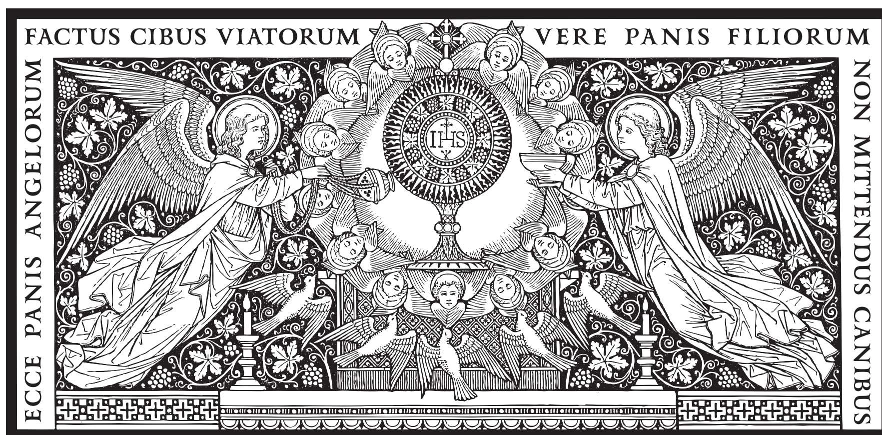

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Editoral

Patronage

A vital sacred music culture depends upon patronage—cultivated, purposeful, and well-funded.

by William Mahrt

he present issue has discussions of four different excellent traditions of sacred music—the Vespers-hymn cycle attributed to Pope St. Gregory the Great, the work of Joseph Bonnet in contributing to the great revival of Gregorian chant and classical organ music in the first part of the twentieth century, the musical accomplishments in an eighteenth-century Portuguese convent, and an excerpt from a motet of Josquin Des Prez, which motet was extensively sung.

Perhaps the cultivation of sacred music in the past sixty years does not measure up to the example these repertories present. I propose that this could be a problem of patronage. Several years ago I conducted a weekend choral workshop on a mass of Josquin Des Prez, Missa "Malheur me bat." Learning a mass of Josquin is different from learning one of Lassus or Palestrina: for them all five movements of a mass are based upon the same material, and so each successive movement becomes progressively easier; but for Josquin, each movement, while also based upon the same material, is newly worked-out and an original and unique composition; there is a good deal more to learn in singing it. We rehearsed all day Saturday and Sunday and sang the piece in a program late Sunday afternoon. The piece was so beautiful and engaging that, despite its difficulty, the singers enthusiastically prepared it and gave a persuasive performance. After our performance, one of the singers asked me, "Why don't we have compositions like this today?" and my answer was simple, we don't have the patronage to sustain such composition.

In Josquin's day, the principal northern European cathedrals and collegiate churches had choirs whose members were principally occupied in singing the liturgy day in and day out, and members of these choirs with particular musical ability produced outstanding polyphonic music to be sung by the choirs. Talent scouts from the South raided these cathedrals for singers, and many of the composers we know well from that period had careers in which they grew up musically in northern cathedrals and were subsequently employed by courts and cathedrals of France and Italy for their best singing years and then returned to their home country as dignitaries of an

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

illustrious institution, guiding the liturgy and continuing to provide extraordinary works of liturgical music. Josquin, born probably sometime between 1450 and 1455, was a choirboy at the royal collegiate church of St. Quentin and had some relation with the cathedral of Cambrai. By 1483, he was in the service of a French court, later in Milan, and in the 1490s the Papal Chapel at Rome, at the beginning of the sixteenth century the court at Ferrara, and by 1504 he returned to his home country, where he was installed as provost at Condé-sur-l'Escaut and remained there until his death in 1521, producing excellent music. This was a career, like very many singers and many composers, that contributed to a beautiful liturgy in very many places, it gave a legion of musicians upbringing and support for the production of increasingly excellent liturgical music. These choral institutions were a fundamental part of the ecclesiastical culture of the period, Gregorian chant was sung for all the offices of the day in the cathedrals and collegiate churches, and polyphonic music was cultivated in many of them. We who still perform that music are the heirs of that tradition.

Could there be such a tradition again in our time? This would involve the kind of patronage that supported such composers as Josquin. Prof. Charles Warren Fox, legendary musicologist of the Eastman School of Music, who taught seminars in Renaissance music, was once asked what year had been the peak of accomplishment in the history of music. He understood the impossibility of such a question, but he also saw the occasion to make an important point: he said 1521. Everyone thought right away that he meant the death of Josquin, whose music he loved and taught regularly. But he said, No! He meant the death of the Medici Pope Leo X, one of the last great patrons of the arts. He was a connoisseur of great art and music; he knew what he wanted and why he wanted it—his criteria were aesthetic—and he had the means to support it. He was a patron of composers such as Heinrich Isaac. Successive Medici generations patronized the arts, but their purposes were directed toward the enhancement of the reputation of their lineage and so served purposes more political than aesthetic; there was a decline in patronage.

For truly great patronage of liturgical music to be effective there must be 1) a knowledge of what is needed, i.e., what purpose the liturgical music is to serve; 2) what the best musical means of achieving that purpose are, particularly in the creation of new works; and 3) a substantial commitment to supporting its realization. To articulate these criteria is already to document why such patronage does not exist today. Or does it?

Liturgical beauty makes the truth and goodness of the liturgy evident and desirable.

First, the purposes of liturgical music. The most important contribution of music to the liturgy is beauty. But it is liturgical beauty—it makes the truth and goodness of the liturgy evident and desirable. We

learn about this from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: as "a necessary or integral part of the sacred liturgy . . . . it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds [and] confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites" for the purpose of "the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful."[1] There are objective and subjective aspects to this beauty: first and foremost, it offers transcendent worship—the offering of sacrifice of the Son to the Father, and it does this through established texts and actions, texts set to well-known melodies and actions whose familiarity confirms their validity. But also, it offers something which is at one and the same time, subjective and transcendent. The music draws the worshipers into the liturgical action with important results: what they sing together joins them to the Heavenly Sacrifice, creating a concord of hearts; what they hear from the choir elicits the delight of recollection, meditation—being moved by the actions of the processions, the celebration of the scriptures, and the presence, adoration, and reception of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

This beauty is best created by a completely sung liturgy with ample ceremonial—congregational song, choir chants, priest's parts, even the lessons from the scriptures, and the participation of sacred ministers, all sung. This was clearly envisioned by the council:

> Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when the divine offices are celebrated solemnly in song, with the assistance of sacred ministers and the active participation of the people.[2]

For the fathers of the council, "solemnly in song" could have meant nothing less than the Solemn High Mass of the tradition. While the conciliar statement could have been stronger, the principle of *hermeneutic of continuity* from Pope Benedict—that the statements from ecclesiastical documents should be read in the context of all the teaching which precedes them[3]—leads inevitably to such a conclusion. When everything is sung, the exquisite musical differences between these elements constitute the beauty of the liturgy and its sacredness.

For the fathers of the council, "solemnly in song" could have meant nothing less than the Solemn High Mass of the tradition.

[1]Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), ¶112.

[2]Ibid., ¶113.

[3]I recall, shortly after the council hearing a lecture by a notable theologian, resident at the local seminary, who talked about the reform of the liturgy. The principle he stated directly was: from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, ignore everything traditional and work only with those things which were innovations. I am sure he was not alone in this direct contradiction to the hermeneutic of continuity, for its results are still visible.

These purposes remain perennial aspects of the liturgy, clearly articulated by the Second Vatican Council and confirmed by subsequent documents.[4] It may be that in many places they have been occluded by other purposes: The transcendent purpose of the liturgical worship may have taken second place to the idea of the instruction of the people, as important as that is; the beauty of the music may have given way to a notion of music as entertainment, sometimes being justified as an attraction to that same instruction, and consequently the idioms of current popular music being adopted without sufficient transformation to sacred purposes. Further, propagation of mediocre music may have been driven by commercial interests over which the hierarchy has rarely exercised sufficient control.

Music must be a significant aspect of study in the seminaries.

Second, how can these purposes be achieved? Music must be a significant aspect of study in the seminaries,[5] for two important reasons. Newly ordained priests must be able freely and unselfconsciously to sing their parts of the Mass. To do this they should receive some individual instruction in singing, some experience in singing in choir, and some exercise in actual singing the priest's parts of the Mass. But even as important: they must learn an appreciation of the role of music in the liturgy. Courses in music appreciation, and elementary music theory, and liturgical theology could be an important part of this.

The education of musicians must be equally important. Majors in sacred music are few and far between in colleges, and more scarce are graduate programs. Such programs, in addition to the practice of music—voice and keyboard lessons; experience in choirs, especially in singing Gregorian chant; and the practice of conducting—the history, theology, and aesthetics of liturgy and its music should have a central role.

Choirs are important for each parish. The presence of a principal sung Mass each Sunday at which the choir provides the propers and perhaps a motet or anthem, the congregation sings the ordinary, and the priest leads the liturgy by singing all of his parts—collects, preface, even the Eucharistic Prayer and the lessons—should be a goal of a parish music program. This could take several years to develop, sometimes in small steps, sometimes with major steps forward in a short time. It will only succeed with the enthusiastic support of the pastor, a well-trained choir director, and a receptive congregation. When choir, congregation, and pastor are attuned to the project, the program could include a polyphonic or orchestral Mass on major feast days. Processions on Palm Sunday, Corpus Christi, and perhaps the patronal feast of the parish can be the occasion for special music and for the cultivation of the devotion of the people.

Ongoing choral work for singers is strenuous, and they may need all kinds of

[4]Notably *Musicam Sacram* and *Sing to the Lord*, both of which, however, must be read in continuity with the tradition.

[5]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶115

encouragement. Social activities for the choir can bring them together and cultivate an enthusiasm for the project. A member of my choir keeps track of birthdays, and passes a card to be signed and arranges to have "Happy Birthday" sung at a rehearsal. Sometimes cookies or a glass of wine enhance a particular occasion without taking much rehearsal time. The work of the choir can be accelerated and enhanced by the inclusion of at least one paid singer on each part, not a trivial expense, but a good investment.

Third, the budget. The old tradition in Catholic parishes was to devote most of the resources of the parish to building and maintaining a parochial school. Sometimes the music for the liturgy was relegated to volunteers entirely. Dedicated and skilled volunteers have often made great contributions, but the maintenance of the liturgy is even more important than that of the buildings. Does the parish pay more for the upkeep of its buildings than for its liturgy? There are public standards, for instance those of the American Guild of Organists, for church musicians, and these should be respected, even as a union scale of wages should be for parish workers. I have seen the work of dedicated volunteers in parish administration as well as in liturgy, and there is a great value beyond a monetary one to such work for the parish. Still, adequate means should be budgeted for payment of skilled musicians.

The greatest programs of sacred liturgical music may seem out of reach of the average parish, even of a cathedral. But there are examples which show a creative solution to the maintenance of a distinctive program. A notable example is St. Agnes Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. This parish has maintained the performance of orchestral masses (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Gounod, et al.) for about thirty-five Sundays in the year (before the pandemic); in addition to a large volunteer choir, this entails a skilled conductor, vocal soloists, and an orchestra consisting of members of the Minnesota Orchestra, the best players in the area. This occurs in a large Baroque church for which the music is a perfect stylistic fit, and for a congregation cognizant of their Germanic heritage. It is an expensive proposition for a large parish, which maintains a school K-12 with over fifty faculty members and whose church building itself requires constant maintenance. The secret is that there is an independent fund-raising organization managed by lay people and legally independent of the parish, which raises sufficient funds to support the music for these Masses. These Masses were initiated by Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, who for years on Sundays conducted the choir and then slipped down to the pulpit to preach a pithy, substantive sermon. The church had been established to serve the immigrants from Austria, Hungary, and southern Germany who lived in St. Paul, and who knew very well the tradition of the orchestral Masses; Schuler's vision was to maintain these liturgical traditions as a living cultural heritage which sustains a living prac-

Adequate means should be budgeted for payment of skilled musicians.

tice of the faith. But it was also a vision based upon the consistent reading of the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Here the three requirements of patronage are met: a substantial vision, the musical means to achieve it, and substantial funding to support it.

Another example of excellent patronage is the *Mass of the Americas,* sponsored by the Benedict XVI Institute for Sacred Music and Divine Worship in San Francisco. This was the result of the vision of Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, who saw the possibility and suitability in St. Mary's Cathedral for the celebration of the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe together, and who commissioned the composer Frank La Rocca to compose the music for a Mass incorporating the best of the Hispanic celebration of Guadalupe and the Anglo-Latin celebration of the Immaculate Conception. The music for the Mass was a synthesis of Gregorian chant, classical polyphony, and popular Hispanic hymnody in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was celebrated in in multi-lingual mode in the ordinary form in San Francisco on December 9, 2018. It was then revised for the extraordinary form in Latin and celebrated as a Solemn Pontifical Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on November 16, 2019. Videos of these amazing celebrations were made by EWTN, and can be viewed on YouTube by searching "Mass of the Americas, San Francisco" and "Mass of the Americas, Washington, D.C." The latter has received over 135,000 views; both are still available. It entailed numerous professional musicians, the team of videographers from EWTN, and over twenty celebrating clergy, as well as the support of the National Shrine, which hosted a congregation of some three thousand people. A series of celebrations of the *Mass of the Americas* has been planned across the country, temporarily on hold because of the pandemic. The expenses of these celebrations were borne by the Benedict XVI Institute, which independently raises funds to support such activities.[6]

I have described two institutions with which I have had a personal relation and therefore know something of their working. I am certain that there numerous others, of varying means and purposes, but which exemplify effective patronage of beautiful music and liturgy for the good of the church and which will produce works of permanent value, analogous to those of Josquin Des Prez and his contemporaries. What is crucial is the coordination of a proper vision of purposes, with ample means and sufficient financial support. The cultivation of the most beautiful and effective liturgical music depends upon the appropriate direction of each of these three elements of patronage. ❖

What is crucial is the coordination of a proper vision of purposes with ample means and sufficient financial support.

[6]Cf. <www.benedictinstitute.org>.

Articles

The Vespers Hymns of St. Gregory the Great: Liturgical Use of the Book of Genesis

The Gregorian hymns for Vespers of the week, now prepared for the new translation of the breviary, reflect the days of creation recounted in the scripture.

by Sr. Maria Kiely, O.S.B.

"Evening came and morning followed—
the first day." (Gen.1:5, N.A.B.)

I would imagine that this refrain evokes for many of us the anticipated joy of Easter and the liturgical solemnity of the Vigil. From time immemorial, the first chapter of Genesis has marked the beginning of the Easter Vigil. It was already in use when the Gelasian sacramentary was assembled (seventh–eighth centuries).[1] This first chapter of Sacred Scripture tells us, when we are assembled together at the most solemn moment in the life of the church, that the world is created from nothing by God, that he is the all-powerful and provident source of our being, that the universe is an ordered whole, and that the whole of time, represented by the six days of creation, is ordered to a Sabbath rest.

The work of the six days has been likened to the building of a temple.[2] On days one through three, the world was prepared

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[1] *The Gelasian Sacramentary, Liber Sacamentorum Romanæ Ecclesiæ* ed. H. A. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894), XLIII: Orationes per Singulas Lectiones in Sabbato Sancto, [566], p. 82. Wilson notes: "It seems certain that the basis of the first part of the book, containing the services for the Church year from Christmas to Pentecost, bas been a Roman Sacramentary of early date" (p. xxvii). See also John Hennig, "The First Chapter of Genesis in the Liturgy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 10, no. 4 (October 1948), 361.

[2] John Bergsma and Brant Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018), pp. 96–97.

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for the creatures that would dwell in it. On days four through six, those creatures were made and placed in their respective domains. Finally, on day seven, God instituted the day for which the other days exist, the Sabbath rest. This structure also represents in germ the story of salvation from beginning to end. Both in form and function, the creation story of Genesis, is a liturgical text.

In the following paper, I would like to present to you hymns that detail the work of the six days. In the Roman Breviary, these hymns were assigned to Vespers during the week; in the revised Liturgy of the Hours they are assigned to evening prayer during Weeks I and III. They are all composed by the same hand and they are attributed to St. Gregory the Great. The attribution to St. Gregory is tenuous, but the hymns are dated to the late sixth–early seventh centuries, and they may have been sent by St. Gregory to the Irish Church. There is an indication in the glosses to the Irish *Liber Hymnorum* that St. Gregory sent "hymns of the week" to St. Columba. It is just possible that St. Gregory had a hand in the transmission, if not in the composition, of these hymns.[3]

[3] *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, ed. J. H. Bernard and R. Atkinson (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1898), vol. 2 *Translations and Notes*, p. 23B. For a presentation of the arguments in favor of St. Gregory's authorship, see the review of the work of Clemens Blume by A. S. Walpole in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 10, no. 37 (October 1908), 143–46. If they are not by Gregory the Great, they are clearly all by the same hand; in his commentary Connelly gives the received consensus: "The Vesper hymns for Sunday to Friday form a series quite unlike those for Matins or Lauds, as they have unity of author and subject as well as unity of purpose and style." Joseph Connelly, *Hymns of the Roman Breviary* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957), p. 35.

Preliminaries

Before analyzing the hymns, I would like to consider with you briefly how the early church read and understood the creation story, since this constitutes the theological and cultural background for our hymns. Then, I would like to comment on the structure of the hymns and on a few translation issues you may wish to keep in mind as you read through them.

I: How Did the Fathers Read and Understand the Creation Story?

During the centuries when the baptism of adults at Easter was the norm, the Book of Genesis figured largely in the immediate preparation of catechumens for baptism. The bishop delivered homilies throughout the season of Lent often based on the work of the six days, the *Hexameron*, and based on the lives of the patriarchs. Homilies from Origen, St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine—to mention only a few—have survived. These patristic commentaries give us magnificent insights into the ways in which Christians in the early church read the scriptures at large, and Genesis in particular. In the light of modern biblical research, their handling of the first chapters of Genesis may appear naïve. They did not have the analytical tools that modern exegetes consider indispensable, but they read carefully with the eyes of faith and they asked probing questions. The interface between the written word and divine revelation was much simpler for them than it is for us. All of them assumed without question that Moses, by God's appointment, was the author of the Pentateuch. The primary author, of course, was God himself; Moses was his instrument. St. John Chrysostom points out that the prophetic gift may look backward as well as forward.

He says:

> Notice this remarkable author [Moses], dearly beloved, and the particular gift he had. I mean, while all the other inspired authors told either what would happen after a long time or what was going to take place immediately, this blessed author, being born many generations after the event, was guided by the Deity on high and judged worthy to narrate what had been created by the Lord of all from the very beginning.[4]

The fathers had great clarity in their understanding of the divine revelation contained in the Book of Genesis, and scripture in general.[5] They stand in monumental contrast to the siftings and decipherings of the historical-critical method. For them, all of scripture is divinely inspired. Basil says, "To say there is an idle word in scripture is a terrible blasphemy;"[6] even the silence of scripture is instructive, for "Moses left unsaid, as useless for us, things in no way pertaining to us."[7] Also, since the revelation of Christ is the ultimate goal of both the Old and New Testaments the fathers considered the Old Testament to be in its entirety prophetic of Christ. St. Hilary of Poitiers has this to say about the Book of Genesis:

> There are many ways in which to interpret Scripture . . . [but] every work contained in the Holy Books proclaims by word, announces by event, establishes by example the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ who, sent by the Father, became Man by being born of the Virgin Mary, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. It was Christ, in effect, who throughout the entire history of the created world, in the Patriarchs, by figures that are both true and clearly seen, begets, cleanses, sanctifies chooses, separates, or redeems the Church.[8]

[4]Saint John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Gen.*, 2:5, English translation: *Homilies on Genesis, 1–17*: Fathers of the Church, Patristic Series (FC), 74, tr. Robert C. Hill (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), p. 31.

[5]For an overview of the Greek and Latin fathers' understanding of the creation story in Genesis, see Adelbert Hamman, "L'enseignement sur la création dans l'Antiquité chrétienne," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, 42 (1968), 1–23, 97–122. See also Pierre Nautin, "Genèse 1, 1–2 de Justin à Origène," in *In Principio: interprétations des premiers versets de la Genèse* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1973), pp. 61–94.

[6]Basil, *Hex.*10, 15: Basile de Césarée, *Sur l'origine de l'homme* (*Homélies X et XI de l'Hexaéméron*): Sources chrétiennes (SC), 160, ed. Alexis Smets, S.J. et Michel van Esbroeck, S,J. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970), p. 206, 13–14. English translation: St. Basil the Great, *On the Human Condition*, tr. Nonna Verna Harrison (Yonkers, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005), p. 43. I assume here that Basil did in fact write Homily 10: See SC, 160, pp. 24–26, 50–52. See also Stephen M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea: A Synthesis of Greek Thought* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), p. 110.

[7]Basil, *Hex*. 9, 1, Basile de Césarée, *Homélies sur L'Hexaéméron*, SC, 26bis, ed. Stanislaus Giet (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968), p. 482; *S.P.N. Basilii Opera omnia*, vol. 1: Patrologia Græca (PG) 29 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), p. 189A; English translation: St. Basil, *Homiliæ in Hexæmeron*, tr. Agnes Clare Way, C.D.P., in St. Basil, *Exegetic Homilies*, FC 46 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963), p. 136.

[8]Omne autem opus, quod sacris uoluminibus continetur, aduentum Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quo missus a Patre ex Virgine per Spiritum homo

This does not mean that the fathers were uncritical and undiscerning in their reading of texts. St. Ambrose, for example, entertains the possibility that the whole of creation took place instantaneously on the first day, but he says that scripture recounts the creation of the parts in sequence, so that we will understand that God created them from nothing.[9] St. Augustine considered that the statement in Gen. 1:1 ("In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth") might indicate the creation of seminal principles that were developed later on.[10] He argues that the truth is one unified whole. There can be no discrepancy, therefore, between the account of creation in Genesis and the findings of science. He even complains that those who incautiously insist on a literal account of the work of six days without having the requisite scientific knowledge impede the conversion of non-Christians:

> There is knowledge to be had, after all, about the earth, about the sky, about the other elements of this world. . . . And it frequently happens that non-Christians will have knowledge of this sort in a way that they can substantiate with scientific arguments or experiments. Now it is quite disgraceful and disastrous, something to be on one's guard against at all costs, that they should ever hear Christians spouting what they claim our Christian literature has to say on these topics, and talking such nonsense that they [the pagans] can scarcely contain their laughter when they see them to be *toto cælo,* as the saying goes, wide of the mark.[11]

The Fathers understood, however, that an allegorical reading of the scriptures, would lead to a depth of insight beyond what the literal level could yield. There was much discussion among them about how much allegory was appropriate, but all of them engaged in this level of exegesis to some degree. They were following the example of St. Paul, who in 1 Cor. 10:1–4, 11, details events from the Old Testament that were prophecies of Christian baptism

natus est, et dictis nuntiat et factis exprimit et confirmat exemplis. Namque hic per omne constituti huius sæculi tempus ueris atque absolutis præfigurationibus in patriarchis ecclesiam aut generat aut abluit aut sanctificat aut eligit aut discernit aut redimit. Hilaire de Poitiers, *Traité des Mystères*, SC, 19bis, ed. Jean-Paul Brisson (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947), pp. 72–75.

[9]Saint Ambrose, *Hexameron* 1.5, 8, 16, 20; especially 2.27: *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (CSEL) 32.1, ed. Carl Schenkl (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1896), p. 25. English translation: *Hexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel*, FC, 42, tr. John J. Savage (Washington D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1961), pp. 28–29.

[10]Now just as all these elements, which in the course of time and in due order would constitute a tree, were all invisibly and simultaneously present in that grain, so too that is how, when God created all things simultaneously, the actual cosmos is to be thought of as having had simultaneously all the things that were made in it and with it *when the day was made* (Gen 2:4). Saint Augustine, *On Genesis*, 5.44–45(23), in *The Works of Saint Augustine—A Translation for the 21st Century*, vol. I/13, tr. Edmund E. Hill, O.P. (New York: New City Press, 2002), pp. 299–300. Latin text: *De Genesi ad Litteram*, 5.23, CSEL 28, ed. Josef Zycha (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1896), p. 168. See also *Confessions*, 12.6–8.

[11]Saint Augustine, *De Genesi ad Literam*, 1.19, CSEL, 28, pp. 28–29; ibid., *Homelies,* tr. Hill, 1.39(19), p. 186.

and of the Eucharist.[12] In another passage (Gal. 4:24) he even used the Greek verb ἀλληγορέω when explaining the relationship between Sarah and Hagar: they are allegories, inasmuch as they represent the Old and New Covenant; of their children, one was the child of promise, the other of the flesh.[13] The art of allegorical interpretation was brought to a high level of perfection over the course of the Patristic age.

Origen had laid out far reaching principles for a threefold interpretation of scripture. Those who came after him followed his lead, even as they adjusted his method to fit new and varied circumstances. Origen, following in the footsteps of Philo and the Platonists, says:

> The right way, therefore, as it appears to us, of approaching the scriptures and gathering their meaning, is the following, which is extracted from the writings themselves. . . . One must portray the meaning of the sacred writings in a threefold way upon one's own soul, so that the simple man may be edified by what we may call the flesh of the Scripture, this name being given to the obvious interpretation; while the man who has made some progress may be edified by its soul, as it were; and the man who is perfect and like those mentioned by the apostle: "We speak wisdom among the perfect . . . " (1 Cor. 11:6–7)—this man may be edified by the spiritual law (Rom. 7:14), which has "a shadow of the good things to come." (Heb. 10:1). For just as man consists of body, soul and spirit, so in the same way does the Scripture, which has been prepared by God to be given for man's salvation.[14]

Origen is clear. Scripture has been prepared by God solely for man's salvation. To this end—that is, so that the human intelligence can penetrate the full meaning of the sacred texts—God has written on three levels at once. The first is the text as it appears on the written page. This is the literal level; it is like the body of the text. The second is the text inasmuch as it offers instruction and makes the reader good. This is the moral level; it is like the soul of the text. The third is the text inasmuch as it tells of hidden mysteries, which are God's full revelation. This is the mystical level; it is like the spirit of the text. Just as a human person is made of body, mind, and spirit, so also scripture is composed of literal, moral, and mystical levels, each suited to the needs and advancement of the reader.

If Origen were to return today and embrace the historical-critical method,

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[12]"I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:1–4). In v.11, St. Paul says that these things happened *in figura*; as an image of what was to come.

[13]For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory (ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα): these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar . . . she corresponds to the present Jerusalem. . . . But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother (Gal. 4:22–26).

[14]Origen, *On First Principles*, IV.2.4, tr. G. W. Butterworth (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1973), p. 276.

he would find a place for it in his larger method, but it would fall under the literal level of the text. Thus, it would belong to the simplest and least penetrating level, the one that tells us little, in fact, about the real import of divine revelation.

Though the principles of interpretation as Origen gave them were subject to much variation among the fathers, spiritual and allegorical exegesis of Genesis was the norm for Christians in the early church at a time when the liturgy was in full development. A spiritual economy that allows for the multi-layered reading of scripture is essential to a true appreciation of the liturgy understood as the sanctification of time through the liturgical day, season, and year. It is also essential to the analysis of our vesper hymns.

Before we continue, perhaps it would be useful to give an example of the moral and mystical levels of interpretation. In his *Hexameron*, after finishing his presentation of the literal meaning of "in the beginning," Basil gives a moral application:

> The first movement [in an action] is called "beginning." To do right is the beginning of the good way. Just actions are truly the first steps towards a happy life. Again, we call "beginning" the essential and first part from which a thing proceeds, such as the foundation of a house, the keel of a vessel; it is in this sense that it is said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10); that is to say that piety is, as it were, the groundwork and foundation of perfection.[15]

In an example of the mystical level, St. Ambrose says the sun and the moon, created on the fourth day, are figures of Christ and the church.[16] Similarly, referring to the sixth day, St. Augustine says:

> As a wife was made for Adam from his side while he slept, the Church becomes the property of her dying Savior, by the sacrament of the blood which flowed from His side after His death. The woman made out of her husband's side is called Eve, or Life, and the mother of living beings; and the Lord says in the Gospel: "Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he has no life in him" (John 6:53). The whole narrative of Genesis, in the most minute details, is a prophecy of Christ and of the Church with reference either to good Christians or to bad.[17]

The hymns on creation grew out of this multi-layered understanding of Genesis that was fundamental to the thought of the early church. They too unfold on a literal, moral, and mystical level. The hour of Vespers was itself seen in this multivalent light. It was both the end of the light of day and the beginning of the next day, seen as a sequence of twenty-four hours

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[15]Basil, *Hex*.1.5, tr. Giet, 108. See n. 8 for full reference.

[16]Ambrose, *Hex*.4.7, tr. Schenkl, 115 (cf. note 10); tr. Savage, 131 (cf. note 10).

[17]Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, 12.8., CSEL, 25.6.1, ed. Joseph Zycha (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1891), pp. 336–37; English translation: *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan,* tr. Rev. Richard Stothert, in *The Writings against the Manichæans and against the Donatists*, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (NPNF), ser. 1, vol. 4., ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, N.Y.: The Christian Literature Company, 1887), p. 186.

(see below). It was the hour of the lighting of lamps, with all the spiritual significance this implied. In the East the hour is still associated with the lighting of lamps and the invocation of Christ, as the light that never ceases, the sun that never sets. In the revised Liturgy of the Hours, Vespers is presented primarily as an evening prayer, but it looks to the sacrifice of Christ and the coming of a new day, the resurrection, bringing light. The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours describes the hour as follows:

> "The raising up of our hands" becomes "an evening sacrifice" (Ps. 141:2). This sacrifice "may also be interpreted more spiritually as the true evening sacrifice that our Savior the Lord entrusted to the apostles at supper on the evening when he instituted the sacred mysteries of the Church or of the evening sacrifice of the next day, the sacrifice, that is, which, raising his hands, he offered to the Father at the end of the ages for the salvation of the whole world." Again, in order to fix our hope on the light that knows no setting, "we pray and make petition for the light to come down on us anew; we implore the coming of Christ who will bring the grace of eternal light."[18]

It is interesting to note that until the reforms of the twentieth century, the liturgical day began in the evening: "Evening came and morning followed, the first day . . . " The church was aligned to the first chapter of Genesis.[19] Solemnities that have a First Vespers still begin in the evening; the feast begins on the Vigil. To think of Vespers as the beginning of the Biblical day anchors us on the creation story of Genesis.[20] We are created by the loving hand of God, a truth we must never forget, and we are recreated by the merciful gift of Christ. The hour of Vespers can be a precious daily reminder. The day begins at sunset and proceeds from darkness into light; we proceed from the crucifixion to the resurrection. In the daily rhythm of the Divine Office, Vespers and Lauds are the two poles around which the offices revolve. Together they remind us and immerse us in the spiritual economy of salvation. These are also the axes around which our creation hymns are built.[21]

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[18] *The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours* (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1971), ¶39. The Instruction makes reference to the commentary of Cyprian of Carthage on the Lord's Prayer, Cyprian, *De oratione dominica* 35, Patrologia Latina (PL) 4, 560 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1844), pp. 541–42.

[19] Our understanding of "day" beginning at midnight, divided into twenty-four equal hours determined by clocks is modern and foreign to the mind of the composer of our vesper hymns. It is worth bearing in mind that in the secular order, not influenced by the Biblical narrative, peoples of the ancient world began their twenty-four-hour days at different times: for the Greeks, the civil day began at the setting of the sun, for the Romans at midnight, for the Babylonians at the rising of the sun, and for the Umbrians at midday. See Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1.3.

[20] S.-G. Pimont, *Les Hymnes du Bréviaire Romain: études critiques, littéraires et mystiques*, vol.1: *Hymnes Dominicales et feriales du psautier* (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1874), pp. 118–19. He notes that the great salvific interventions of God began in the evening: creation, the exodus, the institution of the Eucharist, the burial, and harrowing of Hell.

[21] See Aemiliana Löhr, *Il y eut un soir, il y eut un matin: la priere des hymnes et des heures,* tr. Rév. Mère Catherine de Sienne, O.P. (Paris: Éditions

II: Notes on the Structure of the Hymns and the Translation

The formal structure of the Latin creation hymns consists of four stanzas followed by a standard doxology. The same doxology is used for all the hymns. Each stanza has four lines and each line has eight syllables in four iambic feet. An iamb is short-long, or weak-strong. Iambs are thought of in pairs: two iambs make a *metron*; two *metra* make a line. Hence, the name: *iambic dimeter*. This is the same schema as Long Meter (LM) in our modern hymnals. It is a classical meter developed for hymnody by St. Ambrose, and after close to eighteen centuries it is still one of the most widely used meters for hymns.

The English translations of the creation hymns have retained the meter of the Latin hymns. The translations are designed to be sung both to the Gregorian melodies given for the Latin hymns in the *Liber Hymnarius* and to modern metrical tunes that fit Long Meter. The International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) has made every effort to produce careful and faithful translations of the Latin texts, but because the goal has been to produce liturgical texts that sing well, as opposed to word for word, literal translations, decisions have been made that affect the text. Words have been chosen that sound well together and fit the movement of the melodic line. To the degree that the meaning of the text will allow, English prepositions have been kept off of melismas and otherwise awkward musical sequences. In keeping with the style of Latin hymns, intended as they are for daily use in the Divine Office, ICEL has tried to keep the style of these English hymns simple, with few inversions, but in an elevated register.

These vesper hymns were written for daily use. They are charming, concise, and simple in form. They are short; they wear well with daily repetition; one does not tire of them. The hymn writer has sixteen lines in which to deliver the message. For every day, except Wednesday, the stanzas are more or less clearly divided into two sets of two stanzas.[22] The first describes the event of the day, the second applies the event to our lives and needs. This makes a macrocosm/microcosm alternation and balance. Note also that the Latin text is strong and clipped, in the sense that small words are largely absent. The conjunction *et* [and] occurs only three times in six hymns; there are hardly any prepositions; the little conjunctions *ut* and *ne* appear, but these mean "in order that (not)"; they are "weight-bearing," so to speak, since they carry forward the logic of the verse.

The texts accompanying this paper contain the Latin and English versions of six hymns, one for each day of creation. Together they form a liturgical *Hexameron*. Note the references to scripture at the bottom of each hymn. These are not exhaustive, they do not necessarily figure in the analyses that follow, but they do indicate the extent to which these hymns depend on the scriptures, beyond the thematic references to the days of creation. The Bible is the idiom out of which these hymns grew.

Saint-Paul, 1966), pp. 295–98.

[22]See Patrick Hala, *Louanges Vespérales* (Éditions de Solesmes, 2008), p. 22. On pp. 22–23 Hala discusses the sources for these hymns, giving Dacontius (5th c.) and the *Moralia* of St. Gregory the Great as primary sources. He dates these hymns to the early seventh century.

The Hymns[23]

Sunday Vespers: *Lucis creator optime*

Lucis creátor óptime,
lucem diérum próferens,
primórdiis lucis novæ
mundi parans oríginem;

Qui mane iunctum vésperi
diem vocári præcipis:
tætrum chaos illábitur;
audi preces cum flétibus.

Ne mens graváta crímine
vitæ sit exsul múnere,
dum nil perénne cógitat
seséque culpis ílligat.

Cælórum pulset íntimum,
vitále tollat præmium;
vitémus omne nóxium,
purgémus omne péssimum.

Præsta, Pater piíssime,
Patríque compar Unice,
cum Spíritu Paráclito
regnans per omne sæculum. Amen.

Sublime Creator of the light,
in bringing forth the light of day,
from fountains of that pristine light
you form the fabric of the world.

The morning joined to evening hour
is named the day at your command:
as formless dark steals over us,
in mercy heed our prayers and tears.

Let not our soul, weighed down by faults,
be exiled from the gift of life
and, heedless of eternal good,
ensnare itself in bonds of guilt.

But let it knock at heaven's gate
to gain the prize of lasting life;
let us avoid all harm from sin
and purge away all base desire.

Most loving Father, hear our prayer,
and you, O Christ co-equal Son,
who with the Spirit Paraclete
now reign for all eternity. Amen.

[23]The following commentary is based on a long tradition. Sources consulted include: (1) Aemiliana Löhr, *Il y eut un soir, il y eut un matin…: la priere des hymnes et des heures,* cf. n. 21 above. This is a beautiful, monastic commentary on the hymns of the ferial monastic office. (2) Patrick Hala, *Louanges*; cf. n. 22 above. (3) S.-G. Pimont, *Les Hymnes du Bréviaire Romain*. See n. 20 above. This is an excellent commentary with a critique of the hymns of the old Roman Breviary, modified by Urban VIII. (4) Célestin Albin, *La Poésie du Bréviaire: Essai D'Histoire Critique et Littéraire*, tome 1: *Les Hymnes*, (Lyons, Imp. Emm. Vitte, 1899). Albin has short notes on each line and significant word of the hymns; he consistently worked on the literal and allegorical level. (5) A. S. Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns* (Cambridge University Press, 1922). This is the excellent standard commentary on the Latin texts. (6) Joseph Connelly, *Hymns of the Roman Breviary*; cf. n. 3 above. (7) Peter G. Walsh, *One Hundred Latin Hymn: Ambrose to Aquinas*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012). (8) Matthew Britt, *The Hymns of the Breviary and Missal* (New York: Benzinger, 1936). The English translation of hymns from *The Liturgy of the Hours* © 2016–2019, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:1–5;
Other references:

- John 1:1–5; 8:12; 9:5
- v. 3.3: *nil perenne cogitant*, cf. Heb. 3:12ff. on those who "stray in heart" (*non congnoverant, vias meas*) and so do not enter into God's rest (Ps. 94(95):10–11); Ezek. 26:19–20
- v. 4.1: Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:19
- v. 4.1–2: Matt. 7:13–14

The first hymn celebrates the creation of light out of which the framework of the world emerges; light brings the world out of chaos; it gives it a primary form and it brings order to chaos, such that after the advent of light, the primordial darkness may be named "night."

In stanza one, the word "light" occurs three times. The creator of light is *optime*; the most excellent source of all things, of which light is the first and highest element.[24] In line two the primary function of light within the economy of the created world is given: to mark the days. As we read line two (*lucem . . . proferens*), we are easily led to think of the Light proceeding from Light (*Lumen de Lumine*), that is, Christ. Thus, one moves almost imperceptibly from a literal to a spiritual plane. Both senses of "light" are present to our mind; both together give a profoundly Christian sense of creation. This is not theological discourse; it is liturgical act.[25] Christ is the Word by which God said, "Let there be light." He is present and acting at the moment of creation from which the new light comes that inaugurates the world.[26] "Suddenly, then, " . . . darkness shrank in terror from the brilliance of the novel brightness. The brilliance of the light which suddenly permeated the whole universe overwhelmed the darkness and, as it were, plunged it into the abyss."[27]

In stanza two Christ is the one who names the elements, or rather commands them to be such. The word *vocari* is significant. Leaving questions of meter aside, there are other verbs that might have been used. The primary meaning of the verb *voco* is to call; that is, to *summon*. English has retained the Latin in verbs such as, "invoke, convoke, convocation." In calling light "day," Christ, so to speak, summons the light, gives it order, and so creates day and night.[28] As we said earlier, both Augustine and Ambrose thought that the act of creation was instantaneous; all was created at once, at least in germ. For them, this is what the opening sentence of Genesis means: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." St. Augustine says that he created the outer limits of the universe, the highest, that is the heaven of the heavens (*cæli cælo-*

[24]"Dux lux cunctis elementis"—"Light is the chief of all the elements," Dracontius, *Laudibus Dei* 1.121: Hala, 26. "Light in the hand of God calls forth the world" (Löhr, 315). All references are given by author and page number only. For full bibliographical information, see note 23 above.

[25]This is what has so aptly been called *theologia prima*. See David W. Fagerberg, *Theologica Prima: What is Liturgical Theology?* 2nd ed. (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2004).

[26]Cf. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, 16.59: *novæ lucis primordia in redemptoris preæsentia refulsit* (Hala, 27). See also Löhr, 317.

[27]Ambrose, *Hex.*, 1.9.33, CSEL, 32.1.

[28]Pimont suggests that Christ established this primordial rhythm of darkness and light as a figure of the work of salvation marked by the alternation between light and darkness, between joy and sorrow; both are essential to the Christian life. This idea leads well into lines 3–4 of the same stanza (Pimont, 120–21).

rum) and the lowest, the formless waste. On the first day of creation he summoned what was formless to himself and called it into life. "Only through the same Word that gave it being could it be converted to him who made it and become light at his illumination, not indeed as his equal, but by being shaped and conformed to him who, being in the form of God, is equal to you." (*Conf.* 13.2) The act of recreation is present in and wholly consonant with the act of creation. To use an expression coined by Dr. Philip Rousseau from Catholic University, mankind, and all of creation, is created with a "conversion torque" towards the Creator, "You have made our hearts for you."[29]

This layering of meaning comes quickly to the fore at line three of stanza two. What has hitherto been a serene account of the first day of creation suddenly loses its joy. It is the hour of Vespers, evening is drawing near, we realize that we are in danger of losing the light.[30] We have transitioned to the level of the microcosm. Line three is a marvel; it is a pity to translate it! *tætrum chaos illábitur*: *tætrum* modifies *chaos*; in classical Latin it means "foul, terrifying;" in later Latin it edges into "dark, somber;" *chaos* needs no explanation; *illabor* means to sink down and into, rather scary when coupled with *chaos*; so I think that when a native speaker of late Latin read this line, he understood that it is referring to dusk; nevertheless a shiver would have touched his heart, as he thought of the formless waste from which on the first day of creation he was rescued. All the layers play into the imagery of this line. It opens the door to considerations of chaos that deeply touch the heart. For where is this menacing darkness most frightening? In the darkness of night, of course, but also in the soul of the one singing the hymn.[31] Once again, St. Augustine strikes the right note: "But such a creature's good is to hold fast to you [O God] always, lest by turning away it lose the light it acquired by its conversion, and slip back into the old life, dark and abysmal." (*Conf.* 13.2).

Stanzas three and four together are a prayer for help in overcoming the looming interior darkness. I would only like to point out verse three, line three: "heedless of eternal good" (*dum nil perenne cogitat*). This is what happens when we fall back into the deep; we lose spiritual consciousness; we forget that we are creatures. The Letter to the Hebrews (3:7–4:16) has a beautiful commentary on Ps. 94(95) that shows the tragic consequences of this condition. Yet, the remedy is close at hand; the Lord is merciful and attentive to our prayers and tears. Verse four, line one is an allusion to Mt. 7:7: "Knock and it shall be opened to you." Thus, in stanza four, we see the goal to which we must tend in order to find true happiness. It is heaven's gate, or better in the Latin, the interior citadel,[32] where, if we have purified our hearts and kept them free from darkness, sin, and base desires (*noxium, pessimum*), we will live forever.

[29]St. Augustine, *Conf.* 1.1; Jared Ortiz, *You Made Us for Yourself: Creation in Augustine's Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 14.

[30]See Löhr, 318.

[31]This is the microcosm to which the hymn has turned. The intensity of prayer found in these hymns comes from the layering of meanings; the one who sings the hymn belongs to the macrocosm; he is part of it and his interior life mirrors the life of the created world. He must take cognizance of his place within the whole; this often takes the form of an examination of conscience.

[32]The Latin has *intimum* at stanza four, line 1: We enter Heaven and knock on the very Heart of God; and we carry off the prize of victory in the arms of the Sovereign Giver (Pimont, 122–23).

Finally, note the wonderful balance, repetition, parallelism, and alliteration of the last stanza. All the lines end with exactly the same sound and part of speech, a neuter singular noun; this is different from and stronger than rhyme. Lines three and four are parallel in every respect. This creates a powerful exhortation to action; the hymnist is firmly resolved to do whatever it takes to enter into the heavenly citadel. Other hymns during the week end the prayer of the last stanza with similar intensity. Wednesday, for example, has imperatives and the recurring "-um" at the end of each line. Thursday has parallel and contrasting lines three and four.

Monday Vespers: *Immense cæli Conditor*

Imménse cæli cónditor, qui, mixta ne confúnderent, aquæ fluénta dívidens, cælum dedísti límitem,	O wondrous Maker of the sky, dividing waters, stream from stream, you stem their tide with heaven's dome, to curb their mixed, chaotic flow.
Firmans locum cæléstibus simúlque terræ rívulis, ut unda flammas témperet, terræ solum ne díssipet:	You fix a place for sun and stars and trace the paths for streams on earth, that waters temper scorching rays and so preserve the fertile land.
Infúnde nunc, piíssime, donum perénnis grátiæ, fraudis novæ ne cásibus nos error átterat vetus.	Pour forth on us, Most Holy One, the gift of everlasting grace, lest by a stroke of fresh deceit the ancient sin should wear us down.
Lucem fides invéniat, sic lúminis iubar ferat; hæc vana cuncta térreat, hanc falsa nulla cómprimant.	Let faith search out and find the light and such a beam of light bring forth, that all vain idols flee in dread and falsehood never cloud its ray.
Præsta, Pater piíssime, Patríque compar Unice, cum Spíritu Paráclito regnans per omne sæculum. Amen.	Most loving Father, hear our prayer, and you, O Christ co-equal Son, who with the Spirit Paraclete now reign for all eternity. Amen.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:6–8;
Other references:

- v. 1.3: Ps. 148:4; Ps. 32(33):6
- v. 2.4: Gen. 9: 11
- v. 3.3–4: Gen. 3:1–7
- v. 4: Eph. 6:16
- v. 4:3: 1 Sam. 12:21

Yesterday the creator was *optime*; today he is *immense* and he is also a *conditor*.[33] This

[33]Notice that the Latin *immense* modifies *conditor* but it is next to *cæli*. This is the rhetorical figure of Hypallage, or the transfer of an epithet, as in "restless night"; cf. Hala, 34; and Pimont: The immensity of the sky is certainly the most grandiose image of the absolute immensity of the Creator

appellation, *conditor*, is often in the Christian idiom a synonym for "creator." It is not exactly the same thing, however. A *conditor* is a builder, but also a founder of cities and dynasties. Romulus and Remus, for example, are the *conditores* of the city of Rome. On day two, in our hymns, God shows himself to be a master builder; he is laying the infrastructure of a world to inhabit. He makes the physical sky by placing the firmament in it (heaven's dome). Just as he tamed the blackness of chaos yesterday, today he tames the waters of chaos and converts them into a cosmic AC unit for the earth.[34] If the earth is to be fertile, light and water in the right proportion are needed. God is arranging the temple, so to speak, so that all will be ready for his wonderful plant life when he creates it. Similarly, in stanza two, he prepares a place for the heavenly bodies; he will not create them until Wednesday, but all is ready.[35] The firmament has been the object of much patristic exegesis. Thinking of Isaiah 40:22, St. Ambrose likens it to the eschatological book of life; Christ tells the disciples: "rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). St. Augustine, thinking of Rev. 6:14, likens it to the scriptures, since they are made of skin and spread over us like a vault.[36]

Stanzas three and four are the jewel of this hymn. They appeal to the light and the water, that God has tempered in the world, so that he may temper them in each of us, his microcosms. In stanza three we ask him to pour forth upon us the refreshing waters of grace, to keep us, like the earth, fertile and fresh, fit for everlasting life, because as long as we are in the world, there is the danger that the serpent, that is the "ancient sin" (*vetus error*), may return to dry us up and wear us down by new stratagems, just as he destroyed Eden so long ago. In stanza three, line four, the Latin has *error*; in stanza four, line four, it has *falsa*; and in stanza four, line one, there is a question of faith seeking light (*lucem fides inveniat*). We are dealing here primarily with heresy, sins against faith. Tertullian opens his treatise on baptism by likening heresy to a snake:

> a certain viper of heresy, like Cain, has snatched away a great number [of the faithful] with her most venomous doctrine, making it her top priority to destroy baptism; and this is according to nature; since vipers, asps, and snakes seek arid and waterless places. But we, little fishes, after the pattern of our ΙΧΘΥΣ Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor may we be saved in any other way than by abiding in this water; and so that most monstrous creature, who had no right to teach even sound doctrine, knew well how to kill the little fishes, by taking them out of the water![37]

Thus, in stanza four, we ask for light: that God grant us such light of faith, that all vain things flee in terror and we be kept

(157); cf. Baruch 3:24–25.

[34]See Ambrose, *Hex*. 2.11, CSEL 32.1. Water tempers fire; also dividing the waters of the Red Sea echoes God's handiwork of the second day.

[35]The firmament is not named as such, but instead the verb *firmo* is used to show God's sovereign and decisive control over the elements. Cf. Hala, 34, who cites Ps. 32.6 (Vulgate) *verbo Domini cæli firmati sunt*.

[36]Ambrose, *Hex*. 1.21, CSEL 32.1; Augustine, *Conf.* 13.15.

[37]*De Baptismo*, 1. This is an early treatise of Tertullian, predating his Montanist phase and is directed to a woman belonging to a heretical sect claiming that baptism was ineffectual. Cf. Löhr, 326–27.

safe from falsehood. The Latin *vana* (a substantive from the adjective *vanus*) literally means "empty, void," an indirect allusion to the darkness and void of the formless deep. In the Christian idiom, however, it was used to signify idols.[38] The Latin *iubar* is also an allusive word here. It refers to the first rays of the Sun (not yet created); it signifies the first beam of light as the sun comes over the horizon, and so, used figuratively, it means "brilliance splendor." This word is used of the Holy Spirit in Ambrose's hymn, *Splendor paternæ gloriæ* (line seven). Here it refers to faith and implies the presence of the spiritual sun, the object and source of faith, in contrast to vanity and falsehood.

Thus, on the second day of creation, when God separated the waters and put them in order, light was able to penetrate the confused and chaotic waters that had covered the world in the beginning. This light is a figure of the light of faith that penetrates the darkness of sin, idolatry, and heresy. The hymnist prays that faith, once illumined, may bring forth such a beam (*iubar*)[39] that it will terrify all vain things and never be compromised by falsehood.

Tuesday Vespers: *Telluris ingens conditor*

Tellúris ingens cónditor,
mundi solum qui éruens,
pulsis aquæ moléstiis,
terram dedísti immóbilem,

Ut germen aptum próferens,
fulvis decóra flóribus,
fecúnda fructu sísteret
pastúmque gratum rédderet:

Mentis perústæ vúlnera
munda viróre grátiæ,
ut facta fletu díluat
motúsque pravos átterat,

Iussis tuis obtémperet,
nullis malis appróximet,
bonis repléri gáudeat
et mortis actum nésciat.

Præsta, Pater piíssime,
Patríque compar Unice,
cum Spíritu Paráclito
regnans per omne sǽculum. Amen.

O mighty Author of the world,
you thrust chaotic waters back
and drew the dry land from the deep
to set the earth unmoved and still,

That burgeoning in fitting growth,
adorned with radiant bloom and flower,
she might be fertile, bearing fruit
and yielding welcome, pleasing food.

Now cleanse with fresh and verdant grace
the wounded soul that sin has parched,
that she, by tears, may purge her guilt
and wear away corrupt desire.

Then let her yield to your commands,
and keep her safe from evil ways;
may she delight in all good things
and know no deed that leads to death.

Most loving Father, hear our prayer,
and you, O Christ co-equal Son,
who with the Spirit Paraclete
now reign for all eternity. Amen.

[37]Cf. Jer. 2:5; Tertullian, *De Idolatria*. 10 <http://www.tertullian.org/works/de_idololatria.htm>.

[38]Pimont (162) sees in the *luminis* Christ and in the *iubar* the Holy Spirit.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:9–13;
Other references:

- v. 1.1–4: Ps. 92(93):1–4; Ps. 95(96):10; Ps. 103(104):5–10
- v. 1.3: Ps. 94(95):5
- v. 2.4: Ps. 22(23):1–2
- v. 4.4: John. 11:25–26; Heb. 12:9; Rom. 6:13–14, 22

On the third day, God is again *conditor* (founder of the inhabitable world) but he receives the epithet *ingens*. It is not a beautiful word,[40] but it evokes the power and gigantic might that would be needed for the work of the third day. Notice the strong, imaginative words in stanza one. God pushed back (*pulsis*) the troublesome and vexing masses of water (*molestiis*) to pull up and out, to disengage (*eruens*), the dry land. *Tellus* in line one signifies something more particular than *terra*; it signifies the earth, as opposed to other planets and here, as opposed to the waters of the deep. The end result is that the earth is poised in perfect equilibrium, it is immobile and still.

After all the heavy lifting of stanza one, we see that the earth now disengaged from the waters is dry and fertile;[41] the result of the labors of stanza one is a beautiful pastoral scene of abundant life in every season: Spring (lines one to two), Summer (line three), and Fall (line four). The Latin *pastum* of line four (derived from the verb *pasco*: feed, pasture flocks) signifies first fodder, and it may also signify food in general, though there are other words for that; the use of it here evokes the pastoral image of the Good Shepherd. Note the alliteration on *f*: *fulvis, floribus, fecunda, fructus*. These all relate to and emphasize the fertility and abundance of the earth.[42] In stanza two, line three, the Latin *sisteret* echoes stanza one, line four, *immobilem*, with the added nuance of being established and brought to completion: "This is the final goal of the marvelous burgeoning of the earth under the powerful breath of the Creator."[43]

In stanzas three and four, we ask for the same energetic and creative activity to be carried out within the microcosm of our soul. Sin not only wounds our soul but it burns it; we are parched. We pray that God refresh us and plant within us the *viror gratiæ*. This marvelous phrase combines a totally physical reality (*viror*) with spiritual grace (*gratia*); *viror* means green, it signifies the young fresh and tender shoots that come in spring before the flowers; we ask for that kind of grace and we commit ourselves to watering these lovely shoots with tears.[44] We ask God to stabilize us, give us good measure, and docility, just as he stabilized the earth. Lines three and four of stanza three show considerable psychological finesse: as we wash away and dilute our evil deeds, we weaken and wear away our

[40]Walpole, 283. Another instance of Hypallage, or the transfer of an epithet. See note 33 and Pimont, 186. In meaning "immense" modifies "earth;" here it modifies the *conditor*, God.

[41]Ambrose, *Hex.*, 3.18–19, CSEL, 32.1. Aemiliana Löhr cites Ps. 92(93): 1, 3–4 and Ps. 103(104): 5–9; we could add Ps. 28(29): 3 and 10. See Löhr, 329–30. For an excursus on the multivalence of water in Scripture as it pertains to this hymn, see Pimont 186–87.

[42]Cf. Hala, 39–40; esp. n. 7: *fulvus* is found in Prudentius and Sedulius; it is taken figuratively to mean: golden, luminous.

[43]Pimont, 188.

[44]The idea of washing our sins with tears is a recurring motif with Gregory the Great and with St. Benedict of Nursia (Rule: 4.67, 20.7, 52.9) of whom he was a disciple. Cf. Hala, 42.

perverse desires. All of this activity culminates in the verb *obtempero* (stanza four, line one). It means to comply with governance. Once stabilized and kept safe from the incursions of evil, then it will be summer for us and an autumn in which we will be fully established, enjoy all good things, and know no stroke of death. All of the richness of life on earth looks to the resurrection.[45] Finally, what are the flowers, fruits, and harvests that adorn our souls? Origen says:

> But again, let us also relate the meaning to ourselves. If we have already been made "earth," if we are no longer "parched land," let us offer copious and diverse fruits to God, that we also may be blessed by the Father who says: "Behold the fragrance of my son is as the fragrance of a plentiful field which the Lord has blessed" (Gen. 27:27) . . . And we, therefore, ought thus both to bear fruit and to have seeds within ourselves, that is, to contain in our heart the seeds of all good works and virtues.[46]

Wednesday Vespers: *Cæli Deus sanctissime*

Cæli Deus sanctíssime, qui lúcidum centrum poli candóre pingis ígneo augens decóri lúmina,	Most holy God in heaven above, who paints the sky with gleaming ray, adorning with resplendent lights the glowing dome of heaven's vault,
Quarto die qui flámmeam solis rotam constítuens, lunæ minístras órdini vagos recúrsus síderum,	On this fourth day you set in place the flaming circle of the sun and made the wandering paths of stars to serve the orbit of the moon,
Ut nóctibus vel lúmini diremptiónis términum, primórdiis et ménsium signum dares notíssimum:	That you might set for night and day a boundary keeping them apart and mark with clear, unfailing sign each new beginning of the month.
Illúmina cor hóminum, abstérge sordes méntium, resólve culpæ vínculum, evérte moles críminum.	Enlighten every heart and mind and wipe away all shameful thoughts; deliver us from bonds of guilt and ease the burden of our sin.
Præsta, Pater piíssime, Patríque compar Unice, cum Spíritu Paráclito regnans per omne sǽculum. Amen.	Most loving Father, hear our prayer, and you, O Christ co-equal Son, who with the Spirit Paraclete now reign for all eternity. Amen

[44]Cf. Löhr, 331

[45]Origen, *Hom. on Gen. 1.3, Origen, Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, FC, 71, tr. Ronald E. Heine (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), p. 52.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:14–19;
Other references:

- v. 1.1: Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:16; Mark 1:24; John 17:19
- v. 2.2–4: Bar. 3:34–35; Ps. 8:3; Ps. 148:3; 1 Cor. 15:41
- v. 3.1–4: Ps. 104(105):19–20
- v. 4.1: John 12:35–36; Eph. 5:8; Ps. 35(36):10

At last! The sun, moon, and stars are created and put in place. The first three days prepared the world for occupancy; this day is the first of the second group, when the creatures of the world are put in place.[47] Notice that in stanza one, God paints the heavenly bodies onto the firmament. The Latin *pingis* means to paint, adorn with brush or needle. It can even mean to falsify, because what it produces is not real. All is real here, but the use of this verb shows God as wholly other than and separate from his created sky. He has full control over what he effects.

In stanza one, the effect of the whole is the focus of attention and admiration. The *centrum* in line two is the central point of a vault, analogous to the keystone of an arch, around which the whole vault is constructed.[48] Here it is filled with the light of the sun. God's epithet on this day is *sanctissime*, most holy, the expressive superlative of *sanctus*. Think of the Trisagion: *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*. It signifies that God is divine, glorious, and wholly other. This title fits the fourth day of creation for two complementary reasons. God is glorious and divine: the beauty and radiance of the sky illumined by the sun, stars, and moon is the created reflection of his glory.[49] Yet, he is wholly other: the sun is his mere creature. In the early church, the sun was perhaps the most likely object of idolatry. In the mid-fourth century, Julian the Apostate had worshiped it. The fathers say that one reason plants and flowers were created on the third day was to show that they were not generated by the sun. As we shall see in stanza four, the sun is also an image of Christ, sun of justice, or in some of the versions sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2).

In this hymn, it takes three stanzas to describe the wondrous adorning of the world. Stanza two gives a more detailed account of what God did to make the firmament luminous: he set in place the flaming disk of the sun, the moon, and the stars. Some stars wander (that is, the planets), though they serve the moon. Stanza three describes the cosmic role of the heavenly bodies. They were made to mark the boundaries between day and night and to indicate each new month. We may take this as metonymy for the whole course of seasons and years. The third stanza shows God using the newly created heavenly bodies to make of the world an ordered whole organized for human life. The primary divisions of time are set in place. The elements of time, so necessary for human history have been established. The heavenly bodies are a clear and unmistakable sign (*signum notissimum*) of the passage of time.

In stanza four, the hymnist turns finally to prayer. He makes just the sort of prayer

[47] See n. 3 above.

[48] See the comments on *centrum* in Walpole, 284–85.

[49] Löhr, 332; Pimont, 211.

one would expect after a magnificent portrayal of the lights in the firmament: *Illumina cor hominum*.[50] Grant to our hearts the spiritual counterpart to all of this celestial glory. Christ in his work of salvation is clearly implied here and in the verbs that follow. He is the true Light that enlightens every human heart (John 1:9). By his light, he exposes all the interior world of darkness and shame inside the human soul, but he is merciful as well as holy. He does not leave the darkened heart exposed, but rather creates in us a clean heart, delivers us from guilt, and by his incarnation protects us and eases our burdens. Every line of stanza four begins with an imperative, each of which expresses the salvific work of Christ: *illumine, absterge, resolve, everte*.

Thursday Vespers: *Magnæ Deus Potentiæ*

Magnæ Deus poténtiæ, qui ex aquis ortum genus partim remíttis gúrgiti, partim levas in áera,	O God of awesome power and might, you send into the swelling deep or lift on wings from earth to sky your creatures sprung from flowing tides,
Demérsa lymphis ímprimens, subvécta cælis írrogans, ut, stirpe una pródita, divérsa répleant loca:	That, plunged in waters and submerged or borne aloft to heavenly heights, the offspring of a single stock may grow and fill their proper place.
Largíre cunctis sérvulis, quos mundat unda sánguinis, nescíre lapsus críminum nec ferre mortis tǽdium,	Lord, grant to all your servants here, whom streams of blood and water cleanse, to know no failing caused by sin or bear the loathsome weight of death,
Ut culpa nullum déprimat, nullum levet iactántia, elísa mens ne cóncidat, eláta mens ne córruat.	That sin may never cast them down or boasting swell and lift them high, lest broken souls collapse and fall and prideful souls soon come to grief.
Præsta, Pater piíssime, Patríque compar Unice, cum Spíritu Paráclito regnans per omne sǽculum. Amen.	Most loving Father, hear our prayer, and you, O Christ co-equal Son, who with the Spirit Paraclete now reign for all eternity. Amen.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:20–23;
Other references:

- v. 2:1–2: the scriptural references to water, birds, and fish are too numerous to give here. All three are precious symbols of the Christian life: eternal life (bird); baptism (water), Christ and Christians (fish).
- v. 2:1: water is an ambiguous symbol; in the scriptures it gives both life

(Gen. 1:20–21) and death (Gen. 7:17–21). Cf. Rom. 6:3-4.

- v. 3:2: John 19:34; 1 John 5:5–6
- v. 3.1–4: Is. 66:1–2
- v. 4.3, *elisa*: Ps. 144(145):14 (Vulgate)
- v. 4.4, *elata*: 1 Tim. 3:6

The hymn for today is a perfect gem. It is tightly constructed and ingenious; the creation of birds and sea creatures fired the imagination of our hymnist. God's epithet for today is *magnæ potentiæ*. The ICEL translators allowed themselves to use the much abused but totally appropriate word "awesome" because it fits the sense of awe one feels standing before God and viewing the great and the small wonders of the fifth day. The Latin verbs in this hymn, as in the hymn for day one, are all in the present tense, lending it vivid relief, and also perhaps implying that it takes the continuous sustaining action of God to keep all of these creatures moving in an orderly way; the creatures brought into existence today are for the first time sentient self-movers.[51] These natural, soon to be mortal, living beings, sustained by great power (*magnæ potentiæ*), are the first group in the final phase of creation that will culminate in the making of sentient and rational beings and in the remaking of them in the waters of baptism (evoked in stanzas three and four).[52]

For the ancients, birds and fish looked alike; one swam in the water, the other "swam" in air. Philo says:

> Then when earth and heaven had been adorned with their befitting ornaments, . . . God proceeded to create the races of mortal creatures, making the beginning with the aquatic animals on the fifth day . . . After that he created the races of birds as akin to the races of aquatic animals (for they are each of them swimmers), leaving no species of creatures which traverse the air unfinished.[53]

Basil and Ambrose follow suit,[54] though Basil considers the sea beasts to be inferior to other animals: they are deaf and cannot be tamed.

The birds and the fish, offspring of a single stock, in innocence and obedience to their creator either rise into the heights or plunge into the depths; each finds its proper place. The common birthplace in water is a patent figure of the waters of re-creation in baptism. The baptized also spring from a single source, but the separation proper to fish and fowl is improper to them.

This division from a common source defines the prayer of stanzas three and four. We turn our eyes from the wonders of the fifth day and present ourselves to God as

[51]See Löhr, 336 and Hala, 49–50 for the significance of this new level of creation and also for a discussion of the thought of the ancients concerning the provenance of creatures from the tides of water and subsequently assigned to water or to air.

[52]Löhr, 336–37. Cf. Is. 66:1–2: Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house which you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things are mine, says the Lord. But this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." Hence *servulus* in stanza three, line one.

[53]Philo, *De Opificio Mundi*, 20(62), English translation: *The Creation of the World* in *The Works of Philo Judaeus,* tr. C. D. Yonge, vol. 1 (London: George Bell and Sons, 1800), p. 17.

[54]Basil, *Hex.*, 8.2 (cf. note 8); Ambrose, *Hex.*, 5:35, CSEL, 32.1.

his humble servants (*servuli*; diminutive of *servus*). Like the fish and the birds, we have been reborn in the blood of Christ and in the flowing waters of baptism. After this rebirth, however, we must suffer no relapse into sin (*lapsus criminum*) and bear no weary, loathsome weight of death (*mortis tædium*).[55] The hymnist, like so many ancient writers, sees the birds of the sky and the fish that live in the deep as formed by the hand of God to live their own natural life, but also to be a figure and sign of the spiritual life.[56] Considering them on an allegorical level here, he asks that we be not cast down by our faults, lest we collapse and fall into the deep. Remember Tertullian's image of the baptized who, like fish, are at home in their native element, the waters of baptism, with the great Fish, Christ.[57] Perhaps it is not too much of a stretch to see the weight of death as an unhappy plunge into the depths of an element that should normally be life-giving. Then the hymnist asks that we be not lifted up into the stratosphere of pride and arrogance, and so rush headlong into a grievous fall. "Pride goes before disaster, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).[58] Note again the beautiful parallelism of stanza four, lines three and four:

elisa mens ne concidat,
elata mens ne corruat.

At the head of the lines, *elisa* sounds like *elata*, and they are opposites; *mens* is repeated on the fourth syllable (a strong syllable) in the metrical sequence of both lines; *ne* also follows in the same place in both lines; finally *concidat* and *corruat* both begin and end with the same sounds and they are strong verbs. As we saw earlier on day one, the hymn ends with an intense and memorable prayer.

[55]The Latin *lapsus* is a significant term for the fathers of the church. It figures in the hymns of St. Ambrose and in many other writers. It signifies the fall from grace after baptism. The noun (*lapsus*) and the verb (*labo/labor*) signify: to give way, totter and fall, be on the "slippery slope" (of sin). See Ambrose, Hymn 1.24 and 27; cf. also Hala, 52.

[56]Cf. Löhr, 344–47. She concludes a long discussion of elements in this hymn that are signs and figures of the spiritual life with the following: "Thus, what we were calling moral realities in our hymn have finally turned out to be true mystical realities. The fish and the bird are both signs of salvation, symbols of great and divine realities that lead us to blessedness, on the condition that we reach for the depths and the heights and that we confront them only *in Christo Jesu Domino nostro*."

[57]See n. 33.

[58]Pimont (235) refers to a remarkable passage from Ambrose's Hexameron, which may well be a source (perhaps indirect) for the 4th stanza: *exili super undas, o homo, quia piscis es, non te opprimant sæculi istius fluctus. si tempestas est, pete altum et profundum: si serenitas, lude in fluctibus: si procella, caue scopuloso litore, ne te in rupem furens æstus illidat* (Ambrose, *Hex.*, 5.7.17, CSEL, 32.1). In this hymn we find the same ideas and close connections in vocabulary: to *opprimant* corresponds *deprimat* (stanza four, line one); to the salutary *altum et profundum* corresponds *levet iactantia* (stanza four, line two); to *illidat* corresponds the wonderfully concise and balanced contrast of the last two lines: *elisa mens ne concidat, elata mens ne corruat* (stanza four, lines three and four).

Friday Vespers: *Plasmator hominis, Deus*

Plasmátor hóminis, Deus, qui, cuncta solus órdinans, humum iubes prodúcere reptántis et feræ genus;	O God, who shaped the human race, alone you order all that is; you bid the fertile earth bring forth all kinds of beasts and creeping things.
Qui magna rerum córpora, dictu iubéntis vívida, ut sérviant per órdinem subdens dedísti hómini:	And at the sound of your command all living creatures huge and strong are subject to the human race, that each may serve in rank and kind.
Repélle a servis tuis quicquid per immundítiam aut móribus se súggerit, aut áctibus se intérserit.	Drive far from all your servants here whatever through impurity shall make its way into our acts or plant itself in habits formed.
Da gaudiórum prǽmia, da gratiárum múnera; dissólve litis víncula, astrínge pacis foedera.	Grant us rewards of lasting joy, bestow your many gifts of grace, undo the bonds of bitter strife, confirm your covenants of peace.
Præsta, Pater piíssime, Patríque compar Unice, cum Spíritu Paráclito regnans per omne sǽculum. Amen	Most loving Father, hear our prayer, and you, O Christ co-equal Son, who with the Spirit Paraclete now reign for all eternity. Amen.

Scriptural references:
Primary reference: Gen. 1:24–31;
Other references:

- v. 1.1: Ps. 99(100):3; Isa. 64:8; Jer. 18:6; Sir. 17:4; 33:13; Acts 17:28. Also: Ps. 24:1; 118:73; 138:14 (Nova Vulgate & New American Bible)
- v. 2:1–4: Gen. 2:19–20; 9:2–3; Ps. 8:6 with Heb. 2:7–8; Acts 11:5–9
- v. 3:1–4: Ps. 31(32):3; 48(49):13
- v. 4:1–4: Rom. 8:22; 14:17; Gal. 5:22. Also: Isa. 11:5–9
- v. 4:4: Isa. 54:10; Ezek. 37:26.

On the sixth day God is no longer given an epithet: sublime, wondrous, mighty, holiest, awesome; he is *plasmator*, one who fashions and molds, an artist.[59] This, of course, reflects the distinctive work of the sixth day as it is recounted in scripture, "Let us make man in our image."

What does an artist seek? The perfect accomplishment of his work. For the creator, the perfect accomplishment would be to make something in his own image and likeness. The term *plasmator*, however, has several layers of meaning; it reminds us of the passages from Isaiah and Jeremiah where God is a potter at the wheel making and remaking his clay. Thus we are led to

[59]The verb *plasmo* is found in the psalms (Vulgate) 118(119):73 and 138(139):14. Irenaeus and Tertullian use the noun *plasmator* in speaking of God (Hala, 56).

think of the process of molding and refashioning. This is the work of Christ making and remaking the human race; on the sixth day he is making at the beginning of the world the human nature that will one day be his own, in order to save the work of the sixth day. The concision of this first stanza is amazing! So much happened on this day, yet the structure of the hymn requires that all be told in two out of four stanzas. Certain key elements are described, therefore, and the rest is told by by implication. God is named the Maker of man; this is enough. Then in stanza one, lines three and four, and stanza two, the making and ordering of the animals is described.

In line two, the participle *ordinans* coupled with *solus* implies that all that comes from God's hands is uniquely (*solus*) well-ordered.[60] He does not himself create the beasts and creeping things, but rather bids the earth (*iubes*) to bring them forth. This is significant: they are made out of dirt, wholly of the soil, the ground (*humus*); some crawl upon it, others are great hulking masses drawn from it. Mankind is also of the earth, a creature like the rest of the animals made on sixth day, but his unique status is wonderfully described. Use your imagination here, these enormous, hulking bodies (*magna corpora*), which God makes into living beings by the sound of his command are bowed down before mankind (*subdens*) and given (*dedisti*) into the power of man, to serve (*serviant*) him in good order (*per ordinem*).[61] He is at the top of Jacob's ladder; ascending from earth, man is the top rung.

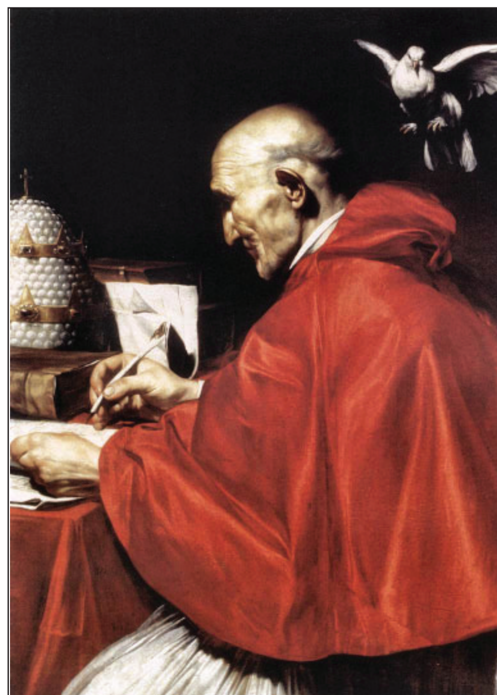
What would be the appropriate prayer, therefore, for stanzas three and four? Not to fall off that top rung into a mass of earthy beings. The hymn focuses on the one quality that separates us from the beasts. It names the quality by its opposite: *immunditia*. The primary meaning of the *munditia* is "cleanliness;" I think this word is used here because it signifies a physical quality, reflected in the Old Testament dietary restrictions: some animals were ritually unclean, but all of them are innocent in their uncleanness. The figurative, transferred signification of *munditia* is "purity," on an elemental level not just chastity, but something more like integrity. The twofold signification of the word makes the transition here from the level of creation to that of recreation. If we become unclean, we do not become like the animals. We are dragged down out of our proper place (think: *ordinans*), off of the top rung, into a morass much worse than anything the animals experience. Our sensual, "bestial" actions cannot be innocent as they are in the other animals.[62] This accounts for the fact that the idea of *immunditia* only comes into the hymn in the context of a prayer that begins with a strong imperative: *repelle* (stanza three, line one). Notice also that the loss of integrity comes by degrees; it inserts itself little by little (*se suggerit*) into our acts and then eventually plants itself firmly (*se interserit*) into habits formed. Aristotle says that habit is a second nature. This is a dreadful picture, we recognize only too well. The hymnist has performed an astounding diagnosis of the human condition.

[60]Pimont considers this phrase the key to the entire hymn: it shows the unique power and authority of the Creator and the subordination of mankind to God (Pimont, 263).

[61]Three strong verbs of subordination (Pimont, 266).

[62]Löhr, 351; Pimont, 268, who cites Ambrose, *Hex.,* 6.3.10, CSEL, 32.1.

In stanza four we continue to pray to God, the *Plasmator*, intensely with four imperatives, one at the head of each line.[63] We ask to be remade and to be given the qualities that most mark a human person as distinct from the other animals, freedom from the uncleanness that marks the devastation of the image of God in us. We ask for joy, grace, and peace. Stanza four, line three is interesting. Animals fight each other all the time, but they are innocent in their violent attacks. Man is the only one who can bear a grudge, the ground of strife that locks or binds opponents in hatred (*litis vincula*). Then, in line four, final word of this hymn is covenant, "covenants of peace" (*foedus,* pl. *foedera*: *pacis foedera*). Covenants also form bonds (*astringe*, as it is used here, has the primary meaning of "make firm, establish," but it also means "draw together, draw closer; bind"). A covenant of peace is the exact opposite of the bonds of strife;[64] and, on a natural level, it is the highest human condition, the condition in which we participate most perfectly in the divine image according to which we were made; It removes us as far as possible from the *immunditia* of acting like an animal. On a spiritual level, since human covenants are figures and signs of the divine covenants God has made with mankind throughout history, the hymn ends on a vista that encompasses the entire economy of human life, natural and spiritual. The new and definitive covenant, established by Christ in his blood, will lead us to the everlasting covenant of peace.[65]



Pope Gregory I; Gregory the Great
b. circa 540, d. March 12, 604.

Think of it . . . a hymn like this does not come out of a culture that is an arid waste.

[63]Hala, 58.

[64]Notice that the two opposites are wholly parallel in lines three and four. After the contrasting imperatives (*dissolve* vs. *astringe*), *litis vincula* is parallel and opposite to *pacis foedera*. Because these opposite have the same meter and fall in the same place in each line, they remain in the ear, so to speak; they are memorable.

[65]If all of nature obeys man and yields to his diverse needs, or even to his good pleasure, he himself in his turn must pay homage to the supreme power and authority of God and serve him in innocence and purity of life. This is the grace the church implores for her children, whom she calls so aptly here "servants" of God. Her maternal accents, which rise in the final stanza to the highest expression of mystical language admirably recall on the one hand the immortal destiny of the king of creation, and on the other, the infallible means by which he may attain it: through peace with God, who distributes his gifts of grace here below and the palms of glory in heaven (Pimont, 260; my translation).

Conclusion

The creation hymns we have analyzed come from a Christian culture in which God was understood to be the defining Good of human life. This is not just to say that He was the center of people's lives. It is something more theological and ontological than that. Christians understood that they were created, contingent beings, wholly dependent on an infinite being in no need of them but who sustained them out of sheer goodness. He offered them his unconditional mercy and love; he sent his only son to redeem their tragic loss; and finally he offered them eternal happiness. He was their personal and their collective source and end. This was a culture in which human beings lived on God's terms, not on their own. Things that people do all too readily in our modern culture were unthinkable for them, not because the moral code was strict, but because such actions were a deformation of nature, and nature was not theirs to change; it belonged to the God who made it.

Similarly, the holy scriptures were God's work, his revelation of himself. The writers of the sacred texts were his willing and holy instruments. The work of the exegete was a service rendered to God and the church. The fathers held that scripture was a complete revelation. What was obscure in one place would be clear in another. They received the scriptures as a gift to be used reverently.

The vesper creation hymns breathe this theological depth and scriptural understanding of the early church. This is, in fact, the hallmark of the long tradition of Catholic hymns, because they grew out of and were composed for the Divine Office, that part of the liturgy that draws the grace of Christ in the Eucharist into the hours and the seasons of our lives.

When we sing the Divine Office and go to Mass, we are acting theologians, either for good or for ill, because the liturgy is formative. This is why ugly, boring, and irreverent liturgies make poor Catholics. But, as we saw in the third and fourth stanzas of the creation hymns, for our human weaknesses there is a divine remedy proportionate to the need and to our place in the economy of creation. The fruits of good liturgy are beyond imagining. With God's help we may, like him on the third day of creation, push back the irksome waters of lassitude and ignorance in the church by reverence and real beauty. The hymns are our great treasure; they are part of the remedy. They are guides leading us into a deeper sense of who we are and how we should live under the light of God's creative and redeeming mercy. ❖

When we sing the Divine Office and go to Mass, we are acting theologians, either for good or for ill, because the liturgy is formative. This is why ugly, boring, and irreverent liturgies make poor Catholics.

Joseph Bonnet, *Animateur* of Gregorian Chant Congresses

Joseph Bonnet brought to burgeoning Gregorian chant congresses an expertise in liturgical organ playing and a knowledge of early organ music.

by Susan Treacy

In an earlier essay I presented the organist Joseph Bonnet as a catalyst in the early twentieth-century revival of Gregorian chant.[1] It was Bonnet who suggested to Charles Tournemire the concept for *L'Orgue mystique,* Tournemire's massive cycle of fifty-one suites of Gregorian chant-based organ works for the liturgical year. Joseph Bonnet's fame as an organist and his active promotion of Gregorian chant led to his appointment as the first president of l'Institut grégorien de Paris, founded in 1923 by the Archbishop of Paris, Louis-Ernest Cardinal Dubois. Thanks to courses offered by the Institut, many people were trained to teach Gregorian chant in parishes all around France. But right from the earliest days of his organ career, as well as during his involvement with the Institut grégorien, Joseph Bonnet played a significant role in numerous Gregorian chant congresses and liturgical days. In this paper I will document and discuss the congresses at which Bonnet was present, and his role in these congresses, which did so much to propagate the chant throughout France and beyond.

The reaction of the Catholic world to the motu proprio on sacred music of Pope Pius X, promulgated on November 22, 1903, was varied; indeed, it ran the gamut from indifference to incredulity, from resentment to enthusiasm. Because of the groundwork laid by the monks of the Abbey of Solesmes and the Schola Cantorum, France was among the countries to react most enthusiastically and quickly to the motu proprio. The Schola Cantorum—the Parisian music school that had been working to propagate sacred music and Gregorian chant—promptly responded in the January 1904 issue of its house organ, *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais.* The journal included the complete text of the motu

A version of this essay was presented at the conference "The Renewal of Sacred Music and of the Liturgy in the Catholic Church: Movements Old and New," October 13–15, 2013, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

[1] "Joseph Bonnet as a Catalyst in the Early Twentieth-Century Gregorian Chant Revival," *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Va.: Church Music Association of America, 2014), pp. 11–21.

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proprio, and following this was a commentary and an "office modèle," which could be executed by a choir of "force moyenne."[2] Several pages later was a suggested "Répertoire de musique sacrée," selected according to dictates of the motu proprio.[3] This was, in fact, a small catalogue of anthologies of sacred polyphony—most of it from the sixteenth century—published by the Schola Cantorum. It was edited by Charles Bordes, founder of the Schola, and graded according to difficulty. The February issue of the *Tribune de Saint-Gervais* contained a letter from Pius X to Dom Joseph Pothier,[4] an article by Georges Romain on the first "effets" of the motu proprio at Rome,[5] and a more extensive continuation of the sacred music repertoire lists.[6] In this issue, Romain also reported on the planned Gregorian Chant Congress in honor of St. Gregory the Great that would take place at Rome in April of 1904.[7]

Joseph Bonnet, 1906.

Meanwhile, back in France, as early as 1905 an international post-motu proprio Gregorian congress was held in Strasbourg,[8] and almost every year thereafter there were Gregorian congresses in France on the international, national, regional, diocesan, or parochial levels. Somewhat later, in 1926, Dom Roger Schoenbechler, O.S.B, a monk of Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, who was stationed in

2"Commentaire: Ce que c'est que le 'motu proprio,'" *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 10, no. 1 (January 1904), 15–27.

3"Répertoire de musique sacrée établie d'après le 'motu proprio' de S. S. Pié X," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais,* 10, no. 1 (January 1904), 30–32.

4"Bref de S. S. Pié X au R^me^ P. Dom J. Pothier, Abbé de Saint-Wandrille," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 10, no. 2 (February 1904), 33–34.

5Georges Romain, "Les premiers effets du 'motu proprio' à Rome," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 10, no. 3 (March 1904), 50–52.

6"Répertoire de musique sacrée établie d'après le 'motu proprio' de S. S. Pié X," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 10, no. 3 (March 1904), 62–64.

7Georges Romain, "À Rome," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 10, no. 3 (March 1904), 88–90. For a fascinating account of this congress and its connection to the earliest sound recordings, see Mary Berry, "Gregorian Chant: The Restoration of Chant and Seventy-Five Years of Recording," *Early Music,* 7, no. 2 (April 1979), 197–217.

8"Congrès international de Chant grégorien," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 11, no. 1 (January 1905), 28–29. This was not the first ever such congress, but perhaps only the first since the motu proprio. Cf. below, the Parisian and Regional Congress of Liturgical Chant and Church Music held in Paris in 1911. It was the golden anniversary of the first *Congrès Parisien et Régional*, which had taken place in 1861.

Joseph Bonnet
Church of Saint-Eustache.

Rome at the Collegio de Sant' Anselmo, spent his summer vacation in France. In one of his reports to the journal *Orate Fratres* he would describe the typical structure of these congresses and liturgical days, and he was enthusiastic over their formative role in the spiritual awakening of France.

> That these "Days" are a grand success throughout the land is evident from the keen interest taken by all, and from the great numbers that flock together to attend them; also by the vast social good and the immense spiritual benefits derived from them.[9]

Since November of 1901 Joseph Bonnet had been in Paris, where he was the leading student of Alexandre Guilmant at the Conservatoire. Earlier, as a lad growing up in Bordeaux, he was awakened to the beauty and spirituality of Gregorian chant when a friend had taken him to hear Gregorian chant at the diocesan major seminary. In 1906 the twenty-two-year-old Bonnet competed for and was unanimously awarded the position of titular organist at the Parisian Church of Saint-Eustache. During his early years at Saint-Eustache Bonnet began to build the magnificent musical edifice of the parish, along with his colleague Félix Raugel, who was choirmaster from 1911. Also during this time Bonnet was establishing his international reputation as a concert organist. 1909 saw the famous Malines Catholic Conference in Belgium, at which Dom Lambert Beaudouin laid out the principles of the twentieth-century liturgical movement, one of which included cultivation of Gregorian chant in the parishes.[10]

1911 seems to be the first year in which Joseph Bonnet's name is recorded in connection with a Gregorian chant congress. For this congress, the fiftieth-anniversary congress of the first Parisian and Regional Congress of Liturgical Chant and Church Music, Bonnet was the official organist.[11] The daily liturgies were celebrated at the Church of Saint-Eustache—where the very first Congrès Parisien et Régional had taken place—and the meetings and lectures were

[9]Roger Schoenbechler, O.S.B., "The Liturgy and France, III: The New Life," *Orate Fratres*, 1 (1926–27), 376–78.

[10]See Alcuin Reid, O.S.B., *The Organic Development of the Liturgy,* 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), p. 79.

[11]*Congrès parisien et régional de chant liturgique et musique d'église*, Paris, June 12–15, 1911.

held at the Institut catholique. Each day there was a Solemn High Mass at 9:00 a.m., a first session at 10:30 for major papers, and second session for various papers at 2:30, along with a practical group lesson in Gregorian chant. At 5:00 p.m. there was scheduled a solemn Vespers or a "concert spirituel," and at 9:00 p.m. a "réunion amicale."[12]

On Monday, the day after Trinity Sunday, the conference commenced with opening prayers at Saint-Eustache. Joseph Bonnet played the "Entrée," Bach's *Nun komm der heilige Geist,* livre VII [*sic*!],[13] followed by the congress participants' chanting of the *Veni Creator Spiritus* in alternation with organ versets by de Grigny, Titelouze, and Gigault. After everyone chanted *Exaudi Christe,* in honor of Pope Pius X—the restorer of Gregorian chant—and Bonnet played a toccata by Frescobaldi, followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Félix Raugel then directed the Saint-Eustache choir in five motets, after which Bonnet played Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor[14] for the "Sortie."[15] At 4:30 on Tuesday afternoon of the congress, after playing for the morning Mass of Saint Anthony of Padua, Joseph Bonnet played an organ recital of French music from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries, punctuated with motets sung by the choir of the church of Sainte-Clotilde.[16] Wednesday saw Bonnet at the Church of Saint-Gervais, where he played psalm and hymn versets on "l'orgue ancien"[17] during Vespers, using the original registrations of Clérambault, Frescobaldi, de Grigny, Titelouze, and Couperin.[18] Thursday, Corpus Christi, was the final day of the congress, and the feast was fittingly celebrated with a Solemn High Mass at 9:00 a.m. at Saint-Eustache. As at the other Masses, the relatively recently published Vatican Gradual was used, and at this final Mass the congress participants chanted the entire Mass. Bonnet's organ repertoire included many pieces based on Gregorian chants and during the procession he played organ versets in alternation with the congregation as they chanted the Corpus Christi hymns *Pange lingua, Sacriis solemnis,* and *Verbum supernum.*[19]

Paris was also the scene, in 1914, of the Fifth Congress of the International Music Society.[20] This congress, of course, was not

[12]"Cinquantenaire du premier congrès parisien et régional de chant liturgique et musique d'église; Les 12, 13, 14, et 15 juin 1911," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 17, no. 4 (1911), 74–75. This is an announcement of the congress, along with a preliminary schedule. *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 17, no. 5 (1911), 107–108, gives an "Order of Religious Exercises," which is revised from the preliminary list in the April issue of *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*. *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 17, no. 6 (1911), 137–43, contains a report on the Congress.

[13]This was probably BWV 651, Fantasia super *Komm, Heiliger Geist,* which is the seventh chorale prelude among the Schübler Chorales.

[14]Probably BWV 538.

[15]"Notice historique et pratique des offices religieux du congrès," *Le Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 17, no. 6 (June 1911), 137–43.

[16]Ibid., 139–40.

[17]This is probably the organ that was rebuilt by François-Henry Clicquot in the mid-eighteenth century, which incorporated parts of the earlier organs, the earliest of which dates back to 1601.

[18]"Notice historique et pratique des offices religieux du congrès," 141–42.

[19]Ibid., 142–43.

[20]Cinquième congrès de la société internationale de musique, June 1–10, 1914.

strictly devoted to sacred music; however, Joseph Bonnet played the grand organ at concerts of sacred music at Saint-Eustache and at Les Invalides. In addition, there were Masses celebrated, including one at Saint-Eustache. Bonnet presided at the grand organ and the choir, directed by Félix Raugel, sang the *Messe solennelle* of Louis Vierne.

World War I brought a seismic rupture in European life, and not least in France. Concert life was not completely suspended, but the publication of many journals was. Joseph Bonnet served as a corporal in the army for two and a half years, until he became ill.[21] His brother was killed in action and this was a significant event in his life, which precipitated a deepening of his Catholic faith. In 1917 Bonnet was sent as a cultural ambassador, to bring propaganda about France to the New World. He toured the United States and Canada, where he played over one hundred concerts.

While on tour, Bonnet wrote to Alfred Cortot back in France, and enclosed a newspaper clipping from a Chicago newspaper. He also quoted another Chicago paper, which included him among a pantheon of contemporary musical stars.

> Pour vous tenu
> Un autre journal de la même ville dit: "Joseph Bonnet one of the great among living executants in art, played the organ in Medinah Temple last night, he was in Chicago for the first time. Here after, those who heard him will think of him as of Casals, Pavlowa, Kreisler, Paderewsky, as one of indisputably supreme in the milieu". (Chicago daily tribune 10 mars 17).[22]

During this period Bonnet was making many American friends in the world of organ and sacred music. Among them were Justine Bayard Ward, Mother Georgia Stevens, R.S.C.J., and the Reverend John Young, S.J., all pioneers in the American Gregorian chant movement. The July 1919 issue of *The Catholic Choirmaster* featured a brief review of an organ recital that Bonnet had played in New York City at Sacred Heart College, Manhattanville, on April 28. This recital was sponsored by the Pius X Chair of Liturgical Music of the Sacred Heart College. The reviewer, "S.J.," wrote that the "programme included compositions built on Gregorian Themes, showing the deep influence these ancient liturgical melodies have had on the development and beauty of musical art."[23]

Each set of pieces was based on a particular Gregorian chant, but the program began with "Differentias" [*sic*], by Antonio de Cabezón. Next, the students from the Convent of the Sacred Heart chanted Kyrie *Orbis factor* in alternation with the organ "interludes" (i.e., versets) by Frescobaldi.[24] Bonnet then played a set using *Lauda Sion*, first with his own "interludes [*sic*] based on the chant,"[25] followed by a

[21]William Joseph Cohill, "Restoration of Church Music in America: An Interview with M. Joseph Bonnet, Organist of the Church of St. Eustache, Paris," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 3 (July 1920), 90–91.

[22]Letter from Joseph Bonnet to l'Association pour l'expansion artistique [Cortot], NYC / 11.III.17 / BOB 733 - 100–101 Letter from New York, 11 March 1917, BnF, LA Bonnet 1.

[23]S.J., "Programmes: New York City," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 5, no. 3 (July 1919), 79–81.

[24]From the *Messa della Domenica* of *Fiori musicali*, vol. 1.

[25]These versets are not listed among Bonnet's

Palestrina ricercare, and a *Grand jeu* by Du Mage (17th c.).[26] Next was a set based on *Ave maris stella*; first the chant with organ interludes by Jean Titelouze and then a postlude by Nicolas de Grigny. The concert continued with a "Short Interlude . . . on the Gregorian Antiphon *Qui mihi ministrat me sequator*,[27] by Vincent d'Indy," and César Franck's *Cantabile* (not based on a chant). Next Bonnet played his own Magnificat versets on mode four played *alternatim* with the chanted Magnificat. The concert ended with Benediction, at which the students chanted *Alleluia Caro mea vere est cibus* (from the Mass for Corpus Christi), *Panis angelicus*, *Concordi lætitia, Tantum ergo,* and the *Laudate Dominum* in mode five. The young female students had all been instructed in the Ward Method, which was new at the time, and the reviewer raved about their performance of the chants. "S.J." considered the "programme . . . the first of its kind in an attempt to attract attention to the close connection between the Gregorian and contrapuntal schools of music."[28]

Meanwhile, back in France, Lourdes was the scene of a "Gregorian Pilgrimage" in August of 1919.[29] Joseph Bonnet, on furlough from his American tours, attended the pilgrimage and wrote his "Impressions of a Gregorian Pilgrimage at Lourdes," which was translated by Justine Ward and published in the January 1920 issue of *The Catholic Choirmaster*.[30] He rhapsodized over the pilgrimage and passed on his enthusiasm to the wider American public in the pages of *The Catholic Choirmaster*. A few pages later in the same issue, an anonymous writer announced the return of Joseph Bonnet to America and mentioned the organist's attendance at the recent Lourdes Gregorian Pilgrimage, and his enthusiastic reaction to the pilgrimage. Significantly, this writer then states:

compositions on the website of the Association Joseph Bonnet, so it is possible that they might have been improvisations. The review does not say so, one way or the other. "Compositions de Joseph Bonnet," Association Joseph Bonnet <http://www.josephbonnet.org>.

[26]S. J., "Programmes: New York City," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 5, no. 3 (July 1919), 79.

[27]Third Antiphon at Second Vespers from the Common of One Martyr, *Liber Usualis* (Tournai; Desclée, 1962), p. 1125.

[28]S. J., *Ibid.*

[29]August 26–28, 1919.

[30]"Impressions of a Gregorian Pilgrimage at Lourdes," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 1 (January 1920), 11–12.

> The enthusiasm of M. Bonnet has communicated itself to many in this country and already there has been launched a movement for the holding of a three days' Congress of Gregorian Chant in New York early in June. It is hoped that the interest of the more important seminaries and choirs may be enlisted in the movement and that the Congress may assume an international aspect through the participation of representatives from Canada and Mexico.[31]

Indeed, on page 30 of this same issue is the first announcement of the "International Congress of Gregorian Chant," to be held at St Patrick's Cathedral, New York, "under the Joint Auspices of the Auxiliary Committee to the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, and The Society of St. Gregory of America." Dom André Mocquereau is announced as "Director of Chant," and Joseph Bonnet "will preside at the Grand Organ." The liturgical and "educational" schedules are laid out, as well as the music to be sung at the three Masses to be celebrated during the congress.[32] There would be further announcements with each issue of *The Catholic Choirmaster* leading up to the congress, each announcement containing more information. In France, as well, the New York Congress was a news item of interest to French church musicians.[33] Joseph Bonnet played no organ recitals during the congress; instead, he served throughout as liturgical organist. A recital had been planned but was dropped from the program; instead, Bonnet played this recital later, at Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.[34]

The New York congress was widely considered to have been a stunning success. The July 1920 issue of *The Catholic Choirmaster* was almost wholly devoted to reports on the congress. The issue contained a "Programme" of all the music that Joseph Bonnet had played during the Gregorian Congress.[35] All of it, except César Franck's *Cantabile,* was Gregorian-chant-based and spanned the centuries through to the twentieth century. Bonnet played his own "Prelude on *Lauda Sion*"[36] and at the opening Pontifical Mass improvised "Interludes on *Sacerdos et Pontifex*."[37] This issue also carried "The Restoration of Church Music in America," an interview with Bonnet by William Joseph Cohill, and several "Comments on the Gregorian Congress" were published. Among them, "A Jesuit Father" opined,

[31]"M. Bonnet," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 1 (January 1920), 25.

[32]"International Congress of Gregorian Chant," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 1 (January 1920), 30.

[33]"Correspondances et Nouvelles: New-York. Congrès international de chant grégorien," *Revue grégorienne*, 5 (1920), 72–73. This is a second announcement, providing more details of the congress that would take place at St. Patrick's Cathedral from June 1–3. Throughout, Bonnet is mentioned as being at the *grand orgue*. Interestingly, the United States is described as "le pays de la vie intense."

[34]"Baltimorensis," "Baltimore, Maryland: Sacred Concert of Organ and Polyphonic Music," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 3 (July 1920), 91–92.

[35]This seems to be all the same music that he played at the recital on April 28, 1919 at the College of the Sacred Heart, Manhattanville.

[36]Cf. n. 26.

[37]Magnificat Antiphon at First Vespers of a Confessor Bishop and Antiphon for the Solemn Reception of a Bishop, *Liber*, 1173; 1840.

> How can we ever thank God enough for the truly magnificent way in which he heard our prayers. I feel we shall have to call upon all the angels of heaven to sing a fitting *Te Deum* . . . Kindly express to the two Benedictine Fathers[38] my deep admiration and my heartfelt gratitude for the heroism of their undertaking. Monsieur Bonnet did all that could be done with his instrument. To him is due the very idea of this glorious *tour de force*—and we shall never be able to thank him enough for his truly Christian unselfish devotedness to the holy cause.[39]

From July 27 to 31 of 1921 Strasbourg was once again the scene of a "Congress of Sacred Music" (Congrès de musique sacrée). The first day there were a High Mass, Vespers, Compline, and Benediction, at which everything was sung in Gregorian chant, the congregation alternating with the seminarians and the children of the *maîtrise*. In his review of the congress, Félix Raugel wrote approvingly of the chant, and especially of the expert conducting of Canon Victori, "qui a le secret de conduire avec précision, fermeté et souplesse les grandes messes."[40] On the evening of the second day "one of the most memorable events" of the congress took place—Joseph Bonnet's organ recital at the Salle des Fêtes. On the program were Bach's Fantasie und Fugue in G Minor (BWV 542) and Franck's Choral in A Minor, which "created a sensation." Bonnet also played contemporary repertoire by Charles Tournemire, Guy Ropartz, and Marie-Joseph Erb.[41] As a tribute to J. S. Bach, whose death date was July 28, 1750, Congress attendees also visited the Church of Saint-Thomas to see the Silbermann organ built between 1737–40 and restored in 1907 under the curatorship of

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[38]Dom André Mocquereau and Dom Augustine Gatard.

[39]"Comments on the Gregorian Congress," *The Catholic Choirmaster*, 6, no. 3 (July 1920), 85.

[40]Félix Raugel, "Les Journées du Congrès général de musique sacrée de Strasbourg: 27–31 Juillet 1921," *Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, 22, no. 10–11 (September-October 1921), 262–73.

[41]Tournemire's *Triple choral*, predating *L'orgue mystique,* inspired by the dogma of the Holy Trinity, *Thème varié* by Ropartz, and *Alleluia* by Erb. *Ibid.,* 265.

Albert Schweitzer. Several activities took place after the congress, among which was another organ recital by Joseph Bonnet, this time at the Cathedral of Saint-Martin, in Colmar.

If Joseph Bonnet was known in France and in the United States as both an organist and a promoter of Gregorian chant, after the Parisian Congress of 1922, he became known to an even wider audience. It was at this congress that he gave his seminal lecture, "On the Role of the Liturgical Organist," and this lecture was published in *Revue grégorienne*,[42] later appearing in English, Spanish, and Italian translations.[43] The congress was held December 6–8, 1922, and several parishes were hosts to its liturgical components.[44] The opening Mass—a Low Mass with music—was held at the Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and featured both Gregorian Ordinary and Proper chants, as well as polyphony.[45] Dom Maur Sablayrolles, O.S.B., directed the chants and Alice Lefebvre, one of the original "inspirers" of the Gregorian Institute of Paris, directed the polyphony. Following Mass there were two sessions of lectures, one at 10:00 and one at 2:00. At the 2:00 session Joseph Bonnet gave his "conférence sur l'organist liturgique."

At 4:00 there was a performance of "religious" music at the Church of Saint-Eustache, with Joseph Bonnet presiding at the *grand orgue* and Félix Raugel conducting the *maîtrise* of Saint-Eustache. With the exception of Rameau's motet *Laboravi*, the choral and organ music was all chant-based. There were interesting and innovative *alternatim* performances, for example, the alternation of the office hymn *Iste Confessor* with organ interludes on that hymn by Cabezón and Titelouze. The modern era was not neglected, as Bonnet played chant-based works by Guilmant, Widor, Paul de Maleingreau, Alphonse Schmitt, and Edward Bairstow, the organist at the Anglican York Minster (cathedral). The last part of the program contained Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, accompanied by choral music of Déodat de Sévérac, André Caplet, Fauré, Widor, Palestrina, and Théodore Dubois. This was capped by Bonnet's rendition of Tournemire's *Triple choral* (*Sancta Trinitas*).

It is instructive to compare different types of sacred music events in which Joseph Bonnet participated. There are two examples from 1925 that present interesting contrasts. One event was held in a major city—Paris—while the other was held in Angers—a provincial city in the Loire valley, west-southwest of Paris. The Diocese of Angers hosted two "Journées liturgiques." These liturgical days were scheduled for February 1–2, 1925, and so they encompassed the Feast of the Purification. Monsieur L. Baron, the *maître de chapelle* of the Basilica of Sainte-Anne d'Auvray, published a two-part report on the Angers congress in *Revue grégorienne*, and provided some vivid descriptions of the liturgies, lectures, and performances.

[42]Bonnet, "Le rôle de l'organiste liturgique du grand orgue," *Revue grégorienne*, 8 (1923), 3–11.

[43]See "The Role of the Liturgical Organist," *Cæcilia*, 63 (1936), 207–209. Reprinted from "Catholic Music," by Rev. J. E. Ronan. "La tasca de l'organista liturgic en el gran orgue," in *Vida christiana*, Barcelona, 1923, pp. 251–56. "La missione dell'organista liturgico," in *Bollettino ceciliano*, Vicenza, 1934, pp. 118–24.

[44]The churches of Saint-Merry, Saint-Sulpice, Notre-Dame, and Sainte-Clotilde.

[45]*Revue grégorienne*, 7 (1922), 191.

For the first time ever, all the choirs of the diocese came together and chanted under the direction of Dom Gajard. Baron remarked that the choirs were "massed a little confusedly in the left transept." They alternated with a choir made up of the *schola* from the major seminary and the choir of the cathedral. They were: "Deux masses vocales, assurement très différentes," remarked M. Baron, and he described how they began rather shakily, but by the time they reached the *Kyrie* they were "already more firmly established," and by the *Credo* they chanted with "a truly perfect alternation."

> Thus, during all of this office which was extolling the kingship of Christ, source of peace and of joy, the Gregorian melodies truly bent our pacified and joyous souls in adoration.[46]

Then Baron describes glowingly the self-effacing artistry of Joseph Bonnet as liturgical organist.

> Not for an instant did the grand organ come to trouble our recollection; with a marvelous art it united itself with the common prayer. The artist, the virtuoso, effaced himself behind the idea that was dominating all of the liturgy that day. In peace and in calm he chanted on his keyboards the adoration and the joy of souls that are united by the sacrifice of the altar to thousands and thousands of angels who sing before the Lamb the thrice-holy hymn. We were not drawn towards the organ but conducted by it towards the altar. The Gregorian themes of the office were reprised, developed, and glossed in the admirable counterpoint of the old masters: Frescobaldi—Merulo—Titelouze . . . or even some grave chorale of Bach enveloped us in its harmonies full of sweetness [*suavité*] . . . The organ thus was not a separate element which took its part in full independence, it entered into the work of grandiose art that is a liturgical office, it let itself be guided by the Spirit; the same one who inspired the Gregorian melodies, the gestures of the celebrant, the choreography of the sacred ministers and the admirable prayers of the Mass.[47]

And this was only the First Vespers of Candlemas! The antiphons and psalms for this office are those of the Feast of the Circumcision. Baron reported that Joseph Bonnet took some of the motives from these chants for some "très heureuses" improvisations, in which he "modified neither the rhythm, nor the modality nor even the text on which he gave such an admirable musical commentary."[48] Vespers ended with Benediction, at which the choir sang Palestrina's five-voice motet *Exsultate Deo.* The riches of the vigil were not over, however. At 8:00 was Compline, followed by Bonnet's organ recital. Baron commented: "The liturgy held him back no more in its severe rules; thus the artist revealed himself."

The day of the Purification featured a Pontifical High Mass at the cathedral. Baron describes vividly the changing of the vestments and the solemn liturgical actions

[46]See especially the Magnificat antiphon, *Senex púerum porábat.* Interestingly, the Feast of Christ the King was instituted by Pius XI on Dec 11, 1925!

[47]L. Baron, *Revue grégorienne*, 10 (1925), 80.

[48]Ibid., 114.

of the Mass. The choir sang a polyphonic ordinary, the *Missa Puer natus est* of Francisco Guerrero. Joseph Bonnet is not mentioned here, so perhaps his participation was confined to the first day of the congress. Baron was awed by the music of the Mass, but a little critical that the choir also took over the singing of the faithful, which he felt gave the Mass an unsatisfactory, performance-like character.

Meanwhile, in Paris, just two months later, on April 28 to 30, were held the "journées de chant grégorien" under the chairmanship of Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris. It was he who had started the Institut Grégorien de Paris, which was the organizer of the congress. Each day of the congress a Pontifical High Mass was celebrated at a different parish. Monday's Mass was celebrated by Dom Gaugain, abbot of Saint-Martin de Ligugé, at the Church of Saint-Germain des Prés. Tuesday the Mass was celebrated by Monseigneur Gaillard, the Bishop of Meaux, and Wednesday Cardinal Dubois himself was the celebrant at Bonnet's Church of Saint-Eustache. A variety of scholæ chanted the Ordinary and Proper of the Masses—the schola of the Insitut Grégorien, the Chanteuses de Sainte-Cécile, the scholasticate of the Fathers of the Oratory, the seminarians of the Holy Spirit Fathers, the seminarians of the Foreign Missions (Missions Etrangères), the seminarians of the Lazarists, the seminarians of the Diocese of Meaux, "etc.," and by "tous les fidèles qui voudront y participer." Some extra Masses were celebrated as well—a morning High Mass on April 30 at the Church of Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles. Also, there was an evening Mass in the crypt of Saint-Honoré d'Eylau, on April 29, for "les fidèles occupies dans le jour." André Marchal played the grand organ on Tuesday at Saint-Germain des Prés and Joseph Bonnet on Thursday at Saint-Eustache. The schedule also included lectures by, among others, Dom Mocquereau, Henri Potiron, and the composer André Caplet (1878–1925). Unfortunately, Caplet died unexpectedly on April 22, so in his place Joseph Bonnet gave a lecture in memory of this gifted composer of sacred music (also known as an orchestrator of some of Debussy's works). Bonnet, in eulogizing his friend, was also acting in his capacity as the president of the Institut grégorien.

In 1933 the Ligue patriotique des Françaises, an association of Catholic women started an "apostolate in chant" as part of their contribution to Catholic Action (Action catholique). Following

on this, they held a Gregorian chant week (May 8–13) presided over by Dom Gajard. The league was associated with Paris's Church of the Madeleine, so the closing Mass for the chant week was celebrated there by the abbot of Solesmes, Dom Germain Cozien, O.S.B. Joseph Bonnet held forth on the *grand orgue* with works by Brahms, Merulo, Frescobaldi, and Handel, but also contributed an improvisation on a Gregorian theme.[49]

From May 4–November 25, 1937, Paris was the scene of the Paris International Exposition, of which an ambitious, two-part conference—the Congrès international de musique sacrée—formed an important element. The congress was organized by the Union des maîtres de chapelle et organistes, under the patronage of Action catholique française. The president of the Union was Charles-Marie Widor, but he unexpectedly died on March 12, so the direction of the congress was taken over by the Comité artistique, of which Joseph Bonnet was a member.[50]

Part I, the "International" session, was held on Saturday, May 22, and featured Eastern European liturgical music. There was a Solemn Mass in the Byzantine Rite, along with a concert by a visiting choir from Zagreb. Part II, held from July 19–25, was the "Congrès internationale de musique sacrée (Chant et Orgue)."[51] This focused on sacred music in France.

On Wednesday, July 21, Joseph Bonnet gave a "Communication"—a short academic paper—on "Gregorian Chant in Organ Literature" (Le Chant grégorien dans la littérature d'orgue). In this paper Bonnet asserted that the study of works by Cabezón, Titelouze, and Frescobaldi in which the polyphonic elements are based on liturgical, i.e., Gregorian, melodies, demonstrates that all the techniques ("formes") used by Bach in his chorale preludes were anticipated by these Catholic masters. Later that same day, at Saint-Eustache, Bonnet played a recital that contained a number of works dedicated to him, among which was the *Fantaisie-choral pour la fête de la Pentecôte*, from Tournemire's *L'Orgue mystique*.

The 1937 congress is the last record I have been able to find of Joseph Bonnet as an animateur of Gregorian chant congresses. In 1940 Bonnet would leave France with his family at the outbreak of World War II. His calendar already included concerts and teaching engagements in the United States and Canada, but in the summer of 1944 Bonnet was struck down by a heart attack while on vacation in Canada with his wife and children. ❖

[49]Marquise de Vesins, "Correspondances et Nouvelles—Initiative heureuse—La semaine de chant organisée par la Ligue patriotique des Françaises," *Revue grégorienne*, 18 (1933), 237–40.

[50]Other artistic committee members included Gabriel Pierné, Maurice Emmanuel, Louis Vierne, Henri Busser, Charles Tournemire, Amédée Gastoué, Abel Deaux, Marcel Dupré, and Edouard Miganan. Maurice Duruflé served on the *Comité d'action*.

[51]Interestingly, the congress booklet shows that among the list of those attending was the not-quite twenty-year-old Mary Berry!

Musica Divina: The Musician Nuns of the Convent of Santa Clara in Oporto (1760–1830)

Portuguese convents with ample resources provided the opportunity for composers to produce excellent sacred music and for talented young women who entered the convents to perform it.

by Rosana Marreco Bresciac

he importance of music in European female convents is well known, and the convents of Portugal are no exception. The music performed in the Portuguese convents was renowned among travelers who visited the kingdom. Its high quality can be verified through the vast quantities of preserved music scores, many of which were written by some of the finest composers in Portugal. The scores, which belonged to female convents in the city of Oporto, primarily date from the 1760s to the 1830s and are preserved in the National Library of Portugal. They reveal the outstanding vocal abilities of some of the nuns, who were also major patrons of the arts. They commissioned scores to be performed on specific occasions by particular vocal and instrumental ensembles, and composers had to consider the individual vocal abilities of each of the performers. In this paper, I propose a study of the music performed in the Convent of Santa Clara in Oporto, one of the most important female religious institutions in the city, where physical and human resources allowed for the production of a unique repertoire with particular, idiomatic characteristics.

As the second most important city of the kingdom of Portugal, Oporto's notability grew throughout the eighteenth century due to the commerce established with foreign kingdoms. Its most notable export was port wine, which was highly appreciated in the foreign market, allowing for the ascension of the bourgeoisie, who shared its power with the Catholic Church. In the mid-eighteenth century Oporto had fifteen convents and the landscape of the city was decisively marked by their towers and buildings. Although many of the convents were erected in previous centuries, the city's good finances allowed for major buildings to be constructed or renovated according to the current eighteenth century style.

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Figure 1. View of the City of Oporto in the Eighteenth Century. W. M. Kinsey, Portugal Illustrated *(London: Treuttel and Würtz, 1829).*

Oporto had four female convents at the end of the eighteenth century: Santa Clara, São Bento da Avé-Maria, Madre de Deus de Monchique, and São José e Santa Teresa. The Convent of Santa Clara was a royal institution, founded by King John I in 1416.[1] At the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were more than a hundred nuns living in this convent and their income was the second biggest of the city,[2] surpassed only by that of the Royal Convent of São Bento da Avé-Maria.[3] The income of the convent allowed the nuns to proceed with several restoration works and the acquisition of other facilities.[4] As previously mentioned, some of the major buildings of Oporto incorporated baroque characteristics during the eighteenth century and the Convent of Santa Clara was no exception. Although the façade kept its original fifteenth century lines, the interior of the chapel was completely refurbished from 1729, with golden

[1]Maria Eugênia Matos Fernandes, *O Mosteiro de Santa Clara do Porto em meados do séc. XVIII (1730–1780)* (Oporto: Arquivo histórico & câmara municipal do Porto, 1992), p. 27.

[2]Padre António Carvalho da Costa, *Corografia Portugueza* (Braga: Typographia de Domingos Gonçalves Gouveia, 1868), p. 311.

[3]Carlos de Azevedo, "A cidade do Porto nos relatórios das visitas «*ad limina*» do arquivo do Vaticano," *Revista de história*: *O Porto na época moderna* [conference proceedings] vol. I (Oporto: Instituto nacional de investigação científica, 1979), p. 203.

[4]P-Pd, Po-9, 3ª série, nº 3c, fls.117v.–120v.

woodcarvings, altars, and new images of saints, constituting one of the finest examples of Portuguese religious decoration in the eighteenth century.[5] The works carried out by the nuns also affected the music production: two organ cases are visible in the interior of the church, one of which is effectively an instrument, while the small positive organ, which was probably built during the first half of the eighteenth century, is possibly the oldest remaining instrument of this church. Unfortunately, no vocal music from the first half of the century could be identified as of the present research.

Figures 2 and 3. Façade and Main Altar of the Church of the Convent of Santa Clara.

[5]Robert Smith, *A Talha em Portugal* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1962), p. 111.

Music in Portugal went through a major renewal at the beginning of the eighteenth century when King John V devoted considerable resources to increasing the level of the music produced and performed in the kingdom. Several renowned musicians were hired from the *Capella Giulia* in Rome to work at the court, and several talented Portuguese composers were sent to Italy to perfect their knowledge.[6] The attention of the king was mainly focused on religious music. King John V, a devoted Catholic, was responsible for a major investment in the construction and refurbishment of church buildings and the arts produced for religious institutions. Throughout the eighteenth century, music in Portugal was increasingly influenced by Italian models. A significant number of Italian composers started working for Portuguese institutions. Music scores were imported and commissioned by female convents from composers

Throughout the eighteenth century, music in Portugal was increasingly influenced by Italian models.

[6]Rui Vieira Nery; Paulo Ferreira de Castro, *Histoire de la musique* (Lisbon: Imprensa nacional–Casa da Moeda, 1991), p. 92.

resident in the country such as Valentino Fioravanti, David Perez, and Giuseppe Totti, and others who had never been to Portugal such as Giovanni Paisiello, Domenico Mombelli, and Nicola Porpora.[7]

In the case of Oporto, an important Italian composer named Girolamo Sertori seems to have had a close influence on the composers studied in the current paper. Sertori was from Parma and spent some of his career working for Juan Esteban de Amendáriz in Pamplona, Spain.[8] Between 1758 and 1760 he organized a collection of Italian and Spanish opera arias and overtures entitled *Divertimenti musicali per camera* and composed six harpsichord sonatas dedicated to Maria Josefa de Armendáriz y Acedo, daughter of the marquis.[9] In 1772 Sertori appeared as a member of the Italian opera company managed by Nicola Setaro, which performed in the city of Valladolid in the 1770s.[10] The oldest manuscript of Sertori preserved in Portugal dates from 1764, and there are others from 1765, which allows us to assume that the composer went to Porto between his engagements in Pamplona and Valladolid. Some of his works have a clear connection to the works composed by Portuguese musicians António da Silva Leite and Francisco de São Boaventura decades later, such as the Lection *Manum suam misit hostis*.[11] It is not likely that Silva Leite had any contact with Girolamo Sertori when the Italian was in the city of Oporto, as he was still young. However, the same cannot be stated regarding Francisco de São Boaventura, who was much more experienced by the 1760s and whose works also clearly display the influence of the style of Sertori's works.

We know very little about Francisco de São Boaventura, except that he was a Carmelite friar who composed several works for the nuns of the convents of São Bento da Avé-Maria and Santa Clara in Oporto.[12] In the documents of the male convent of the Carmelites, a Francisco de São Boaventura is mentioned as the General Attorney of the Carmel Order in 1742.[13] If this is the same Boaventura who composed works for the nuns of Oporto, he was already quite elderly when he did so, as the manuscripts that are still preserved date from 1773 to 1802. Among his works, besides the great number of religious vocal pieces, one finds

[7]Several manuscripts from these composers are currently preserved at the National Library of Portugal. Most of them used to belong to the extinct female convents of São Pedro de Arouca and Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Luz in Arroios, Lisbon.

[8]María Gembero Ustárroz, "El Repertorio operístico en una corte nobiliaria española del siglo XVIII: La obra de Girolamo Sertori al servicio de los Marqueses de Castelfuerte," in *La ópera en España e Hisponoamérica* (Madrid: Instituto complutense de ciencias musicales, 2001), p. 404.

[9]The manuscripts of the six sonatas for harpsichord are currently at the National Library in Madrid and were studied by Giorgio Pestelli. Giorgio Pestelli, "Contributi alla storia della forma-sonata. Sei sonate per cembalo di Girolamo Sertori (1758)," *Revista Italiana di Musicologia* 2, no. I (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana Editrice, 1967), pp. 131–39.

[10]Ibid., 409–10.

[11]Lisbon, Biblioteca nacional, MM 272//4.

[12]Ernesto Vieira, *Diccionario biographico de musicos Portugueszes* (Lisbon: Typographia Mattos Moreira & Pineiro, 1900), p. 282.

[13]Arquivo municipal do Porto, *Inventario da fabrica q.e achamos/No Nosso Hospicio do Senhor Dalem/ quando fomos tomar posse deste por fali/cim.to do P. Faustino da Costa; q.e foi/aos 5 de Março de 1739*. Seção de reservados, M-VR-91, fl 13r.

verses and sonatas, one minuet for the organ, and one minuet and one sonata for two guitars and two violins, written with didactic purpose.

António da Silva Leite was the most prominent musician of the city of Oporto at the end of eighteenth century and the beginning of nineteenth century. He was born in 1759 to a bourgeois family, which allowed him to have a good education to enter religious life. However, he decided not to take the vows and dedicated his life to music.[14] Silva Leite worked as a professor, organist, composer, and director of the Real teatro de São João, Oporto's opera house, which opened in 1798. His activity as a music teacher led him to write and publish several works, including the treatise *Rezumo de todas as regras, e preceitos da cantoria, assim da musica metrica, como do cantochão* (1787); *Estudo de guitarra*, which was a collection of works for that instrument (1796); *Novo directorio fúnebre*, published in 1806; and *Organisto instruído*. Hired as an organist in 1779 by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Oporto to accompany the choir of this major church, he was later involved in a process instituted by the bishop's attorney Francisco Matheus Xavier de Carvalho, who forbade the presence of professional non-religious musicians in the churches and chapels of the diocese without the previous authorization of the bishop.[15] The process was cancelled right after due to the rather clever intervention of Silva Leite.[16] In 1808 he was appointed chapel master of Oporto's cathedral, a position he occupied until his death. His affiliation with the nuns of Santa Clara lasted from 1795 until 1828, five years before his death in 1833.

The high level of music chapels of certain religious orders was famous in a great part of the Catholic world. In convents such as Santa Clara and São Bento da Avé-Maria of Oporto, where a significant part of the elite enrolled their daughters, the cultural level of the nuns was quite elevated, since the education provided to these upper class young ladies included literature[17] and music, sometimes acquired before joining the convents. It is known that some girls had a higher level of education than others when they joined the convent. Having a solid musical education was highly praised when enrolling in a convent as important as Santa Clara, as families could save a considerable amount of money on the dowry of their daughters.[18]

There are several known cases of young ladies being accepted at prestigious religious institutions in the Portuguese kingdom just because they could sing or knew how to play an instrument. One example is the case of the Convent of Santa Clara

[14]"Fez [Silva Leite] os primeiros estudos com o fim de seguir a carreira eclesiástica, chegando a receber as ordens menores; achando-se porém dotado de uma grande vocação para a musica, que desde a infancia estudara subsidiariamente, abandonou o primeiro intento, dedicando se exclusivamente ao estudo profundo da arte." Vieira, *Diccionario biographico*, 19.

[15]Vieira, *Diccionario biographico*, 54.

[16]For more information, see Alberto Bessa, "O Porto d'outros tempos," *O Tripeiro*, 3, 104 (March 1913).

[17]Isabel Morujão, "Entre a voz e o silêncio: literatura e espiritualidade nos mosteiros femininos," *Rever*, 11, 1 (Jan/Jun 2011), 48.

[18]Craig A. Monson, *Divas in the Convent: Nuns, Music & Defiance in 17th Century Italy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), p. 3.

do Desterro in Salvador da Bahia, the most important female convent of Portuguese America in the eighteenth century. In July 1708, the abbess of the convent asked the Portuguese king for permission to admit two daughters of the mason Manoel Rodrigues who could play the organ and the harp. The abbess argued that the convent was almost devoid of women who could play these instruments, and that it was essential to admit at least the organist sister, since it was not possible to keep the musical activity of the convent without this instrument. The Archbishop of Salvador decided that the organist could be accepted at the convent; however, the harpist sister could not follow the same path as she had been previously married. The organist was accepted at Santa Clara almost two years later, in November 1710.[19]

In fact, joining a convent in Portugal in the eighteenth century could be far more exciting than remaining in the family home, as the nuns could have much more contact with other women and men than regular single or married women. The female convents were places to establish social or even romantic relationships,[20] besides being a great place for poetical and theatrical performances.[21] These great festivities were held during the most important occasions of the liturgical calendar, and music had a very important role regarding the affluence of people in a particular convent.[22]

Being a professional musician could put a young lady in the upper classes of the convent, where she was excused from menial tasks such as cooking and cleaning, and it could also release her from certain obligations regarding religious services. In the Convent of São Bento da Avé-Maria, the rule was quite clear, stating that the nun responsible for administrating the choir, books, scores, lights, bells, or the organs[23] had to provide what was to be sung or read, but should not worry about anything else, being relieved of all other duties (including praying) as long as she was present.[24]

Regarding the singer-nuns, the Convent of Santa Clara had a few soloists who should be mentioned. Especially important is the role of Maria Peregrina, a singer who joined the Convent of Santa Clara at a very early age and who took vows in 1797. The scores preserved indicate that she was

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[19]Anna Amélia Vieira Nascimento, *Patriarcado e Religião: as enclausuradas clarissas do Convento do Desterro da Bahia (1677–1890)* (Salvador da Bahia: Conselho Estadual de Cultura, 1994), pp. 56–57.

[20]In the eighteenth century it was very common in Portugal for noblemen to have mistresses inside the convents. They were known as "*freiráticos*." King John V was a *freirático* himself, having assumed three sons of his mistresses, all nuns at the Convent of Odivelas.

[21]Maria Antónia Lopes, *Mulheres, espaço e sociabilidade (2ª metade do século XVIII)* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1989), p. 53.

[22]Cristina Fernandes, "A Música no contexto da cerimónia da Profissão nos mosteiros femininos portugueses (1789–1828)," *Revista Portuguesa de Musicologia*, 7-8 (1997/98), 67.

[23]The organist had to take care of the organ, always keeping it close and avoiding the performance of profane melodies. *Cerimonial da Congregação dos Monges Negros da Ordem do Patriarcha S. Bento do Reyno de Portugal* (Coimbra: Oficina de Diogo Gomez de Loureyro & de Lourenço Craesbeeck, 1647), p. 8.

[24]Porto, Biblioteca Pública Municipal, Ms.1232, *Directorio*, cap. sexto.

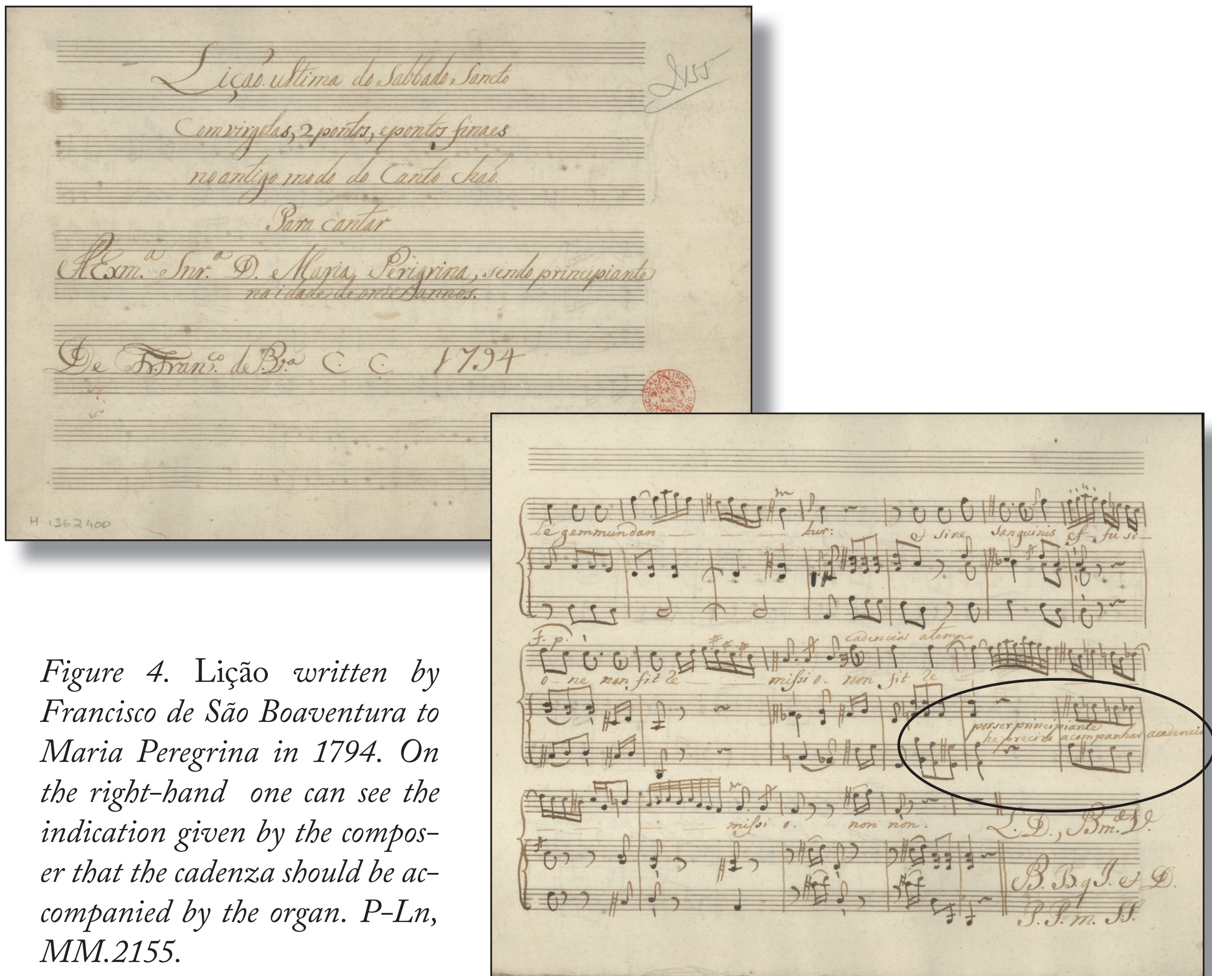

Figure 4. Lição *written by Francisco de São Boaventura to Maria Peregrina in 1794. On the right-hand one can see the indication given by the composer that the cadenza should be accompanied by the organ. P-Ln, MM.2155.*

a pupil of the composer Francisco de São Boaventura, who dedicated music to her when she was only eleven years old.

The manuscript of this work has the following indication by the composer:

> Third Lamentation to be sung on Wednesday, beginning and ending like the ancient mode of the passionary, to be performed by Miss Maria Peregrina, who with uncompleted 12 years old can only hold the A string, and the other notes or points cannot be sustained for too long, especially on the high ones. From the Reverend Priest Master Francisco de São Boaventura, Carmelite Friar.[25]

Francisco de São Boaventura showed constant interest in the technical and musical evolution of his pupil, who from a very early age was already able to sing a few virtuosic passages. Even though her tessitura was somehow restricted (d'–g''), the aria is very expressive. At the end of the aria, the teacher indicated that since the singer was still a beginner, the cadenza needed to be accompanied by the organ.

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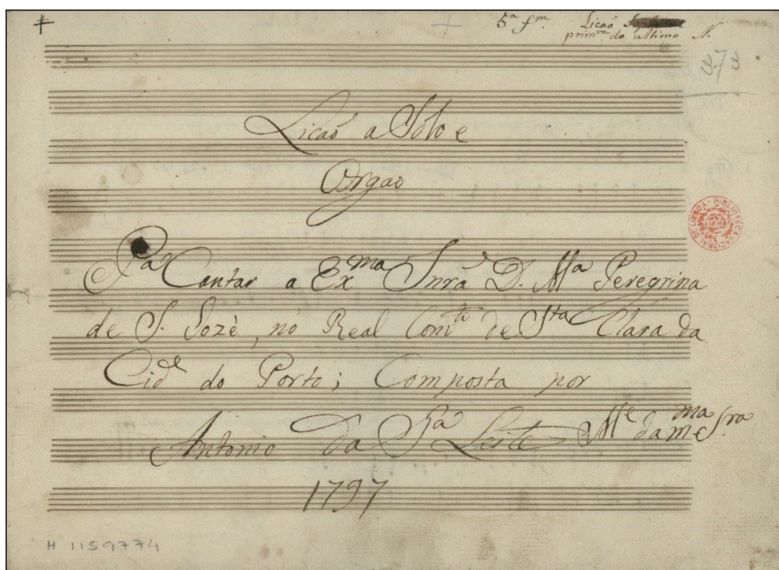
[25]Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MM.478.



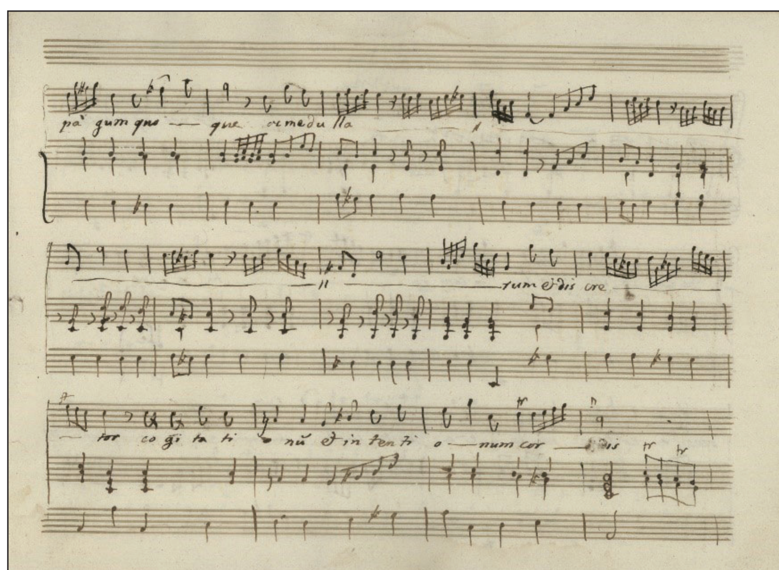


Figure 5. Lição *a solo e órgão by António da Silva Leite. Dated of 1797 and dedicated to Maria Peregrina. P-Ln, MM 373.*

Three years later, when Maria Peregrina had taken vows, António da Silva Leite dedicated two lessons to the young nun, with longer coloratura passages and written candenzas, no longer accompanied. Both Silva Leite and Boaventura wrote very expressive arias for Maria Peregrina, where the liturgical meaning of the texts is highlighted by the long and eloquent musical phrases. The last score dedicated to this nun dates from 1805, one year before her death in August 1806.

Another important performer of the Convent of Santa Clara at the end of the

18th century was Maria Roberta. She was born to a wealthy family of Oporto and joined the convent on May 16th, 1777, paying the dowry of 1,200,000 reis, plus 30,000 reis as charity to the sacristy.[26] Similar to Maria Peregrina, Maria Roberta was under the musical guidance of Francisco de São Boaventura, who dedicated a few works to her. The oldest, a bass aria adapted to soprano, has the following indication: "It still can be plainer, and if you wish it, please let me know because my desire is the same."[27] Once again, the composer demonstrates his concern about the technical level of his students to perform some works in public, being always available to adjust the works so that his performers would feel comfortable.

An interesting work is the *Lectio 2 in Feria 6*, by Francisco de São Boaventura, dated 1773. The work was composed four years before the arrival of Maria Roberta at Santa Clara, which leads to two hypotheses: either the piece was composed previously by Boaventura and later dedicated to the nun when she was already under his musical guidance and had acquired the desirable technique, or Maria Roberta was already a student of Boaventura before joining the convent, as some young women were already proficient musicians when they decided to enroll in a religious institution. However, the mentioned score requires the singer to have a significant technical level, being considerably more virtuosic than the work written in 1774, which reinforces the first hypothesis.

António da Silva Leite also wrote a duet to be performed by Maria Peregrina and Maria Roberta, accompanied by three organs. At the time of the composition of this work, the Convent of Santa Clara relied on a great organ, probably built in the 1720s and restructured in the second half of the century, a small positive organ built in the first decades of the 18th century, and a new positive organ dated 1803. Although the instruments were considerably different from each other and presented distinct technical characteristics—they were originally conceived with different diapasons and ranges—they were set to be played together. Boaventura wrote one work for three organs and four voices, an *Ofertorio* for the Christmas Mass,[28] and Silva Leite wrote at least fourteen works for solo, duet, three, and four voices accompanied by all the organs.[29]

Regarding the duet, although the instrumental parts do not present a very high technical level, the vocal parts require a considerable amount of agility for both voices. António da Silva Leite writes an interesting dialogue between the voices, in movements with very distinct characteristics. This can be noticed in the slow counterpoint movement in the middle of the piece, which offers a great contrast with the faster and more virtuosic movements presented before and after. The way the two voices are written indicates that

[26] P-Lantt, *Livro dos Assentos das Entradas das Noviças e de suas Profissões e para assentar o dia de seu falecimento*, Ordem dos Frades Menores, Província de Portugal, Convento de Santa Clara do Porto, livro 52, fl. 52v.

[27] P-Ln, *Solo de Basso variado 3ª vez p.a soprano de Francisco de São Boaventura*, MM.2931.

[28] P-Ln, MM.292/2.

[29] P-Ln, MM.1231, MM.292/4, MM.2924, MM.1736, MM.312/5, MM.1068, MM.2987, MM.1545, MM.1547, Mm.1548, MM.1549, MM.1550, MM.1553, MM.292/3.

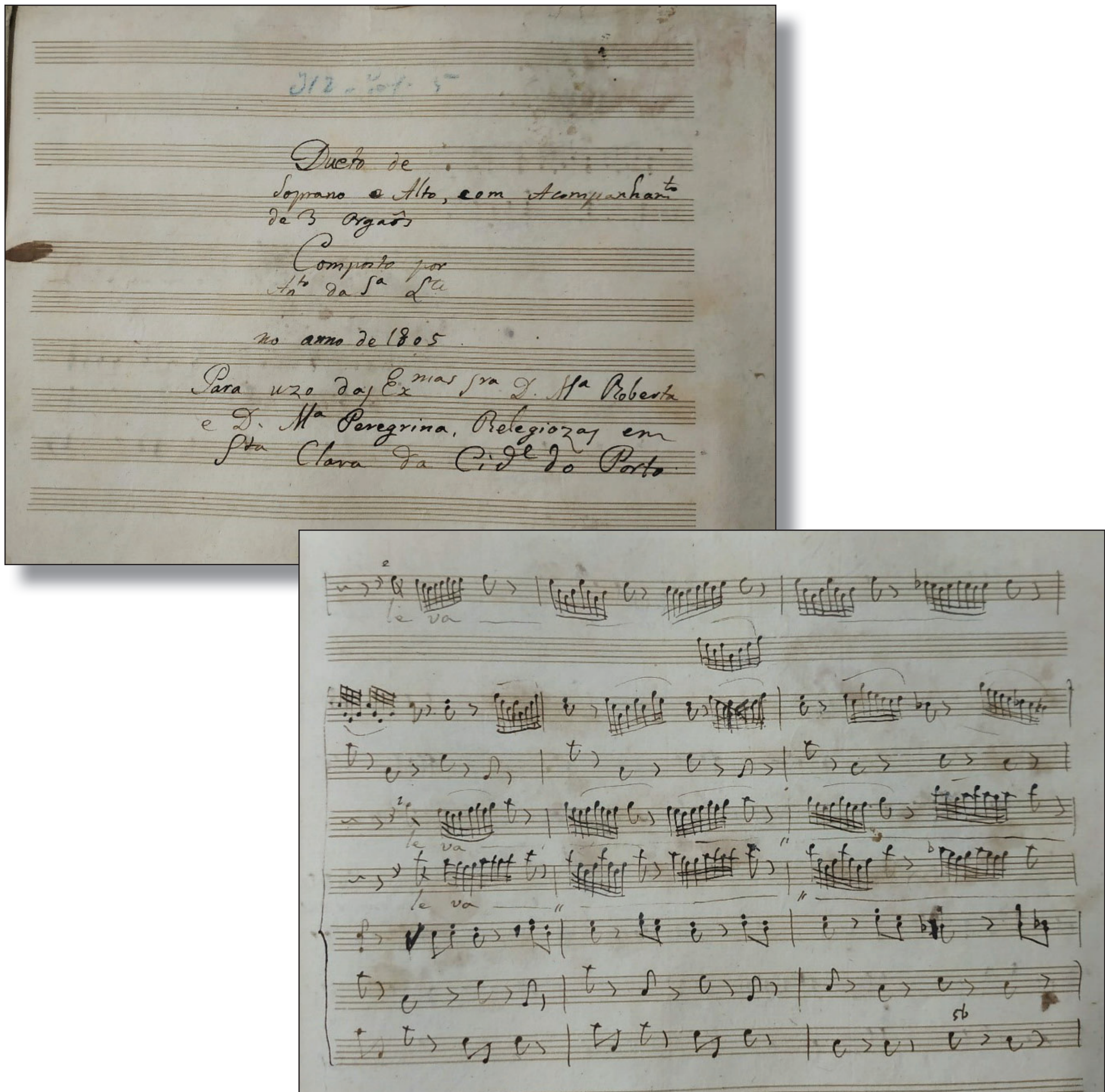


Figure 6. Duet written by António da Silva Leite for Maria Peregrina and Maria Roberta.

Maria Peregrina and Maria Roberta probably had matching/similar voice tones and similar technical characteristics, as we can see in some passages where the two voices are written as one single instrument.

The last musical manuscript dedicated to Maria Roberta is dated 1805, although the nun only died on July 26th, 1842, according to the information provided by the *Livros dos Assentos das Entradas das Noviças e de suas Profissões e para assentar o dia de seu falecimento*.[30]

The character of the music performed in the Convent of Santa Clara during the

[30]P-Lantt, *Livro dos Assentos*, fl. 52v.

transition between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is quite unique. Most of the music preserved is accompanied by one or more organs, although violins, basses, and the harp were also eventually employed. A great number of the scores still preserved are for three, four, or more voices; however, there is a significant corpus of solo vocal music accompanied by the organs and other instruments, and many of them contain the name of the nun who commissioned/performed these particular works. A great number of these works present considerably virtuosic passages, including very long phrases in coloratura, wide tessituras, and long cadenzas. These characteristics are shared by the music performed at the opera theatres of the time, which is understandable considering that one of the composers who wrote for the convent, António da Silva Leite, was also the director of the city's opera house concomitantly. The use of secular instrumental music and music with operatic characteristics in the church was apparently highly esteemed by Portuguese and foreign travelers, even if it was not allowed in every religious institution. William Beckford writes that priest Teodoro de Almeida told him during his visit to the Convent of Sabianas at Belem that:

> We are not very strong in music. We do not allow *modinhas* to be performed neither opera arias, the plainchant is everything you can expect from our nuns. Therefore, we are not worthy of receiving such distinguished visitors since we have nothing considered interesting to the external world to recommend us.[31]

The priest was perfectly aware that the use of music with profane characteristics or even profane music itself was considered far more attractive to visitors than the plainchant, and this seems to have been the common practice in the two major convents of Oporto until the 1830s, when the extinction of the religious orders completely changed the way that these institutions functioned.

In 1834 all the convents, monasteries, and religious institutions were extinguished, and their belongings were secularized and incorporated into the public heritage, except for sacred objects, which were donated to the dioceses. This process affected the male institutions, which were immediately abolished. Female convents were only forbidden to accept new novices. They were active until 1862, when the government established that female convents and monasteries would exist until the death of the last nun. The incomes of the convents decreased substantially and although music kept being produced, the commission of new repertoire was drastically reduced.

The Convent of Santa Clara of Oporto was finally extinguished in 1901. Since then, the building has been used for different purposes: the cloister belongs to the police, while parts of the convent served as a health center and nursery. Fortunately, the luxurious interior of the church of Santa Clara and the cases of its multiple organs are still preserved, even though they remain silent testimonies of the glorious musical activity developed by the talented nuns who lived behind the thick stone walls of the convent two hundred years ago. ❖

[31]William Beckford, *A Corte da Rainha D. Maria I: Correspondência de William Beckford 1787* (Lisbon: Frenesi, 2007), 56–57.

Duquesne Student and Alumni Trip to Paris and Brittany: May 13–24, 2019

Fruitful visits of historic organs with commemorations of historic organists.

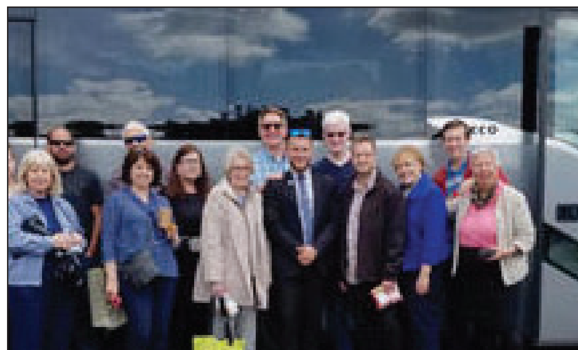
by Ann Labounsky

Since 2000 I have taken students and alumni to Europe to enjoy the culture, music, and especially the organs. These trips have taken us to Southern France (2000) for the anniversary of the death of my teacher André Marchal, to Paris several times, Eastern France, Northern Germany, Bavaria, and England in 2016.

The purpose of this trip was, likewise, to explore the culture, language, and organs of France; but in particular, we sought to trace our Duquesne Spiritain roots and the legacy of my other teacher, Jean Langlais, in Brittany.

Sixteen of us left on Sunday and flew to Chicago arriving in Paris the next morning. I met several university groups on the plane. At the hotel Terminus near Gare de Lyon, where we stayed in Paris, there was also a group from Robert Morris University, who were there studying international business.

We had planned the trip carefully with several meetings prior to the trip. After our time in England three years ago with the spacious bus that Peter Luley arranged, we eventually decided that a bus was in order for this trip. Colleen Lissy made all the arrangements through a company in Seattle, who had a French counterpart in Caen, Normandy. During the previous trips we had relied on public transportation and during the last trip to Solesmes six years ago, we went by train and the students walked three miles with their suitcases to reach the monastery. With this older age-group we decided to use a bus with a chauffeur provided by the bus company.

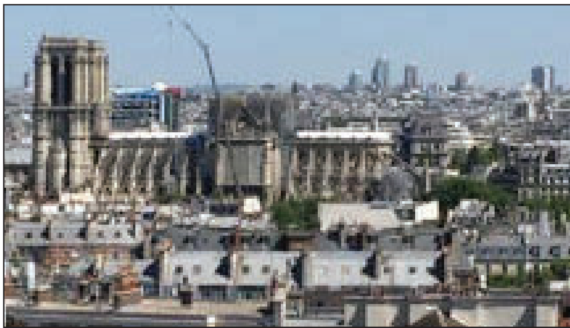


Our group with the bus driver, Guillaume.

Ann Labounsky is professor of music and chairman of the Organ and Sacred Music degree programs as Duquesne University.

The first three days were spent in Paris. We went to several churches including Saint-Antoine des Quinze-Vingts where I had recorded several volumes of Langlais's organ works, and Sainte-Clotilde where Langlais had been the organist for forty-three years. We had arranged to play the organs as these churches in advance and everyone had a chance to try out the instruments. In the morning that we arrived, we went to Rue Duroc, to the Institute for Blind Youth, and the museum of the history of the blind and their illustrious leader Louis Braille, who discovered the system of reading braille notation using six perforated dots. This museum is housed in the Association Valentin Huay down the street from the institute. A blind guide showed us this amazing museum. We walked by the apartments of André Marchal and Jean Langlais at 22 and 26 Rue Duroc. For me it was a nostalgic moment returning to these special places. We had lunch at Place Breteuil where I often came after my lessons.

Wednesday was reserved for our Spiritain roots and the Duruflé apartment. This apartment is tiny and the organ takes up most of the space in the living room. But the views of Paris from the terrace are amazing. This is as close as we came to Notre Dame Cathedral. We did not attempt to go near to it as it was off limits. But we had a very good view from the terrace of Duruflé's apartment.



View of the work on Notre-Dame Cathedral from the terrace of Maurice Duruflé's apartment.

I wanted the students to have some memories of apartments and we were fortunate to be at Duruflé's where Frédéric Blanc was our host. Frédéric had sent a picture of Notre Dame during the fire. He was one of the first to report it.

Older view from April 2019 of Notre-Dame Cathedral during the fire.

The Mother House of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit at 30 Rue Lhomond, is not very far from the Duruflé apartment, the Pantheon, and the Sorbonne. I had visited it three years ago when Father Urfié has invited me to the hospitality week there. This time Father Meudre gave us a tour of the facilities including the chapel and the refectory. The Pleyel piano that had belonged to Lucien Deiss had been moved into the chapel and several students got to play it.

Seeing the room where Father Liebermann had died on February 2, 1852—as they were singing the Magnificat—was a very moving experience for all of us. Statues and the tombs of Blessed Jacques Laval and Brottier are located in the chapel.

Mother House of the Spiritain Fathers with Gareth Allegrucci playing the Playel piano in the chapel.

In the afternoon we took the metro to Auteuil where Frédéric Blanc is organist at the large church of Notre-Dame d'Auteuil. Then it was a walk to 40 Rue de la Fontaine where the Spiritain orphanage (Orphan Apprentices of Auteuil) is located. Few orphans live there anymore, but there is a vibrant community providing food and clothing for the many who need it. The chapel is a gem and houses the original crucifix the replica of which is housed in the Duquesne University Chapel. Father Cesbron gave us an interesting history of the community and Father Brottier's work there. The stained glass windows are particularly moving. Fr. Brottier was an important force within the Spiritain community. He worked in Dakar, Senegal, where he raised funds to build a cathedral. During World War I he served as a chaplain in the infantry and raised funds for this exquisite chapel in three years.

We saw the original crucifix that hangs in the chapel there. Because the dimensions of this Sanctuaire Sainte-Thérèse chapel are larger, this crucifix seems more fitting there than its replica in the DU Chapel. The altar and ambo also harmonize beautifully.

Stained glass window at the Ste. Therese chapel of the motherhouse orphanage of the Spiritains in Auteuil showing Fr. Brottier.

Wednesday we boarded our bus for the trip to the Solesmes Abbey, which is the center for the study and practice of Gregorian chant. It was my fourth trip there, and I had become close to Father Guilmard who had written a practical guide (*Guide Pratique)* to singing Gregorian chant. Our plan was to spend the better part of the day with him singing chant and listening to his explanations of how to accomplish this. Father

Crucifix at the Ste. Thérèse chapel.

Fr. Guilmard and Ann Labounsky at Solesmes.

Guilmard speaks only French so I did the translations. The videos that we made of the day will be used by Paraclete Press on its website to promote this valuable book.

This famous abbey is located in one of the most picturesque places in France on the Sarthe river. The women were housed in three houses across the street from the monastery, and the men were housed within the monastery grounds. All our meals were catered and served in the St. Clement house very near this river. After Compline we were invited to the crypt where the remains of Servant of God, Dom Guéranger are housed.

On Thursday we travelled to Brittany stopping first at La Richardais where Langlais's summer home is located. It was on Rue Suet but now it is renamed Rue Jean Langlais.

The local church has beautiful murals of the stations of the cross by a local painter. We met our guide for this part of the journey, a young organist, Eric Cordé, from Cancale, who had planned this part of our trip. I had corresponded with him for over a year and it was a blessed meeting. We went directly to the church. It was for this church that Langlais had composed his famous *Missa In Simplicitate* for the singer Janine Collard. Patricia Donahoe Burns, who has a voice very similar to that of Janine Collard, sang two movements of this mass in its original space. It was a very special time. Eric Cordé had moved an organ from England there and two stops were working. We then visited Rue Jean Langlais where his summer home was located. After over fifty years, I experienced a surprise to see this small row house that brought back so many memories of my time there with the Langlais family and Janine Collard.

From there it was on to La Fontenelle, the birthplace of Jean Langlais, the famous blind organist, composer, and improviser, who had received an honorary doctorate from Duquesne University in 1976. Without the bus it would have been impossible to visit all these places. La Fontenelle is proud of its most famous luminary and placed a large plaque by the entrance to the church with this inscription:

Jean Langlais's birthplace in La Fontenelle, Brittany.

> La Fontenelle counts among its children a celebrated person in the world of classical music: Jean Langlais. Born in 1907, blind from the age of two, he became a universally-known virtuoso. He gave nearly 300 concerts, notably in the United States. As a composer he wrote and performed his famous "Salve Regina" mass, which was broadcast throughout Europe on Christmas of 1952. He is considered one of the greatest classical composers of the twentieth century

His home across from the church also is marked with a plaque. We were then escorted to the home of Brenda Dean, a gracious English woman who purchased a home on the other side of the church and founded, with Vice President Geneviève Richard, from Les Amis de Jean Langlais (www.jeanlanglais.eu).

She graciously received us into her home and Patty sang again the two movements of the *Missa*. How wonderful it is to see the posthumous fame that this organization is bringing to Langlais. They lead a music festival of music each year during July in La Fontenelle and surrounding locations. This July marks their Fifteenth Festival Jean Langlais.

That evening some of us stayed at a youth hostel in Cancale and others at the Britt hotel. We enjoyed the hostel which was located right on the coast with a beautiful view of the sea.

These youth hostels are located throughout the world and the cost is minimal. I had stayed at many of them when I was a student and still enjoy their ambiance.

On Saturday we visited the Cathedral Saint-Samson of Dol-de-Bretagne where I had recorded a number of Langlais's organ works, and Eric is one of the organists at this cathedral. Like many of the churches in Brittany, it is built of granite. Again, all of us were

Reception at the home of Brenda Dean, with Geneviève Richard of Les Amis de Jean Langlais.

able to play this impressive instrument which was rebuilt by the firm Debierre/Beuchet-Debierre organ (1877–1978), with three manuals and thirty-seven stops in a neo-classical style. The rebuilt organ was designed and inaugurated by Jean Langlais in 1979.

Again, for me it was a nostalgic moment and a decisive one in Langlais's life, for it was here that he suffered a stroke while

View from the youth hostel in Cancale.

coming down the staircase from the choir loft in 1985.

Sunday gave us an opportunity to attend church in Dinard a beautiful town on the Rance river. It supports an English population and has an Anglican church where Eric plays once a month. The organ is by an English London builder, Alfred Oldknow, from 1894. Langlais often visited this church during his summer vacations.

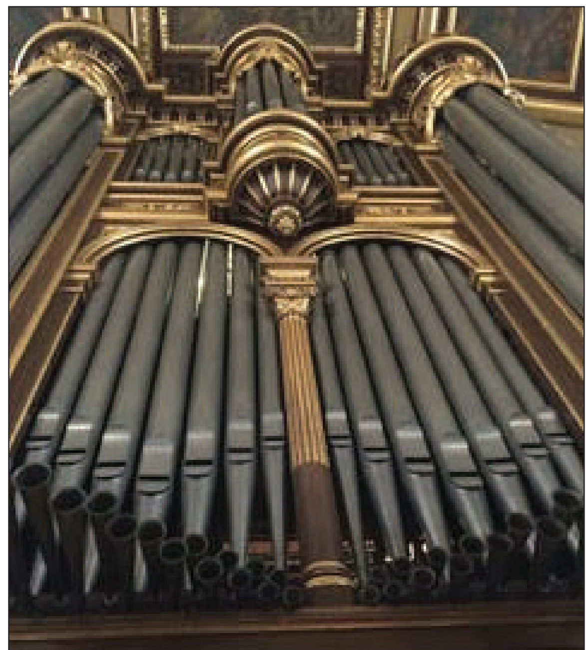
Sunday afternoon we traveled to Rennes, the capital of Brittany. I remembered coming here to interview Flavie, Langlais's sister. Saint-Pierre Cathedral is magnificent, and the four-manual Cavaillé-Coll gave us much pleasure.

Jean-René André, the organist of the cathedral, gave us a beautiful recording of English music on a Dallam organ at the church of Saint-Guinal de Ergué-Gabérie. There is so much to see and hear in Brittany. We only scratched the surface on this trip.

The next stop was Saint-Melaine Abbey's J-B Claus organ (1879), with three manuals and forty stops in the symphonic style. This organ had been inaugurated by César Franck. It was here that we heard some special effects (such as hail) that we had never heard before. That was effective in Franck's Pastorale.

From there we traveled to Fougères, and visited the Saint Léonard's Church. This church gave us a second opportunity (the first was at Notre-Dame d'Auteuil, where Frédèric Blanc is the organist) to hear an organ built by Louis Debierre between 1881 and 1903 with three manuals and thirty-two stops built in the symphonic style. It was inaugurated by César Franck and Eugène Gigout. This organ was voiced by Charles Gigout, Eugène brother. We were again received most graciously by the organist Michel Dubois.

From Fougère we traveled by bus to Vitré, a beautiful very old city, and visited Notre-Dame Church, which houses a Victor Gonzalez organ (1941/1948) with three



Cavaille-Coll organ of Saint-Pierre Cathedral in Rennes.

manuals and forty-three stops in a neo-classical style, inaugurated by André Marchal.

Again, the organist, Anne Marie Hodemont, received us and gave us the program of the inauguration of the organ by her teacher, Jean Bonfils, who is buried in Vitré.

Our last stop in Brittany was at Sainte-Catherine Church de La Roche-Derrien, with a Cavaillé-Coll organ (1847) of three manuals and twenty-two stops, with old material from seventeenth century stops. It is reported to be the oldest organ in Brittany. A newpaper reporter was there to interview me. Several of them asked: "What was the goal of our trip?" I answered: "To trace the life of my teacher Jean Langlais, and to discover many organs from the area."

We had the five-hour trip back to Paris. We were very fortunate to have such a great chauffeur, Guillaume, from Normandy. Because of the fantastic work that Colleen Lissy did in making all the arrangements for the transportation, I took a picture of the two of them as she gave him a donation for his excellent care of us.

Back in Paris, we raced to the church of Saint-Gervais where we had a masterclass with the organist, Aude Heurtematte. The choir loft is very narrow and small so only a few students could hear what she said. I took notes and shared them with the group. Again, how well we learned that the instrument itself is one of the best teachers, and the students responded well to her animated instruction on works by Couperin, Guillain, D'Aquin, and Clérambault.

St. Leonard's church in Vitre with organist Michel Dubois and our guide Eric Cordé.

We discovered that in many of the churches that we visited, the former organists were identified by pictures and by name.

Our last visit was to Saint-Sulpice, where Daniel Roth is the titular organist. After a wonderful visit and the opportunity for everyone to play this amazing organ, Roth went to lunch with us. We asked him what his duties were in this post. He organizes recitals and concerts there, and plays an extended postlude for one Mass. The music in most Parisian churches is minimal but there is great pride in the instruments.

Very old pipework from the positiv division of the Cavaillé-Coll organ at Sainte-Catherine de La Roche-Derrien Church.

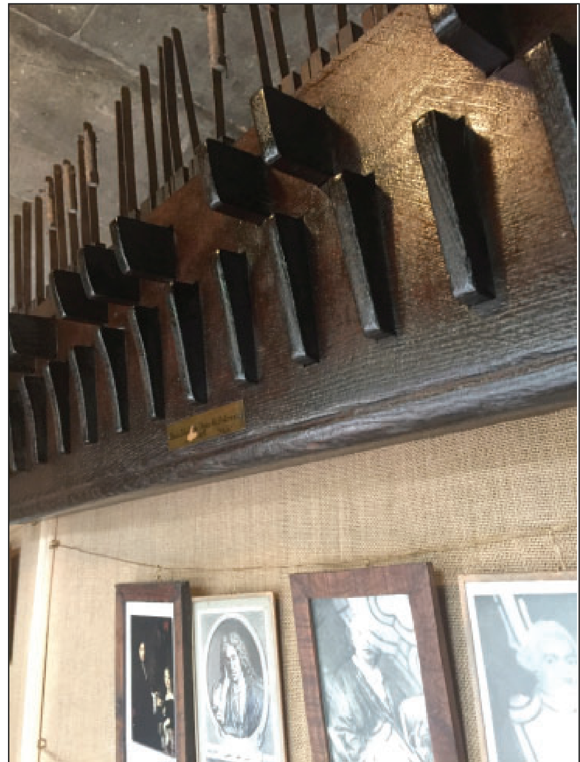
Colleen Lissy with our bus driver, Guillaume.

How different this function is compared to what Pittsburgh Roman Catholic musicians do! We did pick up worship aids from a number of parishes, and in most of them there is no music indicated.

Daniel Roth showed us the innovative device which Cavaillé-Coll used to change registrations. By pulling out a preset registration of very soft stops and then pulling out all the stops and using a ventil pedal, a fast change could be made. For recitals there are stop pullers on each side of the console. I asked him about the other devices. They do have the "hail" stop and a "nightingale" stop (several pipes submerged in water that gurgle when activated), but Roth explained that it needed water. The "thunderstorm" stop was replaced.

We were very happy that Jon Gillock, the Messiaen specialist who lives near Paris, could be with us at Saint-Sulpice, and then for lunch. We spent a long time at Saint-Germain-des-Près where extensive renovations are being made to the church. This is the church where André Marchal and Antoine Reboulot had served as organists.

It was a memorable trip, and one that we will long remember. For me it was a particular pleasure to share these wonderful places with people who had never experienced them. ❖



The former pedalboard, from the time of the Couperin dynasty.

A view of the nave from the choir loft at Saint-Sulpice.

Review

***The Music of James MacMillan* by Phillip A. Cooke. London: Boydell Press, 2019. 317 pp., hardback. ISBN 9781783273706. $39.95. Available from www.boydellandbrewer.com.**

MacMillan's music has an integrated vision that will change the world.

by Conner David McCain

o be a composer is to desire change. At the heart of human creativity is the prelapsarian command to "name" and "subdue" all of the created world, to unveil the order in the ostensible chaos. A composer desires change because he or she sees the possibility for it, because he or she believes in beauty. It is true that beauty can change the world, if we let it, but we live in a time where people are less attuned to the truly beautiful than ever before. Our senses are constantly oppressed by kitsch and propaganda, which are worse than ugly. Every day we are surrounded by "art" that falsely presents itself as the real deal, doing irreparable damage to our sense of the transcendent, to our understanding of the divine, and to our conceptions of personal identity. Roman Catholics (and many other Christians) see the harm being done, but few know what to do about it. Those in the rest of the world (including the music "establishment") either turn a blind eye to the cultural destruction in the name of profit, or are totally unaware of it.

Given the cultural milieu in which we live, it may be time to accept the fact that music, on its own, has very little power to change the world, especially musics (such as "classical" or liturgical) which are presented to a very narrow audience. This is not to say that it has no power at all, but rather that now, more than ever, truly changing the world requires as integrated an approach as possible. Beauty (like the liturgy) does not exist in a vacuum. It has something to say about *everything*. Artists intuitively understand this, but, up until today with our culture of political activism, few have attempted to live it. Over the course of history, however, there are even fewer who have done so while also creating enormously captivating works of art.

Sir James MacMillan (b. 1959) is one of those artists who has lived it. It goes without saying that MacMillan has been *musically* successful in pretty much every quantifiable sense. He is one of the most commissioned composers alive today, having garnered the high esteem both of his musical peers and of arts administrators. He has received honors from the highest echelons of both the secular and sacred world (Queen Elizabeth and Pope Benedict XVI). On a more local level, his music inspires audiences all over the world, and there is no substitute for sitting and listening to a live performance or a recording of his works. It is music that is "soul-baring," full of all the violence and glory of daily life, yet always

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ready to jet off from the immanent to the transcendent. But MacMillan is someone who has grown into a truly integrated vision of beauty and changed the world through it. Thus, in order to capture who MacMillan is and why he is important, a wider portrait than just the individual works themselves is necessary. It is for this reason that Phillip A. Cooke's recent monograph, *The Music of James MacMillan*, is so important. Cooke presents MacMillan's biography alongside analysis of his music, not in some pop-psycho-analytic way, but rather as a means of showing the development and growth of MacMillan's compositional and aesthetic vision, and the way that discovering beauty has changed the way he lives his life.

Cooke's analyses of MacMillan's music are remarkably enlightening, both on an individual scale (his discussion of MacMillan's breakthrough work, *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie,* is particularly revealing) and in reference to his *œuvre* as a whole (MacMillan's penchant for self-quotation is fascinating but difficult for the average listener to discern). The author comes to profound conclusions not only about MacMillan's aesthetic obsessions, but also the musical means by which he achieves those goals.

Despite the title, however, the author is interested in more than just James MacMillan's music. He is interested in the man James MacMillan, who, more so than any other composer of our age (perhaps) has opinions valued by those in non-musical markets. It is in this way that I think this monograph is unique. There will, hopefully, be many monographs analyzing the music of MacMillan, though it is worth pointing out that this is the first. Understanding who James MacMillan is as a man, however, requires a "cultural insider," and Phillip Cooke is exactly that. One can hardly think of a time when a composer's remarks were front page news, as they were when MacMillan made his "Scotland's Shame" address at the 1999 Edinburgh Festival. But to convey the influence of that address on the United Kingdom as a whole requires someone who has lived through the change which ensued and who has a stake (at least culturally speaking) in that change.

Additionally, Cooke is extremely theologically sensitive and literate, which also aids in presenting MacMillan in a fuller light. Though he was, as mentioned above, politically active in his youth, his attentions nowadays are aimed more towards ecclesiastical change in his country. Though the Catholic Church in Scotland is a very complex organism, MacMillan has used his influence as thoughtfully as possible, attempting to ameliorate the cultural destabilization discussed above in a specific cultural-liturgical context. Cooke, though admittedly not a theologian, speaks thoughtfully about MacMillan's theological interests and understands them as being more than just musical, but have a direct bearing on the way MacMillan lives his daily life. This quality in Cooke's presentation is one that specifically deserves praise, especially considering the treatment that Messiaen's Catholicism (for example) receives in much of the analysis of his life and works.

In conclusion, Sir James MacMillan and his music have truly changed the world. He has transcended the often-narrow field that is "contemporary classical music," and has allowed his theologically attuned sense of beauty to impact and direct more than just his music. *The Music of James MacMillan*, and its author, do MacMillan a great deal of justice, both musically and personally. It is a solid foundation for future studies of MacMillan's music, and, more importantly, an attentive and engaging portrait of one of our time's most important artists. ❖

Commentary

Now What? The Unchartered Waters of Covid Times

Face the limitations of the present situation with resourcefuness and optimism.

by Mary Jane Ballou

Everything seems unpredictable and unsure. News articles on Covid-19 and health and safety contradict each other. Some churches have reopened; some are still closed as I write this article. Dioceses and conferences offer different directions. Where are you in the new land of uncertainty? What should you as a choir director or music minister do now and in the "foreseeable future"? And of course, no one knows exactly what the foreseeable future is anyway.

After the webinar convened by the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and other choral organizations on May 5, 2020, panic and depression swept the choral community. If you missed this webinar, you can find it on the NATS website (www.nats.org). That will give you the worst-case scenario. Be forewarned that it is lengthy. A Google search will also bring up summaries of the conclusions and analysis. However, you need not fall on your sword. Currently, these same and other performing arts organizations are funding research to find out what *is* possible. As I prepare to submit this article, two more webinars on positive steps are scheduled. The problem for musicians is that the bad news gets the coverage and gets remembered.

A ban on congregational singing has been proposed. What should you do?

The main point of the first webinar, however, was that choral/choir singing was impossible because of the danger of infection spreading among singers. A ban on

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congregational singing has also been proposed. What should you do?

The most tantalizing option is to dissolve into a lump of misery and sorrow. My advice is to limit this to fifteen minutes per day. It does not solve anything and will probably result in emotional eating. I am not making light of illness, deaths, job loss, temporary furloughs, or serious outcomes. However, misery is not a proactive response. Instead I will offer some thoughts on traveling in this new landscape or sailing in uncharted waters. So, buck up and read on!

1. Stay Informed

Unless you are the director of your own small ensemble, you probably will not be the decision maker on the future of the choir. Nonetheless, you need to keep up to date on the recommendations, the analyses, and the predictions that are floating around. It will be uncomfortable and discouraging, but you must be as informed as possible. If you are a member of a church music organization, such as the Church Music Association of America (CMAA) or the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM), look for guidance there. Does your diocese have an Office of Worship? What is their position? Most pastors have little time and/or interest in digging deeply on this topic, so offer to take responsibility for researching and summarizing this material for them.

2. Develop a "Cantor Corps"

Many of the directives from diocesan offices allow for only a cantor and instrumentalist. No choirs. Do you have singers in your choir who have potential as cantors? Ask for volunteers among those you think might be an untapped resource. You need to remember that there are people terrified of singing from the ambo but capable of singing a good introit or communion verse from the loft or choir area. If your church uses paid cantors, this might complicate matters. However, developing a tuneful "cantor corps" is a way to keep choir members involved until this restriction passes.

3. Seize the "Proper Moment"

With a hiatus in congregational singing and the removal of all worship aids and hymnals from the pews, this could be the moment for the English propers. Why English? Most cantors lack training in singing traditional Gregorian chant. An even greater number of parishioners lack the ears for appreciating chant in a language they do not know. There are several versions of English propers for Sundays and feasts and a useful catalogue of them may

With a hiatus in congregational singing and the removal of all worship aids and hymnals from the pews, this could be the moment for the English propers.

be found on the Musica Sacra website of the CMAA.[1] Remember to "make haste slowly." Father Samuel Weber's *The Proper of the Mass for Sundays and Solemnities*, published by Ignatius Press, has settings for introits, offertories, and communion verses in a range of difficulties. Look at your options if the propers might be a new territory for you to explore.

4. Where Two or Three Observe Social Distancing

Explore the possibility of having two or three strong and confident singers sing a duet or trio. Since they would need to be spaced out, the singers need to know their parts cold. The English Motets published by Heath Morber would be an excellent resource for good soloists. These can be found at EnglishMotets.com. One singer only? In the Renaissance, instruments were often substituted for missing voices. A soprano vocal with appropriate solo stops on the organ could be beautiful for a prelude. This could be a traditional hymn in English or Latin. No arias, please.

5. Social Media Socializing and Educating

Everyone knows about Zoom, the ubiquitous program for corporate meetings, happy hours, remote learning, and other "COVID-19 socializing." There are also other options with Facebook and Google. Gather your choir(s) for a Zoom or in a Facebook Room to chat. Until your singers can gather physically with you again, you want to stay in touch. Of course, you can also communicate with emails that share some musical tidbits, a YouTube link to some fine singing, history about a composer. It should be short and not too frequent. You do not want singers to dread seeing your name in their inboxes.

How about some online conversation with your fellow directors? Not a pity party, but the useful sharing of ideas. If you are not the person to organize this, suggest it to your local AGO or NPM chapter.

Gather your choir(s) for a Zoom or in a Facebook Room to chat.

6. Develop Your Skills and Yourself

Use this time to work on yourself. Maybe you could work on your own singing and keyboard skills. It is easy to let things slip when you are off the "hamster wheel" of weekly service music. This might also be a moment for learning more about the checkered history of sacred music—it has many ups and downs in the last thousand years. Explore some different styles, even if they would not be appropriate for sacred use. The goal is keeping your range and sweetness of voice and fluid fingers on the keyboard.

Lastly, take care of yourself. While this always sounds narcissistic, it truly is not. Exercise, recreational reading, time with family and friends (even if it is a Face Time

[1] <https://musicasacra.com/music/english-propers/>.

chat), good eating, and prayer will all make you more able to give the leadership and charity the times require.

7. Learn About and Share Emerging Resources

There are initiatives out there in internet land. Here are a couple of examples. Dr. Jennifer Donelson-Nowicka, Associate Professor and Director of Sacred Music at St. Joseph Seminary in New York did a webinar series on chanting monastic Compline and Vespers that is available on YouTube. Visit JenniferDonelson.com to learn more. In Nebraska at Sacred Heart parish in Norfolk, Karl Henkel is teaching his choir a new Mass setting via his Coronavirus Choristers Challenge (see choristerschallenge.com). Recordings returned by singers will eventually be compiled into a virtual choir. The Archdiocese of Omaha has Evening Prayer for Sunday each week on Vimeo. Follow conversations that will develop on the Church Music Association Forum and Chant Café. See what others are doing and you could find something that meshes with your skills, both musical and technological, and your singers.

8. Thinking Past the Moment

Maria Grass Amenta writes a weekly blog on ChoralNet about Choral Ethics. A recent column was entitled “Choral Music will survive only if we all help.”[2] Amid our present fears, Amenta makes an excellent point: we need to be ready to make the case for choirs and congregational singing *after* “the foreseeable future.” When the pastor says, “Well, we have been doing fine at Mass without the choir for the last six months,” you should have a reason to get the choir underway again (and not just for Christmas and Easter). Is the poor singing in many Catholic parishes a reason to save on hymnals? Develop solid responses for questions that may arise. Call on the CMAA, NPM, and ACDA for assistance.

Be active, informed, and creative in your own way.

9. Forward Momentum is Key

Be active, informed, and creative in your own way. You have gifts that God has given you and he will show you how to use them. We are traveling in a strange time, but we are not traveling alone. I invite you to share with us how you are working through the COVID-19 pandemic with your singers and other musicians. You can send a brief email and links to me at ballousacredmusic@gmail.com. Our hope is to compile a resource of ideas and solutions to be shared in a later issue.

God bless us, every one! ❖

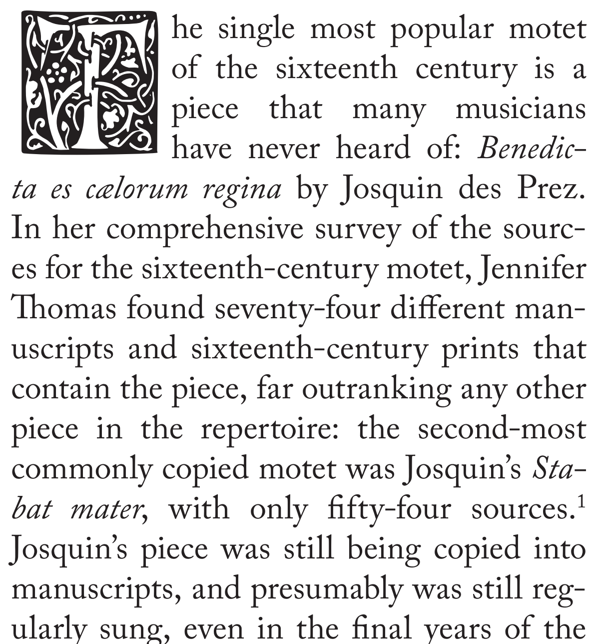
[2]<https://choralnet.org/2020/05/choral-potpourri-choral-ethics-choral-music-will-survive-only-if-we-all-help/>.

Repertory

Josquin's *Per illud ave*

A classic Josquin duet from a great motet.

by Aaron James



The single most popular motet of the sixteenth century is a piece that many musicians have never heard of: *Benedicta es cælorum regina* by Josquin des Prez. In her comprehensive survey of the sources for the sixteenth-century motet, Jennifer Thomas found seventy-four different manuscripts and sixteenth-century prints that contain the piece, far outranking any other piece in the repertoire: the second-most commonly copied motet was Josquin's *Stabat mater*, with only fifty-four sources.[1] Josquin's piece was still being copied into manuscripts, and presumably was still regularly sung, even in the final years of the sixteenth century, generations after Josquin's death in 1521.[2] Another metric of the extraordinary fame of this piece is the number of compositions based on it: an arrangement of the motet for twelve voices by Jean Guyot, a Magnificat based on *Benedicta es* by Orlando di Lasso, and no fewer than seven masses using *Benedicta es* as a model, including settings by Palestrina and Morales.[3] Palestrina's decision to compose a *Missa Benedicta es* is especially intriguing because it is the only Josquin motet that Palestrina treated in this manner; in general, Palestrina preferred to select more

[1]Jennifer Thomas, *The Sixteenth-Century Motet: A Comprehensive Study of the Repertory and Case Studies of the Core Texts, Composers and Repertory* (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati, 1999), Vol. 2, pp. 497–502. A shorter summary of Thomas's study can be found in her "The Core Motet Repertory of Sixteenth-Century Europe: A View of Renaissance Musical Culture," in *Essays on Music and Culture in Honor of Herbert Kellman*, ed. Barbara Haagh (Paris: Minerve, 2001), pp. 335–76. These studies are the basis of the invaluable MOTET Database Catalogue Online, available at <http://legacy.arts.ufl.edu/motet/default.asp>.

[2]For example, one late source of *Benedicta es* is the manuscript Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Mus. MS 1536, a set of partbooks copied in 1583 by the Augustinian canons of St. Zeno in the Bavarian town of Bad Reichenhall—presumably indicating that the piece was in the monastery repertoire at that late date.

[3]The seven *Benedicta es* masses are by Hesdin, Köler, La Hèle, Merulo, Monte, Morales, and Palestrina; see Willem Elders, *Josquin des Prez and His Musical Legacy: An Introductory Guide*, tr. Paul Shannon (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), p. 43, which lists other compositions based on *Benedicta es* by Diego Ortiz, Jean de Castro, and Claude le Jeune.

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recent motets as models for his masses, including works by Morales, de Silva, Jacquet of Mantua, and of course himself. Palestrina's tribute to Josquin—a tip of the hat to a composer who died years before Palestrina was born—shows the extent to which *Benedicta es* was admired by musicians of the late Renaissance.

If *Benedicta es* is lesser known today, this may be because of its length and complexity: written for six voices and lasting some seven minutes in performance, the piece requires an accomplished choir and is too long for many liturgical uses. The piece is also based on a now-unfamiliar chant melody, one of the many sequences for Marian feasts that were abandoned after the Council of Trent:

Benedicta es caelorum Regina, et mundi totius Domina, et ægris medicina.	Blessed are you, queen of heaven, and ruler of the whole world, and medicine of the sick.
Tu præclara maris stella vocaris, quæ solem justitiæ paris, a quo illuminaris.	You are called the brightest star of the sea, who bear the Sun of clemency, by whom you are illuminated.
Te Deus Pater, ut Dei Mater fieres et ipse frater cuius era filia.	God the Father, so that you might become God's Mother and he your brother, whose daughter you were
Sanctificavit, Sanctam servavit, et mittens sic salutavit: Ave plena gratia.	He sanctified you, preserved you holy, and sending [his messenger] greeted you: Hail, full of grace.
Per illud ave prolatum et tuum responsum gratum est ex te verbum incarnatum quo salvantur omnia.	Through that "Ave" spoken and your gracious answer, the Word became flesh through you, by whom all are saved.
Nunc mater exora natum ut nostrum tollat reatum et regnum det nobis paratum in coelesti patria. Amen.	Now, Mother, pray to your son, that he may take away our sins, and may give us the kingdom prepared in our celestial home. Amen.

Josquin's complete motet is a complex piece, paraphrasing the chant melody of the sequence *Benedicta es* in canon between the superius and tenor, with two contratenor and two bassus voices providing rich imitative polyphony.[4] Although tackling the entire motet would be a significant challenge for most choirs, the piece contains a

[4]For a complete critical score of *Benedicta es*, whose critical commentary includes the original chant melody, see *New Josquin Edition*, vol. 23: *Motets on non-biblical texts. De beata Maria virgine 1*, ed. Willem Elders (Utrecht: Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 2006), at 23.10.

Josquin des Prez
b. 1450/1455, d. 27 August 1521

small, self-contained middle section scored as a soprano/alto duo: *Per illud ave prolatum*. This section of the motet describes the scene of the Annunciation: Mary is greeted by the angel with the word "Ave" and offers her gracious response "tuum responsum gratum," through which salvation is brought to the world. Perhaps this intimate scene inspired Josquin to write music with a simpler and more transparent texture: the six-voice opening of the texture perhaps capturing Mary as queen of the heavens, "cælorum regina" and the simple duo of *Per illud ave* portraying the quiet, hidden encounter of the Annunciation.

The performance of duos, or *bicinia*, was an important part of Renaissance musical practice; many choir directors are already familiar with the 1577 *bicinia* by Orlando di Lasso, which are invaluable tools in teaching smaller and less experienced choirs to sing in a Renaissance style.[5] Sixteenth-century music teachers had access to numerous collections of *bicinia* for use with their students, which provided an easily accessible cache of repertoire for use in music lessons. Choristers who had already learned to sing Gregorian chant and to improvise simple polyphony based on chant melodies (*cantare super librum* or "singing on the book") would find singing two-part polyphony to be a logical continuation to their studies, preparing them to sing more complex pieces with full choir. Josquin's *Per illud ave* duo featured in numerous bicinia anthologies, often on its own without the six-voice sections of the motet; its most famous such appearance was probably in the treatise *Dodekachordon* by the Swiss theorist and pedagogue Heinrich Glarean, who singled out the piece as an example of his seventh mode.[6] This handy pedagogical use no doubt contributed to the overwhelming popularity of the motet: sung in its complete form, it was a large-scale musical *tour de force*, but it also contained a short, smaller piece that could be sung by small groups of beginning students. One modern parallel might be Vivaldi's famous *Gloria*, which in its complete form is an impressive, half-hour concert piece; however, many choirs simply excerpt the soprano/alto movement *Laudamus te*, a favourite duet often sung by children's choirs.

[5]Originally published as *Novæ aliquot et ante hac non ita usitatae cantiones suavissimæ* (Munich: Adam Berg, 1577), RISM A/I: L 902. An easily accessible edition by Brian Marble, titled *Twelve Two-Part Motets*, is available at <cpdl.org>. See also Peter N. Schubert, "A Lesson from Lassus: Form in the Duos of 1577," *Music Theory Spectrum*, 17, no. 1 (Spring 1995), 1–26.

[6]Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, tr. Clement A. Miller (n.p.: American Institute of Musicology, 1965), vol. II, p. 263. Strangely, Glarean believed the piece was by Jean Mouton, not Josquin.

This edition of *Per illud ave* is transcribed from a source exactly five hundred years old: the 1520 *Liber selectarum cantionum*, a printed collection featuring numerous Josquin motets, published in Munich and edited by the composer Ludwig Senfl.[7] Because the original tessitura is quite low, I have transposed the pitch up a minor third, placing it within reach for modern sopranos and altos (or, sung down the octave, for modern tenors and basses). A good tempo might be MM=60 to the whole note; the challenge is to set a tempo that is not too slow for the opening but not so fast that the long chains of running quarter notes in the final measures of the piece become too blurry. Like many *bicinia*, this piece probably sounds better with a small ensemble or with two solo singers, rather than with a very large group; in the context of the complete motet, one might choose two soloists to sing *Per illud ave* and use the full choir only for the six-voice outer sections.

Whether or not Josquin had a pedagogical purpose in mind in writing this brief duo, the piece is admirably suited for teaching. The two parts exchange roles throughout the piece, so that each singer gets a chance to lead: the lower voice beginning the entire piece, the upper voice beginning the second phrase (m. 6), and so on. This continual switching of roles also applies to the cadences: sometimes the upper voice has the leading-tone at a cadence, and sometimes the lower voice, which means that both singers need to learn how to tune the semitone below the final correctly (in modern choral music, the leading tone is almost always given to the altos or tenors). The piece increases in difficulty towards the end, with the cascading scales that accompany the text "quo salvantur omnia" (by whom all were saved), and probably the most significant difficulty is at the beginning of m. 26, where the singer on the upper part must be paying attention and remember to skip a note of the scale (from F to A flat). All of these features help singers to build confidence in tuning, intervals, and general musical leadership, and so the piece can be a useful test to see how well your singers have internalized these skills: I often use it as a sight-reading test for experienced choristers auditioning for my own ensembles.

As I write, public Masses in most North American dioceses have been cancelled indefinitely due to the novel coronavirus; it is not clear when our liturgical music programs will be able to resume, or what restrictions choirs may face in a future marked by fears of contagion from small respiratory droplets. This uncertain and constantly changing situation makes it especially important to have flexible pieces that can be used by a smaller, "socially distanced" ensemble in the liturgy—or sung at home among family and friends while waiting for larger-group musical activities to resume. Renaissance duos like *Per illud ave* may seem plain in comparison to our ordinary choral repertoire, but with few opportunities to listen to live choral music in any form, such small-scale musical offerings will be appreciated by all who hear them. ❖

[7]RISM 15204. On this source, see Stephanie P. Schlagel, "The Liber selectarum cantionum and the 'German Josquin Renaissance,'" *Journal of Musicology*, 19, no. 4 (Fall 2002), 564–615.

Per illud ave prolatum

Grimm and Wyrsung, *Liber selectarum cantionum*
RISM 1520 (4), fol. 65v-66r
transposed to B flat (original final: G)

Josquin des Prez
ed. Aaron James

Discantus: Per il - lud a - ve pro la - - - - - - - -

Contratenor: Per il - lud a - ve pro - la - tum, [pro - - la -

6

D.: tum, et tu - um res - pon - sum gra - - - tum, ex te___

C.: tum,] et tu - um res - pon-sum gra - - - tum, ex

12

D.: __ ver - bum in - car - na - - - - - tum, quo sal -

C.: te ver - bum in - car - na - - - tum, quo sal - van - tur

17

D.: van - tur____ om - ni - a, quo sal - van - tur____ om - ni -

C.: om - - - - ni - a, quo sal - van - tur om - ni -

22

D.: - a, [sal - van - tur om - - - - - - - - -

C.: a,__________ [om - - - - - - - -

25

D.: - - - - - - - - - - - - - - ni - a.]

C.: - - - - - - - - - - - - - - ni - a.]

Last Word

Choirs and Covid-19

Doom and gloom must be met with cautious optimism.

by Kurt Poterack

ow, I should stress that I am voicing a very tentative opinion about a controversial subject. I should also say something about myself. In my own way, I can be a bit of a contrarian. I am ordinarily a fairly easy-going, accommodating person, but when something, anything, becomes extremely popular—"takes the nation by storm"—I will often have a negative reaction to it. I will resist. Sometimes I am right; sometimes I am wrong. Often enough, it is just a matter of a minor difference of taste. However, when the news about the corona virus started to turn serious and especially when there was the lockdown, I became skeptical. I did not engage in civil disobedience and, in general, I followed the health advice. However, I felt (and still do feel) that while there is obviously truth to the concerns, they are to some degree overblown. I see a panic-stricken mob mentality at work. Some people enjoy getting panicked and I don't like this at all!

There have been some reports about people becoming infected with COVID-19, becoming sick, and even dying as a result of choir rehearsals. The famous example in the U.S. is the Skagit Valley Chorale in Washington State. Within three weeks of a March rehearsal, 45 of them had been diagnosed with the disease or had symptoms, three of them were hospitalized, and two died. It sounds very serious—and it is, for them and their loved ones. However, according to a report that I read, the average age of the chorister in that group was 69, of the two who died, one was 83 (I do not know the age of the other). I also cannot find any information on whether these two had underlying conditions or whether the ones who "developed symptoms" suffered greatly or only had minor symptoms. As far as I can tell from the news, except for the two who died, all the others survived and are now in good health.

Again, this is tragic for the two who died, those close to them, and those who may have gone through some terrible pain before they recovered. However, this fits the pattern of the disease. It tends to have the worst effect on older people, especially those with underlying conditions. It also seems to spread in closed, crowded spaces. There are those who argue that singers project more droplets and aerosols further which could help spread the virus. I do not dispute that this may be true in general. However,

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there are skeptics. According to *The Guardian* newspaper, Professor Christian Kähler of Munich, Germany has conducted some studies and concluded that "singing is quite safe. . . . Air was only propelled about half a meter in front of a singer, and that is not far enough to cause the infection levels of those outbreaks."

What were these other outbreaks? They were a March rehearsal of the Berlin Cathedral Choir and rehearsals in January of the "Voices of Yorkshire" and the "Altogether Now Community Choir," also in England. At least with these two English choirs, the members were quite friendly, socializing, and engaging in hugs regularly. Even the owner of a nearby pub, frequented weekly by members of the "Altogether Now" choir, came down with corona virus. She did not sing in the choir. So, it is not definite that it is spread by singing any more than by "close talking" or affectionate behavior. Finally, there was the Amsterdam Mixed Chorus which sang the Bach St. John Passion in concert on March 8th. Aside from many people getting sick, a 78-year-old member died. Again, this was tragic.

These are anecdotes. Still, I would think that if choirs were that dangerous for the spread of the corona virus, there would be more anecdotes—and more than three people would have died worldwide. Perhaps there are other cases that I do not know about? Please, if I am being a dangerous skeptic, then correct me before I send people to their deaths or a severe case of COVID-19 induced pneumonia. I am serious. I have been known to be wrong. I can accept correction.

Now, what do I intend to do when the choir season starts in the fall? I will probably read much and consult knowledgeable people beforehand. My guess is that I will make some modifications, telling students to excuse themselves if they feel sick and go to the college nurse to get checked out. I may have singers sing forward rather than in the semi-circle that I prefer. I think I will have the rows distance themselves—maybe even six feet—but not the people in the rows. These are young people, most under twenty. The chances of their dying of the virus are one in five thousand, if I recall correctly. (We only have five hundred students in the entire college.) I, not being quite that young, will probably stand further back when I conduct them. I may even take them outdoors for rehearsal to a nearby covered pavilion when the weather is good. In other words, I will take prudent measures based on actual information. I will not enjoy doom and gloom and pessimism and create all sorts of unnecessary restrictions.

The sooner we can get back to normal, or "near normal," the better. However, if you disagree with me, please let me know. I am open to other points of view.

Happy singing and good health! ❖