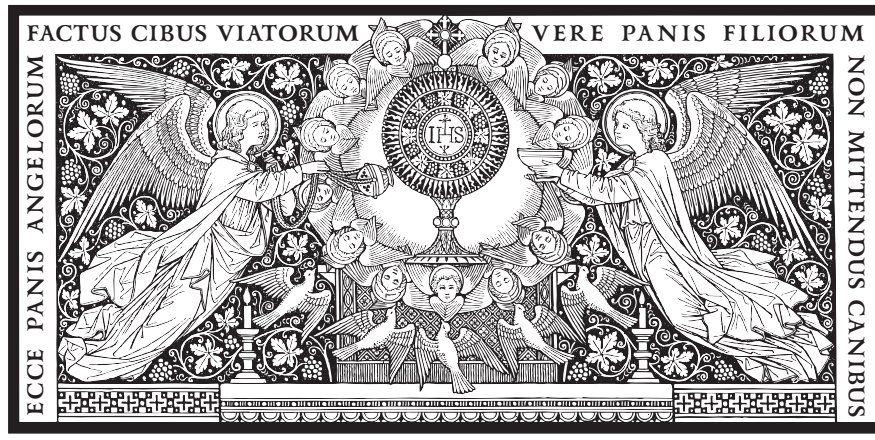

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Editoral
Musica humana

Various kinds of liturgical music reflect and elicit the internal ordering of the motions of the soul.

by William Mahrt

We understand that music affects the human soul, an important fact in its use in the liturgy. The foundation of this understanding goes back at least as far as Plato. In the *Timaeus,* he described the purpose of hearing:

> So much of music as is adapted to the sound of the voice and to the sense of hearing is granted to us for the sake of harmony. And harmony, which has motions akin to the revolutions of our souls, is not regarded by the intelligent votary of the Muses as given by them with a view to irrational pleasure, which is deemed to be the purpose of it in our day, but as meant to correct any discord which may have arisen in the courses of the soul, and to be our ally in bringing her into harmony and agreement with herself, and rhythm too was given by them for the same reason, on account of the irregular and graceless ways which prevail among mankind generally, and to help us against them.[1]

Thus the harmony of music is for the sake of the internal harmony of our souls. Boethius gave a classification of the three kinds of harmony: *musica mundana, musica humana, and musica instrumentalis. Musica humana* is that internal harmony of the soul, which is aided by the hearing of *musica instrumentalis,* sounding music, and which reflects the harmony of all of creation,

We understand that music affects the human soul, an important fact in its use in the liturgy.

[1]Plato, *Timaeus*, 47, c–e, tr. Benjamin Jowett in *The Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton & Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Series, 71 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), p. 1173,

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musica mundana, sometimes called music of the spheres. Although Boethius imagined the spheres as simply the course of the known planets and their motions, which were in harmonic relation each to the others, our notion of the universe is far greater, indeed even expanding. And at the root of it one observes order, the order of the planets and stars moving in predictable motion, but also the order of the components of the atom; as well as the order of genes in every cell; our understanding of these is constantly growing, but at the root of it all we can observe order and purpose.

I wish to examine here *musica humana,* the purposeful internal ordering of the soul as it relates to the various kinds of liturgical music, and how that ordering relates to the purposes of music in the liturgy.

I begin with chant. Gregorian chant is pure melody; it sets in a very direct way sacred texts, mainly texts of the scripture, and mainly the texts of the psalms. The music contributes a beauty to the sacred texts, and singing has traditionally been seen as an elevated way to address God. As Joseph Jungmann put it, each chant presents its text as if on a silver platter. Each has an intrinsic relation to the purposes of the liturgy, underlining and emphasizing the particular purpose of the liturgical action of which it is a part. But it also has a fundamental role in the ordering the soul of the worshiper to the purpose of that action. There are four basic kinds of chant, each of which confirms these purpose in a different way.

1) Psalmody. The chanting of psalms in the Divine Office unifies the voices, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; each singer becomes absorbed into the sacred action. The musical element is quite simple, yet it allows for a penetration of the scriptural text; the parallelism of the parts of the psalm line is articulated by the parallelism of the psalm tone. This chanting supports the singer in assenting whole-heartedly to the text itself and in assenting to the deepest meaning of the text.

2) Syllabic chants. Such chants as hymns or the pieces of the Ordinary of the Mass serve some of the same purposes as psalmody, but with the addition of the beauty of melody; the shape of a beautiful melody underlines the poetry of the text, and, as with psalmody, unifies the singing and elevates the proceeding. The chant gives a

Musica humana, *the purposeful internal ordering of the soul as it relates to the various kinds of liturgical music, and how that ordering relates to the purposes of music in the liturgy.*

consistent rhythm to the text that draws the singer into its poetry.

3) Processional chants. When sung by a choir, an introit, for example, conveys in a rhythmic way the purposefulness of the motion of the procession to the altar. When the procession consists of a hierarchy of members—cross-bearer, candle holders, acolytes, lectors, deacon, priest, even bishop—all moving to the place where the liturgy will be celebrated, one can be struck by the beauty of the order and purpose of what is about to happen. This perception can be instantaneous, but is sustained and increased by the music. By it the listener is drawn in intention to the altar and to the Sacrifice which is to take place there.

The synthesis of complex interaction and harmony is the key to the experience of polyphony.

4) Meditational chants. In response to the singing of lessons, a chant which includes some melismas, passages of melody on a single syllable, can elicit recollection. Its ostensible purpose is to sustain meditation on what has just been heard, but that effect is the result of *musica humana,* the focusing of the attention on something beautiful, which deepens the concentration and elevates the mind. I have observed this effect: when singing a gradual at Mass there is suddenly a stunning silence, there are no distractions; everyone is focused upon the singing or the lesson it complements. This recollection is based upon an setting the "motions of the soul," as Plato calls it, in equilibrium, and this creates a freedom to address the highest levels of thought and adoration.

A second kind of liturgical music is polyphony. It bears quite a different relation to the sacred text than does the chant. The paradigm of a polyphonic movement is that every sentence of the text is set to a subject, which is imitated in turn by each of the parts in a carefully coordinated way. This is the beauty of polyphony, that the intersection of voices produces a harmony that is intricately controlled, but that supports the web of the interacting voices. The listener hears this intersection with wonder, hearing an intricate coordination of the parts. This suggests several kinds of order, in which parts intersect, the greatest of these is the order of the universe itself. Boethius's *musica mundana* is the harmonious intersection of the elements of the sky, which suggests to humanity all other kinds of intersection and order. And this kind of order directly points to the source of order and purpose, the Creator himself. The listener internalizes this order and is absorbed in the orderly complexity of it. The fact that it also produces a harmony means that there is a directly affective element. The synthesis of complex interaction and harmony is the key to the experience of polyphony The listener experiences an equilibrium of emotions, as in melismatic chant, but it is quite different: the motions of the soul more directly correspond to the heavenly motions and are more easily internalized.

A third kind of music is harmonic music. Here the persuasiveness of harmonic movement gives the listener an experience of direct emotions, but the effect is somewhat subjective. I estimate that our response to harmony is an experience of our own emotions, rather than of a universal harmony. I think of the sacred music of Bruckner or Rheinberger, and it seems to me that it is more subjective, it does not so much suggest a universal harmony, but that of the particular listener. For this reason, I estimate that such harmonic music does not serve the highest purposes of the liturgy as well, although it has its own value.

These three kinds of liturgical music usually do not exist in a vacuum; there are aspects of each of them in very much liturgical music. I would cite the music of Viennese Classicism, the Masses of Mozart and Haydn in particular, as an example. These works are composites of melody, harmony, and counterpoint. Solo sections bear some relation to the melody of chant—in the Mozart Requiem, the introit verse is set to the melody of the *tonus peregrinus* of psalmody. The fugal conclusion of the Gloria and Creed are great examples of polyphony, while syllabic sections reflect a directly harmonic style.

The composition of music in the twentieth century stood in an increasingly attentive relation to the musical styles of the past. Thus, for example, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms,* recapitulates the intricate instrumental polyphony of the Baroque, while the chorus sings a chant-like melody. Many recent works carry forth the tradition of beautiful and purposeful liturgical music. This is particularly true of the music of British composers, who provide new music for their ancient Evensong liturgy.

Nevertheless, other music of the twentieth century embraces principles of the cultivation of dissonance, and the problem of atonal music for liturgical use is that, having no tonal center means that it does not depict an ordered world, but a view of arbitrary order or even of disorder, either of the internal motions of the soul or of society or even the world, depictions that are likely inconsistent with a liturgical view. For music to be functional in the liturgy, its language must be familiar to the worshiper, but very often, the point of new compositions is the creation of a new musical language for every work; this leaves most of the listeners out. It is for the connoisseurs of esoteric modern music to judge and enjoy such music, though it is impossible to get a congregation to make purposeful liturgical use of it. This is not necessary, since there is plenty of chant, polyphony, and harmonic music, both old and new to make the liturgy as beautiful as possible and for music to aid the congregation in internalizing elements of order and purpose suitable to the liturgy. ❖

For music to be functional in the liturgy, its language must be familiar to the worshiper.

Articles

The Number Seven as Signifier of Symbolism in the Sacred Music of the Renaissance

The rich and varied symbolism of the number seven in scripture and liturgy is reflected by motets in seven voices for several quite particular occasions.

by Willem Elders

To the memory of my brother, the Rev. Dr. Leo Elders.

That the number seven is one of the oldest among the symbolic numbers is easy to understand when we realize that four periods of seven days form the lunar cycle. The number also refers to the seven celestial bodies (five planets, the sun, and the moon)—in other words, to totality. Early references to it are found in the Bible, which contains no fewer than 356 occurrences of the word "seven," among them the seven-branched candle stand, or menorah, of Judaism (Exod. 37:17–24) which signifies the temple at Jerusalem, and the seven lamps standing for the seven churches of Asia Minor (Rev. 2 and 3). To these, we can add references from the world of late medieval devotion, in particular the emerging of the veneration of the Virgin Mary.

The symbolic use of the number seven can be associated with (a) the praise of God, (b) Pentecost and the most blessed Trinity, (c) penance and salvation, (d) mourning, and (e) the Virgin Mary.

The Praise of God

One of the oldest testimonies of the number seven implying a song of praise is found in Ps. 118 (119):164: "Septies in die laudem dixi tibi." [Seven times a day I praise you.][1] Since this number stands for completeness, the "seven times" means the whole day. Daily services were celebrated already in the early church, beginning with the morning prayer that included the "Laudate" psalms (Ps. 148–150). The Rule of St. Benedict, which was compiled in the first half of the

[1]Quotations from the Holy Scriptures are adapted from the Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition.

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sixth century and imposed itself throughout Europe, established seven "hours" (i.e., times) of prayer during the day, and an eighth in the middle of the night. Though these hours were not observed everywhere, the late Middle Ages saw the rise of so-called *cotidianes* or *zeven-getijdencolleges* (colleges of the seven canonical hours).[2] It should therefore not come as a surprise that the number seven was sometimes incorporated by composers as a structural element in works of polyphony that were intended as praise to God.

Our first example of the use of the number seven as a signifier of musical symbolism is the Osanna in the Sanctus of Josquin's *Missa Gaudeamus*. Based on the first six notes of the plainsong introit *Gaudeamus omnes in domino* [Let us all rejoice in the Lord], the mass was written for the feast of All Saints (November 1).[3] It appears that, with the seven statements of the "Gaudeamus" motif in longer note values, Josquin combined Rev. 8:1–2 with Matt. 21:9. The first passage reads: "When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them" (See Figure 1). The second passage is as follows: "And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!'" The seven trumpets represent the seven events that will characterize the last day. By conceiving the Sanctus in this way, Josquin created a masterly connection between the hymn of praise and the Book of Revelation.

The other examples in this category are works for seven voices. Although the number of voices may seem to be of little importance, this scoring is exceptionally rare in the late-fifteenth and earlier-sixteenth century, as becomes clear when we examine the oeuvres of individual composers and the output of certain publishers. Of the 1387 compositions published by Susato between 1543 and 1561, for example, we find fifty-three pieces for six voices, eight for eight

Figure 1: Albrecht Dürer, The Apocalypse, Figure VI. "Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them" (Rev. 8:2). Woodcut, Nuremberg, 1498.

[2]See Eric Jas, *Piety and Polyphony in Sixteenth-Century Holland: The Choirbooks of St. Peter's Church, Leiden* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), pp. 5–6.

[3]See Willem Elders, "Symbolism in the Sacred Music of Josquin," *The Josquin Companion*, ed. Richard Sherr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 531–568, at 555–6. For the introit, see the *Liber Usualis* (Tournai: Desclée, 1962), p. 1724.

voices, but only one for seven voices, namely Vinders' lament on the death of Josquin (see below). Attaingnant, meanwhile, published not a single work with this scoring. And the manuscripts of the time show a similar picture: neither the six choirbooks of St. Peter's church in Leiden, with 257 works by forty-six composers dating from about 1470 to 1570,[4] nor the seven choirbooks of the Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap in 's-Hertogenbosch with 155 works, include any seven-voice settings.

Probably the earliest seven-voice composition in praise of God is a Magnificat by John Browne, dating before 1502. He was contemporary of Josquin, and has been described as "first among the composers of the Eton Choirbook."[5] Known from the index of the Choirbook in which it is listed with two other works for seven voices (see below), the canticle itself has unfortunately been lost, along with almost a hundred folios of music. The text of the Magnificat, beginning "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior," is Mary's answer to her cousin Elizabeth as reported in Luke 1:46–53.[6]

Much later in the sixteenth century, in 1583, another setting of this text was copied by Francisco Flori into one of the choirbooks of the Bavarian court chapel in Munich. The composer, Orlando di Lasso, wrote as many as a hundred other settings of this canticle, but this is the only one for seven voices,[7] once more confirming the exceptional character of the scoring.

Of the seventy-five motets by Philippe Verdelot there are two for seven voices: *Beata es virgo Maria* and *Sint dicte grates Christo* [Let thanks be said to Christ]. While the first of these falls under our last category, the latter has its place in the present one. Edward Lowinsky has postulated that the motet was written in Florence in 1529–1530 during the siege of the city, because the text alludes to war, famine, and pestilence;[8] and St. John, the patron saint of Florence, is continually invoked in the ostinato motif in one of the two top voices: "Fuit homo missus a deo cui nomen erat Johannes" [There was a man sent from God, whose name was John; John 1:6]. Seven is the number of charity and grace.[9] The seven-voice scoring may also refer to Ps. 118 (119):164 (see above) as well as to Ps. 11 (12):6, a prayer for help: "the promises of the Lord are promises that are pure, silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times."

It is only in the second half of the century that we encounter more examples of seven-voice settings. Five of these are found in Adrian Willaert's famous collection *Musica nova*, published in 1559 in

[4]Jas, *Piety and Polyphony*, 143, 224–310.

[5]Hugh Benham, *Latin Church Music in England c. 1460–1575* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1977), p. 82.

[6]R. McCormack, *The Heptadic Structure of Scripture* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1923), pp. 17–23. McCormack suggested that the text of the Magnificat may hide the number seven in sixty different ways. My thanks to Paul Shannon for referring me to this study.

[7]Wolfgang Boetticher, *Orlando di Lasso und seine Zeit 1532–1594* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1958), p. 965, M[agnificat] 84.

[8]Edward Lowinsky, "A Newly Discovered Sixteenth-Century Motet Manuscript at the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 3 (1950), 183.

[9]George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954, 2nd edition 1961), p. 154.

Venice,[10] and twelve in the second volume of the *Thesaurus musicus* printed in Nuremberg in 1564, which contains seven-voice works only.[11] These are by eleven different composers, and insofar as I have been able to ascertain, the scoring has a symbolic meaning in at least half of them.

At the head of the twelve motets in the *Thesaurus* stands Orlando di Lasso's responsory *Decantabat populus Israel* [The people of Israel chanted]. Other seven-voice motets by this composer, Ps. 112 (113) *Laudate pueri Dominum* [Praise the Lord, O servants of the Lord] and Ps. 146 (147) *Laudate Dominum quoniam bonus est* [Praise the Lord, for it is good], appeared in 1568, and Ps. 133 (134) *Ecce nunc benedicite Dominum* [Come, bless the Lord] somewhat later. This group is characterized by what Wolfgang Boetticher called "harmless 'cantare'-symbolism."[12]

Christmas

The number seven used in the praise of God also appears to have inspired the scoring of Thomas Tallis' *Missa Puer natus est nobis*, based on the introit for the third Mass of Christmas Day [A child is born to us]. The introit's psalm verse text spells out the connection: "Cantate domino canticum novum" (Sing to the Lord a new song). Probably dating from the reign of Queen Mary, the mass may have been performed in London at Christmas in 1554.[13]

Willaert's *Musica nova* contains a seven-voice setting of *Preter rerum seriem*, a sequence that originated in the thirteenth century.[14] Though mostly concerning the Virgin Mary, the sequence was never connected with any particular Marian feast. In several sources, however, the chant carries the rubric "in nocte Nativitatis Domini" or something similar.[15] Like Josquin in his six-voice setting, Willaert uses the medieval sequence as a pre-existing chant. But unlike Josquin who, in the *prima pars*, has each of the chant's successive phrases sung alternately by the first tenor and the superius, Willaert treats the melody in a strict three-voice canon headed by the motto *Trinitas in unitate*. While it is a Christmas song that sets forth the mystery of the Virgin Birth, beyond the order of nature, each of the three sections deals with one of the three Divine Persons: Christ who was born of the Virgin, the Holy Spirit by whose power the heavenly work was accomplished, and the Father who is praised for his sweet providence.

Two other seven-voice masses, both based on Josquin's widely disseminated motet *Præter rerum seriem*, can also be connected with Christmas. The earliest, by Cipriano de Rore (who also composed the seven-voice Christmas motet *Quem vid-*

[10]Though this edition was issued in 1559, the music may have originated many years before.

[11]The five volumes of the *Thesaurus* contain settings for eight, seven, six, five, and four voices, respectively—a total of 228 motets. Those for seven voices constitute less than six percent of that number.

[12]Boetticher, *Orlando di Lasso*, 476.

[13]Paul Doe, *Tallis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 21.

[14]See the *New Josquin Edition*, vol. 24, ed. Willem Elders, Critical Commentary, p. 185.

[15]See, for example, the "Codex Smijers" of the Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap in 's-Hertogenbosch, f. 105v. On this Codex, see Véronique Roelvink, *Gegeven den sangeren. Meerstemmige Muziek bij de Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap te 's-Hertogenbosch* ('s-Hertogenbosch: Adr. Heinen, 2002), pp. 146–7.

istis pastores), may date from before 1557. As already observed by Alvin Johnson, the texture of the model is much thinner than that of the mass. "Where Josquin has seen fit to present a contrasting, imitative counterpoint in two voices against the cantus firmus, de Rore is not satisfied with such transparent polyphony."[16] Nevertheless, the composer "reduces the number of voices frequently from the basic seven-voice arrangement to five voices, to four voices, to three voices, and even to two voices." In other words, full-scoring is not Rore's principal aim, but rather the symbolism of the number seven.

The setting by La Hèle, printed by Plantin in Antwerp in 1578, was published in the composer's collection *Octo missæ 5–7 voces*. From this volume's table of contents can be concluded that the masses *Quare tristis es* and *Fremuit spiritus Jesu* (nos. 5 and 6) are for six voices and based on the six-voice motets of the same name by Orlando di Lasso, and that the masses *Præter rerum seriem* and *Benedicta es cælorum regina* (nos. 7 and 8) are for seven voices and based on Josquin's six-voice motets.[17] It is thus deliberate that La Hèle reserved seven-voice scoring for cycles that were intended for liturgical feasts to which the number seven is so often given symbolic importance.

Our last example is Costanzo Porta's seven-voice antiphon *Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis* from 1580, in which four of the seven voices are derived canonically, two in forward motion, and two in contrary motion. This composition has been described by Hugo Leichtentritt "as uniting in a peculiar way the highest learning of the Netherlands with a fine Italian feeling for sonority."[18] The antiphon, the text of which is drawn from Ps. 44 (45):2, is sung, together with the whole of the same psalm, in the first nocturn of Christmas Matins: "Grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you for ever." Ps. 44 had originally been written for a royal wedding, and the present verse is addressed to the new-born king, Jesus Christ, while the last verse says: "Therefore peoples will praise you for ever and ever."

Pentecost and Trinity

The number seven also inspired composers in settings connected with Pentecost, which is celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter. The Acts of the Apostles 2:2–4 describes what happened after the Ascension of Christ: "And when the day of Pentecost had come, they [i.e., the apostles] were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind . . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues."

The earliest reference to the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit is found in Isa. 11:2–3: "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him (i.e., Jesse), the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord." Gregory the Great commented extensively on the seven gifts,[19]

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[16]Alvin Johnson, "The Masses of Cipriano de Rore," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 6 (1953), 236.

[17]For the Marian mass see below.

[18]Hugo Leichtentritt, *Geschichte der Motette* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1908), p. 144.

[19]See Heinz Meyer, *Die Zahlenallegorese im Mittelalter: Methode und Gebrauch* (Munich: Wilhelm

and they are also referred to in both the sequence *Veni Sancte Spiritus* (v. 9) and the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* (v. 3). In medieval stained-glass windows, the Holy Spirit appears sometimes in the form of seven doves.

In his seven-voice responsory *Loquebantur variis linguis*, Tallis places the plainsong cantus firmus in the tenor, around which the other parts produce a dense polyphonic texture, culminating in a full setting of the word "Alleluia." The same text was set for four voices by Palestrina. In this work, the first five notes of the responsory are sung seven times.[20]

Based on the hymn *Beata nobis gaudia*, sometimes ascribed to St. Hilary of Poitiers (fourth century), John Sheppard's motet for Pentecost quotes the plainsong melody in even notes in the middle voice of a seven-voice texture. The text speaks of the Spirit who shone his rays unto Christ's disciples, and the last of the three strophes, in ternary mensuration, emphasizes the doctrine of the Trinity.

Willaert wrote two seven-voice motets for Trinity and Corpus Christi. The first is *Te Deum Patrem*, in which he introduces two triple canons based on chant from the Second Vespers of Trinity Sunday: the Magnificat antiphon *Te Deum Patrem ingenitum* [You, God the Father unbegotten] in the *prima pars*, the antiphon for the fourth psalm, *Laus Deo Patri* [Praise be to God the Father] in the *secunda pars*. The *resolutiones* are sung at the upper fifth and octave. While the text of each *pars* mentions the three Divine Persons individually, that of the *prima pars* also describes the mystery of the holy and undivided Trinity. The seven voices clearly symbolize the act of praise in the text: "With all heart and voice we confess, praise, and bless; to you be glory for ever."

Willaert's second motet is based on the hymn *Verbum supernum*, for the feast of Corpus Christi, which celebrates the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. All six strophes of the hymn are set for seven voices, and all use a paraphrased version of the hymn's chant melody in the tenor and altus in canon at the fifth. In strophes one to five, the canonic voices bear the text of the popular fifth strophe, "O salutaris Hostia" [O saving victim]. The last strophe has the text "Uni trinoque Domino" [to the one and triune Lord] in all voices. Proof of Willaert's intention to symbolize the deeper meaning of the hymn text musically can also be found in the rhythmic movement of the final strophe, in which the binary mensuration changes into a ternary one, acting thus as a signifier of the holy number three.

Penance and Salvation

The connection of the number seven with sin and penance is based on scriptural passages and on the early Christian writers. Already in the Pentateuch the number seven is presented as the number signifying sin and expiation: "and I myself will smite you sevenfold for your sins" (Lev. 26:24). The same use of the number is also found in the New Testament. In Matt. 18:21–22, we read: "Then Peter came up and said to him: 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.'" Honorius of

Fink Verlag, 1975), pp. 133–5.

[20]Karl Gustav Fellerer wrote that the composer had wanted to establish in this way a relation between his motet and medieval number symbolism. See his *Palestrina: Leben und Werk* (Düsseldorf: Musikverlag Schwann, 1960), p. 66.

Autun mentions the seven ways of forgiveness when he explains the number of weeks before Easter: "Quia septem modis peccata remittuntur. Primo per baptismum, secundo per martyrium . . ." [Because sins are forgiven in seven ways, first through baptism, secondly through martyrdom . . ."][21] And since Cassiodorus (died ca. 570), Christianity has recognized seven penitential psalms, which have been retained in liturgical books to the present day.

An early example in music is a Gloria by Guillaume Dufay, a single mass movement that in its unique source is entitled "Et in terra de quaremiaulx" (i.e., for Lent).[22] Although the Gloria is not said during Lent, except on feast days, the piece may well have been intended for the Mass of the Paschal Vigil. After the solemnly-sung Kyrie, bells were rung inside and outside the church at the intonation of the Gloria.[23] The three-voice piece is based on the following ostinato, which recalls the chiming of bells in its long note values and small intervals. See Example 1.

This theme is repeated under three different mensuration signs. The sixth statement carries the concluding words of the Gloria, "In gloria Dei patris," and, remarkably, a seventh statement of the ostinato appears before the "Amen," without text. The meaning of this *soggetto* is therefore unquestionably the remission of sins at the end of Lent, at the end of the time of penitence.[24]

A second example is found in the *Missa Je n'ay dueil* by Johannes Ghiselin (alias Verbonnet), published in Venice in 1502. The bassus of the Credo repeats a two-note motif as in Example 2, below:

This is surely a fine example of the contravention of Tinctoris' rules for good counterpoint.[25] At the sevenfold repetition of the motif coinciding with the article "Confiteor unum baptisma" [I confess one baptism], the composer makes the forbidden *redicta*, in the most obvious way, in order to express his sinfulness—at the most appropriate place in the Mass—through the number seven as in Example 2.

The next three examples are motets for seven voices, all of them prayers for the forgiveness of sins. Christopher Tye's *Peccavimus cum patribus nostris* "is his most considerable piece, and stands out as one of the best of the late votive antiphons."[26] The first phrase of the text is drawn from Ps. 105 (106):6: "Both we and our fathers have sinned," to which a prayer is added beseeching the merciful Lord Jesus to heed the unhappy sinners and to wash them of their innumerable transgressions. No other seven-voice work by Tye is known. The first

[21]Meyer, *Die Zahlenallegorese*, 135.

[22]Bologna, Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica, Ms. Q 15, no. 190.

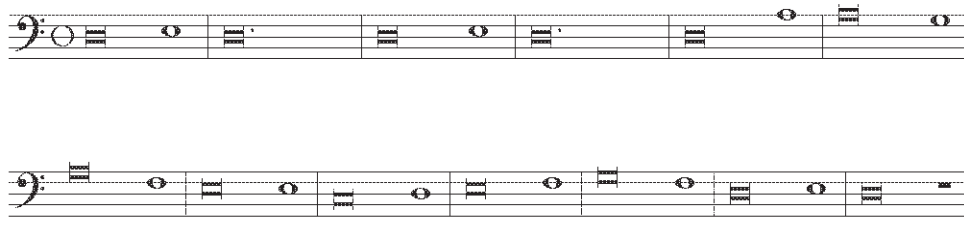
[23]See John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 149.

[24]For the possibility that the ostinato was performed on bells, see Willem Elders, "Zur Aufführungspraxis der altniederländischen Musik," *Renaissance-Muziek 1400–1600: Donum natalicium René Bernard Lenaerts*, ed. Jozef Robijns (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit, 1969), pp. 89–104, at 91–94; for the use of chime bells in worship, see also David Munrow, *Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 34.

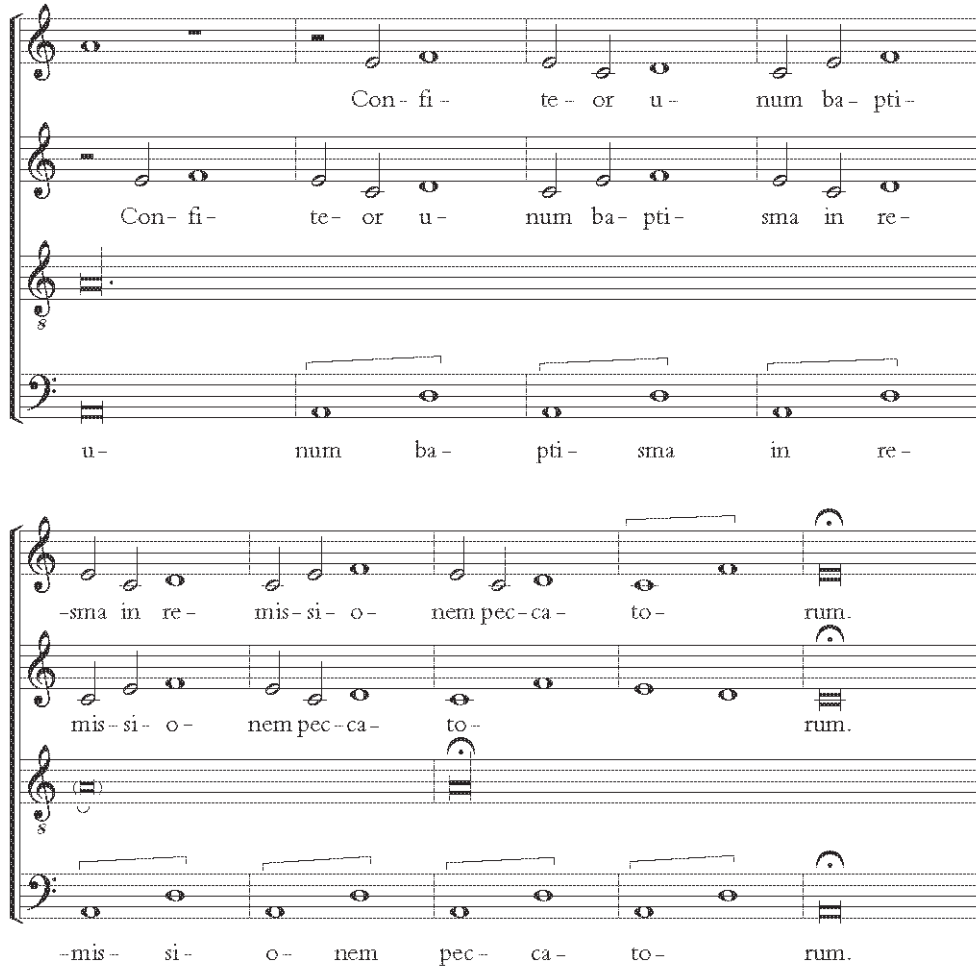
[25]See *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, Book iii, rule 6, ed. Albert Seay, Musicological Studies and Documents, 5 (Rome, 1961), p. 137.

[26]David Wulstan, *Tudor Church Music* (London: Dent, 1985), p. 276.

Example 1.



Example 2.



half of the first section is for four and five voices, and the second half for seven voices. The long second section has been restricted to two to four voices until the seven-voice closure expresses the fervent longing for the heavenly fatherland.

Miserere nostri by Tallis contrasts sharply with this work. Its short text consists of the words "Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri" [Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us], and the motet is only twenty-four breves long. Yet it is a remarkable

demonstration of technical skill: together with an obligato tenor, the composer has written a triple canon (in which six voices are derived from three), resulting in a continuous seven-voice scoring.

Tallis' second confessional motet opens with: "Suscipe quæso Domine vocem confitentis; scelera mea non defendo: peccavi . . ." [Receive, I beseech, O Lord, the voice of one who confesses; I do not defend my faults: I have sinned . . .]. The piece was published, like *Miserere nostri*, in 1575.[27] It seems possible, as Jeremy Noble has suggested,[28] that *Suscipe quæso* was intended for one of the ceremonies in London during the visit of Philip II in 1554. At one of these meetings, Cardinal Reginald Pole, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, formally absolved the English nation from sin and received it back into the Catholic fold. In this respect, Pole follows his thirteen-century predecessor at Canterbury, John Pecham, who in his *Ignorantia sacerdotum* of 1281 directed parish priests to instruct their flocks in six doctrines: the fourteen Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments of the law and the two of the Gospel, the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins, the seven virtues, and the seven sacraments. These doctrines were subsequently adopted throughout England.[29] There is no doubt that the Tudor composers were acquainted with these uses of the number seven and incorporated them in their music.

Lassus' seven-voice motet *Estote ergo misericordes* (Luke 6:36) is the composer's second motet in vol. 2 of the *Thesaurus* (1564; see above). "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" is a prayer to Christ for forgiveness. His seven-voice antiphon *Ne reminiscaris Domine*, published in 1577, is often associated with the seven Penitential Psalms. The *secunda pars* of the motet is a setting of the well-known prayer *Parce Domine*. Its low tessitura (SAATTBB) lends itself perfectly to the somber mood of the text: "Remember not, Lord, our offenses . . . spare your people, whom you have redeemed with your most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever."

On May 24, 1594, only three weeks before he died, Lassus dedicated his *Lagrime di San Pietro* to Pope Clement VIII. Consisting of twenty *madrigali spirituali* and one motet, the cycle does not, strictly speaking, belong to the realm of sacred music, because the music is not intended for liturgical use. On the other hand, the devotional "octaves" written by Luigi Tansillo and published in 1585 met many of the requirements of the Counter-Reformation. Lassus chose only twenty stanzas from the immense and unfinished poem. He set these for seven voices, symbolizing Peter's sorrow after publicly denying Christ in front of the high priest's house: "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord as he had said: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:61–62). The twenty-one settings of the 1594 print represent three times the penitential number seven, thus seven seven-voice settings for each of the three denials: no other music from this time more clearly expressed the penance of both the apostle and the composer. Lassus' intention is also emphasized in his dedication to the pope:

[27]No. 27 in the *Cantiones sacræ* by Byrd and Tallis.

[28]See Doe, *Tallis*, 40.

[29]See Colin Platt, *The Parish Churches of Medieval England* (London: Chancellor Press, 1981), p. 48.

> Onde ponendo io giù il timore, con ogni riverenza maggiore à V.S.ta mando, e dedico le lagrime di S. Pietro, rime composte . . . dal signor luigi Tansillo, e' da me, per mia particolare devotione, in questa mia hormai grave età' vestite di armonia, le quali, mi giova sperare nella somma bontà di V. Beatitudine, che da lei saranno benignamente accettate.
>
> [Whence, overcoming my fear, I send and dedicate to Your Holiness with the greatest reverence *The Tears of St Peter*, stanzas written . . . by Sir Luigi Tansillo, and set to music by myself for my own personal devotion at my now burdensome old age, of which I dare to hope that they will be favorably accepted in the greatest benevolence of Your Grace.]

In this context we have to consider that the oeuvre of the composer contains settings of the *Ordinarium missæ* based on models that are nothing less than scabrous or profane. Giving just two examples, his masses *Entre vous filles de XV ans* [Oh you fifteen-year-old girls] and *Je ne mange poinct de porcq* [I don't eat pork] can not but have displeased those church dignitaries in Rome for whom the musical reforms decided on at the Council of Trent were a necessity. However, that Lassus may have felt free to choose such models can perhaps in part be explained by the fact that the German monarchs, among them his patron Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, had been hostile during the Council to drastic reforms in church music.[30]

The seven-part motet *Vide homo*, added to the *Magnum Opus Musicum* by his sons,[31] is Lassus' swan song.[32] In this text, based on a poem by Philip the Chancellor (1160–1236),[33] the crucified Christ, speaking in the first person, confronts mankind with its sinfulness and reproaches it for ingratitude: "Vide homo, quæ pro te patior" [See, O man, what things I suffer for you]. The poem exhorts mankind to do penance, and Lassus' moving setting only adds to the feelings of repentance expressed in the text.

Salvation

Although in the Renaissance numerous compositions have been dedicated to saints, there are only a few settings in which a relation can be found between the number seven and the state of grace.[34] Perhaps the

[30]For an earlier discussion of the connection of the number seven with the vertical and horizontal structure of the cycle, see Willem Elders, *Studien zur Symbolik in der Musik der alten Niederländer* (Bilthoven: A.B. Creyghton, 1968), pp. 115–17; for a detailed discussion of the cycle in the context of the Counter-Reformation, see Alexander J. Fisher, "*Per mia particolare devotione*: Orlando di Lasso's *Lagrime di San Pietro* and Catholic Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Munich," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 132, no. 2 (2007), 167–220. My thanks to Marco Zarrelli for referring me to this article.

[31]Title of a collection of 516 motets for two to twelve voices by Lassus, published in 1604 in Munich.

[32]See Boetticher, *Orlando di Lasso*, 674.

[33]*Analecta Hymnica Medii Ævi XXI: Cantiones et Muteti, Lieder und Motetten des Mittelalters*; Zweite Folge, ed. Guido Maria M. Dreves (Leipzig: O.R. Reisland, 1895), pp. 18–19.

[34]In five of these settings, a symbolic concept between the martyr's death and some form of ostinato has been established. Willem Elders, "The Lives of Saints Reflected in 16th-Century Compositional Practice," *Musicologia humana: Studies in Honor of Warren and Ursula Kirkendale*, ed. Siegfried Gmeinwasser, David Hiley, and Jörg

most important event in the apostle Peter's life is related in Matt. 16:18–19: "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." This promise is preceded in verses 16–17 by the text: "Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him: Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah![35] For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."

Among Palestrina's 205 motets, there are only two for seven voices. One of these is *Tu es Petrus*, based on Christ's words cited above. In this case, the symbolic denotation of the number seven is to be found in the concept of salvation. In Christianity, salvation is the deliverance by redemption from the power of sin and from the penalties ensuing from it. In other words, it is the phase that man is longing for, after having obtained forgiveness. In Rev. 1:4, John addresses the seven churches in Asia with the words: "Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne." The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (see above) are related by Honorius of Autun to the Seven Beatitudes (the blessings of heaven) of Revelation.[36]

Another example is Jacob Arcadelt's seven-voice motet *Istorum est enim regnum celorum*. Copied into Ms. 24 of the Sistine Chapel in about 1545, it combines the texts of two antiphons for the First and Second Vespers of the Common of Martyrs, "Istorum est enim regnum celorum" and "Isti sunt sancti," both ending with the words "et laverunt stolas suas in sanguine agni" [and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; Rev. 7:14]. In contrast to Lassus, it is this composer's only seven-voice work. The *I. pars* is based on the plainsong melody of the first antiphon,[37] which is incorporated in two of the inner voices as a canon at the lower fifth from the twelfth breve onwards.

A seven-voice motet for St. Cecilia's Day (November 22) by Andreas Pevernage was published in 1568 in Venice in the third book of *Novus . . . thesaurus musicus*. Even though there is no historical evidence for Cecilia's martyrdom, she has long since been considered one of the most famous martyrs of the early Roman church. According to a late fifth-century legend, she was beheaded for having refused to consummate her marriage to a pagan called Valerian. Only in the sixteenth century did she become the patron saint of musicians. The text of the motet, which opens with *O virgo generosa, Cæcilia gloriosa* [O noble virgin, renowned Cecilia], calls her "a happy virgin who now reigns in heaven with the angels," and asks her "to be mindful of us from there."

Finally, Pierre Moulu and Pierre de Villiers composed seven-voice motets in ca.1540 for St. Barbara (*Salve Barbara martyr*) and St. Stephen (*Sancte Stephane*), respectively. Both were tortured to death, and they are the only motets for seven voices in the œuvres of either of these composers.[38]

Riedlbauer (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1994), pp. 115–124.

[35]"Bar" means "Son of."

[36]Meyer, *Die Zahlenallegorese*, 134.

[37]See *Liber Usualis,* 262[2].

[38]Moulu also dedicated a mass to St. Stephen, in which the stones by which he was killed are symbolized by an *ostinato* consisting of semibreves; see Elders, "The Lives of Saints," at 121–2.

Mourning

The number seven has signified mourning since ancient times. Proof for this is found in several passages in the Old Testament. In Gen. 50:10, Joseph commands seven days of mourning for Jacob. The last chapter of the book of Judith (16:28–29) contains the following lines: "and she [Judith] died, and was buried with her husband in Bethulia. And all the people mourned for seven days." In Job 2:11–13 we read: "Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him . . . they wept . . . and they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights." Any doubt as to whether the appearance of the number seven in funeral music signifies mourning is dispelled by John Coprario's *Funeral Teares for the death of the Right Honorable the Earle of Devonshire*, published in London in 1606. The subtitle says that they are "figured in seaven songes."[39]

The theme of death inspired several composers to write laments; this was surely the result of one or more of the following considerations. First, the writing of a lament may have served to ease the composer's personal grief; secondly, the composition was meant as a prayer to God to preserve the soul of the departed; finally, the lament was an expression of regard for the dead person and the homage could help to perpetuate his name.

Among the laments by Netherlandish composers, three are notated in black notes: Josquin's *Déploration de Johan. Okeghem*; Josquin's *Absolve, quesumus, Domine* for Obrecht[40]; and the anonymously preserved *Proh dolor*.[41] Of these, only *Proh dolor* is for seven voices. It can be considered the first seven-voice funeral work in Western music, and as such may have set a precedent for later laments. The text, a humanistic Latin elegy, as well as its unique source—one of the chanson albums of Marguerite of Austria—points to Maximilian I as the person in whose honor this lament was written. It opens with the exclamation "Sorrow!," and calls on the people of German lands to mourn the death of their magnanimous king. It ends with the line, "And may the heavenly host admit this great man." Three of the seven voices are canonic, and sing the text "Pie Jhesu Domine, dona ei requiem" [Merciful Lord Jesus, grant him rest], the final verse of the sequence *Dies ire* in long note values. Josquin has sometimes been claimed as the composer of *Proh dolor*,[42] and to the arguments already advanced can be added the circumstance that of the composers selected by Marguerite for her music book, only Josquin, Marbrianus de Orto and Gaspar van Weerbeke were still alive when her father died. Stylistically, Josquin's authorship is also reinforced by the presence of several falling thirds, a hallmark of his style,[43] and the fact that two of the laments written on his own death are also for seven voices. These are Jheronimus Vinders' *O Mors inevitabilis* and an anonymous

[39]From the same time dates John Dowland's collection *Lachrimæ or Seven Teares* for viols and lute.

[40]See Willem Elders, "Josquin's *Absolve, quæsumus, domine*: A Tribute to Obrecht?" *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, 37 (1987), 14–24.

[41]Found uniquely in Brussels, Biliothèque Royale, Ms. 228, ff. 33v–35.

[42]See Elders, *Studien zur Symbolik*, 22–24.

[43]Willem Elders, "Did Josquin use a Musical Signature?" *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, 62 (2012), 29–63.

setting of *Absolve, quesumus, Domine*.[44]

Vinders constructs an impressive scaffolding in the middle voices of his lament by combining the Gregorian introit of the Funeral Mass with a melody to the same text from the Office for the Dead, the invitatory of Matins. At the same time, he introduces in breves 15–19 in the two lower voices motifs in fourths, that sing the name of the deceased musician, "Josquin de pres," and imitate the ringing of the funeral bells.

The unknown composer of the motet *Absolve* introduces the introit of the Funeral Mass in the top voices as a two-voice canon, and gives the actual text, borrowed from the Burial Service, to the lower voices. This is a prayer for absolution, in which the name of the deceased is mentioned: "famuli tui Josquini." Although the source is incomplete, the motet's canonic set-up has enabled Martin Picker to reconstruct the final seven-voice passage "Requiescat in pace."[45]

More than forty years after Josquin's death, seven-voice scoring appears in two other funeral works, both having their origin at the Habsburg court in Vienna. The death of Ferdinand I in 1564 was commemorated by Johannes de Cleve in his *Austria Danubii*. It is the third motet in Book I of the monumental *Novi thesauri musici*, printed by Antonio Gardano in Venice in 1568. In the text of the epitaph the Emperor is compared with the golden sun that surpasses all other stars. While the second cantus paraphrases the introit of the Funeral Mass, the *quinta* and s*eptima* voices perform a freely invented canon at the fifth, stated four times, on the text "Sicut Domino placuit" [The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord; Job 1:21].

The lament *Defunctum charites Vætem* by Jacob Regnart on the death in 1567 of his teacher Jacobus Vaet, the imperial chapelmaster, was published in Book II of the *Novi thesauri musici*. This lament too is based on the introit of the Funeral Mass, but this time the chant is quoted literally and repeated once. The Graces demand the return from the dead of the composer, "renowned in the farthest corners of the earth."

The Virgin Mary

Mary, the Virgin Mother of Christ, has been an object of veneration in the Christian Church since its earliest days. It is therefore not surprising that the number seven is most often encountered in relation to her. Over the course of the centuries, art, music, and literature have testified to her cult from various angles. Western literature saw her as the personification of grace and purity, and she symbolized therefore the nobility of woman. In art, Mary was portrayed together with all kinds of symbols and attributes to emphasize her many outstanding qualities. In the texts of musical compositions, which were normally derived from the liturgy, the Bible or prayer books, she is often called "the Mother of God" and is entreated to intercede for man with the Lord.

While Mary has rightly been described as "a universal theme in the history of the arts" in general,[46] the same can be said

[44]Preserved in Piacenza, Archivio del Duomo, Ms. s.s., Partbooks TII, f. 1, BI, f. 1–1v, and BII, f. 1v.

[45]Martin Picker,"Josquiniana in Some Manuscripts at Piacenza," *Josquin des Prez: Proceedings of the International Josquin Festival-Conference New York 1971*, ed. Edward E Lowinsky (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 247–60, at 255–9.

[46]Jaroslav Jan Pelican, "Mary," *The New Encyclopæ-*

with respect to her role in music in particular: hundreds of compositions have been devoted to her, and, significantly, composers were often inspired by the visual representations of the Virgin. The two most important representations are Mary as the Mother of Sorrows or *Mater dolorosa*, and Mary as the Queen of Heaven (*Regina cæli*). In art and letters the first representation was often connected with the number seven and the second with the number twelve.[47]

Since the fifteenth century the number seven has been generally used to signify the Seven Joys or the Seven Sorrows of Mary. The basis for this preoccupation with the Virgin's joys and sorrows can be found in late medieval piety, which showed an emotional interest in the inner life of Christ and his mother. The choice of the number seven certainly goes back to its association with completeness. The following events in the life of Mary are commonly mentioned as her Seven Joys: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, Christ found by his Mother, the Resurrection, and her Assumption. The Joys were celebrated in the *Festum Septem Gaudiorum BMV,* in hymns and sequences such as *Gaude, virgo, mater Christi* that were written for this feast. In 1423, the Synod of Cologne introduced the Feast of the Seven Sorrows, as a counterpart to the existing Feast of the Seven Joys. The Seven Sorrows are: Simeon's Prophecy, the Flight into Egypt, the Loss of the Child Jesus for Three Days, the Bearing of the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Deposition, and the Entombment.

The Number Seven Revealed in Seven Pre-existing Chants and Ostinato Motifs

The musical repertoire from the Netherlands contains three compositions in which seven Marian chants are quoted. In chronological order they are the *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini* by Johannes Regis, the *Missa Sub tuum presidium* by Jacob Obrecht, and the motet *Salve regina* by Nicolas Gombert.

The four-voice mass *Ecce ancilla Domini* contains seven antiphons from the office of the Annunciation as found in the liturgy usage of Cambrai.[48] In the earliest source of the mass written before 1480, [49] the scribe has consistently entered the antiphon texts together with the text of the ordinary. If these texts were indeed sung, they would have formed an ideal background for a mass celebrating the mystery of the Incarnation.

It can hardly be doubted that Regis' *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini* served as model for Obrecht's *Sub tuum presidium* mass, for both composers worked in Cambrai, in 1460 and 1484 respectively, as *magister puerorum* of the cathedral. While it is possible that Obrecht's three- to seven-voice mass is the earliest example of symbolic scoring on the continent, his former colleague in Cambrai had already taken the initiative in the use of seven pre-existent chants. Unlike Regis, however, Obrecht uses only fragments of Marian chants, with the exception of the title antiphon, which occurs in the

dia Britannica (1978). *Macropædia* 11, pp. 560–3, at 563.

[47]See Willem Elders, *Symbolic Scores: Studies in the Music of the Renaissance* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), pp. 171–9.

[48]See M. Jennifer Bloxam, *A Survey of Late Medieval Service Books from the Low Countries: Implications for Sacred Polyphony 1460–1520* (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1987), pp. 232–7.

[49]Brussels, Biliothèque Royale, Ms. 5557.

superius of each of the five movements of the mass. Most fragments appear to have been chosen for their textual rather than for their melodic character. Mary is asked to be a mediatrix with Christ and to facilitate man's salvation. The texts therefore collaborate as the leitmotif of the mass, that is, a prayer to the Mother of Mercy.

The third example is Nicolas Gombert's motet *Salve regina*. This work is surely exceptional in the manner in which it squeezes as much chant into as little a space as possible. The motet bears the motto "Diversi diversa orant" [Diverse singers sing diverse prayers]. Each of the three lower voices paraphrases two Marian antiphons in succession; the superius "displays" the title antiphon very elaborately, thus enabling the others to be "covered" by it. The order of entry of these chants is: *Salve regina*, *Ave regina celorum*, the sequence *Inviolata*, *Alma redemptoris mater*, *Beata mater*, *Ave Maria*, *Hortus conclusus*. At the end of the motet, the four voices share the last words of the title antiphon, *O dulcis virgo Maria*. The antiphons belong to various feasts of the Virgin. Nonetheless there are several epithets embedded in their texts that are commonly applied to the crowned Virgin. She is called, for instance, "Queen of Heaven," "Queen of the Universe," "Queen of Mercy," "Mistress of the Angels," "Star of the Sea," "Ever-open door to Heaven," and "Mother of the Redeemer." Gombert's motet can thus best be seen as a pendant to the countless medieval and Renaissance representations of the enthroned Virgin and Child.

Obrecht's *Missa Sub tuum presidium* is not only exceptional because of its seven pre-existent chants, but also because it is written for seven voices, and is, as mentioned above, possibly the earliest example of this scoring on the continent. However, the number of voices is cumulative in the five movements, i.e., the Kyrie is for three voices, the Gloria for four voices, etc., and only the Agnus is for seven voices. But even here, by regularly introducing rests for one or more breves in at least one of the voices, the composer only achieves full scoring in the conclusion of the three sections.

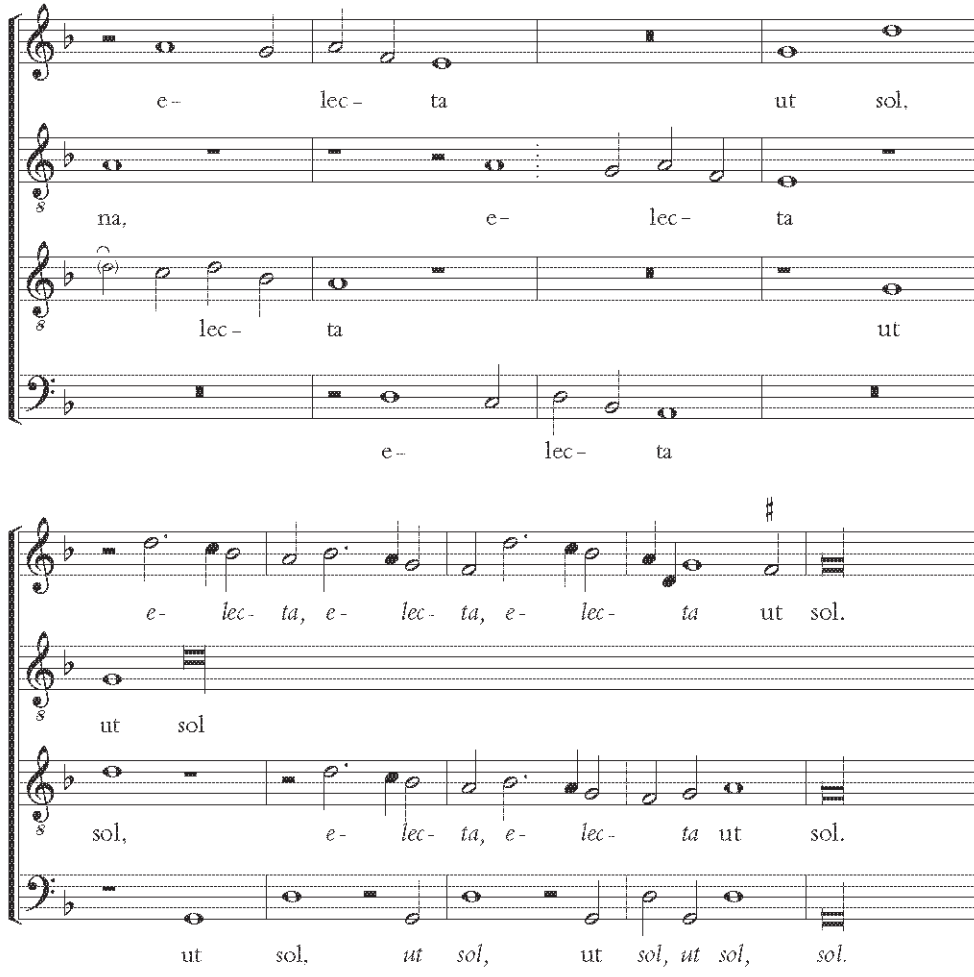
Three other seven-voice mass settings dedicated to the Virgin are known, La Hèle's *Missa Benedicta es, celorum regina*, published in Antwerp in 1578 and based on Josquin's famous six-part motet, Géry de Ghersem's *Missa Ave virgo sanctissima*, published twenty years later in Madrid,[50] and Andreas Pevernage's *Missa Ego flos campi*, also published in Antwerp in 1602.

Josquin's four-voice motet *Virgo prudentissima* offers a nice example of the sevenfold repeat of two notes, and resembles in this respect the ostinato in the Credo of Verbonnet's *Missa Je n'ay dueil* (see above). Based on the antiphon of the same name for the Magnificat of the First Vespers of the Assumption, the text is inspired by the Song of Solomon 1:4, 6:3, and 6:9. In the last verse, "electa ut sol" [bright as the sun], the leap of a fifth (*ut–sol*) in all four voices acts as signifier for the symbolism of the Marian number. See Example 3.

In Gombert's five-voice motet *Veni dilecta mea*, the tenor sings the formula "Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis" seven times. The syllabically recited *soggetto* appears alternately on f' and c'. The other voices combine two different liturgical texts from the Common of Virgins and Common of Holy Women,

[50]This Flemish composer based his setting on the popular five-voice motet of the same name by Francesco Guerrero. The motet is related musically to Josquin's five-voice *Salve regina*.

Example 3.



of which the second, *Nigra sum sed formosa*, is taken from the Song of Solomon. As a result of the ostinato theme, both these texts become Marian in reference.

*Seven-voice Setting*s

All of the following examples of Marian music are for seven voices. A motet by Matthaeus Pipelare illustrates how the choice of this scoring can be highly symbolic. In 1498, the composer was Master of the Choristers at the Illustre lieve Vrouwe Broederschap in 's-Hertogenbosch. The cantus firmus of his *Memorare mater Christi* is taken from the canción *Nunca fué pena mayor* by the Flemish composer Johannes Urreda (Wreede). Pipelare's motet dates from about 1512–16, the period in which its unique source was copied, a manuscript containing chant and polyphony for the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin.[51] The motet exhibits in the most obvious way that the number of voices can have a symbolic meaning: the composer alludes to this by naming his voice-parts "Primus dolor" [First sorrow], "Secundus dolor," etc. In the miniature that embellishes the first folio of the motet, the *Mater do-*

[51]Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 215–16, ff. 33v–38.

lorosa is depicted in a blue robe embroidered with gold, while behind her back the hilts of seven swords are visible. The seven swords are a reference to Simeon's prophecy, spoken at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, that a sword of grief would pierce Mary's soul (Luke 2:35). Pipelare's motet has its correlate in a painting by Adriaen Isenbrandt from about 1530, commissioned by the Church of Our Lady in Bruges: Mary is shown seated on a Renaissance throne, with each sorrow represented separately around her.[52] Whereas the hymn *Memorare* is a prayer to the Virgin, the *Mater dolorosa* herself speaks through the cantus firmus: "Never was there greater sorrow nor wilder torment than the pain I have suffered because of [your] deceit."[53] These words were transcribed in red ink at the start of the "Tertius dolor" voice, which is presented in long note values and is otherwise textless.

In neither Hugh Kellyk's *Gaude flore virginali* nor John Sutton's *Salve regina* is the full seven-voice scoring used throughout. Both motets date from the late fifteenth century, that is, from the same time in which Hans Memling depicted *The Seven Joys of the Virgin*.[54] The hymn *Gaude flore virginali* sings of Mary's seven heavenly joys, and each of its seven strophes begins with the Marian greeting "Gaude" [Rejoice]. As in the other many-voiced compositions in the Eton choirbook, the text of the passages set in full scoring is in black, while that of the passages set for fewer voices is in red. Strophes two, four (lines 1–3; 5–6), six (lines 1–2), and seven (lines 1, 4–6) have been set for seven voices; the other strophes and lines use two to six voices. The ending is also remarkable: the words "Quod hæc septem gaudia" [And that is why these seven joys] set for two voices lead into the climactic final passage for seven voices. In the *Salve regina* by Sutton, the first word sung by all seven voices is the "salve" at the end of the first line. The following section of text, up to and including "Et Jesum," is also set for seven voices. The three seven-voice invocations at the end are preceded by tropes, which are predominantly for three voices.

Going back to continental Europe, some seven decades later Barthélemy Beaulaigue published his motet *Hodie Maria virgo coelos ascendit* in Lyons in 1559. It is the Magnificat antiphon of the Second Vespers of the Assumption.

Mary as the Eternal Virgin

One of Philippe Verdelot's two seven-voice motets, *Beata es, virgo Maria*, is a setting of the third responsory of Matins of the Common of the Virgin. It has the following text: "Blessed are you, O Virgin Mary, who bore the Lord, the Creator of the universe. You brought forth him who made you, and remain forever a virgin. [*II. pars*:] Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. You brought forth him who made you, and remain forever a virgin." Although Verdelot does not use the melody of the responsory—instead he quotes two other Marian chants, the sequence *Ave Maria* and the antiphon *Ave Maria*—he adheres to the responsory

[52]The Ms. Jena 4 of the Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek presents on f. 42v, at which the Kyrie of La Rue's *Missa De septem doloribus* begins, a miniature with a similar representation.

[53]"Numquam fuit pena maior" is the Latin translation of the first line of a poem by Don Garcia Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva.

[54]Munich, Alte Pinakothek. For a color reproduction see Jacques Lassaigne, *Flemish Painting. The Century of Van Eyck* (Geneva: Editions d'art Albert Skira, 1957), pp. 139–140.

form. This means that the music of the words "in eternum permanes virgo" is repeated. As a result, these two sections account for more than half of the motet's total length, and in this way the composer emphasizes the motet's central theme of the "Eternal Virgin." "As far back as we can trace it the Christian consensus seems to have been that [Mary] was not only a virgin when she conceived and bore Jesus, but a virgin totally, for the rest of her days."[55]

The question arises whether the composer chose a seven-voice scoring for this text simply because the number seven is a Marian number, or also because, in ancient times, the number seven was considered the "virginal" number. Although such a connection may seem far-fetched, it is worthwhile to look at it more closely. After Plato had distinguished the planetary heptad as "the movable image of eternity,"[56] the number seven itself became well known as such in Neo-Pythagorean number philosophy. This idea may even have been familiar to Renaissance artists through the writings of the Gnostics. Gnosticism saw the seven planets as the "Seven Virgins of Light," or the "Seven Maidens of Sophia," the Virgin of Wisdom.[57] In this dualistic religious system, Sophia was the female emanation of the *pleroma*, the fullness of the godhead, responsible for the coming into being of the Demiurge, the creator of the material world.[58] It is true that the Gnostic movement was fought by leading early-Christian theologians; nonetheless, together with Neo-Pythagoreanism, it survived and retained its influence, particularly on the development of number theory in the Christian West. The early Church Fathers, up to and including St. Augustine, molded these views into what was to become the fundamental theory of medieval number symbolism.[59] All the elements in the doctrine described above are present in the text of Verdelot's motet: (1) Mary is said to be the Mother of Him who made her, and she is full of God's grace ["genuisti qui te fecit"; "gratia plena"]; (2) she is responsible for the creator of the world coming into being as man ["que Dominum portasti, creatorem mundi genuisti"]; (3) Mary is virgin forever ["in eternum permanes virgo"]. Moreover, medieval litanies to the Virgin often contain the epithet "sedes sapientiæ," Seat of Wisdom.

The theme of the "Eternal Virgin" is also encountered in the sequence *Inviolata*, which was published in a seven-voice setting in Adrian Willaert's *Musica nova* (see above). The first and last lines of the sequence state that Mary is inviolate, spotless and chaste, and that she alone has remained inviolate. Like Verdelot, Willaert based his motet on Gregorian chant: the melody of the sequence is treated as a canon in three voices. *Inviolata* is one of the five seven-voice motets in Willaert's *Musica nova*, each of which carries symbolic scoring in its scoring.[60]

[55]Geoffrey Ashe, *The Virgin* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), p. 63.

[56]Vincent Foster Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism: Its Sources, Meaning, and Influence on Thought and Expression* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 43.

[57]Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism,* 59.

[58]See *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* (1978*). Micropædia*, 9, p. 355.

[59]Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism,* X.

[60]Elders, *Studien zur Symbolik*, 105–7, 111.

Because the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity implied the integral purity of body and soul, many medieval theologians defended the idea of her "immaculate conception." This term refers to the conception of Mary in the womb of Anne, her mother. The thirteen-century Franciscan friar Duns Scotus, in particular, strongly upheld the position that she alone of all mankind was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin. The late appearance in Christian art of the theme of "the Immaculate Conception" is probably due to "the difficulty of establishing a representational type for so abstract a concept,"[61] and because the controversy—how to reconcile the universality of original sin and the need for redemption with Mary's exemption and preservation—would only be resolved in 1854. From the fifteenth century onwards, however, one does find attributes designating the "Virgin of the Immaculate Conception," some of which, such as the *flos campi*, the *lilium inter spinas*, and the *hortus conclusus*, inspired musicians to write seven-voice compositions.

Mary and the Song of Solomon

Perhaps the earliest musical example is by Jacobus Clemens non Papa. On his departure from the Illustre lieve Vrouwe Broederschap in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1550, the composer presented the brotherhood with a motet "ter eeren onser lieven vrouwen" [in honor of Our Lady]. There can be no doubt that this motet, *Ego flos campi*, was the only seven-voice composition Clemens ever wrote. The text, which is inspired by the Song of Solomon (chapters 1 and 4), calls Mary "a flower of the valleys" and

Figure 2. Mary as the Mother of Seven Sorrows. The inscription "Sicut lilium inter spinas" (a lily among brambles) is taken from the Song of Solomon 2:2. Woodcut, Antwerp, 1519.

"a garden fountain." The words "sicut lilium inter spinas" [as a lily among brambles] are given prominent treatment in contrasting homophony; they were and still are the brotherhood's motto. (Figure 2) In 1578, Andreas Pevernage published in Douai a volume of *Cantiones sacræ* in which the same text occurs, also set for seven voices.

The Song of Solomon "has been accepted as an elaborate allegory of the love story of God and his people Israel."[62] But in Christian tradition the book was also explained as a poetic depiction of the relation between Christ and his bride, the church. Medieval liturgy saw the bride of the Song of Solomon as a symbolic representation of the Vir-

[61]James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art* (New York: Harper & Row, [2]1979), p. 326.

[62]*The Jerusalem Bible*, Reader's Edition (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1968), p. 865.

gin Mary, and reinterpreted the effusions of praise as referring to her. Thus the verses 6:11–13 came to be used as an antiphon for the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin: "Descendi in hortum nucum" [I went down to the nut orchard to look at the blossoms of the valley, to see whether the vines had budded . . . Return, return, O Shulammite, return, return, that we may look upon you].[63] Several times the poet of the Song of Solomon describes the bride as a sweet-smelling, enclosed garden. In the Middle Ages the *Hortus conclusus* was adopted as a symbol of the Immaculate Conception. There is a dense seven-voice setting of the antiphon *Descendi in ortum meum* by Cipriano de Rore in which at the word "revertere" the binary mensuration changes to a ternary one. The motet opens the famous parchment choirbook Munich Mus. Ms. B, a collection that was copied in Munich in 1557–59 and is extravagantly decorated with miniatures by Hans Mielich. The same codex contains also Rore's seven-voice settings of the antiphon *Ave regina celorum* and the Christmas motet *Quem vidistis pastores* (see above).

There is still another Marian metaphor derived from Song of Solomon 6:10. It appears at the end of the antiphon *Virgo prudentissima*, which is sung at the Magnificat in the First Vespers of the Assumption. The Daughter of Zion is called "pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol" [beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun]. In his seven-voice setting of the antiphon, Palestrina sustains a three-voice canon and solmizes the last two notes of the bassus: *ut–sol*. In his setting of the same text, Josquin, too, exploited the motif in this way (see above).

Also the oeuvre of Philippe de Monte offers several examples of seven-voice music in honor of the Virgin. No other composer favored this scoring more strongly as a way of expressing belief in the magic power of the Marian number seven. It is tempting to assume that this artistic "behavior" was perhaps a consequence of Monte's character: in 1555, the then thirty-year-old composer was compared to a girl because of his remarkable modesty.[64] His motet *Pulchra es et decora* is based on the Song of Solomon 6:4 and 6:10; since this text also belongs to the liturgy of the Assumption, the beautiful daughter of Jerusalem celebrated in the biblical poem is identified with Mary. The incorporation of two two-voice canons marks Monte's motet as a highly "artificial" work.

Another seven-voice motet by Monte, *Audi, filia, et vide*, takes its text from Ps. 44 (45), the same psalm from which Porta used the third verse for his Christmas motet *Diffusa est gratia* (see above). While the first half of the psalm is devoted to the bridegroom, verses 10–12 describe the bride's praises. Surprisingly, part of this text is found in the gradual for August fifteenth, the Assumption of the Virgin: "Hear, O daughter, and consider, incline your ear . . . and the King will desire your beauty." This text is closely related to the poetry of the Song of Solomon. Once more, the bride of the King is no other than Mary: if she can forget her nation and ancestral home, God will fall in love with her. By using canon technique in three of the voices, Monte raises his motet to a high level of musical

[63]For the antiphon see the Worcester Antiphonary, *Paléographie musicale*, 12, p. 356.

[64]"Ist ain stiller eingezogener züchtiger mensch wie ain junkfrau." See Georges van Doorslaer, *La vie et les oeuvres de Philippe de Monte* (Brussels: Maurice Lamertin, 1921), p. 217.

sophistication.

Finally, Monte set two large-scale Marian texts to seven voices. They are the *Litania Lauretana* and the motet cycle *Virgo vetustis edita*. The first of these compositions, published in Munich in 1596, is almost 400 bars long. It is not known when this medieval litany became associated with the famous pilgrim shrine of Loreto, but by the sixteenth century it had spread all over Europe. Since it was the Jesuits in particular who promoted the litany for devotion and worship—among whom Petrus Canisius must be mentioned, the author of the text of *Virgo vetustis edita*—it appears that Monte was inspired by this order. In 1587, the litany was officially approved by the pope. The diversity of laudatory Marian metaphors does not prevent us from considering the text primarily as a prayer to the *Mater misericordi*æ. The continuously repeated "ora pro nobis" links this text with that of the antiphon *Sub tuum presidium*, on which Obrecht based his three- to seven-voice mass (see above). In the mass the Virgin is also invoked as mediatrix and is asked to bring about the salvation of man. In the most common representation of the Mother of Mercy in Christian art, Mary is shown in a standing position, sheltering supplicants under her cloak.[65] In their scoring both composers "paint" the effect of being under Mary's protection in a similar way: Obrecht always states the chant in long note values in the top voice and even has it sung with its original text; Monte has the *Chorus primus* (discant, alto and bass) recite all the invocations together with the discant of the *Chorus secundus*, creating a treble-dominated medium that contrasts with the brief responses sung by the full choir.

Monte's *Litania Lauretana* was preceded by Costanzo Porta's seven-voice setting of the same text, published in 1580. The layout of the two works is almost the same, but Porta adheres more strictly than Monte to the alternatim principle, that is, the consistent alternation of two choruses: the invocations are sung by the *Chorus primus*, while the *Chorus secundus* responds. Porta's litany was one of the fifty-two motets in the composer's important collection dedicated to the governor of Loreto.

More than any other Marian composition, Monte's motet cycle *Virgo vetustis edita* published in 1589 demonstrates that not only the vertical organization but also the horizontal form of music was sometimes based on number symbolism. The text of the cycle was written, as already mentioned, by the Dutch Jesuit Petrus Canisius,[66] and published in his *De Maria virgine . . . Libri quinque* in Ingolstadt in 1577. The treatise is considered to be apologetic Mariology, and the poem, which appears at the very end under the title *Hymnus ad Dei param virginem*, consists of twenty-two stanzas. Monte, however, clearly with the intention of expressing the number seven not only in seven voices but also in seven equal *partes*, omitted the second stanza.[67] With over 220 breves, *Virgo vetustis edita* can be called a late polyphonic monument in honor of the Virgin. ❖

[65]See Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects*, 325–6.

[66]Piet Nuten, *De "Madrigali spirituali" van Filip de Monte (1521–1603)* (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, 1958), pp. 122–5.

[67]Five years later, with *Le lagrime di San Pietro*, Lassus too shaped his cycle into twenty-one pieces (see above).

Musica Sanans: Individual and Communal Reintegation in Augustine's *Expositions of the Psalms*

Augustine's theory of signs provides a basis for the reconciliation of song and meaning, meaning and church, church and God in singing the Psalms.

by Rev. Samuel Bellafiore

Augustine is a man of apparent contradictions. He is an orator who loves silence, a pagan whose paganism turns him Christian, a man who pursues truth but remains circumspect about his capacity to know it entirely. In everything, Augustine embraces these tensions. He does not shirk from them, but lives them. They bring out his greatest efforts to understand and he manages to reconcile apparent opposites by living *in medias res*.

Among his juxtapositions, Augustine loves music but remains wary of its power. His *Expositions of the Psalms* address the peril and promise of singing the Psalms in community. For Augustine singing the Psalms with body, mind, and heart united to the text helps restore unity within a person, among people and with God. Singing the Psalms helps restore one of the four preternatural gifts lost at the Fall: integrity.

Augustine's interpretation of the Psalms follows a pattern of reconciliation and reintegration. He will assume signs are reconciled to their *res*, then proceed as mind reconciles to sign, body to mind, person to church, and church to God. And, as it turns out, God is the ultimate *res* to which the words of the Psalms point.

This article will detail and elaborate why Augustine thinks psalm singing can restore integrity: first, his sign theory, necessary to grasp how he thinks texts operate; second, the pitfalls and potential gift of psalm singing. Throughout I will return to Augustine's focus on integrity and peace. For the sake of space, I will make reference only to the first volume of *Expositions*.

A Sign Detour

Augustine may be as responsible for semiotics as he is for the soliloquy and memoir. He has conditioned language study such that even today semiotics and linguistics—whether they reconcile with, reckon with,

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or reject Augustine—still have to face him.

For Augustine a sign most basically points to something else. A sign [*signum*] brings up another thing [*res*] in the observer's mind. Augustine distinguishes between natural and conventional signs. A natural sign communicates its *res* on its own without any human imposition.[1] Smoke communicates fire simply because in the natural order fire produces smoke. Nature first connects fire and smoke, not human minds. A conventional sign arises when human habit associates an existing thing with a *signum*. Through human practice over time, a red banner can signify to Augustine the Roman Empire.

For Augustine words are signs, generally conventional.[2] Through habit, the combination of phonemes in the word "arbor" connotes a leaf-bearing organism. Words are primarily spoken and only later written. This makes sense in Augustine's culture, which was more aural than written, but he is also aware that one writes only what one is also first capable of saying; one says only what one is capable of first thinking. Words begin in the heart or the mind, where there is an "inner word," the idea of the *res* but without the *signum*.

That the inner word can exist in the heart without seeing or pronouncing the sign is crucial for Augustine's approach to psalm texts. On one hand it creates a problem: the body that sees or pronounces the sign does not always focus interiorly on the thing signified. This can manifest itself in pride or distraction during prayer. On the other hand, it means the person can lose track of the sign (e.g., in melismatic singing) while still holding its meaning in the heart.

Both the trouble and the benefit derive from the fact that the sign and the signified are different entities. The signified is more important, but usually requires the sign if anyone is to communicate the signified. As signs, words begin in a sort of disunity. Can or should they be reconciled?

Reintegration in the *Expositions on the Psalms*

Augustine's *Expositions* repeatedly refer to two main problems when singing the Psalms: distraction and pride. I will focus on distraction. When distracted, the mind does not integrate the sign one is singing. This means the mind and body go unreconciled. The mouth and vocal cords are doing one thing—e.g., pronouncing the word

That inner word can exist in the heart without seeing or pronouncing the sign is crucial for Augustine's approach to psalm texts.

[1]For more, see Rowan Williams, *On Augustine* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), chapter 2.

[2]William Harmless, *Augustine in His Own Words* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), p. 171.

"praise" at the beginning of Psalm 117—but the mind is elsewhere. It may be on the grocery list, the cantor's flat singing, or the paper due Tuesday. Wherever it is, the mind is not with the body.

This lack of harmony between mind and body has been familiar since the fall of man. With the fall, humanity lost what Augustine identifies as the preternatural gift of integrity. Integrity means the body and the passions are always subject to reason. The intellect and will guide the passions. The person's faculties are completely aligned so that when the intellect and will command one thing, the body cooperates.

Throughout his works Augustine is painfully aware that he does not do the good he wants to do but often does the evil he does not want to do. In *Confessions*[3] Augustine struggles over his inability to focus on the psalm texts he sings at Mass. Too often, he says, he gets lost in the melody and stops caring what he is singing about: "I feel that when the sacred words are chanted well, our souls are moved and are more religiously and with a warmer devotion kindled to piety than if they are not so sung . . . . But my physical delight, which has to be checked from enervating the mind, often deceives me when the perception of the senses in unaccompanied by reason, and is not patiently content to be in a subordinate place."

His concern is: too often people lose sight of an action's purpose, what it really means and is about. It is not that his pleasure in the music is bad, because he acknowledges that the delight awakens devotion. Here Augustine's concern is essentially the same as what gets labeled his preoccupation with sex. The problem is that since *we* are not in harmony, we can value pleasure over purpose. Our internal division spreads: we divorce pleasure from the entire act, making pleasure a god. When pleasure is present, we often begin to *use* the action to gain more pleasure, rather than *enjoying* it, that is, appreciating it for its own goodness and its goodness in relation to God. We have mistaken the *signum* for the *res*.

Thus what Augustine says elsewhere in a sexual context—that there is a "wide gulf between the occurrences and our will"[4]—is true of many human actions. When he points this out, he is not being a prudish dualist. He is being honest about the human race's broken condition. He is also aware

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[3]Augustine, *Confessions*, X.xxxiii. 49, tr. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 207–8.

[4]Ibid., X.xxix.40, 203.

that dissonance between mind and sign and between body and mind will dissipate integrity elsewhere. When the person is not in harmony even within himself or herself, how can the person be in harmony with others singing in church? And if one is not united with those in the other pews, how can one be united with God? As this article will discuss further, Augustine is incorporating the "double law of love" hermeneutic into what psalm singing requires.

Augustine's preaching sympathizes with these weaknesses he knows from his own life. Throughout the *Expositions* he exhorts his listeners to sing in a way that restores integrity to their bodies and to the Body of Christ. Most basically, Augustine urges his listeners to use their reason when they sing. "We want to use our human reason as we sing." In fact, "God has willed to human beings the ability to sing with understanding."[5] Why? Engaging the mind stifles distraction and heightens focus on the text. If one of Augustine's congregants understands more about the words he or she is singing, he or she is enabled to contemplate the Word of God during the act of singing the Psalms. Augustine's pedagogy is basic yet brilliant: give the mind a little more to chew on and the mind will stay with you.

Augustine is making sure the sign is reconciled to the *res* and the mind is reconciled to the sign. When people do not understand the words they sing, those signs still signify their *res*, but the signs operate less effectively. Engaging the intellect makes it easier for the person singing to identify the sign he or she is singing with its *res*, the thing he or she is actually singing about. Once this occurs, the mind is also again in union with the body.

Yes, one needs exegesis to reconcile words to meaning, mind to words and body to mind, but this requires singing humbly. Augustine brings up a practicality of technique that aids this process. Augustine, maybe with some choice cantors in mind, exhorts his congregation not to sing like *prima donnas*.[6] Pride can mount walls between mind and word, between mind and body. If a singer loses sight of the purpose of the music—praise and understanding—he or she will begin using the music and the text for his or her own praise and glorification. Augustine's old wariness about music returns.

Augustine's preaching sympathizes with these weaknesses he knows from his own life.

Singing well requires paying attention to the other people singing. Augustine assumes the psalms at the liturgy are "sung together with harmonious voices."[7] One person cannot sing too loudly, drowning out the others, nor can others sing too quietly

[5]Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms*, trs. Maria Boulding (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2004), 18(2):1, 204.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

or abstain entirely from singing. Instead, the voices build each other up: the strong bearing patiently with weaker voices, humbling themselves below their full potential, thus supporting and strengthening those who cannot sing as skillfully.[8] Augustine is again returning to his theme of humility as necessary for praise. Without humility, one cannot praise God; without praising God, one can barely be a full human being.

One might well object: is Augustine asserting that singing the Psalms actually reverses the Fall's disintegration of our bodies and souls? Or can one, doing *anything* well and with grace, gradually reverse the Fall's effects? Is psalm singing simply one example? Augustine seems to think that with small helps along the way (attention, humility), psalm singing is particularly important in reversing the Fall's effects.

First, for Augustine, singing the Psalms is a process of "appropriation." The best example of Augustine's concept of appropriation comes in another context, the Platonic ascent of his *Confessions*. Still far from God he hears something like God's voice saying, "I am the food of the fully grown; grow and you will feed on me. And you will not change me into you like the food your flesh eats, but you will be changed into me."[9] Nothing for Augustine is purely a subject's action. Objects have their own effect even on active subjects. So too the Word of God, which is more than the Christian's (or Jewish person's) self-expression; the Word of God re-works and re-forms the one who finds it. Lawless argues that in Augustine God's Word orders the disordered and confused mind.[10] The importance of appropriation will become clearer further below, in light of the *totus Christus* hermeneutic.

Second, while God's Word rightly orders human reason, singing the Psalms also re-orders the heart toward its true aim. Singing God's praises can both contribute and image holiness. Commenting on Psalm 32 Augustine says, "we praise him by becoming more and more pleasing to him as we find him pleasing to us."[11] The psalm says, "Praise befits the upright," because the upright are "those who direct their hearts in accordance with the will of God."[12]

Singing entails a new form of life and requires conversion. Regarding the line "Sing him a new song," Augustine exclaims, "Strip off your old selves, you know a new song."[13] Of this new song he says, "only they can learn it who are new persons, renewed by grace and throwing off the old."[14]

He exhorts the praying congregation to "sing not with our tongues but with our lives."[15] This is not to be taken literally, for Augustine is urging his congregation to *keep* singing aloud when they gather. The sentence's move from "tongues" to "lives" emphasizes that singing is incomplete until it harmonizes with one's life outside of prayer. The texts people are singing require consonance with the rest of their lives. The body singing on Sunday cannot sing *only* on Sunday, but must sing in virtue the rest of the week.

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[8]Dr. Timothy O'Malley first pointed out this equilibrium to me.

[9]*Confessions*, VII.x.16, 124.

[10]Harmless, *Augustine in His Own Words*, 157.

[11]*Expositions of the Psalms*, 32(2):1, 392.

[12]Ibid., 32(2):2, 393.

[13]Ibid., 32(2):8, 400.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

Third, Augustine's commentary engages in what one might call performative hermeneutics. His interpretive keys are more than useful lenses for mining Scripture's meaning. They are part of the actual process of singing the Psalms. This is true of the "double law of love" and Augustine's *totus Christus* method.

Augustine's psalm exegesis and exhortation incorporates the hermeneutical double law of loving God and neighbor. Under this principle an interpretation is acceptable only if it leads to charity. When the mind is separated from the text sung—i.e., the person is divided—this ugly separation spreads. The distracted or inattentive singer is also divided from others in the congregation. Separated from the text, the person drifts from the full action in which he or she is participating. Separated from prayer, he or she is unwittingly separated from the community.

But beyond that, the Psalms contain the whole church's prayer of thanksgiving, petition, praise, and adoration. The distracted or inattentive singer fails to attend to his or her neighbor's own life reflected in the psalm. He or she ceases to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. The drifting singer secludes himself or herself from the rest of the Christian community. This community is the Body of Christ so the singer is also drifting from Christ, whose charity binds the Church into one.

Singing well will deepen love. Augustine's principle is not a Kantian maxim as one might be tempted to interpret it. The principle is borne out *in* and borne out *of* the practice of communal prayer. The double law of love flows from within the text, the people, the church and from Christ. Exegesis happens in preaching but also occurs in the very act of singing the Psalms.

The double law of love leads unavoidably into Augustine's *totus Christus* method of psalm interpretation. This method wonders, "Who is the speaker in the Psalms?" According to the method, Christ has mysteriously made the Psalms' words his own through the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery. Christ, who emptied himself for the sake of poor humanity, has taken up the psalms of suffering and about the "poor man." Christ, whom the Father raised, has spoken the psalms about hope and new life. Christ, who ascended to the Father, has spoken the psalms of praise.

For Augustine Christ integrates these words, taking them to himself. Unlike gods who "have mouths, but do not speak . . . ears, but do not hear," and who "make no sound in their throats" (Ps 115:5, 6, 7), this God speaks, hears, and makes human words, indeed human signs, his own. In his human nature Christ may have experienced distraction while praying and been tempted to pride, yet he prayed the Psalms perfectly. He joined them completely to himself, as he joins his Body the Church to himself perfectly and permanently. The Psalms and the church remain forever his.

Christ's action in the Psalms and the church parallel each other. Christ brings out the meaning the Psalms always had and reconciles them to their ultimate *res*, the Son offering praise to the Father. In Christ

Singing well will deepen love.

humanity is reconciled with God; Christ forms the church, who offers his praise back to the Father in the Psalms.

If this is true, words of the Psalms become unmistakably the words of everyone in the church. This is part of the deeper understanding Augustine is fostering in his preaching. He wants people to realize these words are a text, a practice, and a tradition—but they are more. If God's people want to belong fully to him, they need to let these texts belong fully to them. In his humility, God assumed these humble human pleas. It should not be too much trouble for people to pray them too!

As with the double law of love, the congregation enacts and performs the *totus Christus* method. The hermeneutical principle is intrinsic to the act of worship. Far from being an extrinsic law in the modern sense, it is a principle, just as the soul is the body's principle. The hermeneutical principle is present throughout, and it gives life. These hermeneutical principles begin in the text and the Body of Christ praying to the Father, not in Augustine's mind. He extrapolates from what is already true—Christ has assumed the Psalms and formed his praying Body the Church—and then he applies it. His application is true exegesis. The preacher cannot interpret however he pleases; his words must conform to the text of the psalm and to the meaning of the text. Augustine's preaching serves to make people aware of what is already going on in the person, the church, and the Trinity.

Conclusion

Through an increase in awareness, people can unite themselves more fully to the text and to Christ's praise. The act of preaching is part of Augustine's "ministry of reconciliation" to signs, people, and the church. The listener's mind needs the preacher's exegesis to appreciate the *res* of words in the Psalms. Exegesis is a necessary step in the effective reintegration by the Psalms of the person. Humanity, which lost union with God and bodily integrity at the Fall, gains these goods back through praying the Psalms.

For Augustine, singing these words reconciles us to Christ. Christ is the Word who is, as Rowan Williams points out, himself a sign: he signifies the Father.[16] God is the deepest *res*, the meaning behind every creature, the One who created a world whose inhabitants cannot but signify him. Consciously or unconsciously, their being always exclaims, "We did not make ourselves."[17]

However, one day God will not mediate his glory through signs. Signs will pass away: every eye shall behold him, every ear shall hear him, face to face and voice to ear. That unspeakable day of song will be wordless jubilation. Always emphasizing integrity—the many made one—Augustine says:

> When we shall come to you, these "many things" which we say "and fall short" shall cease; and You as One shall remain, you who are all in all; and without ceasing we shall say one thing, praising You in the one, we who have also been made one in You.[18]

Until then, wayfarers wander this world of signs. And while they wander they will sing, for in the Psalms they find their home. ❖

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[16]Williams, *On Augustine*, 38.

[17]*Confessions*, IX.x.25, 172.

[18]Augustine, *The Trinity*, XV, tr. Stephen McKenna, C.SS.R. (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963), pp. 28, 525.

Repertory

Frank La Rocca's The Mass for the Americas: *Two Composers Discuss a Major New Sacred Work*

The Mass integrates a wide variety of musical styles and types into a persuasive whole as an observance of the Immaculate Conception and Guadalupe.

by Mark Nowakowski

In December of 2018 I had the unique opportunity to travel from my own frigid clime of Ohio to lovely San Francisco, with the aim of attending and reviewing the world premiere performance of Frank La Rocca's *The Mass for the Americas*. The work was premiered at St. Mary's Cathedral on December eighth, during a Mass celebrating both the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and our Lady of Guadalupe. The work's major sponsor, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, celebrated the Mass. The premiere was first chronicled in a review written for www.catholicartstoday.com titled "Return to Liturgical Glory?" In the aftermath of wonderful first impressions, I was given the further opportunity to hear the recordings, peruse the score, and sit down with Dr. LaRocca to have a more detailed discussion with him. What follows are highlights from this conversation.

Mark Nowakowski (MN): Thank you, Dr. La Rocca, for meeting to speak with me today about your incredible new work. Before we discuss the piece, I thought it might be useful to somehow briefly discuss your

Dr. Mark Nowakowski (www.marknowakowski.com), is an Assistant Professor of Music at Kent State University. A prolific composer of sacred and concert works, his 2017 Naxos "American Classics" release — "Blood, Forgotten" — was praised as "at once fierce, haunting, and mystical" by Gramophone magazine. His recent work has been commissioned and performed globally by such notables as the Kronos Quartet, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Jeffrey Zeigler, The Monteverdi Cello Octet, The Voxare Quartet, Three Notch'd Road, the FiveOne Experimental Orchestra, Emily Ondracek-Peterson, Stowarzyszenia Mozart, the Vox Musica Womens Choir of Sacramento, the Choir of the Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, and the Cracow Brass Quintet. He has written articles for Sound on Sound, Sacred Music, Onepeterfive.com, the Catholic News Agency, Catholic Arts Today, and writes a long-standing column on new music and music technology at commdiginews.com.

background. For those who don't know your personal story, you basically did a stunning about-face after the mid-point of your career, somehow transforming from a—please forgive me—crusty academic modernist to a fresh composer of luminous Catholic sacred music. Your compositions for the sacred liturgy brought you to a position as the composer in residence for the Benedict XVI Institute. What ultimately called you out of modernism—societal and aesthetic—to serving as a vital musical voice in the church in our time?

Frank La Rocca (FLR): You do me way more honor than I deserve, but I appreciate the acknowledgement of some measure of accomplishment.

What called me out of modernism was a search for beauty and meaning in my music—a beauty that does not hide under layers of ironic distance but which has the capacity to speak to ordinary souls like my own. During the years I spent in graduate musical studies (1974–79) I was told over and over that simplicity, directness, and (in a sense) truth in art were relics of the past, of an inheritance that modern thought had shown to be superseded by enlightened, positivistic, scientific thought. And as a student I toed the line—who wants to be irrelevant? I'm not sure my teachers had really thought these things through. I think they were handing on what they had been given without questioning the philosophical assumptions that support this "enlightened" way of thinking. And one of the problems I had in trying to push back against this was my own lack of any philosophical framework within which I could offer rational defenses. My subjective convictions about beauty ultimately survived these challenges, and, in a way, I am grateful for having to overcome them because it lead me on a quest. If the convictions I held subjectively were not true, how could I defend them? And so, after graduate school, in a search for aesthetic truth—after years as a functional atheist despite my Catholic upbringing, and much to my astonishment, I encountered God. It was a stumbling, haphazard journey, but in his mercy God called me out of the wilderness and showed me that beauty and truth (and goodness) really are all one thing.

Something authentic and important happened to me in this Road to Damascus-like event, and it stopped me in my tracks—including as a composer. After a couple of years of complete creative silence, I chose as my first project an a cappella choral setting, in Latin, of verses from the Seven Penitential Psalms. It was a successful experiment and I realized I had found a way in my creative life of working out a journey of penance and grace in a medium in which, with its relatively limited technical means (unaccompanied voices), I could also begin to forge a language of truth and beauty that brought my faith and my art together in the same place, where they could foster a kind of mutual enrichment. That is the "place" of my CD's title "In This Place." Sacred choral music remains at the center of my work to this day.

MN: Turning towards your *Mass of the Americas*, and having witnessed the work, I am very enthusiastic about it. Yet I must admit when I first read the layout of the work—four languages, the use of Mexican hymn material, the addition of non-standard liturgical instruments, and the theological and aesthetic idea of honoring both

our Lady of the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe—I was, as a composer, intimidated and frankly worried for you. And yet you somehow wrapped it all up in a neat compositional bow, making it a work entirely smaller and more intimate than the large forces and ideas in the "master plan," and yet also as grand and universal as necessary for the occasion. How did you set about wrangling all of these forces and requirements into what is ultimately a work that so clearly coheres?

FLR: I was no less intimidated by the project when it was given to me by Archbishop Cordileone, and the concerns you cite were also my own. I started with the structure of Mass itself—a given—and thought about how that order could be the platform for what is essentially a work in eleven movements of varying length and instrumentation. I gave considerable thought to the prominence and sequence of the languages used: Spanish, Latin, and English (the fourth language, Nahuatl, is sequestered in a single Communion meditation piece, as is the marimba) and to when "active participation" would be by singing or by listening.At its debut the *Mass of the Americas* was to be a gift to the Mexican Catholic community, so of the two vernacular languages Spanish is more prominent. And while ethnic particularity was an element to be accorded respect, the universality of Catholic identity was the most important consideration. Therefore, in fact, Latin is used most extensively of all the languages.

But the engagement with the particulars of Mexican culture is achieved principally not by language but by folk songs and hymns. I used two given to me by Archbishop Cordileone, *Las Mañanitas* and *La Guadalupana*, and one I became familiar with through my research into music at the California Missions, *Cantico del Alba*, a tune sung by families on their way to Mass in mission days.

Sometimes incorporating the tunes was straightforward. For example (following its traditional use) I made an arrangement of *Cantico del Alba* to serve as the processional. The lyrics of the *Cantico* fascinated me with their robust theology. One verse says "Hell trembles three times at the very sound of *Ave Maria*." The melody of *Las Mañanitas* scans quite naturally with the word "Alleluia" and therefore could be dropped into the Mass intact with its new text.

The most important tune, however, since this is a Mass honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe, was *La Guadalupana*. The tune divides naturally into two parts and these parts, separately or together, are woven into the fabric of the *Gloria*, an interlude in the *Processional*, the *Bendito* (Spanish) of the *Sanctus* (Latin), the *Memorial Acclamation* (English), the *Amen*, and also as codettas here and there. The real challenge was to preserve the tune's recognizability while subjecting it to common classical compositional techniques of variation, reharmonization, motivic development, and so forth. So, the *Guadalupana* motives became a way to link together movements of differing instrumentation, length, and language, and to help forge this musical unity I am glad you heard. What had initially seemed most intimidating to me—the "parody" aspects of the Mass—wound up being a powerful binding force across those eleven movements.

The ultimate goal Archbishop Cordileone had for the *Mass of the Americas* was to demonstrate the unity of the Catholic faith across time and cultures, and especially in the Americas where the Virgin

Mary is patroness in her identity as both the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe. In the music this is symbolized most tangibly, perhaps, in the *Recessional*, a setting of the Advent chant *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. I composed a setting of it which features, in the concluding instrumental coda, a final appearance of *La Guadalupana*—but now in a dovetailing counterpoint with phrases of the *Alma Redemptoris Mater* chant. Hearing those two melodies in their natural state one would not suspect they could work this way, but a little Angel whispered in my ear, "try it." I confess I was stunned when I realized this could be done, as it offered an ideal musical illustration of this unity.

MN: Was there an idea of "smallness" and humility in your writing? It struck me that you took a very intimate approach in your composition, as if purposefully speaking from the perspective of a single faithful individual as opposed to trying to speak *for* the ideas of vast nations. Does this observation mean something to you?

FLR: This is a really perceptive question, Mark.You've touched upon something that I strive for—or should I say, which motivates me—when I compose: the creation of an intimate, private space where I might catch fleeting glimpses of, and make an offering *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. And I try to communicate this through the music in a way that enables others to participate in my own experience and make it their own. I frankly have no idea exactly how this works, except, as I've written elsewhere, I've learned that music in the liturgy takes on the role of a sacramental; it must prepare the faithful to receive grace and dispose them to cooperate with it. To do this, it must be fused to the Logos, the Word, in an *intimate* and *filial* relationship, not drawing attention to itself for its own sake and thereby distracting from the primacy of the Word. It may be that what you're hearing is a consequence of this approach.

To create sacred music for the liturgy, I think the composer has to internalize a discipline and restraint that is foreign to present-day understandings of the "artistic temperament." You might say the role of the composer here is a bit like that of John the Baptist. Now this does not mean the music has to be bland, or self-effacing, or that a distinctive compositional voice can't be an element of rightly ordered liturgical music. Sometimes the Word is bold and needs to be underscored as such (I think of something like James MacMillan's *Tu Es Petrus*). If I could easily summarize the solution to the challenges of composing for liturgy I'd write a book and the world would beat a path to my door.

MN: Regarding the *Processional* and the *Recessional*—not official parts of a classic mass setting—did you perhaps see these as aesthetic book-ends to the Mass setting, given their related instrumentation and style?

FLR: That's right. I include handbells (even tolling the same pitch) in both (and only those) movements, I treat the choral writing similarly with a lot of two-part octave-doubled lines. I build the texture up gradually over the course of these movements (a bit like the Andante of the Beethoven Seventh Symphony), and each reaches a grand organ statement of the refrain of *La Guadalupana* in a quasi-Baroque harmonization. The key element in

the *Recessional* (as I described above) is the dovetailing counterpoint between *La Guadalupana* and *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. So the *Recessional* actualizes a potential present in the *Processional*, that is, the demonstration of unity symbolized by interweaving these two melodies.

MN: Given your own spirituality and liturgical background, what was it like to compose for the *novus ordo* for the first time? Were there any unexpected experiences or difficulties working in this rite?

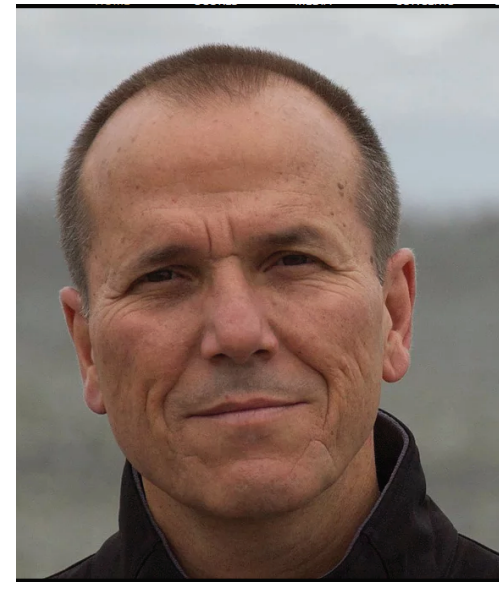
FLR: Archbishop Cordileone emphasized to me the great significance and scale of the Cruzada Guadalupana as an event in the life of the Mexican Catholic community in San Francisco. This Mass was to be its culmination and fulfillment, and therefore things had to achieve a grand scale. But I was also faced with the need to address "active participation" in a very plain sense—I would have to compose music that could be readily sung by the people on first hearing. For the Mass Ordinary I chose to resolve this challenge in a couple of ways. First, I would engage the congregation in singing the penitential texts—the Kyrie and the Agnus Dei—but would reserve the Gloria and Sanctus to the choir and ensemble, without singing participation from the people. This gave me the freedom to compose on a "grander" (and necessarily more complex) scale within a framework that still engaged the people in singing. But I was aware of the danger of creating a discontinuity that might fragment the work as a whole. For the congregational singing, therefore, I took my cue from the tradition of the chorale prelude, embedding very simple tunes within a more elaborate musical framework—one that always allowed the people to echo what they had first heard from either the choir or the cantor. This seemed to work well and, I must say, it was quite something for me to hear the vast throng of people in the cathedral singing something I had composed—I was moved in a way I did not expect. You're right that my own experiences at Mass are predominantly with the *usus antiquior* (St. Margaret Mary's in Oakland) and that my formation in liturgical music has been within that context (both as a child in the 1950's and, after my "reversion," as an adult). Add to that the decades I spent teaching "Palestrina-style" counterpoint to undergraduates and it all does fundamentally influence my style and approach. I seek to locate my liturgical music within a renewal of the sacred treasury of polyphony, both continuing and refreshing this incomparable tradition, drawing inspiration from Victoria, Byrd, Bruckner, and others. To me, it makes no difference whether I've been asked to compose for the *novus ordo missæ* or the *usus antiquior*—I approach the task with the same musico-sacramental criteria because while the outer form of the Mass might show differences, the character of, and role of the music in the internal sacramental dynamics of the Mass must be the same.

MN: After the premiere I was left wondering: did the Archbishop request the additional processionals and recessionals as part of your commission, or was this your own choice? Were you perhaps seeking to invest the entire Mass with a unified style?

FLR: While the Archbishop specified some elements of the music—I was given a directive to incorporate certain traditional Mexican devotional tunes into the fabric of the

music—the frame created by the *Processional* and *Recessional* was my own idea. I knew I would conclude *Mass of the Americas* with the Advent Marian hymn *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, but what, I wondered, could be done at the beginning to act as a bookend for that? Well, as Providence would have it, literally the day before I set to work on the Mass, I saw that a choral group was going to give a concert called "Music of the California Missions" up at the Sonoma Mission. The Archbishop and I had discussed examples from both mission and colonial days as models for this Mass, so to supplement the academic research I had done, I decided to attend this concert, which said it would recreate a Mass from California mission days. The concert began with the *Cantico del Alba* and I knew from both my reading and the concert's program notes that this was a traditional family processional, sung on the way to Mass. I was struck by the beauty and subtlety of the melody but also by the robust catechesis of the Spanish lyrics. And so, not then knowing of the many existing arrangements, I decided to begin the *Mass of the Americas* with my own arrangement of this hymn. I composed this first, and I knew immediately the tolling handbells I began with would reappear in my setting of *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. I think this frame helps forge a sense of unity and wholeness to the music, as do the more subtle internal references in other movements to the tolling bell motif (which are manifested as repeated-note figures).

MN: I was particularly struck by the idea of positive liturgical enculturation in this work, and how your *Mass of the Americas* followed a grand Catholic tradition of bringing local styles into higher liturgical



Frank La Rocca, Composer

styles, not unlike the famous example of the South American Baroque tradition extolled by Pope Benedict XVI. Was this a goal of yours?

FLR: It was, yes. The biggest challenge, both conceptually and in execution, was following the directive I was given to incorporate certain traditional Mexican devotional tunes into the fabric of the music, principally, *La Guadalupana*. I was concerned that my treatment of the tunes not come off as pastiche or as extraneous to the main musical threads. One realization I had was that the instrumentation of the accompanying ensemble needed to support appearances of traditional Mexican music, and therefore chose to follow mission- and colonial-era practices by employing string quartet and guitar along with the organ, and also to visit certain characteristic types of texture, such as movement in parallel thirds in the violins. This had to be done in a way that blended more or less seamlessly with the main musical fabric, but also not

get so absorbed into it that listeners would miss the references to *La Guadalupana* or *Las Mañanitas*.I think I succeeded, as least with those who were listening with more than half an ear. Indeed, the wife of one of my friends, who was born and raised in a strong Catholic family in Mexico, told me she was quite moved, that these tunes evoked deep childhood memories. She said, "As a Mexican, I found the music particularly moving. Hearing the sounds of folk/traditional Mexican song, such as *Las Mañanitas*, married/interwoven with the high/sacred arrangement, moved me literally to tears. It spoke deeply to my heart and memories. It made me feel okay to take pride in, as Archbishop Cordileone said in his homily, paraphrasing the psalms, the fact that 'He has not done this for any other nation.'" While I was not initially sold on the idea of using these tunes, I think her reaction shows the brilliance of Archbishop Cordileone's pastoral vision for this Mass—one that I came to embrace wholeheartedly as I worked on it.

Following his lead, I suggested that we go even deeper into the theme of enculturation and somehow incorporate the Nahuatl (Aztec) language into the work. While the prescribed Mass texts are all presented in either Spanish, Latin, or English, there was an opportunity in the paraliturigcal *Communion Meditation* to bring in Nahuatl. The Communion antiphon for the day (December 8) was *Ave Maria* and I thought that a Nahuatl translation of that text might be just right for the meditation. It took a lot of research to find an authoritative classical Nahuatl translation of it. I finally found it in a fascinating work produced by Don Bartolomé de Alva (a Priest of mixed Spanish and Central American ancestry), written in 1634—a kind of catechism for the sacrament of confession he prepared for his mostly non-Spanish-speaking flock. This song was scored quite differently than the rest of the Mass: for soprano solo, organ, violin, and (the indigenous Guatemalan instrument) marimba. My goal was not just to be encyclopedic in the representation of languages in the Americas, but specifically to bring into the Mass the language spoken by Aztec priests—to hear it sung at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the once-for-all, true, unbloody sacrifice that truly saves.

MN: Given the strong stylistic unity of the work, might there be any plans to have a version that would work with the extraordinary form of the mass? Finally, might you share any plans for further performances, be they in a Mass or concert setting?

FLR: I have, indeed, made a version of the mass for the extraordinary form, which will be premiered November 16 at ten o'clock in the morning, at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Archbishop Cordileone will celebrate a Solemn Pontifical High Mass. In order to adapt the *Mass of the Americas* for an EF Mass, I had to compose a new *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei*, and change the language of the *Benedictus* from Spanish to Latin.

Below is a list of the movements of the new EF version of the Mass of the Americas; all the remaining propers, and the Credo, are as found in the Extraordinary Form Mass *Salve Sancta Parens* from the common of feasts of the Blessed Virgin:

- Processional (arrangement of the traditional Mexican *Cantico del Alba*
- Kyrie (new)
- Gloria
- Offertory — Ave Maria, an a cappella polyphonic setting
- Sanctus
- Benedictus (originally Spanish, now Latin)
- Agnus Dei (new)
- Meditation — sung during the ritual de-vesting of the Archbishop, which takes place at the Altar, but after the "official" end of the Mass. It is a song for soprano, violin, marimba, and organ, setting the *Ave Maria* in classical Nahuatl.
- Recessional — *Salve Regina* (an arrangement of the traditional hymn tune, melding it with and embracing the melody of *La Guadalupana*

There are also two concert performances of portions of the OF Mass scheduled at the Co-Cathedral of Houston for September and November of 2019. The Mass at the Basilica will be accompanied that afternoon by a series of lectures and workshops on range of related subjects, co-sponsored by Catholic University of America and the Benedict XVI Institute.

MN: Thank you, Dr. La Rocca.

Frank La Rocca was born in 1951 in New Jersey. He studied at Yale and at the University of California at Berkeley. He has received grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, and a Young Composers Award from ASCAP. He was a 2018 American Prize winner for the oratorio, *A Rose in Winter: the life of St. Rita of Cascia*. Trained as an academic modernist during his degree studies at Yale and University of California, Berkeley, La Rocca came to see this approach as a barrier to authentic musical expression, and spent many years in search of a personal creative language. A composer of works for both the concert stage and liturgy, one finds considerable common ground between these two in works like *Veni Sancte Spiritus* for soprano, clarinet, and baroque string quartet. La Rocca has said he approaches his work in sacred choral music as "a kind of missionary work" and regards himself in that role "as an apologist for a distinctively Christian faith—not through doctrinal argument, but through the beauty of music." He was named Composer-in-Residence at the Benedict XVI Institute for Sacred Music and Liturgy in 2018. La Rocca has been awarded several times for outstanding achievements as a professor of music California State University, East Bay. La Rocca's music has been performed in North America, Europe, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Uganda. Performers include the California Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Lumen Valo, soprano Christine Brandes, Strata, Artists Vocal Ensemble, Schola Cantorum of the London Oratory School, Young Women's Chorus of San Francisco, Cathedral Choral Society, San Francisco Girls Chorus, Prague Radio —Choir and Orchestra, Alexander String Quartet, and others. His music is published by Boosey & Hawkes, Walton Music, Santa Barbara Music Publishers, and Lumen Verum Music. He is recorded on Enharmonic Records, CRI, CRS, SCI, and ERM Media. Dr. Frank La Rocca taught theory and composition at California State University, East Bay from 1981 to 2014. ❖

Commentary

Incense

Incense provides a complex of sensible elements to the liturgy.

by William Mahrt

Incense is a traditional element of at least the solemn liturgy, used as a preparation for the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist, to honor the Lord in the Gospel and Sacrament, and used at the gospel canticles, Benedictus in Lauds and the Magnificat in Vespers. It is a way of marking the altar and the Book of the Gospels as sacred and of giving honor to the Most Blessed Sacrament, both in the Mass and at Benediction. Its ascending fragrant smoke symbolizes the rise of prayer, as indicated in the psalm verse, "Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight, the lifting up of my hands, as evening sacrifice." (Ps. 140 [141]:2). Its almost exclusive use in sacred ceremonies means that the fragrance of incense immediately calls to mind sacred places. Who has not caught a whiff of incense and said "Aha, we are in church."? The clanking of its chains against the thurible is a characteristic sound unlike any other. It is the immolation of a precious substance, a fitting sacrifice in preparation for the great Sacrifice.

In recent years, many are recovering the use of incense. However, one frequently sees the thurible being lifted up without swinging it. Properly the thurible is swung to cause the smoke of the incense to be circulated and emerge. (Very high church Anglicans sometimes swing the thurible to make a complete circle overhead, perhaps a bit extreme.) I contend that the best way to swing the thurible is with the whole arm, so that it swings widely. But this entails letting the chains of the thurible clank against the body of the thurible. It seems that some think they should avoid this noisy phenomenon and therefore avoid swinging it. But the sound is an integral part of the action. The liturgy uses a synthesis of many senses to contribute to its persuasiveness and beauty. Thus the fragrance, the motion of the celebrant, and the rhythmic sound of the thurible are all a part of this. The sound is as recognizable as its fragrance. The Byzantine thurible has bells on it, so that its sound is even more unmistakable. I suspect that, since the incensation takes place during chants, some think that it might disturb the music. This is not the case at all. Neither does its rhythm need to be coordinated with the music. Rather, the sound of chant accompanied by the rhythmic sound of incensation is a part of the polyphonic and sensible richness of the liturgy, of which music is one of the most important. The sound of incensation reinforces this importance. ❖

William Mahrt is the president of the CMAA and the editor of Sacred Music.

Last Word

An Organ Comes Home

An organ is "home" whether in California or Virginia.

by Kurt Poterack

This summer my college purchased a practice pipe organ. We had received a large donation to establish an organ scholarship program to train Catholic parish organists. We are going to have a huge four-manual organ made for our new chapel, but we also needed an organ for students to practice on outside the chapel. The best deal that I could find was an old M.P. Moeller Artiste which had been kept in good condition. The organ was in California, and my college is in Virginia. More to the point it seemed, after some consultation, that the least expensive and safest means of transport for the instrument was for me to fly out to California, rent a truck, and drive it all the way back across this great country of ours.

This was an adventure which took me five days.

But more to the point, there was a sense in which the organ was coming home. The M.P. Moeller Organ Company had existed in Hagerstown, Maryland for many decades until it finally closed down in the 1990's. Hagerstown, Maryland is not much more than an hour's drive from my college. Moeller not only made the Artiste, but many larger church pipe organs, including the one which had been placed in my hometown parish in Grand Rapids, Michigan back in 1940. I played it several times and, to my knowledge, it is still in place serving the people of St. Isidore's church.

This particular organ which I purchased was last in the possession of the Schoenstein Organ Company. What a pleasure it was to meet Jack Bethards and his employees who helped me pack the organ up and secure it in the back of the 17-foot Budget truck which I had rented. I drove it back along I-80 from the beauty of Southern California through the tackiness of Reno, Nevada; across the Bonneville Salt Flats to within sight of the Rockies; through the Great Plain States and across the Mississippi River; and, finally, along the Ohio and Pennsylvania turnpikes back to Virginia.

So, in a sense, I brought this organ home but, frankly, a pipe organ should be "home" in any part of our country! ❖

Kurt Poterack is choirmaster at Christendom College and editor-at-large of Sacred Music.

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Church Music Association of America Annual Fund 2018

Funding of CMAA programs and operations comes primarily through membership fees, attendance at our programs, sales of our publications, and through the Annual Fund. Your generous support of the Annual Fund allows us to offer worthy applicants tuition scholarships to attend our training programs and to offer student and seminarian tuition rates. With the extra financial support the CMAA receives from its contributors, we are also able to offer new types of training programs, the annual Sacred Music Colloquium, Chant Intensive, and to underwrite the costs of bringing in world-class directors and teachers.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, and the volunteers who help make all our programs successful, I thank you for your financial assistance during calendar year 2018.

If there are any errors or omissions in our recognition lists, please accept my apology and send a correction to us at gm@musicasacra.com or call us at (505) 263-6298.

Our closing Mass at the 2019 Colloquium in Philadelphia, PA was offered for the intentions of our generous benefactors.

William P. Mahrt
President

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($1000 or more)

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Dr. William Mahrt
Dr. Edward Schaefer

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Thank you for your generous support of the Church Music Association of America

Support the CMAA Annual Fund

In 2014, the CMAA board of directors established the CMAA Annual Fund – a campaign to generate contributions beyond dues from members and others. Monies raised through the annual fund are used to support the organization's general operating expenses as well as specific programs.

The annual fund allows the CMAA to meet the organization's day-to-day challenges and strengthens its financial foundation. Gifts to the fund are used to support:

Annual Fund Projects and Programs

- ☐ **Online publication of a comprehensive free library** of educational materials for choir directors and others including numerous books on chant as well as the many CMAA publications.
- ☐ **Publication, distribution, and sponsorship of a wide array of books** useful in promoting sacred music. The CMAA is also active in sponsoring new publications such as the *Parish Book of Chant,* the *Simple English Propers,* and our latest new publication: *Now I Walk In Beauty – 100 Songs and Melodies for School and Choir.*
- ☐ **Continuing-education programs,** including Chant Intensive workshops and the annual Colloquium. The CMAA also supports regional workshops sponsored by local groups through advertising and materials. Support this work through your donation.
- ☐ **Commissions of new music.** Although promoting the use of the vast repertory of existing music in the public domain is a key part of our annual programs, it is also crucial to encourage the composition of new music. When new engravings are needed for our programs, they are made public at our website.
- ☐ **Scholarships for students and seminarians** to attend our programs. Every year we receive many requests for funding; providing scholarships and lower student/seminarian rates to support these requests is crucial for the future of the Church in promoting sacred music to seminarians and students.
- ☐ **Colloquia** on the national level for all members, including special events and recitals. The liturgies and recitals are open to the public. Your gift can help underwrite the cost of Colloquium 2020 and the 2020 Summer Chant Courses in Tampa.

SPECIAL GIFT!

When you donate $100 or more, you can receive a free copy of Papal Legislation on Sacred Music, courtesy of Roman Catholic Books.

Please send your tax-deductible gift to the CMAA Annual fund today.*
For information about making a gift of securities, please visit our website.

With your help, we will be able to strengthen our services and enhance our support of the profession in the new millennium.

CMAA ♦ 2014 Corn Drive ♦ Las Cruces, NM 88001 ♦ musicasacra.com

* The Church Music Association of America is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are deductible to the extent of the law.

Musica Sacra

CHURCH MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

□ Please accept my gift to the CMAA Annual Fund.

I am donating because (please check all that apply):

____ I am grateful for all that the CMAA has done for me, including free online resources
____ I want to support the work and programs of the CMAA, including scholarships
____ I believe in the value of Sacred Music in the liturgy and would like to support new music composition commissions and/or book publications
____ I want to make a donation in honor of _____
____ I want to make a donation in memory of _____
____ I would like to help underwrite a CMAA Training program or Symposium
____ I would like to underwrite a Special Event, such as the Colloquium Orchestral Mass.
____ Other: _____

___ $50 ___ $100 ___$150 ___ $300 ___ $500 ___ $1,000 ___ Other: _____

Your gift of $20 pays for the Colloquium Music book for a seminarian.
Your gift of $50 allows us to scan and upload an out-of-print issue of Sacred Music to our archive.
Your gift of $100 allows us to scan and upload an out-of-print book to our resources page.
Your gift of $150 allows us to offer a student/seminarian rate tuition to one worthy applicant in 2019.
Your gift of $300 allows us to offer two student/seminarian rate tuitions to two worthy applicants in 2019.
Your gift of $500 allows us to offer one full-tuition scholarship to the 2019 Colloquium.
Your gift of $1000 allows us to offer two full-tuition scholarships to the 2019 Colloquium.

Name _____
□ *I prefer to remain anonymous for purposes of recognition in Sacred Music.*

Address _____

_____

City _____ State _____ Zip +4 _____

Email _____ Phone _____

____ I have enclosed a check.

____ Please charge my ____ Visa ____ MasterCard ____ Discover ____ Amex

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Signature _____

Name of Cardholder (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Please mail your donation to: *Church Music Association of America*
2014 Corn Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88001

You may also make an online contribution or stock donation at our website at http://musicasacra.com/giving/annual-fund/

Save the Date for the

2020 Sacred Music Colloquium

Sponsored by

The Church Music Association of America

Make plans now to join us

June 22-27, 2020, Jesuit High School, Tampa, Florida

The **Church Music Association of America** invites you to join us and experience the beauty and majesty of the Roman liturgy. Sing chant and polyphony with top conductors; attend plenary sessions and breakout sessions on directing, organ, children's programs, and more. Evening events include: Annual CMAA Member Meeting, Music Reading and the **Follies**.

Get all the details (forthcoming) at: MusicaSacra.com/Colloquium

Registration forthcoming at *shop.MusicaSacra.com*

Save the Date!
2020 Summer Chant Courses

June 15-19, 2020
NEW LOCATION!!!
University of Florida | Gainesville, Florida

Course Offerings:

Laus in Ecclesia I – Clear Creek Abbey

New!!! Laus in Ecclesia II – Fr. Mark Bachmann

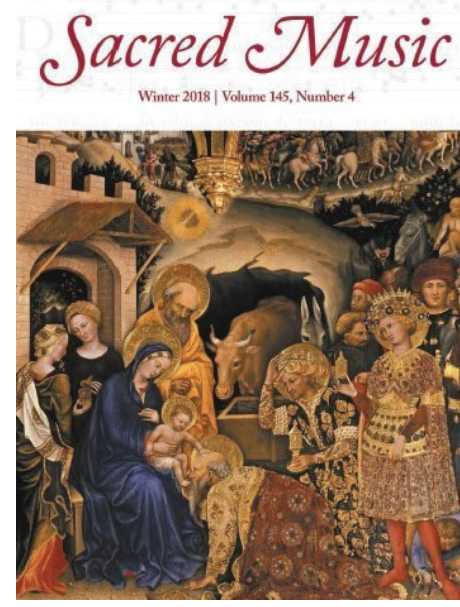
Advanced Chant and Semiology – Dr. Edward Schaefer

Information regarding Registration forthcoming at MusicaSacra.com

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us next summer in expanding your chant skills.

Give the Gift of Sacred Music

Do you know someone who would benefit from a gift membership in the Church Music Association of America?



Music Director
Pastor
Seminarian
Choir Member
Music Teacher
Liturgist

Would your parish benefit from having a Parish Membership?

Benefits of Membership:

- Discounts on CMAA events and workshops, summer chant courses and the annual Sacred Music Colloquium.
- Book discounts at our events.
- A subscription to *Sacred Music*, the oldest continuously-published journal of music in North America.

Each issue of *Sacred Music* offers:

- Liturgical and musical ideas for your parish or schola.
- The newest scholarship on sacred music.
- Instruction on the method and theory of chant, the history of classics in the polyphonic repertoire, and important Church documents.
- Teachings of the masters of sacred music.
- Reviews of new books, music, and recordings.

"The greatest need of liturgy today is the restoration of the sense of the Sacred."

William Mahrt, CMAA President

Please help us continue our work. Join today!

MusicaSacra.com

New Membership or Renewal Form

he Church Music Association of America (CMAA) is an association of Catholic musicians, and those who have a special interest in music and liturgy, active in advancing Gregorian chant, Renaissance polyphony and other forms of sacred music, including new composition, for liturgical use. The CMAA's purpose is the advancement of *musica sacra* in keeping with the norms established by competent ecclesiastical authority.

The CMAA is a non-profit educational organization, 501(c)(3). Contributions, for which we are very grateful, are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Your financial assistance helps teach and promote the cause of authentic sacred music in Catholic liturgy through workshops, publications, and other forms of support.

The CMAA is also seeking members, who receive the acclaimed journal *Sacred Music* and become part of a national network that is making a difference on behalf of the beautiful and true in our times, in parish after parish.

Who should join? Active musicians, certainly, but also anyone who favors sacred music as part of a genuine liturgical renewal in the Catholic Church.

Shipping Address:

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Email _____ Country _____

Address _____ City _____State/Prov ____ Zip _____

Payment:

☐ Check # _____ Enclosed

☐ I authorize CMAA to charge my: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

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Credit Card Number | Expiration Date | Security Code (*3 digits located on back or 4 digits on front for AMEX*)

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Cardholder Signature | Date of Signature

_____

Name on Card (Please print) | Billing Address (if different than shipping address)

___ I've enclosed my check or credit card authorization for $60 for an annual membership that includes an annual

Church Music Association of America and Sacred Music

MAKE
NOTE OF
OUR NEW
BUSINESS
LOCATION

We're **MOVING** our offices

Please Make Note of our new mailing address:

CMAA or SACRED MUSIC
322 ROY FOSTER ROAD
MCMINNVILLE, TN 37110

Office Phone: (505) 263-6298
Email: gm@musicasacra.com

Effective January 1, 2020

MusicaSacra.com