

A NEW BEGINNING FOR SACRED MUSIC

"The greatest need of liturgy today is the restoration of the sense of the sacred," writes William Mahrt in his opening editorial to the Spring 2006 issue of *Sacred Music* (Volume 133, Number 1). "Music has a principal role, since it expresses that sense of the sacred and sustains it through time."

"Whether it be Gregorian chant, classical polyphony, or more recently composed music, standards of artistic excellence, both in composition and in performance must be re-established and strengthened."

To that end, Professor Mahrt (Stanford University) introduces a new series of new studies on repertory appropriate to the new rite. The new issue features his own close examination of the *Kyrie Orbis Factor* as an excellent choice for parishes.

Kerry McCarthy writes on the motet by William Byrd "*Ave Verum Corpus*." Byrd offered his work to "true lovers of music" who "enjoy singing to God in hymns and spiritual songs." McCarthy reminds us that when this motet was written, public Catholic worship (and, for all practical purposes, singing in Latin) had been outlawed in England. Mass was celebrated in homes and private chapels. Byrd responded by cultivating a new kind of sacred music, tailored for small groups in an intimate atmosphere. For this reason, this motet belongs to the Renaissance tradition of domestic music making.

The lead article by Mahrt describes Gregorian chant as a paradigm of sacred music. He begins with a description of what makes sacred music different and why chant is the model to which all other sacred music is to be compared. He explains one aspect of why this is so by elucidating the meaning of four different Mass proper musical settings of a single Latin text. He shows how the music itself reflects the liturgical purpose of the chant in eliciting certain stages of spirituality that one experiences during the liturgy.

This issue also features two very important articles on the Ward Method of chant pedagogy for children. Amy Zuberbuehler, who has experience as a teacher in this method, describes the origin and history of music instruction according to the Ward system. Gisbert Brandt, a chant instructor in Cologne, Germany, describes the method itself.

The address of Benedict XVI to the Choir of the Pontifical Chapel is printed in English translation, Duane Galle reports on a liturgy in honor of Msgr. Richard J. Schuler, and Kurt Poterack offers a perspective on the on-going work to reconcile the SSPX.

Sacred Music is sent to members of the Church Music Association of America. You can join the CMAA with a \$30 annual contribution. *Sacred Music* is a continuation of *Caecilia*, published by the Society of St. Caecilia since 1874, and *The Catholic Choirmaster*, published by the Society of St. Gregory of America since 1915. It is published quarterly by CMAA.

