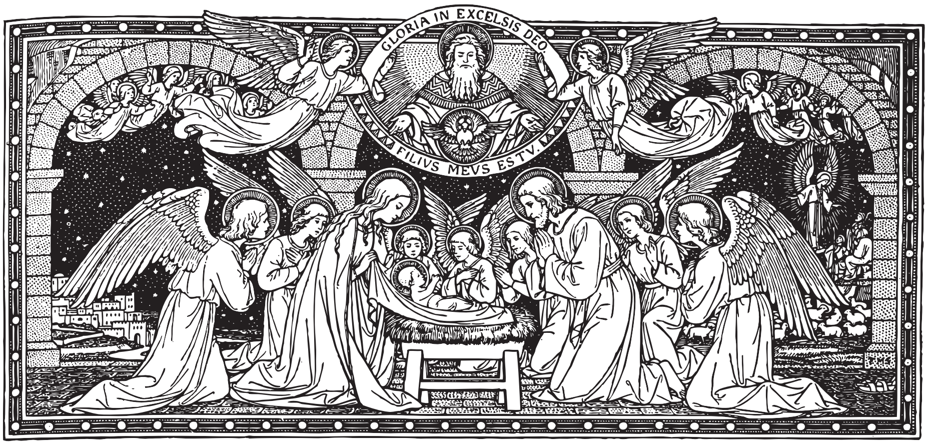

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Editoral

Hermeneutic of Continuity

This key to interpretation remains the most sure in unlocking the meaning of the current legislation governing sacred music.

by William Mahrt

The mission of the CMAA is to bring to the liturgy, particularly through its music, a sense of the value and importance of the sacred and the beautiful. We have witnessed a time since the Second Vatican Council in which the sacred and the beautiful have not always fared well; in fact, it could be said that participation of many in the liturgy has suffered because of a deficit of these very qualities. But what the council proposed and what ensued were not quite the same. This was expressed by Pope Benedict XVI in the first Christmas message to the Roman curia of his papacy. Here, instead of following custom and giving simple Christmas greetings, he gave a deep and wide-ranging account of the previous year, including the following about the results of the council nearly forty years afterward:

> On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture"; it has frequently availed itself of the sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the "hermeneutic of reform," of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-church which the Lord has given to us.[1]

This "hermeneutic of continuity" is far from just holding on to what exists at the present, but rather carrying out a reform that renews the church in continuity with the best it has received from the very Lord himself. The prescriptions of the council are to be read in continuity with the whole tradition upon which it is based. It is also far from leaving behind the sacred and beautiful traditions which continue to be valid. Concerning the Mass, the council prescribed:

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[1] *Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings* (December 22, 2005) <http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia.html>. An illustration of the hermeneutic of discontinuity was given in a lecture by a distinguished theologian at our seminary, who gave his key on how to interpret the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: disregard anything traditional and pay attention only to the innovations.

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

> 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]

If this is read in continuity with the tradition at the time of the council, "celebrated solemnly in song, with . . . sacred ministers" simply meant the Solemn High Mass, the tradition of singing all of the parts of the Mass to be said aloud, assisted by deacon and sub-deacon, and accompanied by the appropriate music. This was a real reform, since it gave the active participation of the people an important role.

There is no question about the music:

> The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.[3]

An essential element of the reform was bringing the treasury of sacred music into the actual worship of the people. But in the face of the pressure, at least from the liturgists, for the total vernacularization of the liturgy (something the council did not foresee), the fall-back solution was simply to replace the Propers of the Mass with vernacular hymns. This was, of course, nothing new; many of us grew up with hymns sung during a Low Mass, and we looked forward to the incorporation of chant and polyphony into a more organic celebration of the liturgy. There ensued some controversy about the role of the music, especially between the Consilium, represented by Monsignor Bugnini, and the musicians, represented by Monsignor Anglès of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music. Pope Paul knocked heads together and the document *Musicam Sacram* was produced. This was a compromise document, but it formed the ground for some progress. Pope Francis has recently acknowledged this document as the last authoritative document on music in the liturgy.[4]

On the one hand *Musicam Sacram* supported the continuation of the Missa Solemnis, but it provided a way of introducing the singing of its elements gradually, giving the familiar three progressive stages of introduction of music.

> The distinction between solemn, sung, and read Mass, sanctioned by the Instruction of 1958 (n. 3), is retained, according to the traditional liturgical laws at present in force. However, for the sung Mass (*Missa cantata*), different degrees of participation are put forward here for reasons of pastoral usefulness, so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing, according to the capabilities of each congregation.[5]

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[2] Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* ¶113.

[3] *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* ¶112.

[4] *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the International Conference on Sacred Music* (March 4, 2017) <http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/march/documents/papa-francesco_20170304_convegno-musica-sacra.html>.

[5] Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, *Musicam Sacram* (March 5, 1967) <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_

The three stages are well known: 1) the chants in which the priest and people sing in dialogue, including the Sanctus; 2) the rest of the Ordinary of the Mass and the intercessions; and 3) the Propers of the Mass, including potentially the lessons (¶¶28–31), but other provisions allowed for further compromise, so that the ultimate resolution has been a Mass in which spoken and sung elements are freely mixed, what I have called a *Missa Mixta*.

This is the state of affairs today, which is expertly described by the present article by Fr. Fergus Ryan, for which I am grateful.

I believe this state of affairs as well includes many desirable elements: priests are frequently singing more of their parts in dialogue with the people; congregations are much more frequently singing parts of the ordinary, whether in Latin or English; and choirs are beginning to add to the mix some Gregorian Proper of the Mass. I frequently hear the desire of members of congregations that we move away from the "sacro-pop" repertory of the last century, though they are not always clear what direction that should take.

There are also some less desirable elements: the traditional repertory of "songs" in popular styles; the bowdlerization of hymn texts in the face of political correctness; the use of secular instruments as accompaniment (guitars, particularly, but even the piano); the conventional repertory of responsorial psalms, with a trivial antiphon repeated by the congregation to the speaking of the verses or their singing in simple psalm tones;[6] the singing of one of two frequently-sung three-fold alleluias, again to psalm tones,[7] the reading of lessons by amateur readers, who sometimes cannot pronounce the Old-Testament names.

I would, then, propose several stages of improvement of liturgical music, with the underlying premise of the "hermeneutic of continuity"; the ultimate goal is the incorporation of the people into the completely sung Mass. The stages can sometimes be achieved quickly, and sometimes only with patience and persistence:

> 1) in the place of "songs" in popular styles, introduce those hymns which have poetry and music of excellent quality.
>
> 2) introduce the accompaniment of the organ in place of the piano or an ensemble of mixed instruments.

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vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_instr_19670305_musicam-sacram_en.html>.

[6] The stated purpose of the responsorial psalm in the GIRM is simply meditation; I once asked a priest what their purpose was and the answer was to give the people something to do. I freely acknowledge that the people participate in this, but I question whether it sufficiently constitutes meditation for them.

[7] The most conventional thing seems to be a three-fold alleluia, which is entirely syllabic and which completely avoids the most significant traditional element of the Mass Alleluia—melismatic singing. It is significant that the missal, in giving the text for the alleluia, gives "Alleluia, alleluia" and then the verse; this is the scheme for the Gregorian alleluia, and I have proposed that a simple Gregorian alleluia can be sung by the congregation. Likewise, if the verse is to be chanted briefly, at least the formulae for Mass psalm tones, rather than office psalm tones should be used. I will address this issue in a future article. In the Gregorian repertory, both the gradual and alleluia are meditation chants, and each serves a function of elaborating upon the lesson it follows with a musical meditation. I contend that the transformation of the alleluia into an "acclamation" was a mistake. I will comment on this in a further issue.

3) in addition to the "four-hymn sandwich" introduce the singing of the dialogues between priest and people, if the priest is able and willing.

4) the introduction of the singing of excellent compositions for the Ordinary of the Mass, even in Gregorian chant,[8] avoiding those settings with repeated refrains, which interrupt the continuity of the text.

5) improve the quality of the responsorial psalm and alleluia; even on major feasts singing a Latin gradual or alleluia; with the agreement of the priest, it might be appropriate to give the congregation some instruction on the significance of a meditation chant.

6) introduce more Gregorian chants, ordinary and/or proper; a simple Gregorian communion chant can be added to a communion hymn on a regular basis; a beautiful Gregorian chant can replace a hymn on occasion. I contend that the hearing of beautifully-sung Gregorian chants even on occasion can introduce the congregation to a higher level of liturgical music and can be an investment for the future. Latin is the natural language of Gregorian chant, but there are settings in English as well; both could be used from time to time; one does not exclude the other.

7) when the ordinary is well established, attempt to phase in some singing of the propers by the choir in Gregorian chant.

8) establish expectations of what is to be sung; as Fr. Fergus says, you should never have to ask, are we going to sing "Amen"?

I have spoken somewhat critically of the *Missa Mixta*, the Mass with constant alternation of sung and spoken parts, but that is a qualified criticism. It is far better that several parts of the Mass can be sung, far better than the four-hymn sandwich.[9]

My point here, however, is the "hermeneutic of continuity." The foundation of all of the liturgical music I have spoken about is the Missa Cantata, the completely-sung Mass. This was the stated goal of *Musicam Sacram,* and should remain a goal ever to keep in mind. We need the mentality of the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages: they designed and began to build their cathedral, knowing full well that they would not see it completed. Still, to see part of it built must have been a matter of great satisfaction; so should it be for us. ❖

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[8] Note that a specific provision for the singing of the ordinary in Latin was made in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, ¶54.

[9] When I was teaching at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester in the early seventies, I sought out a church with good music, seeking a refuge from the four-hymn sandwich. The French church was recommended, because it had had a good tradition of sacred music. I called and asked if there was High Mass, "Oh, no, we don't do that any more." "What music do you have?" "Hymns." "Is the any Mass without hymns?" "The noon Mass." I went to the noon Mass, and there were hymns; the organist played them and the congregation sat on their hands, and didn't sing. Moreover, the sermon was about my telephone call: "Someone called who hates music!" I approached the priest after Mass and told him I did not hate music, being a professor at the Eastman School of Music. The poor man was mortified and very apologetic, but acknowledged that we had lost a lot along that line.

Articles

Liturgical Music, Transcendental Beauty, and Theosis: Reflections after Fifty Years of the Novus Ordo

The metaphysical characteristics of beauty enable beauty to provide the most authentic and effective mechanism for real participation in the sacred liturgy.

by Theodore Krasnicki

The post-Vatican II conciliar reform of the Roman liturgy was mainly concerned with the sanctification of the faithful. This was a response to the criticisms raised by the modern liturgical movement (LM) which, from its very beginning, saw the faithful as silent and (therefore) detached spectators at the traditional Latin Mass—something they saw as in need of correction.[1] This idea was repeated by Pius XI and XII, as well as by *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (*SSC*), the disciplinary liturgical constitution of Vatican II that called for a "restoration" of the Mass.[2] To remedy this, the Traditional Latin Mass was extensively changed so as to maximize "the full and active participation by all the people [which] is the aim to be considered before all else" (*SSC* ¶14), a crucial phrase that vindicated the LM's main position. One major change was the encouragement of congregational singing in the vernacular at Mass, usually to the demise of traditional Latin sacred music sung by choirs. This immediately created a conflict in the church over the role and type of music used in the liturgy. This conflict, which persists to this day, is often expressed in musical "style wars." The majority side believes that liturgical music should be functional "ritual music" whereby singing religious texts fosters the sanctification of the worshippers; for the other side, "liturgical music" is transcendentally beautiful and inspires a devotion in the worshippers which can lead to their sanctification.[3] Both positions would, nevertheless, agree that "the purpose of sacred music . . . is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful."[4]

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[1] Lambert Beauduin, *Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* (Louvain: Abbey of Mont César, 1922), pp. 50 and 52 <https://archive.org/details/lesquestionslitu07louvuoft/page/n55/mode/2up>.

[2] Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Dec. 4, 1963); The standard English version of *SSC* has been used as is found at <www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>.

Theodore Krasnicki received his Ph.D. from the Université de Montréal and studied Gregorian chant under the late Père Clément Morin. His musical services for the Latin Mass extend from Montréal to Northern Vermont. .

In this essay, I would like to address this conflict from a philosophical point of view in support of the latter position. Much has been written about this conflict over the past fifty years, but I would like to discuss a few basic principles which have not been dealt with sufficiently. These involve the role of beauty in fostering the devotion of the faithful at Mass, thus leading to their sanctification through what is called "theoria" in Eastern Christianity, or simply "contemplative prayer" in the West. I prefer to use the former because of its direct association with theosis in the East. My aim in this essay will be to show how beauty is a necessary and primary component of any liturgical music for active participation in the liturgy—that is, if it is to lead to the sanctification of the faithful. In sanctification, "man is sanctified through each of the sacraments, insofar as sanctity means purity from sin, which is the effect of grace."[5] Specifically, I will discuss the essential role that beauty has in liturgical music in fostering theosis of the worshipper. Theosis, often called "deification" and even "divinization," embodies the theological idea of sanctification but goes beyond it by stressing the personal spiritual union with God in theoria particularly during the liturgy; it is a personal experience of God. Theosis is a process of transformation, a spiritual ascent, in which a worshipper becomes God-like so as "to share in the divine nature."[6] Aquinas described theosis as God bestowing "a partaking of the Divine Nature by a participated likeness" in the faithful.[7] In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* we read: "The Word became flesh to make us 'partakers of the divine nature' . . . for the Son of God became man so that we might become God."[8] This is theosis. In this way, I follow Pseudo-Dionysus' classic definition of "theosis": "Divinization consists of being as much as possible like and in union with God."[9] I will stress the spiritual union, specifically centering on the way beauty in liturgical music fosters theosis. Of particular interest will be the theological aesthetics and dramatics of Hans Urs von Balthasar who saw the traditional idea of transcendental beauty as crucial in seeking spiritual union with God. My underlying belief is that had von Balthasar participated in the post-Conciliar "restoration" of the liturgy, it would not have become a "reform."[10]

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[3] For a short but definitive summary of these two opposing views, see Susan Benofy, "What is Really behind the Music 'Style Wars'? A question of Function, Holiness and Hermeneutics," in *Adoremus Bulletin*, 19, no. 2 (April 2013) <https://adoremus.org/2013/04/15/What-is-Really-behind-the-Music-quotStyle-Warsquot/>.

[4] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶114.

[5] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (hereafter *STh*)I, q. 63, a. 6. Cf., David Berger, *Thomas Aquinas & the Liturgy* (Naples, Fla.: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2005), p. 85.

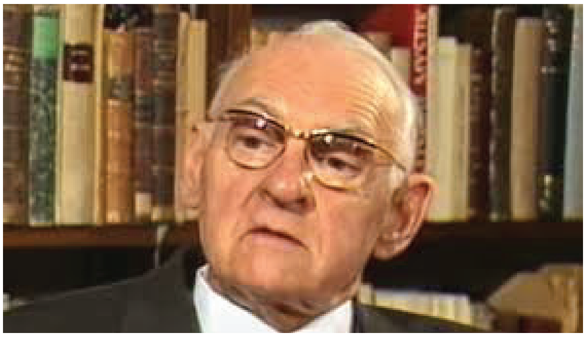
[6] 2 Pet. 1:4.

[7] St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II, I-II, q. 112, a. 1, Resp.

[8] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (hereafter *CCC*), ¶2713. The translation used throughout this paper may be found at <https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm>.

[9] Pseudo-Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 1.3, in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, tr. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 198.

[10] It is interesting that the liturgists preferred using the term "reform" to speak about the liturgical changes that had already started over a decade



Hans Urs von Balthasar

ed musicians when the instruction on music, *Musicam Sacram* (*MS*), was being drafted. The divide centered on the very nature of the liturgical reform, along with the understanding of the purpose of liturgical music. The liturgists saw the novel concept of ministerial function (*munus ministeriale*) in *SSC* ¶112 as giving liturgical music an essential function in the liturgy.[12] Fortified by the words "the people should be encouraged to take part by means of . . . songs"[13] which promoted the faithful's "active participation," the liturgists maintained that congregational singing was not just necessary but had priority over any passive listening to chant. The invited musicians, on the other hand, understood the sacred music of the church as "a treasure of inestimable value,"[14] according to its millennium-old manner of increasing the devotion of the worshippers. The beauty of this treasure led to their sanctification. This generally meant listening to beautiful sacred music sung by trained choirs. Msgr. Annibale Bugnini, the secretary in charge of the Consilium, explained it this way:

The divide centered on the very nature of the liturgical reform, along with the understanding of the purpose of liturgical music.

> here precisely is where the views of the two sides diverged: in the view of the liturgists the people must truly sing in order to participate actively as desired by the liturgical constitution; in the view of musicians, however, even "listening to good, devout, and edifying music . . . promotes 'active' participation."[15]

---

earlier, rather than "restoration," the term mainly used in *SSC*. "Restoration" implies bringing back something lost or no longer there. "Reform" implies changing defects, often in a revolutionary manner, which was the preferred term of the liturgists. I will use these terms accordingly.

[11] For more discussion of this conflict, see my "The Primacy of Gregorian Chant: Reflections on the Fiftieth Anniversary of *Musicam Sacram*," *Sacred Music*, 144, no. 4 (Winter 2017), 31–33.

[12] Steinmetz discusses the change from "*characterem ministeriale*" in the early versions of *SSC* to the novel "*munus ministeriale*" in the final version. See Michel Steinmetz, *La Musique: Un Sacrament?* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2017), especially pp. 15–17.

[13] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶30.

[14] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶112.

[15] Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy (1948–1975)* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1990), p. 904.

Annibale Bugnini

Bugnini, who, as liturgist and supporter of the LM did not favor the musicians' position, further noted that:

> The musicians even invoked the authority of St. Thomas: "Although some may not understand what is being sung, they understand why it is being sung, that is, *for the praise of God*, and this is enough, even if the faithful do not strictly speaking sing in order to rouse their devotion." The Pope placed a large question mark alongside these arguments and interpretations.[16]

The liturgists perceived the incomprehension of Latin as an impediment to the faithful's rational understanding of the liturgy. Feeling that incomprehension blocked their full, active participation, Latin chant was to be rejected. The musicians' complaints against the liturgists, namely, that "the group [of pastoral liturgists] is unwilling to accept St. Thomas' concept of 'active participation'"[17] were dismissed for treating liturgical music as a mere "art-form and an adornment of the celebration,"[18] rather than something essential to the liturgy. Bugnini concluded that the real reason for the rebellion by the musicians against the reform "was a refusal to allow that the people could sing."[19] In short, there were two opposing views of active participation with respect to liturgical music at the Consilium: that of the liturgists who stressed congregational singing and along with it the comprehension of its text, and that of the musicians who stressed the traditional affective power of listening to beautiful liturgical music for the sanctification of the faithful even if the texts were not understood. As Bugnini put it, this deep confrontation became the Consilium's "way of the Cross."[20]

It is my contention that the conflict happened because the liturgists at the Consilium overlooked the ontological nature of beauty. The idea of an objective beauty had by then already become problematic as it still is. The liturgists could not see how beautiful liturgical music leads to the sanctification of the worshippers as it intensified their devotion. To see the importance of beauty in Christianity and the liturgy, I shall now look at what St. Augustine had to say about it. His view on the matter was very influential in the Western Church until the twentieth century, when beauty became the embarrassing *enfant terrible* of the modern secular art world as well as within the church and, it seems, within the Consilium.

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[16] Bugnini, *Reform*, 904, n. 12.

[17] Bugnini, *Reform*, 905, n. 14.

[18] Bugnini, *Reform*, 885.

[19] Bugnini, *Reform*, 887.

[20] Bugnini, *Reform*, 900 ff.

Sacred Music and Devotion

The Confessions of St. Augustine describe his spiritual journey of ascent toward the Christian God.[21] It began when he wondered where beauty came from in this changeable world.[22] He realized that in this material world, things are changeable, perishable, and imperfect. The perfect things are the unchangeable or eternal, which therefore cannot be material but must be immaterial, otherwise called "spiritual," such as ideas or concepts. Through the influence of (Platonic) metaphysics he affirmed that beauty is essentially spiritual. The limited beauty in this material world has to "participate" to varying degrees in a perfect, eternal, and spiritual world. Through the grace of God, he discovered that the God of the Bible is spirit and is holy, and he discovered that the beautiful creator of this world was whom he was searching for. "Behold, the heavens and the earth are; they proclaim that they were created . . . Thou . . . , Lord, madest them; who art beautiful, for they are beautiful."[23] The beauty in the world is a limited manifestation of God's own beauty:

> He, then, is "beautiful" in Heaven, beautiful on earth; beautiful in the womb, beautiful in His parents' hands; beautiful in his miracles; beautiful under the scourge; beautiful when inviting to life . . . beautiful in "laying down his Life;" beautiful in "taking it up again;" beautiful on the Cross; beautiful in the Sepulchre; beautiful in Heaven.[24]

Because the human soul embraces non-material entities such as concepts and ideas, so St. Augustine realized that the human soul is also spirit. God's spirit, therefore, can also inhabit the human soul. To find God, St. Augustine turned inward, into his soul, discovering that all along in his search for him, God had been present within him. By turning inwardly, he finally found the eternal source of the world's beauty:

> Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! Too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made.[25]

Already we can see that, as Torevell has noted, "it is difficult to find anywhere else in Christian writing such a passionate enthusiasm for an identification of God as both the transcendent Other *and* in the depth of the self."[26]

St. Augustine adapted the classic Platonist ascent of the soul for Christianity, mapping the way from the material realm to the spiritual. This ascent is a spiritual movement of the human soul towards God. It begins with the perception of the physical beauty in the world, then discovers that beauty is spiritual, as is one's own soul, and finally seeks the source of the spiritual beauty in the supernatural, spiritual realm. Viladesau has noted that, "the presupposition of the Platonic ascent through beauty to the divine is that creatures participate in God's being at various levels and are thus able to reflect and reveal God's beauty."[27] What had distracted St. Augustine from finding God was his admiration for the beauty in this material world, physical beauties inferior to God's beauty, thinking there is no source for earthly beauty other than in this earth. "I . . . was transported to Thee by Thy beauty, and presently torn away from Thee by mine own weight, sinking with grief into these inferior things." [28]

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[21] St. Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, tr. J. G. Pilkington (New York: Liveright Publishing, 1943) <https://archive.org/details/confessionsofsta011875mbp>. All citations from Augustine's *Confessions* are taken from this version.

[22] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. XI.

[23] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. XI, ch. 4, 277.

[24] St. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 45.3. tr. members of the English church (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1848), p. 230. <https://archive.org/stream/expositionsonps02auguuoft?ref=ol#page/230/mode/2up>.

[25] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. X, ch. 27, 247–48.

[26] David Torevell, *Liturgy and the Beauty of the Unknown: Another Place* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2007), p. 48.

It is not only creation's natural beauty that led St. Augustine to seek God, but also the beauty created by artists' hands. Good artists can envision beautiful art forms that participate in God's infinite knowledge of all beautiful forms:

> but I, O my God and my Joy, do hence also sing a hymn unto Thee, and offer a sacrifice of praise unto my sanctifier, because those beautiful patterns, which through the medium men's souls are conveyed into their artistic hands, emanate from that Beauty, which is above our souls, which my soul sigheth after day and night. [29]

The beauty of the patterns that artists skillfully produce on earth for their artistic forms derives from God through participation in his beauty. Through his grace, God can instill beautiful ideas in the minds of earthly artists to create beautiful forms. Aquinas has shown that nature is nothing other than a particular kind of art, namely God's art.[30] God is the supreme artist whose creation is filled with his artistic beauty. The world is art-crafted by God for his own delight. In this way, "the beauty of nature consists in precisely this, that it expresses God's intelligence and freedom. Nature is God's artwork, and it reveals the Supreme Artist."[31] Beauty in creation is thereby a theophany of her artist. Beauty reveals God's presence in the world and this theophany has long been a part of Christian discourse. As Nichols has reminded us, "God sets in the creation his image and other traces—what the Latin Fathers call the *vestigia Dei*."[32]

In Eastern Christianity, it is the Plotinian idea of "emanation" that has often been alluded to by theologians; for Maximus the Confessor, "The Cause of all things, through the beauty, goodness and profusion of His intense love for everything, goes out of Himself in His providential care for the whole of creation."[33] Creation

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[27] Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), p. 219.

[28] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. VII, ch. 17, 154.

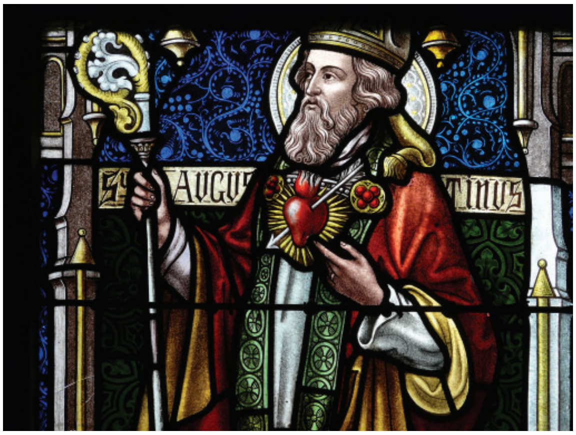
[29] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. X, ch. 34, 259.

[30] John-Mark L. Miravalle, *Beauty: What It Is & Why It Matters* (Manchester, N. H.: Sophia Institute Press, 2019), p. 20.

[31] Miravalle, *Beauty*, 25.

[32] Aidan Nichols, O.P., *Redeeming Beauty: Soundings in Sacral Aesthetics* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2007), p. 82.

[33] Maximus the Confessor, "The Fifth Century," in



St. Augustine

in its beauty, goodness, and truth emanates from God through his love and shows his love. Western Christianity, in contrast, was more influenced by St. Augustine's Platonism. Because of his stress on *creatio ex nihilo* against Manichæism, St. Augustine centered on the relation between the eternal divine world and the temporal created world using Plato's doctrine of "participation" rather than Plotinus's "emanation" as in Eastern Christianity.[34] For him, when God created the world, he created it with the eternal and perfect forms or ideas in his mind as prototypes for all the beings of his creation. Not only is God perfect, eternal, and unchangeable, but he is beautiful because beauty is a perfection. These ideas, forms, or essences in God's mind are, therefore, also beautiful. For St. Augustine, all the beings in creation are beautiful to the degree that they *participate* in these eternal archetypes or divine ideas (forms),[35] as St. Thomas Aquinas later referred to them.[36] The ideas in God's mind represent the perfect forms or essences as exemplars or models for what he creates.

In music, of course, we are dealing with a different kind of intelligible form perceived as patterns not in the visual world, but as patterns of harmony grasped in the world of sound. Dubay has noted that:

> Melody and harmony lie at the border of the material and immaterial. On the one hand, sound waves are picked up by our sense of hearing, and yet on the other there is in music a strong intellectual and spiritual element, both in the composer and the listener.[37]

A piece of music can be envisioned as a spiritual or conceptual being, its form revealed in the motion of sound, in contrast to the light which reveals a visual being's form. Langer has called these "dynamic forms."[38] As with visual forms, beauty is a property of the tone pattern that forms music. In Greek thinking, only harmony is characteristic of beauty. Properly ordered music, is pleasing to the ear when it is harmonious. Because there is a categorical difference between visual beauty and aural beauty, the

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"Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice," in *The Philokalia*, vol. 2, tr. and ed. Palmer, Sherrard, Ware (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1981), no. 86, p. 281.

[34] St. Augustine, "Quæstio 46, De ideis" of his: *De Diversis Quæstionibus Octoginta Tribus*, in *Corpus Christianorum*: *Series Latina* vol. 44A, ed. Almut Mutzenbecher (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), pp. 68–70.

[35] Ibid., 70.

[36] Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, q. 15, a.1–3 and pt. I, q. 84, art. 5, among several such references.

[37] Thomas Dubay, S.M., *The Evidential Power of Beauty: Science and Theology Meet* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), p. 54.

[38] Suzanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art* (New York: The New American Library, 1954), p. 192, also p. 199, n. 75.

beauty of the latter has traditionally been described analogically in terms of a musical "taste," a sweetness, rather than a beauty which refers to visual things.

Music and its beauty (or sweetness) were of special interest to St. Augustine. Conveying beautiful patterns of sound is the work of a well-ordered musical artist who is adept in the art of pleasing sound modulation. St. Augustine embraced this (Varo's) ancient definition of music. Beautiful music can move the emotions, or, as the mediævals might have expressed it, stir the "passions." As Miravalle explains in a more modern context, "the beholding of beauty can direct our passions, which, in turn, provide powerful motivators for action toward spiritual goodness and truth."[39] Music moves the human soul through its harmony of sound, which is its beauty. This beauty delights the soul, creating a deeper attraction. Beautiful sacred music can direct these human passions towards God. St. Augustine gives the well-known example of his experience of conversion to Christianity when he heard beautiful liturgical music that moved his soul: "I call to mind the tears I shed at the songs of Thy Church, at the outset of my recovered faith."[40] Whether visual or aural, an effect of beholding beauty is the delight she produces in her beholder, a foretaste of the human soul's immense joy when faced with the beatific vision.

There is a categorical difference between visual beauty and aural beauty.

But beauty in liturgical music was also problematic for St. Augustine. Fearing that the beauty of music might be a distraction which turned the listener away from God by charming the human soul solely for itself, he considered banning singing in the liturgy. Acquiescing to such beauty for its own sake was a distraction from God, a distraction which had also prevented St. Augustine from finding God within himself for a long time.[41] As such, he saw it as an occasion for sin.[42] "No one needs to be persuaded that beauty can exert a mighty influence on emotions, intellect, and will," Dubay reminds us.[43] But such influence could also be directed to instill a devotion, a spiritual fervor, that leads to the worshipper's spiritual ascent. The ability to increase devotion was the important characteristic of liturgical music which finally led St. Augustine "to approve of the use of singing in the church, that so by the delights of the ear the weaker minds may be stimulated to a devotional frame."[44] Beautiful liturgical music inspires devotion for the worship of God. This idea has been repeated throughout the ages by others, such as St.

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[39] Miravalle, *Beauty*, 12.

[40] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. X, ch. 33, 256.

[41] Ibid., bk. X, ch. 27, 241–42.

[42] Ibid., bk. X, ch. 34, 257–59.

[43] Dubay, *Evidential,* 345.

[44] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. X, ch. 33, 256–57.

Thomas Aquinas and Pope Pius XII.[45] In fact, St. Thomas's teaching on sacred music as it relates to devotion is founded on St. Augustine's understanding of the emotive power of beautiful liturgical music.

Traditionally, devotion has been linked to the sanctification of the faithful. Devotion is an intense desire for God, through which God may bestow his grace, revealing his presence within the devout human soul, as he did for St. Augustine. In the Middle Ages, "once the associations of music with pagan worship were overcome or forgotten, the 'mainstream' of Christian thought and culture virtually universally embraced music not only as an embellishment of liturgical life, but as a symbol of the divine itself and hence as a means of mediating consciousness of God."[46] Since St. Augustine's time, this mediation has usually been related to music's power of inspiring devotion in the worshipper.

The power of sacred music to inspire devotion derives mainly from its beauty. Beauty speaks to the affective dimension of the human soul, the passions. The passions, however, are not meant to be given license to irrationality. They need not only to be tempered or reined in by reason, but the whole soul—including reason—needs to be "attuned" through faith, as von Balthasar would call it,[47] to welcome God in the human soul. When so attuned, beauty sweetens the soul for a wordless encounter with the ineffable God. In the ninth century, Aurelian of Rhéôme observed that beautiful music could make the mind more receptive to the inflow of the Holy Spirit just as it had done for Elisha.[48] Through the grace of God, beholding created beauty moves an attuned soul towards a spiritual union with God because it points to God's presence in the human soul. Created beauty participates in God's beauty, which is to say that God reveals Himself through created beauty: "conversely, every experience of beauty is a revelation of God, to varying extents, at different levels, and in diverse ways."[49] As Aquinas put it, "the beauty of anything created is nothing else than a similitude of divine beauty participated in by things."[50] In the attuned soul, the delight when beholding beauty becomes a greater delight in the spiritual encounter with the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the beauty of liturgical music inspires a devotion that fosters personal spiritual union with God. It helps the soul make its spiritual ascent to God by enveloping spiritual contemplation within the delightful presence of God. In the liturgy, "music conveys and becomes an invitation to rise to the hidden [divine] reality signified in the liturgy."[51] Seeing its effect on the faithful, Abbott Suger in the eleventh century mentioned that, “the purpose of liturgical music is to lift up the soul to the Light,” towards a spiritual union with God. The effect of beautiful liturgical music, then, is to lead people beyond the sensible realm in order to delight the human soul with the timeless harmony of eternity.[52] The beauty in musical melody is a presence found in the ineffable divine spiritual world. And as the beauty of liturgical music instills devotion, it fosters theosis. Let us investigate this more closely.

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[45] Pius XII, *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina* (Dec. 25, 1955), ¶60 <http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_25121955_musicae-sacrae.html>.

[46] Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts*, 35.

[47] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics,* vol. I: *Seeing the Form*, tr. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Franscisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), p. 235.

[48] As quoted by Joseph Dyer, "The Power of Music According to Two Medieval Commentators," in *Dies est leticie: Essays on Chant in Honor of Janka Szendrei*, ed. David Hiley and Gábor Kiss (Ottawa: The Institute of Mediæval Music, 2008), pp. 214–15.

[49] Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts*, 227.

[50] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentarium in De Divinis Nominibus*, lect. V, as translated in Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts*, 43.

[51] Torevell, *Liturgy and the Beauty*, 61.

Transcendental Beauty and Theophany

In an earlier citation we saw that St. Augustine described God as his glory. This affirmation is crucial to understanding the cosmic dimension of beauty. In the Sacred Scriptures, the beauty of God is generally not ascribed particular theological importance; instead, they speak of the glory of God. In the Hebrew Bible, for instance, ordinary beauty (הפי) and its derivatives are mainly associated with physical beauty, which also has power of attraction in this world.[53] But the glory of God, *kabod*, is associated with his great majesty.[54] There is one very important reference in the Septuagint that relates God to the beauty of things on earth; this is that “the first author of beauty made all those things,”[55] through which one can be led to acknowledge God: “for by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby.”[56] The beauty in this world is, therefore, a theophany that points to and reveals the presence of its glorious creator. As St. Augustine put it, God is “the Beauty of all things beautiful.”[57]

Hans Urs von Balthasar takes up this important distinction between God’s glory and his beauty. For him, the difference between created beings and the Divine Being is greater than their similarity, in which case:

> what is called the “beauty” of created being is in consonance with the sublime attribute of the Divine Being that is known as “glory.”
>
> Earthly beauty always appears limited in a finite being or through harmonious coordination of finite entities, which God, viewed as the absolute Being and as infinite reality—both aspects of the sole eternal Life—shines in the other, all-transcending and all-pervading glory.[58]

That earthly beauty is in “consonance” with God’s glory is similar to Plato’s understanding that earthly beauty “participates” in the divine world to a degree limited by its essence. Because God’s beauty is very different from mere created beauty, it is more appropriate to speak of the former as “glory.” The glory of God is ineffable and therefore beyond human conception, whereas it is more tangible to speak of beauty. Created beauty offers only a glimmer of God's glory while revealing his presence in creation. Because we are made in the image of God, the divine world is our true home, and we yearn for its glory. In fact, human beings have been designed for beauty.[59] As Dubay expresses it:

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[52] Torevell, *Liturgy and the Beauty*, 163.

[53] David Penchansky, “Beauty, Power, and Attraction: Aesthetics and the Hebrew Bible,” in *Beauty and the Bible: Toward a Hermeneutics of Biblical Aesthetics*, ed. Richard J. Bautch and Jean-François Racine (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), pp. 47 and 51.

[54] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Love Alone: The Way of Revelation: a Theological Perspective*, tr. Alexander Dru (London: Burns & Oates, 1968), p. 8.

[55] Wis. 13:3.

[56] Wis. 13:5.

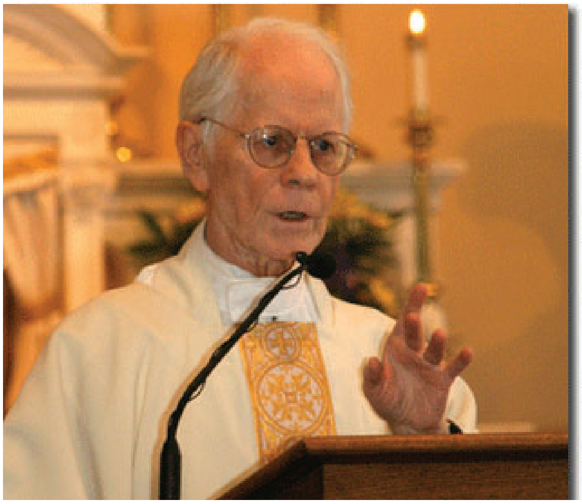
[57] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. III, ch. 6, 48.

[58] Hans Urs von Balthasar, “Earthly Beauty and Divine Glory,” *Communio*, 10, no. 3 (Fall 1983), 202–3.

> The acute experience of great beauty readily evokes a nameless yearning for something more than earth can offer. Elegant splendor reawakens our spirit's aching need for the infinite, a hunger for more than matter can provide . . . In mature people, elegant music, if a mixed metaphor be permitted, sparks a thirst for the divine."[60]

St. Augustine famously expressed this yearning which fed his spiritual ascent in this way: "for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee." [61] Created beauty was God's call to St. Augustine to find him precisely because humanity was made for beauty.[62]

In the New Testament, the glory of God is further associated with God's love, particularly as seen in the sacrifice of his son on the cross. For the ancient Greeks, harmony among different and even contrasting elements of a being was a characteristic of beauty and it was this ordered harmony that brought delight to its beholder. It would certainly not have included the ugly horror of seeing a man crucified, suffering, and dying on a cross. But through the light of Christian faith, the perception of what is at first an ugly sight becomes perceived as the great beauty of God's Love for humanity. This change of perspective is what von Balthasar calls (using a musical metaphor suggesting harmony of sound) a Christian "attunement,"[63] "which is a concordance with the rhythm of God himself, and therefore an assent not only to God's Being, but to the free act of willing which is always being breathed by God upon man."[64] This breath, God's gift of grace, constantly led St. Augustine's ascent to God.



Thomas Dubay

In view of this immense importance of beauty, von Balthasar developed "a Christian theology in the light of the third transcendental," which is beauty.[65] Transcendental beauty is the kind of beauty that

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[59] Miravalle, *Beauty*, 50.

[60] Dubay, *Evidential*, 56.

[61] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. I, ch. 1, 1.

[62] Sam Welbaum, "The Transformed Beholder: Objective Beauty as the Impetus for Sanctification in the Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar," *Perichoresis*, 10, no. 2 (September 2012), 255.

[63] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 235 ff.

[64] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 244.

[65] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 9.

St. Augustine was concerned with when, using Platonist metaphysics, he linked created beauty in the cosmos to God, her source. Transcendental beauty makes manifest and yet veils the presence of God in the world, be it in nature or in art. As Welbaum explains:

> The light of faith (the truth, goodness, and beauty) of God's self revelation perpetually shines forth to mankind, giving objective evidence of God's grandeur. Objective beauty is infused in the world and perpetually pours forth from the God who grounds the being of all things.[66]

> In other words, beauty is concerned with the very essence of an object . . . The aesthetic that von Balthasar presents is one that is centred on the perception, by the eyes of faith, of God's self-interpreting glory. The absolute form, the absolute essence, of beauty is God's self-revelation to the world.[67]

The purpose of beauty in this world, then, is to reveal God's presence; or, better stated, beauty is God's self-revelation to humans in this world. This is also true of the beauty displayed in artworks. The beauty of liturgical music is an artwork that can be viewed as God's self-revelation to the worshippers at the liturgy.

Transcendentals are important in traditional metaphysics, such as that of St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas, because they rationally expand our limited theology of God, as well as in the practical sphere of the experience of God. Metaphysics is the study of being in general, that is, of being *qua* being. All "things" in the world are beings which are defined by their particular essence which forms them. The idea of "transcendental" means that it is found in every being to some degree. Because every being is different, a transcendental is a concept which can be applied to all beings only by analogy. Beauty is regarded as a transcendental when the name "beauty" is applicable to every being, whether as a conceptual being in the mind or as an actual being in the world. Transcendental beauty transcends the entire created world of beings, and therefore it has a cosmic dimension. When beauty is thus seen as objective and common in every being, it has an ontological depth. This means that every being is beautiful in so far as it is a being. The difference between transcendental beauty and any pedestrian idea of beauty is that while the former is viewed as an ontologically necessary property of every being, the latter is not and so has little cosmic importance. Generally, the latter is usually viewed as superficial, often as a subjective construct and not a real part of the world, and is often associated with a mere aestheticism which has, sadly, invaded the church. Ruskin's classic distinction between æsthetics and theoria in beauty has similarities.[68]

When we relate being to God, whether through faith or otherwise, the transcendentals gain a sacred character. Transcendental beauty becomes sacred beauty when beauty is viewed in its cosmic dimension as emanating or deriving from God as the ultimate source. Contemplation of such sacred beauty can lead to the horizon of God's glory as it did for St. Augustine when he saw beauty as sacred in his conversion to Christianity. As sacred beauty, transcendental beauty is the eternal in all things because it not only ultimately derives from God as her source but is his self-revelation to the world. God, in other words, is immanent in his creation through beauty.

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[66] Welbaum, "Transformed," 253.

[67] Welbaum, "Transformed," 247.

[68] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. 2 (London: Watson and Viney; London, 1891), pp. 45-48 <https://archive.org/details/in.gov.ignca.20283/mode/2up>.

Traditional metaphysics is important here because it illuminates the ontological depth of beauty in all the beings of the cosmos. It reveals that truth and goodness apply to every being and so, likewise, these are transcendentals. As transcendentals, they are convertible with each other, which means that when we speak of one we actually speak about the others. That is to say, being (thing), truth, goodness, and beauty are the same but differ only in how we ourselves view or conceptualize the being, whether ethically, logically, or, as in the case of beauty, centering on its splendor which produces a delight in the one who perceives it. As Dubay expresses it, "truth, goodness, and beauty have their being together. By truth we are put into touch with reality, which we find is good for us and beautiful to behold."[69] Goodness, truth, and beauty may be transcendental properties of all the beings of creation to one degree or another, but of these, as Maritain has remarked, beauty is in fact "the splendor of all the transcendentals together."[70] Von Balthasar explained that truth without beauty loses its cogency, and goodness without beauty loses its attractiveness.[71]

Traditional metaphysics is important here because it illuminates the ontological depth of beauty in all the beings of the cosmos.

As a theophany that reveals a glimmer of God in his glory, then, transcendental beauty calls the beholder to venture beyond the particular instance of beauty towards all beauty in the cosmos. It calls the heart of the person, that is, the whole person and not just the human intellect. As Wilson explains it, transcendental beauty is "that property of a being that becomes perceptible when we grasp being *as a whole* and so *in it fullness as real*."[72] There seems to be a kind of religious intuition involved which leads to a mystical experience that apprehends the sacred transcendental dimension of beauty and the other transcendentals. As Viladesau has suggested:

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[69] Dubay, *Evidential*, 52.

[70] Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism with Other Essays*, tr. J. F. Scanlan (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 36 <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.501395/mode/2up>.

[71] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 19.

[72] James Matthew Wilson, *The Vision of the Soul: Truth, Goodness, And Beauty in the Western Tradition* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017), p. 225.

> My proposal is based on the conviction that there is also an underlying implicit or transcendental dimension of religious experience. Its object—the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, the numinous—would then be ontologically identical with the ultimate object of aesthetic or moral or intellectual experience (as in the medieval theory of the "transcendentals"); it would never be experienced simply in itself as a categorical object but would always be "coexperienced" as the dimension of mystery implicit in all human knowing and loving; it would ground the analogies that are in fact found in the human reaction to the beautiful, the good, the true, and the holy.[73]

Through a mystical openness to him, God can move souls toward him through the attraction of his glory whose glimmer resides in the transcendental beauty of all beings and which is grasped through such religious intuition.

Through Christian faith, one also discovers that the Logos is at the center of all transcendental beauty. All created things were made through Christ who is the image[74] or form of God the Father and his glory: "as the manifestation of the beautiful, Christ holds together in his person the infinite depths of splendor and the visible presence of form."[75] That is to say, the beauty in this world found in every being reveals the "face" of Christ: "in Christ the panoply of being is made present through the 'face' of a Person."[76] Through beauty, then, God calls her beholder to ascend beyond her individual created instance towards him as the glorious and loving creator. It is a mystical ascent because it raises the human soul from contemplating the material realm toward contemplating the spiritual realm of God's glory, something beyond human comprehension and impossible to describe in human words. Moreover, such mystical experience of transcendental beauty calls one to inquire through human reason of the things that are finite, as it did for St. Augustine, opening up the horizon to the infinite. Such an inquiry could be pursued through metaphysics so as to satiate the desires of the human intellect.

As the meeting locus between heaven and earth, the liturgy in particular can lead to a glimpse of the ineffable Glory of God. It fosters mystical experiences of the ineffable God through beauty. It is not for naught that traditional liturgy is filled with beauty for the five senses through which the *sensus communis* (common sense) of the soul, as Aristotle called it,[77] prepares the way for the whole person to behold a glimpse of God's glory and love. As von Balthasar put it, "as the heart perceives God's beauty at deeper and deeper levels, the heart transforms and images this beauty at deeper levels and is filled with a desire to extol and praise the God whose beauty is being perceived."[78] Beauty in this world, then, is the intertwining of the spiritual and the physical through which God summons human souls and, in the context of this paper, especially during the liturgy. Objective beauty is thereby an impetus for sanctification. As Welbaum has explained:

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[73] Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts*, 41.

[74] *St. John Damascene on Holy Images*, pt. III, point 3, tr. Mary H. Allies (London: Thomas Baker, 1898), p. 93: "The Son is the first natural and unchangeable image of the invisible God, the Father, showing the Father in Himself."

[75] Francesca Aran Murphy, *Christ the Form of Beauty: A Study in Theology and Literature* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 143.

[76] Ibid. 175.

[77] Aristotle, *De Anima,* II, 1–2.

[78] Welbaum, "Transformed," 258–59.

> Beauty, by nature, is transcendent and lifts the beholder out of his or her daily life and invites contemplation of the mystery of being. As God's divine beauty is perceived, the beholder is drawn deeper into this beauty, being purified and standing in awe of his creator. This purification and awe begins a transformation in which God's love is infused in the beholder and he or she then begins to once again image God correctly. This process is not a violent one, but one in which the beholder joyously embraces God's beauty, and therefore His love.[79]

This is theosis, which the liturgy fosters through its beauty offered for the six senses, as nourishment for the human soul.

Attunement in Faith and Theosis

Harrison has pointed out that "being a Christian consists in giving oneself to God, and, in return, God making one more like Christ, which von Balthasar refers to as 'attunement' or 'consonance' between human beings and God."[80] Just as the world was created by the Logos using the beautiful divine forms (ideas), so too can lives be transformed to moral forms of human action in harmony with Christ's tangible form of beauty. The beautiful forms of the lives of the holy saints were attuned to the form of Christ's living beauty. There is therefore, as St. Thomas Aquinas noted, an inseparability of beauty and virtue.[81] Beauty requires virtue because virtue itself is beautiful. It is here that beauty in liturgical music can lead to both devotion and its effect, namely the spiritual goodness of a person. This is the goal of theosis in this created world, to be God-like morally and therefore spiritually.

Attunement involves a holy interaction between God's grace and the human striving to be in harmony with God. It concerns the Christian's whole life, and is, therefore, a conversion of the whole person to the holiness of God. For a heart that is attuned through faith to the rhythm of God, the whole person responds to beauty's call by embracing it. In so doing, the beholder of beauty is changed.

> This is the same manner in which a believer is drawn deeper and deeper into God's beauty and is changed to resemble Him and display his beauty all the more. God's love elevates man from where he is, draws him in and then cultivates intimacy that leads to the believer's sanctification.[82]

Indeed, the goal of God's revealed glory in created beauty is to cause the beholder to grow by Christian experience so that one's life grows into the life of Christ: "God's beauty is the impetus for the beholder to live a life that reflects God's glory in all things."[83] A transformation of the whole person occurs because of beauty, as it is guided by faith and impelled by God's grace. Such a conversion of the whole person is sanctification of the person, theosis. It implies a change of everything in one's life. This accords with St. Paul's proclamation that, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." [84] Ugliness, by the way, is some privation of beauty in a being; in the moral sphere, it is the privation of love in the person, which is sin. As St. Augustine declared: "our soul, my brethren, is ugly because of sin: by loving God, it becomes beautiful . . . for love itself is the beauty of the soul."[85]

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[79] Welbaum, "Transformed," 262.

[80] Victoria S. Harrison, *The Apologetic Value of Human Holiness: Von Balthasar's Christocentric Philosophical Anthropology* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), p. 15. Cf., von Balthasar, *Glory*, 235–50.

[81] St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, q. 145, art. 2.

[82] Welbaum, "Transformed," 259.

[83] Welbaum, "Transformed," 262.

As we can see, it is most important for St. Augustine and von Balthasar, and for Christianity in general, that the Christian God is not only beauty but also love. Von Balthasar's attunement, for instance, takes into account the Johannine revelation that God is love who, as in John 6:44 "infused in me a longing for true love, so as to draw me to it."[86] God's beauty is thereby intimately related to his love. Transcendental beauty is beauty filled with God's love. As von Balthasar would put it, beauty is "Divine Love."[87] In this way, as Welbaum explains, "God's being is love, and beauty is the conduit of love that irradiates all of creation."[88] Beauty "at its core is love."[89] A beautiful soul, then, is one steeped in goodness as well as truth transcendentally, that is, of the whole being. As St. Augustine expressed it, "as the love increases in you, so the loveliness increases: for love is itself the beauty of the soul."[90] Transcendental beauty mediated by faith in attunement leads to truth and goodness filled with the beauty of God's love. This is because God has implanted in man the light of faith as well as the desire for love which is "an echo of God's love."[91] In this way, humanity was made for love and for beauty. God reveals himself and his glory to the world through its beauty; it is a self-revelation that is founded on God as love. As Welbaum explains further:

> God's self-revelation is a revealing of His very nature, which is infused with love. Love and beauty are therefore irrevocably intertwined, and the perception of God's beauty is an experience of God's love.[92]

God's love and beauty, which are really the same, can overwhelm the attuned beholder so as to lead him to embrace God's beauty. But he is never satiated by embracing it: he wants more, leading him to perceive God's beauty at deeper levels, transforming him more deeply.[93] This transformation is theosis, in which the image of God is restored in him. God's beauty, in other words, is the impetus for sanctification, demanding the response of the whole person.[94] This transformation is a restoration of the original image of man before his fall:

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[84] 2 Cor. 5:15 (KJV).

[85] St. Augustine, *Homily 9 on the First Epistle of John 4:17-21*, *commentary 9* <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/170209.htm>.

[86] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 211.

[87] Welbaum, "Transformed," 258.

[88] Welbaum, "Transformed," 255.

[89] Welbaum, "Transformed," 254.

[90] St. Augustine, *Homily 9.*

[91] von Balthasar, *Glory,* 211.

[92] Welbaum, "Transformed," 262.

[93] Welbaum, "Transformed," 258-59.

[94] von Balthasar, *Glory,* 213.

> Having been endowed "in His image," man is called upon to be completed "in His likeness." This is Theosis. The Creator, God by nature, calls man to become a god by grace.[95]

This transformation is a sanctification, theosis, which is mediated by God's beauty in the world, when one in humility surrenders to it. As David Fagerberg puts it, "the deified life is a life of charity, and charity is what lies at the base of the created universe."[96] Indeed, we cannot love anything unless it is beautiful and therefore the source of our enjoyment.[97] One of the two sides of theosis, then, is transformation into God's love. Von Balthasar's theological concept of attunement through faith, in which the Christian grows in harmony with the beauty of God, is, in effect, the process of theosis.

Liturgical Theosis and Active Participation

The other dimension of theosis is the experience of God: "a Christian is not a Christian simply because he is able to talk about God. He is a Christian because he is able to have experience of God . . . a mystical union of God and man in the Holy Spirit."[98] This is a spiritual encounter with God in the deifying process of attunement. It is the spiritual union of which St. Augustine spoke when finding God within him. This spiritual encounter gave him a mystical "vision" of God. In his mystical union, St. Augustine heard the silent harmonious voice of God speak to him within his soul.[99] Hearing beautiful liturgical music induced him to take a leap of faith toward Christ. This is mystical union in theosis through theoria. In this prayer of the heart, one seeks a personal illumination of the mind in union with God on a level beyond images, concepts and language, that is, it is a mystical union. It is a deeper awareness of the ineffable God than is available through the intellect of human reason. In the *Catechism,* this contemplative prayer is described as "a *communion* in which

Balthasar's theological concept of attunement through faith, in which the Christian grows in harmony with the beauty of God, is, in effect, the process of theosis.

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[95] Archmandrite George, Abbot of the Holy Monastery of St. Gregorios on Mount Athos, *Theosis: The True Purpose of Human Life* (Mount Athos: Holy Monastery of St. Gregorios, 2006), p. 21.

[96] David W. Fagerberg, "From Divinization to Evangelization: An Overview," in *Divinization: Becoming Icons of Christ through the Liturgy*, ed. Andrew Hofer, O.P. (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2016), p. 29.

[97] Richard Viladesau, "Theosis and Beauty," *Theology Today*, 65, no. 2 (July 2008), 183.

[98] Archmandrite George, *Theosis*, 45.

[99] Brian Brennan, "Augustine's *De Musica*," *Vigiliæ Christianæ*, 42, no. 3 (Sept. 1988), 269, especially n. 3.

the Holy Trinity conforms man, the image of God, 'to his likeness.'"[100]

Such communion is a spiritual union which has a privileged place in this world: the liturgy is the privileged means of theosis.[101] It is privileged in the liturgy because the latter is the work of the head and body, the whole Christ who is the Logos and the High Priest.[102] As the Logos, Christ is the perfect artist of creation. He is the perfect form of beauty revealing God's glory. This means that the most beautiful thing on earth must be the liturgy. As Daria Spezzano notes, "the most beautiful thing on earth is going to be the one thing that most fully reveals God's goodness and truth. And that is Christ's Paschal Mystery."[103] The Mass in particular is the celebration of that mystery, and it needs beauty to reveal its goodness and truth. The celebration is not complete unless it reveals Christ's very presence in its beauty. The priests serving him in persona at the altar, therefore, must also be artists who reveal Christ's beautiful face to the worshippers through beauty. To foster the divinization of Christians, all the liturgy must be a beautiful witness to the truths of her faith so as to engage the whole person; its art must convey the truths necessary for salvation.[104]

> The Beauty of God's house is the beauty of God's kingdom and the reflection of the beauty of God; the love of this beauty leads to sanctification, which is not merely a healing of our nature, but a glorification: a sharing in God's immortal nature, God's being and glory.[105]

The liturgy must be an icon, a window into heaven which points to the veiled heavenly realities it signifies, thereby leading the worshipper to actively participate in them.[106] Christ is the icon of the invisible God, whom we see in the liturgy. Maritain has pondered:

> Is not beauty a transcendental, a property of being, one of the Divine attributes? "The being of all things derives from the Divine Beauty," says St. Thomas. In that respect, then, the artist imitates God, Who created the world by communicating to it a likeness of His beauty.[107]

In communicating Christ's beauty, the artist conveys the presence of God.

As an image of the beautiful God, our human nature intends us to be captivated by beauty and be led by it in theosis.[108] Because the aim of the liturgy is theosis, that is, the sanctification of the worshipper through the experience of God, theoria is at the core of active participation in the liturgy. The fruits of the liturgy can be reduced to one: theosis. For this reason:

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[100] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶2713, original emphasis <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p4s1c3a1.htm>.

[101] Daria Spezzano, "Divinization and Renewal," in *Divinization: Becoming Icons of Christ through the Liturgy*, ed. Andrew Hofer, O.P. (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2016), p. 75.

[102] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶1187 <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s1c2a1.htm>.

[103] Spezzano, "Divinization," 89.

[104] Spezzano, "Divinization," 86.

[105] Viladesau, "Theosis," 180–1.

[106] Spezzano, "Divinization," 90.

[107] Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism*, 96.

[108] Spezzano, "Divinization," 88.

> everything in the Church leads to Theosis; the Holy Liturgy, the Mysteries, divine Worship, the Gospel sermon, the fasting; all of these lead to one thing. The Church alone is the place of Theosis.[109]

Beautiful liturgical music contributes to theoria by instilling the devotion that impels the soul to experience his presence. Through sacred beauty, God by grace invites the worshipper to witness the beauty of Christ so as to emulate him. In this way, the beauty of liturgical music is also a theophany of Christ present in the worshipper. This experience of the worshipper in his mystical ascent transforms him, through his cooperation with God's grace, into the divine likeness, a likeness founded on divine beauty. The value of the transcendental beauty in liturgical music, then, is to instill the devotion that intensifies and focuses theoria thereby leading to a mystical union with God. Through theoria, the silent worshipper, enrobed in the beauty of liturgical music, is not thereby detached from the heavenly liturgy, but is entering into it. For that to happen, liturgical music must be founded on silence if it is to reflect the heavenly music of silence, something which Cardinal Sarah has brought to attention recently.[110] The work of the liturgical musician is, therefore, to fill the liturgy with beautiful sacred music founded on heavenly silence. It is in this way that St. "Augustine can be understood to view the music we hear as coming from a spiritual model, from the music of silence."[111]

From our discussions, we can see that the religious intuition involved in transcendental beauty mentioned earlier has a role in the process of theosis. In theoria, the sacred emotive meaning of beautiful liturgical music helps grasp ineffable truths concerning the mystery of God. Their meaning is intuited in the transcendental dimension of religious experience. Such truths are not propositional truths about facts because they are not grasped by the human rational intellect *per se*. As St. Augustine said, "'*si comprehendis, non est Deus*'—if you understand (that is, grasp fully), it is not God."[112] In theoria, listening to beautiful liturgical music can illuminate these non-propositional truths according to their mystical meaning. As Johansson explains:

> the Scripture, in being confined to word symbols, often needs intuitive help of music to express more fully the deeper reality of the word symbol. . . . The words, then, direct us to the specific facts, but the music itself, in its own way, goes beyond the fact.[113]

This is because:

> The abstract quality of music, its ambiguity, is its strength. Music does not have specific meaning but it does have meaning. It is this ethereal quality of tones

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[109] Archmandrite George, *Theosis*, 36.

[110] Cardinal Robert Sarah, *The Power of Silence: Against the Dictatorship of Noise,* tr. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2017).

[111] Paul Westermeyer, "Music and Spirituality: Reflections from a Western Christian Perspective," *Religions,* 4, no. 4 (2013), 573.

[112] As quoted in Dubay, *Evidential*, 336.

[113] Calvin M. Johansson, *Music & Ministry: A Biblical Counterpoint* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1984), p. 99.

> moving fleetingly in time, heard but never touched, tasted, seen, or smelled, that makes music the most logical of all the arts to deal with mystery.[114]

The quality of the music, therefore, becomes very important for illuminating the ineffable divine realm within the listener. This quality is dependent on the artist-composer as well as the performers. In this way:

> Music may be interesting, relevant to life, personal, knowable, and even dramatic, but music must be artistically worthy, for, with artistic grace as a foundation stone, music will be able to capture and present the truth of the transcendent God. Music will be a gateway into that realm in which the worshipper will more fully grasp the truth of God's mystery and more fully experience that sense of awe that comes from a fuller realization of His Holiness. The veiled strains of the *mysterium tremendum* are in the notes.[115]

The quality of liturgical music, then, rests in its ability to convey transcendental beauty and thereby promote the sanctification or theosis of the faithful. Liturgical music must find its character in truth, goodness, and beauty, for which Gregorian chant, as Dom Hourlier of the Abbey of Solesmes has noted, is exemplary.[116] The beauty in liturgical music, even as a liturgical offering to God, is meant to be a theophany of God in the listener. In this respect, Maritain has noted that:

> The Contemplative and the Artist . . . both perfected by an intellectual habit binding them to the transcendental order, are in a position to sympathize . . . The Contemplative whose object is the *causa altissima* upon which everything else depends, knows the place and the value of art and understands the Artist. The Artist, as such, cannot judge the Contemplative but can guess his grandeur. If he really loves beauty and his heart is not besotted by some moral vice, as he goes past the Contemplative, he will recognise love and beauty.[117]

Liturgical artists and composers need to live in the transcendental order of the world.

Pointing to transcendental beauty in music is, admittedly, an elusive task, especially if we are seeking specific rules or guidance as to how it can be realized in practice. As Scruton explains, "the transcendental is ineffable, and that which we cannot eff we must consign to silence."[118] What is certain is that, "if we are to talk of music as having a relation to the transcendental, it is only a certain kind of music that we have in mind—music construed as an object of listening, where listening involves an awareness of, and attention to, the meaning of what is heard."[119] In the visual arts and architecture there have been traditional rules of proportion developed over the centuries for realizing beautiful works. St. Augustine tried to delineate the principles of good modulation for a sweetness or beauty in music throughout his *De Musica*. Others, such as Johansson, have more recently proposed some guidance for composing acceptable liturgical music.[120] In the case of classical art-music, Dubay has shown that "a performance of classical music is a melodic unity whose harmonies are in exquisite proportion—which are two reasons why it is beautiful."[121] But in the end, it falls on artistic genius and the religious intuition of the musical artist to be able to create not just beautiful musical compositions, but glorious cosmic ones that emanate a transcendental beauty through participation in God's glory. In this respect, Dubay has pointed out, "Beethoven's inability to hear the very music he was composing vividly underlies what is true of any beautiful form: it must preexist in the mind before it can be concretized in reality."[122] God can impart musical ideas in the composer as a gift of divine charism: "for an artist to work as a Christian, both natural and supernatural inspiration must be present," as Nichols has remarked.[123] Liturgical music is true and good in as much as its beauty intensifies a devotion which leads the listener to theosis.

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[114] Johansson, *Music & Ministry,* 91.

[115] Johansson, *Music & Ministry*, 101.

[116] Dom Jacques Hourlier, *Reflections on the Spirituality of Gregorian Chan*t, tr. Dom Gregory Casprini and Robert Edmonson (Orleans, Mass.: Paraclete Press, 2004), pp. 46–47.

[117] Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism*, 66.

[118] Roger Scruton, *Effing the Ineffable*, personal website <https://www.roger-scruton.com/about/music/understanding-music/187-effing-the-ineffable>.

[119] Ibid.

Transcendental beauty in music is best grasped through examples. William Mahrt, for instance, has given examples of the *bontà delle forme* of liturgical music, specifically of Gregorian chant to show how it is a paradigm in revealing a glimmer of the glory of God.[124] Von Balthasar has also listed examples of transcendental beauty in various musical styles which reflect the beauty of divine glory:

> Among these belong, besides Gregorian chant, the works of Palestrina and his contemporaries and a great many of the old German (mostly Protestant) hymns. Also, the high Masses of Bach and Haydn, the litanies of Mozart and the summit of musically imprinted faith, the unfinished Credo of his Mass in C minor, as well as the Kyrie of Schubert's B major Mass. When these or similar works are *prayed* by the singers, they can fill the people not merely with beauty but with a sense of the holy: they can transmit a glimmer of the divine glory that was their original inspiration. The person who hears only the beauty has an "ersatz" experience—as so many have who listen on Good Friday to the Matthew Passion. The real meaning of that which they heard eludes them.[125]

Through attunement in faith, "ersatz" beauty is transformed into a sacred beauty that fosters theosis.

It is not enough, then, for liturgical music to have a beauty which merely delights a listener. It must have a sacred transcendental beauty which spiritually leads people into the glory of God. Generally, von Balthasar's examples of traditional art-music require musical skill to execute properly, while their depths accommodate different levels of music listening appreciation. Even the old German hymns he mentions were often sung by the congregation as four-part chorales and became the subject of embellishments and instrumental variations for great German composers like Bach, and are not far removed from art-music. Today it is rare that an entire congregation can sing such chorales with great beauty because this requires much rehearsing or at least years of singing together. While sacred music from the church's treasury may not be popular in the vast majority of Novus Ordo parishes today, the church has fostered sacred art-music since time immemorial. The church has traditionally sought to lift the musical tastes of worshippers to greater spiritual heights. The Gregorian propers of the Mass, for instance, are meant to increase the devotion of the listening worshippers in order to intensify theoria. Beautiful art-music within the liturgy, such as Gregorian chant and Palestrina's works, is concerned with theosis.

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[120] Cf. Johansson, *Music & Ministry*, ch. 8.

[121] Dubay, *Evidential*, 55.

[122] Dubay, *Evidential*, 60.

[123] Nichols, *Redeeming*, 65.

[124] William Mahrt, *The Musical Shape of The Liturgy* (Richmod, Va.: CMAA, 2012), pp. 117–29.

[125] von Balthasar "The Grandeur of Liturgy," *Communio*, 5, no. 4 (Winter 1978), 349–50.

Because conversion involves the whole person, theosis also effects a change of taste for what is beautiful. I believe that attunement in faith can promote a taste for beautiful art-music concerned with offering a glimmer of God's glory. In attunement through faith, a person's perception of beauty can change as it did in St. Augustine's spiritual ascent when he came to prefer spiritual beauty over physical or sensual beauty. Musical preference relates largely to musical styles, which is a subject of considerable importance for theosis, but a vast one which cannot be dealt with here. Suffice it to point out that liturgical music must have transcendental beauty, which, drawing from our discussions, is characterized by three principles that affect the musical style of liturgical music. The first is that liturgical music must instill devotion in the worshipper that leads to an intense personal union with God. The second is that it must be based on silence so that the harmonious silent voice of God may be heard in theoria. The third, which follows from these, is that it must be spiritual which means it must be holy, or separate from the pedestrian music of the noisy world. Art-music is implied by these principles. These, I posit, describe the quality of holiness referred to by Pius X and repeated by Pius XII, a quality which is necessary for liturgical music.[126]

Much of what I have said about transcendental beauty, theosis, theoria, and the liturgy can be understood as Christian "mysticism,"[127] an often misused word today, and a topic seemingly ignored by the Consilium as well as by the liturgical music debates of the past fifty years. Mysticism is about beholding the invisible mysteries. As the late Fr. Jonathan Robinson of the Toronto Oratory pointed out, "mystical experience is not an exceptional experience;"[128] rather, "this experience grows out of the ordinary practice of Catholicism."[129] It is an "embodied mysticism, that is rooted in the sacramental and liturgical life of Faith." Sadly, "the *de facto* contempt for beauty in the church, as shown especially in the liturgy, has serious consequences in the very real world that we are constantly being admonished to take more seriously."[130] That is to say, the church no longer takes "beauty very seriously any more, and because of this, what the church says about truth and goodness becomes more and more meaningless and irrelevant to the modern world."[131] As von Balthasar pointed out, by taking away beauty, you take away truth and goodness. "This is because beauty cannot be separated from her two sisters, truth and goodness; take away beauty and you take away her sisters."[132] The mystical transformation of the whole person through experiences of beauty, truth, and goodness, which is theosis, is the highest form of active participation in the liturgy. But, strictly speaking, the beauty of heavenly silent music cannot be heard, only perceived in this mystical experience:

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[126] Pope Pius X, Motu Proprio, *Tra le Sollecitudini* (1903), ¶2 <https://adoremus.org/1903/11/tra-le-sollecitudini/>.

[127] Simply put: "The mystic is one who experiences the reality of the living God." Jean Daniélou, *God and the Ways of Knowing*, tr. Walter Roberts (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003), p. 110.

[128] Jonathan Robinson, *In No Strange Land: The Embodied Mysticism of Saint Philip Neri* (Kettering, Oh.: Angelico Press, 2015), p. 21.

[129] Robinson, *In No Strange Land*, 8.

> The heavenly song cannot be heard on earth; it is that *canor* of which the mystics speak, the song which sounds first above, then within, the human being. Earthly music can only remind us distantly of this song. The most beautiful music is only an echo of the eternal Gloria.[133]

Active Participation as Liturgical Theosis

At the outset of our discussion, we saw that the liturgists at the Consilium regarded the beauty in liturgical music as having secondary importance for sanctification. One reason for this was that there were a few very influential "pastoral musicians," such as Joseph Gelineau and Lucien Deiss, who supported the liturgists at the Consilium. The former actually espoused a problematic theory in music psychology which spread among the liturgists prompting some musicians to call it the "Gélineau disease."[134] According to this theory, singing liturgical texts always engaged the faithful more fully than listening to them being sung.[135] Certainly, the idea of active participation through congregational singing was meant to engage the faithful in the liturgy so as to lead them to sanctification. The pastoral musicians envisioned verbal engagement with the text which required a rational understanding of the words being sung, rather than a non-verbal mystical illumination of God's presence as a divine gift bestowed upon the worshipper during theoria. In taking a narrow, functionalist approach to liturgical music, the liturgists and pastoral musicians failed to understand the ontological importance of transcendental beauty for sanctification. In their functionalist thinking, the role of music in the liturgy was fulfilled by congregational singing while they saw the musicians' position as contrary to theirs and held in contempt. The liturgists could not see how beauty in music had an essential "function" in the liturgy and looked at beauty as a mere adornment, as if for the entertainment of the worshippers. When the most important ontological character of liturgical music, which is its beauty, is ignored, it is no wonder that so much sentimental and

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[130] Robinson, *In No Strange Land*, 269.

[131] Robinson, *In No Strange Land,* 268.

[132] von Balthasar, *Glory,* 18.

[133] Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art*, tr. David F. Green (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963), p. 261.

[134] Bugnini, *Reform*, 887.

[135] Joseph Gelineau, *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship: Principles, Laws, Applications* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1964), p. 17.

"kitsch music"[136] has dominated the Novus Ordo liturgy ever since.

Ironically, chapter six of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* upholds the traditional view when it speaks of the treasure of Gregorian chant and polyphony; what is a "treasure" if it is not beautiful and desirable? Article 122 actually repeats Pius XII's concern for beauty. The increasing acceptance of beauty as mere subjective aestheticism within the church before the council led Pius XII, through his *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina* to try and restore the traditional Christian understanding of beauty as something objective because of her ontological connection with God. For him, the purpose of art is "to express in human works the infinite divine beauty of which it is, as it were, the reflection."[137] In particular, this reflection of God's beauty in religious art

> is even more closely bound to God and the promotion of His praise and glory, because its only purpose is to give the faithful the greatest aid in turning their minds piously to God through the works it directs to their senses of sight and hearing.[138]

Beauty, whether in art or in nature, is a gift from God which is meant to draw souls toward him.

Sacrosanctum Concilium actually repeats this concern for beauty, and likewise links it, whether in nature or through artists' hands, to the infinite beauty of God. It refers explicitly to beauty in the context of the fine arts, to which music has traditionally belonged, and specifically as an aid to devotion:

> Very rightly the fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man's genius, and this applies especially to religious art and to its highest achievement, which is sacred art. These arts, by their very nature, are oriented toward the infinite beauty of God which they attempt in some way to portray by the work of human hands; they achieve their purpose of resounding to God's praise and glory in proportion as they are directed the more exclusively to the single aim of turning men's minds devoutly toward God.[139]

Although this section on sacred visual art and furnishings does not mention music, its presence is implicit because music belongs to the fine arts (*artes ingenuæ*) as described in the preceding section entirely devoted to sacred music in the liturgy.[140] By extension, sacred music is not just art but an exceptionally fine art having the highest artistic value for the liturgy. This resonates with Pius XII's affirmation that sacred music "is more closely associated with divine worship than most of the other liberal arts" (*artes*

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[136] Roger Scruton, "Kitsch and the Modern Predicament," *City Journal*, Winter 1999 <https://www.city-journal.org/html/kitsch-and-modern-predicament-11726.html>: "imagination is not possible for everyone; and in an age of mass communication, people learn to dispense with it. And that is how kitsch arises—when people who are avoiding the cost of the higher life are nevertheless pressured by the surrounding culture into pretending that they possess it. Kitsch is an attempt to have the life of the spirit on the cheap."

[137] Pius XII, *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina*, ¶25.

[138] Pius XII, *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina*, ¶27.

[139] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶122.

[140] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶¶112–21.

liberales).[141] Beauty, in the context of music, is referenced as "adding sweetness to prayer" (*orationem suavius exprimens*).[142] This passage retains the ancient distinction between visual beauty and beautiful sounds by referring to the latter metaphorically in terms of "sweetness." Adding sweetness to prayer is precisely the role of beauty for instilling devotion, as we have shown. In short, although *Sacrosanctum Concilium* does not make an explicit connection between transcendental beauty and active participation (*participatio actuosa)*, there is an implicit connection between the two. While the Consilium musicians did not see musical beauty as a mere adornment to the liturgy, the liturgists failed to grasp the importance of sacred beauty for sanctification. In this connection, von Balthasar gave a prophetic warning which should have been heeded in the fabrication of the Novus Ordo: "We can be sure that whoever sneers at her [beauty's] name as if she were the ornament of a bourgeois past—whether he admits it or not—can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love."[143] Indeed, theosis is charity in union with God, for which "it is no coincidence that faith communities that ignore beauty are also lukewarm and poorly catechized."[144]

One has to wonder, then, about the main premise of the LM from its beginnings, namely that the "silent spectator" at the liturgy is detached from it. Perhaps it may have been "self-evident" to some extroverts at the Consilium, but our discussion has shown otherwise. Both Pius XI and XII suggested only limited congregational singing (antiphonal) of the beautiful Gregorian ordinaries at a *Missa Cantata*. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, however, is ambiguous on this point, a fact which allowed the liturgists and pastoral musicians their extremist latitude in stressing the understanding of words. Even St. Augustine warned that words are not essential to prayer: "Recourse to words is unnecessary both to the heart's longing and to God's knowledge of that longing."[145] This is because God is ineffable; he is beyond human words to describe. In this case, the abstract if not mystical nature of music takes over: "and if you cannot speak about him, yet ought not to be silent, what remains is that you jubilate; so that the heart rejoices without words."[146] Jubilation is singing syllables not words, as in the melismas of Gregorian chant. In this way, "jubilation is most fitting for the ineffable God."[147] In jubilation, the beauty of the melody moves the heart to devotion to contemplate the sacred mysteries. This corresponds to Aquinas' position that understanding the sung text is not needed as long as the music aids devotion in the liturgy. What is important is the transcendental sacred beauty of liturgical music for theoria. The sound of beauty in the liturgy is for theosis, not entertainment or adornment of a church and its liturgy.

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[141] Pius XII, *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina*, ¶30.

[142] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶112.

[143] von Balthasar, *Glory*, 18.

[144] Miravalle, *Beauty*, 41.

[145] St. Augustine's *Epistola* 130.10.20 as described by R. H. Weaver, s.v. "Prayer" in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, O.S.A. (Grand Rapids Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), p. 672.

[146] St. Augustine, *Sermo* 356, as cited in *Music In Early Christian Literature*, ed. James McKinnon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 157.

[147] Ibid.

If there is to be sacred music in the liturgy, its beauty is of utmost importance for the sanctification of the faithful.

Conclusion

I believe I have sufficiently shown that if there is to be sacred music in the liturgy, its beauty is of utmost importance for the sanctification of the faithful. In agreement with St. Augustine, von Balthasar, and many others, my main point is that sacred (transcendental) beauty is essential to the liturgy because it can spiritually lead the faithful towards a mystical union with God. When transcendental beauty infuses sacred music, attunement in faith impels the worshipper toward God, through a mystical ascent beginning in this earthly life leading beyond created beauty to the horizon of divine beauty, which is God's glory. The transcendental beauty of liturgical music fosters the sanctification of the faithful listener by increasing devotion, which leads to this theosis. Theosis makes the worshipper more charitable, because God is love. The weekly drinking of beauty at Sunday Mass is nourishment for sanctification on the worshipper's spiritual ascent. This is generally true today of the Traditional Latin High Masses, the Eastern Divine Liturgies, and of those Novus Ordo oratories and churches that are concerned with liturgical beauty.

It has often been suggested that the active participation referred to in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* should be interpreted mainly as an inner or internal participation of the faithful; *Musicam Sacram,* ¶15a even says so explicitly: "active participation . . . should be above all internal, in the sense that by it the faithful join their mind to what they pronounce or hear, and cooperate with heavenly grace." In that case, *munus ministeriale* also implies active congregational *listening*. When sacred beauty is primary in liturgical music, the consideration for trained beautiful voices, symbolic of the heavenly angels, singing beautiful compositions would also be primary. The liturgy does not require familiar tavern songs just so everyone could have a voice, good or bad. As Viladesau explains, the transforming power of beauty in liturgical music has been very important through the centuries.

> The loss of Latin as the universal popular language in the Middle Ages no doubt increased the importance of church music, for the beauty of the sound not only glorified God and solemnized the ritual but also provided a substitute form of sacred experience for a general populace that could no longer understand the texts.[148]

Our discussions have shown that sacred beauty in music indeed has an essential ministerial function, *munus ministeriale*, in the sanctification of the faithful through active listening, more so, I would argue for theoria, than congregational singing if beauty has pride of place.

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[148] Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts*, 20.

Listener participation in beautiful liturgical music, then, is a high form of engagement or "active participation" in the liturgy that feeds man's innate religious intuition. Sacred beauty is essential not only to glorify God but to also contribute to the sanctification of the faithful, the two "functions" of beautiful sacred music in the liturgy according to Pius XII's *Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina* (¶¶34–35) and repeated in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (¶121). The essential role of liturgical music, then, is not only to bring the worshipper to experience God; it is also to make the worshipper God-like. Beauty is an ineffable splendor for the hearts of the faithful which God has given them so as to delight at his presence in the Eucharistic feast, a mystery beyond all telling. Beautiful patterns of liturgical music lead the hearts of the faithful to the silent musical beauty of the divine world.[149] All this leads to theosis, the goal in life of all Christians in co-operation with God's grace. Theosis or sanctification is led by sacred beauty. For St. Thomas Aquinas, grace is actually the reception of God's beauty.[150] Grace is "divinization" and St. Thomas explicitly identifies it as the reception of God's beauty, according to the capacity of each recipient.[151]

Bugnini and, one would assume, the liturgists at his Consilium, spoke little about liturgical beauty for an active participation in the liturgy, stressing instead cerebral comprehension, a rationalism characteristic of the philosophical Modernism of that century. The Consilium's corresponding stress on the function of liturgical music, as opposed to its ontology, ignored the affective power of transcendental beauty to spiritually lead humankind to God. The liturgists perhaps did not reject beauty but treated it only as a secondary, albeit desirable, byproduct of its function. This is reminiscent of the then-pervasive idea in modern architecture in which form follows function, which is to say, of treating beauty as a byproduct of functionality rather than the defining goal.[152] The liturgists' position has generally prevailed in the Novus Ordo up to the present. It goes without saying that even today, arguing on the basis of beauty, whereby the worshippers listen to beautiful sacred music

The Consilium's corresponding stress on the function of liturgical music, as opposed to its ontology, ignored the affective power of transcendental beauty to spiritually lead humankind to God.

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[149] See my "Gregorian Chant: A Modulation of Silence through Humility," in *Sacred Music,* 146, no. 3 (Fall 2019), 22–37.

[150] Viladesau, "Theosis," 184.

[151] Viladesau, "Theosis," 184.

[152] Roger Scruton, *Beauty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 21.

(in Latin) can still be a way of the cross for music directors. The Gregorian Proper of the Mass, for instance, is almost always replaced by vernacular metrical hymns even though *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (¶114) gives the former first place in the Roman Liturgy.

I must address one last important point here: that my discussion on theoria and the liturgy is at odds with post-conciliar thinking. My position does not undermine the sacramental nature of the Eucharist, because the spiritual union with God in theoria can only be perfected through the reception of the Eucharist. The sacrifice of the Mass remains necessary for a full union of the human person, body and soul, with God. I have only stressed the latter. I believe that my position represents the traditional position that was dominant for ages before the council and which still dominates much of Eastern Christianity, and, I would also argue, that it was the position of the musicians at the Consilium. I cannot enter here into any comprehensive examination of this very important issue, but I will mention briefly the ideas of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain who, just before the Second Vatican Council, were already dismayed by the way that the liturgy was being redefined from its traditional understanding as "the public worship rendered to God by the Mystical Body of Christ."[153] As public worship, the liturgy is the "Church's contemplation" of the great sacred mysteries of faith.[154] The individual worshipper joins this contemplation of the mystical body because "the liturgy itself asks that the soul tend to contemplation; and participation in the liturgical life, if it is understood and practiced in its true spirit, is an outstanding preparation for union with God by contemplation of love."[155] In this way, "the worship rendered to God by the Church is necessarily an exterior worship, but it is a worship in spirit and in truth, in which what matters above all is the interior movement of souls and the divine grace operating in them."[156] It would then "be a great error to conclude that simple participation in the liturgy would establish our spiritual life at a more elevated degree than the one to which it is drawn by union with God in contemplation."[157] Rather, "in what concerns individual souls, contemplation, to the extent that they attain to it, is superior to the acts through which they take part in the divine service."[158] Those who would argue against this, like the liturgists at the Consilium, it seems, do not know what contemplation is and they misunderstand the sacred liturgy. "They do not know that these two supernatural realities and grandeurs must be associated and not divided."[159]

In conclusion, one certainly does not need to study metaphysics for theosis. Platonic metaphysics had a role at the beginning of St. Augustine's spiritual ascent to God in clarifying his thinking which had become muddled by the pagan religion of Manichæism. It also helped him to see that beauty is a theophany, but St. Augustine would eventually have seen the sacred and therefore spiritual character of beauty through his co-operation with God's grace, as well as with the church guiding his ascent in theosis. As he exclaimed, "God wishes not only to vivify, but also to deify us."[160] The point of metaphysics is that it discloses conceptually the objective nature of beauty in creation, and thereby God's transcendence. In today's confused post-modern world of subjectivizing and relativizing beauty and value, metaphysics can be a great help in clarifying the transcendental and sacred character of beauty. In keeping with past centuries, a contemporary metaphysics is certainly needed to advance the limited human understanding of God's glory as expressed in biblical theology. Welbaum has noted that for theologians "to reject metaphysics is to reject being, and to reject being is to reject the eternally revealed love of God."[161] This stands true for liturgists as well. Indeed, "once we touch a transcendental, we touch being itself, a likeness of God, an absolute, all that ennobles and makes the joy of life: we enter the realm of the spirit."[162] Yet Bugnini and the liturgists seemed to have even mocked the Consilium musicians for using St. Augustine's and St. Thomas's arguments founded on devotion because these did not require a comprehension of the sung texts. One wonders to what extent the Liturgical Movement and its liturgists at the Consilium appreciated the ontological and theological nature of beauty for which von Balthasar developed his theological aesthetics. Criticisms of the liturgists from the few theologians during the Consilium are disconcerting. For instance, Monsignor Domenico Bartolucci, the late Maestro in Perpetuity of the Sistine Chapel who served under six popes, said concerning the whole liturgical reform, "I recall that Cardinal Ferdinand Antonelli, of venerable memory, often said: 'What are we to make of liturgists who don't know theology?'"[163] It is imperative that today, if there be any music in the liturgy, it must be primarily founded on sacred transcendental beauty. In this way beautiful sacred "music is a servant before the face of God; it has a priestly function. It speaks of the ineffable, it represents the *loci de sacerdotio et de finibus*."[164] The beauty of liturgical music founded upon silence opens up space in the devoted heart of the worshipper for hearing the silent voice of the ineffable God in theoria. Founded on ontology, this is St. Thomas Aquinas's version of "active participation" which leads to the sanctification of the worshipper, that is, to theosis, the purpose of human life. ❖

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[153] Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, *Liturgy and Contemplation*, tr. Joseph W. Evans (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1960), p. 12.

[154] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 20.

[155] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 11.

[156] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 14–15.

[157] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 28.

[158] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 21.

[159] Maritain, *Liturgy*, 61.

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[160] St. Augustine, *Sermo* 23B, as quoted in David Vincent Meconi, S.J., *The One Christ: St. Augustine's Theology of Deification* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), p. 90.

[161] Welbaum, "Transformed," 256.

[162] Maritain, *Art*, 26.

[163] "Interview With Monsignor Domenico Bartolucci: by Pucci Cipriani and Stefano Carusi posted on the Rorate Cæli website," tr. Christopher A. Ferrara, "Tradition Vindicated: True Confessions, Pro Vobis and Pro Multis," *The Remnant* <www.remnantnewspaper. com/Archives/2009-0831-ferrara-catholic_tradition_vindicated.htm>.

[164] van der Leeuw, *Sacred*, 262.

In Choosing the Parts to Be Sung . . .

The idea of separating the people's singing of short acclamations and responses from the singing of the sacred ministers is without foundation and unhelpful in building sung celebrations.

by Fr. Fergus Ryan, O.P.

The present Roman Missal for the ordinary form of Mass, and in all its editions going back to the publication of its first General Instruction in 1969, invites a process of selecting the texts that will be sung in the celebration of Mass. The General Instruction gave guidelines for the making of decisions, as follows:

> In choosing the parts actually to be sung, however, preference should be given to those that are more significant and especially to those to be sung by the priest or ministers with the congregation responding or by the priest and people together.[1]

The present General Instruction puts it slightly differently, but the meaning is the same:

> In the choosing of the parts actually to be sung, preference is to be given to those that are of greater importance and especially to those which are to be sung by the Priest or the Deacon or a reader, with the people replying, or by the Priest and people together.[2]

Among English speaking parishes in particular, the invitation to choose what will be sung has been taken with the document on music published shortly before the new Missal of Pope Paul VI, *Musicam Sacram*.[3] This latter document from 1967 emphasizes quite strongly that acclamations (and responses) be sung at what it continued to call in a technical way a *Missa Cantata* (Sung Mass) before anything else might be sung at that celebration. The guidelines in the Roman Missal since 1969, taken with the dated technical, legalistic description found in *Musicam Sacram*, have had consequences for English speaking parishes not seen so frequently elsewhere, and the invention of new terminology and grouping of liturgical texts for singing also not employed by other language groups. It is worth considering again the missal's guidelines for choosing those parts to be sung.

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[1] General Instruction of the Roman Missal, ¶19, in its first two editions (1969/1970 & 1975).

[2] General Instruction of the Roman Missal, ¶41, in the third edition (2000/2002/2008).

[3] Sacra Rituum Congregatio, "Instructio de musica sacra in sacra liturgia *Musicam sacram* (5 martii 1967)," in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis,* 60 (1967), 300–20.

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Until the 1960s there were effectively two forms of celebration of Mass.

Before examining the guidelines of the present missal in detail, it is important to understand the immediate background. Until the 1960s there were effectively two forms of celebration of Mass. The first was the sung celebration in which the priest chanted his parts and the choir and people sang both the responses to the priest, and also other chants whose texts either changed for each occasion (introit, gradual, etc.) or did not change (the Sanctus, etc.). The second form of celebration was technically entirely without music, but in practice it was possible for the choir and people to insert chants into the celebration. In the first everything had to be sung, and only in the liturgical language (Latin, etc.). In the second, the priest did not sing, while the choir and people had a great variety of possibilities, singing in Latin or even in the vernacular. To many people, there were not so many differences between the two kinds of celebration, but technically speaking they were quite different.[4]

Temporary changes following the Vatican II document on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, permitted a middle ground between the two kinds of celebration described rather indirectly in the 1964 document for the first set of changes to the liturgy, *Inter Oecumenici*.[5] By permitting the priest-celebrant to sing parts of the proper and ordinary with the choir or congregation, *Inter Oecumenici* permitted a recited or Low Mass in which there could be singing by the priest precisely when some of the proper (or hymns) or ordinary were sung during it.[6] Then from 1967 a partially sung *Missa Cantata* was permitted in order to facilitate more frequent sung celebrations.[7] Provided the priest sang his parts, or at least most of them, most of the more complicated music for the choir and people could be omitted. The list of obligatory and optional parts to be sung corresponded almost exactly to the three-step program for encouraging congregations to join the choir in singing the Mass recommended by the Holy See in 1958.[8] The first step recommended in 1958 was joining in the sung responses to the priest. The first item on the list from 1958 became the minimum singing of the simplified sung Mass in 1967. It was not permitted in 1967, however, to sing at a *Missa Cantata* the chants at introit, communion, offertory, or to sing the Kyrie eleison, Credo, etc., unless the priest chanted most of his parts. Conversely, were the priest not to sing any of his parts, the choir and people seemed to be free to sing the variable (propers) and the unchanging longer parts (ordinary), as it seems they could do before Vatican II, and that celebration would be considered, still in 1967, a *Missa Recitata* or Low Mass.[9]

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[4] The different forms of celebration of Mass were clarified in 1958 in an instruction called "Concerning Sacred Music" or in Latin *De Musica Sacra*: Sacra Rituum Congregatio, "Instructio De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia ad mentem litterarum encyclicarum Pii Papæ XII 'Musicæ Sacræ Disciplina' et 'Mediator Dei' *De Musica Sacra* (3 septembris 1958)," in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 50 (1958), 630–663. See ¶3, p. 633.

[5] Sacra Rituum Congregatio, "Instructio ad exsecutionem constitutionis de sacra liturgia recte ordinandam Inter Oecumenici (26 septembris 1964)," ¶2, in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 56 (1964), 877–900.

[6] The matter was clarified by an answer to a query submitted to the *Consilium*: "At a recited Mass may one or other part of the Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, etc.) or of the Proper (e.g., the gradual, the communion antiphon) be sung? Reply: Yes." In the original Latin: "Utrum in Missa *lecta* una alterave pars Ordinarii (*Kyrie, Gloria,* etc.) aut Proprii (e.g., Graduale, antiphona ad Communionem) cantari possit? *Resp.:* Affirmative," Consilium ad Exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia, "Utrum in Missa lecta," in *Notitiæ,* 5 (May 1965), 136, ¶3.

[7] *Musicam Sacram,* ¶¶28–31. The translation provided by DOL 508 is not particularly accurate. DOL refers to *Documents on the liturgy. 1963–1979. Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1982).

All of this is very technical, the distinctions likely went over most people's heads, and was effectively done away with in the Missal of Pope Paul VI in 1969 as was noted in 1970 by the Congregation for Divine Worship in its periodical.[10] The difference between Sung Mass and spoken or Low Mass was effectively discontinued in 1969, as was the legalistic atmosphere in which singing the liturgy was discussed and experienced.

> *A major trend in the liturgical changes, in the liturgical movement and the reforms following the conciliar document on the liturgy, was to emphasize the singing of the liturgy and the faithful's participation in that singing.*

A major trend in the liturgical changes, in the liturgical movement and the reforms following the conciliar document on the liturgy, was to emphasize the singing of the liturgy and the faithful's participation in that singing, as can be seen from the move to make singing the liturgy simpler and the approach less legalistic. The Missal of Paul VI encourages the use of singing at all Masses celebrated with a congregation seven days a week, not just at one Mass on a Sunday.[11] Like the rather rigid and legalistic directives before it, the current missal emphasizes the singing of the responses and acclamations by the people, all of which depend upon the singing of the priest. The responses include "And with your spirit"; the acclamations include "Amen," "Thanks be to God," "Glory to you, O Lord," "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ." Unlike the documents before it, the current Missal does not insist that a list of certain texts be sung in its entirety before other texts of the Mass may be sung. It talks about priority being given, which is a very different thing.

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[8] Cf. *De Musica Sacra*, ¶25, in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 50 (1958), 639–40.

[9] It is debated whether singing the liturgical texts in Latin—the Ordinary and the Proper—during a Low Mass was actually permitted before the Second Vatican Council. The practice permitted by the reply from the *Consilium* to a *dubium*, published in 1965, may be interpreted as confirming previous practice as licit, not as, through a reply to a *dubium*, expanding possibilities. The same argument can be made with respect to singing hymns in the vernacular at Low Mass—not necessarily Dialogue Mass—before they were explicitly permitted in 1958. Cf. *De Musica Sacra*, ¶30. It is well known that such vernacular hymn singing at Low Mass was practiced rather freely and rather widely before 1958.

[10] "Locutio 'in cantu,' mutatur in 'Missa cum cantu,' ne ansa præbeatur notioni alicuius formæ Missæ amplius non exstantis, forma stricte iuridica ut antea," Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, "Variationes in 'Institutionem Generalem Missalis Romani' inductæ," in *Notitiæ,* 54 (May 1970), 182.

How can this priority be given? When it is given? By whom is it given?

In the first place, I would suggest that priorities be indicated for the region of an episcopal conference. The responses and acclamations should be sung to the melodies provided in the liturgical books promulgated by the episcopal conference. A strong argument can be made against priests and deacons using melodies which do not appear in the missal for singing their liturgical texts.[12] Using different melodies from different composers makes it difficult for everyone to know how to sing the responses to the ministers, and makes unnecessary work for the latter, as *Musicam Sacram* understands.[13] Before Vatican II, the clergy could only use the official melodies for singing the orations, greetings, readings, etc.[14]; that restriction has never been lifted explicitly and, indeed, the missal's recommendation for the priest to sing makes reference to the (official) melodies in

> *Before Vatican II, the clergy could only use the official melodies for singing the orations, greetings, readings, etc.; that restriction has never been lifted explicitly.*

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[11] Cf. General Instruction of the Roman Missal, ¶19, of the first and second editions; in the third edition the relevant article is ¶40.

[12] *Musicam Sacram*, ¶57 indicated an obligation to have new melodies for the sacred ministers approved by the competent territorial authority, as had *Inter Oecumenici*, ¶42.

[13] Cf. *Musicam Sacram*, ¶58.

[14] Pope Pius XII, "Litteræ encyclicæ de sacra liturgia *Mediator Dei et hominum* (20 novembris 1947) ¶171," in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 39 (1947), 589, which made reference to Pope Pius X's motu proprio, although without indicating the precise article in question. The following seems the most appropriate text to quote: "le melodie proprie del celebrante all'altare e dei ministri, le quali devono essere sempre in solo canto gregoriano senza alcun accompagnamento d'organo," Pope Pius X, "Motu proprio de restauratione musicæ sacræ *Tra le sollecitudini* (22 novembris 1903) n. 22," in *Acta Sanctæ Sedis*, 36 (1903–1904), 336.

the missal.[15] It seems to me that the episcopal conferences can give direction on the quantity of texts which priests and deacons might sing regularly in their parishes: the preface, the acclamations at the gospel ("A reading from . . . "; "Glory to you, O Lord," etc.), etc. The diocesan bishop might also give direction and support.

In the second place, regular practice in parishes might be established, particularly if there is no helpful direction at regional or diocesan level.

In the third place, I see in individual organists and choir directors resources for helping prioritize the singing of the clergy with the people responding in song. This third context should be focused on building familiarity where it is lacking. It should not be sporadic and variable nor always be a topic for discussion. "Will we sing the Amen?" should never be a question for the choir. The answer will always be, however, "If the priest sings the prayer, we will sing the Amen." Never, ever, should this priority for sung responses and acclamations be raised in preparing a specific wedding or a funeral, or included in material for preparing such occasions. In the final instance, the priest celebrating decides if he will sing a prayer or a greeting, and may in fact decide immediately before the prayer or greeting arises. At the risk of being repetitious, the music used for these texts should be from a very limited and familiar repertoire.

As mentioned earlier, the Roman Missal also says that, in choosing the parts to be sung preference is to be given to those sung by priest and people together.[16] These parts are grouped in two: unchanging texts and texts which change by occasion.

The former is customarily called the sung Ordinary of the Mass and consists in the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei.[17] These chants are preferably sung on every occasion they are part of the Mass. While the singing of the creed on a regular basis has fallen out of favor in almost every part of the world, the other parts of the ordinary are in principal intended to be sung, and indeed should be sung every day.

As for the second group of texts sung by priest and people together, these are for the introit, offertory, and communion, and also the responsorial psalm and the Alleluia with verse. The choice of chants for introit, offertory, and communion is a major topic to be discussed in itself and given the missal provides alternatives if nothing is sung at these moments, we will not discuss them further. The Alleluia with its verse (and alternatives in Lent) is often called an acclamation, and in a certain sense it is.[18] The refrain, at least since the 1960s, has the musical form of a short acclamation, which makes it easier for priest and people to sing it together. It is difficult to imagine why the Alleluia with its verse would not be sung at every Mass. The responsorial psalm is a particular challenge for parishes since replacing the set text with another in order to facilitate singing is not so easily done in practice, whereas that very approach is employed for the aforementioned introit, offertory, and communion. One solution to the challenge of singing the responsorial psalm has been in use in Poland since the 1970s: all the responses have the same metrical form so the same music can be used for those responses.[19]

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[15] The third edition of the General Instruction says that it is a laudable practice for the parts of the Eucharistic prayer concerning all the concelebrants, and for which musical notation is provided in the missal, to be sung: Cf. General Instruction of the Roman Missal, ¶218.

[16] General Instruction of the Roman Missal, ¶19 in the first and second editions, ¶41 in the third edition.

[17] For an examination of the technical expression "Ordinary of the Mass," in Latin "Ordinarium missæ," see the forthcoming article: Fergus M. T. Ryan, "*Ordinarium Missæ* & *Ordo Missæ*—Notable Differences to be Maintained in Translation?" *Liturgia Sacra*, 26 (2020), 135–64.

[18] Referring, in modern languages, to the Alleluia with verse before the gospel, and the Lenten equivalent, as "gospel acclamation" may induce confusion when speaking of the dialogue-like acclamations at the gospel. *Musicam Sacram* ¶29b refers to "Acclamationes ad evangelium" (Acclamations at the gospel) which are the acclamation-responses to the announcements of the deacon—*Gloria tibi,*

What does Mass look like musically speaking if we follow this analysis of "in choosing the parts to be sung?" First of all, the clergy sing their parts as they are able and the choir and people are able to respond. Those parts are the greetings, the announcements at the gospel, the preface and perhaps the other variable prayers, the *mysterium fidei,* and the doxology of the Eucharistic prayer. But these sung texts are not "scheduled" for particular celebrations. They simply happen without any fuss. If the organist can support the people's sung responses, all the better.

Second, the parts of the ordinary are sung when it is possible. In many places the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei will be sung on every occasion they are part of Mass. Some weekday Masses might not have a congregation able to sing the Gloria when a feast day occurs, but many will. The singing of the parts of the ordinary will not need to be scheduled: "will we sing the Sanctus today?" will not be a question to have. The question that might arise will be for the organist and choir director: "which setting of the Mass will we use?" That question might be answered by a previous decision to use a number of settings for different seasons, or different kinds of feast.

Third, there will be a norm for Sundays, and perhaps a different one for weekdays, regarding the singing of the variable texts: Alleluia with verse (Lenten alternative), responsorial psalm, chants at introit, offertory, communion.

The three kinds of texts for singing—(1) responses/acclamations, (2) ordinary, (3) variable texts—should be approached rather differently to the three stages mentioned in *De Musica Sacra* and *Musicam Sacram*, one to be implemented before the others. They exist together and singing some from each group best occurs at each celebration.

"In choosing the parts to be sung" should also be read in the light of a comment made in the periodical of the dicastery some years after the publication of the new missal. In May 1975, the Congregation for Divine Worship issued a note on including melodies in vernacular editions of the Roman Missal.[20] The note was being published,

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Dominie; Laus tibi, Christe—not the Alleluia with its verse which is mentioned later in ¶31c of *Musicam Sacram.* Unlike earlier editions of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the third edition at ¶62 employs as a heading "Acclamatio ante lectionem Evangelii," i.e. Acclamation before the reading of the gospel, although throughout the document the preference for "Alleluia with verse" remains. In spite of the novel heading, the distinction remains between the two elements: Alleluia with verse as opposed to acclamations dependent upon the chanting of the deacon or priest.

[19] See Fergus M. T. Ryan, "Singing Responsorial Psalms: Raising the Bar," in *Worship*, 94, no. 4 (Winter 2020), 335–45.

[20] Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, "De

it said, in response to several queries the dicastery had received asking whether melodies should be included in such editions of the missal. The dicastery's note indicated that the absence of melodies in some vernacular editions of the Roman Missal was causing Masses to be celebrated without any singing. The congregation posed a question in its note: "Which parts of the Mass are to be sung?"[21] Its reply did not name the sung ordinary and proper as such, but in considering the *Ordo Missaæ*, it stated that one should consider the choice of parts for singing to be set in line with the traditional use. It then went on to point to the melodies provided in the missal before 1970 and both the Graduale Romanum and Liber Usualis (also from before 1970), to the Missale Romanum of 1970 itself, to *Ordo Cantus Missæ* of 1970, in addition to the initiative of the monastery at Solesmes.[22] The congregation's printed reply finally mentioned the need to take into account local circumstances touching on cultural and linguistic matters. The principal point of interest here is the emphasis on traditional use. There was no suggestion that a rupture be sought.

The principal point of interest here is the emphasis on traditional use.

We can say that the invitation to "choose the parts to be sung" does not invite frequent discussion and change to what is sung at Mass. While the first group of texts will change according to the abilities and decision of the priest, singing them shouldn't require discussion or frequent preparation on the part of the choir. The parts sung from the second and third groups—either the number of items sung or the choice of music or text—should be relatively stable and predictable. The priest should not have to ask each Sunday in each parish, church or chapel "is the choir singing the psalm/ Alleluia/Gloria/Sanctus/Agnus Dei?"

What about "Eucharistic acclamations"? Neither the missal, nor church documents

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formulis melodiis musicis ditandis in editionibus vulgaribus missalis romani," in *Notitiæ,* 105 (May 1975), 129–32.

[21] Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, "De formulis melodiis musicis," in *Notitiæ,* 105 (May 1975), 129. The translation of the question into English is ours.

[22] From Solesmes had been published in 1972 all the prefaces of the *Missale Romanum* of 1970 set to the traditional Gregorian tones: Abbaye de Saint–Pierre de Solesmes, *Praefationes in Cantu* (Solesmes: Abbaye de Saint–Pierre de Solesmes, 1972). In late 1975 a more complete book was published but this hardly seems to be the book being referred to in *Notitiæ* in early 1975. The 1975 book from Solesmes included all the notated prefaces of the 1972 book and set more of the liturgical texts to chant than was the case in all the liturgical books for Mass issued by the Holy See from 1969 to 1975. Cf. Abbaye de Saint–Pierre de Solesmes, *Missale Romanum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum. Ordo Missæ in Cantu* (Solesmes: Abbaye de Saint–Pierre de Solesmes, 1975); more recently: *Ordo Missæ in Cantu juxta Editionem Tyicam Alteram Missalis Romani* (Solesmes: Abbaye de Saint–Pierre de Solesmes, 1995).

with a universal appeal, speak of Eucharistic acclamations. The Sanctus should ordinarily be sung from a Mass setting which includes the Agnus Dei, etc. The acclamation after the consecration is a simple acclamation depending upon the singing of the priest, as is the Amen at the end of the Eucharistic prayer. It is unwise to vary the melody of the acclamation from that given in the missal. The expression "the great Amen" is equally absent from church documents of international import. Of course, there is nothing to prevent a more elaborate melody being employed for the Amen provided it follows naturally from the singing of the doxology (Through him, and with him . . .) by the priest who uses the melody provided in the missal. Singing these three parts with little else sung in the Mass has been recommended in some places as a starting point for weekdays, but this way of making singing present in a celebration renders the whole unbalanced. The idea came from some musicians in the United States of America and seems to have been based on a faulty presumption that the priest and other ministers would no longer sing their parts, but the acclamations which are based on their singing would be sung as a matter of priority.[23] That idea of separating the people's singing of short acclamations and responses from the singing of the sacred ministers is without foundation and unhelpful in building sung celebrations.[24]

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[23] It is interesting to follow the source and development of the expression "Eucharistic acclamations." A commentary on *Musicam Sacram* in 1968 considered the different kinds of texts requiring different kinds of musical treatment and set apart acclamations (naming the Holy, Holy, the Alleluia, and the Amen) from the priest's prayers (which it listed as the Eucharistic prayer, collect, prayer over the gifts, postcommunion). Cf. Music Advisory Board, "The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations. III.2a," *Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter* 4/1–2 (1968), 3, reprinted in *35 Years of the BCL Newsletter* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004), p. 117. In 1972, *Music in Catholic Worship*, a document of the bishops' committee on the liturgy, stated: "the former distinction between the ordinary and proper parts of the Mass with regard to musical settings and distribution of roles is no longer retained. For this reason, the musical settings of the past are usually not helpful models for composing truly liturgical pieces today," United States Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, "Music in Catholic Worship, ¶51," in *The Liturgy Documents. A Parish Resource*, vol. 1, ed. M.–A. Simcoe (Chicago, Ill.: Liturgy Training Publications, 2004), p. 358. It then went on to say the following: "In the Eucharistic celebration there are five acclamations which ought to be sung even at Masses at which little else is sung: Alleluia; 'Holy, Holy, Holy Lord'; Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen; Doxology to the Lord's Prayer," "Music in Catholic Worship, ¶54," in *The Liturgy Documents,* 359. The document *Liturgical Music Today* of 1982 had the following to say: "The acclamations (gospel acclamation, doxology after the Lord's Prayer, and eucharistic acclamations—including the special acclamations of praise in Eucharistic Prayers of Mass with Children) are the preeminent sung prayers of the Eucharistic liturgy. Singing these acclamations makes their prayer all the more effective. They should, therefore, be sung, even at weekday celebrations of the Eucharist. The gospel acclamation, moreover, must always be sung," Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, "Liturgical Music Today, ¶17," in *The Liturgy Documents*, 372. The most recent document, *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, comes directly from the USCCB and states the following: "the acclamations of the Eucharistic Liturgy and other rites arise from the whole gathered assembly as assents to God's Word and action. The Eucharistic acclamations include the Gospel Acclamation, the Sanctus, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Great Amen," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, ¶115, Pastoral Liturgy Series 4 (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2008), p. 34. *Sing to the Lord* went on to say: "At daily Mass, the above priorities should be followed as much as possible, in this order: dialogues and acclamations (Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus,

The expression "in choosing the parts to be sung" was never intended to be an invitation to daily or weekly discussion.

The expression "in choosing the parts to be sung" was never intended to be an invitation to daily or weekly discussion on how many parts to sing, nor an invitation to change the melodies regularly for every single text, nor a way of permitting inexperienced musicians and choirs to serve at Mass without adequate preparation. "In choosing the parts to be sung" is in the first place an invitation for regions including many dioceses to establish normative practice around the liturgical texts which are to be sung. In the second place it is intended to encourage the clergy to chant using melodies in the missal without the obligation, indeed with the intention not, to sing all the texts. In the third place it is an invitation for the faithful to know and sing the responses and acclamations in dialogue with the clergy using the melodies in the missal. Finally, it invites organists and choirs to be ready to sing the same parts of the Mass weekly and daily. ❖

Memorial Acclamation, Amen); . . . Even when musical accompaniment is not possible, every attempt should be made to sing the acclamations and dialogues," *Sing to the Lord*, ¶116. This approach to singing "Eucharistic acclamations" to the neglect of many other texts, even such as the shorter parts of the sung ordinary, has been emulated in different parts of the world, without the same degree of authoritative direction, however.

[24] William Mahrt observes, "the isolated singing of 'five acclamations' is in contradiction with [*Musicam Sacram*], whose conception of the centrality of the priest's parts to the singing represents a better functional use of music. The sung preface is important to the Sanctus; the sung Lord's Prayer is important to the doxology which follows it. It is not that these five pieces should not be sung without any other singing, but this is far from an ideal, liturgical use of music." William Mahrt, "Toward an Revision of *Music in Catholic Worship*," *Sacred Music*, 134, no.1 (Spring 2007), 59. I would go further than Professor Mahrt in saying that it is inappropriate to sing the five pieces he mentions if the parts of the ordinary are not sung; if a congregation can sing these five pieces on a given occasion, they can also sing the Kyrie and the Agnus Dei.

From Hornbostel's African Motion-Oriented Music to Benedict XVI's Music of the Cosmic Liturgy: The Onitsha Connection (2015–2019)

What is the role of music which fosters contemplation in the sacred liturgies celebrated in Africa?

by Fr. Jude Toochukwu Orakwe

Erich M. von Hornbostel, one of the pioneer scholars of ethnomusicology, posited that "African and (modern) European music are constructed on entirely different principles."[1] Hornbostel argued about the essential difference "between our [European] rhythmic conception and the African's" concluding with the controversial thesis that "we [Europeans] proceed from hearing, they [Africans] from motion."[2] Hornbostel's theory has triggered a hot debate as to what he precisely meant and the implication of his differentiating theory. John Blacking interpreted the theory to imply that "Africans think of the sounds as a bi-product of rhythmical movement, whereas Westerners pay more attention to the sounds than to the movement which causes them."[3] For Ruth Stone, Hornbostel's theory indicates "a motor basis for rhythm, emphasizing not just the acoustic sound as part of the analysis, but the physical movement as well."[4]

Now, while some ethnomusicologists assert that Hornbostel's theory is true, some scholars aver that his thinking

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[1] Erich M. von Hornbostel, "African Negro Music," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1928), 30, quoted in Christopher A. Waterman, "The Uneven Development of Africanist Ethnomusicology," in *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music*, ed. Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 171.

[2] Hornbostel, "African Negro Music," 53, quoted in Waerman, *ut supra.*

[3] John Blacking, "Some Notes on a Theory of African Rhythm Advanced by Erich von Hornbostel," *African Music Society Journal*, 1, no. 2 (1955), 15.

[4] Ruth M. Stone, "Shaping Time and Rhythm in African Music: Continuing Concerns and Emergent Issues in Motion and Motor Action," *Revista Transcultural de Música* (Sociedad de Etnomusicología Barcelona, España), no. 11 (July 2007), p. 2.

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Erich M. von Hornbostel

about African music has no practical justification as far as observance of African practice of music is concerned. Yet some have wondered if there might not be some scintilla of truth in his theory especially given—as Jones observed—that "in Africa, the music of the dance and the dance itself are one indivisible whole."[5] While "it would be easy to dismiss this idea from Hornbostel as outmoded, ill-informed, or simply not worthy of consideration," Stone argues, "the reason to follow it, however, is that for more than half a century ethnomusicologists have engaged with the idea of a motor basis for rhythm" in African music making.[6] Obviously, Hornbostel's theory has notable aesthetic implications for general music making in Nigeria and perhaps in other African countries. In particular, and from personal observation, there tends generally to be a semblance of "centrality of motion and action"[7] in the making of the music in the liturgy in Nigeria, which lends support to Hornbostel's observation.

Hornbostel's Theory vs. African-Nigerian *Liturgia Movimentata*

With what I knew previously about African music and my immediate experience of it on coming back from the United States, I argue—as I already indicated above—that Hornbostel may not be totally wrong after all. As a matter of fact, I have seen and, on coming back to Nigeria, really observed what has been defined as a *liturgia movimentata*, a liturgy in which expressive gestures are highly conspicuous and aesthetically normal.[8] As an ethnomusicologist, I

I have observed what has been defined as a liturgia movimentata, *a liturgy in which expressive gestures are highly conspicuous and aesthetically normal.*

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[5] A. M. Jones and L. Kombe, "The leila Dance, Old Style," *African Music Society* (1952), quoted in Blacking, "*Some Notes*," 15.

[6] Stone, "*Shaping Time*," 3.

[7] *Ibid.*, 4.

[8] Cf. Basil Okeke, *Music of Worship: A Cross-Cultural Study with Nigerian Examples* (Ph.D. diss.,

had no problem with that inasmuch as this motion-oriented liturgy, more or less, is in line with the instruction of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments that "forms of external expression can have a place in the liturgical actions of . . . peoples on condition that they are always the expression of true communal prayer of adoration, praise, offering and supplication."[9]

Nevertheless, I felt a bit of disquiet with the sheer latitude of body movement or music motion I observed in some liturgies celebrated in my country. One of my approaches to solving this problem was gradual but quiet replacement or substitution of the content of the music repertoire with other musical forms, especially those geared more to contemplation. That is to say, instead of opting only for musical forms that are easily prone to body movement, we started to introduce also more and more of Gregorian chant and polyphony. Under my supervision, there was even the introduction of chamber orchestra in the liturgy. In doing all this, I felt inspired by my experience of what Benedict XVI calls the "cosmic liturgy," both during my pastoral work in the diocese of Augsburg in 2008 and in my participation at the 2017 CMAA Colloquium Mass in Minnesota in the former parish (St. Agnes) of the late Msgr. Richard Schuler.

This does not mean that I totally shied away from controversies. I remember I did stir some hornets' nests in one parish once by demanding that a marching band should not be allowed to play in the church. I knew I was right because I was drawing from St. Pius X's *Tra le sollecitudini* but not everybody felt happy with my insistence. I also cannot forget an Easter night I had to pause the liturgy in order to halt what, in my opinion, was an exaggeration of the *liturgia movimentata*. Call it dancing if you like! But I felt it was becoming rather too much as well as unbearable, and some of the worshipers were losing grip of what we were really celebrating and drifting to horizontalism and mutual entertainment. The theory of Hornbostel was unfolding before my eyes in a way that made me really uncomfortable. My indignation was perhaps accentuated by my conviction that "dancing [*qua tale*] is not a form of expression of Christian liturgy" as Ratzinger argues.[10] Now, it would be wrong to conclude from the theory of the

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Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra, Rome, 2011), p. 292.

[9] Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy*, Fourth instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy, March 29, 1994, ¶42 <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdwinclt.htm>.

[10] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), p. 198.

motion-oriented posture of African music making that all Africans come to the liturgy to dance. It is not as simple as that. We will come back to this matter but first we must gain an understanding of what Benedict XVI defines as cosmic liturgy.

Benedict XVI's Concept of Cosmic Liturgy

In his book *Das Fest des Glaubens*, the then Cardinal Ratzinger made the following noteworthy statements while criticizing the use of utility music in the liturgy:

> the Church must not settle down with what is merely comfortable and serviceable at the parish level; she must arouse the voice of the cosmos and by glorifying the Creator, elicit the glory of the cosmos itself, making it too glorious, beautiful, habitable, and beloved."[11]

It would seem that Ratzinger is imbued with and perhaps influenced by the Pythagorean view of musical sound as reflecting "the harmony of the entire universe,"[12] the symphony of a "[macro-]cosmos . . . constructed mathematically, [as] a great edifice of numbers."[13] In *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, he argues that "Christian liturgy is always a cosmic liturgy . . . In the celebration of Holy Mass, we insert ourselves into this liturgy that always goes before us. All our singing is a singing and praying with the great liturgy that spans the whole of creation."[14] The important question is: what does Ratzinger mean by cosmic liturgy and how would it be realized?

The important question is: what does Ratzinger mean by cosmic liturgy and how would it be realized?

Ratzinger's concept of cosmic liturgy is based on the overarching, overreaching, and all-pervading presence of the *mysterium crucis*—Christ crucified for entire mankind, hung on the cross for all (believers and unbelievers) to see. In this way, he inexorably becomes the starting point, the focus and the culminating point of our Christian act of worship. Indeed, it is "at the name of Jesus [that] every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[15] As a consequence, Ratzinger concludes that

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[11] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Das Fest des Glaubens*, p. 109, cited in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), p. 129.

[12] Barbara Russano Hanning, *Concise History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002), p. 4.

[13] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 152.

[14] Ibid., 151–52.

[15] Phil. 2:10–11.

> The Christian liturgy is a cosmic liturgy precisely because it bends the knee before the crucified and exalted Lord. Here is the center of authentic culture—the culture of Truth. This humble gesture by which we fall at the feet of the Lord inserts us into the true path of life of the cosmos."[16]

As far as Ratzinger is concerned, such a cosmic liturgy can only be propelled by a certain form of music "that corresponds to the worship of the Incarnate One who was raised up on the cross," a musical form that "lives from another, greater and broader synthesis of spirit, intuition, and sensuous sound"[17] and is fitted with the capacity of evoking "the eternity, infinity, and 'strangeness' of the divine."[18] The paradigm—if not the exact model—of such music is seen in the great "Western music, from Gregorian chant through the music of the cathedrals and great polyphonic music, through Renaissance and baroque music, right up to Bruckner and beyond."[19]

The Quest for Benedict XVI's Ideal of Cosmic Liturgy in Onitsha

A number of isolated incidents in my liturgical music ministry in the Archdiocese of Onitsha make it clear that there has been and there is still a craving for liturgical music in the mold of the Benedict XVI's ideal of cosmic liturgy. Not everything is ruled or driven by Hornbostel's theory. Music making in an African liturgy does not—and indeed should not—be presumed to always begin and end with dancing, as is sometime imagined. A first sign of rebellion against the "Hornbostelian idea" of "centrality of motion and action" in the liturgy is in the emergence of the St. John XXIII Liturgical Community in the Onitsha Archdiocese, a group that is zealously dedicated to fostering the celebration of the Tridentine Mass and the use of Gregorian chant. But even outside such a forum, one gets some glimpses of a yearning for a truly cosmic dimension in the music of liturgical celebrations of the wider archdiocese, a liturgy that is not subject to the same inner dynamics as the extreme forms of the *liturgia movimentata*.

After my first meeting with the choirmasters of the Archdiocese of Onitsha on December 8, 2018, a meeting for which many of them felt very grateful, I got an impassioned call from one of the veteran choirmasters. It sounded almost like a distress call. But it was also very encouraging in tone. He told me something like: keep on working hard to purge our liturgy of all "dance-provoking music." On another occasion, after a very late-night rehearsal of chant and polyphony, one of the choir directors told me that he is in fact gradually getting fed-up with the use of a large number of songs that have a danceable rhythm. I also know a priest chaplain of choirs who would always tell members of the choir to visit the Onitsha Cathedral Basilica during the funeral of a priest [whose liturgical music I usually direct personally] and see what it means to have truly liturgical music.

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[16] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 193.

[17] Joseph Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. by Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), p. 124.

[18] Peter Kwasniewski, "A Critique of Contemporary Church Music in the Light of the Characteristics of Sacred Music," *Sacred Music*, 144, no. 1 (Spring 2017), 30.

[19] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy.*

Interestingly, I remember the auxiliary bishop of Onitsha, the Most Rev. Denis Isizoh (who previously encouraged me to do my doctoral studies in the US), indicating to me that a great positive change is happening with my approach to the music ministry. But the most encouraging feedback came when the Archbishop mandated that there would be a singing competition for all Catholic secondary schools in the archdiocese and the contest should be principally based on the Latin Gregorian chant of the Ordinary of the Mass! The competition was held on the November 16, 2019 with much success.

> *I am aware that a new force or energy has been unleashed within the liturgical music apostolate in the archdiocese due to the specific approach of the current Liturgical Music Commission.*

However, I am aware that a new force or energy has been unleashed within the liturgical music apostolate in the archdiocese due to the specific approach of the current Liturgical Music Commission. As already mentioned above, I reasoned that instead of engaging in polemics about what qualifies as liturgical music or not, it is more beneficial to create an irresistibly attractive paradigm of singing the liturgy, one to which choir directors would naturally be attracted and want to imitate in future. My first debut as a choir director was with the episcopal golden jubilee of Francis Cardinal Arinze in November of 2015. I had recently returned from Indiana University. I and the choir sang the *Missa de Angelis* in alternatim with a renaissance-style polyphonic setting by an Italian composer, Claudio dell'Albero. A number of respondents happily indicated that the sound was very Vatican-like, a feedback that has also been reiterated in other contexts.

Next, I decided to take charge personally of the funerals of archdiocesan priests. I deliberately made the funeral a liturgical event involving an interplay of Gregorian chant and polyphony. In the first years, I worked with chants of the *Missa pro defunctis* that were more or less familiar to the congregation. But gradually, I introduced the more complex chants and polyphonic works. For example, it was only in 2018 that I was able to finally introduce the Latin offertory, *Domine Iesu Christe*,[20] the Alleluia verse, *De profundis*, and *Venite post me*, working regularly with a semi-professional group of singers that are members of the Regina Cæli Choir from Odoakpu, Onitsha. Year after year, something more daring would be added in the plan for the funeral liturgy. The expectation was that the choirs would copy the quiet example of music planning for funerals. And so it was! But this was just one area of the transformation.

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[20] Previously, I used an English version of the chant of *Domine Iesu Christi* [*O Lord Jesus Christ*].

In the archdiocesan preparation for priestly ordination of 2018, I remember insisting rather strongly that "pontifical Masses for archdiocesan celebrations should be normatively in Latin." My insistence was motivated by the Ratzingerian argument that "the Church must not settle down with what is merely comfortable and serviceable at the parish level." There was, I felt, the need to distinguish the liturgy as celebrated in our rural parishes from that celebrated at the cathedral or the archdiocesan centre. The execution of liturgical music at the archdiocesan level ought to be done to a very high standard. Nevertheless, with regard to the preparation of the archdiocesan priestly ordination year, 2019, the archdiocesan choir performed an SATB setting of Jude Nnam's *Missa Ifechukwu*, a mass setting in Igbo language that approaches more to the demand for a melody-oriented instead of dance-prone style of singing.

Last, but not least, there was this innovation of invoking the sound of the entire creation, iconically represented in the use of chamber orchestra as accompaniment in Masses. My first experience as a choir director came with the priestly ordination of a deacon from my parish in December 2016, during which my choir performed with a four-piece chamber brass ensemble. It was a bit of novelty, although I must say that the use of the orchestra at Mass has been done with the Archbishop Valerian Okeke Music Academy under the leadership of Fr. Steve Ifeanyi. But it happened only occasionally since the academy was never intended to be a regularly-performing church choir. Currently, the use of a brass quartet or even a chamber orchestra at the liturgy is gaining ground in the archdiocese of Onitsha. Concerning the use of additional instruments apart from the organ or keyboard, I am in total agreement with Ratzinger that "when man comes into contact with God, mere speech is not enough . . . [his] own being is insufficient for what he has to express," therefore he has to invoke and invite "the whole of creation to become a song with him."[21]

Some Final Thoughts

At this juncture, a critical western respondent will feel justified to ask a question that goes this way: "we expected you to go home and engage in the work of inculturation of music in your country, and here you are talking about the effort to promote Gregorian chant and western polyphony." To this question I will respond that inculturation is not primarily about developing a fertile imagination capable of inventing new things. Neither is it "any kind of general 'freedom' of manufacture, degenerating into spontaneous improvisation;" nor is inculturation an arena for some form of "tomfoolery and banal experiments" purporting to make the liturgy "interesting."[22] Inculturation is "before all else, education, [an] inner opening up of a man to his possibilities."[23] Inculturation in this sense leads to "the unfolding of a Christian culture in all its different dimensions: a culture of cooperation, of social concern, of respect for the poor . . . of care for the suffering and dying . . . a culture of law . . . of dialogue, of reverence for life, and so on."[24] With all these cultural foundations set in place, the atmosphere becomes naturally fecund for the emergence of "artistic works [and other cultural forms and formats] that interpret the world anew in the light of God."[25]

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[21] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 136.

[22] Ibid., 166, 169.

[23] Ibid., p. 201

[24] Ibid.

The project of liturgico-musical universality demands that inculturation places "emphasis on the accurate communication of meaning in a given culture.

Besides, it is important to remark that for Christians in Africa, inculturation must be seen from the optics of universality. In his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, Pope John Paul II[26] gives the principles for a genuine inculturation of worship [and this includes sacred music], among which are compatibility with the Christian message and fellowship with the universal church. The criterion of communion with the universal church, which implies universality, is based on the acceptance of the multiplicity of cultures inasmuch as Christianity is not meant for one culture alone.[27] By serving as an instrument of fostering communion in the global church, the task of inculturating African worship music does not end up becoming an instrument of isolating African Catholics from the entire Catholic Christendom. Rather, the project of liturgico-musical universality demands that inculturation places "emphasis on the accurate communication of meaning in a given culture [while considering] the wider Christian community and its teaching."[28]

Therefore, the project of inculturation must organically spring from adherence to the liturgical values that are common to the universal church. Since the local culture is the arena of the operation of the gospel put forward by the evangelizing church, the interaction between the gospel and local culture will naturally give rise to a new reality that bears an analogical semblance to the mystery of the incarnation whereby the "Word became flesh." In the same way, the Gospel becomes culture and the culture becomes Gospel. The new incarnation-like reality becomes a genuine and valuable contribution to the growth of the kingdom of God among the people to whom the gospel message is addressed and indeed a veritable gift to the universal church. ❖

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[25] Ibid.

[26] Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, On the Church in Africa and Its Evangelizing Mission towards the Year 2000 (1995), ¶62 <http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_14091995_ecclesia-in-africa.html>.

[27] Michael Paul Gallagher, *Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith and Culture* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), p. 120.

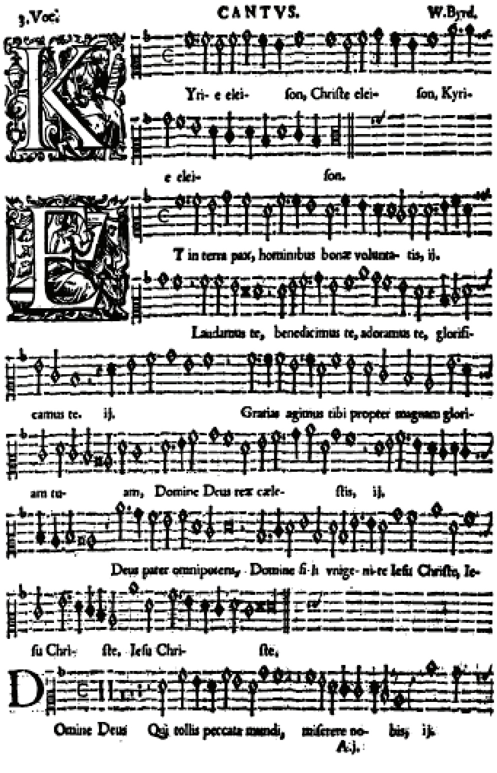
[28] Felix Muchimba, *Liberating the African Soul: Comparing African and Western Christian Music and Worship Styles* (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2008), p. 91.

Christmas Music of William Byrd, Paradoxical Catholic Court Composer for Protestant Elizabeth I

Two unique gems in Byrd's ouevre are a perfect accompaniment to light the way in times of darkness.

by Roseanne T. Sullivan

In honor of the season, this article takes a comparative look at the circumstances in which two of composer William Byrd's works for Christmastide were created. The first piece is an English carol from a songbook that Byrd dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I's chancellor. The second is his polyphonic music for a Christmas day Mass from a collection that Byrd published late in his life and that he dedicated to a baron who secretly held prohibited Catholic Masses in his home.


3.Voc.
CANTVS.
W.Byrd.
Yri- e elei- ſon, Chriſte elei- ſon, Kyri-
e elei- ſon.
T in terra pax, hominibus bonæ volunta- tis, ij.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorifi-
camus te. ij.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam glori-
am tu- am, Domine Deus rex cæle- ſtis, ij.
Deus pater omnipotens, Domine fi-li vnige- ni-te Ieſu Chriſte, Ie-
ſu Chri- ſte, Ieſu Chri- ſte,
Omine Deus Qui tollis peccata mundi, miſerere no- bis, ij.
A.j.

First page of the Kyrie part book for Cantus copied directly from the second edition of Byrd's Mass for Three Voices, *1599–1600.*

William Byrd, as you know, was a brilliant English Catholic composer during the Renaissance, whose music is still treasured and often performed today during traditional Latin Masses, and also in ordinary-form Masses that in some places are reverently celebrated in Latin. For one example, the Saint Ann Choir of Palo Alto, California—under the direction of Stanford musicology professor and sacred music scholar, William P. Mahrt—often sings

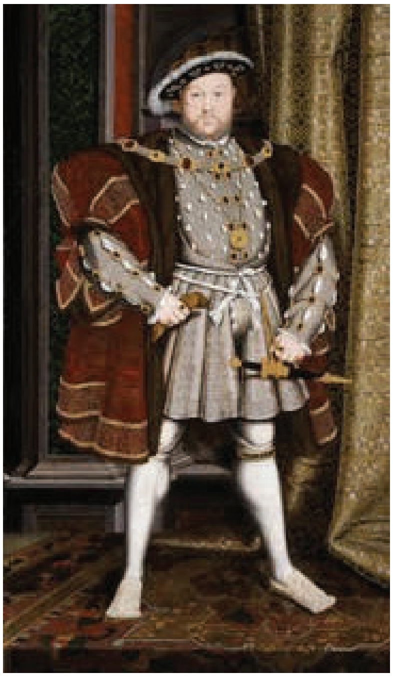
A version of this article previously appeared in the Christmas 2019 issue of Latin Mass Magazine: A Journal of Catholic Culture and is reprinted with permission. Roseanne T. Sullivan is a writer from the Boston area who currently lives in San José, California. She writes about sacred music—along with whatever else catches her Catholic imagination.

Byrd Masses on feast days and sings motets composed by Byrd on Sundays throughout the year at ordinary-form Latin Masses. Even the volunteer choir at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Oratory that I attend in San José, California, which is dedicated to the extraordinary form, sings Byrd's "Mass for Three Voices" at traditional Latin High Masses on special occasions, and frequently sings Byrd's *Ave Verum Corpus* and others of his motets at Sunday Masses.

Byrd led a paradoxical life, to say the least. He was a Catholic who worked for Protestant Queen Elizabeth as a court composer and musician, and was prominent among Elizabeth's Protestant courtiers. But he also composed music that he and his harried Catholic co-religionists would sing at Masses, Masses which they were forced to celebrate covertly in fear of a knock at the door, imprisonment, steep fines, and even death. It's almost miraculous that he kept his job and his life.

As Kerry McCarthy, scholar and singer of Gregorian Chant and Renaissance polyphony, noted in her highly readable 2013 biography titled *Byrd*,[1] that he was born at "an unusually volatile moment in English history."

Byrd's birth year, 1540, was the year that King Henry VIII "finished dismantling the monasteries and convents."[2] Monastic libraries were looted and their books used for scrap paper, some of which was odiously used in privies, so totally despised were the ancient liturgies and music of the Catholic Church. "1540 was the year the workshop of Hans Holbein produced the iconic 'Rome portrait' of the forty-nine-year-old Henry VIII, glowering at the viewer with fists clenched, the massive canvas barely able to contain his bulk."[3] The canvas is 94.09 inches by 52.95 inches!



Portrait of Henry VIII by the workshop of Hans Holbein the Younger, 1537–1547

"[Byrd] was as well known in his day as any court poet or playwright, and just as close to the centers of power. A monumental painting made in 1604, illustrates the point nicely."[4] Although he is not pictured, Byrd had close ties to many portrayed in this painting. "At a distance of more than four hundred years, the atmosphere of luxury, gravity, and political tension is still palpable in this painting. That was the

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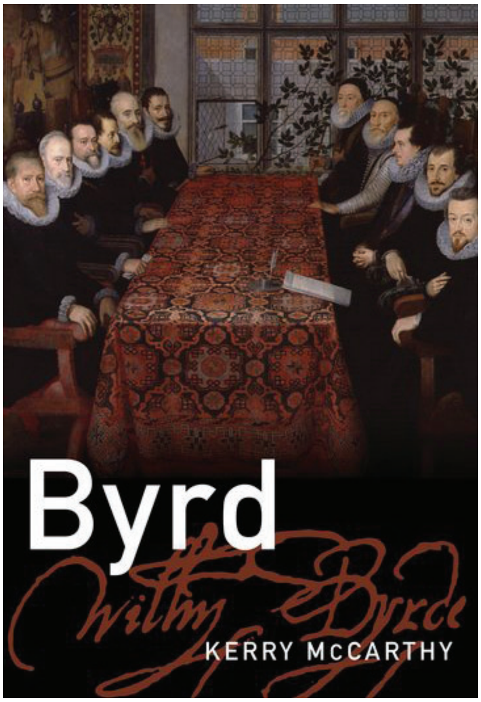
[1] Kerry Robin McCarthy, *Byrd*, from *Master Musicians Series* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 4.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., vii.



Cover of McCarthy's book Byrd.

world in which Byrd's music was created and performed."[5]

During Byrd's youth, the traditional Latin Mass was replaced with a stripped down English service and banned outright. "What had taken place daily at every pre-Reformation altar, from the humblest parish church to the greatest cathedral, was now a rare and dangerous luxury."[6]

As court composer, William Byrd published a wide variety of music. Since the Psalms were a treasured text source for Protestants at that time, most of the polyphonic religious works he published were motets that set psalm texts in Latin or English. Byrd published other religious songs in English as well.

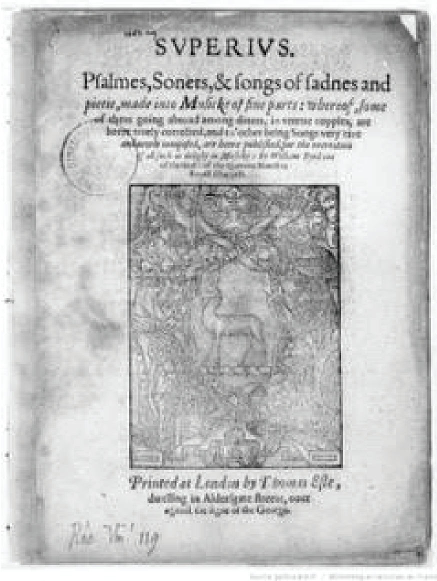
Byrd not so subtly thumbed his nose at the Protestant majority by his choice of texts. Many of the texts were about throwing off oppressors and pleading for God to rescue Jerusalem. Some were "gallows texts"—Psalm verses that were well known amongst Catholics as the last words of priests martyred during the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church in England during the Reformation.

"Lullaby," a Christmas Carol

In 1588, Byrd published an elegant songbook, *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs*. According to McCarthy, the elegance of this songbook may have been part of an attempt to reestablish his reputation at court. "He spent most of the decade under constant suspicion of illegal Catholic activities."[7]

The title page of *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs* reads, in part:

> Songs very rare and newly composed are here published for the recreation of all such as delight in music, by William Byrd,



SVPERIVS.

Pſalmes, Sonets, & ſongs of ſadnes and pietie, made into Muſicke of fiue parts:

Printed at London by Thomas Eſte,

Psalms, Sonnets and Songs (1588) title page.

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[5] Ibid., viii.

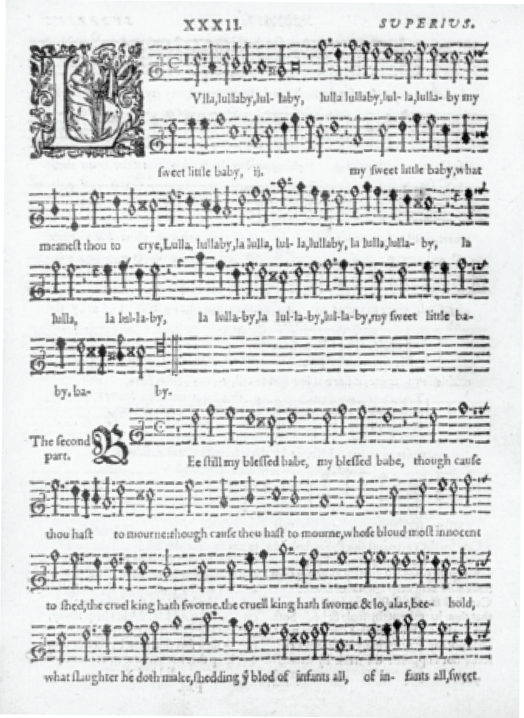
[6] Ibid., 134.

[7] Ibid., 82.

> one of the gentlemen of the Queen's Majesty's honorable Chapel. With the privilege of the royal majesty.

Fortunately for Byrd's reputation, the songbook was a hit, and his English Christmas carol from that songbook, "Lullaby, My Sweet Little Baby," became an enduring favorite. The Earl of Worcester wrote fourteen years later, in 1602, that "we are frolic [joyful] here in court . . . Irish tunes are at the time more pleasing, but in winter Lullaby, an old song of Mr. Byrd's, will be more in request, as I think."[8]

Remembering Byrd's earlier thinly-disguised protests in the texts of his Psalm settings, it is tempting to see a similar vein in the "Lullaby," with this line, "O woe and woeful heavy day when wretches have their will!" Too, there's the thinly-veiled allusion in that even though the wicked king sought to kill the King (Jesus), the Son of God would reign, "whom tyrants none can kill."


XXXII.
SUPERIUS.
Vlla,lullaby,lul- laby, lulla lullaby,lul- la,lulla- by my
ſweet little baby, ij. my ſweet little baby,what
meaneſt thou to crye,Lulla, lullaby,la lulla, lul- la,lullaby, la lulla,lulla- by, la
lulla, la lul-la-by, la lulla-by,la lul-la-by,lul-la-by,my ſweet little ba-
by, ba- by.
The ſecond part.
Ee ſtill my bleſſed babe, my bleſſed babe, though cauſe
thou haſt to mourne:though cauſe thou haſt to mourne,whoſe bloud moſt innocent
to ſhed,the cruel king hath ſworne.the cruell king hath ſworne & lo, alas,bee- hold,
what ſlaughter he doth make,ſhedding ŷ blod of infants all, of in- fants all,ſweet

First page of the score of "Lullaby, My Sweet Little Baby"

Lullaby, My Sweet Little Baby

Refrain: Lulla la lulla lulla lullaby,
My sweet little Babie, what meanest thou to cry.

1. Bee still my blessed babe, though cause thou hast to mourne:
Whose bloud most innocent to shed, the cruell king hath sworne.
And lo, alas, behold, what slaughter hee doth make:
Shedding the blod of infants all, sweet saviour for thy sake.
A king is borne, they say, which king this king would kill:
oh woe, & woful heavy day, when wretched have their will.

2. Three kings this King of kings to see, are come from farre,
To each unknowen, with offerings great, by guiding of a Starre:
And shepherds heard the song, which Angells bright did sing,
Giving all glory unto God, for comming of this King,
Which must bee made away, king *Herod* would him kill.
Oh woe and wofull heavie day, when wretches have their will.

3. Loe, my little Babe, be still, lament no more,
From furie shalt thou step aside, help have wee still in store:
Wee heavenly warning have, some other soyle to seeke,

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[8] Ibid., 95.

From death must flie the Lord of life, as lamb both myld and meeke:
Thus must my Babe obey the king that would him kill.
Oh woe and wofull heavie day, when wretches have their will.

4. But thou shalt live and raigne, as *Sibilles* hath foresayd,
As all the Prophets prophesie, whose mother, yet a maide,
And perfect Virgin pure, with her brestes shall upbreede,
Both God and man that all hath made, the Sonne of heavenly seede:
Whome caytives none can traye, whome tyrants none can kill.
Oh joy, and joyfull happie day, when wretches want their will.

Third Mass of Christmas Day, *Puer Natus Est*

In 1607, nineteen years after "Lullaby," and about a decade after he published his still-famous settings for the Ordinary of the Mass, Byrd published his polyphonic setting of the Latin propers for the Third Mass of Christmas Day, the *Puer Natus Est* Mass. Byrd published his music for the Propers of the *Puer Natus Est* Mass along with Christmas motets in the second volume of *Gradualia*. (The *Gradualia* is a large collection of his settings of the propers for major feasts of the Catholic calendar. He published the two volumes in 1605 and 1607.)

McCarthy noted that Byrd's introit for the *Puer Natus Est* Mass was unique among his compositions. In Gregorian chant, multiple singers sing the same melody together at exactly the same pitch. When polyphonic music developed with multiple voice lines, Gregorian chant was used as a single *cantus firmus* (a "fixed song") around which multi-voiced improvisation was developed. Byrd departed from that *cantus firmus* tradition in most of his polyphonic compositions, using melodies from sources other than chant for his *cantus firmi*, with one exception: the *Puer Natus Est* Mass.

Byrd began the Introit for Christmas Day by quoting the Gregorian chant for the day ("Puer natus est nobis," "A child is born for us") in three of the four voices. "This gesture seems to have been a brief nod to the old tradition of chant-based polyphonic Mass Propers, something that Byrd never took up again in quite the same way."[9]

The following bit of history gives a vivid glimpse into the risks Byrd and his fellow Catholics were taking. In 1605 after publication of the first part of the *Gradualia*, a French traveler named Charles de Ligny wrote home that he had attended a musical evening during which William Byrd played the organ and other musical instruments with the Jesuit Henry Garnet, along with other Jesuits, and English gentlemen. De Ligny was arrested and briefly thrown into Newgate prison "on account of certain papistical books written by William Byrd" that he carried. Those "papistical books" were the partbooks of the first *Gradualia*. In spite of being the composer of those papistical books, Byrd narrowly avoided imprisonment through the indulgence of Queen Elizabeth, and he continued to live as a free man until he died in 1623.

Byrd had retired from the court to live in Essex by the time he published *Gradualia*, and he worshipped with, played for, and composed sacred music for a gathering of Catholics in the nearby home of Baron John Petre. Byrd wrote in the dedication of his second *Gradualia* to Petre that the music had "proceeded from his house, most generous to me and mine."

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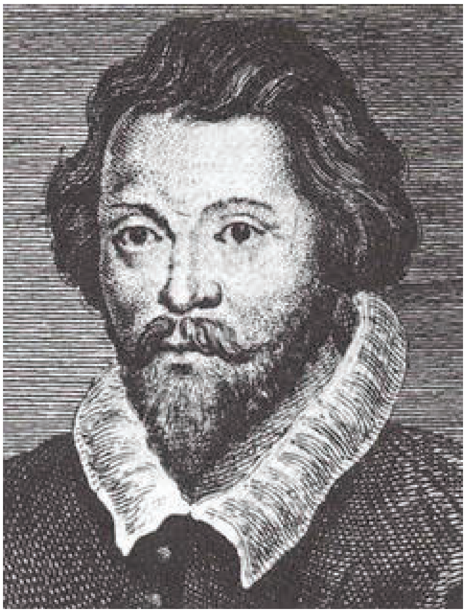
[9] Ibid., 186.

Byrd somehow managed to get the necessary approvals for printing the *Gradualia* from no less a Protestant personage than Richard Bancroft, the Anglican Bishop of London. According to McCarthy, the bishop who approved the printing apparently did so because he thought the propers would contribute to dissent between Catholics.

Perhaps partly due to the danger of discovery that he envisioned for singers of his propers, Byrd kept the individual propers short. "His elegant little offertories and communions—some of them are barely a minute long—could hardly be further removed from the leisurely Latin motets."[10] "When he described his settings of the Mass Proper in his 1605 preface, he called them 'notes as a garland to adorn certain holy and delightful phrases of the Christian rite.'"[11]

Catholic to the End

In spite of all the associated risks, Byrd increasingly used his talents to serve the Catholic liturgy over the same years when almost the entire English population was abandoning the ancient faith. Almost certainly, he had his own end in mind. In the will he signed in 1622, the year before he died, Byrd wrote this prayer, "that I may live and die a true and perfect member" of the "holy Catholic Church, without which I believe there is no salvation for me." ❖



"There is no evidence that the well-known engraved portrait of Byrd; is anything but a fanciful eighteenth-century artist's rendition of an Elizabethan gentleman."[12] This engraving by Gerard van der Guch, after a drawing by Nicola Francesco Haym, c.1729, is in the British Museum.

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[10] Ibid., 184.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., x.

Commentary

A Christmas Like No Other

What graces are to be found in struggling through this year?

by Mary Jane Ballou

What a year this has been! In March 2020 we never thought about Christmas. However, as I write this in mid-November, we find ourselves in myriad situations. Some churches are open for public Masses, some have only livestream. Every local and state government, every diocese has different regulations about masks, distance, maximum attendance, indoors or outdoors, no music, some music, more music or less music. Worst of all, no congregational singing.

While I may be "a cock-eyed optimist," it is hard to think of what to say, what to recommend, or how to console. So, I will simply report. In response to my inquiry on the Facebook group "The Roman Catholic Organist," musicians took the time to let me know their plans for Christmas liturgies. Many were organist and cantor only. Some blessed with spacious lofts were able to field a small choir or schola with masks and social distancing. However, a few churches are using their choirs, often professional "scholas" and special instrumentalists. More fortunate still is the church with carols for the congregation on printed sheets. In some dioceses, choirs are prohibited; in others, they are limited to four singers. Marginally better, four singers, an accompanist, and one additional instrument. Livestreaming only is still out there. In some cases, it has been continued along with "live" Masses, while other dioceses have closed indoor public Masses due to rising numbers of cases. The feasibility of outdoor Masses for the Christmas celebrations is obviously climate dependent. In short, Mass celebrations in the United States and Canada are a patchwork quilt for our COVID-19 Christmas season.

The general ban on congregational singing is tragic: whether they are "good" Catholics or "bad," people love to sing carols at Christmas, even if they are absent or mute the rest of the year. What will they hear this year and sing? Nothing but mall music and pop secular holiday songs? One possibility might be a short outdoor carol sing with a distanced quartet and only the first stanzas of a few carols. Even if this is not possible on Christmas Eve or Day, Epiphany is twelve days on ahead.

We may, each of us, feel quite alone in this situation. However, I would like to quote from a recent article by Maria Grass Amenta on ChoralNet:

Mary Jane Ballou is a musician in Jacksonville, Florida. She has served as a music director in large and small churches, as well as small women's ensembles. Dr. Ballou has been active in the Church Music Association of America and is a regular contributor to the CMAA's Sacred Music *journal.*

> Our lives seem to be out of whack this year. Everything we do in our profession has been changed, rescheduled, revamped, reformatted, and rethought. Nothing we do is as it was, and we are struggling in ways we never thought we would struggle. If you thought you were alone, you should take heart to know you are NOT alone. It's small comfort, I know, to realize others are struggling but perhaps comfort, anyway you can get it, is a good thing.[1]

If you are interested in seeing what other churches and denominations are doing to cope with this "winter of our discontent," you can visit the following websites:

National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM):
https://npm.org/
practical-resources-for-music-ministers/

Association of Anglican Musicians:
https://anglicanmusicians.org/covid-19/

Association of Lutheran Church Musicians:
https://alcm.org/news-events/
pandemic-resources/

The Royal School of Church Music (U.K.):
https://www.rscm.org.uk/
covid-19-resources-for-churches/

These links are not being provided for readers to discourage themselves. They are a reminder that all church musicians are working through this pandemic. There might also be something of use to you in your own situation.

Now for some practical thoughts.

I hope all of us have been conscientious in keeping in touch with our choir or schola members: emailing, texting or phoning, Zooming, etc. If you have let this slacken as the months passed, kick it up a notch for the holidays.

With the time saved by not organizing binders, finding a brass quintet, or rearranging music to fit your available choral resources, you can also think of yourself. There is the area of self-improvement. Have you harbored a secret desire to play the ukulele at parties? Buy a uke and learn a few chords. If you are an organist with access to an organ, is there some composer or composition you have never had time to work on? Work on it now. Wish you could paint or draw? Paint by numbers has revived with more than kitty pictures, so why not try it? Maybe you can finally read *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*.

How about more time for meditation and prayer? Why not consider breathing exercises to calm stress? Alexander Technique and Feldenkreis are ways to work on posture and body use. As we say nowadays, "There's an app for that!" And the world of YouTube awaits your inquiry.

Self-care is not selfish. Done with a good intention, it is a way to improve your ability to live and work with others—your family, your friends, your fellow musicians. Happiness is hard to find right now. The joy of the upcoming season seems far off. So, cultivate a cheerful spirit and a peaceful heart. Whatever lies ahead, God will give us the graces we need.

If you are reading this after a hectic Christmas, the suggestions still apply because of our uncertain times. I wish you the best of the season and thank you for all that you, as singers, directors, and listeners do to enrich the life of the church. ❖

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[1] Maria Grass Amenta, *Choral Potpourri/Choral Ethics: Time for Us All*, November 12, 2020 <www.choralnet.org>.

Repertory

The Organ Low Mass: Reviving a French Tradition for COVID-19

An entire body of repertoire remains to be discovered for many, and it opens up beautiful possibilities in the face of the strictest limitations on singing.

by Aaron James

Eight months into the coronavirus pandemic, it seems clear that this virus outbreak is the major crisis of our generation; it has caused enormous devastation in all areas of human life, and the work of church musicians is no exception. Public Masses were suspended for much of early 2020 throughout North America, and many parish employees found themselves laid off, sometimes permanently. Here, as in so many other areas of life, COVID-19 did not create new problems but exacerbated existing ones: the poor treatment of many church musicians during the pandemic can be traced back to many years of bad clergy-musician relationships and a general perception in too many parishes that the work of musicians is a decorative luxury rather than an essential part of the work of the church.

Church musicians now face the challenge of operating their music programs as fully as possibly while complying with the restrictions imposed by local public health authorities and diocesan liturgy offices, which vary from location to location and which have changed frequently in recent months. We have had to adapt to changing limits on the number of worshippers allowed in church, respond to the constantly evolving consensus on the risks of droplet versus aerosol transmission of the virus, and weigh the advantages of various kinds of protective equipment: regular masks, "singer's masks," face shields, Plexiglas barriers, and air filtration systems. The ongoing confusion emphasizes how little we still know about the virus, and there is much uncertainty about what will happen next, with rising infection rates throughout North America and the threat of another round of lockdowns.

At the Oratory of St Philip Neri in Toronto, we have certain advantages

Aaron James is the Director of Music for the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, Toronto.

Many parishes have found ways to offer a simplified sung Mass during COVID-19, either with a small choir or with a solo cantor.

that have allowed us to maintain a relatively robust liturgical life since reopening. Although Toronto is Canada's largest city, it has been hit less hard by the virus than many other Canadian cities (Montréal is still the national hotspot); our local archdiocese, following the advice of Toronto Public Health, allows small choirs to sing in the liturgy as long as the singers are spaced ten feet apart. The Fathers of the Oratory constitute a "bubble" of priests who live together, along with the Oratory novices and the seminarians in residence at St Philip's Seminary; this provides a large group of priests and servers who are not required to maintain physical distance from each other. This makes it possible for us to continue to offer the ceremonies of our Sunday Solemn High Mass (*usus antiquior*) with a small distanced choir of four to six people (occasionally taking advantage of "household bubbles" among the choir to allow a larger number of singers, since there are two married couples on our choir roster). Although this Mass and its music are in many ways stripped down in comparison to our "normal" liturgical life, it is a great consolation to be able to offer a beautiful act of worship during this painful time.

Many parishes have found similar ways to offer a simplified sung Mass during COVID-19, either with a small choir or with a solo cantor. The difficulty that this presents, however, is that offering even one Mass in this way requires a Herculean effort: picking repertoire that can be sung on limited rehearsal time, finding a large but private space to rehearse before Mass, and keeping up with the required protective measures. The resulting Mass, in most places, can be attended by only a small number of people: here in Toronto we are currently limited to seventy-five worshippers in the congregation, with a possible reduction to fifty now being discussed. Extra Mass times have been added to accommodate the parishioners who want to attend, with reservations taken online and by phone; most people who want to attend the Solemn Mass are turned away, with registrations filling up early in the week. This leaves a genuine pastoral need for music of some form at the many other Sunday Masses, and one way of filling this need is to revive a century-old French tradition: the organ Low Mass.

Although "organ Masses" are a time-honored part of the repertoire, with numerous Renaissance and Baroque examples, the Masses of these earlier composers were intended for use at a High Mass with singing: the *Messe pour les paroisses* of Couperin and similar works were written for a tradition of *alternatim* performance, with the organ alternating with the choir during the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. The idea of a Low Mass with organ accompaniment is a more modern development, which seems to have originated with the Parisian organist-composer Eugène Gigout in the 1870s; at the church of Saint-Augustin he offered a weekly Mass that was accompanied by organ throughout, stopping only for the gospel, the announcements, and the sermon.[1] By the 1920s, the organ Low Mass was practically universal in Parisian churches and attracted standing-room only congregations who came to hear what was in effect an extended organ recital.[2]

By the 1920s, the organ Low Mass was practically universal in Parisian churches and attracted standing-room only congregations who came to hear what was in effect an extended organ recital.

Although from a liturgical standpoint the practice of playing non-stop organ music during Mass is thoroughly regrettable, the "organ Low Mass" took on a more liturgically defensible form in the many published masses by organist-composers like Vierne, Langlais, Litaize, and Messiaen. These Masses typically contained five movements: "Entrée," "Offertoire," "Élévation," "Communion," and "Sortie," sometimes with the addition of an "Introit" played during the opening prayers at the foot of the altar. In the French tradition, the "Élévation" was played during the actual elevation of the host, following their longstanding custom; for modern celebration of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, it would be most appropriate to play the "Élévation" after the consecration, while the priest silently prays the second half of the canon, by analogy with the place of the polyphonic Benedictus at a high Mass.

The most well-known collection of twentieth-century organ Masses, Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue mystique*, was of course not intended for the organ Low Mass.[3] Tournemire hoped that his fifty-one *Offices* for the Sundays and major feasts of the year would be sung during High Mass, so that his chant-based organ compositions would be heard in connection with the singing of the corresponding chant melodies. Kevin Vaughn has recently drawn a useful distinction between twentieth-century organ Masses intended for High Mass (*Grande messe*) and those intended for Low Mass (*Messe basse*)—a distinction made in the titles of many published organ masses, notably those of Gaston Litaize.[4] Settings intended for the *Grande messe*, like Tournemire's *L'Orgue mystique* suites, are typically shorter in length, since the organist must allow time for the singing of the offertory and communion chants before beginning to play; these Masses typically open with a short "Prélude a l'introït" rather than a lengthy "Entrée." Counter-intuitively, *Messe basse* settings are often much longer and more substantial works than *Grandes messes*, since there is no need for the organist to leave time for any chant singing or other music during the Mass. Of course, the two kinds of organ Mass can often be used interchangeably; a *Grand messe* contains the same types of pieces as a *Messe basse*, but they are simply more concisely written and more closely tied to the chants of the day. These *Grand messe* pieces can thus just as well be used for Low Mass, and their greater brevity may even be an advantage during COVID-19.

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[1] Raymond Anthony Kotek, "The French Organ Mass in the Twentieth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), p. 35.

[2] Ibid., 37.

[3] See the papers by Edward Schaefer and Robert Sutherland Lord in *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Va.: Church Music Association of America, 2014).

In the context of a *usus antiquior* Low Mass, published organ Masses by twentieth-century French composers fit the length of the Mass with very little need for adaptation; pieces like Langlais's *Suite mediévale* or the Tournemire *L'Orgue mystique* suites seem to match the ceremonies perfectly, with the "Offertoire" providing a suitably substantial piece to cover the long offertory prayers in the older form of the Mass, and the "Élévation" corresponding closely to the length of the second half of the Roman Canon. This close relationship between the length of the Mass and the organ music is unsurprising given the careers of these composers: Langlais and Tournemire were intimately familiar with the Mass, and their published compositions reflect the experience of many years improvising during the celebration of Mass. Since these works all incorporate Gregorian chant melodies (with the Langlais *Suite médiévale* including the familiar *Adoro te devote* and *Ubi caritas*), these works are particularly well suited to the present moment; they are not merely "solo organ pieces" but help to evoke the broad tradition of Catholic liturgical music at a time, keeping the familiar melodies of Gregorian chant in the ears of the congregation at a time when the actual singing of these chant melodies may not be possible.

In the context of the ordinary form of the Mass, there are more significant difficulties in adapting this older music to the liturgy. The newer form of the Mass does not permit music during the canon, making the French tradition of the "Élévation" impossible, and with the very brief offertory prayers in this form of the Mass it is difficult to accommodate an "Offertoire" of any substantial length. A sympathetic priest might be willing to wait longer while a two- to three-minute "Offertoire" is played, or it might be better to play a shorter piece such as the "Élévation" during the offertory, saving the actual "Offertoire" as a prelude before Mass.

Of course, one of the main difficulties presented by the French organ Mass tradition is that few organists have the time and inclination to learn a complete organ-Mass suite each Sunday; even the most skilled professional organist would think twice about committing to learn one of Tournemire's extremely difficult "Pièces terminales" every week. A more manageable alternative would be to play a prelude and postlude from your own existing organ repertoire, drawing the technically easier "Offertoire," "Elevation," and/or "Communion" from the appropriate Tournemire suite or from elsewhere in the repertoire of chant-based organ Masses. In this way, the music played within the liturgy itself is tied as closely as possible to the tradition of chant, with more freely composed music heard before and after Mass. Players might also create their own "organ Masses" using appropriate organ pieces of the correct length.

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[4] Kevin James Vaughn, "The Organ Masses of Gaston Litaize (1909–1991): The Culmination of a Twentieth-Century Liturgical Genre (D.M.A. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2016), p. 31.

Among the large repertoire of French liturgical organ music, one often overlooked source is the series of volumes published by the Schola Cantorum under the title *Orgue et liturgie*.[5] This long-running series included editions of historic organ music as well as anthologies of new compositions for the liturgy, and it included a series of volumes dedicated to the various genres of organ music for the Mass.[6] The pieces vary in style and difficulty level; with the exception of the well-known *Prélude sur l'introït d'Épiphanie* by Maurice Duruflé, they are mostly by lesser-known composers like Dom Clément Jacob, Simon Plé, and Georges Robert. While many are based on the chants of particular feasts from the church year, others are based on more generally known chant melodies that could be used on any Sunday of the year. There are also several North American contributions to the genre, including James Woodman's extremely attractive and accessible *A Little Organ Mass*, based on Eucharistic melodies including the familiar *Pange lingua*.[7]

A Low Mass with organ will never be a substitute for a High Mass with sung ordinary and propers, but with the significant liturgical restrictions we now face, it can be a deeply meaningful pastoral adaptation. Because the music of the French organ Mass was inspired by chant, it provides an audible link to the normative tradition of the chanted Mass in situations where singing is not permitted or where only small numbers are allowed to attend the day's sung Mass. And although this style of Mass is particularly valuable as a response to COVID-19, it could have its place after the end of the pandemic as well, fulfilling a need for people who prefer a short, quieter Mass at an "off-peak" time. As stressful and difficult as the past few months have been, the experience will not have been wasted if it encourages us to explore our history and deepen our understanding of the Catholic liturgical tradition. ❖

> *A Low Mass with organ can be a deeply meaningful pastoral adaptation.*

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[5] A full list of published French organ Masses is in Kotek, "The French Organ Mass in the Twentieth Century."

[6] *Orgue et liturgie No. 48: Préludes sur l'introït*; *No. 52, Offertoires*; *No. 57, Élévations*; *No. 62, Communions*; and *No. 75, Sorties*. The series is still in print and can be ordered through your local music dealer; a full catalogue of the *Orgue et liturgie* series is available at <www.schola-editions.com>.

[7] Boston, Mass.: Schirmer, 1996.

Review

***Sacred Treasures of Christmas*. London Oratory Schola Cantorum, conducted by Charles Cole. Hyperion. CDA68358. $19.98.**

Sung masterfully, this recording is a fitting tribute to gems of the Christmas repertory.

by William Mahrt

Here is a block-buster collection of great motets for Christmas, Epiphany, and Purification, by one of Britain's most distinguished boys' choirs, including works by composers from Jean Mouton (1459–1520) to Samuel Scheidt (1587–1654). The London Oratory Schola Cantorum sings for the Saturday evening Vigil Mass and major feast days at the Brompton Oratory, in addition to concert tours to Spanish cathedrals, the American East Coast, and California missions, and concert performances of Monteverdi *Vespers,* and J. S. Bach's *St. John* and *St. Matthew Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio.*

Charles Cole was a chorister at Westminster Cathedral, studied at Oxford, and returned as organ scholar at Westminster Cathedral before being appointed to the Oratory School. In addition to his work with the Oratory Schola Cantorum, he has conducted numerous illustrious performances, including Sir James MacMillan's *Tu es Petrus* at the celebration of Mass by Pope Benedict at Westminster Cathedral. In Rome, his schola sang for the canonization of John Henry Newman and gave a private recital for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. The Church Music Association of America is proud that he has been a director of chant and polyphony for our summer colloquia.

The motets on the CD are substantial pieces, whose texts are drawn from the liturgy. Cole has provided interesting commentary on each motet together with translation of the texts. Here I focus upon just a few major types. The collection includes the quintessential and very frequently-sung Christmas motet, Victoria's *O magnum mysterium* (for four voices). I once began to count how many settings of this motet could be heard on YouTube, but stopped at one hundred. There is good reason for its popularity: it is an exquisite setting of its text, in which each line of text is treated beautifully, and not a note is out of place. At the beginning the drop of a fifth and rise plus half step (a–D–a–b-flat–a) in imitation epitomizes the sense of the exquisite mystery of the animals seeing the newborn Lord.

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

The collection includes several double-choir motets, plus pieces in five and six parts as well. Gabrieli's *O magnum mysterium* for two choirs, one high, one low, makes striking sustained sonorities with unexpected harmonies, which effectively call up the sense of mystery of the text. Palestrina's *Surge illuminare Jerusalem* is for two equal choirs, which respond to each other at the same pitches. This is not the familiar serene polyphony usually heard from Palestrina, but a vivacious interaction between choirs gives a vivid and active setting of such of words as "surge."

Lassus' *Omnes de Saba,* in contrast, while it is also for equal choirs, proceeds with the choirs answering back and forth at different pitches in a stunning variety of textures. Mouton's *Nesciens mater* is also for a kind of double-choir arrangement, but the second choir is in four-part canon with the first, making for a dense and resonant texture.

Some motets are in six parts, but in the milieu of the late sixteenth century, the paradigm of eight-voice antiphonal choirs was very influential. Hassler's *Verbum caro factum est,* displays numerous divided-choir passages, often in three-part semi-choirs, one of women, one of men, in virtuoso combinations, that give the listener the impression that the piece must really be in eight parts. Guerrero's *Pastores loquebantur,* also in six parts, begins with an elegant imitative texture, but in the course of the piece, antiphonal passages emerge, first three-by three, but then by overlapping the parts, four-by-four, and finally five-by-five.

Gregorian chant plays a role in the collection, including one Mass proper, *Alleluia: Dies sanctificatus* for Christmas Day, appropriately included here, since the boys regularly sing chant for the liturgy. But several motets as well are based upon Gregorian chants. Victoria's *Alma Redemptoris mater* is saturated with the melody of the ancient tone of the Marian antiphon for Advent and Christmas; if you recognize the melody, you hear it repeatedly emerging from the rich texture of the motet. Two motets include Latin hymns from the fourteenth century: Hassler's motet *Puer natus in Bethlehem* sets the hymn to eight parts, the soprano singing the tune solo and the other seven parts responding in a harmonized setting of it; then all eight parts join in an alleluia. Lasso sets *Resonet in laudibus* to five voices in imitative style, which emerges is ebullient triple homophony.

Two motets are in the strict liturgical form of matins responsory, and stem from the time of Queen Mary's restoration of the Latin liturgy; they are based upon the chants for the office, including their formal scheme of repetition. Both are for six voices, the highest voice carrying remarkable high-pitched motives very prominent in the texture. Sheppard's setting gives the whole form in a tight presentation of the chant with elegant polyphony. Tallis's *Videte miraculoum*, for the Purification (Presentation), the concluding piece of the disk, is in the most extended style and is perhaps the most beautiful piece, a qualification for which there are many competitors in this CD. ❖

News

New Discographies

Palestrina is the latest of eighteen complete discographies of early music to be posted by Jerome F. Weber on the website of the Plainsong and Medieval Music Society in the last five years. The first two treated Guillaume Du Fay and Josquin dez Pres. Others followed, and in 2018 the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* won the ARSC Award for Excellence in Recorded Sound Research, the first year the Association for Recorded Sound Collections admitted online publications for nomination. In 1991, the first year of the ARSC Awards, the same award was given to the same compiler for *A Gregorian Chant Discography*, which is now superseded by the website <chantdiscography.com>. A major advantage of online publication is the opportunity to update each discography as necessary. This is usually done about once a year.

Orlandus Lassus followed, omitting the secular songs in four languages, then Tomás Luis de Victoria. Palestrina was posted in parts, first the Magnificats, then the *Offertoria*, then the masses and other major works such as Lamentations and *Canticum Canticorum*. The motets, madrigals, and ricercari were underway when the pandemic blocked access to libraries. Much of the data was filled out from the compiler's collection and online documentation, using the Haberl edition on IMSLP, but numerous problems of identification were insoluble. For eleven titles in particular, many recordings of duplicate titles could not be sorted out. By removing to a supplement a sizable number of recordings related to these eleven titles, the discography as it remained could then be presented with a considerable degree of accuracy, for it was essential to identify precisely which setting of a given title could be heard on each disc.

The discography purports to list every recording made from 1900 to the present time individually by title. Most dates of recording have been ascertained by using numerous sources online. The timing of each recording is given, including each mass movement. The main list runs to 106 pages; the supplement is six pages. Problems relegated to the supplement are difficult: there are four settings of *Alma Redemptoris mater*, two of them for eight voices, and six settings of *Ave Maria* including three for four voices. *O bone Jesu* is the incipit of three different texts. There are two settings of *Popule meus*. Three settings of *Regina cæli* include two for eight voices. The recordings in the supplement will be identified for the most part when libraries become accessible again. Meanwhile the discography appears to be useful enough for immediate publication.

For the full list, visit:
<http://plainsong.org.uk/publications/discographies-by-jerome-f-weber/>.

For Palestrina directly:
<http://plainsong.org.uk/publications/discographies-by-jerome-f-weber/palestrina-discography/>.

Address of Bishop Timothy C. Senior, Rector, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, [Wynnewood] Philadelphia, during Solemn Compline on October 16, 2020 as part of the CMAA's "Sacred Music Boot Camp," Held Online

It is a grace for St. Charles Borromeo Seminary to welcome all the members of the Church Music Association of America who are joining us virtually in prayer this evening for the celebration of Compline—livestreamed from Immaculate Conception Chapel. It is an opportunity for me as a bishop in the United States to thank all of you church musicians for all your service to the church—for all you do, day in and day out—which has such an impact on the life of the people of God.

It is at times a ministry of the church that goes unnoticed and is, perhaps, taken for granted all too often. Your participation in the Church Music Association of America is an indication that you take your service very seriously, and recognize that this is a ministry which calls you to use the talents which God has given you in service of the church, to lift the hearts and minds of the people of God. In his presence, you inspire them to open up to the wonder of the presence of the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist, and to open their hearts to see the power of God's word. And so I thank you—thank you for all you do in so many faith communities throughout our country.

On a personal note, earlier this year, my mother was called home to God, just a month shy of her ninety-ninth birthday. She was a church musician for decades, first as a singer, then later as the choir director and music director at our parish church for over thirty years. It was within that context (within our family, and within the parish) that I discerned a call to the priesthood, becoming an organist and church musician for a while myself, particularly here at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary as a seminarian in formation, discovering how God used music to touch my heart, to move me closer to him, and to open me up to the desire he had for me to become a priest, which by God's grace would be my desire, renewed each day. I think about Mother, too, because I remember the sacrifices she made, again so often unnoticed and unappreciated, giving glory to God through her music ministry.

St. Paul writes in his letter to the Thessalonians this evening, "may the God of peace make you perfect in holiness." This is a call for every Christian; it's God's desire for each of us. We pause for a moment this evening recognizing how God has used the gift of music to open our hearts to that work, perfecting us in holiness, giving each musician the grace to grow in that call. May the God of peace make all of you, dear church musicians, perfect in holiness.❖

Last Word

Church Acoustics

The resonance provided by architecture is key in the success of a sacred music program.

by Kurt Poterack

Wallace Clement Sabine (1868–1919) is considered the founder of the modern science of architectural acoustics, a field very important in the construction of buildings. As a young physics professor at Harvard, he was given the task to improve the acoustics of the newly built Fogg Lecture Hall which had a long reverberation time. This long reverberation made it difficult to understand lectures. His assignment, so to speak, was to reduce reverberation and thus improve what is now called "speech intelligibility." Up to that time, many important buildings, including churches, tended to be built using hard materials—stone, marble, etc.—which reflected sound waves. The buildings looked grand but tended to garble speech. Sabine, for better and for worse, set in motion the creation of materials and the construction of buildings which tend to absorb rather than reflect sound.

He even invented such a material, known variously as "Akoustolith" or "Guastavino" tile, which absorbed sound even though it looked like a hard, reflective material. A number of churches in the early twentieth century, before amplification, were built with this material. I have been in one such building and found it rather depressing. The look was that of a traditional, stone church with a vast interior, but the sound was that of a 1970's living room with shag carpeting. I can understand the desire to have the preaching better understood, but the music was meant to resound in such a space, not fall flat.

Today, we have the opposite problem that Wallace Sabine had over a century ago. Much acoustical ingenuity these days is

The potential conflict in planning new church buildings is that there needs to be a harmony between the quality of the music and the intelligibility of the spoken word.

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

focused on sound reduction. Even the very word "acoustical"—as in "acoustical tile"—tends to mean absorbing rather than reflecting sound. Many of our buildings these days (including churches) tend to have dull acoustics. Arguably, many modern people are focused on the rational (understanding *words*) rather than the poetical (letting *music* resound throughout a space).

Herein lies the potential conflict in planning new church buildings. There needs to be a harmony between the quality of the music and the intelligibility of the spoken word. The second of these two, speech intelligibility, is fairly obvious to most people. The notion that the quality of the music—how it *sounds*—must be protected, is less obvious to people. Ordinary people tend to think that music just "happens," they assume that it has no physical needs or requirements. Although I say that they assume music just happens, on some level, they know better. Otherwise, why do people enjoy singing in the shower? They don't necessarily know that their singing voice is reflected off of the tile. However, that feeling that they are not alone, that the building—or least the shower portion of it—is singing along with them is very powerful.

This makes a big difference in churches—and not just for choirs and organs. Organists and choristers are more professional even if they are amateurs. They know that they have a job to do, to sing, to play, and they do it even in a bad acoustic. Congregations on the other hand need to be coaxed. They tend to be shy, depending on the circumstances. A dead sound in a church building will make them feel like they are singing alone, even if others are singing. They will feel that they are isolated in their own bubble if there is not sufficient reflection of sound waves. Ultimately, they will give up and not sing much. Some will not sing at all.

A dead sound in a church building will make the singers feel like they are singing alone, even if others are singing. They will feel that they are isolated in their own bubble if there is not sufficient reflection of sound waves.

Let me conclude with two verses from sacred scripture. When the Pharisees rebuked the people for proclaiming Christ as he entered Jerusalem he said, "If they remain silent, the very stones will cry out."[1] In the Old Testament it says: "For the stones will cry out from the wall and the rafters will echo it from the woodwork."[2] This notion of inanimate objects joining us in the praise of God, I contend, is what a church building should be like! ❖

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[1] Luke 19:40.

[2] Hab. 2:11.

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☐ **Continuing-education programs,** including Chant Intensive workshops and the annual Colloquium. The CMAA also supports regional workshops sponsored by local groups through advertising and materials.

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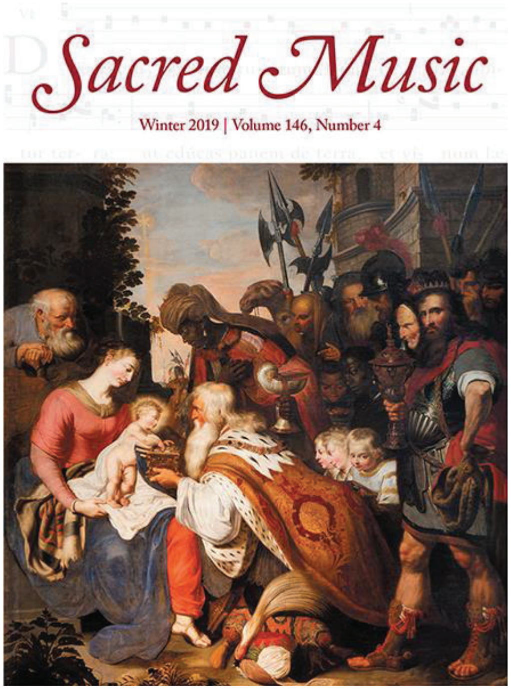

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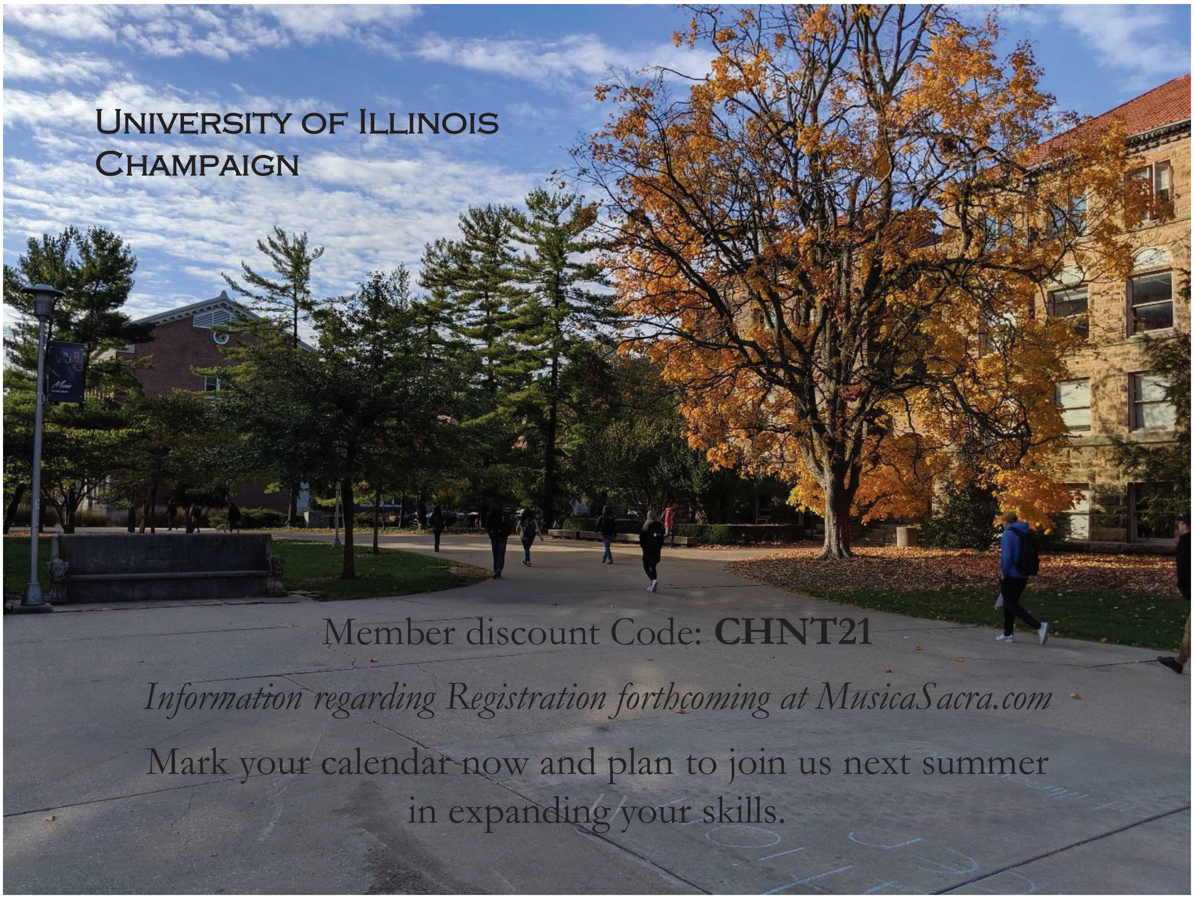

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