pertinent to the discussion which follows; these follow Aristotle and Cicero closely.

¹²French music of this period distinguished four basic voice parts: *dessus* (soprano), *haute-contre* (a high tenor part, corresponding to a low alto range), *taille* (a lower tenor part), and *basse* (bass).

There is a definitive break in style and texture for the text which follows. The lilting rhythms and full texture of the *exordium* give way to a declamatory style for soloist and continuo, as the miraculous relationship, through Christ, between God and Mary is described in compact terms: "You who gave birth, to the amazement of nature, to him who begot you." Even though the text is referring to something which is miraculous and mysterious, the simple style which Charpentier has chosen would seem to confirm that he is interpreting this text as a *narratio*, a presentation of fact which supports the argument being made. In the rhetorical tradition, the *narratio* is expected to appeal to the reason, not to the *emotions*; pathos is reserved for the *exordium* and *peroratio* (conclusion), and, if present, the *digressio* (digression). It becomes clear, then, why Charpentier chooses a declamatory style for this text.

Is Charpentier's interpretation of the text a reference to the church's teaching on Mary as the new Eve?

The lilting rhythms return with a somewhat fuller trio texture for a brief, light-hearted dialogue and cadence on the text which follows: "Virgin before and after, from the mouth of Gabriel." Musically, an interruption occurs here: dance rhythms and dialogue are replaced by a slow harmonic rhythm, imitative texture and chant-based melody (see above) for the remaining text: "Assuming that 'Hail,' have mercy on sinners." At first sight, this does not seem consistent with the syntax of the text: "assuming [or "taking," "receiving"] that 'Hail'" seems to complete

the thought which precedes it, since "Ave" was the first word spoken by the angel Gabriel to Mary at the Annunciation. Charpentier's setting, however, provides the listener with a different interpretation, in which the words of Gabriel are attached to "Virgin, before and after," and Mary's "assuming" of the word "Ave" is attached to her having mercy on sinners. Latin Christendom has long observed the fact that the word "Ave" is the inversion of the name "Eva;" in addition, "sumens" is not a word which implies passive hearing but rather active taking. Is Charpentier interpreting the text as a reference to the church's teaching on Mary as the new Eve? Referring to Mary's reply to Gabriel, "be it done to me according to thy word,"¹³ St. Irenaeus declares that "The knot of Eve's disobedience was united by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith."¹⁴ Charpentier's *actio*, his *performance* or *interpretation* of the text implies something like the following: "Virgin before and after, according to the words of Gabriel; have mercy on sinners as you receive his 'Hail,' taking on the role of new Eve."

Though this is the end of the text, it is not the end of the antiphon, because the text from "Virgo prius" to the end is repeated with the addition of the *dessus* voice and the two violins. Initially the repetition is exact, except for the additional voices. However, while the first occurrence of the words "sumens illud 'Ave'" (mm. 77–83) concluded with a half cadence in A minor followed by a chromatic cry for mercy in the minor mode (mm. 83–90), in the repetition of the text by the full ensemble, the phrase "sumens illud 'Ave'" cadences in G major and is followed by an expanded major-mode setting of "peccatorum miserere" which concludes the antiphon. Thus the tension created in the first statement is released when it is repeated, again suggesting the loosening of the knot of disobedience described by St. Irenaeus.

¹³Luke 1:38.

¹⁴Quoted in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶494.

How, then, is this sequence of musical subsections to be understood in rhetorical terms? The words “Virgin before and after, from the mouth of Gabriel” are additional proof of Mary’s efficacy as a mediator as the Mother of God, and as such may be interpreted as the *confirmatio*. The final phrase of the text, particularly when understood as a reference to Mary as the new Eve, would likewise seem to be an extension of the *confirmatio*, yet it must necessarily form the *peroratio* since it concludes the text. Now the need for the textual repetition makes sense. The first instance of the words “sumens illud ‘Ave,’ peccatorum miserere” is essentially a *digressio* which foreshadows the *peroratio*, after which the *confirmatio* continues and is followed by the actual *peroratio* when the final textual phrase reappears.

It is in the arena of *elocutio*, the surface-level decoration through figures of speech, that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theorists see the greatest parallel between the art of rhetoric and that of musical composition. This tradition of figuration is most often seen in German writers, though some of their works were widely distributed.¹⁵ Many of these figures amount to word painting, a practice extending back to the Renaissance; for example a descending melodic line might be attached to the phrase “descendit de caelis” of the Creed. Still others have to do with repetition and melismatic writing used to emphasize important words. While examples of this sort are to be found in the *Alma Redemptoris Mater* (there is, in fact, a descending leap figure attached to the word “cadenti,” or “falling”), it may seem somewhat surprising, given the influence rhetoric seems to have had on the organization of the antiphon, that Charpentier does not saturate his music with these figures. However, despite criticisms from contemporaries that Charpentier’s use of “learned” compositional techniques was “Italianate,”¹⁶ the fact that his music is relatively conservative in its use of musical figures is a demonstration of the extent to which this French composer, though somewhat influenced by Italian traits, practiced the restraint that was characteristic of French aesthetics.

The fusion of music and drama was the essential genesis from which Baroque style was born, a style which ultimately was created in Italy and emanated from that nation to the rest of Europe. This unique union of text and music was slower to evolve in France, particularly in the arena of sacred polyphony. The tension between music’s capacity to focus the attention of the faithful upon the liturgical action and music’s ability to distract from this action was present then as it still is today. Yet, for Charpentier, the act of composition was truly an *actio*, a performance of a text not unlike the performance of a sermon. By balancing the older traditions of chant and polyphony with a restrained use of musical-rhetorical practices, Charpentier manages to direct the thoughts of his listeners towards the meaning of the liturgical text without detracting from the liturgical action of the office. ❧

*Is Charpentier’s interpretation
of the text a reference to the
church’s teaching on Mary as
the new Eve?*

¹⁵See the resources listed above (note 5) for further discussion.

¹⁶See especially Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Comparaison*, part 2, pp. 347, and part 3, p. 138. It should be noted, however, that Le Cerf’s famous criticism is directed towards Charpentier’s French music; the courtier actually praises the composer’s Latin compositions.

DOCUMENTS

Colloquium XVIII: The Repertoire

TUES, 10:30AM ENGLISH MASS

Introit: Hearken, O Lord, Unto My Voice

Kyrie (Ambrosian, English, Oost-Zinner)

Psalm: We Are His People

Alleluia (plainchant)

Offertory: I Will Bless the Lord

Offertory Motet: If Ye Love Me, by Tallis

Sanctus (Ambrosian, English)

Mystery of Faith: Dying You Destroyed Our Death

Our Father (Mahrt)

Agnus (Ambrosian, English)

Communion: One Thing I Seek

Communion Motet: O salutaris Hostia, by Pierre de la Rue

Recessional: Hymn: When Morning Gilds the Skies (Laudes Domini)

WED, 10:30AM REQUIEM MASS

Introit: Requiem aeternam

Kyrie: XVIII

Gradual: Requiem aeternam

Sequence: Dies irae

Offertory: Domine Jesu Christe

Offertory motet: Circumdedereunt me, by H. Franco

Sanctus: XVIII

Agnus: XVIII

Communion: Lux aeterna

Communion motet : Ave verum, by Byrd

In paradisum

Chorus angelorum

THURS, 10:30AM EF, MISSA CANTATA, FEAST OF ST. JULIANA FALCONIERI

Introit: Dilexisti justitiam

Kyrie: XI

Gloria: XI

Gradual: Specie tua

Offertory: Filiae regum

Offertory motet: Tu solus, by Josquin

Sanctus: XI

Agnus: XI

Communion: *Quinque prudentes*
Communion motet: *Ave Maria*, by Guerrero
Recessional: *Urbs beata Jerusalem*, by Lasso

THURS, 5:00PM HOLY HOUR

O salutaris Hostia, by Byrd
The Litany of Loreto
Tantum ergo, by Palestrina

FRI, 10:30AM OF, VOTIVE MASS FOR THE HOLY FATHER

Introit: *Spiritus Domini*
Kyrie: *Missa Simile est regnum coelorum*, by Victoria
Gradual: *Beata gens*
Alleluia
Offertory: *Confirma hoc Deus*
Offertory motet: *Tu es Petrus*, by Palestrina
Sanctus: *Missa Simile est regnum coelorum*, by Victoria
Agnus: *Missa Simile est regnum coelorum*, by Victoria
Communion: *Factus est repente*
Communion motet: *O sacrum Convivium*, by Victoria

FRI, 7:30PM VESPERS

Deus in adjutorium, by Anon. Spanish
Antiphon: *O Magnum pietatis opus!*; Psalm 109 in falsobordone, by Lorente de Anchuelo
Antiphon: *Salva nos*; Psalm 110
Antiphon: *Ecce Crucem Domini*; Psalm 111, by Ceballos
Antiphon: *Nos autem gloriari*; Psalm 112
Antiphon: *Per signum Crucis*; Psalm 115, by Cabezon
Responsory: *O Crux gloriosa!*
Hymn: *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*
Antiphon: *O Crux, splendidior cunctis astris*
Magnificat primi toni, by Victoria
Antiphon: *O Crux*
Marian antiphon: *Salve Regina*, solemn tone

SAT, 10:15AM EF, SOLEMN MASS VOTIVE BVM

Introit: *Salve sancta Parens*
Kyrie: *Missa Vulnerasti cor meum*, by Morales
Gradual: *Benedicta et venerabilis*
Offertory: *Ave Maria*
Offertory motet: *Ave Maria*, by Gombert
Sanctus: *Missa Vulnerasti cor meum*
Agnus: *Missa Vulnerasti cor meum*
Communion *Beata viscera*

Communion motet: Beata viscera, by Isaac
Organ Recessional

SUN, 8:00AM OF MISSA CANTATA, 12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Introit: Dominus fortitudo

Kyrie: Mass in F, by Monteverdi

Gloria: Mass in F, by Monteverdi

Gradual: Convertere Domine

Alleluia

Credo I

Offertory: Perfice gressus meos

Offertory motet: Perfice gressus meos, by Orlandus Lassus

Sanctus: Mass in F, by Monteverdi

Agnus: Mass in F, by Monteverdi

Communion: Quod dico vobis

Communion motet: O sacrum Convivium, by Morales

Recessional motet: Ave Maria, by Bruckner ♪



Visit To Heiligenkreuz Abbey

Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI

Editor: The Austrian monastery of Stift Heiligenkreuz provided the voices for recording Chant: Music for the Soul (Universal Studio, 2008), which provides an outstanding example of Cistercian chant in a CD that has been in the top of the Billboard charts in the U.K. and the U.S. Pope Benedict XVI spoke at the monastery in 2007.

Sunday, 9 September 2007



Abbot, Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, Dear Cistercian Monks of Heiligenkreuz, Dear Brothers and Sisters in Consecrated Life, Distinguished Guests and Friends of the Monastery and the Academy, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On my pilgrimage to the *Magna Mater Austriae*, I am pleased to visit this Abbey of Heiligenkreuz, which is not only an important stop on the *Via Sacra* leading to Mariazell, but the oldest continuously active Cistercian monastery in the world. I wished to come to this place so rich in history in order to draw attention to the fundamental directive of Saint Benedict, according to whose *Rule* Cistercians also live. Quite simply, Benedict insisted that “nothing be put before the Divine Office.”

For this reason, in a monastery of Benedictine spirit, the praise of God, which the monks sing as a solemn choral prayer, always has priority. Monks are certainly—thank God!—not the only people who pray; others also pray: children, the young and the old, men and women, the married and the single—all Christians pray, or at least, they should! In the life of monks, however, prayer takes on a particular importance: it is the heart of their calling. Their vocation is to be men of prayer. In the patristic period the monastic life was likened to the life of the angels. It was considered the essential mark of the angels that they are worshippers. Their very life is worship. This should hold true also for monks. Monks pray first and foremost not for any specific intention, but simply because God is worthy of being praised. *Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus!*—“Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy is eternal!”: so we are urged by a number of psalms (e.g., Ps. 106:1). Such prayer for its own sake, intended as pure divine service, is rightly called *officium*. It is “service” par excellence, the “sacred service” of monks. It is offered to the triune God who, above all else, is worthy “to receive glory, honour and power” (Rev. 4:11), because he wondrously created the world and even more wondrously renewed it.

At the same time, the *officium* of consecrated persons is also a sacred service to men and women, a testimony offered to them. All people have deep within their hearts, whether they know it or not, a yearning for definitive fulfillment, for supreme happiness, and thus, ultimately, for God. A monastery, in which the community gathers several times a day for the praise of God, testifies to the fact that this primordial human longing does not go unfulfilled: God the Creator has not placed us in a fearful darkness where, groping our way in despair, we seek some ultimate meaning (cf. Acts 17:27); God has not abandoned us in a desert void, bereft of meaning, where in the end only death awaits us. No! God has shone forth in our darkness with his light, with his Son Jesus Christ. In him, God has entered our world in all his “fullness” (cf. Col. 1:19); in him all truth, the truth for which we yearn, has its source and summit.

Our light, our truth, our goal, our fulfillment, our life—all this is not a religious doctrine but a person: *Jesus Christ*. Over and above any ability of our own to seek and to desire God, we ourselves were already sought and desired, and indeed, found and redeemed by him! The gaze of people of every time and nation, of all the philosophies, religions, and cultures, ultimately encounters the wide open eyes of the crucified and risen Son of God; his open heart is the fullness of love. The eyes of Christ are the eyes of a loving God. The image of the crucified Lord above the altar, whose Romanesque original is found in the Cathedral of Sarzano, shows that this gaze is turned to every man and woman. The Lord, in truth, looks into the hearts of each of us.

The core of monasticism is worship—living like the angels. But since monks are people of flesh and blood on this earth, Saint Benedict added to the central command: “*pray*,” a second command: “*work*.” In the mind of Saint Benedict, and Saint Bernard as well, part of monastic life, along with prayer, is work: the cultivation of the land in accordance with the Creator’s



will. Thus in every age monks, setting out from their gaze upon God, have made the earth life-giving and lovely. Their protection and renewal of creation derived precisely from their looking to God. In the rhythm of the *ora et labora*, the community of consecrated persons bears witness to the God who, in Jesus Christ, looks upon us, while human beings and the world, as God looks upon them, become good.

Monks are not the only ones who pray the *officium*; from the monastic tradition the church has derived the obligation for all religious, and also for priests and deacons, to recite the breviary. Here too, it is appropriate for men and women religious, priests, and deacons—and naturally bishops as well—to come before God in their daily “official” prayer with hymns and psalms, with thanksgiving and pure petition. Dear brother priests and deacons, dear brothers and sisters in the consecrated life! I realize that discipline is needed, and sometimes great effort as well, in order to recite the breviary faithfully; but through this *officium* we also receive many riches: how many times, in doing so, have we seen our weariness and despondency melt away! When God is faithfully praised and worshipped, his blessings are unfailing. In Austria, people rightly say: “Everything depends on God’s blessing!”

Your primary service to this world must therefore be your prayer and the celebration of the Divine Office. The interior disposition of each priest, and of each consecrated person, must be that of “putting nothing before the Divine Office.” The beauty of this inner attitude will find expression in the beauty of the liturgy, so that wherever we join in singing, praising, exalting, and worshipping God, a little bit of heaven will become present on earth. Truly it would not be presumptuous to say that, in a liturgy completely centered on God, we can see, in its rituals and

chant, an image of eternity. Otherwise, how could our forefathers, hundreds of years ago, have built a sacred edifice as solemn as this? Here the architecture itself draws all our senses upwards, towards “what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined: what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9). In all our efforts on behalf of the liturgy, the determining factor must always be our looking to God. We stand before God—he speaks to us and we speak to him. Whenever in our thinking we are only concerned about making the liturgy attractive, interesting, and beautiful, the battle is already lost. Either it is *Opus Dei*, with God as its specific subject, or it is not. In the light of this, I ask you to celebrate the sacred liturgy with your gaze fixed on God within the communion of saints, the living church of every time and place, so that it will truly be an expression of the sublime beauty of the God who has called men and women to be his friends!

The soul of prayer, ultimately, is the Holy Spirit. Whenever we pray, it is he who “helps us in our weakness, interceding for us with sighs too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26). Trusting in these words of the Apostle Paul, I assure you, dear brothers and sisters, that prayer will produce in you the same effect which once led to the custom of calling priests and consecrated persons simply “spirituals” (*Geistliche*). Bishop Sailer of Regensburg once said that priests should be first and foremost spiritual persons. I would like to see a revival of the word *Geistliche*. More importantly, though, the content of that word should become a part of our lives: namely, that in following the Lord, we become, by the power of the Spirit, “spiritual” men and women.

*A monastery is above all a place
of spiritual power.*

Austria (*Österreich*) is, in an old play on words, truly *Klösterreich*: a realm of monasteries and a land rich in monasteries. Your ancient abbeys whose origins and traditions date back many centuries are places where “God is put first.” Dear friends, make this priority given to God very apparent to people! As a spiritual oasis, a monastery reminds today’s world of the most important, and indeed, in the end, the only decisive thing: that there is an ultimate reason why life is worth living: God and his unfathomable love.

And I ask you, dear members of the faithful: see your abbeys and monasteries for what they are and always wish to be: not mere strongholds of culture and tradition, or even simple business enterprises. Structure, organization, and finances are necessary in the church too, but they are not what is essential. A monastery is above all this: a place of spiritual power. Coming to one of your monasteries here in Austria, we have the same impression as when, after a strenuous hike in the Alps, we finally find refreshment at a clear mountain spring. . . . Take advantage of these springs of God’s closeness in your country; treasure the religious communities, the monasteries and abbeys; and make use of the spiritual service that consecrated persons are willing to offer you!

Finally, I have come also to visit the Academy, now the Pontifical Academy, which is 205 years old and which, in its new status, the abbot has named after the present Successor of Peter. Important though it is that the discipline of theology be part of the *universitas* of knowledge through the presence of Catholic theological faculties in state universities, it is equally important that there should be academic institutions like your own, where there can be a deeper interplay between scientific theology and lived spirituality. God is never simply the “object” of theology; he is always its living “subject” as well. Christian theology, for that matter, is never a purely human discourse about God, but always, and inseparably, the *logos* and “logic” of God’s self-revelation. For this reason scientific rationality and lived devotion are two necessarily complementary and interdependent aspects of study.

The father of the Cistercian Order, Saint Bernard, in his own day fought against the detachment of an objectivizing rationality from the main current of ecclesial spirituality. Our situation today, while different, nonetheless has notable similarities. In its desire to be recognized as a rigorously scientific discipline in the modern sense, theology can lose the life-breath given by faith. But just as a liturgy which no longer looks to God is already in its death throes, so too a theology which no longer draws its life-breath from faith ceases to be theology; it ends up as an array of more or less loosely-connected disciplines. But where theology is practised “on bent knee,” as Hans Urs von Balthasar urged, it will prove fruitful for the church in Austria and beyond.

This fruitfulness is shown through fostering and forming those who have vocations to the priesthood or the religious life. Today, if such a vocation is to be sustained faithfully over a lifetime, there is a need for a formation capable of integrating faith and reason, heart and mind, life and thought. A life devoted to following Christ calls for an integration of one’s entire personality. Neglect of the intellectual dimension can give rise all too easily to a kind of superficial piety

*A life devoted to following
Christ calls for an integration
of one’s entire personality.*

nourished mostly by emotions and sentiments, which cannot be sustained over a lifetime. Neglect of the spiritual dimension, in turn, can create a rarified rationalism which, in its coldness and detachment, can never bring about an enthusiastic self-surrender to God. A life devoted to following Christ cannot be built on such one-sided foundations; half-measures leave a person unhappy and, consequently, also spiritually barren. Each vocation to the religious life or to the priesthood is a treasure so precious

that those responsible for it should do everything possible to ensure a formation which promotes both *fides et ratio*—faith and reason, heart and mind.

Saint Leopold of Austria—as we heard earlier—on the advice of his son, Blessed Otto of Freising, who was my predecessor in the episcopal see of Freising (his feast is celebrated today in Freising), founded your abbey in 1133, and called it *Unsere Liebe Frau zum Heiligen Kreuz*—Our Lady of Holy Cross. This monastery is dedicated to Our Lady not simply by tradition—like every Cistercian monastery—but among you there burns the Marian flame of a Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard, who entered the monastery along with thirty of his companions, is a kind of patron saint of vocations. Perhaps it was because of his particular devotion to Our Lady that he exercised such a compelling and infectious influence on his many young contemporaries called by God. Where Mary is, there is the archetype of total self-giving and Christian discipleship. Where Mary is, there is the Pentecostal breath of the Holy Spirit; there is new beginning and authentic renewal. From this Marian sanctuary on the *Via Sacra*, I pray that all Austria’s shrines will experience fruitfulness and further growth. Here, as at Mariazell, I would like, before leaving, to ask the Mother of God once more to intercede for all of Austria. In the words of Saint Bernard, I invite everyone to become a trusting child before Mary, even as the Son of God did. Saint Bernard says, and we say with him: “Look to the star of the sea, call upon Mary . . . in danger, in distress, in doubt, think of Mary, call upon Mary. May her name never be far from your lips, or far from your heart. . . . If you follow her, you will not stray; if you pray to her, you will not despair; if you turn your thoughts to her, you will not err. If she holds you, you will not fall; if she protects you, you need not fear; if she is your guide, you will not tire; if she is gracious to you, you will surely reach your destination.” ❧

COMMENTARY

Singing Hymns Instead of the Proper of the Mass

by Helen Harrison



hoirs are not present at all Masses that have music. It is inevitable then that people sometimes need to sing “another song that is suited to the sacred action, the day, or the season and that has a text approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop.”¹

Musicam Sacram provides for the singing of hymns instead of the Mass proper.

The custom legitimately in use in certain places and widely confirmed by indults, of substituting other songs for the songs given in the graduale for the entrance, offertory, and communion, can be retained according to the judgment of the competent territorial authority, as long as songs of this sort are in keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast, or with the liturgical season.²

Even during said Masses the proper may be sung.

Moreover, some other song can also, on occasions, be sung at the beginning, at the offertory, at the communion, and at the end of Mass. It is not sufficient, however, that these songs be merely “Eucharistic”—they must be in keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast, or with the liturgical season.³

It is therefore allowable to sing hymns at Mass but only if they are chosen in accordance with these directions.

The debate about the worthiness and appropriateness of parts of the current hymn repertoire will surely continue for some time. Recent issues of *Sacred Music* have raised the questions of the quality of liturgical music and of the suitability for the liturgy of the St. Louis Jesuits repertoire.⁴

Eleonore Stumpf suggests that beauty can be a road to God and seeks to justify her choices of music on these grounds. Looking at individual hymns or songs or groups of these from the point of view of personal preference can only lead to conflicting opinions. A more helpful approach to hymn selection begins with a consideration of beauty. God is perfect beauty and goodness and truth. Our encounter with this beauty in the liturgy is nothing less

Helen Harrison has a Ph.D. in historical musicology. She is a member of the cathedral parish in Adelaide, South Australia.

¹The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2002) [GIRM], ¶48.

²Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, Musicam Sacram*, ¶32.

³*Musicam Sacram*, ¶36.

⁴Shawn Tribe, “Beyond Taste in Liturgical Music,” *Sacred Music*, 133, no. 2 (2006), 23–24; Jeffrey Tucker, “The Mystery of the St. Louis Jesuits,” *Sacred Music*, 133 no. 3 (2006), 27–36; Eleonore Stumpf, “Beauty as a Road to God,” *Sacred Music*, 134, no. 4 (2007), 13–26; William Mahrt, Editorial: “Aesthetics Revisited,” *Sacred Music*, 135, no. 1 (2008), 3–4.

than a participation in the worship offered by the whole company of heaven. We join with Christ in his offering of himself to the Father. Such an honor ought to produce in us true reverential awe. This in turn should lead to humility. Humbled before God we seek to be obedient to what the church teaches about the liturgy and strive to become better informed about this in order to offer worship more pleasing to God. Our desire to offer worthy worship leads us to employ what we understand to be beautiful for the worship of true beauty.

Beautiful music is well-constructed in terms of melody, harmony, and rhythm. When we hear beautiful music and listen to it with sensitivity, the Holy Spirit heightens our appreciation of it and leads us to an acute awareness of the presence of God.

There is a need to “purify worship from ugliness of style, from distasteful forms of expression, from uninspired musical texts which are not worthy of the great act that is being celebrated.”⁵ Not everyone has the necessary musicality to recognize well-constructed music. Some music graduates seem to lack this skill, while others without formal music training may possess it.

One of the descriptions of the church found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council is that of the Body of Christ. From this comes the concept of the Holy People of God.⁶ Important as this is, it has been perhaps unduly stressed as the paramount model of the church. In the

Trying to begin a discussion on liturgical music with one’s individual preferences as the starting point is fraught with difficulties.

1960s and 1970s it became fashionable to claim “We are church” to the point where we, rather than God, were seen as all-important. This became the justification for the rejection of much of the church’s tradition and also much of the repertoire of sacred music. Composers caught up in this way of thinking often set texts lauding the singers rather than praising the Lord. Entrance antiphons were abandoned for “gathering songs.” Sometimes their tunes were of respectable quality but all too often, being designed to be instantly memorable, they were banal.

Mindful of this, one can be forgiven for having some concern at Dr. Stumpf’s thoughts on beauty as a road to God. It is indisputable that sometimes beauty may lead us to God. The problem is that what one sees as beautiful, another—and particularly one skilled in musical analysis—sees as lacking in substance. It is possible to come to strange conclusions by basing one’s thinking on a subjective view of the church. So too, trying to begin a discussion on liturgical music with one’s individual preferences as the starting point is fraught with difficulties.

The need to be obedient to the church’s teaching concerning hymns perhaps requires more thought than it has so far received. Hymns are often sung at Mass during the entrance procession, at the preparation of the gifts, during communion, at the end of communion, and after the dismissal. For some of these occasions the church has guidelines.

The text of a hymn or of another song is of particular importance. It must be consistent with Catholic teaching and drawn chiefly from holy scriptures and from liturgical sources.⁷ Furthermore

⁵Pope John Paul II, *Chirograph on the Centenary of the Motu proprio “Tra le sollecitudini” on Sacred Music*, (2003), ¶3.

⁶Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* (1964), chapter 2.

⁷Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), ¶121.

liturgical music is to adhere to the liturgy's texts, is to be synchronized with the time and moment in the liturgy for which it is intended and must reflect the gestures proposed by the rite.⁸

Those choosing texts and music for hymns need to have a sound musical judgment, an extensive knowledge of the hymn repertoire, an appreciation of good poetry, and the ability to discriminate between good and poor Catholic theology. Particularly there is a need to be aware of the difference between the "Body of Christ" and (as some songs say) "my bread" or "my cup." The literary quality of some revisions of old hymn texts is variable. Some of the worst modernized texts seem to arise from inartistic attempts to adopt politically correct language. Then too there are hymns with "thee" and "you" in the same line! Other unhappy language modifications end up destroying rhyming patterns. Skillful modernizations of old hymns are found in the poetry of Anthony Petti in the *New Catholic Hymnal*.⁹ Petti makes little attempt to alter those hymns that would lose their character by being updated. For example, he keeps the repetition of the "ee" sound in Richard Heber's *Holy, holy, holy*, thereby retaining the poetry and rhyming pattern. Petti's second verse is:

Holy, holy, holy, all the saints adore thee,
 casting down their golden crowns before thy majesty;
 Cherubim and Seraphim falling down before thee,
 God everlasting, through eternity.¹⁰

*Together in Song*¹¹ alters the original to "all the saints adore you" and "falling down before you." This alters the rhyming pattern from 'a a a a' to 'a b a b' for verses 2 and 3 but not for verses 1 and 4. The same practice is found in the work of the editors of *Hymns for Today's Church*.¹² Most of the other alterations in that book are skillfully done.

We need to look at the various points of the liturgy where hymns are sung and then must examine the structure and function that should characterize those hymns. Then, by attempting to adhere to the liturgy's texts, our chosen hymns will have some chance of enhancing rather than undermining the liturgy.

By adhering to the liturgy's texts, our chosen hymns will have some chance of enhancing rather than undermining the liturgy.

The **introit** chant takes the form of an antiphon, psalm verses, the Gloria Patri and then the repeat of the antiphon. Its length is suitable for accompanying the entrance procession and the incensing of the altar. Often it highlights the day or season. Hymn replacements should respect the length and function of the introit. On the two Sundays of the year when rose-colored vestments may be worn, their introits—*Gaudete* and *Laetare*—underline the joyful character of these days. To omit the introit and sing an unrelated hymn offers no explanation of the nature of the day. The above-mentioned directions from *Musica Sacram* make it clear that there are restrictions on what is suitable for singing in place of these texts.

⁸*Chirograph*, ¶5.

⁹*New Catholic Hymnal* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971).

¹⁰*New Catholic Hymnal*, #91.

¹¹*Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II* (Sydney: HarperCollins Religious, 1999), #132.

¹²*Hymns for Today's Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), #7.

The church's introits almost always have texts directed to God or, occasionally, to the saints. They are not at all expressions of personal piety. They are not introverted, assembly-praising songs. Nor do they involve the singers taking on the voice of God. Although the texts of the introits are not always related to the readings of the day, on particular days such as Easter, Christmas, Ascension, and Pentecost the antiphons do concern the feast being celebrated. Substitute hymns on these feast days should underline the day while using God-centered texts. It is a worthwhile exercise to look through one's parish hymnals and mark those texts that are theocentric and not pietistic. In other words one is looking for texts that are not introverted. Most hymnals contain very few of these. The very few texts that pass this test are suitable for further examination regarding their possible use as introits.

Those who sing metrical hymns have a collection of tunes that can be used for various sets of words. There is merit in developing a repertoire of metrical hymns in all parishes. A parish that relies on too many hymns or songs with non-interchangeable tunes will have great difficulty in developing a useful repertoire of hymns for the liturgy.

Once a parish has established a collection of metrical hymn tunes, it is possible to generate abundant entrance hymns by making use of the various metrical psalters. These psalters were developed particularly in Protestant France and Scotland, but also in other parts of Europe, at the time of the Reformation. The thinking was that the only texts of sufficient worth were biblical ones. This led to the whole psalter being set to metrical and rhymed verse. Some of the texts were lacking in literary merit but others have survived the test of time. A later development was a not-so-strict translation of the psalms but one that conveyed the general meaning. One of the better-known examples is *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*.

There is merit in developing a repertoire of metrical hymns in all parishes.

The psalter has always been the church's chief hymn book. It is useful to be able to draw on psalm texts for hymn singing at the liturgy. Christoph Tietze's *Introit Hymns* makes use of metrical psalms alongside metrical versions of antiphons from the gradual.¹³ Tietze has also included a metrical Gloria Patri verse immediately before the recapitulation of the antiphon in each of his entrance hymns. This book is a useful addition

to the repertoire but congregations are not obliged to use the *Graduale Romanum* or *Missale Romanum* or *Graduale Simplex* introits nor even Anglicized versions of these. When drawing on the various collections of vernacular hymns some caution is in order. Essentially this involves taking care about the person of the Trinity to whom the text is addressed and ensuring that the text is God-directed rather than an expression of personal piety.

Given the current paucity of suitable hymns for use at the introit, one would hope that compilers of future hymnals—whether they are recognized publishers or parish musicians using their copyright licenses—would consider using some of the current metrical psalters in association with metrical forms of the antiphons. Even non-metrical antiphons could introduce and close a metrical hymn. One can imagine that the well-known chant *Drop Down You Heavens from Above, and Let the Skies Pour Down Righteousness*¹⁴ married with a suitable psalm, would make a good entrance hymn for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. In ordinary time, many psalm texts could

¹³Christoph Tietze, *Introit Hymns for the Church Year* (Franklin Park Ill.: World Library Publications, 2005).

¹⁴See Theodore Marier, *Hymns, Psalms and Spiritual Canticles* (Belmont Mass.: B.A.C.S. Publishing Co., 1974), #449, or *The New English Hymnal* (Norwich: The Canterbury Press Norwich, 1986), #501.

stand alone, without antiphons, as suitable entrance hymns. Four modern-language metrical psalters which provide useful material are:

Michael Morgan, *The Psalter for Christian Worship* (Louisville, Kentucky: Witherspoon Press, 1999). Witherspoon Press is a part of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Jointly published by the Office of Theology and Worship and Columbia Theological Seminary, the book includes an index of liturgical use, related to our three-year cycle of readings. There are limited supplies of this book available.

Martin E. Leckebusch, *The Psalms: 150 Metrical Psalms for Singing to Well-Known Hymn Tunes* (Buxhall, Stowmarket, Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 2006). This is indexed by topic and for each psalm there is a brief commentary on the text. Some of the tunes are in uncommon meters with their recommended tunes found in the Kevin Mayhew hymn collections.

Christopher L. Webber, *A New Metrical Psalter* (New York: Church Publishing, 1986). Most of these hymns use common meter, long meter, or short meter. Webber has also included texts for a collection of canticles. The liturgical index applies to the Anglican/Episcopalian church. Webber has been particularly generous regarding copyright permission for his texts. For non-commercial reproduction of the texts he says: "This book may be reproduced by a congregation for its own use without charge or permission."

Psalter Hymnal (Grand Rapids, Michigan: CRC Publications, 1987). This comes from the Christian Reformed Church. Hymns 1–150 are the 150 psalms. There are also "Bible Songs" from numbers 151–236. The general hymn collection then follows. After that there is a doctrinal section which is not of use to Catholics. The indexes are particularly useful. For those who make use of copyright licenses, this is a useful addition to the parish music library.

Introit replacements could also come from the usual hymn repertoire. There are many scripture-based hymns. Some texts concern the Lord's Day and are suitable for most occasions. Most of the ancient office hymns are directed to God the Father and end with a Trinitarian conclusion. Their content and structure make them a useful source for entrance hymn material. One does not only have to consider ancient office hymns. In *The New English Hymnal* the editors have made it their policy to write new office hymns where there were previously no suitable ones. There one can find a hymn for the Holy Family (*The Growing Limbs of God the Son*) and the Baptism of Christ (*The Sinless One to Jordan Came*).¹⁵ Compiling a parish list of "Entrance Hymns" that is in accordance with the general thrust of the introit texts may at first seem an onerous task but ultimately it should prove to be a much-used resource.

It is not permissible to replace the **Alleluia** or Lenten acclamation before the gospel with a hymn about the word of God.¹⁶

The **offertories** of the *Graduale Romanum* and *Graduale Simplex* are not found in the current missal. Nevertheless one needs to look at the style of texts used in the gradual. They are taken from the psalms or from particular scriptural passages relevant to the day. Suitable music at this point could include organ music (outside of Lent), motets (if there is a choir) or hymns. Hymns

*Introit replacements could
also come from the usual
hymn repertoire.*

¹⁵*The New English Hymnal* ¶45 and ¶58.

¹⁶GIRM, ¶62.

at this position in the liturgy could well underline some idea taken from the readings of the day. They could also refer to the season or feast day (outside of ordinary time), or they could concern the preparation of the gifts. As the hymns used here no longer replace set liturgical texts there is some freedom of choice, provided that there is due regard to the insistence on quality in the church documents.

There are three places where music is appropriate during the distribution of Holy Communion. The gradual and missal provide communion antiphons which may be extended by the singing of psalm verses. Hymns may be sung during communion, but if there is to be a thanksgiving hymn at the end of communion, then there should be a pause before it commences.¹⁷ The amount of singing during communion will depend on the presence or absence of a choir.

The **communion antiphon** could be sung by a *schola* or a soloist if available. In its place a well-chosen single verse of a congregational hymn would be helpful. It is often possible to find a hymn verse that corresponds to the text of the missal or gradual antiphon. The *Graduale Sim-*

plex suggests that certain texts are appropriate at any time. These include, from Psalm 34 (33): *Taste and See That the Lord Is Good*. The recommended *Ubi caritas* chant is something that wears better than its Taizé counterpart.

Unlike the introits, the communion antiphons tend not to be directed to God the Father but speak of the words or actions of the Son.

As in the case of the introits, one needs to consider the nature of the texts of the communion antiphons before substituting whole hymns or single hymn verses for them. Often the communion antiphon refers to the gospel and serves to make a link between the Word and

Eucharist. Given the history of the development of these antiphons and the introduction of the three-year cycle of readings, this link is not always found. Some of the texts do use Christ's words and so we find the "I am" statements e.g., "I am the Bread of Life," "I am the vine," and "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life." Unlike the introits, the communion antiphons tend not to be directed to God the Father but speak of the words or actions of the Son. Both the *Graduale Romanum* and the *Graduale Simplex* suggest the possibility of using the antiphon repeatedly between verses of a psalm. This requires two groups of singers and is not particularly relevant in the situation where the congregation is the only singer. If the singers are about to move forward to receive Holy Communion they will not want to be singing during that time. One or two verses should suffice.

Hymns with choruses seem to be very prevalent in some Catholic parishes. There are even settings of the Gloria and Credo with choruses! One wonders where this practice came from as it is peculiar to the Catholic Church. Perhaps the concept of the responsorial psalm gave rise to it. It could also have come from the success of the chorus hymns sung in the 1960s at the Billy Graham Campaign. Several American hymnals include the hymn that became very popular during these campaigns—*How Great Thou Art*. Excessive chorus singing seems to treat the singers like pre-schoolers who love endless repetition. It does little to aid congregational singing, becoming instead an invitation to remain silent. We are told that music such as Taizé choruses produces a mantra for prayer. Perhaps it does in some situations, but generally when

¹⁷GIRM, ¶187.

used during the Sunday Mass it seems that often the intention and the reality are far apart. In spite of various bodies recommending chorus singing during the reception of Holy Communion, most congregations would like to be spared from this trial. If congregational hymn singing is to replace the communion antiphon then it needs to be brief. There is provision in *Musicam Sacram* to adapt the singing to the needs of the congregation:

In order that the faithful may actively participate more willingly and with greater benefit, it is fitting that the format of the celebration . . . should be varied as much as possible, according to the solemnity of the day and the nature of the congregation present.¹⁸

If a hymn is sung later, during the reception of communion, then a **Eucharistic hymn** is appropriate as is a hymn associated with the Name of Jesus or even a psalm. Care needs to be exercised regarding theology and sentimentality. Noisy hymns would be disruptive as would ill-chosen ones not related to this part of the Mass.

Provision is also made for the singing of a **hymn of thanksgiving** as the communion of the people concludes.¹⁹ Obviously, texts praising God would be appropriate. Most of the hymns concerning Eucharistic adoration would be out of place here.

The Missal makes no mention of a **final hymn** to accompany the outgoing procession yet *Musicam Sacram* does refer to this.²⁰ If there is a final hymn it is unhelpful to choose an introverted text. Praise and discipleship are suitable themes for final hymns. Most congregations resent being “kept in” to sing numerous verses of a final hymn—particularly if the priest has disappeared before the beginning of the first verse.

*Praise and discipleship are
suitable themes for final
hymns.*

Perhaps it is useful here to take some specific hymns and consider their suitability at the various places where hymn singing is permitted. We could consider Isaac Watts’ hymn *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. The text is scripture-based, particularly in the verse “Forbid it Lord, that I should boast.” Nevertheless the whole thrust of the hymn is the singer’s reaction to the love of Christ and to what he suffered for us. This immediately puts it at odds with the nature of the antiphon texts for the introit and communion. Because it is not Eucharistic it is not appropriate as a communion hymn. It is not really a suitable text for a final hymn and so it is not helpful there either. It is a good hymn, as are many in our hymn collections, but it can only really find a home at Mass if it is sung during the preparation of the gifts. This sort of examination needs to be applied to any hymn being considered for use at a specific point in the Mass.

On Christmas Day there will be no place for the picturesque carols such as *Silent Night* or *Away in a Manger*. Hymns such as *O Come, All Ye Faithful* and *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*, are more acceptable. The hymn from the Liturgy of St. James, *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, serves to make a useful link between the Incarnation and the Eucharist. It could well provide a communion hymn on Christmas Day.

¹⁸*Musicam Sacram*, ¶10.

¹⁹GIRM, ¶88.

²⁰See the above reference to ¶36.

There have been repeated instructions for the provision by diocesan or national organizations of a list of approved music for the liturgy.²¹ There was a deadline set for the appearance of a directory when *Liturgiam Authenticam* was published in March 2001. Within five years the various bishops' conferences were to have their directory ready for publication. Father Hermans suggests that this should be more than just a list of songs. He sees that:

Liturgical life needs a kind of "vernacular *Graduale*" that offers suitable liturgical song for celebrations during the liturgical year and for individual parts of every celebration.²²

*Liturgical life needs a kind of
"vernacular Graduale."*

Referring to the request made to the bishops to compile a directory of approved liturgical songs he says "Above all, it is good for our worship of God and for the faith of every Christian that these opportunities actually be taken."²³

This discussion about hymn selection has had nothing to do with choosing or avoiding the hymns of specific composers or groups of composers. Hymns for use at Mass may be by St. Ambrose, the St. Louis Jesuits, or Charles Wesley, or anyone else, provided that they meet the criteria mentioned above. They must be scriptural or liturgical. Scriptural should not mean simply verses lifted from the Bible and thrown together without any consideration of poetry. Nor does it mean more or less matching irregular slabs of text with totally uninspired tunes and then adding a chorus. Hymn construction must be truly artistic—as judged by competent poets, theologians and musicians—and it must be appropriate in nature and style and length for its position in the liturgy. ☩

²¹Father Jo Hermans lists them all in his "The Directory of Liturgical Songs in the Vernacular: Background and Liturgical Criteria," *Antiphon: A Journal for Liturgical Renewal*, 11 no. 1 (2007), pp. 46–64.

²²Hermans, "Dictionary," p. 64.

²³Hermans, "Dictionary," p. 64.



A Tribute to Mary Berry, C.B.E., 1917–2008

By Jeffrey Morse



r. Mary Berry, in religion, Mother Thomas More, Canoness Regular of St. Augustine, Congregation Notre Dame de Jupille, an ardent champion, scholar, and teacher of Gregorian chant, died May 1, 2008, Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord. Dr. Berry will long be remembered by her students and those who attended her workshops as a true apostle of the chant as a living tradition, inspiring all with her enthusiasm and scholarship and by her holiness of life.

Mary Berry was born into a life of academia in Cambridge, England, June 29, 1917. Her father Arthur Berry was a chemist and Vice-Master and Librarian of Downing College, Cambridge; her mother, the daughter of an Anglican clergyman. As a young girl she attended the Perse School where she was quickly singled out for music, though she later admitted that this was done “quite randomly,” it affected the course of her life. She decided to visit the Abbey of Solesmes with her father in her “gap” year before going up to Cambridge, as she had decided to write an essay about Gregorian chant for a musical competition. Many in the musical world were talking about Gregorian chant in the mid-1930s and in particular about the Abbey of Solesmes, and she thought this fact would give her a better chance of winning. They arrived during Holy Week and while attending the offices of Tenebrae, she was suddenly struck by the beauty of the responsories, in particular the lovely little melody of descending *torculi* that begin many of the verses of these chants. She was quickly won over by the chant and it was here too that the seeds of her later conversion to Catholicism were sown.

It was also during this “gap” year that she attended the *École Normale de Musique* in Paris in order to study theory and composition. On her first day there, quite lost, she asked someone in the crowd for directions and asked help in finding a good theory teacher as well. The stranger was Nadia Boulanger. It was the beginning of a relationship that lasted until Boulanger’s death in 1979. While studying with Boulanger, one of the greatest musical pedagogues of the twentieth century, Mary was impressed not only by her obvious erudition, but also by her deep Catholic faith, which furthered her growing interest in Catholicism.

In 1938, after attending Girton College, Cambridge, and taking her B.Mus. degree, she made the decision to become a Roman Catholic, being received into the church by the Bishop of Liège, Belgium. On Palm Sunday 1940, she entered the novitiate of the Canonesses Regular of St. Augustine in Jupille, Belgium, and on Pentecost Sunday was forced to flee on foot with the whole novitiate in advance of the invading German army. They were escorted to the French boarder by the French army, and then walked to Paris to meet up with the other canonesses from Jupille already in Paris. This was a very treacherous and



Jeffrey Morse, a student of Dr. Mary Berry, is Precentor and Master of the Choristers at the Church of St. Stephen, the First Martyr, Sacramento, California. moravocis@mac.com.

extremely dangerous time. Eventually through the diplomatic maneuverings of the father of one of the nuns, she, along with the other canonesses, was able to refugee to Lisbon, Portugal, to wait out the war. There she made her religious profession in 1942.

After the war and final profession in 1945, she returned to France and taught at the order's school in Dijon. She was sent to study Gregorian chant at the Institut Gregorien in Paris and in Rome became a student of Dom Eugène Cardine. In the early 1960s she decided to go back to Cambridge to pursue a doctorate in music. She studied there with the eminent English musicologist Thurston Dart, who at first tried to dissuade her from doctoral studies because of her age but finally relented. While researching her doctoral thesis, *The Performance of Plainsong in the Later Middle Ages and the Sixteenth Century* at the Bibliothèque National in Paris in 1966, her attention was drawn to a fifteenth century processionale. In it she discovered the melody of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," which by that time was thought to have been a musical composition of Thomas Helmore who had first put words and music together in the *Hymnal Noted*, Part II, in 1856. Despite his claim that it had been copied by the late J. M. Neale from "an old French Missal in the National Library, Lisbon," scholars had never been able to find this source or any source written before the 1850s. Berry also contributed articles to the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*.

The destruction of choirs, the burning of chant books, and the wholesale persecution of Latin was a horrific experience for all of us.

While back in England, she became director of Ward Method Studies for Great Britain and Ireland, and set up centers for the teaching of Gregorian chant, working closely with Odette Hertz, who was director of Ward Studies in France. In 1968 she received her doctorate and was offered a Fellowship at

Newnham College, Cambridge, where she headed up the musical faculty. The late 1960s proved to be a very confusing time in the church and she found herself at odds with the direction her religious order was going. She opted for exclaustation, or living apart from her community, but remained a canoness until her death, living a devout and observant life in Barton, a village just outside Cambridge.

Religious life, alas, was not the only thing effected in the late 1960s; the unthinkable was about to happen, the nearly complete abandonment of Gregorian chant in the church. Remembering this time in a talk given to the Association of Latin Liturgy, London, in October of 1985, she remarked:

Our feeling about the chant had been one of absolute complacency; we had been to the Society of St. Gregory Summer Schools, we had been over to France to the Institut Grégorien, we had got our grades, we knew our stuff; we had got the chant taped, and on we sang! . . . The world of Gregorian chant sailed on, serene and glorious, like some great ocean-going liner, rising and falling on an untroubled sea of rhythmic waves. Alas, in the year 1970, that unsinkable liner seemed to hit an iceberg and sink with all hands. I stress the word "seemed." Nevertheless, the destruction of choirs, the burning of chant books, and the wholesale persecution of Latin was a horrific experience for all of us, but at least it did one thing: it brought us up short: it made us think in depth about the chant.

In 1975 Dr. Berry, along with a colleague, Rosemary McCabe, and the encouragement of Nadia Boulanger, founded the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, to sing, record, and primarily to teach the chant which had all but disappeared. This venture took her all over the world teaching, lecturing, and encouraging all who came to learn from her. She was an inspirational speaker, and though her scholarship was top-notch, it never kept her from bringing the chant to the humblest or most geographically far-flung group. She was missionary about the chant and her cheerful erudition left few unconverted. With her students, either at the university or with those who studied with her privately, she was a most generous teacher, but she set standards high, and could be extremely tough. She allowed for no ignorance of liturgy or music, and mistakes made during the singing of a liturgy required the offender to genuflect in his place in choir, following an ancient monastic custom, and usually garnered a stern talking to afterward. The liturgy, she would often remind

Berry co-founded the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge to sing, record, and primarily to teach the chant which had all but disappeared.

her students, was too important and holy a thing to approach with one's homework half-done and ill-prepared, only one's greatest effort and work could be acceptable for such a noble calling as to be set before the Lord's altar to sing his praises.

In 2000 Dr. Berry was awarded the papal medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" conferred upon her by the Abbot of Pluscarden Abbey at the conclusion of the singing of Vespers according to the use of Salisbury, in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, in what was the first Catholic ceremony to be had in that chapel since before the Reformation. In 2002 a C.B.E. was conferred upon her by Queen Elizabeth II for her service to "plainsong and Gregorian chant." She directed the Cantors of the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge in numerous recordings critically praised on the Herald label, and was the first to produce and record a reconstruction of a complete festal service based on the tropes and organa of the Winchester Troper. She also made with the Cantors two recordings for the Vatican Museums to accompany two of their traveling exhibits, *Angels From the Vatican*, and *Tu Es Petrus*. For nearly forty years she wrote reviews for *The Gramophone*.

Like St. Bede the Venerable, one of her saint-heroes whom she had held up countless times as an example to her students as the "perfect monk and scholar," she died on the Feast of the Ascension, peacefully and serenely, after a life spent tirelessly in the singing, teaching, and promotion of the church's song, our living link with the Church of the Apostles. The chant, she said in a lecture at St. Patrick's Church, Portland, Oregon, in August 1989,

utterly refreshes, enriches, and converts anyone who sings it, through the intricate and superlative art of generations of unknown composers, closer in time than we are to the original revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The chants proclaim the sacred texts in a way that reveals the church's deep and traditional faith in the Son of God, made Man, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified for our sake, but also risen, ascended, and glorified.

Dr. Mary Berry was buried in the churchyard of St. Birinus, Dorchester-on-Thames, after Requiems celebrated in Cambridge at the Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs and at Dorchester Abbey. ☩

Chant at Mealtimes

By Jeffrey Pinyan



It was a few months ago that I began learning some of the common prayers of the church in her universal language, Latin. The first two prayers were the *Ave Maria* and the *Pater Noster*. Despite my lack of education in the language (although I had studied French for six years), I was able to learn these prayers quickly for two reasons: I practiced them often enough to devote them to memory, and I knew their vernacular translations by heart already. This second reason only counts for anything because the *Hail Mary* and the *Our Father*, as I have prayed them for nearly two decades, are very accurate translations of the Latin prayers. This means I was able to learn the Latin prayers word-by-word and identify each Latin word's counterpart(s) in the English translation. This identification helped me to learn the Latin more quickly and more easily.

After those two prayers, I decided to learn the traditional blessing over meals: *Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.* My family had prayed this (in English) over every dinner since I can remember. I was pleased to see that the English is a virtually word-for-word translation of the Latin: *Benedic, Domine, nos et haec tua dona, quae de tua largitate sumus sumpturi. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.* The word order is slightly different, but now that I know a bit more about Latin and word order, I'm not surprised. The first and last words of the blessing are *benedic* (bless) and *sumpturi* (about to receive), and these indeed set the tone for the prayer.

After a short period of memorization, I took to praying this blessing in Latin privately over my breakfast and lunch. When Lent began, I revealed it to my wife: every Friday, I would pray the blessing over the meal in Latin. My wife, who is a medievalist studying for her Ph.D at Rutgers University (and who insists she's forgotten more Latin than I'll ever know), warmly received this "new" tradition. Then in late April, in response to a thread on the *Musica Sacra* forums, I drew up a chant setting (based on simple collect tone A) for the blessing.

What is this all about? Why pray at home in Latin? Why *chant* at home in Latin? For one reason, it thrills me because I am exercising a freedom within bounds (as all true freedoms are) in "composing" the chants. Since I don't have much education in chant, I don't know how to compose my own chants conforming to the various tones. That did not stop me from finding existing settings and applying them to the prayers, thanks to the enormous treasury of sacred music

*Why pray at home in Latin?
Why chant at home in Latin?*

Jeff Pinyan is a parishioner at Queenship of Mary in Plainsboro, New Jersey, and a software developer for the Internet Crimes Group, Inc. in Princeton, New Jersey. thecrossreference@gmail.com

guarded by the church. I employed one chant setting for the blessing itself, and a different setting for the post-blessing prayers of *Mensae caelestis participes faciat nos, Rex aeternae gloriae* and *Ad cenam vitae aeternae perducat nos, Rex aeternae gloriae* added respectively at lunch and dinner. In this way, I have made the prayers my own without changing their universal character. From

this perspective, I see now that Catholic worship is intended to behave the same way: it is universal without being stifling, to be other-worldly and yet inviting.

The home is the domestic church.

But the other reason is that I am involving myself (and my wife and, in the future, our children) in this long tradition of the church—singing our prayers as chants—because the home is, after all, the domestic

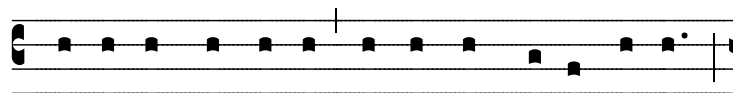
church. Our children will learn about the faith, and see it lived on a day-to-day basis, in our homes before they come to understand what we say and do at Mass. Indeed, unless they see the faith lived at home, they won't know why we profess such a faith at Mass at all! The fruits of this extend beyond the walls of the domestic church as well and can be powerful witnesses to our Catholic faith and heritage elsewhere: a restaurant, a cafeteria, or a park bench.

This is a heritage too priceless to lose, and as we pray and work to restore it to our parishes, we can remain its faithful *custos* in the domestic church, our homes. ☩

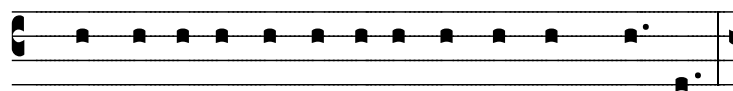
GRACE BEFORE MEALS



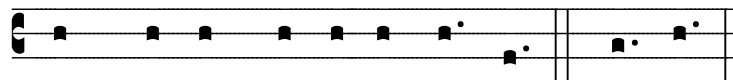
O - ré- mus.



Bé- ne- dic, Dó- mi- ne, nos, et haec tú- a dó- na, *



Quae, de tú- a lar- gi- tá- te, sú- mus sump- tú- ri.



Per Chrí- stum Dó- mi- num nó- strum. ☩ Á- men.

Israeli Hebrew and Catholic Chant

By Jeffrey Tucker



Can a Gregorian chant be reestablished as the primary and living musical language of Roman Rite Catholics around the world? The prospect strikes many as undesirable, and, even if it were desired, it is improbable and even impossible. But is it really? The Jewish people accomplished something in our own time even more implausible, and did it through sheer dedication and hard work.

The attempt to restore Hebrew as a working vernacular began in earnest around the same time as the Solesmes monastery began to work toward a restoration of Latin chant. The analogy is not exact, of course, but comparing the two attempts can reveal just how much more a daunting task Jewish people faced in this undertaking than Catholics did in theirs. What the Hebrew movement sought was not merely the use of an ancient language in worship or song but the re-institution of a vernacular language itself.

On the face of it, it seems like an impossible ambition. Hebrew was not a vernacular. It was a scholarly language and never a native one, even for those brought up in all-Jewish communities. For a millennium and a half, Hebrew had the status in the Jewish world that Latin does today in the Catholic world. It was the language of theology and art, poetry and scholarly discourse. It was something to study but not use in communication in the lives of regular people.

And yet here is the astonishingly fast sequence of events, as recounted in *A History of the Hebrew Language*.¹ The first public and prominent call for the restoration of Hebrew came in 1879 with Eliezir Ben-Yehuda's article called "A Burning Question." He did more than merely advocate. He was a great teacher who wrote the monumental *Dictionary and Thesaurus of the Hebrew Language*. His method was to combine medieval and ancient sources, drawing on both rabbinic and poetic Hebrew traditions, to forge a composite vernacular that would standardize language. New words were created out of Arabic words that had some semantic relationship to Hebrew. Many words stayed in the language but many were not used and fell out of favor.

Jews who already lived in Palestine had become speakers of the language, first in small family units that found others who would join them in speaking Hebrew in their own homes. The language moved into civic discourse in small cells, academic institutions, and finally in public life. There are informal reports of how the most passionate among them would find someone speaking some other language and say to them: "Jew, speak Hebrew." This was compelling in part because of the obvious need for an international language of Judaism in an area with a constant influx of immigrants from central and eastern Europe. These people were inclined to continue to speak their own native language. But a unified tongue is a critical element of a unified people with a mission, in this case the settlement of Palestine under the Zionist idea. Other motivations for changing to Hebrew were the desire

*A unified tongue is a critical
element of a unified people
with a mission.*

Jeffrey Tucker is managing editor of *Sacred Music*. sacredmusic@musicasacra.com

¹Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, tr. John Elwolde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 269–272.

to renew Jewish culture and recapture grandeur that they had once experienced as a people in the very place they now lived.

In 1922 Hebrew was accepted as one of the official languages in Palestine. When the state of Israel came into being in 1948, there was no question that Hebrew would be its official language. It became the native tongue of anyone born and raised Jewish in this country, and remains so today. It can and did happen, and in an astonishingly short period of time: some forty years from proposition to fulfillment of proximate goals and some sixty years until its complete realization.

Again, linguists regard language as the organic enterprise of a people, something that emerges out of the utilitarian need of people to communicate. By its nature it resists imposition, design, and prescription. But the restoration of the Hebrew language did not happen spontaneously. Nor did it emerge organically from within the community of Jewish people. It was the result of conscious design and effort on the part of an intellectual (and political) movement that understood that for a people to cohere and thrive as religious and cultural force required that they possess a unifying mode of communication, a verbal expression of their identity that both came from within and served as a relentless external reminder of what brings them together.

It was an effort very much like that of the Solesmes effort combined with the work of Pius X. Indeed, the chant tradition was not nearly as unused in the 1870s in the Catholic world as Hebrew was in the Jewish world. The Catholic was more modest in the sense that it did not seek to make Latin a living vernacular but merely a liturgical foundation for music at liturgy. It was and is eminently achievable. Progress was being made by mid-century. There is absolutely no reason to believe that it is a hopeless cause.

We can take inspiration for the extraordinary triumph of Hebrew in our own times. What the cause needs more than anything else are passionate leaders at all levels of the church who are willing to make great sacrifices to make this dream a reality. The work of small parishes is not in vain. It is precisely here where the progress takes place. The effort is assisted by top-down efforts at reform but it proceeds and is spread from the bottom up. Evangelization for the cause by people who already chant helps to draw others to the cause.

Evangelization for the cause by people who already chant helps to draw others to the cause.

Broadening our small cells into larger ones takes the movement to the next steps. This is one of many reasons why the Sacred Music Colloquium is the most viable venue for pushing forward the effort. Movements toward ever higher planes of authority are good and necessary but they must be built on a grass-roots effort. Books and training manuals are essential not only to buy but to give others. The more that can be done to institutionalize Gregorian chant, the more viable the effort becomes. This is why the *Parish Book of Chant* is so important as well.

There is already evidence that tremendous progress is being made. The documentary evidence includes the numbers of scholas in this country, which my estimate puts at about two hundred, up tremendously from three years ago. Chant books are now being sold by all major Catholic publishers, which is something that is new in the last three years. The circulation of *Sacred Music* magazine has gone up four-fold in a period in which similar periodicals are going under. Five years ago there were perhaps two or three workshops on chant in the course of a year, whereas now the number approaches twenty or more.

Anecdotally, the evidence is even stronger. Someone said to me a few years back that Catholics were about to leave the liturgical desert, and that he knew this because of the significance of the year forty in holy scripture. I'm not sure what to make of this, but it is generally true

that it was forty years ago when we Catholics lost our way in liturgical music and wandered off to the point of being lost. We are finding our way out and making our way to the musical land of milk and honey, the name of which is the *Graduale Romanum*. Or to extend the analogy to the Gospels, we are making our way to the true cross, the very source of our salvation.

The future is by no means set on some pre-determined historical trajectory, and triumphalism is completely out of place. What is necessary is a combination of hard work and hard prayer, and even then there will be setbacks along the way. It is precisely the time when we are ready to give up and despair that our efforts and prayers are more necessary than ever. Let us not be indifferent and let us not be intimidated by obstacles that stand in our path. ❧

REVIEWS

A Book to Challenge Us All

Anthony Ruff, O.S.B., *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform: Treasures and Transformations*. Hillenbrand Books. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2008.

MY VIEW BY JEFFREY TUCKER

The book in question is a large work of very impressive scholarship—682 pages, with over a thousand footnotes, and multilingual apparatus employed to its fullest—that will fully absorb anyone with an interest in the question of what happened to Catholic music in the twentieth century. The author is a monk and priest at St. John's Abbey and a serious chant scholar who writes for many Catholic music publications. He takes the reader on a long, winding, and fascinating journey through the debates on liturgical music from the Baroque period through the present, with a special focus on the last hundred or so years. The questions he takes up are asked by many but not often answered with his vast knowledge of the subject. Only someone very well-read in this subject would fail to learn something new on every page, and for this reason, the book is completely engaging at every step. The author writes not with anything like a stifling academic distance but rather like a good narrative historian, which is interesting considering that the book is based on his 1998 dissertation defended at the University of Graz. He has an eye for the colorful anecdote, and his stories of prelates, composers, singers, publishers, and controversies make the book a real page turner.

There is no question of the status of this work as indispensable and required reading for anyone who takes seriously the subject of the history of modern Catholic music. And not only indispensable: it is likely to be regarded as definitive, for it is not a work easily displaced by another comparable work. For the most part, it has a balance that makes his account plausible and a range of references that give it a level of credibility that we don't find in this subject area dominated by polemics about one's personal likes and dislikes. What's more, there is a solid reason to

Jeffrey Tucker is managing editor of *Sacred Music*. sacredmusic@musicasacra.com

hope for a widespread readership for this book. The ethos of contemporary music talk within the Catholic community tends toward a kind of historical blindness, as if all that is good and viable is rolled into the latest offerings from the big music publishers or appears in the latest hymnal release. A grasp of the historical range of this work will help musicians to be more critically-minded about what they are doing, and remind us all of the vast wealth of liturgical music that has been left behind for reasons that are very weak.

The book also helps frame up current debates about the future of Catholic music, perhaps helping us avoid fruitless controversies of the past. Whatever views a person holds today in the current controversies has probably been held by someone in the past. And here we find what might be the most surprising revelation of the book overall: debate and controversy over text language, style, instruments, rhythm, authority, and all the rest, is nothing new in the postconciliar period, which we all tend to associate with an unusual level of controversy. What Fr. Ruff shows is that all these debates stem from unresolved issues deep in our history as Catholics. One could easily draw from his level of detail and sweep the lesson that these issues will be debated again and again, *saecula saeculorum*, and therefore there is a good reason to maintain a dispassionate distance from them all.

This is a lesson one could easily draw from the book, which is one reason I find myself resisting his argument, for if this book can be said to have a unified thesis it is to make a case equally weighted in favor of preserving our heritage and against what many today accept as the idealist position on sacred music, as summed up by Benedict XVI's Sistine Chapel address in 2006: "An authentic renewal of sacred music can only happen in the wake of the great tradition of the past, of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony."

The book helps frame up current debates about the future of Catholic music.

In contrast, Fr. Ruff argues that chant, though praiseworthy from a musical and spiritual perspective, has limited prospects for success at the level of parishes and cathedrals. In fact, he goes further to argue that the high view of the place of sacred music is far too limited, and even imagines that popular music of every style can have a role in liturgy. He seems at peace with the prospect that the chant tradition will always live side-by-side with many other types of music, and provides evidence that this has long been so regardless of the norms that govern music at Mass. I'll have more to say on this view later.

The Place of Art in Liturgy

The tone is set at the outset with the author's disagreements with Joseph Gelineau and Gino Stefani, both of whom argue that progress in the human arts is not a purpose of liturgy. Fr. Ruff argues, in contrast, that "it is appropriate to ascribe to liturgical music the purpose of fostering cultural and artistic goods" (p. 16). This is necessary for a "healthy interaction between liturgy and human culture." He likes the phrase "ritual music" and attempts to "liberate the term from its captivity to the 'progressive' element in the Church" (p. 24) by pointing to the many movements favoring chant precisely because of its intimate link with the ritual taking place in the liturgy.

However, he contrasts his preference for this term with the "proponents of traditional Catholic church music" who generally prefer the term "sacred music." He says that this is "inadequate as a comprehensive term for Catholic worship music" (p. 36) because the phrase itself is from the nineteenth century in origin, because the sacred vs. secular distinction doesn't hold up under closer investigation of the repertoire, and because insisting on it can potentially work

against artistic excellence (so we are back to his view that church music has a cultural goal as well as a liturgical one). At the same time, he is not drawn to the term "pastoral music" with its low association with parish use only; he fears that it too is too narrow. His final preliminary marks will be much welcome by those skeptical of claims of advocates of multi-culturalism for their tendency to dream up rationales for ruling out the exclusion of all music that has made the great contribution to the experience of the Roman Rite throughout Christian history.

Is There Such a Thing as a Treasury?

With these preliminaries out of the way, the author investigates the history, and here his material is enormously revealing. Again, his judgment running through all his analytics is that the search for a treasury of sacred music is more elusive than one might suppose. He begins with the Carolingian era and the tension that developed with the rise of polyphony. He demonstrates "that the inherited chant . . . preserved alongside new additions suggests the conscious cultivation of a historic repertoire. The attitude toward liturgical chant represents, in a sense, the first case in the history of Western church music of the cultivation of a treasury." It was not merely a matter of preserving a form of music. Chant was considered to be of divine origin, intimately connected with Christian ritual (pp. 61–62). The same was true in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when polyphony and chant were both preserved as liturgical forms, though here Fr. Ruff restates his continuing judgment that there was no "conscious cultivation of a treasury of sacred music." But the reader is given enough evidence to come to a different judgment.

Fr. Ruff's section on the nineteenth-century Caecilian movement (pp. 72–107) this reviewer finds to be one of the most intriguing in the entire book. He shows Caecilians to be the most powerful force in the world for influencing the direction of Catholic music in a fundamentalist direction. The author has affection for what they were attempting with their avowed liturgical conservatism, though he points out their two largest failings: first, their severity over form led them to set themselves against modern compositional approaches of even masters such as Anton Bruckner and Josef Rheinberger while not offering much of the same quality as a replacement. Second, they were wedded to the degenerate post-Trent Medicean editions of chant that had mangled the chant repertoire. Both their opposition to artistic development and their attachment to corrupted chant editions led to their failure as a movement.

His treatment of the Solesmes chant revival relies heavily on published resources, but his account provides an excellent overview of what the monastery was attempting to achieve. New to this reader is Fr. Ruff's account of how Solesmes founder Dom Guéranger himself sang the chant. His reading was soft, quick, and supple in contrast to the prevailing method of singing slowly and heavily. It was said that he "knew how in his monastery to give the Gregorian melodies an accent, a rhythm that would not have occurred to anyone else. It appears as revelation" (p. 111). In fact, his emphasis on style was so strong that he said it would accomplish nothing to restore purer editions if nothing changes about the way people sing.

Two departures from the main account are offered by the author. He explains the advent of a new school of Lutheran hymnody in the nineteenth century that foundered on its uncritical embrace of modernity (he says that has lessons for today) and he takes note of the revival of early music and authentic performance in late twentieth century. He finds the lesson in the latter movement of how the revival of past forms and repertoire can provide a way for tradition to renew itself. He points to chant as an example of music that was successfully preserved and renewed: "The reason for such stability is probably to be found in the canonical nature of the chant repertoire . . . The more a musical repertoire is considered integral to the rite, the more likely it is that the repertoire will remain in use even when it becomes 'old'" (p. 189).

The Liturgical Movement

Until the twentieth century, the Solesmes revival was considered to be part of a more general liturgical movement that sought more attention to the liturgy both within the Catholic Church and as an evangelical tool for transforming culture. Among its fruit must be included the work of Justine Ward in pushing for congregational chant. She receives high praise in Fr. Ruff's account. However, the development of the liturgical movement in the middle of the twentieth century led to a conflict that I had personally never really understood until reading the chapter on the topic. The movement was dedicated to involving people more directly in the liturgy through action, word, and music, and he shows that much of what they advocated came to fruition in the Second Vatican Council with the emphasis on simplifying rites and introducing the vernacular. The conflict with musicians came when the agenda of having people more involved showed a lack of appreciation for the inherited chant repertoire that was making huge strides. The musicians and liturgists eventually came to blows in a war of words during and following the council. This is covered in chapter twelve, one of the most revealing in the book. The following chapters in this section provide a detailed examination of twentieth century legislative documents and chronicle their progressive emphasis on people's participation, while acknowledging that emphasis on chant and polyphony remained a constant theme.

The conflict with musicians came when the agenda of having people more involved showed a lack of appreciation for the inherited chant repertoire.

The Second Vatican Council

All of this is to set up the critical section of this book that provides what might be the most comprehensive analysis yet published of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963) and the debates over music that followed it. He covers the various debates and drafts of that document, with the great tension between the serious musicians and the liturgists. I hadn't known before just how decisive a victory was won by the advocates of sacred music. The final formulation of the text reflected drafts favored by Monsignor Higinì Anglès and Johannes Overath—the two voices for sanity on music issues, though the reader is given the impression by the author that their victory was somehow regrettable. Whether the author is fully on board with the implied conclusion is not relevant: what this chapter shows is that if we are to speak of the "will" of the council, the advocates of sacred music, traditionally understood, clearly had the upper hand. To me it is a case study in how the Holy Spirit guides church councils.

The contentious atmosphere continued during the drafting of *Musicam Sacram* of 1967. If the proponents of sacred music regret some aspects of that document, it is helpful to consider that Fr. Ruff similarly considers this document to be a victory for the forces advocating sacred music. He states plainly that the document "does allow that the entire ordinary be rendered polyphonically by the choir (and instrumentalists)" (p. 345), even if it is considered preferable that the Credo and Sanctus be sung by the entire congregation. The language concerning the Sanctus was even changed during the draft stage. It originally said that the Sanctus "is to be rendered by the entire congregation," but this language was later softened to say that the Sanctus "customarily is to be sung preferably by the entire congregation" (p. 346).

The two competing organizations following the council were the Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae, dominated by Anglès and Overath (and with which the Church Music Association of America enjoyed affiliation), and *Universa Laus*, which was deemed "more progressive." *Universa Laus* was the venue for Joseph Gelineau, Helmut Hucke, Philipp Harnoncourt, and others who believed that the classically educated and trained church musicians were

“part of the problem,” to quote Bernard Huijbers. This group had an influence on the thinking of two U.S. musicians that did grave damage to the status of sacred music in America: Tom Conry and Rorey Cooney. And here we get to the real source for the dramatic change in music in the United States that followed the promulgation of the new Mass. Cooney criticized traditional music as “ancestor worship,” wrote that Gregorian chant was “impossibly dull,” and that the music of Orlando di Lasso “doesn’t belong in liturgy” (p. 369). Fr. Ruff plainly says that these radical positions “cannot be reconciled with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council” (p. 370). (I contacted Mr. Cooney about these quotations, and he says that he regrets their tenor now. His parish uses a Greek Kyrie every Sunday, and the whole parish now sings Sequences in Latin.)

Fr. Ruff is similarly if cautiously critical of the writings of Frederick R. McManus (1923–2005), who also had a huge influence in the direction of change. In response to McManus’s repeated attacks on traditional sacred music, Ruff writes: “Clarifying the liturgical propriety of active listening and integrating this form of participation into the overall understanding of *participatio actuosa* remain unfinished tasks of liturgical renewal” (p. 381). In an effort to push the debate forward, and in response to radical claims that the choir is really a distraction from liturgy and needs to be disbanded, Fr. Ruff provides a strong defense of the idea that “the reformed liturgy allows for, and even calls for, the employment of inherited or newly composed repertoire performed by choirs” (p. 416).

The Chant Question

The author’s true specialization is Gregorian chant, so it is not surprising that his section on this topic is erudite and intriguing at every step, and offers very interesting insights. Here we find a level of clarity that marks something of a departure from the rest of the book. He clearly states that chant enjoys primacy of place among all genres of worship music. He speaks of the “magisterium’s strong advocacy of Gregorian chant and the belief that Latin chant maintains its value in the reformed liturgy” (p. 472). This reality stands in contrast to the American documents on music, such as *Music in Catholic Worship*, which reflect the “tensions and contradictions” in legislation in dropping any mention of chant and in claiming that terms like *propers* and *ordinary* no longer apply. The American documents from the 1980s “take for granted that the entrance song, offertory song, and communion song will be freely chosen hymns or other music rather than *Propers*.” So while it is true that Roman documents introduce some ambiguities on the place of chant, the American documents go far afield in assuming that chant has nothing to do with the Roman Rite.

Fr. Ruff’s own perspective on chant is heavily informed by the semiology (science of signs) of Eugène Cardine, a chant scholar who left Solesmes to teach in Rome. The author says that his work completely changes the way chant is sung by putting primacy on text over music and rejecting the Solesmes’s emphasis on “equalist” rhythm and replacing it with something else. Fr. Ruff writes: “Perhaps it could be that the chant does not sound as ‘prayerful’ now: smooth melodies in gentle waves have given way to sprightly, dramatic, clearly articulated declamation” (p. 485).

He clarifies that

it cannot be reasonably claimed that Gregorian chant becomes easier to sing through the use of semiological principles. The necessity of understanding Latin for an adequate rendition has become dramatically underscored. A singer (or at least the conductor) using [the *Graduale Triplex*] needs to read three notations at once . . . The requisite amount of textual/musical sensitivity and subtlety is increased considerably. (p. 486)

He further shows that semiology provides a strong case that the music of chant is driven by the

text, which suggests far more “word painting” in chant than mid-century scholars believed existed, and he argues that semiology underscores the near-impossibility of adapting chant music to vernacular texts. However, he is cautious about the viability of semiologically informed performance in any setting. He prefers “pre-semiological chant sung before the Second Vatican Council for listening to monks who were able to meditate on a Latin liturgical text” to “semiologically-performed chant sung today for somewhat inspired but uncomprehending listeners” (pp. 496–497). He finds that Solesmes-style chant in today’s setting might be “closer in many important respects to its Carolingian precedent.” Unfortunately, his semiological studies have also convinced him that Gregorian propers are really too difficult for parish choirs. They are just too tender, too sensitive, too tricky, for amateurs to sing. This is probably fine because “Mass Propers were not written for every Christian community, but for particular liturgical centers. In a sense, the spirituality of chant was not intended to be a spirituality for the entire Church” (p. 496). Nonetheless, “it is important the Gregorian chant remain one of the foundations of Catholic liturgical music”; it must be “part of the formation of liturgical musicians, candidates for ordination and pastoral ministry and liturgical scholars” (p. 505).

Without exaggeration the repertoire of the polyphonic Mass Ordinary is one of the most important cultural achievements of Catholicism.

What To Do?

Where does this leave the average parish? What role is chant to play? He believes that a Latin ordinary is viable and even essential. Propers can also be used. The introit can serve as a prelude. The offertory and communion

chants “might be used as solo pieces for the sake of congregational reflection” (p. 506). The gradual too can be sung. He rules out the Alleluia and tract because the assembly can’t really participate. And what about polyphony? “It can be stated without exaggeration that the repertoire of the polyphonic Mass Ordinary is one of the most important cultural achievements of Catholicism” (p. 516), but it is not an easy fit in the reformed liturgy because the ordinary form was not designed with this music in mind. “Use of the inherited repertoire will always represent an adaptation of sorts.” He believes it is possible to use this music in settings where this music is “part of the cultural context of particular worshiping communities” (p. 544), but when musicians make this choice they are selecting one good (the beauty of tradition) at the expense of other goods such as the need for participation. He is warmer to the idea of using Latin motets at Mass, but his strong preference is for the vernacular congregational hymn, which he defends as part of the Catholic tradition in practice if not in legislative norms.

His conclusion is that Pope Pius X’s push for a “nearly absolute ideal of worship music” has proven to be “untenable” and is therefore “no longer advanced by the magisterium” (p. 610). His final advice is not what I would characterize as a clarion call:

In the present-day reformed Roman liturgy, one will seek out solutions in given situations that take account of many praiseworthy aims, including: structural ritual coherence; active, external, congregational participation in song; openness to local cultures; respect for local traditions; and cultivation of inherited musical treasures. What sorts of solutions might be desirable? In many pastoral situations, fairly little music of the past would be employed, but integration between music and rite would be high. In other situations, considerably more music of the past would be employed without causing undue inconsistencies in any direction. In some exceptional places and on some occasions, generous

employment of the inherited repertoires, though entailing considerable inconsistencies, would be affirmed as an appropriate manner of celebrating the reformed Roman Eucharistic Liturgy. All have their place within the catholic whole. No solution is absolutely perfect; a wide variety of solutions deserves respect. (p. 611)

The Need for Inspiration

The author here seems to take for granted that choosing music for Mass is as easy as making selections from a printed page of options, but that is not the reality on the ground. Change requires hard work, inspiration, and pastoral effort. It requires something to cause Catholic musicians to leave the status quo and enter a new phase of development. I'm not sure that this prescription is going to inspire anyone to make the effort. If everything we do is treated as a praiseworthy contribution to overall diversity, why bother? A further issue that he doesn't really address is the obvious reality that Catholic music today is in a sad state, even in shambles, and this is more than obvious from any random visit to just about any suburban parish. The default position of music at Mass today is the famed "four hymn" sandwich made up of very tired, mediocre, popular hits from twenty and thirty years ago, as led by a cantor with a few people called the choir who are really just singing the melody. The musicians do their best but people do not participate as the reformers imagined they would. Our fellow parishioners cannot read music. We have few organists available to us. Gregorian chant is not sung but in a few selected, simple parts of the Mass during Lent. This is not excellence, and it reflects nothing found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. I'm not sure that anyone reading Fr. Ruff's treatise would really have much of an inkling of this reality based on his text alone, and it follows therefore that the reader would not discern the desperate need for change and progress.

Choirs need a challenge if they are to be inspired to grow.

I wonder why. If I were to venture a guess, I would suggest that Fr. Ruff worries about the risks associated with serious efforts to introduce music that is truly proper to the Roman Rite. He is concerned that people are not really ready for it, that the musicians will not sing the music properly, that the reformed liturgy isn't really a suitable venue for chant, and that the existing parish investment in the status quo is too high to be abandoned without serious pastoral cost. I can see making a case for each of these points, but my own experience tells me that the overall judgment is incorrect. Choirs need a challenge if they are to be inspired to grow. The people in the pews need to connect more with their history, and they too are capable of learning and growing. The priests need to see how their sung parts beautifully integrate with the true music of the Roman Rite, and this will cause them to have more respect for the musicians. As for the reformed liturgy itself, this is a point on which my own thinking has shifted over the years. It is a suitable home for Gregorian music and even the polyphonic music of old. I've seen it happen in too many settings to believe otherwise.

I can understand the author's doubts. I had them at one point too, particularly as regards the reformed liturgy. But one only needs to visit a place like St. John Cantius in Chicago among the many dozens of parishes now inspired by the Pope Pius X ideal adapted to our times, or to attend the Sacred Music Colloquium in which hundreds gather to learn, sing, and worship. Then there are the growing numbers of scholas and parishes in this country that use the *Graduale* as the foundational book for music at Mass. These are not illusions. They are not rarified and strange. They are increasingly the inspiration for a growing movement within the Catholic

Church in the United States and around the world. Now, it's true that the bulk of Fr. Ruff's book was written ten years ago, at a time when chant and polyphony were at a low point. *Music in Catholic Worship* (since replaced by a better document) was still the prevailing document in the American setting. There was no *Summorum Pontificum*. Scholas were few. But times are changing, and why? Because of the very ideal that Fr. Ruff declares unviable and outmoded.

My own wish is for Fr. Ruff in about five years to begin work on another book. I believe that the hints of pessimism and exaggerated caution will be gone. He will more clearly see that the practice of Catholic music in America in the last several decades is not a norm that will persist but an aberration that could not last. Moreover, there is a strong sense in which *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform* will have made a contribution to the progress precisely because this book reconnects us with our history and our responsibilities as musicians, and makes us realize just how serious the job of being a Catholic musician truly is. For that he has earned the gratitude of everyone working to improve Catholic music. ♪

MY VIEW BY WILLIAM TORTOLANO

Father Anthony Ruff, O.S.B. is a priest and monk at Saint John's Abbey in Minnesota. He is a bright star in a small but effective effervescent galaxy of young, energetic, and articulate Roman Catholic musicians and liturgists who represent a magnetic center of popular spokespersons.

Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform is a voluminous exposition of diverse and important documents from Rome, the United States, and various personalities, conferences, and writings on the church's history, traditions, and positions regarding the very survival of music and participation. Father Ruff quotes and makes extensive analysis on various phenomena: the role and purpose of music in the liturgy; its historical development and controversies; the liturgical movement and tradition, as well as twentieth-century worship; and finally an up-to-date perspective.

It is a "big box" to wonder around in, with suggestions, advice, and personal recommendations. All kinds of tempting things to read, see, and evaluate before purchasing for corporate worship investment. This plethora of goods is not to be read lightly. Father Ruff is well informed and makes every effort to substantiate his musicological expertise with veracity and a cornucopia of well-documented sources.

It is up-to-date except (and through no fault of his), it could not include two momentous documents: Pope Benedict XVI's apostolic letter *Summorum Pontificum* of July 7, 2007 and *Sing to the Lord* (Music and Divine Worship) issued on November 14, 2007 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. These appeared after the book was published. They are both very important—and for some—contradictions to one another. Indeed, they could also possibly reflect the Vatican's approach and an "American Catholic Church."

In a sense, this is a major contradiction that is manifested in Father Ruff's well-written book: how to reconcile the conflict between the "preservation of the inherited treasury of sacred music" and the reformed liturgy. He valiantly tries to sort out what is written and place it in the context of our vital, living church. Father should be praised for elucidating what had to be written. We need this book.

Dr. William Tortolano is Prof. Emeritus of Fine Arts, Music, Saint Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont.

This does not mean that we can or should agree with Ruff. No Benedictine priest wants to irritate someone else. But, he does. There is an excessive use of the word “I.” Ego, Ego sum? We recognize that an author’s personal (and well articulated and researched) views will come into focus. And this is good. We can agree or disagree to a premise and/or a conclusion. The introduction of two pages uses “I” fifteen times. This book is based on his doctoral dissertation. It sounds definitive, but it is actually not.

Nevertheless, what does happen is that one will read and re-read what he has to say; and his conclusions or solutions (I’ve read the book three times, and need to read it again—all 682 pages).

There are extensive footnotes. Very extensive. Many sources are not common and familiar to many of us. Unfortunately they are in the original German, Italian, French, Latin, and other languages. It would have been helpful to have them translated.

Most of us will agree that the implementation of sacred music as inherited treasury (chant, polyphony, chorale, organ music, etc.) and the “reformed” liturgy (folk music, guitar, congregational participation, the role of the cantor, choir, etc.) is adjusted and prescribed according to local needs, perceptions, and understanding of the “official” church directives.

We seldom talk about historical performance practice. Should we use, for “authentic” choral performance: countertenors, boy sopranos, male altos or castrati?(!). We simply use what is common vocal practice today.

A contradiction is manifested in the book: how to reconcile the conflict between the “preservation of the inherited treasury of sacred music” and the reformed liturgy.

But, the one perplexing and enigmatic problem is the interpretation of Gregorian chant. Do we continue to sing the well-established rhythmic patterns and style of Dom Moquereau’s paleography (study of the manuscripts) and his approach (we all know the ictus is not in the manuscripts), or do we now sing the chant in the “new” rhythmic style as seen

in the research of Don Eugène Cardine’s semiology (the study of signs).

One wishes that Father Ruff had shown at least an example of one chant in both realizations.

My association with Dom Cardine (I translated his book from the Italian and French, *Il Primo Anno di Canto Gregoriano*) makes me particularly aware of the problems. After all, we study both paleography and semiology together.

One also wonders: what was the *sound*? People in the tenth century were physically much smaller and lived fewer years than we do today. A vocal sound reflects bone structure and physiognomy as well as resonance. It must have been different.

None of my own personal observations in any way minimizes the outstanding value of this book. It is provocative, as it should be. It is challenging and it is well written, documented, and substantial. The true value of this book is its comprehensiveness; its sincerity; its thorough research; and yes, its personal solutions.

By all means buy it, read it and read it again. And be challenged by what it has to say. ☞

Chant for the Soul

By Jeffrey Tucker

Gregorian chant is back again in the billboard charts, hitting number one in the British classical charts and in the top ten of all music, besting Madonna and other groups I've never heard of but which are apparently hugely popular. The CD in question is "Chant: Music for Paradise," or, as it is called in the U.S., "Chant: Music for the Soul." (It is interesting to ponder why the production company believes that the word "soul" is more popular in the U.S. and "paradise" is more popular in Europe.)

The singing is done by the Cistercian monks of Stift Heiligenkreuz (Holy Cross) in Austria. The chants are from the Requiem Mass and Office. The opening song is *In Paradisum*, which sounds hopeful and beautiful but takes on a new cast when you realize that its historic association is with a graveside procession or possibly a coffin being lowered into the ground.

The quality of singing is unspeakably beautiful, even perfect. That twenty singers could so perfectly coordinate every consonant, vowel, crescendo, phrase, and cut-off must amaze any and every choral conductor. And it is not just perfect on one song but every chant and everything about every chant. Your jaw will drop on the first hearing, and then you feel the desire to listen to it a thousand times over.

The chants they sing are not from the Roman Gradual that is used in our parishes and cathedrals (or should be, in any case). The Cistercians have their own music books, so the chants are slightly different. There are different expressive neumes in them, and some extra melismatic phrases. For those who know the Roman chants, these make fascinating listening, as a highlight to the diversity of style of chant. There is not one tradition called "Gregorian chant" but many editions of music for the Roman Rite.

We can learn something about the debates within chant scholarship just by listening. The monastery was founded in 1133 by St. Leopold III of the House of Babenberg. The chant there has never stopped, so we have a case of a continuous tradition, as one generation of singers rolls into the next. It is highly unlikely that a new monk could show up and say: "Here is a great new way to render this rhythm!" and get away with it. Chant masters like Ted Marier and Anthony Ruff point out that they have never had success in changing the way monasteries sing. The groups revert to the old way overnight.

So what do we hear here? We can detect a relentless pulse underneath the music. The melodic lines are free and undulating like a vast river but there is a sturdy substructure that is firmly organized to keep the singers together and secure, and this substructure is neither random nor dictated from on high. It is a shared understanding among all singers, one that partakes of the precise apparatus culled together by the Solesmes chant masters when they set out to teach the entire Catholic world to sing. So what we have in this recording is a reliable indicator of how the chant might have sounded in the twelfth century and earlier. All those involved in the debates about chant rhythm would do well to listen and learn.

I do believe that this is the most wonderful, most perfect sound I've heard yet on any chant recording. It is unaccompanied and the acoustics are flawless. What I find notable here is the perfect uniformity in pitch, pronunciation, vocal production and, most striking, the style as revealed in the phrasing and dynamics. It is marvel. There is no audible leader at all. Every singer is producing at a level equal with every other.

Of course, one wonders how this is possible, and I think the answer comes from the detailed work behind the scenes in terms of counting. If you can listen to what is happening beneath the

surface, you can detect an inaudible pulse that turns out to be regular and pervasive—the heart-beat that you do not necessarily hear but is the driving force behind the music.

There are differences between the chant these monks sing—some small issues of notes and rhythm—and what you will find in the *Graduale Romanum*, due to the tradition in their own order. So if you are seeking a CD to help you sing the *Graduale*, this is not it. If you are seeking a CD to help you understand style and rhythm or just simply to help you pray, I can't imagine anything better.

Let us ask the obvious question: how can we account for the secular popularity of chant?

First, it is enormously beautiful and worthy from a purely musical perspective. The tunes are varied and express the widest possible range of emotion. They are also singable—some of the most beautiful music ever composed. And they have that special quality that causes them to last the ages. If you have ever attempted to write a song, you know how difficult it is to come up with anything that lasts longer than a few years at best. Master melodists like Haydn and Brahms could do this but in Gregorian chant we have the model and ideal. Also, consider the sheer length of phrases in chant. They last and last, with seamless integration over extended periods. I mean not only the development of the melody but the melody itself. We marvel that Mahler could do this in his symphonies but in chant we have tens of thousands of examples of the same thing using not orchestras of hundreds of players but just unison lines of one part. To me, that is amazing.

Second, the music has a holy quality that suggests a sacred space, and this comes at a premium in a world devoid of sacred spaces. Our intellects and souls cry out to touch something pure, fundamental, and eternal. Not even our churches qualify in most cases, especially with their loud drums and guitars or their boring metrical hymnody that never quite takes flight. With this CD, however, we can put it in our car stereos or home systems and experience something of a sacred space that we can create ourselves. It is no substitute for being at the monastery or in a church where it is sung but it is substitute we can conjure up quickly. The demand for this CD expresses the universal demand for the sacred. Why is the music holy? Here we delve into a mysterious area that I can't quite understand. Is it the modal structure, the lack of evenly divided metrics, the language, the compatibility with the God-given instrument of the voice, or that this music has all those elements? Maybe this issue will always remain as mysterious as it is undeniable.

Third, this music represents something unifying, depoliticized, and harmonious in a world of national division, war, economic crisis, and controversy between peoples. Here we have music that transcends the multicultural, as appealing to a peasant in Brazil as a hunter in Uganda or a latte-sipper in Seattle. There is an ongoing fashion to learn about the music of other peoples as a means to unifying our world. But unification doesn't come through mere appreciation of differences but by finding commonalties. I might suggest that Gregorian chant might be uniquely qualified as constituting universal music in our times. After all, we find here the very roots of nearly all that is known as music in the West.

Consider, too, the striking irony that this new CD has been produced and is being marketed by thoroughly secular company: Universal Music. This company might be responsible for some of the most disgusting and culturally degrading trash music being produced today. And yet here the secular and sacred meet in a glorious way to bring holy art to the whole world. Benedict XVI often refers to the need for a "healthy secularism" in which non-sacred institutions can work to serve sacred ends. Perhaps this is an example of what he means. May the work of Stift Heiligenkreuz and Universal come together to convert our church musicians and then convert the world. ☩

LAST WORD

The Liturgy And Culture

By Kurt Poterack

Having just returned from a Gregorian Chant study tour of Europe, I am of a mind to indulge in a brief reflection on the liturgy and culture—and, of course, specifically, sacred music. In the course of two weeks, I was in England, Switzerland, Bavaria, and, very briefly, Austria and Italy. The most general things I noticed were the strong traces of a Catholic, civilized culture that survived in these places—particularly on the continent. I could still see big, public crucifixes in the small villages of Switzerland, and, almost every stop on the way, I could enter a church and hear an organ being tuned in preparation for a concert.

In Munich, I saw many of the unfortunate features of a big, modern city, but I was also surprised by other things: not only the most obvious things, such as examples of beautiful Catholic architecture still standing, but also a more gracious approach to living. Fresh fruit and vegetables were sold everywhere (including train stations!), outdoor cafes abounded, and in the famous Marienplatz musicians were playing classical music. There was not the American compulsion to cover every public space with the “glop” of contemporary, popular music—undisputed “master of the universe.” The two pop groups I heard in the Marienplatz seemed to be simply a small, diverse part of an otherwise higher standard of musical taste.

Only once did I hear a car driving by my hotel with a boom box blaring. It was oddly out of place.

Now that being said, I fully admit that the state of the faith in Europe is not great. There were other things—intellectual heresies, revolutions—which sapped the faith in Europe. However, it was the Catholic faith that was the womb in which all of these good aspects of culture grew and flourished—and it is the survival of these things that make the reinvigoration of the liturgy possible. In fact, more traditional aspects of liturgical worship seem to have survived longer in Europe after Vatican II simply because there is a higher standard of taste on the continent.

We Americans tend to be a very earnest, sincere people. When we see a problem we want to fix it and, still being a young country, we have the will and the energy to do so. This pertains to American Catholics as well. The growth of the Church Music Association of America, its related activities, and the many youth-filled traditional Catholic groups are all good signs. However, I think we have to keep in mind that we are up against a general culture which was never Catholic and one that now insists upon “wall papering” itself not with beauty, but with hip-hop and rap music. Of course there is a separation between the sacred and profane, but there is an interaction as well.

I say this not as discouragement, but merely as a counsel to realism. In trying to persuade our fellow American Catholics of our point of view (the church’s point of view!), we have to keep in mind that their cultural reference point is less likely to be Mozart than Madonna. ♪

Kurt Poterack teaches music at Christendom College. kpoterack@hotmail.com

Church Music Association of America

August 21, 2008

Dear Friend of the CMAA,

Catholic Church music has been in a state of upheaval for decades. The good news is that the Church Music Association of America is making progress in bringing about change to the beautiful and true.

With a heritage that dates to 1874 and a rebirth in 1964 in cooperation with the *Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae* (Rome), the CMAA today has emerged as the leading educator, promoter, and publisher in the sacred music tradition, drawing thousands of young people to this liturgical art and inspiring change in parishes around the country.

- Our teaching seminars on Gregorian chant are filled to capacity. More than three hundred attended our week-long seminars in Chicago this summer.
- We have made available dozens of books of chant and polyphony available online—for free download. These beautiful scans are used every day by directors and singers all over the country and the world.
- We are running a round-the-clock forum on sacred music that is helping thousands.
- We have published the *Parish Book of Chant* that puts the Gregorian tradition into the hands of every Catholic, and provides complete English translations.
- Many other books have been published by the CMAA, including a tribute volume to William Byrd, a book of communion antiphons with psalms, books on the theology of sacred music, manuals of musical rubrics, and much more.
- Our journal *Sacred Music* is the leading venue for scholarship and practical help in giving truly sacred music primacy of place in Catholic liturgy. Now in its 135th year, its circulation has reached modern highs.
- Parish memberships in the CMAA are growing daily, as is our listing of Gregorian scholas around the country.
- Through the generosity of donors, provided a limited number of scholarships to music students and seminarians to attend training sessions.
- We work to match up good Catholic musicians with parishes in need of their services, and thereby serve as a “job bank” that has led to many improvements in the liturgical experience in parishes around the country.

What does all this mean for you and your parish? It means that change is coming along the lines of what Pope Benedict XVI has proposed: away from “utility” music and toward music as sung prayer. He has said that “an authentic updating of sacred music can take place only in the lineage of the great tradition of the past, of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony.”

For millions of Catholics, this will mean a substantial improvement in their prayer lives and bring them to fall in love again with the Mass. It will bring decorum to our worship, joyful solemnity to our liturgy, and peace to our parishes.

This is an issue that the pope has written about for decades. And under his leadership, we’ve seen substantial change in the right direction. After a period of upheaval such as we’ve seen, this change will not be immediate. There are hearts that need to undergo a kind of conversion.

Just as importantly, what is needed now is technical training. Many pastors and laypeople have the desire to embrace the Gregorian tradition in their music, and sing the music of the sacred treasury of motets and masses of the past. What stands in their way is that they do not know where to begin. They don’t have musicians who are properly prepared.

This is where the CMAA has made such a difference. Our training programs in chant, organ technique, and vocal production have helped people overcome their fears and make this music their own. CMAA-affiliated chant directors, organists, and singers are now quoted in the Catholic and religious press on a regular basis. Young people are being inspired.

Church Music Association of America

The CMAA is positioned to take the leadership role. It was formed just after the close of the Second Vatican Council with the mandate of guiding American Catholic music after the council. History didn't turn out that way, with music having taken a dramatic turn in following decades. But today we can put the past behind us and look to a bright future.

Our president is William Mahrt of Stanford University, one of the most brilliant chant scholars in the world. He serves as the editor of our journal, and also teaches at our annual colloquium, in addition to speaking around the country. It is such a pleasure to work with him.

His theme is to stay ever focused on the ideals emphasized by the whole of our tradition. Chant is the music of the Roman Rite, intimately bound up with the text and reflecting the holiness, universality, and beauty of the liturgy itself. All other music of the Mass should be reflective of the spirit and sensibility of the chant.

Thus does the choir have a special role. Does this mean that the people are excluded from singing? Quite the opposite. There are parts for the choir, parts for the choir and the people, and parts for the celebrant alone. The rite is ennobled when all parts are sung in a fitting manner.

Understanding this, and being able to sing the music that is suitable, requires hard work, study, and lots of practice. That is our responsibility as Catholic musicians.

Musicians must be inspired to accept this responsibility. At the same time, they must have access to high-quality teaching materials, sheet music, instruction manuals, as well as seminars to provide technical training. Also, they need to enjoy the support of a nationwide community that helps them on a constant basis. This is what the Church Music Association of America provides.

The CMAA has been able to do all of this on a very low budget—shockingly low, in fact. We have no endowment, no large pool of benefactors, no subsidies from large foundations or the government. People pour their lives into this work because they love it and care about it so much.

And yet, there are bills to pay and costs to defray: printing, facilities, books, scanning, internet, scholarships for students who cannot afford to pay, among many other costs. It is also urgent that we expand our current services, with more seminars, software tools, archival books to get online, and training sessions in all regions.

We are also making some big plans for the future. We would like to send a copy of *The Parish Book of Chant* to every bishop in the U.S. and Canada. This might lead to many parish and cathedral adoptions. Right now, we cannot afford to do this.

We are looking at a new program which we are calling the Chant University. It would be designed for college-age students. It would provide a full immersion into the world of sacred music. We have the personnel and the means of outreach.

Can you imagine what kind of a difference a program like this could make in the church? But financially this is not currently feasible: ideally, everyone would come on scholarship.

Because we are a non-profit organization, a 501(c)(3), donations to our work are tax-deductible. This means we can accept your contribution to the CMAA and you can deduct that amount from your taxes to the full extent that regulations allow.

Please consider joining the work of the CMAA with an annual membership, and, in addition, helping with a financial gift that, as large as you can afford, will help us continue this wonderful work and expand into the future. Continued progress is not written in stone. It is written on the dedicated hearts of those who care about improving the liturgy.

The Catholic music of the ages, the music that the church tells us is “of inestimable value,” must be heard again in our parishes, carried in our hearts, and passed on to the next generation. The CMAA offers hope that this can happen in our time. And for this reason, it deserves all the support you can provide. Please go to MusicaSacra.com now to make your donation.

Thank you for reading, and please pray for continued success in this apostolate.

Very sincerely,

Scott Turkington
Director of Chant Intensive
Church Music Association of America

P.S. St. Augustine said that through sacred music “truth filtered into my heart, and from my heart surged waves of devotion.” Together, let's work toward making his experience our own.