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Editorial

Seasons

The structure of preparation, feast, and season in the liturgical year fulfills the human need for authentic festivity.

by William Mahrt

All things have their season, and in their times all things pass under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. . . .

Ecclesiastes, 3:1–2.



The variety of seasons is a treasure of the liturgy; changes of seasons cast light upon the enormous significance of each of the events of the year. The key feasts of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost have their unique events, with seasons of preparation, the celebration of the event, and a season of fulfillment. Take, for example, Christmas. Advent forms its preparation, the observance of the feast itself with three Masses is unique, and its season of fulfillment includes several significant events. Each of these elements sheds a significant light upon the others and comprises a magnificent whole.

But with Christmas, there is a problem: secular, commercial motivations have replaced Advent with a nearly hysterical shopping season, all geared to separate the buyers from as much of their money as pos-

sible. Indeed, the latter part of the year is constituted with three “feasts,” each with its commercial season of preparation. At the end of the summer, pumpkins begin to appear in the stores and a proliferation of artificial cobwebs develop around the ceilings and shelves of the stores, all in anticipation of the sale of candies for Hallowe’en. But All Saints’ Day brings an abandonment of such things, and in their place an anticipation of Thanksgiving dinner, with commercials for turkeys, stuffing, cranberries, and pumpkin pie, with fancy recipes and secrets for cooking all of this; rare is the mention of giving thanks. But early the next morning, Black Friday begins, with some stores opening at dawn, initiating the rush to purchasing numerous and sometimes extravagant gifts for Christmas; decorative lights appear throughout the neighborhood quite soon; and the classical music station plays a string quartet arrangement of “Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer”; but where is the mention of the Nativity of the Son of God?

The liturgical seasons provide a balance for all of this. A look at the gospel-readings of the Sundays can provide an indication of the variety of the seasons. Advent

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is a somewhat penitential season, but with hopeful anticipation of the coming of Christ; the Gloria is not sung, but the alleluia is. Advent was originally a season of six weeks, and even recently the final Sunday after Pentecost read a gospel concerning the second coming of Christ and the end of the world; this has been retained for the first Sunday in the ordinary form. The rest of the Sunday gospels of Advent concern the preparation for the earthly birth of Jesus, first by John the Baptist, and ultimately by the Annunciation and Visitation. Thus, there is a dynamic shape to Advent, beginning with something somewhat negative, moving to the preparation by John, and then to the preparatory feasts concerning Mary. The gospel of the Mass of the Vigil of Christmas (Christmas Eve, distinct from the Midnight Mass) narrates the conclusion of the Annunciation story, telling of Joseph receiving a message from an Angel in a dream and taking Mary into his home.

The role of John the Baptist is interesting, because this plays into the calendrical setting of Christmas. While Christmas occurs around the winter solstice, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist is on the summer solstice, just six months earlier. This is seen to be a calendrical representation of John's statement, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30), since the winter solstice is the time when daylight begins to increase, and the summer solstice when it begins to decrease. There is another interesting calendrical parallel: while the Annunciation of Jesus occurred upon the vernal equinox, there was a feast on medieval calendars (and on Byzantine ones) of the Annunciation of John, i.e., to Zachary, on the autumnal equinox.

Christmas itself has three Masses, in the

night, at dawn, and in the day. (Traditionally the Mass in the night was at midnight, but that has been ameliorated to the extent that we get the call, "What time is the Midnight Mass?") Between the Night and Day Masses, there is an interesting difference: in the night, the gospel is about the historical birth ("A decree went out from Caesar Augustus"), while the Propers of the Mass concern the eternal begetting of the Son from the Father ("In the brightness of the saints, from the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee," the traditional communion antiphon). On the day, the Propers of the Mass concern the earthly birth ("A child is born to us, and a son is given to us," the introit in both forms), while the gospel concerns the procession of the Son from the Father from the beginning of the Gospel of St. John ("in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God").

The chants for the two Christmas Masses also differ: the processional chants for the Mass in the night (introit and communion) bespeak the silence of the night by being in a very simple style; traditionally this Mass was called "in galli cantu," at the crow of the rooster, since it was understood that at the winter solstice the rooster would crow at midnight, and the chants for the Ordinary of the Mass in traditional sources are among the simplest. The proper chants for the Mass in the day are ebullient, the introit beginning with a leap upward of a fifth in a major mode.

Christmas is followed the by three very distinctive saints' days, thought to be the earliest days of the *sanctorale*. December 26 celebrates St. Stephen, the first martyr; the following day celebrates St. John, the pre-eminent evangelist; and then follows the real martyrs of the Christmas time, the

Holy Innocents, the children slaughtered by King Herod. Another feast that realizes a historical event is, in the extraordinary form, called the Circumcision, something prescribed by Jewish law to be observed on the eighth day of the birth of the child. This day is sometimes simply called the Octave of Christmas, but in the ordinary form, it is now observed as the Solemnity of Mary. This is, however, the title found in the most ancient documents of the Proper of the Mass (collated in the *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*). It should be acknowledged, in addition, that this has always been in one sense a Marian feast, since the Divine Office sings the psalms for Marian feasts.

Epiphany, January 6, is a major feast, commemorating the adoration of the Magi. Its name in the Orthodox world is Theophany, a manifestation of God, and in the adoration of the Magi the manifestation of the newborn Lord to the nations is represented by the Wise Men from the East. The day itself, as a manifestation, has always been understood to represent three epiphanies, the showing forth of the Lord to the Magi, Jesus' first miracle at the Wedding at Cana, and the Baptism of the Lord. These are summarized by the antiphon to the Magnificat at Second Vespers of Epiphany:

Tribus miraculis ornatum diem
sanctum colimus: hodie stella Magos
duxit ad præsepium: hodie vinum ex
aqua factum est ad nuptias: hodie in
Jordane a Joanne Christus baptizari
voluit, ut salvaret nos, alleluia.

In the extraordinary form, the season following the feast also includes Sundays whose gospels narrate events that could be called epiphanies: the Sunday after Epiphany—the finding of the child in the Temple; the octave of Epiphany—the Baptism; the Second Sunday after Epiphany—the Wedding at Cana, and finally Jesus reading in the synagogue. This latter is only suggested by a communion antiphon on the Third Sunday after Epiphany. Its text “All wondered at the words that proceeded from the mouth of God,” the conclusion of the story of Jesus going to the synagogue in Nazareth and reading from Isaiah, after which he said, “This day this scripture is fulfilled in your ears,” after which all wondered (Luke 4:16–22). Communion antiphons which use gospel texts consistently quote from the gospel of the day, so that it might be inferred that at one time this was the gospel for that Sunday.

The final feast of the Christmas season fulfills the Jewish law that the child be presented in the temple and his mother be given a ritual purification on the fortieth day (Luke 2:25–32). Old Simeon, who received the child, had been given a revelation that he would not die before he saw the Christ, and when he took the child into his

Three miracles adorn the holy day which we celebrate today: the star led the Wise Men to the manger; today wine was made from water at the wedding-feast: today Christ willed to be baptized by John in the Jordan, that he might save us, alleluia.

arms, he uttered the canticle *Nunc dimittis*: “Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,” naming Jesus “a light for the revelation of the gentiles.” For this reason, a procession with lighted candles is made on this day, and it is thus called Candlemas. It marks the end of the cycle of feasts around Christmas.

The feast of Easter, with its preparatory season of Lent constitutes another major cycle of preparation, feast, and season of fulfillment. There are, however, occasionally interpenetration of the seasons. For instance, in the Middle Ages, the original date of Good Friday was pegged at March 25, the same date as the Annunciation, a remote part of the Christmas cycle.

St. Augustine asserts a rationale: that the perfect man should have lived a perfect number of years. Likewise, during Lent, there is another epiphany: the Transfiguration. It is, of course, quite different from those of the Christmas season, which all

occur in proximity of the Nativity of Jesus. The Transfiguration had quite a different purpose—revealing the divinity of Christ to the key apostles in order to prepare them for the ordeal of his Passion and Death. It has something in common with the Baptism in that it culminates with the voice of

the Father: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

“All things have their season,” and when the seasons and their various stages are observed, the splendid variety of the year is projected. We are incorporated into a thing of beauty, which at the same time makes it possible for us to give a beautiful worship. This beauty leaves far behind the exaggerated commercialism of our

secular seasons. We can surely share some of the joys and festivities of the secular society, but these are transformed by a vision we receive from the liturgy, in which all joys are anticipations of those which await us. ❖

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Articles

The Fundamental Trajectory of Aesthetic Education

How can musicians help those who don't appreciate the beauty of the church's treasury of sacred music grow to love Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony?

by Jennifer Donelson-Nowicka



ius X's formulation of the principles by which the church understands her sacred music, as found in the 1903 motu proprio

Tra le sollecitudini, was so clear as to be able to inspire countless musicians and clergy to dedicate themselves to liturgical and musical renewal in the church throughout the twentieth century. This clarity of thought is aided by the assertion, in the first paragraph of the document, of what the end of sacred music is. If we know its end, its telos, we can understand what, why, or how it is as it is.

Knowing the telos of something helps answer all sorts of questions. If one knows, for example, the end of a chair, one is enabled to use it, to compare it to other chairs, and to assess whether it performs its function well. Knowing the telos can permit the opportunity to learn to build a chair, to appreciate different chairs throughout history,

to improve a design for a chair, to make it aesthetically pleasing, to place it in a particularly fitting physical context, or even to imagine other purposes it might serve.

So, what is the end the church sees in sacred music, according to Pius X? Admittedly, the common translation of the motu proprio obscures this otherwise clear formulation a bit.

Sacred music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the *general scope* of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful.¹

What is a *general scope*? The overall outlook? A forecast? The Latin and Italian are more philosophically precise.

¹Pius X, motu proprio, *Tra le sollecitudini* (Nov. 22, 1903), ¶1 <<https://adoremus.org/1903/11/tra-le-sollecitudini/>>, emphasis added.

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Musica sacra, prout pars integrans solemn-
nis liturgiæ, huius particeps est *finis*, qui
gloriam Dei et sanctificationem Christi-
fidelium spectat.²

La musica sacra, come parte integrante
della solenne liturgia, ne partecipa il *fine*
generale, che è la gloria di Dio e la santifi-
cazione e edificazione dei fedeli.³

This translation deficiency is remedied
somewhat in the formulation of this princi-
ple, carried forward into the ordinary mag-
isterium of the church by all the popes of
the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,
in its expression in the commonly-used
English translation of Vatican II's *Sacrosanc-
tum concilium*.

and having regard to the *purpose* of sacred
music, which is the glory of God and the
sanctification of the faithful.⁴

*finemque musicæ sacræ respiciens, qui glo-
ria Dei est atque sanctificatio fidelium.*⁵

²Ibid., in Latin, available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-x/la/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-x_motu-proprio_19031122_sollicitudini.html>, emphasis added.

³Ibid., in Italian, available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-x/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-x_motu-proprio_19031122_sollicitudini.html>, emphasis added.

⁴Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (Dec. 4, 1963), ¶112 <https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>, emphasis added.

⁵Ibid., in Latin, available at <https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_lt.html>, emphasis added.

Still, *finis*, the Latin is clearest. The church is speaking about the end, the telos, the reason for which sacred music is.

This end is twofold, and the order of these two ends as outlined in the text matters, since the second is an abundant result of the first. The first end of sacred music is to redound to the glory of God. It is theocentric. It is a gift that God gives to man in order that it may be returned to God as a gift, an offering of the self, in union with the sacrifice of Christ present in the sacred mysteries of the altar. That we can make music and are musical creatures is a gratuitous gift of God to mankind, to be returned in a similarly gratuitous manner, particularly in the context of the sacred liturgy, in which is found the source and summit of our faith and Christian lives. This gift redounds to

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the glory of God; the giving of this gift is an action which glorifies God. The beauty of the music in and of itself also redounds to the glory of God, for beautiful things participate in the perfection of beauty which finds its source in God. In short, beauty is pleasing to God (he created it!) and powerfully reminds man of the splendor of reality, which is grounded in the Logos.

From this gratuitous offering of the human person in the midst of the church, in the context of the sacred liturgy, flow graces which aid in the sanctification of souls, and their building up in the faith. This is the secondary end of sacred music, and it flows from the primary end. In rightly-ordered sacred music, the musician and those hearing or making the music with the musician, receive actual graces which help them grow in holiness and conformity to Christ. This grace is facilitated by the beauty, text, meaning, and liturgical use of the music. In this way, sacred music acts as a sacramental; the action of making a fitting music is appointed by the church so that, through it, the soul becomes disposed to receive the sacramental grace available to us in the sacred liturgy.

So, this is the two-fold end, and now there is some light for further questions that need to be asked and answered.

For example, when speaking of this secondary end, it seems important to recognize a limitation in sacramentals. As the old *Catholic Encyclopedia* entry on sacramentals points out, “experience teaches [that] the sacramentals do not infallibly produce their effect.”⁶

⁶Henri Leclercq, “Sacramentals,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912) <<https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13292d.htm>>.

Pope Pius X discusses this in article 2 of *Tra le sollecitudini* when he says: “It must be true art, for otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.” In other words, beauty is a constitutive element of sacred music, lacking which the efficient cause of sacred music is not evidenced, and the final cause, its end or purpose, is unrealized.

This lack of infallibility in production of the intended effect of sacred music might be ascribed to multitudinous causes related to this necessary beauty, any one of which thwarts the music from achieving its purpose.

The music might be too focused on human concerns in its text or style to point beyond itself to God, in the end failing to foster prayer and therefore it lacks a fittingness for expressing and clothing the worship of God on this side of heaven.

The music might lack a full or orthodox expression of the Catholic faith in its text.

The music itself might be lacking in compositional excellence such that the effect it gives is clunky, out of proportion, trite, or emotionally disordered.

Perhaps the piece of music is beautiful, but it simply doesn't fit the liturgical placement assigned to it. A Sanctus sung during the entrance procession isn't fitting. Or imagine a beautiful piece of classical music which was composed for the concert hall—a movement of a Beethoven symphony—as the music to accompany the retiring procession at Mass. The misplacement of something beautiful distorts the beauty of the piece, like a badly-fitted frame around a painted masterwork. The fittingness, and

therefore effect, of sacred music is always tied to the liturgical action.

Even in music which possesses both musical and textual excellence, there are the myriad musical concerns in the execution of the piece—tuning, pitch, good ensemble, good rhythm, pronunciation, proper articulation, tone production, breath support, tempo, phrasing, etc. Always and everywhere avoiding deformations in any of these things is the hope of the musician when he works to produce beautiful music with excellence befitting that beauty. But the lot of life on this side of heaven is that flawless execution almost always evades the musician, and so one aims always to perform in the best possible way, commending the imperfections to the mercy of God and uniting them to Christ's sacrifice when one gives of oneself, with all one's failings, in the act of making music as a sacrifice of praise.

There are certainly deficiencies on the side of the listener, too, which prevent the music from effecting its end.

The listener could lack the attention needed to allow the music to have its effect in terms of its secondary purpose. The listener could have a physiological defect which distorts the sound of the music into something that doesn't possess beauty for him. The taste of the listener might be so affected by a strong preference for another kind of music such that he is incapable of apprehending the beauty in a music that, while objectively beautiful, he cannot appreciate. The music might spark unpleasant memories, emotions, or associations with non-musical things such that the beauty of the music is crowded out by those connections with negative things.

Sacred music, maximally capable of fulfilling its purpose, doesn't just happen. It

requires the production of beauty, which takes effort, and the reception of the beauty, which requires an openness of heart—and that openness of heart, while readily available in some hearts, may take some cultivation in others.

This prompts further questions.

What circumstances, efforts, skills, or dispositions bring about music which fulfills its ends? How are these circumstances, efforts, skills, or dispositions fostered? It seems that what is required is a formation of the musical technique, but also a formation of the ear, of the taste, of the sense of good and bad, of the person.

What produces this formation? This development of musical skill and sensitive listening? The openness of heart to perceive and appreciate beauty?

For the purpose of this essay, that which achieves this formation will be called "aesthetic education." And it is precisely in aesthetic education—music education—that one can address many of the stumbling blocks encountered on the path of sacred music accomplishing its goals. Aesthetic education aids in accomplishing that which the sacramental of sacred music aims to accomplish.

And this formation is never complete as there is always more to learn, always a greater perfection to be achieved. So in observing this process of aesthetic education, one can

*Is aesthetic education
really capable of helping
sacred music serve as an
effective sacramental?*

speak of its general trajectory—more specifically identifying that towards which it aims, and the steps along the way to that end.

One can, therefore, ask about aesthetic education: what is it? How is it? What is its end? Through asking these questions one can learn more about what might be one's role as a music director or musician or parishioner in the church.

Now, this might seem overly ambitious. Is aesthetic education really capable of helping sacred music serve as an effective sacramental? Music directors and pastors know all too well the intransigence of certain persons in their inability to receive well things which we know to be objectively beautiful, fundamentally Catholic, and perfectly suited for the liturgy. And musicians sometimes frustratingly experience the upper limits of their technical and artistic capacities, knowing what they want to achieve, but somehow still being unable to do so, despite education received.

So perhaps it is worth asking more generally what the end of education is and only then more specifically, what the end of aesthetic education is. Then one can know whether the ends of this education accord with the ends of the sacred liturgy. And if they do, one can think about how to effect this education, even in the face of particularly challenging circumstances and intransigence.

And here's the spoiler alert for this essay: there is such a profound harmony between the end of the liturgy and the end of education that every musician ought to recognize the necessity of education in the work he does. This profound harmony helps the church musician realize essential tools for his trade, and noting this harmony likewise properly orients Catholic education more generally.

Please allow the preemption of some objections with another spoiler alert: this essay will not be asserting that the end of either the liturgy or of sacred music is didactic, that is, that the liturgy and sacred music have as their reason for existence teaching us something. We have already clearly established what the ends of the liturgy and sacred music are, and neither the primary nor the secondary ends were educational, as in: conveying information. Moreover, the Catholic view on this is at odds with the Enlightenment, for example, which viewed religious practice and singing as didactic exercises which had as their primary purpose the cultivation of moral goodness in a person. That view, contrary to the Catholic view, is that the liturgy is instrumentalized in achieving a more fundamental goal, that of making someone a good person by this-worldly standards. For the Catholic, however, the liturgy is the participation on this side of heaven in what we will forever be doing, and that is worshipping God in the eternal liturgy of heaven. The Catholic doesn't instrumentalize the liturgy for another end, but participates in it as an anticipation of man's true telos.

Instead, it can be asserted that there is a harmony between the sacred liturgy and sacred music, on the one hand, and education, on the other. The two synergistically order man to his end and enable him to anticipate its achievement. The sacred liturgy and sacred music, as well as education (and specifically aesthetic education) already involve anticipatory realizations of our telos. In the principal end of the sacred liturgy and sacred music one offers a gift to the unmoved mover, the unchanging God, in a purely gratuitous manner. What one will see is that there is a harmony here with

the purpose and process of education: the reception of a gift which is then given back to God, redounding to his glory.

Further, in the secondary end, that which flows from the primary end, one is changed. The liturgy and sacred music change a person. They form a man. They shape him. Likewise, education changes a person. It forms man, it shapes him. And in this, both need to be aligned with man's proper end. "God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next."⁷ Here, sacred music and aesthetic education cooperate in giving man an anticipatory experience of his end.

*Sacred music and aesthetic
education cooperate in
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experience of his end.*

So with that bold claim, let us get to work on discovering the whys, whats, and hows of education from a Catholic perspective.

A perceptive Catholic will note that the modern experience of education presents many problems. A main one is the instrumentalization of education towards solely materialistic ends which seem ungrounded by properly-oriented final ends. The student asks, "Why am I learning this?" Answer: "To understand X." Question: "Why do I need to understand X?" Answer: "To be able to do Y." Question: "Why do I need to know how to do Y?" Answer: "To get

⁷*A Catechism of Christian Doctrine: Prepared and Enjoined by Order of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore* (1891), q. 6.

a good job." This is a reduction of work from the organizing, vocation-like center of a way of life to a mere cog's service in the machine of the money economy. If only our educational establishments prepared young people for good work! And usually the line of questioning ends there. And we know that, sadly, even the day-to-day functioning of some of our Catholic schools has been happy to stop the questions there.

In this scenario, the problems are twofold: first, education is oriented simply towards use of knowledge, the instrumentalization of knowledge. This instrumentalization is accompanied by a reconceptualization of knowledge as information that, by its nature, has no connection with wisdom. Certainly, knowledge can be useful, but there is also a clear human experience of delighting in knowledge simply because the knowledge is possessed, even if it is never utilized or utilizable. Why should one want to know, for example, about the migration patterns of sand hill cranes? Perhaps it is because one can use that knowledge for some scientific study. But I can testify that that is not my experience of this knowledge, nor that of most people in Nebraska. There, it is something learned as something fascinating in and of itself, and perhaps the knowledge augments the wonder experienced at seeing the yearly flocking of millions of these birds to the sand dunes in the Platte River. One learns it simply to know it, to respond to one's natural curiosity and proclivity for wonder at the world around me. It is interesting!

Moreover, constantly instrumentalizing knowledge distorts the way in which one knows something, since the way in which one knows something has a receptive resting at its

core, even if the process of achieving knowledge of complex or deep things involves effort and striving and later involves the use of that knowledge for another end. More on that in a moment. But for right now, we must recognize the fundamental desire of the human person to know. This desire is grounded in man's nature which, in knowing, experiences a harmony between what is known, what is in the mind, and reality, truth. When one knows, one somehow possesses the truth. But this possession is not absolute—one doesn't have total control over that which one knows, for example. Too, one does not create that which one knows. (Even for an artisan or artist, creation from knowledge is not *ex nihilo*, but rather dependent on given sources at work in the imagination.) The possession in knowledge is more like one somehow has within oneself a share in truth, and one experiences a profound pleasure in that participation of one's mind in the truth. This pleasure is so profound as to evidence an end in and of itself, even if one never utilizes this knowledge.

The second problem in the line of questions above-mentioned is that the questions do not go far enough. They do not ground the use of knowledge, the accomplishment of other things, in the end of man's life. They ought to go further.

Question: "Why does one want a good job?" Answer: "Because through it one will be able to accomplish good things, as well as gain money." Question: "Why does one want to accomplish good things? Or why does one want money?" Answer: "Because accomplishing good things is pleasing and makes one and others happy. And money makes one happy." Question: "Why does one want to be happy and make others happy?" Answer: "It seems that men are

made *for* happiness." Question: "Why are men made for happiness and what is the source of this nature?" Answer: "God is the source and unity with him is the ultimate happiness. When one finds things that make men happy, they point to a share in what men ultimately desire, and that is God, for as St. Augustine says, 'our hearts are restless until we rest in Thee.'" Ultimate happiness is possessing one's ultimate good: God. And this possessing is somehow *being possessed by* God, for one is neither the source of this ultimate good nor even of the desire for this ultimate good. The way one is in one's nature is given to one as a gift, and man cooperates in this gift when he orients himself towards his final end.

This is the Catholic perspective on the ground of knowledge—even useful knowledge is ultimately for the sake of perfecting the nature of man, and the nature of man is that he is in the image and likeness of God and as such finds his source and end in God. Therefore, when one instrumentalizes knowledge, it must always be in accomplishing a good, and done so in a good way, so that oneself and others may, through these goods, be brought ever closer to mankind's final good: God himself.

*Does one acquire only
knowledge in the process of
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one's capacity to love?*

So again, back to the fundamental investigation: what is education, and what is the purpose of education? We seem already to have discovered a fundamental purpose which accords with human nature: the acquisition of knowledge, and education is a process by which I can acquire knowledge. It is how one can come to possess the truth. But this prompts a few more questions: is education the only way in which man acquires knowledge? Does one acquire only knowledge in the process of education, or is there more to be gained such as virtue and habit, or even a growth in one's capacity to love? There's also the question which was laid aside a moment ago: *how* do I know?

There is much to be learned from the thought of two moderns on this last question, and they teach it in a way that is so clear as to seem a sort of medicine for the contemporary ailments which afflict our knowing. Let us turn to the thought of Joseph Pieper and Simone Weil. Pieper has written so many things that are so wonderful, but for the topic at hand, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture* and *The Philosophical Act* are particularly salient. Within the work of Simone Weil, *Waiting on God*, and specifically within that work, "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God," is also helpful.

Let us summarize some of the main points of these texts.

As Pieper points out, *how* one knows is twofold.

First there is *ratio*, the root of the word "rational." This way of knowing is discursive and requires effort. I proceed to greater knowledge through the process of reasoning or argument. If this, then that—*ratio* involves assessing the truth in terms of the principle of non-contradiction and

other tenets of logic. This way of knowing searches for the truth, examining evidence and making steps in the line of reasoning. It happens at the abstract level. I have received knowledge through my senses (for, as the Aristotelian and scholastic dictum goes, "there is nothing which is in the mind which was not first in the senses") and the faculties of my soul—my memory and intellect—work on this knowledge to produce greater knowledge which, though embedded in the experience of reality, is abstracted from that reality, touching on the essences and natures of things by means of definitions, concepts, and categories. This way of *ratio* allows me to draw further conclusions which are universal in nature, not remaining only in the particulars perceived in the sensory reception.

The old *Catholic Encyclopedia's* entry on Aristotle summarizes the relationship between the senses and the intellect well:

Intellectual knowledge is essentially dependent on sense-knowledge, and intellectual knowledge is, nevertheless, superior to sense-knowledge. How, then, does the mind pass from the lower knowledge to the higher? How can the knowledge of the sense-perceived (*aistheton*) lead to a knowledge of the intelligible (*noeton*)? Aristotle's answer is, that the mind discovers the intelligible in the sense-perceived. The mind does not, as Plato imagined, bring out of a previous existence the recollection of certain ideas, of which it is reminded at sight of the phenomenon. It brings to bear on the phenomenon a power peculiar to the mind, by virtue of which it renders intelligible essences which are imperceptible to the senses, because

hidden under the non-essential qualities. The fact is, the individual substance (*first substance*) of our sense experience—*this* book, *this* table, *this* house—has certain individuating qualities (its particular size, shape, color, etc.) which distinguish it from others of its species and which alone are perceived by the senses. But in the same substance, there is underlying the individuating qualities, its general nature (whereby it is *a* book, *a* table, *a* house); this is the *second substance*, the Essence, the Universal, the Intelligible. Now, the mind is endowed with the power of abstraction, generalization, or induction (Aristotle is not very clear as to the precise nature of this power) by which it removes, so to speak, the veil of particularizing qualities and thus brings out, or leaves revealed, the actually intelligible, or universal, element in things, which is the object of intellectual knowledge.⁸

These powers of “abstraction, generalization, or induction,” involving a kind of motion from one thing to another, are what Pieper calls *ratio*.

The other way, Pieper points out, that we know is through *intellectus*. *Intellectus*, or *simplex intuitus* is effortless. It is the process by which reality impresses itself upon the person. There is no discursive effort, but rather reality imposes itself upon the intellect. For example, *being* is not a concept but rather a reality. And as a reality that is not exhaustively conceptualizable, it simply is, and everything that is, *is*. As such, I don't reason

⁸W. Turner, “Aristotle,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907) <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01713a.htm>>.

my way to being, I simply open my mind, by means of my senses, and it is revealed to me, naturally, without effort. Pieper says:

The Middle Ages drew a distinction between the understanding as *ratio* and the understanding as *intellectus*. *Ratio* is the power of discursive, logical thought, of searching and of examination, of abstraction, of definition and drawing conclusions. *Intellectus*, on the other hand, is the name for the understanding in so far as it is the capacity of *simplex intuitus*, of that simple vision to which truth offers itself like a landscape to the eye. The faculty of mind, man's knowledge, is both these things in one, according to antiquity and the Middle Ages, simultaneously *ratio* and *intellectus*; and the process of knowing is the action of the two together. The mode of discursive thought is accompanied and impregnated by an effortless awareness, the contemplative vision of the *intellectus*, which is not active but passive, or rather receptive, the activity of the soul in which it conceives that which it sees.⁹

Knowledge by these two ways is a participation in the life of God by virtue of

*I do not create that which
I know; reality is not my
invention. I encounter
reality.*

⁹Joseph Pieper, *Leisure: the Basis of Culture* (1952; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2009), p. 28.

being made in his image and likeness. I am able to know and have the capacity of intellect because I am made in God's image. In both ways of knowing, and particularly in *intellectus*, we see the givenness of the process of knowing. I do not create that which I know; reality is not my invention. I encounter reality. Understanding is the natural capacity of man to be open to the world and the means by which reality is able to reveal itself to man. It has a restfulness in it, a feeling of reaching its telos when it encounters truth, a rest in the object for which the capacity was made. And in this restfulness can arise wonder and awe.

It is here that the Simone Weil's discussion on attention is pertinent, since her thought proposes the necessity of attention for both *ratio* and *intellectus*. Because the acquisition of knowledge in both means of knowing is receptive (having, as they do, their origins in the givenness of reality), attention is a key habit for the reception of reality through the senses.

At first glance, Weil's sense of attention seems to be another description of *intellectus*, and there is indeed a relationship between attention and *intellectus*. For Weil, the effort required in developing one's attention is exerted so that the soul can "receive into itself the being it is looking at, just as he is, in all his truth."¹⁰ Attention is the disposition of oneself to reception of the truth. In giving my attention to something, I focus on it, and I attend its impression upon my intellect. This focus doesn't mean narrowing in, however. Narrowness causes one to miss what one might not expect to see, or to impose one's view on reality rather than allowing reality to impose itself on the intelligence.

¹⁰Simone Weil, *Waiting on God* (London: Fontana Books, 1959), p. 76.

Rather, there is a way in which attention paid increases one's capacity for awaiting the reception of reality since it always returns the senses to the thing perceived, waiting for the revelation of the thing to one's mind.

Attention does require an act of the will, as Weil spends most of her text describing. It is a gift of one's self, of one's capacity to know. I offer the faculties of my soul in an openness which allows reality to make itself known. In this phenomenon, reality is a gift from God, as are my senses and intellect, and I give those gifts back to God by offering my attention to reality. Certainly, the habitual gift of self is something that requires a struggle against the effects of original sin. But just like any virtue, it can be cultivated, and the ease which Weil sees in the act enters when the senses are virtuously habituated to acting in accord with their nature, and their nature is to serve as the organs through which reality impresses itself upon the mind. It could be said that education is the deliberate and systematic process of the cultivation of the virtue of attention, and that this cultivation is clearly not bound by the physical limits of a classroom, though that is the fundamental purpose of going to school.

Further, Weil sees the study of any subject whatsoever as a preparation for prayer and union with God for as St. Thérèse teaches us, "prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven."¹¹ Weil sees prayer as paying attention to God. Attention is a habit to be cultivated, a muscle to be strengthened. In school, one's ability to pay attention to and be shaped by external things is developed. In the classroom, one pays attention to things of a lower order, and

¹¹St. Therese of Lisieux, *Manuscripts autobiographiques*, C 25r, quoted in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2558.

in prayer one pays attention to him whom greater than which nothing can exist.¹²

If we apply both *intellectus* and Weil's sense of attention to the aesthetic sphere, we observe that there is a receptivity in the perception of beauty because beauty is revelatory to the intellect, and gives us access to the true and the good. So let us first examine beauty in relation to the intellect, and then turn to beauty as a face of the good.

As *splendor formæ*,¹³ beauty is firstly an aspect of being which touches the intellect. True beauty in a work of art presents itself to my intellect, and if my attention turns my senses observe the beautiful object, I am pleased in hearing or seeing it.¹⁴ I rest in the beauty of the thing perceived—gazing, listening, delighting in this aspect or that detail, or being overcome by the splendor of the whole. In one aspect of hearing or seeing something beautiful, there is no discursive thought, no striving, and so in this way it is akin to *intellectus*. There is an immediacy to beauty in which beauty can impress itself upon the intellect of the one who pays attention, of the one who allows his senses to perceive the beautiful thing. This immediacy is often accompanied by a feeling of amazement or wonder, of being “wowed” by beauty. I don't strive to be struck by the beauty, it just happens—and sometimes this effect of paying attention to the beautiful thing even surprises one who did not expect it. Especially in works of art that are resplendently beautiful, the refulgence of the beauty and its impact on my intellect could only be averted through violence to the senses or attention, or an extreme or cultivated antipathy towards the

bearer of such beauty. Beauty is even capable of capturing my attention despite distraction. The splendor of the beauty captivates my senses, turning my attention to attend to the beautiful thing.

Beauty needs no apology, no teacher. It is a self-evident and effective witness, sharing with the process of education the turning outwards of one's attention. The power of beauty in this regard can even disarm those ideological objections against a certain style or the singing of a text in Latin. This is, of course, that at which a musician aims when working to perfect the performance of a work which is widely known and loved as a masterwork.

But what about those beauties that are more subtle, or not as magnificent? What about the elegance of a line of chant which is refined and restrained, not announcing itself as impressively as the façade of the Rouen cathedral or the high C in the Allegri *Miserere*? Do music directors need only program musical beauty which is grandiose and spectacular in order to effect and fulfill the church's mind on the end of sacred music? Too, what about the motet that is a masterwork and performed mostly well, but had a few mistakes in it, thereby marring the perfection of the piece? Certainly, musicians strive for perfection on this side of heaven, but it is not always achieved. Does this mean the efforts have been in vain?

In Weil we see that a habit of attention makes it possible for even less spectacular beauties to impress themselves upon the soul. A soul habitually attentive to beauty will notice more and more even those beauties which are simple and delicate. Likewise, the habit of attention enables the faculties of the soul to function like a sentinel watching for daybreak,

¹²Simone Weil, *Waiting on God*, 66.

¹³St. Albert the Great, *De pulchro et bono*, I, 2c.

¹⁴St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I.5.4.

ready to herald even the faintest glimpse of the light of beauty to appear, but not engendering an obliviousness to the shadows which yet fall. The attentive observer accurately sees them all. A congregation evermore habitually attentive to the beauty of the sacred music will notice when a piece doesn't come off faultlessly, but they will still be ready to rejoice in those beauties which are heard.

This habitual sort of attention, paid to the beautiful in the context of the Sacrifice of the Mass, is not always readily available, especially in the hearts and minds of those who have put up some sort of roadblock to the reception of beauty.

As a remedy, certainly there is a role for the music director to engage in those types of education which cultivate attention through a conscious refinement of *ratio* in the understanding of the church's music.

Like a docent who attends to the gazer in the art museum, the musician or priest can help parishioners learn how to listen intelligently to music. In activating the discursive thought of *ratio*, one can learn how to perceive order in a melodic line, to identify the beginnings and ends of phrases, to sense how one phrase responds to another and how these phrases form the overall musical structure of a piece. In this process, there is always a return to what is perceived through the senses; one does not construct an insightful understanding of a piece of music by just imagining what is there but instead by attentively and purposefully focusing the senses on this detail or that, and then making sense of those details through an educated understanding of musical style, harmony, or rhetoric. The cultivation of *ratio* in understanding music is learning how to focus the attention to

musical reality in a purposeful and directed way. One learns to probe music in a deeper way, sharpening the intellect, and rejoicing in what one finds in the givenness of that which is sensed as source material for the discursive thought of *ratio*.

But in the real world, how does this actually happen? Few are the parishioners who will attend a music appreciation lecture series. Maybe some parishioners will read a bulletin column or watch a short YouTube video explaining what's interesting about this Sunday's music. Probably we'll be able to convey a number of these insights to those who come to choir rehearsals. Nevertheless, rare is the priest who is able to understand these things in a really deep way so as to convincingly convey them to parishioners in a homily. Too, there's the question of how much time (if any!) should be devoted to preaching about music. Maybe Father will understand the spiritual benefit of talking about these matters in an occasional homily, but perhaps the best that could be hoped for is an occasional, insightful homily about sacred music that inspires a sustained desire to be attentive to it. Father's encouragement to think about this or that while praying with the church's sacred music might be effective for some.

But what might be even more successful for the average parishioner who isn't already interested in Gregorian chant is the arousal of attention by programming and working to perform excellently those musical works which are so evidently beautiful as to captivate the attention. Attention is key, and desire directs the attention. Stunning beauty can be the necessary spark for attention.

We don't have to explain everything,

making sure to make great strides in the *rational* understanding of the music. We don't have to coddle listeners. We don't have to insist on translations of non-vernacular texts being key for catechesis, absent which all is lost. (Certainly translations do have a role in cultivating understanding, but they are not an exclusive gateway to knowledge.)

We can do our work in creating the greatest beauty we can muster, and trust that even a brush with beauty will lead to a desire to hear it more frequently and to experience it with intelligence. There is a sort of instant "education" embedded in the hearing of spectacularly beautiful music. And this instant education is enough to set a listener on a path of rich soil that makes the sacramental effective in helping grace take root.

There is a movement in my heart and will when I apprehend beauty. It's not just the effort of *ratio*, but also that of desire—desire for the beautiful thing. Beauty piques my interest and causes in me a longing to possess it. The wonder at it sustains my desire to keep paying attention to it, in the hope that I will be able to hold on to it. Beauty draws me, always inviting me to return again to perceive it. Beauty is a sort of perceptible "face" of the good, and the good is the object of my will. The good, through beauty, activates my will, and my will is capable of sustaining my attentiveness to the music, opening up the possibility of my understanding and appreciating it in a deeper way.

So where do beauty and education intersect? We've already seen that education is an experience of growth in knowledge. But knowledge is a participation in reality. And the gateway to that participation is the beautiful. The light of this beauty shines on the prospect of knowledge and makes it desirable. Perhaps this is directed by a teacher.

Perhaps it is self-instigated. Perhaps it is inspired by some external phenomenon. Whatever the case, as Weil points out, intelligence is led by desire. Desire focuses my attention. And, as Aristotle points out, "All men by nature *desire* to know."¹⁵

In attentiveness there is required a cultivation of the capacity receptively to wait and attend to the revelation of reality, of beauty. Attention is inseparable from humility. And in the thought of Weil, attention is synonymous with love. Attention, as a gift of the movements of the soul, of the very self, back to the source of reality, forms an integral part of love. Attention to the beautiful focuses that which I will on the good, and orients my intellect in a habitual (i.e., deliberately focused, ever overcoming more and more the effects of original sin) openness to truth. All this redounds to the glory of God. For, as St. Irenaeus said, "the glory of God is the living man, and the life of man is the vision of God."¹⁶ This is *how* man lives. And whenever the will chooses the good and the intellect rests in the truth, man lives as he ought. Any beauty loved, any good chosen, any truth known, is a participation in, an orientation towards, the ultimate good, the ultimate truth, the source of beauty: God himself. This is the glory of God and, as the more popular paraphrase of St. Irenaeus goes, "man fully alive."

There is an undeniable connection between beauty and desire. Beauty amplifies the desirability of the good. Beauty increases the attraction of the true. Though a definition of beauty is ever-hunted and

¹⁵Jonathan Lear, *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 1, emphasis added.

¹⁶Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, IV.37.7.

often leaves much to be desired, we might say *here* that beauty is a perfection or excellence, the possession of or participation in which, increases the delight which man takes in the goodness and truth of a being. And this is summed up in the popular quote from St. Thomas in the *Summa*: “pulchra enim dicuntur quæ visa placent” [for the beautiful is said to be that which, being seen, pleases].¹⁷ Further, phrasing this in the same terms we’ve been using in this discussion, beauty is that which, when it makes itself known to the intellect by means of the senses, has the effect on the person perceiving it both a pleasing restfulness and a desire to possess it. This restfulness comes from the orientation of the capacities of man towards their proper ends, and out of this restfulness man is moved by the desire beauty arouses in his heart.

So beyond this connection between beauty and desire, it’s not hard to see the connection between beauty and contemplation, between beauty and worship. Physical beauty arouses a desire for the source of this beauty, pointing beyond itself to the throne of God. Beauty in sacred music is an arrow pointing man to God. It doesn’t stop in just itself. This is why beauty is a constitutive—i.e., necessary—element for the art and music of the sacred liturgy. If “the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows,”¹⁸ and beauty facilitates man’s orientation towards and participation in his ultimate ends, it follows that beauty is so fitting for the liturgy so as to be necessary.

Again to Weil’s assertion that desire

¹⁷St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ* I.5.4.

¹⁸*Sacrosanctum concilium*, ¶10.

leads the intelligence. Here we might now say, too, that beauty leads the intelligence. Of course now we see that the object of the intelligence is much more than facts, more than things which can be utilized for some other purpose. Knowledge is an end in itself because it is the resting of my intellect, given me by nature, in its proper end. And therefore, education is a process which has as its fundamental trajectory and goal the orientation of man towards his ultimate end.

And at long last that truth which I gave you in the spoiler alert: there is a harmony between the end of the liturgy and sacred music and the end of education. Both processes, on this side of heaven—liturgy and education—are a participation in my ultimate end, an orientation of all I am and all that I have towards God. In the liturgy, as the privileged locus from which flows the “entirety of the Christian life,”¹⁹ I unite this gift of imperfect self with the perfect sacrifice of Christ, in the Spirit, to God the Father.

Aesthetic Education

Education in any subject whatsoever is a formation in attending to reality, which predisposes one to prayer, and music is particularly effective in this regard because it is sung prayer. So now we might say that *aesthetic* education is that process by which I cultivate the ability to produce sensible beauty to the greatest degree possible, along with that process by which I sharpen my senses to accurately perceive the beauty which would make itself known to me. And in that cultivation of the accuracy and perceptiveness of the senses, because “there is nothing which is in the mind which was not received through the senses,” I grow *overall*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

Aesthetic education is that process by which I cultivate the ability to produce sensible beauty to the greatest degree possible, along with that process by which I sharpen my senses to accurately perceive the beauty which would make itself known to me.

in my capacity for perceiving reality, which of course, when properly oriented, helps me to become even more human, ever more able to orient and let my intellect rest in the truth. So, aesthetic education aids my intellect in discovering the truth. And, as Plato argued in the *Republic*, training in music, growing in the ability to distinguish between good, less good, and spectacularly good music, transfers into a habit of seeking and loving that which is noble and good even in the moral sphere.

So: aesthetic education is a process which is good *overall* for man.

First, aesthetic education for the production of beauty.

This is my technical work as a musician—my development of vocal technique, good breathing, the capacity to shape a beautiful phrase, my ability to sing or play with good rhythm, balance, tempo, ensemble, etc. It is also the development of two

kinds of hearing, the two of which are a sort of chicken and egg, each contributing to the other. One is an internal hearing—my inner “library of sounds,” the product of experience in working in a medium as well as of a lively creative imagination. It’s my idea of how the music ought to sound. The more educated I am, the more knowledge I have, the more interesting and beautiful this idea will be. The second kind of hearing is an external hearing—a growth in the ability of my senses to accurately perceive the sound I am making. This involves a fine tuning of the ear and of the intelligence as the director of the attention towards that which needs hearing. When these two kinds of hearing are activated, what they perceive must be compared. Am I creating the beautiful sound I intend to create? If not, what can I do differently to ensure the external reality matches the interior reality? Or . . . what can I draw from my experience to make my interior idea more interesting and beautiful?

Aesthetic education is a growth in all these things, and this is our responsibility as musicians. This is the human perfection to which we are called so as to ensure that our deficiencies don’t irreparably detract from the capacity of the beautiful music the church gives to draw souls to Christ, don’t distract from the augmented ability to pray which beautiful music affords. I must increase in my knowledge and abilities so as to decrease and become invisible, veiled by the beauty which leads souls to God.

Next, aesthetic education for the perception of beauty.

The development of the ability to perceive beauty accurately depends on a cultivation of the senses. And this cultivation is the domain not only of the musician, but also of the one who simply perceives,

who is a perceiver of the beauty produced by another. And the development of this ability to perceive beauty is linked to the capacity to appreciate the beauty of that perceived. And this is our work, as aesthetic educators, with all in our parish. We are ambassadors of beauty, helping others to experience, accurately perceive, love, and pray with beautiful music.

And we can now say, sharing as beauty, education, and liturgy do in harmonious ends, that there are aspects of beauty which command the attention and have real and important effects on the spiritual life.

Beauty enables an abiding with. When something is beautiful, it captures my attention, increasing my desire to remain with it, to go deeper. This is an important spiritual medicine in the fleeting attention spans of our time. With the focus of attention that beauty engenders, God's voice is more clearly able to be perceived, heard in the scriptures, seen in the splendor of reality.

Beauty has a newness, a freshness which breaks monotony. When something is beautiful, it is rich, always presenting something new to notice and delight in. When I step back from something which has become mundane to notice its beauty, it's as if I rediscover it all over again. Isn't this a good habit for married life? The intellectual life? For the worship of God in the sacred liturgy? For spending time with beautiful music we've sung for years?

Beauty cultivates wonder: because that which is beautiful always allows a fruitful and fresh abiding with, I wonder in amazement at it. There is never enough of it. My capacity for more of it is increased, and my desire for it grows. And when God is recognized as the source of beauty, it becomes clear that beautiful things, and especially

those beautiful things which are integral to the sacred liturgy like sacred music, increase our capacity for God. Beauty cultivates our desire for him, which is why I pray in beauty.

In beauty, I experience different degrees. Some things are rather beautiful. Other things are wondrously beautiful. Some things can grow in their beauty as they develop. My ability to produce beauty grows with education and attentive practice. And it is in this dynamic experience of beauty that I realize that the beauty I experience on this side of heaven, the beauty in the choral music upon which I lavish all the talent I can muster—that all this is nothing when compared with the beauty that awaits us in heaven. In fact, the splendor of the beauty on this side of heaven, and realizing that it can be greater still, drives me in a constant trajectory towards heaven.

When we understand our roles as music directors in facilitating that which is described above, we can confidently commend to God our efforts at ensuring the success of the sacramental of sacred music. By occasionally capturing the attention of our congregation with some particularly spectacular works of sacred music and then offering a steady diet of the infinite variations of the manifestation of beauty in the church's treasury of sacred music, we can count on beauty to spark and sustain the desire of listeners to seek the source of such beauty. What's more, we can trust that the desire and good will created by experiences with beauty will lead our congregations into a deeper and more nuanced understanding and experience of the church's sacred music, enabling them to pray, worshipping God in beauty, setting their intellects on the truth and their wills on the good. ❖

Romano Guardini and the Spirit of Liturgical Music

Gregorian chant perfectly expresses the inner reality of the sacred liturgy.

by William Mahrt



acques Maritain began his fundamental work *Art and Scholasticism*, “The Schoolmen wrote no special treatise entitled *Philosophy of Art*,” but he elaborated a concise and coherent scholastic theory of art drawing upon treatises on various other subjects.

The same could be true of music for Romano Guardini: in *The Spirit of the Liturgy* he does not directly address musical matters; rather, he makes just a few telling remarks about liturgical music, which yet indicate a sensitivity to the importance of its role in the liturgy. His discussion of liturgy and its culture is thus ripe for extrapolating some aspects of music that arise from it.

In waxing eloquent about the greatness, exclusiveness, and strength of the liturgy, with its attention to the hereafter, he refers to the normative form of the liturgy. We may have forgotten, in our age of the Mass with a thorough mixture of sung and spoken forms, that before the council, there was a strict distinction between the High Mass and the Low Mass. In the High Mass, practically everything to be spoken aloud was sung, while in the Low Mass, everything was spoken. Guardini makes it clear that he is referring to the High Mass;

If we reflect on the liturgy as a whole, and upon its important points, not upon the abbreviated form in which it is usually presented, but as it should be, we shall have the good fortune to experience the miracle of a truly mighty style.¹



Romano Guardini 1885–1968

¹Romano Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* [*Vom Geist der Liturgie*, 1918] in *The Church and the Catholic and The Spirit of the Liturgy*, tr. Ada Lane (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1935), p. 154; see a recent edition together with the *Spirit of the Liturgy* of Joseph Ratzinger (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018).

This paper was read at the 2018 annual conference of the Society for Catholic Liturgy in Miami, Florida.

This conception of the sung Mass was maintained by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council. *Sacrosanctum concilium* prescribes:

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

For the fathers of the council, this would have been an adequate prescription of the Solemn High Mass, with only one additional proviso, that the participation of the people be included. There would have been no assumption that some of the parts would be spoken. Guardini acknowledges the norm, while conceding the prevalence of the Low Mass; it is clear, he was imbued with the culture of the High Mass.

He gives a clearly privileged status to Gregorian chant, because of its suitability to the transcendent nature of the liturgy. Comparing several different aspects of liturgy with non-liturgical counterparts—for instance the collects of the Mass with the prayers of Anselm or Newman—he compares Gregorian chant:

Liturgy . . . is not the direct expression of any particular type of spiritual disposition . . . if we compare . . . Gregorian chant with the popular hymn—we shall always find, within the sphere of the liturgy, that the medium of spiritual

expression, whether it consists of words, gestures, colors, or materials, is to a certain degree divested of its singleness of purpose, intensified, tranquilized, and given universal currency.³

His view of chant is quite specific, and it concurs with his theory of the beauty of the liturgy. He criticizes those who pursue only the aesthetic aspects of liturgical music: saying that the simple man or woman seeking consolation in the liturgy penetrates its essence better than “the connoisseur who is busy savoring the contrast between the austere beauty of a Preface and the melodiousness of a Gradual.”⁴ But for Guardini, this raises the question of beauty in the liturgy.

He wanted to avoid sharp opposites, particularly in the case of beauty and truth. For him beauty has a solid foundation in truth. He calls upon a traditional definition of beauty, *splendor veritatis*, and expands upon it:

Beauty is the triumphant splendor which breaks forth when the hidden truth is revealed, when the external phenomenon is at all points the perfect expression of the inner essence.⁵

Beauty is thus far more than the grace of an external form; in fact, he condemns in no uncertain terms those who follow just the aesthetics of an object, “aesthetes, unwelcome guests, drones . . . parasites sponging

²Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (December 4, 1963), ¶113 <https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>.

³Guardini, *Spirit of the Liturgy*, 153. Other items in the comparison are the priest’s gestures, the rubrics for the adornment of the sanctuary, the vestments, and the altar vessels.

⁴Ibid., 186.

⁵Ibid., 190.

on life”⁶ particularly in the liturgy, illustrating this with a musical example:

The careworn man who seeks nothing at Mass but the fulfillment of the service which he owes to his God; the busy woman, who comes to be a little lightened of her burden; the many people who, barren of feeling and perceiving nothing of the beauty and splendor of word and sound which surrounds them, but merely seek strength for their daily toil—all these penetrate far more deeply into the essence of the liturgy than does the connoisseur who is busy savoring the contrast between the austere beauty of a Preface and the melodiousness of a Gradual.⁷

Here he is not condemning a preface or a gradual, for as liturgical forms, these have a fundamental link to the whole purpose of the liturgy. Take, for example, the versicle and response, which forms a part of the preface of the Mass, *V. Sursum corda, R. Habemus ad Dominum*, “lift up your hearts; we have lifted them up to the Lord.” The melody expresses literally the lifting on the first accented syllable of each of these:

a-b-c b a-b a-g b a-b-c b b a-b a a-g
Súr- sum cór-da. Ha- bé- mus ad Dó- mi-num,

To me, it is incomprehensible, in setting the English for the liturgy, that these texts should have been set to a form of the same melody which begins with a descending melody:

⁶Ibid., 186.

⁷Ibid.

c-b a-b a a-g c c-b a b a a a-g
Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.

As for the gradual, the melismatic chant following the first lesson of the Mass, this is a prime example of one of the most fundamental aspects of liturgical music, a meditation chant following upon a lesson (the gradual, alleluia, tract of the Mass, and the responsory of the office). It contrasts with the lesson which has many words, and few notes, but having few words and many notes, a melismatic style which, in my observation, elicits recollection and thus wondrously complements the lesson. An example is the gradual for Easter Sunday which begins, “Hæc dies, quam fecit Dominus.” (See Figure 1.)

Guardini is aware of this principle, and he remarks on this phenomenon with the readings of the Divine Office:

often these readings are introduced and concluded by short prayers of a characteristically contemplative and reflective nature—the antiphons [i.e., responsories] during which that which has been heard or read has time to cease echoing and the sink into the mind.”⁸

A good description of the recollection achieved by such a chant after a lesson.

Guardini’s discussion of the entire liturgy includes some interesting indications of the role of music in it. He contrasts the view of Jesus of those who rely on private devotions with that given by the liturgy. The former is a human Jesus who is true God and true Man. The latter is the Sovereign Mediator, eternal high priest, sitting

⁸Ibid., 124.

Grad.
2.
H ÆC di- es, * quam fe- cit

Dó- mi- nus : exsul-té- mus,

et læ- té- mur in e- a.

ψ. Confi-témi-ni Dó- mi- no,

quó- ni- am bo- nus : quó- ni- am in sáe- cu-lum mi-se- ri- cór- di- a * e- jus.

Figure 1. Gradual for Easter Sunday, Hæc Dies . . .

at the right hand of the Father, rapt into the light of eternity and remote from time and space.⁹

The Gospels are the focus of this liturgical context, in which

they are a part of the Mass, of the *mysterium magnum*, an integral part of the structure of the mystery of sacrifice . . . of the structure of the particular Sunday office, current season, or ecclesiastical year swept along by that powerful straining upwards to the Hereafter which runs through the entire liturgy.¹⁰

⁹Ibid., 156.

¹⁰Ibid., 157.

And they were for him experienced chanted in a foreign language, underscoring their eternal, super-historical meaning.¹¹

The role of the Gospels in the traditional liturgy is key here. The Gospel of the Sunday Mass was the subject of a patristic homily at Matins, the basis of the antiphon to the Benedictus at Lauds and the antiphon to the Magnificat at Vespers. Its thematic was recalled throughout the day. This focus upon the Gospel is a significant element in the entire order of the liturgical year. The history of salvation from the Annunciation through Nativity, Public Ministry, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension

¹¹Ibid., 155.

of Christ, then Pentecost, and capped by the Assumption of Mary. This history was born primarily by the Gospels, day in and day out. They are stories which, especially in the traditional order, were heard annually, and were remembered well from year to year. Their purpose was not principally information, but the celebration of the history of salvation. The chanting of the gospels enhances their legendary character and places them in a festive context. Guardini's mention of their chanting suggests that he understood this. He saw the entire liturgy as a context, and it should be remembered that this was a chanted liturgy.

Guardini constantly seeks to reconcile opposites: beauty & truth, matter & spirit, logos & ethos, and so forth. It is along these lines that his theory of symbol is significant. He sees two kinds of personality that are contrasting; the first seeks a spiritual level that is unrelated to the physical; the second seeks a jumble of the spiritual and the material, but which is not clarified by any principal. His solution to this dichotomy is symbol: a symbol is the external expression of the interior and the spiritual. When the spiritual is cast in a material way in a more nearly perfect way, then the symbol has a universal applicability. In the liturgy, the body is an emblem of the soul. Actions can be such symbols—kneeling, exchanging the kiss of peace when done with dignity and reverence. These can be reinforced by physical means, incense, etc. Thus matter and spirit are complementary in the way that they formed an intrinsic bond in the creation of a symbol. A similar bond can be said of music, especially Gregorian chant. The physical act of singing and the materiality of the sound it produces are intrinsically linked with the spirituality of singing,

with the sacred text and its spiritual significance, especially its function in the liturgy.

Guardini's discussion of logos and ethos is ripe for comparison with music. The historical shift of emphasis upon logos to ethos, from communal worship to interiority, has striking parallels in the history of music. But when it comes to the role of

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music in the liturgy, it might be assumed that its function has to do with ethos. Still, there are elements of Gregorian chant that participate in the logos of liturgy: its texts are scriptural and normative, and its melodies bear a relation to universal harmony that links them with the whole order of creation. ❖

Taking Up the Psalter: A Letter to Some Friends

The psalms encompass every human experience.

by Fr. Samuel Weber, O.S.B.



Recently I was asked by some friends who are not accustomed to using the psalter, why it might be to their advantage to take it up in their worship and private devotion. This should not be too difficult a matter to explain, I thought at first. Anyone who has listened to Handel's *Messiah* is aware of the long Christian tradition of reading the Old Testament as a *book of prophecy about Christ*. Surely this would be a good place to start.

Christ in the Psalms

Having studied the history of Christian worship and prayer, I knew well the traditions that sang the psalms in praise of the *Royal Son of David*, the Lord Jesus Christ (e.g., Psalms 2, 109[110], 131[132]), upon whom had been poured the oil of gladness (Ps. 44[45]:8).¹ How the heart thrills when

¹The most frequently quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament is the Book of Psalms. Many have found in their reading of the New Testament a key to a Christian understanding of the psalms. For Psalm 2:7, see Heb. 1:5; 5:5, and Acts

the Messianic Psalms are sung, especially during Advent and Christmastide!

In the *psalms of trouble and suffering*, who could not help but recognize Jesus, the Suffering Servant? On the cross, the psalms of his people provided the words he needed to cry out to his God (Ps. 21[22]), and led him to commend his life and labors into the hands of the Father (Ps. 30[31]:6).² No wonder these psalms occur so often during Lent and Holy Week.

And then, how to hymn *his resurrection glory*? No finer song than Psalm 117(118) for praising the *stone rejected* become *the cornerstone*, and celebrating every Sunday as the special day *made by the Lord*, on which rejoicing and gladness are the order of the

13:33. For Psalm 2:1-2, see Acts 4:25-26. Psalm 109(110) is the more frequently cited psalm. In Matt. 22:44 (and parallel passages) Christ applies this psalm to himself. Version of the psalms used in this article: *The Psalms: A New Translation from the Hebrew, Singing Version* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

²For Psalm 21(22), see Matt. 27:46 and Mark 14:34. Psalm 30(31) is found in Luke 23:46.

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day (Ps. 117[118]:24; see also Matt. 21:42, Mark 12:10, and Luke 20:17.; cf. Acts 4:11 and 1 Pet. 2:7).

Although he did return to the Father's glory and is now seated at God's right hand, Jesus did not forget the loved ones who remained behind. The *gift of the Holy Spirit* in wind and fire at Pentecost attested: *I am with you evermore*. Psalter in hand, our Christian ancestors took up the chant on Ascension Day, *God goes up with shouts of joy* (Ps. 46[47]:6), and longed for his Spirit-gift in their own lives, praying, *Send forth your Spirit . . . renew the face of the earth!* (Ps. 102[104]:30).³

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

As I was mulling over these, and various other possible ways of responding to the request my friends had made, I noticed, stacked in the corner of my bookcase, some postcards, memories of student years in Rome. Among them I came across one of the ancient baptis-tries of the city, its walls adorned with dazzling mosaics. There, on the wall opposite the baptismal pool, situated in such a way that, as the newly baptized emerged dripping from the waters, their eyes would immediately fall upon it, was the figure of a youthful shepherd boy. A little lamb was hoisted upon his broad shoulders. I must show this to my friends and tell them how those early Christians newly up from the waters, upon seeing this wonderful work of art, would remember that it was Jesus who had assured them, *I am the good shepherd* (John 10:11), and would sing of him to whom their lives were now irrevocably committed:

³These psalms are not specifically cited in the New Testament. Their use at Ascension and Pentecost belongs to the tradition of Christian psalm-singing in worship.

The Lord is my shepherd . . .
near restful waters He leads me . . .
My head you have anointed with oil . . .
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell, for
ever and ever. (Ps. 22[23]:1, 2, 5, 6)

I picked up another postcard. This time the scene, from the catacombs, was that of a tiny cavern deep under the street level. Perhaps at one time it had been used as a small chapel. Etched on one of its walls, in red the color of clay, was a small altar. Near it were fish, and two baskets filled with loaves marked with crosses. Vines heavy with clusters of ripe grapes were also near. All was ready for a sacred meal. *Taste and see that the Lord is good!* (Ps. 33[34]:9, cf. 1 Pet. 2:3). Perhaps my friends would be interested to know that primitive Christians found in this psalm words most suitable to celebrate *Christ present among them* as they shared the *Bread of Angels* (Ps. 77[78]:25) and the *Chalice of Salvation* (Ps. 115[116]:13). Perhaps this traditional communion psalm would find a place in their own commemoration of the Lord's Supper.

The Mirror Image of Life

As I considered the matter, I felt sure that these points would be helpful to my friends. And yet, something *more* was needed. What was it? I began paging through the hymnal they were accustomed to use, and as I did so, it became more and more evident what had to be said about the *advantages of the psalter*.

This is what I noticed. Like the psalter, the hymnal contained numerous hymns that praised and thanked God, and many others that recalled the beauty of his creation and extolled his unceasing providence. Faith and hope in his promises were duly expressed, and the fellowship of Christian believers

extolled. Hymns celebrating the mystery of Christ in the church year were not lacking either. Indeed, a number of them were beautiful paraphrases of the great Christological psalms.

Unlike the psalter, however, there was not one *angry* hymn in the entire collection. So often we feel the need to pour out our rage to God in prayer. How will the hymnal help us then? Perhaps this is precisely the point at which the psalter is most valuable for our needs today, and the point at which our current worship books and hymnals fall short. The psalter is *true to life*; it accords so accurately with the *rawness of human experience*. It leaves nothing unsaid, no emotion unexpressed. I knew then that I would have to tell my friends the *whole truth* about the psalter, and what might happen to them if they took it up.

First of all, the psalms would expose the *pain of living*, and demand that they face squarely *every condition of human suffering*. Betrayal by friends (Ps. 54[55]), attacks of enemies (Ps. 55[56]), the unfairness of a world in which the wicked seem to get rewards, and the just, for all their devoted piety, seem afflicted with endless trouble (Ps. 72[73])—it is all *there*, in graphic detail. The ultimate issues of sickness and death receive particular attention:

Spent and utterly crushed,
I cry aloud in anguish of heart.
(Ps. 37[38]:9)

You have given me a short span of days;
my life is as nothing in your sight.
(Ps. 38[39]:6)

Take away your scourge from me.
I am crushed by the blows of your hand.

(Ps. 37[38]:11)

This sort of prayer *disorients life*. It threatens security. It hurts! We are frightened.

But it would not be enough merely to expose pain. More is needed. There must also be a *response* on the part of the believing heart. It must *do something* with this pain. It must present it to God!

“Hear my voice, O God, as I *complain!*” (Ps 63[64]:1). These words were frequently to be found on the lips of some of the greatest saints! Curses, complaints, and laments abound in the psalter. And this is good.

Taking up the psalter makes a bold statement to the world about the *relationship between God and the human family*. God cares about everything that is happening in our lives. He cares about all our experiences, especially those we find difficult and confusing. Since the psalter is his inspired word, it is clear that he expects to hear from us when we are fed up with the disappointment and suffering of life. *Even when we are fed up with God!*

Taking up the psalter makes a bold statement *about us*. When we sincerely join the prayer of our hearts to the words of our lips, we declare that we have finally decided *to stop burying pain deep within*, where neither God nor loved ones can reach to help us. We say that we are *ready to suffer through our pain* and, when the time comes, *to get over it and let it go*.

Taking up the psalter holds a promise. Disorientation is not forever:

When I think: “I have lost my foothold,”
your mercy, Lord, holds me up.
When cares increase in my heart,
your consolation calms my soul.
(Ps. 93[94]:18–19)

And that will be good.” ❖

We are *not alone* in our trouble; suffering, sickness, and death do not have the final say. Could this be the reason why so many Christians have clung tenaciously to the psalter for so many centuries? We *need desperately* to listen to the psalms, to read them and to sing them, alone and together. To scream, to delight, to weep, to pray them again and again until

My body and my heart faint for joy;
God is my possession forever.
(Ps. 72[73]:26)

I know now how I will answer my friends. I will tell them, “If you take up the psalter, prepare for an ordeal. Get ready to see the *mirror image* of your own life in the book your hands hold. Prepare to let the tears flow . . . and the sighs, and the groans.

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Reflections on the Encyclical *Mediator Dei* of Pope Pius XII: Eucharistic Worship

Knowledge of the nature of the Eucharist gives clarity to the manner in which we participate in it.

by Fr. Robert C. Pasley



In the second part of the Encyclical, *Mediator Dei*,¹ Pope Pius XII discusses Eucharistic worship, which is the central part of the liturgy of the church.

First the pope takes the opportunity to recall the nature of the Mass.

66. The mystery of the most Holy Eucharist which Christ, the High Priest instituted, and which He commands to be continually renewed in the Church by His ministers, is the culmination and center, as it were, of the Christian religion. We consider it opportune in speaking about the crowning act of the sacred liturgy, to delay for a little while and call your attention, Venerable Brethren, to this most important subject.

Notice he says, “Christ, the High Priest.” The Holy Eucharist is the ultimate sacrifice of thanksgiving, superseding and fulfilling all the sacrifices of the temple of Jerusalem.

¹Pope Pius XII, Encyclical, *Mediator Dei* (November 20, 1947) <<https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius12/p12media.htm>>.

67. Christ the Lord, “Eternal Priest according to the order of Melchisedech,”² “loving His own who were of the world,”³ “at the last supper, on the night He was betrayed, wishing to leave His beloved Spouse, the Church, a visible sacrifice such as the nature of men requires, that would re-present the bloody sacrifice offered once on the cross, and perpetuate its memory to the end of time, and whose salutary virtue might be applied in remitting those sins which we daily commit, . . . offered His body and blood under the species of bread and wine to God the Father, and under the same species allowed the apostles, whom he at that time constituted the priests of the New Testament, to partake thereof; commanding them and their successors in the priesthood to make the same offering.”⁴

²Ps. 109:4.

³John 13:1.

⁴Council of Trent, Sess. 22, c. 1.

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Christ is the eternal priest according to the order of Melchisedech. He leaves a visible sacrifice, not simply a meal, not a memorial service, not a community-centered celebration of self. This offering of the bread and wine, granted to the apostles, who were priests of the New Testament, is passed on to “their successors in the priesthood to make the same OFFERING.”

68. The august sacrifice of the altar, then, is no mere empty commemoration of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, **but a true and proper act of sacrifice**, whereby the High Priest by an unbloody immolation offers Himself a most acceptable victim to the Eternal Father, as He did upon the cross. “It is one and the same victim; the same person now offers it by the ministry of His priests, who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner of offering alone being different.”⁵

We stand mystically at Calvary with Jesus in his offering. We should be profoundly affected by this reality. It should make us reflect on our attitude as we prepare for Mass and attend Mass. The awesome severity and seriousness of what we are entering into should also really make us reflect upon the music we offer at Mass. Are little happy, vapid ditties, secular-style music, ever appropriate for such an act? Articles 67 and 68 must be shouted from the rooftops. So many are ignorant that this is the reality they are entering into in each and every Mass.

Next, the pope says:

⁵Emphasis added. *Ibid.*, c. 2.

69. The priest is the same Jesus Christ, whose sacred Person His minister represents. Now the minister, by reason of the sacerdotal consecration which he has received, is made like to the High Priest and possesses the power of performing actions in virtue of Christ’s very person.⁶ Wherefore in his priestly activity he in a certain manner “lends his tongue, and gives his hand” to Christ.⁷

He is the Lord’s instrument by means of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Jesus is the priest at every Mass. The human man is his instrument. Precisely because the priest is the instrument of Our Lord Jesus Christ he must comport himself with the utmost dignity. He should be clean and neat. He ought to wear the proper clerical attire of his office, and not slovenly and even ugly, casual clothes. The priest should take care that the vestments for Mass are beautiful and clean. His attitude in Mass must not be casual chattiness, but a silent seriousness as he prepares to image Christ in his most perfect sacrifice.

Pope Pius XII goes on. At Mass it is the same victim offered:

70. . . . Our divine Redeemer in His human nature with His true body and blood. The manner, however, in which Christ is offered is different. On the cross He completely offered Himself and all His sufferings to God, and the immolation of the victim was brought about by the bloody death, which He underwent of

⁶Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III.22.4.

⁷St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, 86:4.

His free will. But on the altar, by reason of the glorified state of His human nature, “death shall have no more dominion over Him,”⁸ and so the shedding of His blood is impossible; still, according to the plan of divine wisdom, the sacrifice of our Redeemer is shown forth in an admirable manner by external signs which are the symbols of His death. For by the “transubstantiation” of bread into the body of Christ and of wine into His blood, His body and blood are both really present: now the Eucharistic species under which He is present symbolize the actual separation of His body and blood. Thus the commemorative representation of His death, which actually took place on Calvary, is repeated in every sacrifice of the altar, seeing that Jesus Christ is symbolically shown by separate symbols to be in a state of victimhood.

This is his real presence—the miracle we must never forget, and that we must emphasize through our art, especially music.

GOD BECOMES PRESENT ON THE ALTAR. This is an overwhelming reality. The altar is literally his earthly throne. The awe of this fact should make us drop to our knees and repeat the words of Peter over and over, “Depart, oh Lord, for I am a sinful man.”⁹ Awe, reverence, dignified comportment, the most sacred and beautiful music, proper attire, the attitude of priest and people, the cleanliness and sacredness of the building are all of the greatest importance. Why? Because they are an external acknowledgement of God’s presence and His importance. They also

⁸Rom. 6:9.

⁹Luke 5:8.

importantly help to acclimate our bodies and lift our souls into a new mystical reality that is so very different to everything else in our life.

Continuing, the pope discusses how, at Mass, the ends are the same as in the sacrifice of Calvary:

a. First, to give glory to our heavenly father as an odor of sweetness that ascends to heaven:

71. . . . To perpetuate this praise, the members of the Mystical Body are united with their divine Head in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and with Him, together with the Angels and Archangels, they sing immortal praise to God¹⁰ and give all honor and glory to the Father Almighty.¹¹

Mass is not primarily about us. We don’t go to Mass to get something out of it. We go to Mass to GIVE—to give God adoration. The offering of incense at the beginning of a Solemn Mass is a symbol of the offering of the sweet-smelling sacrifice of Our Lord that we are offering as our solemn obligation to return to the Lord proper worship and praise. We come to sing his praise, we come to offer to God the perfect sacrifice he demands, we come to give him honor. We come to tell him that he is all that matters.

b. The second end is to give thanks to God.

Yes, it is still not about us. We owe him thanks for every breath we take. How often

¹⁰Cf. Roman Missal, Preface.

¹¹Cf. Ibid., Canon.

our thanks is so shallow and almost non-existent. So often we see the glass half empty instead of half full.

c. The third end is that of expiation, propitiation, and reconciliation.

Expiation: making reparation for guilt or wrongdoing.

Propitiation: making satisfaction or appeasing.

Reconciliation: bringing about forgiveness and unity.

It is still not about us. We need to make up for our sins and the sins of the world. We need to make satisfaction and repair the damage done to God's goodness. And we need to bring forgiveness and unity of Christ into the world.

73. . . . Certainly, no one was better fitted to make satisfaction to Almighty God for all the sins of men than was Christ. Therefore, He desired to be immolated upon the cross "as a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only but also for those of the whole world"¹² and likewise He daily offers Himself upon our altars for our redemption, that we may be rescued from eternal damnation and admitted into the company of the elect. This He does, not for us only who are in this mortal life, but also "for all who rest in Christ, who have gone before us with the sign of faith and repose in the sleep of peace;"¹³ for whether we live, or whether we die "still we are not separated from the one and only Christ."¹⁴

¹²John 2:2.

¹³Roman Missal, Canon.

¹⁴St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Book XIII, c. 19.

d. The fourth and final end is that of impetration—asking fervently.

Finally, our needs enter into the picture.

74. . . . Man, being the prodigal son, has made bad use of and dissipated the goods which he received from his heavenly Father. Accordingly, he has been reduced to the utmost poverty and to extreme degradation. However, Christ on the cross "offering prayers and supplications with a loud cry and tears, has been heard for His reverence."¹⁵ Likewise upon the altar He is our mediator with God in the same efficacious manner, so that we may be filled with every blessing and grace.

Christ is our Mediator, interceding to the Father for us. Oh, how much we need his grace and care.

The Holy Father continues:

76. Now the Apostle of the Gentiles proclaims the copious plenitude and the perfection of the sacrifice of the cross when he says that Christ, by one oblation, has perfected forever them that are sanctified.¹⁶

77. [This oblation, this eternal sacrifice,] does not immediately have its full effect; since Christ, after redeeming the world at the lavish cost of His own blood, still must come into complete possession of the souls of men. Wherefore, that the redemption and salvation of each person and of future generations unto the end

¹⁵Heb. 5:7.

¹⁶Cf. Heb. 10:14.

of time may be effectively accomplished, and be acceptable to God, it is necessary that men should individually come into vital contact with the sacrifice of the cross, so that the merits, which flow from it, should be imparted to them. In a certain sense it can be said that on Calvary Christ built a font of purification and salvation which He filled with the blood He shed; but if men do not bathe in it and there wash away the stains of their iniquities, they can never be purified and saved.

79. The august sacrifice of the altar is, as it were, the supreme instrument whereby the merits won by the divine Redeemer upon the cross are distributed to the faithful: . . . Its daily immolation reminds us that there is no salvation except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ¹⁷ and that God Himself wishes that there should be a continuation of this sacrifice “from the rising of the sun till the going down thereof,”¹⁸ so that there may be no cessation of the hymn of praise and thanksgiving which man owes to God, seeing that he required His help continually and has need of the blood of the Redeemer to remit sin which challenges God’s justice.

Participation

Having a full appreciation of the immense mystery and awesome reality of the Mass, each person must be aware that to participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice is a chief duty and supreme dignity. It should never be offered in an inert and negligent fashion, giving way to distractions and daydreaming.

¹⁷Cf. Gal. 6:14.

¹⁸Mal. 1:11.

The faithful must enter into the Mass with earnest concentration so that they may be united as closely as possible with the High Priest, Jesus Christ.

Participation in Mass—praying the Mass, not praying at Mass—is to be praised. This would most practically be accomplished with the use of hand missals, or by getting to Mass early to pray and not chat with neighbors—in other words, by preparing ahead of time.

Remember, prior to the twentieth century, there was very scant use of electricity. There were no microphones and experimentation on electric lights had just begun in the late nineteenth century. After the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, books were still rare and very expensive. And yet, for at least one thousand nine hundred years, people went to Mass, knew what was happening, and participated. Imagine a Pontifical Mass at the main altar of Saint Peter’s Basilica attended by three thousand people. The modern Mass would not have been possible with all of its active participation and the need for everything to be heard.

Pope Pius XII and the liturgical movement of the early twentieth century, however (and rightly so), wanted to take advantage of modern advances and the mass production of books. Hand missals for the laity were printed and encouraged. Pray the Mass and not pray at Mass became the motto. There was resistance to this idea.

He also encouraged the people to make responses and sing the responses at a *Missa Cantata*.

105. Therefore, they are to be praised who, with the idea of getting the Christian people to take part more easily and more fruitfully in the Mass, strive to

make them familiar with the “Roman Missal,” so that the faithful, united with the priest, may pray together in the very words and sentiments of the Church. They also are to be commended who strive to make the liturgy even in an external way a sacred act in which all who are present may share. This can be done in more than one way, when, for instance, the whole congregation, in accordance with the rules of the liturgy, either answer the priest in an orderly and fitting manner, or sing hymns suitable to the different parts of the Mass, or do both, or finally in high Masses when they answer the prayers of the minister of Jesus Christ and also sing the liturgical chant.

106. These methods of participation in the Mass are to be approved and recommended when they are in complete agreement with the precepts of the Church and the rubrics of the liturgy. Their chief aim is to foster and promote the people’s piety and intimate union with Christ and His visible minister and to arouse those internal sentiments and dispositions which should make our hearts become like to that of the High Priest of the New Testament. However, though they show also in an outward manner that the very nature of the sacrifice, as offered by the Mediator between God and men,¹⁹ must be regarded as the act of the whole Mystical Body of Christ, still they are by no means necessary to constitute it a public act or to give it a social character.

A dialogue Mass, usually Low Mass, would have people and priest respond to

¹⁹Cf. 1 Tim. 2:5.

certain parts of the Mass aloud. This could also happen at a Sung Mass, where people and priest responded one to the other. This was a big change in mentality. The whole concept of a verbal dialogue, either spoken or sung, between the priest and people was relatively new. Even to this day there are many who resist this idea in the ancient use of the Mass. Of course, just the opposite exists in the practice of the Missal of Paul VI, where everything has to be said and done. Pius XII issues warning in this regard, however.

106. . . . A “dialogue” Mass of this kind [Missa Cantata sung with the priest and people] cannot replace the High Mass [Solemn Mass with priest, deacon, subdeacon, clergy, and choir] which, as a matter of fact, though it should be offered with only the sacred ministers present, possesses its own special dignity due to the impressive character of its ritual and the magnificence of its ceremonies. The splendor and grandeur of a high Mass, however, are very much increased if, as the Church desires, the people are present in great numbers and with devotion.

Correcting Errors in Connection to the Mass

The pope then goes on to correct an erroneous theory that was floating about and is still alive and well today, namely, that the priesthood of the people and the ministerial priesthood are basically the same and that a Mass without the people would be invalid.

No.

The priesthood of the ordained priest and the priesthood of the people are complementary, but distinct. The lay people offer the Holy Eucharist with and through

the priest at the altar, but the priest alone has the power to offer the sacrifice and consecrate the bread and the wine. The priest receives a distinct sacrament which conforms him to Christ, the high priest.

The blurring of the distinction between the ministerial priesthood and the baptismal priesthood of the people is the source of many problems today. This warning was not heeded, and people are encouraged to do everything the priest does. (Isn't this really Presbyterianism?)

One example is the *orans* position. Only the priest should extend his hands during the praying of the "Our Father," but many lay people, sadly at the encouragement of priests, extend their hands with the priest.

82. The fact, however, that the Faithful participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice does not mean that they are also endowed with priestly power.

The people must unite with Christ as a victim, purifying their souls and reproducing the image of Jesus Christ. Their participation in the external rite should represent the internal immolation of their heart and body.

Another example of this error is that it is said by some that a private Mass of a priest by himself, even without a server, cannot be valid if the people are not present. The people would almost be seen as concelebrants. This is absolutely false.

It is preferred for a priest who says a private Mass to have a least one server, but in cases of necessity the priest may say Mass alone and it is totally valid. Why?

Because no Mass is ever technically "private." The whole church is present at every Mass:

- The Church Triumphant
- The Church Suffering
- The Church Militant

A Push for the Reception of Holy Communion and Eucharistic Devotions

118. But the desire of Mother Church does not stop here. For since by feasting upon the bread of angels we can by a "sacramental" communion, as we have already said, also become partakers of the sacrifice, she repeats the invitation to all her children individually, "Take and eat. . . Do this in memory of Me"²⁰ so that "we may continually experience within us the fruit of our redemption"²¹ in a more efficacious manner. For this reason the Council of Trent, reechoing, as it were, the invitation of Christ and His immaculate Spouse, has earnestly exhorted "the faithful when they attend Mass to communicate not only by a spiritual communion but also by a sacramental one, so that they may obtain more abundant fruit from this most holy sacrifice."²²

He Praises Eucharistic Devotions:

1. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle
2. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
3. Solemn Eucharistic processions
 - Corpus Christi
 - Forty Hours devotions
4. Extended adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for times of prayer

²⁰1 Cor. 11:24.

²¹Roman Missal, Collect for the Feast of Corpus Christi.

²²Council of Trent, session 22, c. 6.

He talks about the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

128. The divine Redeemer is ever repeating His pressing invitation, “Abide in Me.”²³ Now by the sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ remains in us and we in Him, and just as Christ, remaining in us, lives and works, so should we remain in Christ and live and work through Him.

129. The Eucharistic Food contains, as all are aware, “truly, really and substantially the Body and Blood together with soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁴ It is no wonder, then, that the Church, even from the beginning, adored the body of Christ under the appearance of bread; this is evident from the very rites of the august sacrifice, which prescribe that the sacred ministers should adore the most holy sacrament by genuflecting or by profoundly bowing their heads.

133. These exercises of piety have brought a wonderful increase in faith and supernatural life to the Church Militant upon earth and they are reechoed to a certain extent by the Church Triumphant in heaven which sings continually a hymn of praise to God and to the Lamb “who was slain.”²⁵ Wherefore, the Church not merely approves these pious practices, which in the course of centuries have spread everywhere throughout the world, but makes them her own, as it were, and

by her authority commends them.²⁶ They spring from the inspiration of the liturgy and if they are performed with due propriety and with faith and piety, as the liturgical rules of the Church require, they are undoubtedly of the very greatest assistance in living the life of the liturgy.

In summary:

1. The Mass is the august sacrifice of the altar. It is no mere empty commemoration of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, but a true and proper act of sacrifice, whereby the High Priest by an unbloody immolation offers himself a most acceptable victim to the Eternal Father, as he did upon the cross. It is a sacrificial banquet whereby we are invited to receive the Lamb of God.
2. The ends of each Mass are the same as in the sacrifice of Calvary:
 - a. First, to give glory to the heavenly Father, as an odor of sweetness that ascends to heaven.
 - b. The second end is to give thanks to God.
 - c. The third end is that of expiation, propitiation, and reconciliation.
Expiation: making reparation for guilt or wrongdoing.
Propitiation: make satisfaction or appease.
Reconciliation: to bring forgiveness and unity.
 - d. The fourth and final end is that of impetration (asking fervently)

²³John 15:4.

²⁴Council of Trent, session 13, c. 1.

²⁵Rev. 5:12, cf. 7:10.

²⁶Cf. Council of Trent, session 13, chapter 5 and c. 6.

3. Participate in the Mass by praying the Mass. This is to be praised. It is not forbidden to pray other things at Mass, but it must not be primary.

– In like manner we should sing the Mass, not just sing at Mass.

4. The priest offers the sacrifice; the people offer it through and with him.

– Private Masses are perfectly good.

5. Eucharistic Devotions outside of Mass are highly praised.

– Adoration

– Benediction

– Eucharistic processions

6. The Holy Eucharist is the real presence of Christ—body, blood, soul, and divinity.

– We must have reverence in attitude (talking, attire, genuflections, etc.).

– Be modest.

– Receive Holy Communion in a state of grace.

– Have proper respect. ❖

Repertory

A Marian Antiphon for Christmastide

A search for the original version of the text reveals insights into Marian piety.

by Dom Georges Frenaud, O.S.B.

Among the many chants which the liturgy of Christmas consecrates to Our Lady, the ancient antiphonaries give, following the antiphons of the Benedictus and the Magnificat, a whole series of little gems which, for the most part, praise the Mother of God and her wonderful virginity. Today these antiphons are no longer used during the Christmas Office. The *Processionale*, however, and the *Variae Preces* have preserved quite a few of them. One of these is the subject of this article, which seeks to determine its original text.

Here it is, as given at present in the *Monastic Processionale* of Solesmes:

Virgo Dei Genitrix,
quem totus non capit orbis,
in tua se clausit
viscera factus homo.
Vera fides Geniti
purgavit crimina mundi,
et tibi virginitas
inviolata manet.



Figure 1. Antiphon Virgo Dei Genitrix from the *Processionale Monasticum* (Solesmes: E Typographeo Sancti Petri, 1893), p. 272.

The ancient antiphonaries give, following the antiphons of the Benedictus and the Magnificat, a whole series of little gems which, for the most part, praise the Mother of God.

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148. — Virgo Dei Genitrix.

1. **V**irgo Dé-i gé-nitrix,* quem tó-tus non cá-pit ór-bis,
 in tú-a se cláu-sit ví-sce-ra fá-ctus hó-mo Vé-ra fí-des
 Gé-ni-ti purgá-vit crí-mi-na mún-di, et tibi virgí-ni-
 tas inví-o-lá-ta má-net.

Figure 2. Antiphon Virgo Dei Genitrix from Cantus Selecti ad Benedictionem Ss.mi Sacramenti (Tournai: Desclée, 1957), pp. 181–2.

We find the same text, in whole or in part, in the various liturgical books in five different forms:

1. As an antiphon at Christmas, usually in the group added after the antiphon *Hodie Christus natus est* at the Magnificat of Second Vespers.

2. As a verse of a responsory of Matins, now dropped from use, which used to be sung at the Second or Third Nocturn at Christmas. Here is the complete text of this fine piece which wonderfully commemorates the triumphant royalty of Christ:

R. Continet in gremio cælum terram-
 que Regentem Virgo Dei Genitrix
 proceres comitantur Herilem, per
 quos orbis ovans Christo sub Prin-
 cipe pollet.

V. Virgo Dei Genitrix, Quem totes non
 capit orbis in tua se clausit viscera
 factus homo.

Continet in gremio cælum terram
 que regentem virgo dei genitrix proceres comi-
 tantur herilem per quos orbis ovans christo sub
 principe pollet. Virgo dei genitrix que
 totus non capit orbis in tua se clausit viscera factus ho-
 mo. Per quos Rescens mater virgo in riu

Figure 3. Responsory Continet in Gremio, from an antiphonary for Franciscan use from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, Fribourg, Switzerland, f. 38r <<https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/fcc/0002/38r>>.

3. The same holds true for the gradual *Benedicta et venerabilis es* which is still used today for the *Missa de Beata per annum*. Here, too, the strophe *Virgo Dei Genitrix* forms the verse.

Grad. 4. **B**e-ne-dicta * et ve-ne-rá-bi-lis es, Virgo
 Ma-ri-a : quae si-ne tactu pudó-ris in-
 vén-ta es ma-ter Salva-tó-
 ris. V. Vir-go De-i
 Gé-ni-trix, quem to-tus non ca-pit ór-
 bis, in tu-a se clau-sit ví-sce-ra * fa-ctus
 hó-mo.

Figure 4. Gradual Benedicta et venerabilis es from Graduale Romanum (New York: Desclée, 1961), p. [76].

4. On the other hand, the second part of the text, *Vera fides Geniti*, was formerly used as a communion antiphon on certain feasts of the Blessed Virgin, although this practice does not seem to have been general.



Figure 5. Communion *Vera fides Geniti* from *Graduale Sancti Victoris cum notis* (Paris: Abbaye Saint-Victor, 1270–1297), f. 133r.

5. Finally, the complete text of the antiphon forms the two first verses of a charming little Marian hymn which manuscripts of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries sometimes ascribe to Lauds of the Assumption. To the two verses of the antiphon, the hymn adds a third (*Te matrem*) and a doxology (*Gloria magna Patri*).

*We shall see that the
antiphon itself is
found in much earlier
sources.*

Hymn.
2.
V

Irgo, De-i Gé-nitrix, * quem to-tus non ca-pit or-
bis, In tu-a se clausit visce-ra factus homo. 2. Ve-ra fi-des
Gé-ni-ti purgá-vit crimi-na mundi, Et ti-bi virgí-ni-tas
invi-o-lá-ta manet. 3. Te matrem pi-e-tá-tis, opem te clá-
mi-tat orbis : Subvé-ni-as fámu-lis, o bene-dicta, tu-is.
4. Gló-ri-a magna Patri, compar sit gló-ri-a Na-to, Spi-ri-
tu-i Sancto, gló-ri-a magna De-o. A-men.

Figure 6. Hymn *Virgo Dei Genitrix*, as found in *Cantus Selecti ad Benedictionem Ss.mi Sacramenti* (Tournai: Desclée, 1957), p. 181.

This final use of the *Virgo Dei Genitrix* shows us that we have here a metrical antiphon. There is nothing to indicate, however, that the text would have been originally part of a hymn to Our Lady. The hymn which does give it to us does not appear in the manuscripts until toward the end of the eleventh century. We shall see that the antiphon itself is found in much earlier sources.

The communion *Vera fides Geniti* is used for the Mass of September 8 in a manuscript of Lucca (No. 606), probably written at the end of the eleventh century. We know of no more ancient source, and none again until the thirteenth century.

The gradual *Benedicta et venerabilis* does not itself go back further than the eleventh century. Moreover, the part of

our text which it uses as a verse is easy to restore with certainty. It cannot, therefore, help us to restore the second part of the antiphon.

The responsory *Continet in gremio* is certainly more ancient. We find it as early as the end of the ninth century in the *Liber Responsorialis* of Compeigne. It is among the seventeen responsories that this manuscript assigns to the third Nocturn of Christmas. Here, too, the verse contains only the first part of the antiphon text. We should also say that other manuscripts of sufficient antiquity give this responsory a completely different verse. We cannot, then, depend on this use of the text *Virgo Dei Genitrix* to establish the composition as going back to an origin in the Night Office of Christmas.

It seems clear that the original form of this text is the antiphon itself. It is found in the three oldest antiphonaries for the office which we know of at present: the *Liber Responsorialis* of Compeigne, the *Hartker Monastic Antiphonary* (St. Gall 390) and the *Antiphonary of St. Eloi of Noyon* (a private collection, without page numbers, for Christmas Vespers). But the writings of St. Pascasus Radbert provide us with two other very valuable points of information which make it possible to place its origin further back. It is, in fact, to the Abbot of Corbie that we now attribute the first of the fourteen Marian sermons published in Migne's *Latin Patrology* as appendix to the works of St. Hildefonse of Toledo. This sermon on the Assumption reproduces a passage from the *Virgo Dei Genitrix*. Here are the lines containing the excerpt:

Virgo siquidem ante partum, virgo in partu et virgo post partum: Quem totus

itaque non capit orbis in ejus se clausit viscera Deus factus homo (Migne, XCVI, 243 A).

This undeniable borrowing proves that St. Pascasus must have known our text. It makes it possible, moreover, to see a second illustration which is made in the famous letter *Cogitis me* on the Assumption. An innocent literary blunder attributed this writing to St. Jerome during the whole of the Middle Ages, but Dom Lambot has clearly shown that it was by the Abbot of Corbie. Among the many allusions or borrowings which this letter makes from the Marian texts, we find these lines:

Quæ (Virgo), ut diximus, non temere per Christi gratiam super choros Angelorum exaltata devotissime hodie prædicatur: quia præcessit eam Dominus et Salvator noster ex ea vera fide Genitus ad cælestia (Migne, XXX, 129 BC).

The words *vera fide Genitus* are found, as we shall see, in a very ancient version of our antiphon. Since St. Pascasus knew of it, and since he is usually very generous by way of liturgical citations, it seems certain that we have in this letter *Cogitis me* a reference to the second part of our *Virgo Dei Genitrix*.

Now both the Sermon and the letter are youthful works of St. Pascasus.¹ These writings were composed about the year 830. We can, therefore, without risk of error, attribute the antiphon *Virgo Dei Genitrix* to the beginning of the ninth century. It does not, however, seem to have belonged to the

¹See Henrie Peltier, *Pascase Radbert, Abbe de Corbie* (Amiens: L.-H. Duthoi, 1938), pp. 111–13.

original texts of the Christmas Office. The more ancient Beneventan manuscripts do not give it, and it is not found in the Roman antiphonaries of the twelfth century, although these seem to have preserved certain archaic aspects of the original Roman liturgy. We may assume some evidence in favor of a Gallic origin at the beginning of the Carolingian “renaissance.” Documents are lacking, however, for establishing this as certain. It is obvious, on the other hand, that by the eleventh century the antiphon was already in use throughout the Christian world (Spain, Italy, France, Germany, and possibly England).

What was, in the beginning, the exact text of this antiphon? For the first part all sources agree (a single manuscript replaces *orbis* with *mundus*, which does not alter the sense). The present text is, therefore, certainly the original.

It is not the same for the second part of the antiphon, which is found mainly with two variations. One of them is of no interest except for future classification of the manuscripts; it deals with the last word of the antiphon, *manet*, which sometimes becomes *permanet*, and sometimes *permansit*. The other variant, on the contrary, changes the very meaning of the passage and should be given full consideration. The expression *Vera fides geniti* of the beginning of the second part is often replaced in some versions by *Vera fide genitus*, or somewhat more rarely by *Vera fides genitus*. We find, too, for the same passage, other variants in single cases: *Vera fides genitris*, *Vera quidem geniti*, *Vera fide geniti*. One manuscript of Norcia had originally *Vere quidem genitus*, which a second hand has corrected to *Vere fides geniti*. Which, then, is the authentic version?

If we use each of the three main variants

in their context, (1) *Vera fides geniti*, (2) *Vera fide genitus*, and (3) *Vera fides genitus*, we can immediately make certain observations.

Variant 3 does not make acceptable sense. It would have to be translated thus: “True faith, the Begotten-One has washed away the crimes of the world.” This elliptic style, however, was rarely used in the Middle Ages. It is much more likely, if not certain, that this is a case of a copyist’s error, placing *fides* where *fide* should have been. We shall see, furthermore, that this error, followed at St. Gall, was widespread only in the manuscripts descended from that school.

Variant 1 was used in a more widespread fashion, and forms the version we have at present as standard. It is not useful, however, without certain serious drawbacks. We cannot, indeed, translate it as “The true faith of the Begotten-One,” that is, of Christ. Patristic tradition has never attributed faith to Christ. The only possible meaning would be “The true faith in him who has been begotten to wash away the sins of the world,” or possibly, “The true faith as taught by him who is begotten.” According to St. Paul (Rom. 3:26), St. Augustine speaks thus several times of *fides Christi* in the sense of *fides in Christum*. There remains, however, a serious objection to this reading and this interpretation. It comes from the following words: *purgavit crimina mundi*. Is it really our faith which washes away the sins of the world?

Properly speaking, it is Christ, the Begotten-One himself who brings about this universal purification: *Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi*. Our personal faith purifies only our individual faults. It achieves only our subjective redemption. Yet, if we do not make this faith a source or effective

cause, but rather a formal cause, the phrase maintains some meaning, difficult no doubt, but acceptable. Faith in Christ, to the measure that it is developed, dispels the shadows of sin. Thus light destroys darkness. And this is also the sense which we must at present understand when we sing either the antiphon or the hymn *Virgo Dei Genitrix*. Nevertheless, taken thus, this strophe seems stiff and wooden. The piece is completely Marian; the phrase *Vera fides geniti* would really have no Marian significance (since it deals with our own faith); it would, moreover, have no link with the ending of the strophe: *et tibi virginitas inviolata manet*.

Everything seems normal, however, with variant 2: *Vera fide Genitus*. The meaning seems very clear: Christ, begotten through the true faith of Mary, has washed away the sins of the world, and, because of this very fact of its accomplishment by faith, the virginity of the Mother of God has remained intact. There is a close connection between the two parts of the strophe, and the first words evoke a thought which is both very rich and completely traditional.

It is at just this point, however, that paleographers would stop us. In a conflict between two versions, they usually give preference to the more difficult reading, since that is the one which would have had more opportunities to be corrected. In this case, no corrector would have thought of changing this *vera fide genitus*, which is quite clear, into *vera fides geniti*, which is much less so. The opposite would seem more likely. Thus from the paleographer's point of view, the more difficult reading would be the older one.

We must, therefore, have recourse to a chronological comparison of the evidence. Before making it, however, we can note that

in this case variant 3 from the manuscripts of Noyon and St. Gall offers us another explanation, which is also very logical, of the divergencies which we have observed. Supposing that the original text was *Vera fide genitus*, we see that the simple error of a scribe, involuntary and mechanical, could have changed it to *vera fides genitus*, which is nearly incomprehensible. It could well have been this scribe's error, then, which drew the attention of later copyists. Not being aware of the original reading, they may have thought that they were right in changing the error from *genitus* to *geniti*, which, in fact, does improve the clarity of the text somewhat. Thus we could have passed, logically enough, from *vera fide genitus* to *vera fides geniti* in two simple steps of a double error.

We were able to examine the manuscript sources.² We used the photographic copies of manuscripts which are kept in the Salle de Paléographie at Solesmes. We have been able to add to these the letter *Cogitis me* of St. Pascasus Radbert, mentioned above, and the homily *Congrue satis* of St. Odilon of Cluny on the Gospel of the Assumption, which also borrows from our antiphon the expression *vera fide genitus* (Migne, P.L., XCVI, 263 A).

The ultimate scope of these manuscripts will be realized only by their classification into "family" groups, but for the time being a simple chronological classification would seem to authorize a solid decision in favor of the reading *Vera fide Genitus*. This reading is given in the only two sources presently known to be from the ninth century.

²For students of paleography who may wish to examine this list of sources in detail, we note here that it is published in the *Revue Grégorienne*, 1952, no. 6 (November-December), 206.

The manuscripts of the tenth century also favor it. The readings in the two which disagree have no serious basis, as they probably represent a copyist's error which goes back to an older common source of both. At this time there is no trace of the reading *Vera fides geniti*. In the eleventh century most of the manuscripts continue to favor the original reading of the ninth century. Two manuscripts reproduce the error *vera fides genitis*. The reading *vera fides geniti* also now appears for the first time in four sources.

The manuscripts of the twelfth century are about equally divided between the old ninth century reading and the new correction *vera fides geniti*. They occur in Italy, Germany, and France.

A few explorations of the manuscripts of the thirteenth century show the persistence of the two more common readings, the oldest and the newest, but the latter, *vera fides geniti*, tends to become more and more common. It is the only reading used in the communion antiphons, and it seems to have been chosen at the outset for the Hymn *Virgo Dei Genitrix*, which goes back to the end of the eleventh century at the earliest.

However summary this examination of manuscript resources may be, it gives a very clear and strong presumption in favor of the leading *vera fide genitus*. This reading, moreover, does not merely represent a restoration of an authentic text. We also make a real gain in the doctrinal value of the text, and find it to be much more in conformity with the theological tradition of the high Middle Ages. In the summary of our little inquiry, this aspect of the problem deserves to be given a brief separate consideration.

Our antiphon is a Christmas chant as

well as a Marian chant. It combines two qualities which are apparently contrary, but which are characteristic of the ancient Roman liturgy. It is both conservative and allusive. The first strophe returns us to that very atmosphere of Marian devotion which characterized the first seven centuries of the Christian era. We honor in Mary both her perpetual virginity and her divine motherhood. The three first words tell the whole story. The development which follows only serves to convey the admiration elicited by those two opposing and apparently irreconcilable aspects of the mystery: a God who infinitely transcends all the limits of creation, and a child who is yet clasped to the maternal bosom. This is a basically lyric theme which leaves the soul suspended before the incomprehensible. The antithesis is very powerfully underscored, and every word enhances it. This is a pure contemplation of the church in ecstasy before the ineffable miracle. We find a similar passage in the beautiful responsory *Sancta et Immaculata*:

Quia quem cæli capere non poterant, tuo
gremio contulisti.

The second strophe is somewhat more human in aspect. Here, too, the first three words seem to be the key. This is why it is so important to establish their original form. This *fide Genitus* is a parallel to the *verbo concepit* which the liturgy attributes to Mary in several other chants of Christmas. Thus it forms an echo of the many-times-repeated words of St. Augustine: "Non enim Virgo libidine, sed fide concepit."³ The *vera fides*

³St. Augustine, Sermo LXIX, *de Verbis Domini*, n.X, c.3, n.4, Migne, P.L., XXXVIII, 442.

is the living faith, that which blossoms into true charity. This also brought the great Bishop of Hippo to say: “Propter cujus sanctum in Virginis utero conceptionem, non concupiscentia carnis urente factam, sed fidei charitate fervente, ideo dicitur natus de Spiritu Sancto et de Maria Virgine.”⁴

We cannot refrain, either, from citing again Sermon CXCVI (XIII in Natali Domini) which inspired the Middle Ages to one of the most beautiful Marian sequences: “Angelus nuntiat, Virgo audit, credit et concepit. Fides in mente, Christus in ventre.”⁵ If, then, the Incarnation is, on the part of God, a work of grace and mercy, it is, from man’s point of view, the fruit of the living faith of the Virgin Mary. The universal work of salvation began to be accomplished in that act of faith. By it Mary becomes the perfect model of the church, which also ceaselessly engenders Christ through its faith. She is also the perfect model of every Christian soul, which continues, through this same living faith, to give birth to Christ within itself and around it. Who would fail to see in this an echo and wonderful development of the greeting which Elizabeth gave her cousin: “Beata quæ credidisti, perficientur in te quæ dicta sunt tibi a Domino”?

The rest of the antiphon, however, lengthens our perspective. Since Mary’s faith engendered the Savior, she has, through him, achieved the redemption of the world. *Vera fide Genitus purgavit crimina mundi*. Moreover, this miraculous conception through faith alone is, for the

Mother of God, a guarantee of her virginity. True faith is both chaste and fruitful. When it attacks sin, it purifies. When it lives in a virgin soul, it produces this motherhood without jeopardizing this virginity. Our *vera fide Genitus* thus explains why, in Mary, virginity remains inviolate.

In these few lines of remarkable seriousness, liturgical prayer has gathered together the essence of Marian piety as it was known to the first centuries of the Christian era: the faith of a virgin mother, the perfect ideal of what the entire church and each of its members should attain. We cannot help but hope that one day soon this beautiful text will be restored to an honored place in the public celebration of the mystery of Christmas, which is also, in its way, the mystery of Mary. ❖

⁴St. Augustine, Sermon CCXIV, n.6, Migne, *loc. cit.*, 1069.

⁵St. Augustine, Sermon CXCVI, Migne, P.L., XXXVIII, 1019.

A Succinct Mass by Johann Stadlmayr

This charming setting is well-suited for parish choirs which have more female than male voices.

by Charles Weaver



ohann Stadlmayr (d. 1648) began publishing Catholic liturgical music in 1596, marking the beginning of a long and prolific career. He served first (from 1603) in the chapel of the Archbishop of Salzburg and was later chapel master to the Habsburg Archdukes of Innsbruck, where he lived until the end of his life. Stadlmayr wrote a wide variety of music, frequently employing the newly emerging styles of polychoral effects and concerted music for instruments and voices together. Consequently, most of his Mass settings are for six, eight, ten, twelve, or fourteen voices, and they are designed to be sung together with brass instruments. His musical style is similar to that of his more famous contemporary Michael Praetorius.

In contrast to this grand music, Stadlmayr published one collection of short mass settings (*missæ breves*) for four and five voices in 1641. Could this have been a response to the economic necessity caused by the hardship of the Thirty Years' War? The five-voice mass, presented here in a new edition, is the final mass of this collec-

tion. The musical style is simple, with very few syllables set to more than one note. The only musical effects are alternations of duets with the full choir, and a recurring change to triple meter, usually coupled with a rising harmonic sequence. This charming Mass is among the shortest settings I know, with some of the movements taking less time in performance than some of the plainchant settings of the Kyriale.

Performing Forces

The 1641 collection includes a *basso continuo* part, which almost entirely follows the lowest sounding voice. Choirs should feel free to sing this mass *a cappella* or with accompaniment by the organ as the needs of the singers and the liturgical situation require. In the interest of efficient use of space, I have not printed the *basso continuo* part on its own line; an organist should feel free to accompany by doubling the lower voices. In the few instances where the original *basso continuo* part featured independent notes, I have printed these in small notes in the vocal bass part. The first example of this is in the Kyrie, m. 7. Choirs performing a

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cappella should feel free to omit these parts entirely or to sing them with the text underlaid as they see fit.

The scoring of the vocal parts is for two soprano parts, one alto, one tenor, and one bass. The range of the alto part is narrow enough that it should be equally comfortable for female altos or for high male voices. This is an unusual feature in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century masses, whose vocal ranges are often difficult to adapt to the needs of modern choirs. Together with the charming style and brevity, this mass becomes a good choice for a parish choir with a high proportion of female voices.

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Rhythm and Tempo

The duple sections are given a mensuration sign of *tempus imperfectum*, or what we now call common time. In these sections, the note values of syllables are mostly quarters, eighths, and halves. Occasionally, syllables are set on a single sixteenth note following a dotted eighth. It seems best, as a result, to beat quarter notes. As with much syllabic music of this style, special care should be

taken with weak final syllables that fall on downbeats at the ends of phrases. Most of us are tempted to strike these hard and take a quick catch breath before the next phrase, but it is better to round the phrase off nicely, with attention to the accentuation of the words. Beating quarter notes also mitigates this problem.

The exception to my suggestion of quarter-note conducting is in the first section of the Sanctus, where the note values are considerably longer. It can work well in this movement to beat half notes. There is a nice effect at the opening of this movement caused by the temporal displacement of the voices. If all the voices cut off a quarter note from each iteration of the word “sanctus” this allows the tenors to pop out of the texture. Given the slower values, some directors may wish to take this section faster, which is also helped by the different conducting pattern.

The triple sections are written in a *tripla* proportion (a time signature of 3/1). This raises the question of the proper relationship (if any) between the tempo of the duple and triple sections. Given the rather continuous speech rhythm of this mass, I find that I like to keep the pulse going, so that the quarter note of the duple sections becomes the whole note of the triple sections. Technically, this is a *quadrupla* proportion, and it is not generally associated with the theory of triple-meter sections. But it has the nice practical effect of keeping the pace of the text even, since the eighth notes become the half notes. Done in this way, the meter contrast is one of grouping rather than one of complicated proportions. If the first section of the Sanctus is conducted in two, it is the half note and not the quarter note that supplies the pulse for the triple sections. I find

these transitions to the “Osanna” sections to be the most difficult meter changes. Other directors may prefer to find other solutions.

Melody and Harmony

Certain aspects of the harmony sound relatively modern in comparison to most *stile antico* music. Voices are often called on to sing difficult intervals: diminished fifths (tenor, Gloria, m. 27); augmented octaves (bass, Gloria, m. 36); and chromatic semitones (soprano 1, Credo, m. 17). It may be useful to spend some rehearsal time on these sections. These chromatic semitones often form part of a rising sequence in the triple sections. This is usually paired with a text whose rhetoric builds to a grammatically accented word—“Jesu Christe” in the

Gloria, “Deo vero” and “Ecclesiam” in the Credo. These should probably form high points of dynamic shapes.

In all the other section, the dynamic shapes should be dictated by the sense of the words and the text setting, following the standard rhetorical shape of the Mass Ordinary: softer beginning for “Qui tollis” in the Gloria; renewed energy for “Cum Sancto Spiritu;” dynamic contrast for the contrast of death and life in the Credo. Shadings of tempo and dynamics may be coordinated as well. The “Et incarnatus est” section of the Credo is in much the same harmonic language as the rest of the mass, but its note values are longer. It may be appropriate to respond to this with a softer dynamic and with a slight slackening of the tempo. ♦

Missa a 5

JOHANN STADLMAYR

1. Kyrie

Cantus 1
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,

Cantus 2
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,

Altus
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,

Tenor
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,

Bassus
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,

7
Chri - ste e - lei - son, Chri - ste e - lei - son, Chri - ste e - lei - son,

Chri - ste e - lei - son, Chri - ste e - lei - son, Chri - ste e - lei - son,

Chri - ste e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e -

Basso continuo
Chri - ste e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e -

Chri - ste e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e -

11
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

- lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

- lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

- lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, e - lei - son.

2. Gloria

Cantus 1
Et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - næ vo - lun - ta - tis.

Cantus 2
Et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - næ vo - lun - ta - tis.

Altus
Et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - næ vo - lun - ta - tis. Lau - da - mus

Tenor
Et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - næ vo - lun - ta - tis. Lau - da - mus

Bassus
Et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - næ vo - lun - ta - tis.

6
Be - ne - di - ci - mus te. A - do - ra - mus te. Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te. Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus

Be - ne - di - ci - mus te. A - do - ra - mus te. Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te. Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus

te. Be - ne - di - ci - mus te. Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te. Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus

te. Be - ne - di - ci - mus te. Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te. Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus

Be - ne - di - ci - mus te. Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te. Gra - ti - as a - gi - mus

11
ti - - bi prop - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am.

ti - - bi prop - - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am.

ti - - bi prop - - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am. Do - mi - ne

ti - bi prop - - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am, glo - ri - am tu - am. Do - mi - ne

ti - - bi prop - - ter ma - gnam glo - ri - am tu - am.

16

De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens. Do - mi - ne fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te, Ie -
 om - ni - po - tens. Do - mi - ne fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te, Ie -
 De - us rex cœ - le - stis, De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens. Ie -
 De - us rex cœ - le - stis, De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens. Ie -
 De - us Pa - ter om - ni - po - tens. Ie -

21

- su Chri - ste. fi - li - us Pa - tris.
 - su Chri - ste. fi - li - us Pa - tris. Qui tol - lis pec -
 - su Chri - ste. fi - li - us Pa - tris. Qui tol - lis pec -
 - su Chri - ste. Do - mi - ne De - us, a - gnus De - i, fi - li - us Pa - tris. Qui tol - lis pec -
 - su Chri - ste. Do - mi - ne De - us, a - gnus De - i, fi - li - us Pa - tris.

26

mi - - se - re - re no - - bis. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, su -
 ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re no - - bis. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di.
 ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re no - bis. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, su - sci -
 ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re no - - bis. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, su - sci -
 Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di su - sci -

31

- sci - pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Qui se - des ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris, mi - se - re - re

Qui se - des ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris.

- pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Qui se - des ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris, mi - se - re - re

- pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Qui se - des ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris.

- pe de - pre - ca - ti - o - nem no - stram. Qui se - des ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris, mi - se - re - re

36

no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus san - ctus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus, tu so - lus al -

Quo - ni - am tu so - lus san - ctus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus, tu so - lus al -

no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus san - ctus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus, tu so - lus al -

Quo - ni - am tu so - lus san - ctus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus, tu so - lus al -

no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus san - ctus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus, tu so - lus al -

43

- tis - si - mus, Ie - su Chri - ste. Cum san - cto spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a,

- tis - si - mus, Ie - su Chri - ste. Cum san - cto spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a,

- tis - si - mus, Ie - su Chri - ste. in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a, in

- tis - si - mus, Ie - su Chri - ste. Cum san - cto spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a, in glo - ri - a, in

- tis - si - mus, Ie - su Chri - ste. Cum san - cto spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a, in

48

in glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris. A-men, a-men.

in glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris. A-men, a-men.

glo-ri-a, in glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris. A-men, a-men.

glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris. A-men, a-men.

glo-ri-a De-i Pa-tris. A-men, a-men.

3. Credo

Cantus 1

Cantus 2

Altus

Tenor

Bassus

Pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, fa-cto-rem cœ-li et ter-ræ, vi-si-bi-li-um

Pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, fa-cto-rem cœ-li et ter-ræ, vi-si-bi-li-um

Pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, fa-cto-rem cœ-li et ter-ræ, vi-si-bi-li-um

Pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, fa-cto-rem cœ-li et ter-ræ, vi-si-bi-li-um

Pa-trem om-ni-po-ten-tem, fa-cto-rem cœ-li et ter-ræ, vi-si-bi-li-um

5

om-ni-um et in-vi-si-bi-li-um. Et in u-num Do-mi-num Je-sum Chri-stum, Fi-li-um

om-ni-um et in-vi-si-bi-li-um. Et in u-num Do-mi-num Je-sum Chri-stum, Fi-li-um

om-ni-um et in-vi-si-bi-li-um. Fi-li-um

om-ni-um et in-vi-si-bi-li-um.

om-ni-um et in-vi-si-bi-li-um.

10

De - i u - ni - ge - ni - tum.
 De - i u - ni - ge - ni - tum.
 De - i u - ni - ge - ni - tum. Et ex Pa - tre na - tum an - te om - ni - a sæ - cu - la.
 Et ex Pa - tre na - tum an - te om - ni - a sæ - cu - la.
 Et ex Pa - tre na - tum an - te om - ni - a sæ - cu - la.

15

De - um de De - o, lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de De - o ve -
 De - um de De - o, lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de De - o ve -
 De - um de De - o, lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de De - o ve -
 De - um de De - o, lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de De - o ve -
 De - um de De - o, lu - men de lu - mi - ne, De - um ve - rum de De - o ve -

23

-ro, ge - ni - tum non fa - ctum, con - sub stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri: per quem om - ni - a
 -ro, ge - ni - tum non fa - ctum, con - sub stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri: per quem om - ni - a
 -ro, Con - sub stan - ti - a - lem Pa - tri: per quem om - ni - a fa -
 -ro, ge - ni - tum non fa - ctum. per quem om - ni - a
 -ro, per quem om - ni - a

27

fa - cta sunt. Qui prop - ter nos ho - mi - nes et prop - ter no - stram sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de coe - lis.

fa - cta sunt. Qui prop - ter nos ho - mi - nes et prop - ter no - stram sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de coe - lis.

- cta sunt. Qui prop - ter nos ho - mi - nes et prop - ter no - stram sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de coe - lis.

fa - cta sunt. Qui prop - ter nos ho - mi - nes et prop - ter no - stram sa - lu - tem de - scen - dit de coe - lis.

fa - cta sunt.

32

Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne;

Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne;

Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne;

Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne;

Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu san - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne;

39

Et ho - mo fa - ctus est.

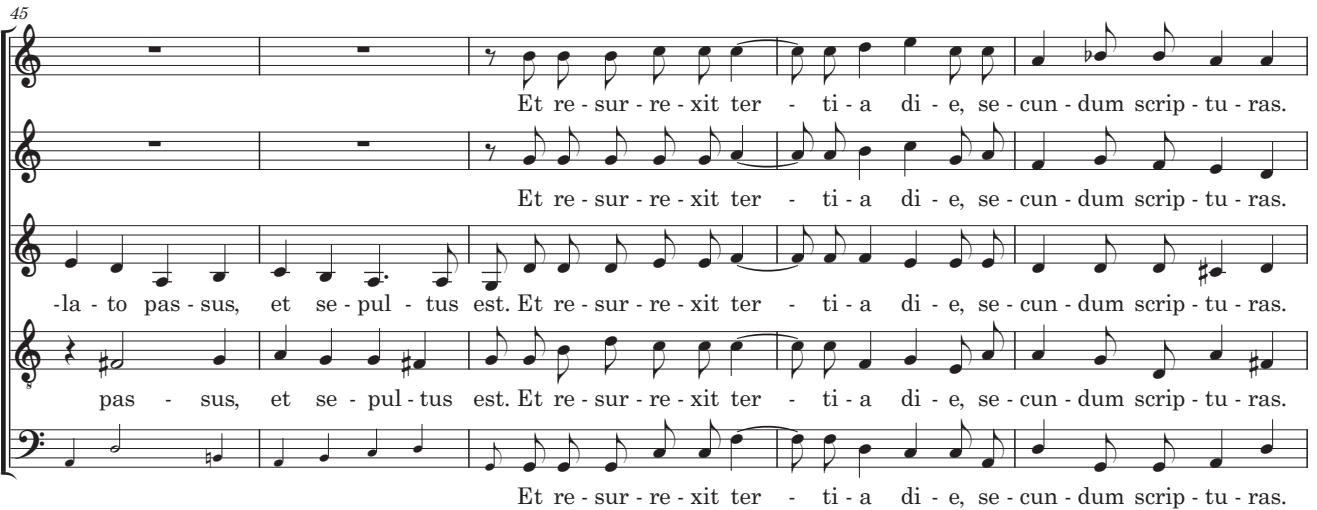
Et ho - mo fa - ctus est.

Et ho - mo fa - ctus est. Cru - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis: sub Pon - ti - o Pi -

Et ho - mo fa - ctus est. Cru - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis:

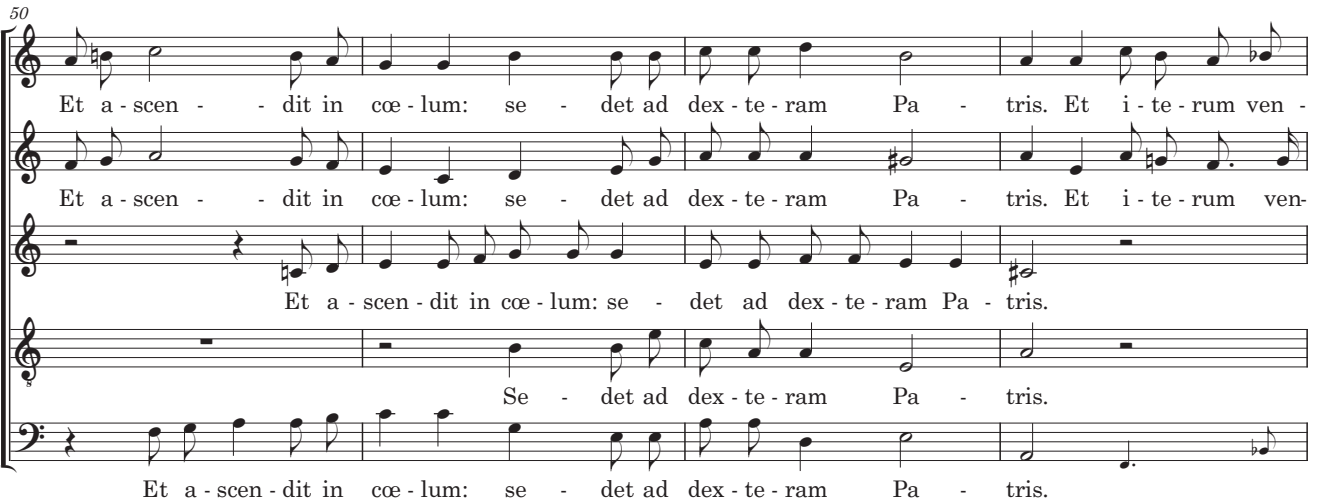
Et ho - mo fa - ctus est.

45



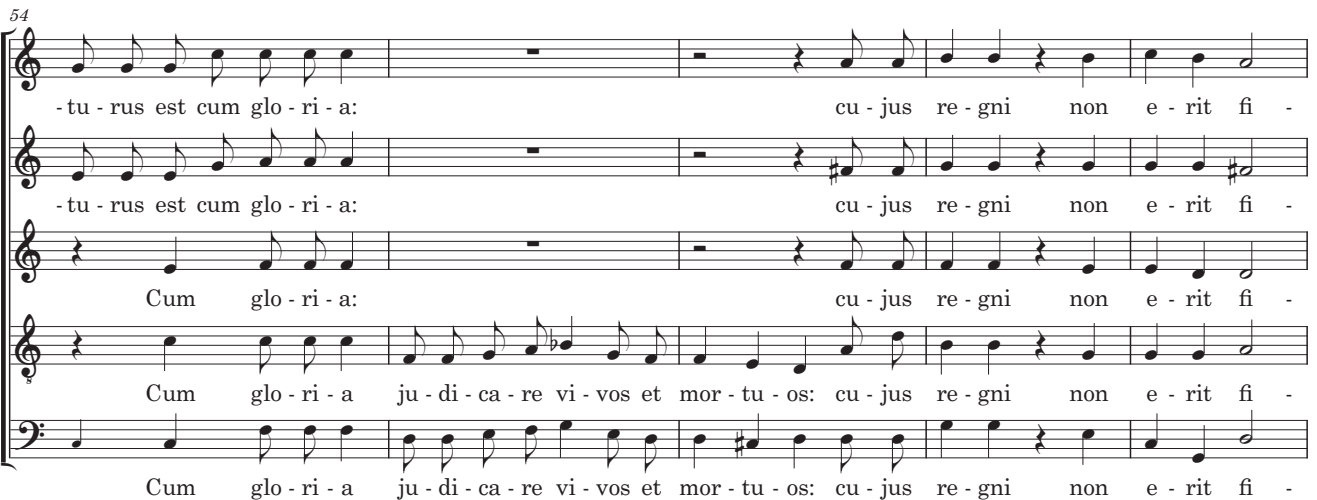
Et re-sur-re-xit ter - ti - a di - e, se - cun - dum scrip - tu - ras.
Et re-sur-re-xit ter - ti - a di - e, se - cun - dum scrip - tu - ras.
-la - to pas - sus, et se - pul - tus est. Et re-sur-re-xit ter - ti - a di - e, se - cun - dum scrip - tu - ras.
pas - sus, et se - pul - tus est. Et re-sur-re-xit ter - ti - a di - e, se - cun - dum scrip - tu - ras.
Et re-sur-re-xit ter - ti - a di - e, se - cun - dum scrip - tu - ras.

50



Et a-scen - dit in cœ - lum: se - det ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris. Et i - te - rum ven -
Et a-scen - dit in cœ - lum: se - det ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris. Et i - te - rum ven -
Et a - scen - dit in cœ - lum: se - det ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris.
Se - det ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris.
Et a - scen - dit in cœ - lum: se - det ad dex - te - ram Pa - tris.

54



-tu - rus est cum glo - ri - a: cu - jus re - gni non e - rit fi -
-tu - rus est cum glo - ri - a: cu - jus re - gni non e - rit fi -
Cum glo - ri - a: cu - jus re - gni non e - rit fi -
Cum glo - ri - a ju - di - ca - re vi - vos et mor - tu - os: cu - jus re - gni non e - rit fi -
Cum glo - ri - a ju - di - ca - re vi - vos et mor - tu - os: cu - jus re - gni non e - rit fi -

59

- nis. Et in Spi - ri - tum san - ctum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre

- nis. Et in Spi - ri - tum san - ctum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem:

- nis. Et in Spi - ri - tum san - ctum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem: qui ex Pa - tre

- nis. Et in Spi - ri - tum san - ctum, Do - mi - num et vi - vi - fi - can - tem:

- nis. Qui ex Pa - tre

63

Fi - li - o - que pro - ce - dit. Qui cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

Qui cum Pa - tre, cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

Fi - li - o - que pro - ce - dit. Qui cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

Qui cum Pa - - - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

Fi - li - o - que pro - ce - dit. Qui cum Pa - tre et Fi - li - o si - mul a - do - ra - tur et

68

con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per Pro - phe - tas. Et u - nam san - ctam Ca -

con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: qui lo - cu - tus est per Pro - phe - tas. Et u - nam san - ctam Ca -

con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: Et u - nam san - ctam Ca -

con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: Et u - nam san - ctam Ca -

con - glo - ri - fi - ca - tur: Et u - nam san - ctam Ca -

73

- tho - li - cam et a - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am.
 - tho - li - cam et a - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am.
 - tho - li - cam et a - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am. Con - fi - te - or u - num bap -
 - tho - li - cam et a - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am. Con - fi - te - or u - num bap -
 - tho - li - cam et a - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am.

79

Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cti -
 Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cti -
 - tis - ma in re - mis - si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum. Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cti -
 - tis - ma in re - mis - si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum. Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cti -
 - tis - ma in re - mis - si - o - nem pec - ca - to - rum. Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cti -

82

- o - nem. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sæ - cu - li. A - men. A - men.
 - o - nem. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sæ - cu - li. A - men. A - men.
 - o - nem mor - tu - o - rum. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sæ - cu - li. A - men. A - men.
 - o - nem mor - tu - o - rum. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sæ - cu - li. A - men. A - men.
 - o - nem mor - tu - o - rum. Et vi - tam ven - tu - ri sæ - cu - li. A - men. A - men.

4. Sanctus

Cantus 1
 Cantus 2
 Altus
 Tenor
 Bassus

San - ctus, san - ctus, san - - - - ctus, Do - mi - nus De -

San - ctus, san - ctus, san - - - - ctus, Do - mi - nus De - -

San - ctus, san - ctus, san - - - - ctus, Do - mi - nus

San - - ctus, san - ctus, san - ctus, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi -

San - ctus, san - ctus, san - - - - ctus, Do - mi - nus De -

9

- - - - - us Sa - ba - oth. Ple - ni sunt cœ - li, ple - ni sunt cœ - li et ter -

- us Sa - - - ba - oth. Ple - ni sunt cœ - li, ple - ni sunt cœ - li et ter - -

De - - - us Sa - ba - oth. Ple - ni sunt cœ - - li et ter - -

- nus De - - us Sa - - ba - oth. Ple - ni sunt cœ - - li et ter - -

- - us Sa - - - ba - oth. Ple - ni sunt cœ - - li et ter - - -

16

-ra glo - - ri - a tu - - a. O - san - na, O -

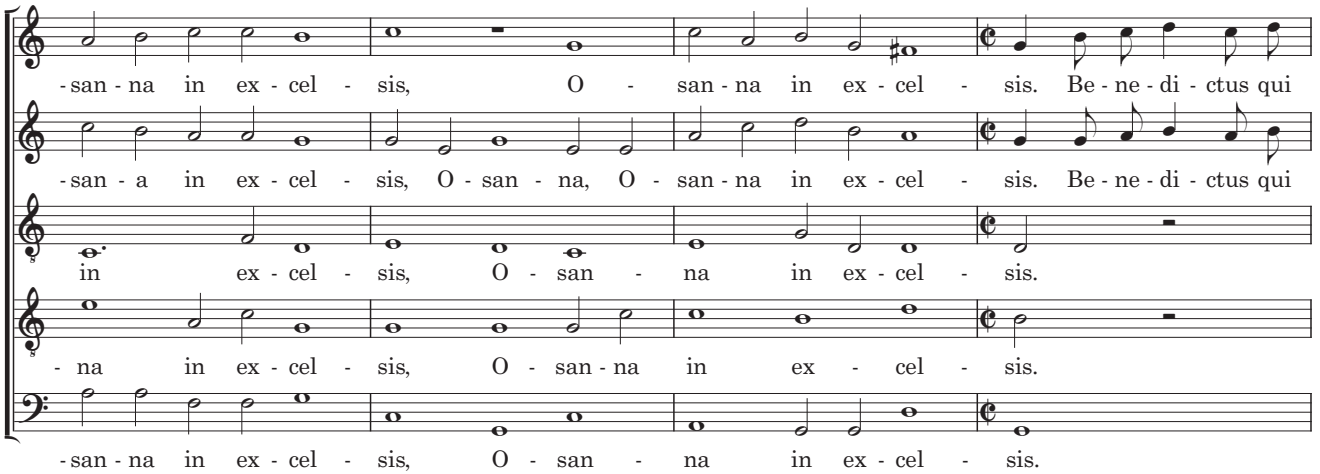
-ra glo - - ri - a tu - - - - a. O - san - na, O - san - na, O -

-ra glo - ri - a tu - - - - a. O - san - na, O - san - na

-ra glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a tu - a. O - san - na, O - san - na, O - san -

-ra glo - - ri - a tu - - - - a. O - san - na, O - san - na, O -

23

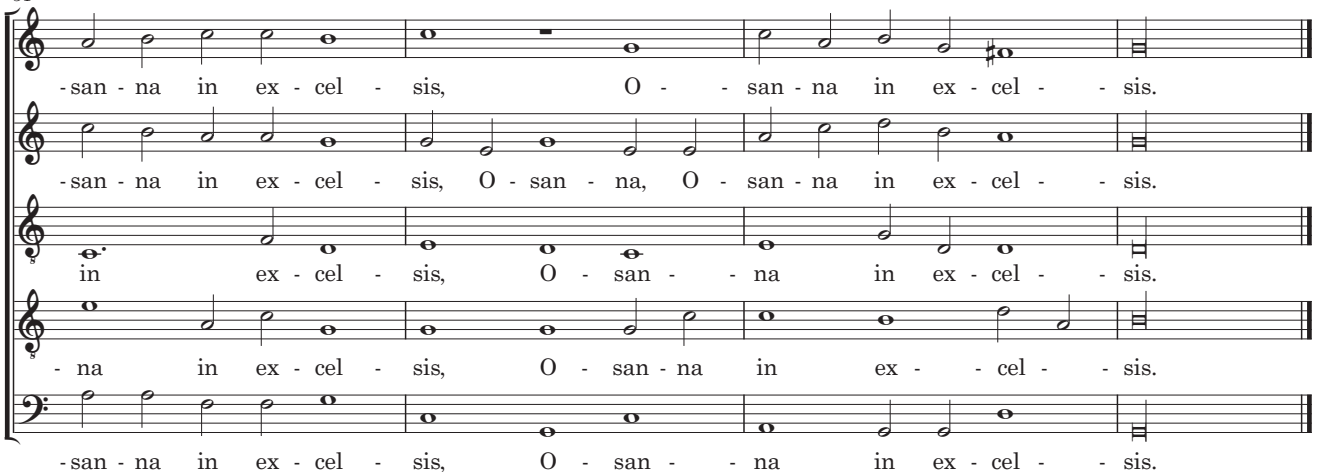


-san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis. Be - ne - di - ctus qui
 -san - a in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis. Be - ne - di - ctus qui
 in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis.
 - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis.
 -san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis.

27

ve - nit in no - mi - ne Do - mi - ni. O - san - na, O - -
 ve - nit in no - mi - ne, in no - mi - ne Do - mi - ni. O - san - na, O - san - na, O -
 O - san - na, O - san - na
 O - san - na, O - san - na, O - san -
 O - san - na, O - san - na, O - -

31



-san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - - san - na in ex - cel - - sis.
 -san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na, O - san - na in ex - cel - - sis.
 in ex - cel - sis, O - san - - na in ex - cel - - sis.
 - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - - cel - - sis.
 -san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - - na in ex - cel - - sis.

5. Agnus Dei

Cantus 1
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re

Cantus 2
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re

Altus
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re

Tenor
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re - re

Bassus
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di.

8
no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di.

no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di.

no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi -

no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi -

A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi -

15
A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

- se - re - re no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

- se - re - re no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

- se - re - re no - bis. A - gnus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

22

-di, do - - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - cem.

-di, do - - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - cem.

-di, do - - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - cem.

-di, do - - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - cem.

-di, do - - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - cem.

Commentary

Celebrating the Traditional *Latino* Mass: Incorporating Latin Music into Today's "Ethnic" Liturgies

Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony are at home in Masses in any language.

by Trent Beattie



uring Ascension week last summer, I listened several times to a recording of Tomás Luis de Victoria's *Ascendens Christus*. The famous motet, which means "Christ ascending" is a refreshing, serenely triumphant, joyful, and uplifting means of drawing the attention of listeners heavenward.

This is what should be expected from the best-known Spanish composer of the Renaissance. Born in 1548 in Avila, Spain, Victoria is best known for his compositions, but he was also an organist, singer, and, not least of all, a priest. Even though Padre Victoria lived in the days before baseball, he hit a homerun with the fittingly hope-filled *Ascendens Christus*.

After this encouraging Ascension week, due to the musical efforts of a priest from Saint Teresa of Avila's time and place, I attended a Spanish Mass on Sunday, far removed from Saint Teresa chronologically and geographically. Sadly, it also turned out to be far removed from her spiritually.

The scene, in sharp contrast to the week that led up to it, was rich in chaos and irony. The priest and deacon chanted parts of the Mass, yet the choir was, to put it diplomatically, out of place. They were heavily "techno-fied" with a portable electric keyboard and extra loud speakers—and I do mean *extra-loud* speakers.

The music was so loud, in fact, that even if it had been Gregorian chant, it would have been disturbing. Aside from the volume, the other problems with the music were voluminous. It was heavy, artificial, obnoxious, aggressive, self-seeking, agitated, and earthbound. It was the exact opposite of *Ascendens Christus*. My Ascension week that had been going so well, was now descending rapidly into the netherworld.

"Purgatorian" Mass

Purgatory has been described as "a heavenly hell" or "a hellish heaven." It is for souls who are certain to obtain life eternal, yet its pains are even said to be equal to some of those in

Trent Beattie has written several articles for various Catholic publications and has compiled Saint Alphonsus Liguori for Every Day, a new edition of which is now available from Mediatrix Press.

hell, duration only excepted. It is a mysterious mixture of intense joy and intense suffering. That, in a “scale model” way, was what took place at this Sunday Mass. Distinctly pleasant and unpleasant things were mixed into one entity.

What added to the deeply confusing and ironic nature of the event was that it took place in a parish named after Pope Saint Pius X, the author of the Motu Proprio *Tra le sollecitudini*, released on Saint Cecilia’s feast day, November 22, 1903. Article 17 of this classic on sacred music states that:

In general it must be considered a very grave abuse when the liturgy . . . is made to appear secondary to . . . and at the service of the music, for the music is merely a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid.

The faithful should not be subjected to a concert with a Mass that just happens to be tacked onto it. This situation is considered by the Holy Father to be, not only a grave abuse (bad enough for a trip to hell when done with full knowledge and consent), but “a very grave abuse,” which raises the question as to whether some liturgical abuses can even be classified as “sins that cry out to heaven.”

This might seem extreme at first, but aside from the imagery of a singer literally crying out to heaven, what is done in church is done directly in God’s presence. In fact, Pope St. Pius X even goes so far as to say in the introduction to *Tra le sollecitudini* that:

it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us, when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odor of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord

the scourges [with which he] drove the unworthy profaners from the temple.

Tra le sollecitudini
*includes the forbidding of
piano music in church, so
it is safe to assume that
if electric keyboards had
been popular at the time,
they would not have
fared well with the Holy
Father, either.*

Requiring Re-Choiring

Tra le sollecitudini includes the forbidding of piano music in church, so it is safe to assume that if electric keyboards had been popular at the time, they would not have fared well with the Holy Father, either. Indeed, Pope St. Pius X stated unequivocally in the introduction that:

Nothing should have place . . . in the temple calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful, nothing that may give reasonable cause for disgust or scandal, nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and sanctity of the sacred functions and is thus unworthy of the House of Prayer and of the Majesty of God.¹

¹Pope Pius X, *Papal Letter to the Cardinal Vicar*

He continues by stating that musical abuse is

one of the most difficult to eradicate, and the existence of which is sometimes to be deplored in places where everything else is deserving of the highest praise—the beauty and sumptuousness of the temple, the splendor and the accurate performance of the ceremonies, the attendance of the clergy, the gravity and piety of the officiating ministers. Such is the abuse affecting sacred chant and music.²

One of the most insightful run-on sentences around (*italics added*) gives clues as to why I have not heard back yet from either the officiating priest or deacon about my concerns regarding the “purgatorian Mass” where, to add irony to irony, contained reference to mortal sin in the sermon—a sermon to which I stated that musical abuse could have been added as an example of mortal sin. Oh, yes, now back to the aforementioned run-on sentence:

And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art [of music], fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, *so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained*

of Rome (December 8, 1903) <<https://adoremus.org/1903/11/tra-le-sollecitudini/>>.

²Ibid.

*even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical Canons, in the Ordinances of the General and Provincial Councils, in the prescriptions which have at various times emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from Our Predecessors the Sovereign Pontiffs.*³

Because of the great capacity for change in music and man’s tendency to seek after what entertains him (apart from concerns

Because of the great capacity for change in music and man’s tendency to seek after what entertains him (apart from concerns about truth or beauty) clergy should receive thorough seminary training in the specifics of sacred music.

³Ibid.

about truth or beauty) clergy should receive thorough seminary training in the specifics of sacred music and bishops should continually keep their ears open to what takes place in their dioceses, always ready to correct where needed.

Since this has not occurred in most dioceses, it is often up to groups such as the Church Music Association of America, the Saint Gregory Institute of Sacred Music, and Corpus Christi Watershed to facilitate the transition from mediocre or messy music to sacred music, the “supreme model” of which has always been Gregorian chant, Pope Pius X tells us.

This transition might actually be easier for Spanish-speaking congregations than for English-speaking ones, since Spanish is closer to Latin than English. For example, it is a much shorter leap from “iglesia” to “ecclesia” than from “church” to “ecclesia.”

Authentically Spanish Mass

As Saint John XXIII reminded us in *Veterum Sapientia*, The Latin language is for the entire church around the whole world. Yet it could be said that Latin is, in a particular way, for French, Italian, and Spanish Catholics. Their languages are so closely related to Latin that they could even be called “daughters of the mother tongue.”

A thoroughly Spanish Mass, therefore, is one that incorporates Latin. This is true, whether in the *usus antiquior* or the *usus recentior*, as made clear in the 1974 *Graduale Romanum* and in the album *Inclina Domine* by Cantores in Ecclesia, a beautiful collection of all the Latin chants proper to the *usus recentior* on the Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Incorporating a truly Spanish (or *Latino*) Mass into a parish means turning our atten-

tion to the extensive and venerable tradition of church music, starting with Gregorian chant and continuing through Renaissance polyphony. The works of the great Padre Victoria and other composers, such as Sebastian de Vivanco (also a priest) and Cristobal de Morales can draw souls to God far more effectively than the stuff composed for portable electric keyboards and extra loud speakers.

Indeed, with the treasury of sacred music, we can truly ascend with Christ directly to heaven, free of demonic detours

*Indeed, with the
treasury of sacred music,
we can truly ascend with
Christ directly to heaven,
free of demonic detours
or putrid pitstops.*


or putrid pitstops. This is what Pope Saint Pius X wanted for liturgical music, so it is what our parishes should have—especially when they are named after the very Holy Father who wanted to restore *all* things in Christ.

Indeed, let us ascend with Christ and not fall to perdition. ❖

Last Word

A Sunday Morning in *Traditionis Custodes* Land

by Kurt Poterack

ast Sunday, being on Thanksgiving break and having no liturgical duties at the college at which I teach, I decided to go to one of the extraordinary-form Masses celebrated according to the terms newly established by the diocese, following the recent directives from Rome. The Mass was held in the former weight room of a grade school. What had been a once-a-Sunday Mass celebrated in the local parish church with a congregation of slightly over three hundred people, has turned into three Masses in an off-parish location with a total congregation of over six hundred people. I would say that the congregation was two-fifths children under the age of ten, two-fifths adults under forty, and about one-fifth people who are over sixty. (I am sure there were people between forty and sixty, but they were not present at the Mass I was at in great numbers.)

So, this Mass would have only been “nostalgic” for no more than one-fifth of the congregation. Even at that, those who are sixty-five now would have known the *Novus Ordo Missæ* since they were thirteen and the beginnings of reforms such as vernacularization since they were seven. Those

who could truly be nostalgic through long exposure to the older usage are more and more fading from the scene. What has been clear for some time is that the older usage now appeals to young people, especially young adults, who simply want to lead a Catholic life and see this Mass as the “best bet” for themselves and their children.

While there certainly are “naughty trad-dies” who can be snarky and annoying and very polemical, I just didn’t see that in this particular congregation. I used to be a big advocate of the “reform of the reform,” and still see this as a practical strategy. (By all means, introduce chant, good hymns, *ad orientem*, etc., where they do not exist.) However, the specific proposals for changes to the prayers and rubrics of the ordinary form, such as restoring the original wording of the priest’s propers or the prayers at the foot of the altar, or ember days, etc.—those are, and remain, speculative proposals. The “older Mass” exists as a real, concrete option, albeit an under-siege option. It is a complete unit. This, I think, is what practical young people, especially parents with young children, are choosing. They don’t have ten to twenty years to wait. Their children will be grown by then.

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

The one complaint that I sometimes have against some “traddies” is a kind of an irrational partisan spirit. I remember a Catholic convention at which I directed a choir and schola for a Latin, ordinary-form Mass celebrated *ad orientem* by a bishop. It was quite well-done and beautiful, if I do say so. I was later told by a friend that some people at the convention went instead to a Tridentine Low Mass celebrated by a priest in his hotel room on the coffee table. Leaving to go to that Mass rather than the convention Mass, they remarked dismissively, “Oh, we’d never go to a novus ordo, it’s so ugly!” (A coffee table is more appropriate and beautiful than an actual altar? Didn’t 60s liberals celebrate “home Masses” on coffee tables, too?)

What I am saying is that sometimes the ordinary form, in particular cases, is performed in such a way that it instantiates the holy and the beautiful more perfectly—regardless of the particularities of a usage. Think of the Masses at the parish of the late Monsignor Richard Schuler celebrated all according to the 1970 Missal, but in Latin, *ad orientem*. Many people confused his Masses for what we then called “indult Masses.” Then, think of the many times, the music of the extraordinary form—in both pre-conciliar and post-conciliar instances—has been substandard.

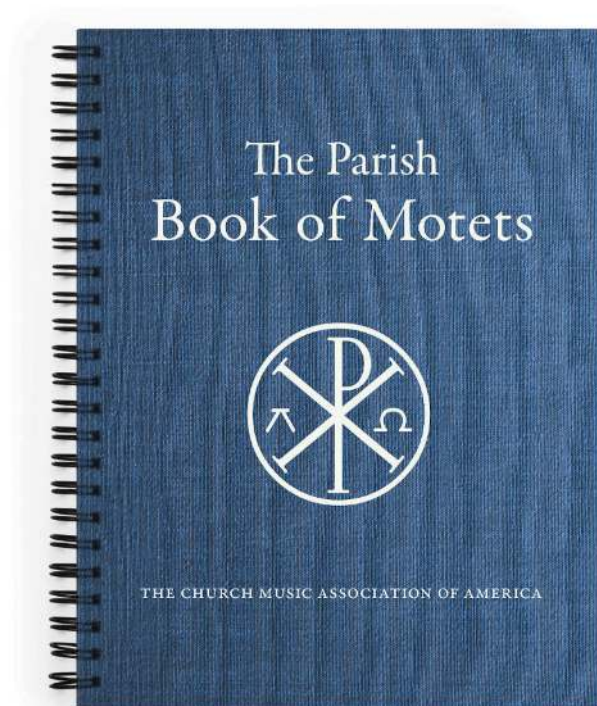
I am not saying that all “traddies” are like this, but it is the one complaint and concern that I do have of this movement. I have known of two young people who recently have rejected a very well-done Latin ordinary-form Mass in favor of an extraordinary-form Mass with music that is fair to middling. Still, I am generally supportive of what many young people like and I do not see this movement as diminishing. I hope

that those in authority in the church will realize that harshly penalizing people for not totally buying into a prudential decision (the particular reform of the liturgy coming out after Vatican II), but who reject no doctrines, is not only unwise and pastorally insensitive, it is also unjust. ❖

I hope that those in authority in the church will realize that harshly penalizing people for not totally buying into a prudential decision (the particular reform of the liturgy coming out after Vatican II), but who reject no doctrines, is not only unwise and pastorally insensitive, it is also unjust.

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The annual fund allows the CMAA to meet the organization’s day-to-day challenges and strengthens its financial foundation.

Donations are needed for these Annual Fund Projects and Programs:

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- Commissions of new music.** Although promoting the use of the vast repertory of existing music in the public domain is a key part of our annual programs, it is also crucial to encourage the composition of new music. The CMAA commissioned three new motets for the *Parish Book of Motets* project.
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Cancellation: Requests received in writing at the CMAA Office emailed or postmarked on or before June 4th will receive a refund less the non-refundable \$75 deposit. After that date, partial refunds are given only in the form of a credit toward registration for the 2024 Colloquium. Credits are not carried forward more than one year. Refunds may be processed after the Colloquium. **All requests for credit must be received via email by June 18 to be considered for any credit** (gm@musicasacra.com). Requests after June 4th may only receive a partial credit, depending on charges to the CMAA for meals, housing, and other expenses.

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Application deadline is April 15.

Photographs and Recordings: You are welcome to take photos and videos, but please do not use flash, especially during sacred liturgies.

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