Sacred Music

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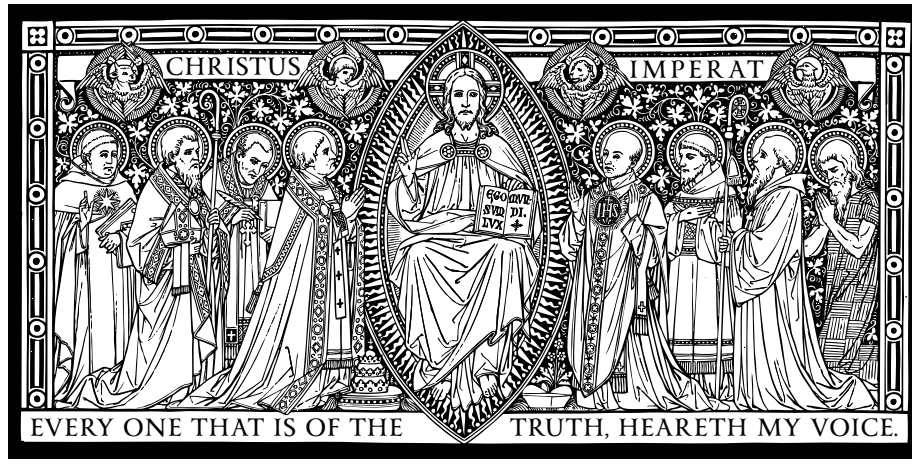

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Articles

Dom Mocquereau's Theory of Accent and Sixteenth-Century Rhythm

As a chant method, Mocquereau's rhythmic theory lacks historical foundation. Questions of chant performance aside, it still offers insight into the nature of musical accent.

by Charles Weaver

Dom André Mocquereau (1849–1930) is best known as the developer of the classic Solesmes method of Gregorian chant performance. Much of Mocquereau's writing is devoted to specific questions of chant performance, especially the interpretation of neumes and the rhythmic structure of Gregorian melodies. Mocquereau's ideas were extremely influential, especially in Roman Catholic liturgical music circles in French- and English-speaking countries. The question of rhythm in Gregorian chant, so controversial in Mocquereau's time, remains difficult or even intractable in our own, even as many features of Mocquereau's interpretation, such as the lengthening of the penultimate note of the salicus, have given way to newer methods based on more thorough research by Dom Eugène Cardine (1905–1988) and his followers. Mocquereau's way of performing still has its adherents, but his influence has waned somewhat.

Now, ninety-three years after his death, it is worth considering what of Mocquereau's theory retains some value. What place, if any, does Mocquereau have in the history of music theory? The best way to gain some perspective on this subject is to consider what Mocquereau has to say on questions outside the realm of Gregorian chant. Indeed one distinctive feature of Mocquereau's method as compared to the

Dom André Mocquereau

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chant-related writings of his contemporaries and successors is his incorporation of many other types of music in his argument. Mocquereau frequently cites examples from the music of Palestrina, Mozart, Beethoven, and others to advance his position on questions of rhythm. Mocquereau's theory, above all his exploration of the phenomenon of accent, has a value that transcends particular questions of chant interpretation.

In this article, I will examine Mocquereau's theory of accent as it applies to another repertoire whose rhythmic character remains somewhat elusive: sixteenth-century polyphony. It is well known that this music was usually notated without barlines in the original sources.[1] The lack of barlines raises the question of whether the music has a metrical structure at all and if this structure is the same as the modern understanding of musical measure. Are some beats stronger than others, for example? Should modern editions place the music into measures? How do word accents relate to the meter and measure?

For Mocquereau, the metrical structure of sixteenth-century polyphony was closely linked to his theory of Gregorian rhythm, which was based on the rhythmic structure of the Latin word. This structure is the subject of the second volume of Mocquereau's principal treatise, *Le nombre musical grégorien*, published in 1927, near the end of his life.[2] Most of the substance of his theory of accent had already been published in the seventh volume of *Paléographie musicale*, released serially between 1901 and 1905.[3] During these years, Mocquereau was corresponding with two important contemporary theorists of rhythm, Vincent d'Indy and Hugo Riemann. Some of the contents of this earlier work are reprinted in the 1927 volume, while other aspects of the theory are expanded upon or revised.

My purpose in focusing on the application of Mocquereau's ideas to Renaissance polyphony is twofold: to move the consideration of Mocquereau's work outside of the controversies surrounding Gregorian performance practice and to gain some insight from Mocquereau's work into the rhythmic structure of Renaissance polyphony. In other words, I will consider Mocquereau as a theorist rather than as a paleographer and performer of plainchant. The following discussion of Mocquereau's ideas should not be taken as advocacy of any particular way of singing Gregorian chant. Instead, Mocquereau's theory serves as a way to examine more general questions of accent, language, and musical meter.

Mocquereau's Theory of Accent

For Mocquereau, a word "is the sign of an idea."[4] An idea is a single, unified concept, so the word that represents an idea semantically must likewise have a sense of unity and integrity. This sense of unity, crucial to sensible and intelligible speech, is a value that should carry over into the composition

[1]Exceptions include the rather rare use of score format and arrangements of polyphonic music in instrumental tablature.

[2]André Mocquereau, *Le nombre musical grégorien*, vol. 2 (Tournai: Desclée, 1927).

[3]Bénédictins de Solesmes, *Antiphonarium tonale missarum, XIe siècle, codex H. 159 de la bibliothèque de l'école de médecine de Montpellier*, Paléographie musi*cale,* vol. 7 (Solesmes: Imprimerie Saint-Pierre, 1901).

[4]"Le mot est le signe d'une idée." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 86. All translations from the French are my own.

and performance of texted music. Drawing on the writings of medieval grammarians, Mocquereau identifies the principle that unifies the word as accentuation, which is a differentiation between the syllables with regard to their pitch, intensity, length, and rhythm.[5] The first three of these dimensions are self-explanatory. By the fourth, rhythm, Mocquereau means the metrical position of the syllables in their musical setting, whether they are characterized by the impulse and rising energy of the arsis (upbeat) or the repose and dragging-out of the thesis (downbeat). "Accentuation" is the general term for the organization of the whole word, while "accent" refers specifically to the quality of a single syllable with regard to these four dimensions. In different languages, differentiation between the syllables may arise in only one dimension or in a combination of several. The differentiation of the syllables and the placement of the accent is what animates the word, giving it the quality of unity that ties it to the concept it represents; the accent is like the soul, and the word is like the body.[6]

Latin, being the language of Gregorian chant, is the language of most interest to Mocquereau. But describing the nature of the Latin accent in terms of the four dimensions is difficult. Since Latin is not a living, spoken language, and since the pronunciation of languages changes over time and varies from place to place, any consideration of how the Latin accent worked in the past is a matter of historical reconstruction. The sources for this reconstruction are primarily the testimony of Latin authors and grammarians, as well as linguistic evidence from changes in spelling over time. In his discussions of the Latin accent, Mocquereau emphasizes that he wishes to avoid the influence of modern languages. Regional variation in the pronunciation of Latin has been remarked on since at least the sixteenth century, but Mocquereau wishes to arrive at an understanding of Latin accentuation and pronunciation that is as close as possible to that of the composers of the Gregorian melodies and free from the influence of geography or dialect. In his early works, Mocquereau's theory of accent draws heavily on the classicist Charles Bennett, who argues for a relatively light stress accent in classical prosody.[7] In the second volume of

The differentiation of the syllables and the placement of the accent is what animates the word, giving it the quality of unity that ties it to the concept it represents; the accent is like the soul, and the word is like the body.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., 88.

[7]Charles Bennett, "What Was Ictus in Latin Prosody?" *The American Journal of Philology*, 19, no. 4 (1898), 361–83.

Le nombre, Mocquereau goes further by outlining a whole history of Latin accentuation, beginning with the linguistic origins of Latin within the Indo-European family of archaic languages and continuing to the development of the modern Romance languages.

Mocquereau divides the history of Latin into four periods: archaic, before the second century B.C.; classical, from the second century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.; ecclesiastical, in the fifth century and following; and Romance, covering the period of the differentiation of modern Romance languages.[8] Drawing on contemporary philological works, Mocquereau asserts that archaic Latin had an accent of intensity on the first syllable of the word as well as a pitch accent that was variable within the word. During the classical era, Latin developed its characteristic placement of the accent on either the penultimate or antepenultimate syllable. This placement depends on the quantity of the syllable (long or short). Classical pronunciation distinguished between long and short syllables, a feature that gradually disappeared from spoken Latin over the succeeding centuries. If the penultimate syllable is long, as in *Salvator*, the accent falls there, *Salvátor*, but if the penultimate syllable is short, as in *Dominus*, the accent falls on the previous syllable, *Dóminus*.

So much for the placement of the accent, but at the time of Mocquereau's work, the nature and characteristics of this accent were disputed, with scholars disagreeing over whether the accent had elements of both intensity and pitch. Mocquereau notes that German scholars believed that there was a strong intensity component to the accent, while French scholars believed that there was no element of intensity at all and that the Latin accent depended entirely on pitch. Unsurprisingly, Mocquereau sided with the French school in this debate (also drawing on the discussion by Bennett). According to this understanding, classical Latin had no intensity accent at all, but only a melodic accent—also described as a tonic accent or pitch accent—in which the accented syllable would be uttered at a higher pitch than the others. This corresponds to an etymology of the word *accent* from *ad* + *cantus*, which suggests a melodic dimension.

To resume Mocquereau's historical narrative, over the course of several centuries, the accent took on an element of intensity, so that in the ecclesiastical period, the Latin accent had elements of both pitch and intensity, as discussed by grammarians of the period. In addition, ecclesiastical Latin developed a secondary accent, so that longer words are pronounced both with a main accent on the penultimate or antepenultimate syllable and a slighter accent on every second syllable preceding the main accent. For example, in the word *misericordia*, the main accent is on *-cor-*, but there is a secondary accent on *-se-*. According to Mocquereau, it was not until the twelfth century that writers begin to describe a durational element to the accent. This marks the final period of Mocquereau's scheme, in which Latin gave rise to the Romance languages, whose pronunciation of the accent lost its pitch dimension and increased in terms of intensity and length.

To summarize Mocquereau's views on word accentuation, the classical accent was purely melodic, with no element of intensity or lengthening. Over the centuries of the era of the Roman Church, the accented

[8]Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 107.

syllable took on first an element of intensity and subsequently an element of lengthening as the Latin language evolved into the Romance languages. The beginning and end of this historical narrative were and are widely accepted. For modern classicists, there is widespread agreement both that the archaic accent was a stress on the first syllable, as implied by phonetic evidence involving the transformation of vowels over time, and that the accent of late Latin (Mocquereau's Romance period) was one of intensity.[9] The middle of Mocquereau's narrative, describing the nature of the classical accent and its immediate successor in early centuries of the church, remains in dispute. W. Sidney Allen provides a critique of the French approach on logical and phonetic grounds.[10] Allen argues that it is more logical for the Latin accent to have stress from the beginning and to change over time only by losing its melodic qualities. The evidence of Latin writers (as cited by Mocquereau and other French scholars) suggests an entirely melodic accent, but for Allen this reflects a conscious imitation of the accent patterns of Greek, which more obviously lacked a stress accent, rather than the actual pronunciation of Latin. Given the fact that the phonetic evidence described by Allen and the testimony of the Latin writers cited by Mocquereau are in disagreement, it is unlikely that any definitive determination is possible.[11]

For Mocquereau, then, the central feature of the classical Latin accent is its tonic character. From this idea, he develops an elaborate theory of accentuation in which classical pronunciation is idealized as the basis for musical speech. The accented syllable governs the word by forming the summit of a melodic arch when spoken. The syllables of a word have a different quality depending on whether they are pre-tonic, tonic, or post-tonic: "The pre-tonic syllables run with hastened steps toward the accent; the tonic syllable, short and light but gently rounded, is like the keystone of this little rhythmic edifice; the post-tonic syllables, on the contrary, move away from it slowly and as though with regret."[12] According to the fifth-century author Martianus Cappella, the accent is the "soul of the voice" (*anima vocis*) and the "seedbed of music" (*seminarium musici*), as accent itself is akin to melody.[13] Mocquereau extends this first metaphor into a characterization of words as organic entities. The syllables on their own are dead and inert. When they are joined by the accent, they come to life in this dynamic motion toward the tonic accent and away from it. In exactly this sense, the accent is the unifying element of the word. The tonic accent literally animates the word—giving it form and life according to the principle of the soul (*anima*).

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[9]W. Sidney Allen, *Accent and Rhythm: Prosodic Features of Latin and Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 151.

[10]Ibid., 151–4.

[11]Susan Rankin offers a list of recent classicists more or less skeptical of a primarily pitch-based understanding of the Latin accent. Susan Rankin, *Writing Sounds in Carolingian Europe: The Invention of Musical Notation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 289–94.

[12]"Les syllabes antétoniques courent d'un pas accéléré vers l'accent ; La syllabe tonique, brève, légère, mais doucement arrondie, est comme la clé de voûte de ce petit édifice rythmique ; Les syllabes postoniques s'en éloignent au contraire lentement et comme à regret." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 147.

[13]Ibid., 244.

According to Mocquereau's historical outline, this idealized classical accent was gradually replaced by the intensive and durational Romance accent. The composition of Gregorian chant took place in a middle period along this path, so that the character of the Latin accent used in the Gregorian repertoire is one of melodic height, light intensity, and no element of lengthening. For Mocquereau, the composers of sacred polyphony in the sixteenth century, Palestrina above all, were trained within this Gregorian atmosphere, so that their music retains all of these elements, in opposition to more modern styles of music, which are based instead on the heavy accent of the Romance languages.

Musical Consequences of the Latin Accent in Gregorian Chant

The theory of accent sketched above provides a way to think about the rhythmic structure of Gregorian melodies as they relate to the Latin text. We will consider in turn four aspects of the Latin accent as theorized by Mocquereau: its height, brevity, lightness, and arsic character. Each of these aspects shapes Mocquereau's understanding of musical rhythm in texted music.

The Accent is High

According to Mocquereau's theory, the Latin accent is primarily tonic, that is, melodic and pitch-based. Since the Gregorian melodies were composed during his ecclesiastical period, this implies that the composers were setting a Latin text that retained this natural melody when spoken. Consequently, the accented syllable within an isolated word falls most naturally on a relatively high note in Gregorian chant, corresponding to the natural speech pattern. Mocquereau asserts that, as a result, the melodies often display melodic contours that underscore the tonic accent. This leads to a testable observation, since Mocquereau is making a specific claim about a feature of Gregorian melody that unifies several different forms. The formulaic melodies of liturgical recitation and psalmody provide the simplest example. Here the accented syllable in a word or phrase is almost always distinguished by a note that is higher than the surrounding notes. Mocquereau extends this pattern to the Gregorian repertoire more broadly, with the idea that there is a frequent correlation between melodic high points and the tonic accent of Latin words. This implies a unified approach to text declamation, where the elaborate melodies are extensions of the accentual (and, consequently, rhythmic) principles that govern the liturgical recitatives and psalmody.

Paolo Ferretti took up Mocquereau's ideas about the melodic accent of words and made them a principal feature of his discussion of form in plainchant.[14] In this broader sense, the hypothesis of the tonic accent becomes more a feature of theory than practice, suggesting that the melodic structure of Gregorian chant depends in a deep sense on the accentual structure of the words themselves. Ferretti formulates the hypothesis in the form of a law: "Gregorian melody, if we consider its architectonic line, is modelled on the grammatical accents of the liturgical text. That is to say that the melodic peaks generally coincide with the

[14]Paolo Ferretti, *Esthétique grégorienne* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1938).

tonic accents of the words."[15] There was widespread agreement on this point among other scholars early in the twentieth century, even outside of Mocquereau's sphere of influence.[16]

The Accent is Brief

Mocquereau also contends that the accent in spoken Latin during the Gregorian centuries was short, and that this characteristic is reflected in text setting in the chant repertoire. The implications for analysis of this claim are slightly less fundamental and useful than those that arise from the tonic accent, but we will see that many of the same authors have engaged with Mocquereau's contention. Mocquereau does not mean that the accented syllable was actually shortened in speech, but rather that the quality of a syllable being accented did not have an especial impact on the length of that syllable when uttered:

> To avoid any misunderstanding, let us clarify the meaning of this word "brevity." We do not mean to say that the accented syllable was shorter and faster than the other syllables, but only that it was not longer, that it was worth a simple beat, an elementary beat, like the unaccented syllables. We will even see later that this brevity, this lightness of the accent does not prevent, on the contrary, giving the accented syllable a certain length.[17]

As with the discussion of the tonic accent, the imprecision of this language has been the subject of some criticism.[18] Mocquereau sometimes seems to argue that the accented syllable is always short and at other times seems to argue that the accented syllable is sometimes long and sometimes short. When describing texts set as chant melodies, the latter contention is clearly more defensible, as accented syllables are often set on long notes or groups of notes. I believe this to be Mocquereau's position.

To untangle the apparent inconsistency, we must distinguish between Mocquereau's theorizing about the nature of the spoken accent in classical and ecclesiastic Latin (short) from the way this translates into length of syllables when set to music (more or less indifferent). Mocquereau begins his discussion by speaking in purely grammatical terms, with the testimony of Latin authors, especially the second-century author Varro: "The high [syllable] is narrower and shorter and in every way less than the low, as it easy to understand from

[15]"La mélodie grégorienne, si l'on considère sa ligne architectonique, est calquée sur les accents grammaticaux du texte liturgique. Ce qui veux dire que les sommets mélodiques coïncident en général avec les accents toniques des paroles." Ibid., 14.

[16]Joshua Veltman provides a useful account of the reception of this idea in plainchant scholarship, including agreement by Wagner and Johner as well as indifference by more recent scholars. Joshua Joel Veltman, "Prosody and Rhythm in the Post-Tridentine Reform of Plainchant" (Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, 2004), pp. 13–16.

[17]"Pour éviter tout malentendu, précisons le sens de ce mot 'brièveté.' Nous n'entendons pas dire par là que la syllabe accentuée était plus brève et plus rapide que les autres, mais seulement qu'elle n'était pas plus longue, qu'elle valait un temps simple, un temps premier, comme les syllabes non accentuées. Nous verrons même plus loin que cette brièveté, cette légèreté de l'accent n'empêche pas, tout au contraire, de lui donner une certaine ampleur." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 209n.

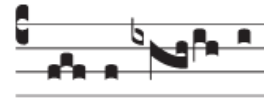
[18]Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indianapolis Press, 1958), p. 280.

music, whose image is prosody."[19] According to the resulting theory, the acute accent or high part of the accent could only occupy a brief time. We have seen that the Latin accent can fall on syllables with either a short or a long quantity. According to the classicist Georges Édon (1837–1905), a short accented syllable received one high sound, but a long accented syllable received a circumflex accent, consisting of a high part of the syllable followed by a low part.[20] In other words, the accent itself, in the sense of a high sound when pronouncing a syllable, applies to only half of a long syllable, which is spoken with a pitch that falls over the course of the syllable.

The consideration of length and accent in Gregorian chant is distinct from this linguistic hypothesis. Instead, we speak of length or brevity by considering the number of notes sung on a single syllable.[21] Mocquereau believed that the placement of melismas (meaning any reasonably long succession of notes on a single syllable) was most natural on the final syllable of the word and secondarily on the accented syllable of the word. This preference is by no means exclusive. Mocquereau believed that any syllable may receive a melisma, which is an extension of the syllable without regard to its quality of accent: "This blossoming of vocalizations on these various syllables is only the result of an aptitude, proper to all Latin syllables, to receive more or less long melismas."[22]

By contrast, Mocquereau considered a marked preference for melismas on accented syllables rather than final syllables to reflect a modern compositional aesthetic opposed to that of the Gregorian composers. To illustrate these two different compositional strategies, he offers a hypothetical modern setting of the words *scio cui* [*credidi*] and compares it to the Introit beginning with those words. Both are shown in Figure 1.[23]

1a. A Hypothetical Modern Setting



1b. The Gregorian Setting

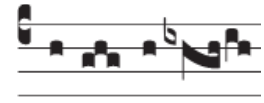


Figure 1. Two contrasting text settings.

Mocquereau does not believe that any rules of Gregorian composition forbid the first setting; instead, he believes that the Gregorian composers were under none of the self-imposed constraints of the modern composer. As with his discussion of the tonic accent, Mocquereau provides several musical examples involving phrases where the

[19]"Acuta exilior et brevior et omni modo minor est quam gravis, ut est facile ex musica cognoscere, cujus imago prosodia." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 759.

[20]Ibid., 209n.

[21]For the purposes of this investigation into the phenomenon of melisma, or what Apel calls the "melismatic accent," we sidestep the question of different lengths on individual notes of chant (whether measured or nuanced) implied by various medieval notations. Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 279.

[22]"Cet épanouissement de vocalises sur ces diverses syllabes n'est que le résultat d'une aptitude, propre à toutes les syllabes latines, de recevoir des mélismes plus ou moins longs." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 213.

[23]Ibid., 213–14.

accented syllable is on a single note followed or preceded by a larger group of notes.

The Accent is Light

The two previous qualities of the Latin accent, its height and brevity, led Mocquereau to make several testable claims about the style and structure of Gregorian melodies. The third supposed quality, the lightness of the accent, is different in that it has no evidentiary basis in the melodies themselves.[24] In other words, the level of intensity given to the accent is a matter of performance practice rather than of notational analysis. As with the other two qualities of the Latin accent, Mocquereau bases his theory of intensity on the historical outline of a progression from a classical accent that was entirely tonic to a Romance-language accent that based primarily on stress and length.[25] According to the grammarians of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages (the fifth and sixth centuries), the accented syllable is spoken with both a higher pitch and with greater intensity. Reasoning that the progression was a gradual one lasting centuries, Mocquereau attributes to the Gregorian centuries a medium sort of accentuation, with some intensity on the accented syllable but less than would occur in a Romance language.

For Mocquereau, the intensity should follow the natural melody of the word in speech. Translated into the musical and liturgical speech of plainchant, the intensity follows the curve of the melody.

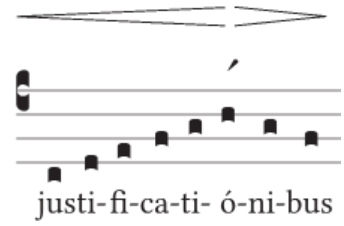


Figure 2. The melody of the isolated word.

Figure 2 illustrates this idea.[26] The idealized Latin word is conceived of as a Romanesque arch (gently sloping and lacking any point) in both the melodic and intensive dimensions:

> One should carefully take pains to reach the accented syllable by a gentle slope, by a moderate crescendo, well executed, increasing with the ascending movement of the melody, and based on the greater or lesser number of pre-tonic syllables.
>
> Having arrived at the top, one should avoid hardness, surprise, and brilliance of force on the high note. Let us never forget that height is always the first and the most spiritual quality of the accent, and force, more material, comes only afterwards, even after lightness. One should take care at the turn of the two slopes, which should not form an acute angle but a sonorous curve, light and gracefully rounded. On the opposite side, the line of intensity curves and comes to rests gently on the last syllable, like the melody.[27]

[24]Ibid., 226.

[25]Ibid., 231.

[26]Ibid., 232.

[27]"On veillera soigneusement à atteindre la syllabe accentuée par une pente douce, par un crescendo modéré, bien conduit, croissant avec le mouvement ascendant de la mélodie, et calculé sur le nombre plus ou moins abondant de syllabes anté-

In effect, Mocquereau's conception of how to sing or speak a word idealizes his theoretical classical accent in order to advance an anti-modern aesthetic. Pitch height is "the most spiritual quality of the accent," while intensity is "more material." Carrying this logic further, we arrive at an aesthetic of chant that deliberately rejects the typical conception of accent and stress, which is associated with modernity and measured music.[28] The light accent that follows the melodic contour is a rejection of the modern and an embrace of the ancient:

> The more the accent, high and intense, approaches, in our lections and in our chants, its classical (that is to say, musical) performance, the more these lections and chants will be penetrated with the ancient savor, the aesthetic sense, and the spiritual unction that belong eminently to the ecclesiastical chant.[29]

This way of thinking is tied too closely to a particular religious and musical practice to have a place in the more objective study of plainchant used in present scholarship. Unlike the melodic and durational qualities of the accent, there is no trace of the accent of intensity in the notation that we can test. I include Mocquereau's thoughts on the matter because his Gregorian aesthetics inform is understanding of the rhythmic structure of Renaissance polyphony, which he also idealizes in anti-modern terms.

The Accent Can Fall on the Upbeat

The opposition of Mocquereau's aesthetic to the modern carries over into his consideration of how Latin accentuation aligns with the rhythmic order, that is, the arrangement of musical events into successions of upbeats and downbeats. It will be necessary here to give a brief account of Mocquereau's theory of rhythm. In Mocquereau's view, the basic unit of musical rhythm is a pair of beats: an upbeat followed by a downbeat. Other writers sometimes consider the downbeat to come first, but for Mocquereau, rhythm measures a motion, and it is self-evident that any motion consisting of a rise and fall must begin on the rise: it is impossible to tap your foot without picking it up off the ground first.

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toniques. Arrivé au sommet, on évitera sur l'aiguë la dureté, la surprise, l'éclat de la force. Ne l'oublions jamais : l'acuité est toujours la première, la plus spirituelle des qualités de l'accent, et la force, plus matérielle, ne vient qu'ensuite, après même la légèreté. On veillera au tournant des deux versants, qui ne doit pas former un angle aigu, mais une courbe sonore, légère, gracieusement arrondie. Au versant opposé, la ligne intensive s'incline et se repose doucement sur la dernière syllabe, comme la mélodie." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 237.

[28]This aesthetic preference presents clear parallels to the Gothic revival and other nineteenth-century antiquarian movements, as described at length in Katherine Bergeron, *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). The smoothness of the Solesmes style has come under particular criticism in light of more recent scholarship on performance practice. See Timothy McGee, "Medieval Performance Practice," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Music*, ed. Mark Everist and Thomas Forrest Kelly, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 587.

[29]"Plus l'accent, aigu et intense, se rapprochera dans nos lectures et dans nos chants de son exécution classique, c'est-à-dire musicale, plus ces lectures et ces chants seront pénétrés de saveur antique, et de ce sens esthétique, de cette onction spirituelle, qui conviennent éminemment à la cantilène ecclésiastique." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 238.

The upbeat is thus associated with beginning, motion, energy, and lift, while the downbeat is associated with ending, coming to rest, and a winding-down of energy. Since, in Mocquereau's view, the Latin accent used in the composition of Gregorian chant is high, light, and brief, the accented syllable quite naturally falls on the upbeat of a rhythm, since the arsis is also defined as the part of the rhythm given to height, lightness, and brevity. Mocquereau believes that the more common conception of accent, in which the accented syllable aligns with the downbeat, presumed to be the strong or accented part of the measure, is a modern idea foreign to what he sees as the true Gregorian aesthetic.[30] For Mocquereau, this view is based on an impoverished understanding of accent that applies only to modern languages and not to ecclesiastical Latin. It is better that the syllables of impulse (the accented syllable) and the syllables of repose (the final syllable) should fall naturally on the parts of the rhythm (moving from upbeat to downbeat) that share those characteristics. In other words, the natural placement of the syllables within the measure is opposite in Latin to their natural placement in French, English, and other modern languages. In any Latin word of chant, then, the most natural placement of the ictus, marking the downbeat, is on the final syllable, regardless of where the accent falls. In the classic Solesmes method, each ictus mark can be conceptualized as the downbeat of a short measure of either two or three beats. The downbeats of these measures do not necessarily align with the accented syllables and indeed usually do not. This freedom with regard to accent and ictus is the very essence of Mocquereau's theory.[31]

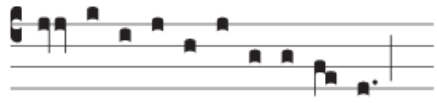
While Mocquereau was quite clear on this point, the widespread equation of downbeat with "strong beat" has led to a great deal of misunderstanding of the classic Solesmes method. My own experience with first encountering the Solesmes books was bafflement at the placement of the ictus or downbeats in syllabic chants, as it seems on first glance to represent a French-like pronunciation of Latin, with the stress given to the final syllable of the word. It is possible that an unspoken preference for rhythms with weight and length on the ends of time units would be a natural development from the formative years of a native French speaker. Regardless, Mocquereau's point, based on his elaborately constructed theory of the Latin tonic accent, is rather more subtle and is intended to oppose rather than mimic the normal accentuation of French when applied to Latin.

The natural placement of the syllables within the measure is opposite in Latin to their natural placement in French, English, and other modern languages.

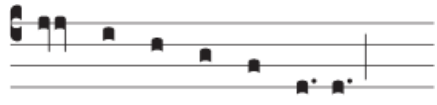
[30]Ibid., 319.

[31]Ibid., 624.

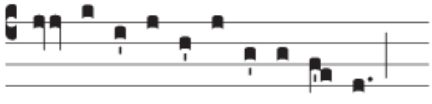
3a. The melodic figure



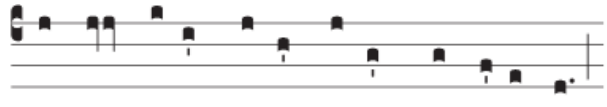
3b. The fundamental notes



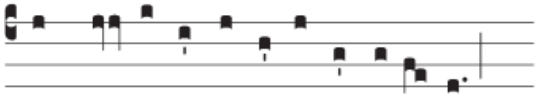
3c. The placement of the rhythm



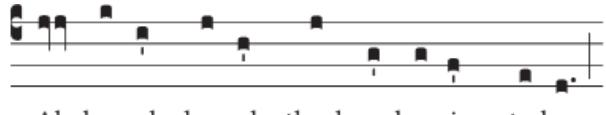
3d. Adaptation to French words



3e. Adaptation to Italian words



3f. Adaptation to English words



3g. The Latin setting

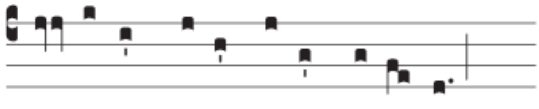


Figure 3. Different accents in different languages.

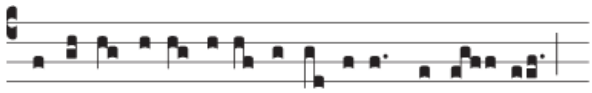
Mocquereau illustrates his view of the difference between modern languages and Latin with an illuminating discussion of a short phrase from the office antiphon *Nolite solliciti,* shown in Figure 3.[32] Mocquereau makes a short analysis, reminiscent of Schenkerian principles, in which he identifies the fundamental notes of an underlying melodic progression (Figure 3b). Mocquereau believes that the placement of the downbeats falls naturally on these more fundamental notes, and the entire figure falls into a binary rhythmic pattern (Figure 3c). Mocquereau then fits doggerel to the melody in three modern languages, with the accented syllables coinciding with the ictic notes (Figures 3d–g). This is contrasted with the Latin setting, where all the accented syllables except the last coincide with the non-ictic notes of each rhythm or composite beat. To understand Mocquereau's theory of the Latin accent, the reader should sing through these four settings, paying special attention to the interaction of accent (high, light, and short) and beat in the Latin version. It is not that the pronunciation of Latin imitates modern French but rather that the pronunciation of the Latin accent is theorized as high, light, brief, and on the upbeat, in a way that may be counterintuitive to some singers.

Different melodic circumstances can lead the accent to coincide with the ictus, as in the word *caeléstis* in Figure 3g; the position of the accent is free with respect to the downbeat. The possibility of the accent on the upbeat provides an explanation for the

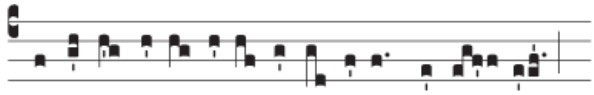
[32]Ibid., 318. Mocquereau's examples here use modern notation, which I have adapted to Solesmes square notation for consistency's sake.

situation, frequently encountered in plainchant, where the accented syllable falls on a single note followed by a long melisma on the weak final syllable.

4a. The phrase as presented in the Solesmes editions



4b. Hypoethetical alignment of ictus and accent



4c. Mocquereau's approach

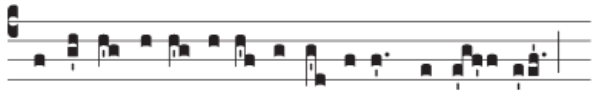


Figure 4. Rhythmic structure in the antiphon Memento verbi tui.

A particularly striking example of this situation is the first phrase of the communion antiphon *Memento verbi tui*, shown in Figure 4a. In the words *verbi*, *tui*, *servo*, and *Domine*, the accented syllable falls on a single note followed by a group of two or more notes. Assuming a relative equality of note lengths, a question naturally arises as to which notes are felt as downbeats and which as upbeats in singing.[33] The reader should sing through versions b and c in Figure 4 while tapping the beats marked with the ictus sign. Version b presents several successive triple measures with two syllables arranged in a short-long pattern. Most listeners will hear this as a reversal of the expected melodic pattern, even as it respects the widespread tendency to favor strong syllables on downbeats. In version c, several accented syllables in a row fall on the upbeat to a triple measure, followed by a weak syllable on the downbeat. This reading is consistent with Mocquereau's understanding of the accent. Mocquereau compared version b to a chain whose rings were broken apart: "Who does not feel, while singing, that this phrase ends at each word and goes to pieces?"[34] This passage is also discussed, with similar conclusions, by Johner.[35]

The Different Rhythmic Orders

We have seen that the word, conceptualized as a unified rhythmic motion, gives rise to Mocquereau's principle that the ictus or downbeat belongs on the last syllable, which is the point of repose in the utterance of the word. It remains to clarify what this theory implies for the part of the word that comes before the downbeat. In Mocquereau's theory, the ictus naturally falls every two or three pulses, as a result

[33]It should be noted that in either a semiological or a mensuralist interpretation, the single notes on the accented syllables are all longer than the notes that make up the groups that follow, since the St. Gall neumes for these groups are written in their cursive form and also appear with the appended Romanian letter c in Einsiedeln 121.

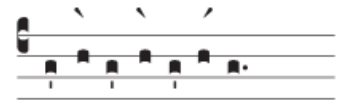
[34]"Qui ne sent, en chantant, que cette phrase tombe à chaque mot, et s'en va par morceaux?" Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 299.

[35]Dominic Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant*, trans. Henry Butterfield (New York: Pustet, 1906), p. 44.

of deep-seated features of the human psyche, which tends to divide a series of pulses in this way. This means that some words, namely those with more than two syllables, will contain more than one ictus. Here the two possible placements of the Latin accent (on the penultimate or antepenultimate syllable) give rise to two fundamental rhythmic categories, which Mocquereau calls the spondaic order and the dactylic order, relating to paroxytones (words with the accent on the penultimate syllable) and proparoxytones (words with the accent on the antepenultimate syllable) respectively. In the spondaic order, the accented syllable falls between two ictus, on the lightest and highest part of the rhythm or measure. The singer perceives this as the placement of the accented syllable on the upbeat. For example, say the word *Salvátor*, tapping downbeats on *Sal-* and *-tor*, while giving energy and lightness to the accented syllable *-vá-*. Since the secondary accents in a word fall on every second syllable before the principal accent, several such displacements may occur in a single word, and each relatively accented syllable will be felt on an upbeat.[36]

By contrast, in a three-syllable proparoxytone (e.g., *Dóminus*), the two ictus fall on both the accented syllable and on the unaccented final syllable. Since the ictus and the accent are aligned, there is a fundamentally different psychological experience of the pronunciation of the word, as the rhythmic structure arising between the tonic and post-tonic syllables moves from downbeat to downbeat rather than from upbeat to downbeat. In a proparoxytone of five or more syllables (e.g., *misericórdia*), the secondary accent (*-se-*) will similarly coincide with the ictus or downbeat.

5a. The spondaic order



5b. The dactylic order

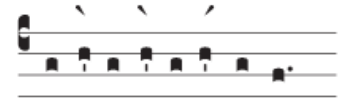


Figure 5. Two rhythmic orders.

The two rhythmic orders are shown in Figure 5. The words *justificatiónem* and *justificatiónibus* have two different rhythmic profiles resulting from the different placement of the accent. To get a sense of this, try singing the two examples while tapping the downbeats. The accent on the beat and the accent off the beat should create a noticeably different rhythmic feeling while singing. The contrast between these two placements of the accent relative to the rhythmic structure is one of the most basic elements of Mocquereau's Gregorian rhythmic theory. Both consist of composite rhythms moving toward the repose of the downbeat on the final syllable, but they arrive there by two divergent but equally natural paths.

Late in his book Mocquereau distills his conception of the Latin accent into the following list-like summary, which restates in short form many of the points described above:

[36]In Mocquereau's system, secondary accents only fall on every alternate syllable before the principal accent. Some authors determine the placement of secondary accents differently, especially in words formed as compounds of other polysyllabic words.

The Latin accent, high, short, delicately strong, almost spiritual (*anima vocis*), always placed on the penultimate or the antepenultimate, is:

> An impulse, which runs toward its point of arrival;
>
> A beginning which claims its end;
>
> A rising, a strong arsis which demands a weak thesis.

Hence, a Latin rhythmics, whose principal characteristics are:

> The strong beat on the arsis;
>
> The weak beat on the thesis.

Hence, the weak ictic cadences of all Latin words.

The Romance accent, on the contrary, heavy, grave, long, and often placed, in certain languages especially, on the last syllable, is:

> A point of arrival, instead of being an impulse
>
> An end instead of a beginning
>
> A strong thesis instead of a strong arsis

Hence, a masculine, Romance rhythmics, whose principal characteristics are:

> The weak beat on the upbeat, on the arsis
>
> The strong beat on downbeat, on the thesis

Hence, the strong ictic cadences of the Romance languages, unknown to Latin rhythmics.[37]

Mocquereau believes that the Latin accent, as practiced by the composers of Gregorian chant, is high, light, brief, and coincides naturally with the upbeat of a rhythmic motion. Each of these four qualities is contrasted with an opposing modern conception of accent—indifferent to pitch height, heavy, long, and naturally on the thesis—which governs how modern languages are set to music.

The Joining of Words

Word-Rhythms and Word-Beats

So far, we have only considered Mocquereau's theory in relation to individual, isolated words, with only passing attention

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[37]"L'accent latin, aigu, bref, délicatement fort, presque spirituel (anima vocis), toujours placé sur la pénultième ou l'antépénultième, est un élan qui court vers son point d'arrivée, un début qui réclame sa fin, un levé, une arsis forte qui demande sa thésis faible. De là, une rythmique latine, dont le principal caractère est le temps fort à l'arsis, le temps faible à la thésis. De là, les cadences ictiques faibles de tous les mots latins. L'accent roman, au contraire, lourd, grave, long, et placé souvent, dans certaines langues surtout, sur la dernière syllabe, est un point d'arrivée, au lieu d'être un élan, une fin, au lieu d'un début, une thésis forte, au lieu d'une arsis forte. De là, une rythmique masculine romane dont le principal caractère est le temps faible au levé, à l'arsis, le temps fort au frappé, à la thésis. De là, les cadences ictiques fortes des langues romanes, inconnues de la rythmique latine." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 648.

paid to the way words interact with each other in the context of a melody. The theory is refined and extended when applied to texts of more than one word. Each word naturally gives rise to a rhythmic structure moving from upbeat to downbeat, but in the context of a piece of chant the individual rhythmic motions of the words are folded into larger motions at the level of the phrase, the group of phrases, and the melody as a whole.

The connection of words to each other has consequences for the rhythmic profile of the individual words. In a group of words like *dixit Dóminus*, Mocquereau's presumed natural rhythm of each word (that is, the spondaic and dactylic orders) would result in ictus on *-xit*, *Do-*, and *-nus*, but this is impossible when the words are spoken together, since this would result in the ictus falling on two adjacent syllables, disrupting the natural flow of the rhythm as an alternation of down and up. In this case, the ictus is pushed back to *di-*, allowing for the steady progression of binary rhythms. Such a word is called a word-beat (*mot-temps*), since its tonic and post-tonic portions align with the measure (downbeat-upbeat) rather than with the rhythmic structure (upbeat-downbeat). Since the final syllable *-xit* falls after the ictus, this is not a possible ending to any rhythmic unit. The word aligned in this way demands a continuation. By contrast, a word that retains its natural state of having an ictus on the final syllable is called a word-rhythm (*mot-rythme*), meaning that the word contains a complete rhythmic structure of arsis plus thesis. In application to chant melodies, the words are sometimes all set as rhythms (as in Figure 4c), sometimes all set as beats, and sometimes set as a mixture of both. The interplay between these two patterns amounts to the experience of word rhythm within Mocquereau's conception of Gregorian chant.

Figure 6 shows the first two strophes of the sequence *Lauda Sion*, which, if we follow Mocquereau's system, juxtaposes both dispositions of the words within the measure. The poetry is based on a mostly trochaic (strong-weak) stress pattern (with a reversal in the beginning of line 3), but with each strophe ending with a dactyl:

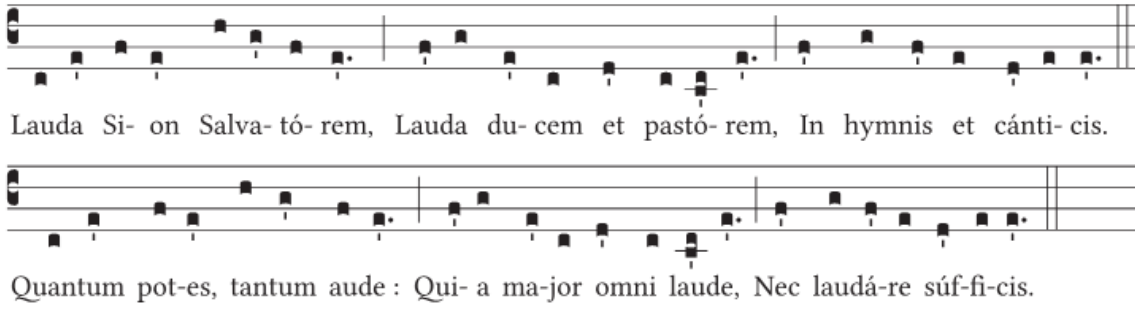

Figure 6. Lauda Sion, *strophes 1 and 2.*

Láuda Síon Salvatórem,
Láuda dúcem et pastórem,
In hymnis et cánticis.

Quántum pótes, tántum áude:
Quía májor ómni láude,
Nec laudáre súfficis.

Each strophe is set to the same music. According to Mocquereau's principles, the music is in a steady duple meter, consisting of measures of two notes each. These measures are reckoned by counting backwards by twos from the long note that ends each line.[38] In the first line, the downbeats coincide with the word endings, so that all the words are word-rhythms. In the second line, the situation is different because of the two-note neume on *-sto-* of *pastórem*. Counting backwards in the steady rhythm of twos, we see that the words *lauda* and *ducem* become word-beats, with the final syllables falling between two downbeats. In the third line, counting backwards from the *mora vocis* on the last syllable results in an ictus falling on the accented syllable of *cánticis* (in accordance with the scheme of the dactylic order) and with the word *hymnis* being treated as a word-rhythm. In the second strophe, set to the same music, the same pattern of ictus placement results in *laudáre* being treated as a word-beat. Singing through this example while tapping the downbeats gives a sense of the difference between the experience of word-beats and word-rhythms, even when set to the same music.[39]

[38]The long note at the end of the line is an example of the principle of the *mora ultima vocis*, derived from the eleventh-century theorist Guido d'Arezzo. The idea is that length on final notes of sections separates the music into sense units.

[39]The principle of counting backwards suggests that the performer must generally plan the placement of the ictus in advance. It also assumes that slight variations in the melody, as in variant versions of a chant that change a single note on a syllable to a two-note neume, have the ability to completely turn around the rhythmic structure of a melody. A striking example of this may be found in two different but closely related versions of the hymn stanza *Tantum ergo*, found on pages 952 and 954 of the *Liber usualis*. The relationship of downbeats to accented syllables is completely different in the two melodies, in spite of the melodic similarities. This underscores Mocquereau's basic indifference to the placement of the ictus with respect to the accented syllables.

Higher Structure and Accent

Aside from this complex framework of words and beats, there is another important way in which the words interact with each other in Mocquereau's rhythmic theory. This is by extending the principle of the tonic accent to longer structures than just the single word. In effect, melody organizes and deepens the meaning of groups of words by arranging them relative to each other in pitch:

> One might believe, from the importance we have given to the study of *isolated words*, that Gregorian melody seeks to follow exactly the melodic, dynamic, quantitative, and rhythmic shape of each word, and takes care never to deviate from it. This would be a mistake. Music is too noble a mistress, too conscious of her independence and power to constantly subject herself to such servitude. She knows that her own resources infinitely exceed in number, in variety, in power, in beauty, those of the pure word; she reserves the right to use them as she pleases, not to the detriment of the text, but to her own advantage: she

> enlightens its meaning, develops its feeling, and makes its lessons penetrate to the depths of our souls.[40]

As with his claims for the tonic accent, Mocquereau lists several ancient authorities for the subordination (in this limited sense) of words to music.[41] The melody has absolute freedom to follow or enhance the natural melody of a particular word (by placing the tonic accent on a relatively high note) or to reverse it (by placing another syllable above the tonic accent in pitch) for melodic or rhetorical reasons.[42] Either procedure may be significant for the analyst. In particular, a "reversal" (*renversement*) can signal a larger design, where the melodic accentuation follows the meaning of the phrase rather than of the individual word. The first two words of Figure 6 work in this way, where the melody subsumes the accent in the word *Lauda* to that in *Sion*. Following this principle to its logical conclusion, Mocquereau finds great rhetorical weight in melodic high points, since these show which parts of the text the composer wished to highlight. The melody seen in this way takes on something of the quality of unity that Mocquereau found so important in the individual word. By finding the high points in a chant melody and subtly directing the performance toward and away from them with dynamics and agogic accents, practitioners of Mocquereau's method are essentially performing a particular kind of exegesis as they sing.

The Latin Accent in Renaissance Polyphony

As I have laid it out here, Mocquereau's conception of the way the words interact with the rhythmic framework of arsis and thesis creates a level of complexity that many subsequent chant scholars have dismissed. While the idea of the high, light, and brief accent that constantly shifts into and out of phase with a structural grid of downbeats and upbeats is a beautiful idea, there is almost nothing in the music that supports it, at least by the standards of modern scholarship and performance practice. But if we turn to sixteenth-century polyphony, the situation is quite different.

In both the seventh volume of *Paléographie musicale* and the second volume of *Le nombre*, Mocquereau gives several examples of Renaissance polyphony in order to bolster his claims about the light, upbeat

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[40]"On pourrait croire, d'après l'importâtes que nous avons accordée à l'étude des mots isolés, que la mélodie grégorienne s'attache à suivre exactement la marche mélodique, dynamique, quantitative et rythmique de chaque mot, et veille avec attention à ne s'en écarter jamais ; ce serait une erreur. La musique est trop noble dame, elle a trop conscience de son indépendance et de son pouvoir pour s'astreindre constamment à une telle servitude. Elle sait que ses propres ressources dépassent infiniment en nombre, en variété, en puissance, en beauté, celles de la parole pure ; elle se réserve d'en user à son gré, non pas au détriment du texte, mais à son avantage : elle en éclaire le sens, en développe le sentiment, et en fait pénétrer les leçons jusqu'au fond des âmes." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 277.

[41]Ibid., 278–83.

[42]Apel thought that by having it both ways, Mocquereau was failing to assert much of anything: "By dividing the whole field into three categories: Prééminence du texte, Transaction entre le texte et la mélodie, and Prééminence de la musique, Dom Mocquereau somehow succeeds in proving [his thesis], without proving anything." Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 280. Apel's interest is in making broad claims about the mechanism of Gregorian melody as a whole, whereas Mocquereau is developing a methodology for approaching individual cases in performance, analysis, and, indeed, exegesis.

nature of the Latin accent. With these examples, Mocquereau makes several interesting observations about the nature of text rhythm in sixteenth-century polyphony, and he does so while standing on much firmer historical ground than he does with his claims for Gregorian rhythm. Along with the plainchant revival, the polyphony of the sixteenth century, and the music of Palestrina in particular, was also the subject of keen historical interest and revival in the late nineteenth century. Two figures later associated with the founding of the Schola Cantorum in Paris—Charles Bordes and Vincent d'Indy—were instrumental in this revival, which was tied up with both French and ecclesiastical politics.[43] Mocquereau's citation of Palestrina is an appeal to authority designed to further his anti-modern program, based on the rejection of the modern understanding of musical meter and rhythm. His observations apply equally well to the style of many other sixteenth-century composers.

Mocquereau's central claim is that there is no rule requiring the coincidence of downbeat (in a sense to be explained below) and accent in sixteenth-century style, and that consequently the downbeat is not necessarily a "strong" beat. This is an adaptation into measured music of the idea, so fundamental to the classic Solesmes method of chanting, of the dissociation of ictus and accent. Mocquereau summarizes what he sees as the modern view that the accented syllable must fall on a downbeat: "We know that for modern composers the Latin accent is intensity and nothing more. Consequently, they try to make it coincide with what they call the strong beat or the downbeat of the measure, in the same way that they make the modern accent, the French accent for example, coincide with the strong beat of the measure. A barline in front of all accents is the rule!"[44] By contrast, Mocquereau believes that the polyphonic composers of the sixteenth century enjoyed the same apparent freedom with regard to this rule as the composers of the Gregorian melodies. Mocquereau also contends that this freedom also characterizes the music of later authoritative composers like Beethoven:

> And what can be said about the squareness, the symmetry of the measures, the members of the phrase and the sentences, which complete the rigidity of this first rule! Surprisingly, composers, trained from childhood to observe these laws, do not feel cramped! Like a bird born and raised in its cage, they do not suspect the freedom of the true greater rhythm, such as one finds in the works of a Beethoven, in those of the religious masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and, even better, in the Gregorian musical free rhythm.[45]

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[43]Catrena Flint offers a complete account of the political situation, including the connections between the Schola and Solesmes. See Catrena Flint, "The Schola Cantorum, Early Music and French Political Culture from 1894 to 1914" (Ph.D. diss, McGill University, 2006).

[44]"On sait que pour les compositeurs modernes l'accent latin est une intensité, rien de plus. En conséquence, ils s'efforcent de le faire coïncider avec ce qu'ils appellent le temps fort ou frappé de leurs mesures, de la même manière qu'ils font coïncider l'accent moderne, l'accent français par exemple, avec le temps fort de la mesure. Une barre devant tous les accents, voilà la règle !" Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 625.

[45]"Et que dire de la carrure, de la symétrie des

Mocquereau's arguments here are as tendentious as they are colorful, but we may still examine his claims about the rhythm of sixteenth-century polyphony in relation to more recent scholarly discourse on this subject. I believe that Mocquereau's discussion presents an explanation of sixteenth-century word rhythm that differs from the standard one and can enrich our understanding of that rhythm.

Rhythm and Tactus in Mensural Notation

The notation of sixteenth-century vocal music uses note values similar to those still in use.[46] On various levels—semibreve, breve, long, maxima—there was a theoretical possibility that these values could be divided into either two or three of the notes of the next shorter value. The arrangement of these divisions was called the mensuration, which was signaled by the placement of various signs at the beginning of the notated music. In practice, by the sixteenth century, the vast majority of music was in the mensuration known as imperfect time with minor prolation. In this mensuration, every note value divides into two notes of a smaller value. This duple-only division became the basis for modern music notation, which still retains the related mensuration signs as the time signatures generally known as common time and cut time.

Most polyphonic music in the sixteenth century was written with a single part notated at a time. Each part would be located either on a different part of the page from the other parts (choirbook format) or in separate books, which would be kept together as a set (partbook format). The individual parts usually did not have regularly recurring barlines. Barlines were reserved for use in instrumental tablatures, where several parts are written simultaneously on the same staff, or when music was notated in score.

Many historical sources indicate that sixteenth-century performance was marked by the presence of the tactus, which is a regular motion of down and up (thesis and arsis) given by the conductor or the individual singers when singing a polyphonic piece. Ruth DeFord has usefully disentangled the various meanings of the word tactus into the concepts of "performance tactus," the time value governing the actual physical motion of thesis and arsis in performance; "compositional tactus," which is the way the regularly recurring time value of the tactus relates to features of counterpoint and dissonance treatment; and "theoretical tactus," which relates to the time value supposedly governing a particular mensuration.[47] For instance, in the "C" and "cut-C" mensurations described above, the music has a the-

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mesures, des membres de phrase et des phrases, qui complètent la rigidité de cette première règle ! Chose surprenante : les compositeurs, dressés dès leur enfance à l'observation de ces lois, ne s'y sentent pas à l'étroit ! Comme l'oiseau né et élevé dans sa cage, ils ne soupçonnent pas la liberté du vrai grand rythme, tel qu'on le trouve dans les oeuvres d'un Beethoven, dans celles des maîtres religieux des XVe et XVIe siècles, et, mieux encore, dans le nombre musical grégorien." Ibid.

[46]In the discussion that follows, I will use names for the note values that are translations of the standard sixteenth-century terms (breve, semibreve, minim, semiminim) rather than the names we use for the equivalent notes (double whole note, whole note, half note, quarter note).

[47]Ruth DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm in Renaissance Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 51.

oretical tactus that lasts for a semibreve and a breve respectively, but the compositional tactus is generally the semibreve in both cases, and the performance tactus may be either the breve or the semibreve depending on the skill and preferences of the singers.

The semibreve tactus is thus divided into one minim of downward motion (thesis), which I will call the downbeat in the discussion that follows, and one minim of upward motion (arsis), which I will call the upbeat. I use these terms advisedly, in order to clarify the connection between Mocquereau's chant theory and the modern theorization of sixteenth-century rhythm. Boone argues that using terms such as "downbeat" is inappropriate in discussions of the rhythm of mensural notation because of the connection to modern conceptions of meter.[48] Since it is precisely those conceptions that Mocquereau attacks, I adopt the terms downbeat and upbeat as translations of thesis and arsis respectively, with the understanding that the downbeat has no presumed connection with dynamic stress.

Most modern editions place barlines before each breve *initium*, so that the measures of the modern edition correspond to the timespan of the theoretical tactus in the cut-C mensuration. Since the compositional and performance tactus do not necessarily correspond to the theoretical one, it is usually safe to assume a compositional tactus of a semibreve, which makes both the first and third minims of each measure downbeats and the second and fourth minims upbeats, in the sense of tactus motions. As we will see, some differences in quality between the two downbeats of each measure—that is between breve *initia* and semibreve-max *initia*—are often observable. The recurring motion of the tactus and the alternation of down and up bear a clear resemblance to the more modern concept of the measure, and this resemblance is reinforced by standard editorial practice. This raises the question of the relationship between tactus and accent, which has often been conflated with the question of tactus and meter. Following Mocquereau, I will focus on the first of these questions as it relates to the grammatical accent of Latin.[49]

Word Accent and Mensural Placement

Knud Jeppesen, in the classic work on Palestrina's musical style, provides a good introduction to the question of text accentuation and tactus in sixteenth-century music.[50] Jeppesen points out that in sixteenth-century style, there is a marked

[48]Graeme Boone, "Marking Mensural Time," *Music Theory Spectrum*, 22, no. 1 (2000), 6. Boone prefers the more neutral term *initium* (plural *initia*), referring to the point in time that commences a note of a certain length within the hierarchical mensural framework. What I am calling downbeats are semibreve *initia*, while the upbeats are minim *initia* but not semibreve *initia*. In DeFord's terms, we may categorize a beat by the highest mensural value of which it marks the beginning, so the upbeats are minim-max *initia* because they do not mark the beginning of a semibreve in the mensural framework.

[49]In discussing the setting of individual words in polyphonic style, the uncertainty of the notation of text underlay limits us to certain periods and certain kinds of text. The style of the later sixteenth century is more syllabic, allowing for more certainty in the placement of particular syllables. This is especially true in longer texts, such as the Gloria or the Credo of the Mass, which are typically set in a more syllabic style than other texts, such as the Kyrie and the Sanctus.

[50]Knud Jeppesen, *The Style of Palestrina and the Dissonance* (New York: Dover, 1970).

difference in the way dissonance is handled on downbeats and upbeats, since all non-suspension dissonances occur only on the upbeat, while all suspensions occur on the downbeat.[51] This leads Jeppesen to the conclusion that the downbeat is accented or strong, while the upbeat is unaccented or weak; in other words, the standard editorial practice has real metrical meaning analogous to the modern conception, owing to the different melodic and contrapuntal treatment of downbeats and upbeats. In text setting, however, this does not always lead to a coincidence between accented syllables and downbeats.

Figure 7 shows an excerpt drawn by Jeppesen from the Gloria of Palestrina's four-voice *Missa sine nomine* (only the soprano, altus, and tenor are shown, as the bass is resting in this passage), in which the accented syllables of the lower two parts do not coincide with the downbeats. Jeppesen writes, "There is no reason to suspect that Palestrina is guilty here of such a careless declamation as: 'prŏptēr măgnām glŏrĭām tŭām.'"[52] Jeppesen proposes an alternative barring for the altus in this excerpt, shown in Figure 8, stating that with this barring, "Everything falls naturally into its place, and the melody accurately follows the stress

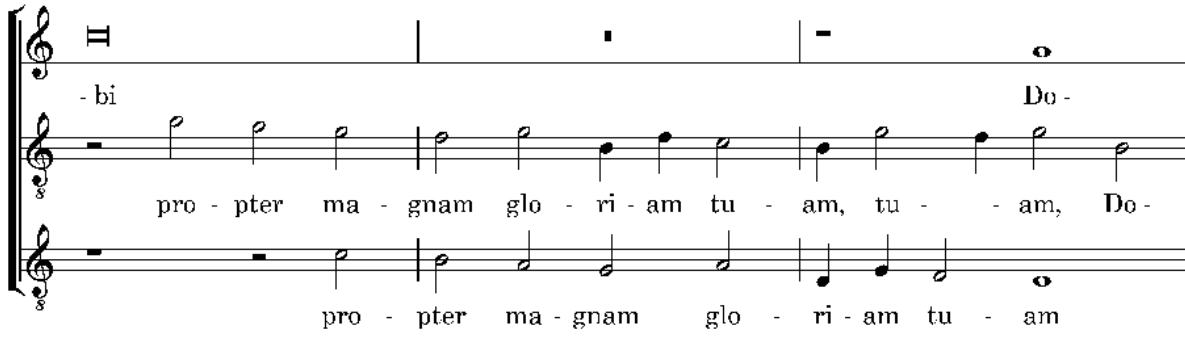

Figure 7. Excerpt from Palestrina, Missa sine nomine, *Jeppesen, p. 21.*

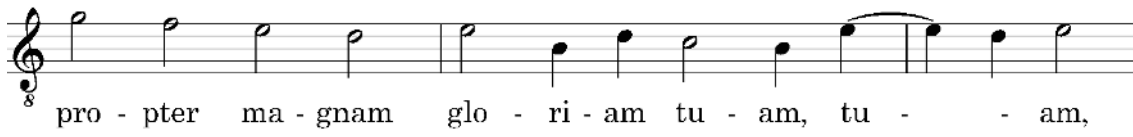

Figure 8. A hypothetical rebarring of the altus, Jeppesen, p. 23.

[51]Ibid., 23. For the sake of clarity, I am using my own proposed terminology of downbeat and upbeat, which Jeppesen does not use. He speaks first of odd-numbered minims and even-numbered minims and later of "strong" and "weak" parts of the measure.

[52]Ibid., 22. Jeppesen uses the scansion symbols for long and short syllables interchangeably with the concept of accented and unaccented syllables.

of the text."[53] This shifting of the barlines is possible because the passage has only one instance of a downbeat-type dissonance, just before the end of the phrase in the suspension in the altus.

Given the conflict between the accentual pattern of this voice and the tendency of the style more broadly to treat downbeats and upbeats differently, Jeppesen proposes a model of listening where contradictions between the "macro" rhythm, which corresponds to the tactus and the regular pattern of barlines, and the "micro" rhythm, which corresponds to the individual words in each voice, are a feature adding to the complexity of Palestrina's style.[54] In performance, he recommends a light touch with regard to the stress accent of Latin in order to minimize the disturbance to the listener.[55]

Jeppesen's ideas about the relationship of accent to barlines are widespread. Boone surveys other modern theories of tactus, which generally refrain from equating the perception of tactus with the experience of meter.[56] Boone shows, however, that the alignment of voices (like the dissonance treatment cited by Jeppesen) gives a privileged place to semibreve *initia* and to higher-level *initia* as well. As a result, he cautiously suggests some analogy between tactus and meter, even as he is careful to avoid terminology with too much modern baggage. Boone stops short of discussing the way word accent enters the picture, but elsewhere he suggests that in French texts with an alternation between accented and unaccented syllables, these tend to fall on the downbeat and upbeat respectively.[57]

In discussing Palestrina's treatment of words, DeFord offers a view that is more flexible than Jeppesen's and quite close, as we shall see, to Mocquereau's view:

> Accented syllables are usually set to longer notes than unaccented syllables, which may or may not be aligned with stronger mensural positions than the shorter notes that follow them. In a series of equal minims, however, accented syllables fall on semibreve *initia* and unaccented syllables on minim-max *initia* about 80–90 percent of the time. Agogic accents that are independent of the semibreve *initia* lead to irregular and constantly shifting groups of minims within phrases. Semibreve *initia* are always audible, however, and final notes of phrases fall on semibreve *initia* whether or not they are supported by cadences.[58]

In this context, "agogic accent" refers to the emphasis felt when hearing a relatively long duration. The last part of DeFord's statement suggests that Jeppesen's rebarring in Figure 8 is incorrect, since the last note shown is a phrase ending and is supported by a cadence.[59] Jeppesen's realignment means that the cadence falls on an

[53]Ibid., 23.

[54]Ibid., 28.

[55]Ibid., 29–30.

[56]Boone, "Marking Mensural Time," 26, n. 44.

[57]DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration, and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 105.

[58]Ibid., 376.

[59]By the term cadence, I mean a vertical octave between two parts at a phrase ending, approached by contrary motion from the nearest imperfect consonance and usually preceded by a suspension in one of the parts. This describes the situation between the lower two parts in Figure 7.

upbeat, so the accentuation is improved with respect to downbeats and accents at the expense of the shape of the phrase. DeFord's formulation makes better sense of the passage in Figure 7; the most rhythmically salient feature of the duet is that the phrase ends on a semibreve *initia*, with the accented syllables falling into the 10–20 percent of cases where they do not coincide with the downbeats.[60]

Looking at late sixteenth-century polyphonic style more broadly, we see an extension of the principles relating accent and tactus to even more mensural levels. Sometimes this yields a proportion of non-coincidence between accent and downbeat even higher than the figure given by DeFord.

[60]An alternative and slightly more complicated approach, suggested to me directly by DeFord in relation to this passage, is to consider the minims as grouping into "measures" of three in the approach to cadence, thus ignoring the metrical implications of the periodic down-up motion of the *tactus*.

Mocquereau's claims about the placement of the final syllable of a phrase on the thesis accord well with the surviving music. By formulating ideas about meter, with regular periodicity and regular downbeats, Mocquereau also enters into a wider theoretical discourse that describes many types of music outside of the more specialized realm of plainchant.

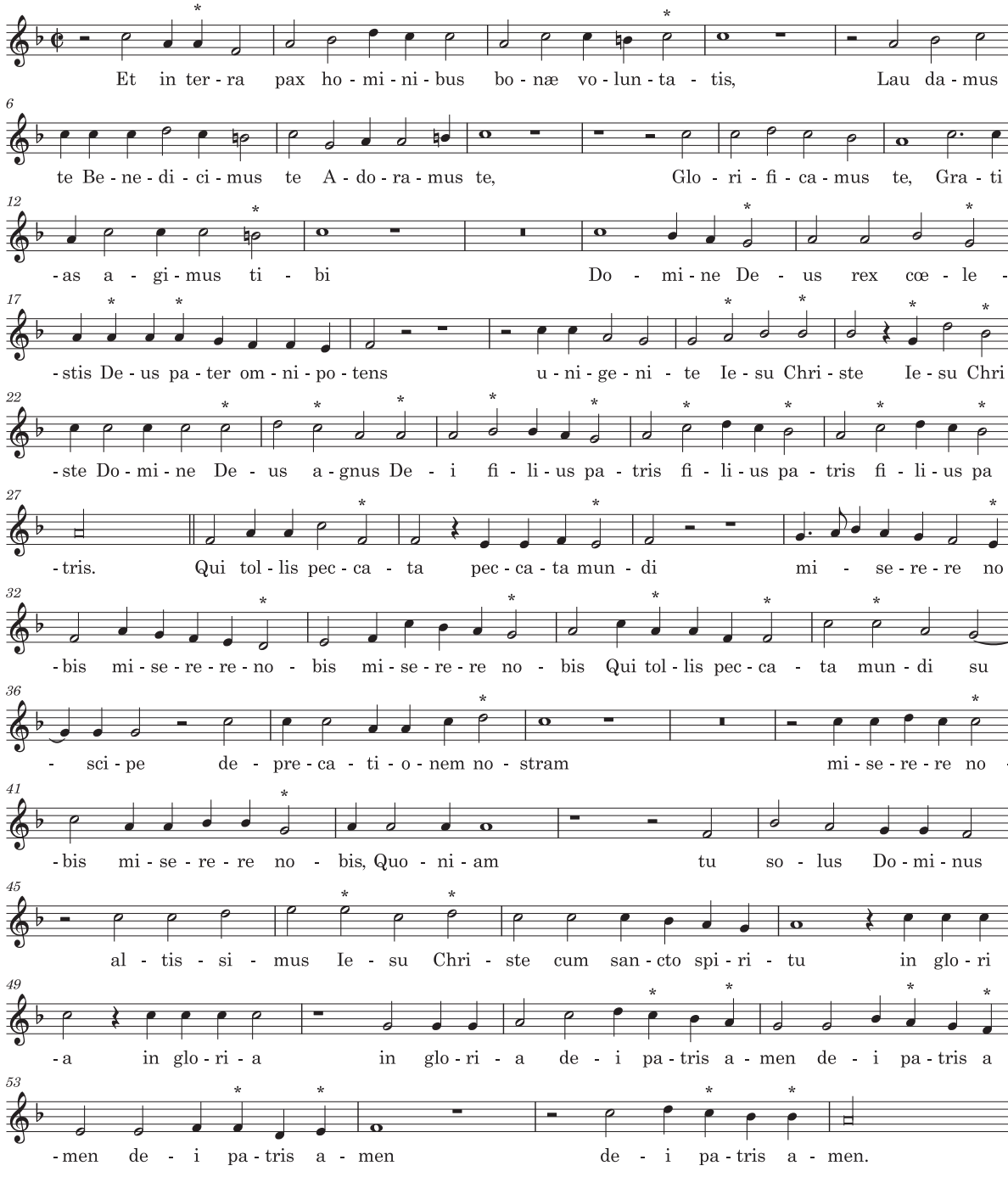

Figure 9. Discantus primus from Gallus's Gloria, Missa super Ich stund an einem Morgen.

Figure 9 shows an excerpt from a five-voice Mass setting by the Slovenian composer Jacobus Gallus (1550–1591), first published in 1580. For reasons of space, I show only one of the two soprano parts, but the analysis that follows would apply equally well to any of the other voices. The punctuation in Figure 9 is that of the original edition. The accentuation of the text is as follows, with bracketed sections indicating text not sung by this voice part:

[Glória in excélsis Deo] Et in terra pax homínibus bonæ voluntátis. Laudámus te. Benedícimus te. Adorámus te. Glorificámus te. Grátias ágimus tibi [propter magnam glóriam tuam.] Dómine Deus, Rex cæléstis, Deus Pater omnípotens. [Dómine Fili] unigénite, Iesu Christe. Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Fílius Patris. Qui tollis peccáta mundi, miserére nobis. Qui tollis peccáta mundi, súscipe deprecatiónem nostram. Qui sedes ad déxteram Patris, miserére nobis. Quóniam [tu solus Sanctus.] Tu solus Dóminus. Tu solus Altíssimus, Iesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spíritu, in glória Dei Patris. Amen.

Figure 9 follows the standard editorial convention of placing the bars before each breve *initium*. As we shall see, the analysis below will confirm the aptness of this choice. The style is overwhelmingly syllabic, with only a single syllable in m. 31 lasting for more than one note. Given the high frequency of syllables set to semiminims, it is likely that the performance tactus here is a divided semibreve that marks each minim distinctly, or even possibly the minim itself. But periodicity at higher levels—the semibreve and the breve—are observable as well, so that at least three levels of metric hierarchy are present. I have marked with a star every time the accented syllable falls on a less "downward" part of the measure than the syllable that follows; that is, I mark cases where the note of the accented syllable coincides with a shorter maximum value of *initium* than the following syllable.[61] I have also excluded cases of syncopation, as in mm. 6 and 7, or cases of DeFord's "agogic accent," where the accented syllable coincides with a lower-level *initium* than the unaccented syllable, but the accented syllable is longer than the unaccented one. In this example, the upbeat accent happens quite frequently, raising the question of whether this is faulty declamation or whether the downbeats have any meaning.

Table 1: Downbeats and Words in Gallus's Gloria

Breve *initia*	
Final, unstressed syllable of a word or sense unit	32
No attack	12
Monosyllable at the end of a sense unit	5
Accented syllable	3
Secondary accent	2
Neutral syllable	1
Monosyllable beginning a sense unit	1
Semibreve-max *initia*	
Accented syllable	16
No attack	16
Final, unstressed syllable	14
Neutral syllable	9
Secondary syllable	1

The accentual implications of the tactus are clarified if we start instead from the principle of phrase endings landing on downbeats. This excerpt lasts for fifty-six measures, divided into two sections of twenty-seven and twenty-nine measures. This gives us 112 downbeats: fifty-six breve *initia* and fifty-six semibreve-max *initia*. Table 1 shows the syllable placement on each of these downbeats. The function

[61]This mark is adapted from various writings of Mocquereau.

of each of these downbeats and the differentiation between them is striking. At the level of the breve *initia*, there are forty-four measures with an attack on the downbeat. Of those forty-four, thirty-seven are endings of either words or sense units that end with a monosyllable (e.g., *laudamus te*). It is clear that the idea of the downbeat of the measure as a "strong" beat is in constant conflict with the text declamation. The situation is different with the semibreve-max *initia*. Here, accented syllables, including secondary accents, occur in just under half of the measures with an attack on this beat—seventeen out of forty. This analysis shows the emergence of a clear differentiation between beats on the level of the breve or notated measure. But the differentiation is one in which the notated downbeat overwhelmingly performs an ending function and coincides with a weak final syllable in Latin. Accented syllables happen on downbeats of the semibreve tactus (the semibreve *initia*), but only rarely with the breve *initia*. The complex layering of metric levels, which do not correspond to a simplistic view of accented downbeats, is typical of many of Gallus's contemporaries, even as the coincidence of weak final syllables with downbeats is a feature of sixteenth-century sacred style more broadly.

Mocquereau's View

Mocquereau's view of rhythm in the sixteenth century was one of freedom with regard to the placement of the accented syllable within the measure: "The religious masters of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were not yet subject to the bondage of the strong beat; and the further back we go, the more evidence we have that religious polyphonic music rejected the obligatory concordance of the Latin accent and the so-called strong beat."[62] The governing principle is not an alignment of downbeat with accent but an alignment of downbeat with ending function. For Mocquereau, this is because each phrase or phrase member constitutes a rhythm, in the same sense in which he uses that term with Gregorian chant—a motion ending with repose on the thesis or downbeat.[63] The composer has complete freedom to lengthen the notes preceding the arrival on the phrase-ending downbeat, so that the accented syllables may or may not correspond to downbeats as well. For Mocquereau, the position of the accent is secondary to the position of the final note. To put this into Mocquereau's specialized terminology, the individual words may be word-beats (with the final syllable on the upbeat) or word-rhythms (with the final syllable on the downbeat), but the phrase itself is always a rhythm, in that it always reaches its conclusion with the repose that comes with the downbeat.[63]

Mocquereau's formulation provides a way to think about the phrase in sixteenth-century style that accords well with the way I experience those phrases in singing. Indeed, much of Mocquereau's theorization of Gregorian rhythm can be applied to the experience of polyphonic rhythm, and it sidesteps some of the concerns about the perception of meter raised by Boone and

[62]"Les maîtres religieux des xve, xvie et xviie siècles ne subissaient pas encore la servitude du temps fort ; et plus on remonte vers les siècles passés, plus on a de preuves que la musique polyphonique religieuse repoussait la concordance obligatoire de l'accent latin et du prétendu temps fort." Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, 2: 628.

[63]Ibid., 637.

the authors he cites. Questions of meter and tactus are difficult and have always been the subject of controversy, but my conclusion in the remaining paragraphs is an attempt to describe the experience of tactus in sixteenth-century music, using terms drawn from Mocquereau.

The tactus is a motion (physical or imagined) of down and up that measures time in polyphonic music. The downbeat or thesis is the place of repose and natural length, while the upbeat or arsis is the place of impulse, energy, and lightness. The accented syllable may fall freely on either the down or the up portions of the tactus, as the function of these parts has little to do with the phenomenon of emphasis or accent. Phrase endings tend, as a rule, toward the downbeat. By placing attacks primarily on downbeats—as is typical at the beginning of a piece or to highlight particular words—composers increase the relative repose of the phrase, while energetic phrases usually contain more attacks on upbeats, often including syncopation, which we can think of as a durational accent beginning on an arsis. Such upbeat-beginning writing is frequently featured in later sections of a piece. We do not feel the downbeat as strong in and of itself, since the perception of intensity is driven by the word accentuation. Many downbeats are actually arrival points on weak final syllables, and this does not indicate any exceptional subversion of an accentual metric framework. Indeed, the weak final syllable of a phrase or a piece achieves a sense of repose primarily by coinciding with the downbeat.

Most of this way of thinking is formulated in ways influenced by Mocquereau's theory of word accent, but it intuitively connects with how I have long felt the rhythm of sixteenth-century polyphony to work as a performer. It is primarily for this reason that I have been drawn to Mocquereau's writings. While Mocquereau's observations about Renaissance rhythm are included in his theory primarily to bolster his claims about Gregorian rhythm, they are actually founded on a more solid historical basis than his more speculative arguments about Gregorian chant. The tactus is a real historical term, with a real and well-established motion of arsis and thesis. Mocquereau's claims about the placement of the final syllable of a phrase on the thesis accord well with the surviving music. By formulating ideas about meter, with regular periodicity and regular downbeats, Mocquereau also enters into a wider theoretical discourse that describes many types of music outside of the more specialized realm of plainchant. ❖

While Mocquereau's observations about Renaissance rhythm are included in his theory primarily to bolster his claims about Gregorian rhythm, they are actually founded on a more solid historical basis than his more speculative arguments about Gregorian chant.

Practical Suggestions for Increasing Beauty in the Audible and Visible Aspects of the Liturgy

Attention to church acoustics, amplification, and altar furnishings improves not only the sound of sacred music but also restores beauty to the liturgy.

by Maria Balducci and Maximilian Van Hecke

As the music of the Catholic Church is slowly making a return to its roots of Gregorian chant and the sacred polyphony that organically blossomed from it, one must wonder if this music belongs in many of the churches built in the last half-century. On a theological level, it unquestionably does. On a practical level, however, can the beauty of this music, which inspires us to lift our mind and hearts to heavenly thoughts, be heard, understood, appreciated, and prayed in churches that simply are not beautiful?

As utilitarianism and simplicity became the focus of architecture in the mid- to late-twentieth century, many churches built during this period in the United States inherited these characteristics. The beauty inherent in the idea of a church building being a sacred temple where God dwells in our midst as Christ his Son came to dwell in our midst, where the angels and saints replete in glory gather around the banquet table of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, fell away dramatically. For many church musicians today, their church does not look beautiful or support sacred music by its architecture.

Sacrosanctum Concilium states: "The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care."[1] Regarding church art and architecture, it similarly states: "she has brought into being a treasury of art which must be very carefully preserved."[2] These two integral parts of the liturgy, the central gathering of Catholics to pray and praise God together, are wholly intertwined. The sacred music of chant and polyphony simply cannot attain the fullness of its purpose without a beautiful church in which the music lives and breathes.

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[1]Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), ¶114 <https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>.

[2]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶123.

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Given current limitations in church architecture, we must think creatively with the church about how to move towards the goal of a fully integrated liturgy in which the faithful both see and hear beauty. Dietrich von Hildebrand's insight into the visible and audible aspects of beauty provides an excellent basis for the importance of beauty. He states:

> This higher beauty of form in its quality transcends by far the sphere of these objects. It is a great mystery that God has entrusted to visible and audible capacities: to be able to place before us sublime, spiritual qualities, a beauty that, in its quality, reflects God's world, and that speaks of this higher transfigured world. The function of the senses and of the visible and audible capacities in this is of a modest, humble kind; they are a pedestal, a mirror for something much higher.[3]

The audible and the visible combine to create not just sensory or pleasurable beauty, but together create a higher beauty of form. In what follows, we will discuss practical steps that a musician can take toward implementing this beauty of form, through both the audible and the visible.

Audible Beauty

Improving the Acoustics of Your Church

One of the most significant obstacles church musicians face today is poor reverb. Acoustician Dennis Fleischer describes reverb, or reverberation time, as "the quality of sustain that occurs in large hard-surfaced spaces."[4] When speaking of reverb, we can distinguish between a dry acoustic (short reverb) and a wet acoustic (long reverb). The level of reverb is usually measured using the RT60, which is the amount of time it takes for the volume of a sound to decay by sixty decibels after the sound source has stopped. An RT60 of one second is very dry, allowing for clear speech but little reverb.[5] An RT60 of 1.5–2.5 seconds allows for some reverb and good speech clarity, while 3.5 seconds allows for even better reverb but begins to strain

The audible and the visible combine to create not just sensory or pleasurable beauty, but together create a higher beauty of form.

[3]Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Beauty in the Light of the Redemption* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2019), pp. 14–15.

[4]Dennis Fleischer, "An Acoustician's View: Acoustics for Congregational Singing," in *Acoustics for Liturgy: A Collection of Articles of The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada,* Meeting House Essays, No. 2 (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1991), 11.

[5]Larson Davis, "Understanding RT60 in Room Acoustics" <http://larsondavis.com/learn/building-acoustics/Reverberation-Time-in-Room-Acoustics>.

speech clarity.[6] Large cathedrals may have an RT60 as high as eleven seconds.[7]

As an acoustician interested in church congregational singing, Fleischer recommends cultivating a longer, wetter reverb, since "reverberation is a major factor for enhancing the quality of the ordinary voice in worship environments."[8] When we sing in a dry acoustic, the sound stops quickly in front of us, rather than reflecting and traveling through the church and being lifted together upward toward heaven. There is also a very real effect of self-consciousness and discomfort when singing in a church that absorbs the sound: only one's individual voice is heard in a dry room, rather than the voices of the congregation blending and uniting in prayer.

To increase reverb, Fleischer recommends using only "a minimum of sound-absorbing material."[9] Many materials used in churches cause this deadening of sound through absorption. The USCCB lists several of these materials: "sound-absorbing building materials include carpet, porous ceiling tiles, soft wood, untreated soft stone, cast concrete or cinder block, and padded seating. Avoiding excessive use of such materials makes it easier to achieve the ideal of many voices united in song."[10] Other common culprits include fabrics, tapestries, drapes, felt banners: anything that is not a hard surface and absorbs sound rather than reflecting it.

One should consider simply removing unnecessary items such as tapestries from walls, banners, drapes, or pew cushions. These materials often look outdated and tend to dirty easily, in addition to being sound absorbers. In terms of structural materials, such as brick, concrete, ceiling tiles, and soft wood, one can consider applying a shellac finish, which is a simple and inexpensive way to close the pores of porous materials and cause more reflection of sound. While shellac is usually used on porous wood, it can also be used on drywall, tile, or porous brick. This should be considered for the ceiling as well, particularly if there is not the desired height of the ceiling to help produce a vertical resonance and draw the sound upward.

The removal of carpet, while certainly a financial and logistical issue, is something that absolutely must be considered. Practically, carpets stain easily and need lots of cleaning, and they are a greater potential hazard in the presence of incense and candles, and musically, they steal the reflective and uplifting sound that belongs in a church building. Even spiritually, they remove the sense of feeling as though one is in a holy and sacred space, as carpet is a very utilitarian, ordinary sort of material meant to deaden noise. The floor should ideally be both visually beautiful and acoustically reflective. If it can only be one of the two, it should be the latter. As Scott Reidel states:

> The floor is typically the building surface that is largest and nearest to worshipers and musicians. It is important that the floor be reflective of sound, particularly

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[6]Ibid.

[7]T. H. Lewers and J. S. Anderson, "Some Acoustical Properties of St. Paul's Cathedral, London," *Journal of Sound and Vibration,* 92, no. 2 (January 1984), 285.

[8]Fleischer, "An Acoustician's View," 11.

[9]Ibid., 12.

[10]United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sing to the Lord* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007), ¶103.

> near musicians, since it provides the first opportunity for much sound energy to be reinforced. Carpet is an inappropriate floor covering in the worship space; it is acoustically counterproductive to the needs of the worshipers.[11]

There is a great variety of acoustically reflective flooring options, which include slate, quarry tile, sealed wood, stone, ceramic tile, terrazzo, marble, and even polished concrete. These are all longer-lasting options than carpet, and they offer a more beautiful and dignified space.

Another consideration in terms of reverb is a major, unavoidable one. Fleischer explains: "in most churches, the single greatest sound absorber is the congregation itself" because "the fully clothed person provides about as much sound absorption as four to six square feet of conventional acoustical ceiling tile."[12] It is important to consider that people absorb sound and thus shorten reverb. Therefore, much consideration should be given to increasing all potential for adding reverb within the church, as a full congregation will absorb much of it; this is easy to forget when there is a small number of people in the church.

The placement of the instruments and musicians can also improve the sound. Is the organ (or piano) and choir in a corner, on a carpet, or under a low ceiling? Could they be moved to a loft or to a better location where the sound comes from above or from behind, encouraging the congregation to sing with them, rather than singing at them? Is there only an older piano or an electronic organ not suitable for the church building or incapable of filling the space? A small pipe organ could be purchased without tremendous expense from online stores such as Organ Clearing House.[13] The church pianist might take organ lessons and play organ for Mass, as "the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument that adds a wonderful splendor to the church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up the spirit to God and to higher things."[14]

Suggestions for Musicians

There is not much getting around the fact that the church's treasury of sacred music, Gregorian chant and polyphony, will sound stale and dry in many churches built in the past fifty years. There are a few practical ways, however, to help make this music sound a bit more sublime and inspired. First, a soft and simple instrumental accompaniment will help to provide a more continuous sound to support the chant. Second, a singer or choir should ensure that there is a strong rhythmic

The placement of the instruments and musicians can also improve the sound.

[11]Scott R. Riedel, *Acoustics in the Worship Space* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), p. 17.

[12]Fleischer, "An Acoustician's View," 12.

[13]See for example, www.organclearinghouse.com.

[14]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶120.

flow, accentuating certain syllables, elongating vowels, and being careful of breath placement, which are all practical musical elements that will have a positive effect in a dry acoustic space. Third, if there is a choir, rotating parts of the chant between men and women and ending with them together is a lovely way to provide contrast and richness within a chant or hymn. One should always carefully rehearse unison *a cappella* singing; every choir must be able to create a beautiful unison sound before preparing anything else. Lastly, familiarity is key, especially if an unfamiliar chant or hymn, particularly if in Latin, is introduced. Choosing one or two simple chants or simpler polyphonic pieces and singing them regularly will allow one's familiarity, comfort, and experience of them to take precedence over the fact that it may sound dry or different.

Limiting Amplification

Now we turn to the contentious issue of electronic sound amplification or "sound systems" for short. The mid-twentieth century brought about the widespread adoption of sound systems in Catholic churches. The reason for this perceived need for sound systems has roots going back several decades. The liturgical movement that began in the nineteenth century brought a greater emphasis on liturgical clarity and active participation. As Pope Pius XII recounts in his encyclical *Mediator Dei*:

> The majestic ceremonies of the sacrifice of the altar became better known, understood and appreciated. With more widespread and more frequent reception of the sacraments, with the beauty of the liturgical prayers more fully savored, the worship of the Eucharist came to be regarded for what it really is: the fountain-head of genuine Christian devotion. Bolder relief was given likewise to the fact that all the faithful make up a single and very compact body with Christ for its Head, and that the Christian community is in duty bound to participate in the liturgical rites according to their station.[15]

This emphasis on the faithful's participation in the Mass had been growing for some time, beginning with Pope Pius X's

The mid-twentieth century brought about the widespread adoption of sound systems in Catholic churches. The reason for this perceived need for sound systems has roots going back several decades.

[15]Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy, *Mediator Dei* (1947), ¶5 <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei.html>.

coining of the term "active participation."[16] Popes Pius XI and Pius XII both developed the term further and more forcefully,[17] until it came to even fuller expression in the Second Vatican Council's documents *Sacrosanctum Concilium*[18] and *Musicam Sacram*.[19]

With this emphasis on active participation growing in the first half of the twentieth century, we see a call for more transparency and lucidity within the liturgy. The occurrence of dialogue Masses increased, as did liturgical study and translations.[20] In 1945, liturgical scholar Fr. Gerard Ellard, S.J. advocated for the use of microphones at the altar during Mass. He said that up to that point amplification had only been used for preaching from the pulpit, not at the altar.[21] He proposed: "just as microphones were put in the pulpits, wherever they were needed or even half-needed, so microphones must be put on the altars wherever needed at all."[22] In 1958, the Sacred Congregation for Rites, with the approval of Pope Pius XII, weighed in on the use of sound systems. After prohibiting almost entirely the use of "automatic instruments and machines" such as "the automatic organ, phonography, radio, tape or wire recorders, and other similar machines," the Sacred Congregation allowed the use of loudspeakers, i.e., sound systems:

> Loudspeakers may be used even during liturgical functions, and private devotions for the purpose of amplifying the living voice of the priest-celebrant or the commentator, or others who, according to the rubrics or by order of the pastor, are expected to make their voices heard.[23]

At this time, sound systems were used primarily for amplification of speech. Soon they would see nearly universal use in the amplification of sacred music, and this is where most of the negative consequences for the liturgy appear.

The acoustic priorities of electronically amplified speech often conflict with the priorities of musical performance. As discussed earlier, congregational and choral singing benefit immensely from a long, wet acoustic. A good reverb allows a choir to hear itself, evaluate its sound, and adjust accordingly. A poor reverb, however, does nothing to help a choir, since a longer acoustic tends to blend the sound of a choir and hide mistakes. A good acoustic covers a multitude of ills.

On the other hand, sound systems typically benefit from a short, dry acoustic

[16]For a discussion of the history and practical implications of the term "active participation," see Edward Schaefer, *Catholic Music Through the Ages: Balancing the Needs of a Worshipping Church* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2008), pp. 201–3.

[17]Schaefer, *Catholic Music,* 201.

[18]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶14.

[19]Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, *Musicam Sacram* (1967), ¶15 < https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_instr_ 19670305_musicam-sacram_en.html>.

[20]Robert Cabié, *History of the Mass*, tr. Lawrence J. Johnson (Washington, D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1992), pp. 118–20.

[21]Gerald Ellard, "Microphones for Altars," *Orate Fratres*, 19, no. 12 (November 1945), 544.

[22]Ellard, "Microphones," 546.

[23]The Sacred Congregation for Rites, Instruction on Sacred Music and Sacred Liturgy, *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia* (1958), ¶72 <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_25121955_musicae-sacrae.html>.

that absorbs the sound from the choir and gives no aural feedback to the singers. Electronic sound amplification is a constant battle against reverb because reverb increases the volume of a given sound in the acoustic space.[24] Sound system designers and architects often choose to use sound-absorbing material to limit the reverb, making it easier to control the clarity of sound amplification. This emphasis on clarity over resonance and reverb is the central acoustic conflict between modern sound systems and resonant music in the liturgy.

In a church with a dry acoustic, it may seem necessary to use electronic sound amplification in order to project the sound of a choir, but this presents problems. For a choir amplified electronically in a dry acoustic space, any natural blend that might have occurred within a wetter acoustic is lost. The positioning of choristers relative to microphones quickly becomes a matter of undue importance. Some singers are loud while others are soft; others sing brightly while some sing darkly. A good choir director can, of course, work with the choir on choral balance to mitigate these differences, but microphones more often amplify those very differences rather than balance them.

In a space with longer reverb, however, the balance of individual voices, while somewhat dependent on individual positioning of singers, is hardly dependent on where choristers stand relative to each other. It helps to stand next to other members of your section, but that is a small factor for the overall balance and sound of the choir. A well-designed acoustic space with mostly hard surfaces and a long, resonant reverb aids a choir in self-corrective singing and in making the choral sound cohere within the space.

How might a sound system be designed or used in such a way as to aid sacred music rather than hinder it? How would one balance the church's promotion of active participation and its emphasis on lucidity and transparency of the liturgy, with the acoustic requirements for beautiful, resonant choral and congregational music? William Mahrt proposes an alternative to microphones and sound systems: "when the Mass is sung, there is no need for a microphone."[25] The sung Mass is the preferred mode of celebrating the Mass, as the Second Vatican Council stated in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: "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."[26] Mahrt argues that the singing of the Mass without a microphone "projects a sacred text throughout a large church in an elevated style suitable to the sacred," whereas "with a microphone, the priest slips into the rhetoric of the talking heads of television; the lector abandons the chanting of the lesson, and the style falls into the chatty, which does not suit the sacred."[27] Mahrt acknowledges that this solution is an ideal and that in practice we must often compromise: "even though the whole Mass be sung, the homily may need the microphone. Even though the lesson be sung, if it is not heard clearly, perhaps a microphone is necessary."[28] That said, he asserts that "this necessity stems mainly

[24]Fleischer, "An Acoustician's View," 11.

[25]William Mahrt, "Microphone," *Sacred Music*, 139, no. 2 (Summer 2012), 4.

[26]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶113.

[27]Mahrt, "Microphone," 5.

[28]Ibid., 6.

from the fact that our churches are consistently the subject of acoustical dampening."[29]

The way forward for sound systems seems to be limiting their use, as much as reasonably possible, simply to carefully chosen speech amplification. Fleischer acknowledges a tension between speech amplification and music amplification: "There will surely be incompatibilities among the major areas of the project [of church building]," and there "will even be disparities within these areas such as the conflicting acoustical requirement for speech and music."[30] That tension notwithstanding, he argues that "the acoustical characteristics for choir, organ and congregational singing are wholly compatible."[31] If the music can have a unified, integrated approach to amplification that utilizes primarily the natural, well-designed acoustics of the space, then a sound system may only be necessary to support speech. Fleischer envisions a "properly designed speech reinforcement system," which when used in tandem with natural music acoustics, "will provide the responsiveness necessary for the full range of liturgical oratory and actually enhance the richness and uniformity of speech distribution among the assembly."[32] This use of natural, well-designed acoustics with a substantial reverb combined with a sound system designed to reinforce only speech (when the Mass is not fully sung) may offer the best of both worlds: beautiful, natural music amplification and crisp, clear speech.

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Visible Beauty

A Responsibility of Music Directors

Beauty through the visible is equally as important and something for which a musician must accept responsibility; after all, a musician is a kind of artist, and artists all work together to share the gift of beauty. As Jem Sullivan discusses in *The Beauty of Holiness: Sacred Art and the New Evangelization*:

> The diminishing role and place of Christian art in liturgy, catechesis, and evangelization has occurred precisely at the moment when popular media culture, in content and medium, has become

[29]Ibid.

[30]Fleischer, "An Acoustician's View," 15.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid., 15–16.

> increasingly sensory and visual. Everyday life is infused with images, words and sounds aimed at engaging the mind, will, senses and emotions, while the daily or weekly experience of liturgy, catechesis, and evangelization is often bereft of beauty.[33]

The world offers many overwhelming and dazzling sensory experiences, such as films and live concerts. On the other hand, churches and religious art often present only bland and uninspired kitsch. And while mere imitation of secular practices because they are popular is no sound rule for liturgical practice, the sensory experience of profound beauty in and only in these secular forms is a massive failing on the part of the church.

Our audible *and* visual senses should be different from the chaos of the everyday world and should be overtaken in the house of God by all things beautiful and worthy; one does not make sense without the other—the audible works in harmony with the visual. Therefore, in addition to examining the church's acoustic qualities and the quality of sacred music, let us examine some practical ideas for increasing the visible beauty in a church, so that the church is an effective manifestation of tradition, a living and permanent organism.

First, what does it mean to call a church "beautiful"? As Duncan Stroik states in *The Church Building as a Sacred Place: Beauty, Transcendence, and the Eternal*, the sacred equals the beautiful:

> If we are open to the sacred, it will grip us as we approach the church, or even when we see its dome or spires from afar. Upon entering, the architecture will carry our eyes and then our hearts toward God, toward heaven. The material embodiment of the sacred will draw us out of ourselves by being beautiful, harmonious, and transcendent.[34]

Something beautiful awes us, and we can revel in it and are transformed by it; we want to know more about it and grow closer to it. Something beautiful is not forgotten but remains in our memory, a treasured part of our bodies and our spirits. When we walk into an objectively beautiful church, our minds are immediately drawn to God, and there are aspects and details within the church that teach us about our faith and lift us to the things of heaven and of God, above our earthly possessions. The church building, through its sacred music, art and architecture, needs to be an important way to teach and inform us of our faith and our beliefs through its existence (*lex orandi, lex credendi*).

While we have already discussed the importance of flooring material, which impacts a church not only audibly but also visually, the materials of the altar furnishings are even more significant. The altar, representing Jesus, the Living Stone (1 Peter 2:4), should be made of a precious and valuable stone. Is it a beautiful and permanent fixed altar? The tabernacle, the central crucifix, the ambo, and the baptismal font should all be worthy of its purpose

[33]Jem Sullivan, *The Beauty of Holiness: Sacred Art and the New Evangelization* (New Haven, Conn.: Knights of Columbus Supreme Council-Catholic Information Service, 2012), pp. 6–7.

[34]Duncan Stroik, *The Church Building as a Sacred Place: Beauty, Transcendence, and the Eternal* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2012), p. 5.

and beautiful to see. They should not represent current trends in materials or styles which only distract or become outdated but instead be timeless, representing Christ as the incarnation of eternity in time, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8).

The same ideas apply to other visual aspects of the church: the stations of the cross, artwork, statues, images. These should also serve as teaching tools of the Church, so that someone struck by their beauty might reflect: "I want to learn more about the saint because of this moving statue" or "I need to sit at this station and be with Veronica lovingly wiping the face of Jesus." Additionally, does the lighting for these pieces of artwork enrich their purpose? The lighting in a church (e.g., warmth and coolness of bulbs, focus of the lights, and chandeliers) can make a significant difference in the feeling of the sacred. And the most important lighting: does the church have beautiful, timeless stained glass? Not until you walk into a beautiful church with light coming through stained glass at just the right time of the day can you appreciate its importance and the connection between light, beauty, and holiness.

Many recently built churches simply lack any of this visual stimulation, whether the reasoning is the desire for simplicity, lack of finances, or simply a lack of knowledge. Acquiring sacred art to bring more beauty to the church without a huge financial burden can be as simple as visiting a storage facility for church supplies from closed or consolidated churches. Perhaps a meeting could be scheduled with a reputable Catholic church architect or artist, who could explore new ideas with the staff and with parishioners, as many not trained in the profession simply lack the awareness and the foresight needed. Sometimes simply a new coat or color of paint, contrasting colors, or stenciling can be methods to beautify an existing space. This extends, as well, to the outside of the church building. Is the landscaping around the church well-maintained? Is God's beauty in nature seen leading into the church, through flowers, trees, stone paths, benches, trimmed bushes? The outside should be an inviting welcome to the inside of the overwhelmingly beautiful church.

Not until you walk into a beautiful church with light coming through stained glass at just the right time of the day can you appreciate its importance and the connection between light, beauty, and holiness.

The placement of instruments and choirs can also be a visual consideration. While their placement is determined largely by acoustic and musical concerns, their visual impact must also be taken into account. Are they visually distracting, perhaps too close to the sanctuary, or facing directly at the congregation? The musical advantage of a choir loft with the sound coming from

behind and reaching over the heads of the congregation is complemented by its visual unobtrusiveness. Too often have we witnessed a prominently placed choir in which choristers do not visually match the reverence needed for the sanctuary. Removing the choir from obvious view, if possible, can prevent such distraction and, in turn, aid in focusing the choir's efforts on producing music that sounds beautiful.

Looking to the Future with Patient Endurance

Through all of these practical matters, which should be carefully considered, the words of church architect Art Lohsen must remain a foundation: "While the lack of beauty in most contemporary churches is being broadly lamented, the effort to restore beauty in the Church takes patient endurance."[35] For all the time, effort, logistical challenges, conversations, and difficulties that might be experienced in the effort to increase the beauty of a church in both its architecture and music, patient endurance must hold fast, with the goal of beauty and evangelization always in mind.

Furthermore, beauty, both visual and auditory, belongs not only in our Catholic churches but should be imprinted in the hearts and minds of the faithful. The beauty of God when manifested in the liturgy should enrapture one's whole being, leading to deeper union with God and others. For those Catholics who are already familiar with true sacred music and art and appreciate its beauty theologically and spiritually, they can receive many of its fruits whether they are praying in a beautiful cathedral or sitting in a dilapidated-shed-turned-church. But for the majority of Catholics, as well as non-Catholics, who might be searching for or striving for a deeper faith but are a bit lost in the midst, they truly need the combination, the harmony, of a beautiful church with beautiful sacred music and art. Even liturgically well-formed Catholics can benefit from beautiful churches and liturgies. For many church musicians today, our church does not look beautiful, and our church does not support sacred music. Beauty is mere decoration, and utility rules the day. But the church building, through its sacred music, art, and architecture, must teach and inform us of our faith and our beliefs through its existence (*lex orandi, lex credendi*).

While it is true that chant and polyphony simply will not sound as beautiful and transcendent in many modern churches, this in no way means that such churches should not have this music as their foundation. These forms are the music of the Church, and it is essential that they are an integral part of the liturgy. Well-designed, beautiful churches will allow true sacred music to flourish and shine with a beauty that glorifies God and edifies mankind. The music will in turn—hopefully—inspire the demand for a more beautiful church in which to live. Our sung prayers should rise like incense, and our liturgies should strive to be a living experience of heaven expressed sacramentally; beauty should thus surround us everywhere in God's temple. ❖

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[35]Art Lohsen, "The Need for Beautiful Churches," *Adoremus Bulletin*, Online Edition, June–July 2013, XIX, no. 4 <https://adoremus.org/2013/06/the-need-for-beautiful-churches>.

Repertory

Terra tremuit et quievit, Offertory for Easter in Chant and William Byrd's Polyphony

Byrd's use of tone painting for the trembling earthquake is memorable.

by William Mahrt

Occasionally a chant makes explicit depiction of something in the text. This is sometimes called "word painting," adopting a term for a figure of speech from rhetoric. In rhetoric this means using words to paint a vivid picture. By analogy, in music, the term is better "tone-painting," since the depiction is made with notes, or more precisely, with pitches, tones. In grammar, rules are obligatory, but in rhetoric, figures of speech are voluntary. Thus, in music when the text mentions ascending, often a composer sets this to a rising melody; this is not necessary but rather voluntary; it would be obtrusive if on every occurrence of the word, this rising pattern had to be used. While this depiction of ascent is quite frequently used, other opportunities for depiction are also sometimes used. A good example is in the offertory for Easter Sunday, *Terra tremuit*.

The text:

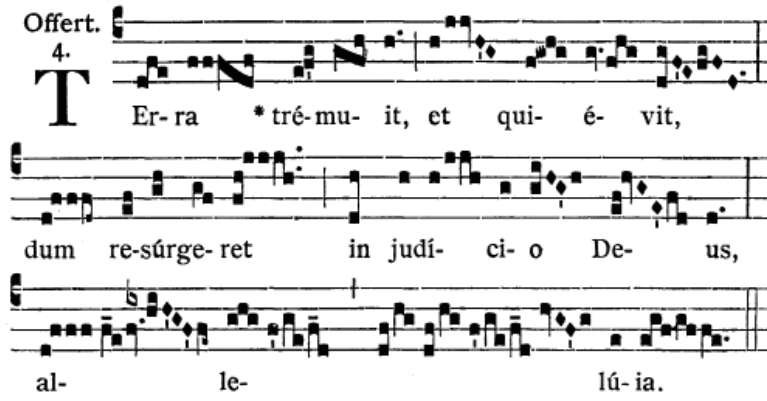
> Terra tremuit et quievit, dum resurgeret in judicio Deus, alleluia. *Ps. 75: 9–10*
>
> The earth trembled[1] and was still, when God arose in judgment, alleluia.

"Trembled" in the first line recalls the earthquake which followed the death of Christ, described in the Gospel of St. Matthew (27:50–51): "And Jesus again crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent."

Here is the chant which sets this text.

[1]This is the English translation of the Vulgate "tremuit"; the Rheims translation, both the original 1610 version and the Challoner revisions give "trembled," though most English translations give "feared."

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



Offertory for Easter Sunday, Terra tremuit.

One might expect that "trembled" would be the occasion for a vivid musical description, but this does not happen; the intonation of the chant is a typical modest rise from the final to the a reciting tone of the mode four of the chant; moreover, "quievit," which might be set to a less active motive, instead rises to a peak, with the highest note of the chant and the highest admissible tone in this mode. Even though the two phrases come from successive verses of the psalm, they form a typical parallelism, for the music of the following phrase repeats the beginning from the final of the mode. But now, it expresses rising a little more quickly on "resurgeret" to its peak. There follows a typical depiction of the text, since on "in judicio" there is a direct rise of a fifth followed by another rise to a third. This is a figure often found on texts which speak of judgment, and can easily be seen as the most evident aspect of tone painting in the piece. This rise of a fifth plus a third is entirely absent from the Old Roman version of this chant; this suggests that the text depiction occurred upon the importation of Roman chants to the North, when the subsequent revision of the chants frequently included text depiction.

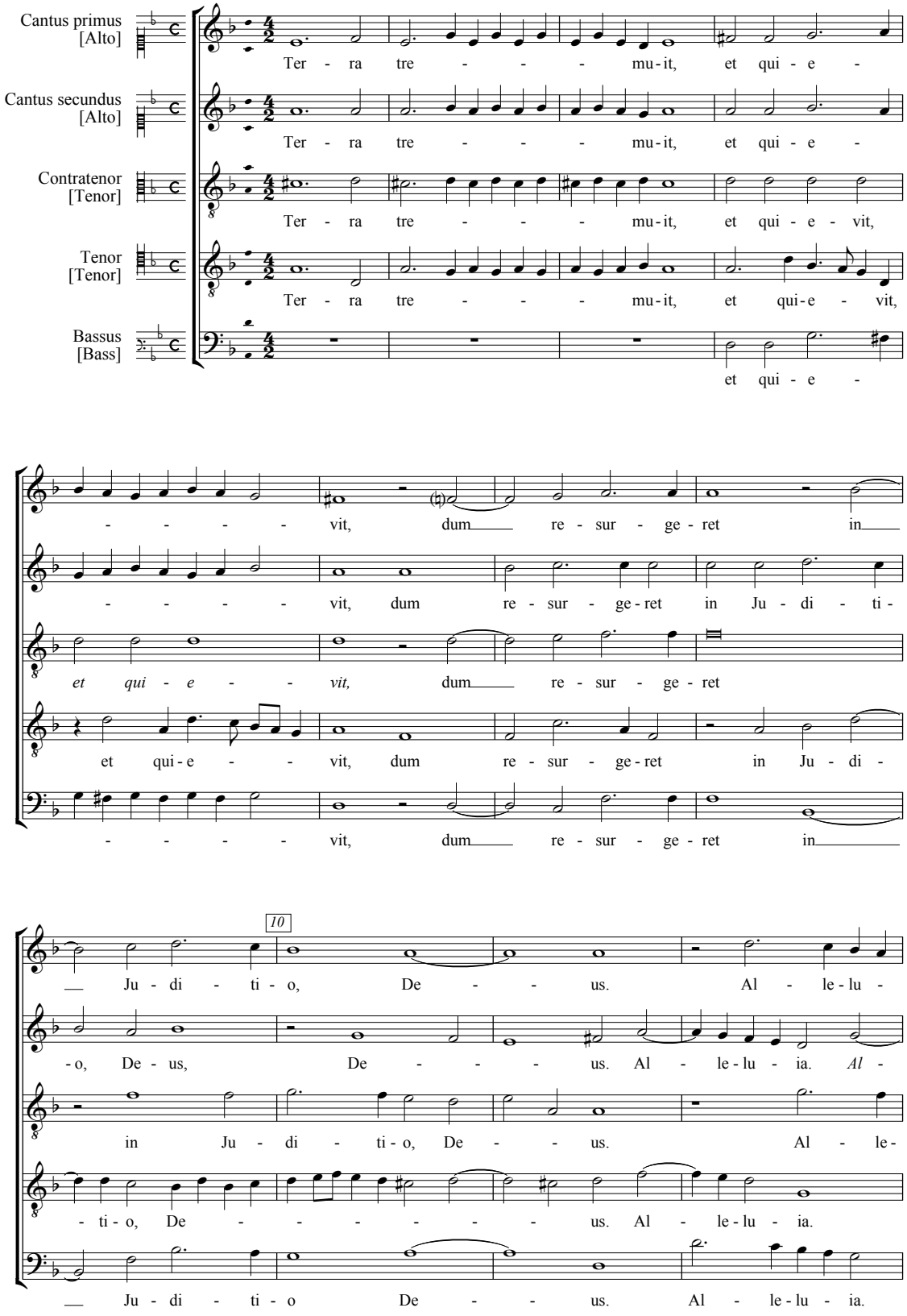
The voluntary character of the use of rhetorical figures is illustrated by the setting of the same text in polyphonic music by William Byrd. His offertory for Easter Sunday in the *Gradualia,* makes vivid depiction of "trembled" at the very outset of the piece. Five harmonic progressions are quickly alternated, effectively projecting the idea of trembling. This clearly evident depiction of the text stands as a confirmation of Byrd's own statement about his composition of music to sacred texts:

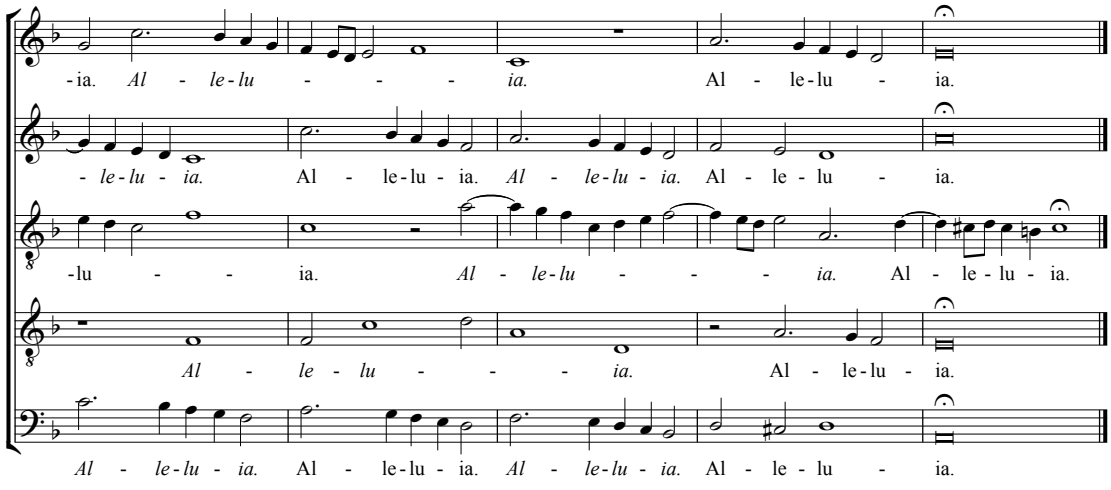
> There is such a profound and hidden power to sacred words, that to one thinking upon things divine and diligently and earnestly pondering them, the most suitable of all musical measures occur (I know not how) as of themselves, and suggest themselves spontaneously to the mind that is not indolent and inert.

His immediate response to "Terra tremuit" is to set the idea of the earthquake to a shaking passage. The following text, "dum resurgeret in judicio," is set to a rising imitative passage, which places "judicio" on the highest pitch of the piece. This is characteristic of Byrd's manner of composition, but his setting of the earthquake is what is most memorable in this piece. ❖

Terra tremuit

William Byrd (*c.*1540-1623)





Source: William Byrd: *Gradualia, seu cantionum sacrarum . . . Liber secundus* (1st edition, 1607, 2nd edition, 1610), no. 23. Edition by David Fraser, courtesy of Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL).

There is such a profound and hidden power to sacred words, that to one thinking upon things divine and diligently and earnestly pondering them, the most suitable of all musical measures occur (I know not how) as of themselves, and suggest themselves spontaneously to the mind that is not indolent and inert.

Commentary

Homily for Fall Workshop

Celebrating the Holy Eucharist as the church asks us to is a high priority for evangelization.

by Bishop Robert J. McManus

This homily was given by His Excellency, Bishop Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester, Massachusetts, at the closing Mass of the CMAA's fall workshop.

I would like to welcome, somewhat belatedly, all who have attended the last two days the Fall Sacred Music Workshop 2023 sponsored by the Church Music Association of America. I would also like to thank Msgr. James Moroney for allowing us to celebrate Mass in this magnificent church of St. Cecilia.

The Second Vatican Council teaches that the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. Sad to say, just this past week, I came across a disturbing statistic that in 2022 it was reported that only 17% of American Catholics attended Mass every Sunday, down from 24% of Catholics in 2019. This, my dear friends, is a serious pastoral problem because one cannot claim to live the Catholic life authentically without participating in and receiving the Holy Eucharist. In light of this disturbing statistic, the obvious question becomes: what are we to do? The answer I would offer this afternoon is quite simple: we are to celebrate the Holy Eucharist as the church asks us to do, with deep faith and devotion according to the Roman rite as handed on by the church's liturgical tradition.

On the day of a man's ordination to the sacred priesthood, the ordaining prelate asks the candidate the following question: "Do you resolve to celebrate faithfully and reverently, in accord with the Church's tradition, the mysteries of Christ, especially the Sacrifice of the Eucharist and the sacrament of Reconciliation, for the glory of God and the sanctification of the Christian people?" To which the candidate responds: "I do."

The celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is not the personal possession of the priest who can celebrate it as he chooses. To do so is clericalism of the first order. The Eucharist is the divine and sublime gift that our Lord and Savior gave to the church

His Excellency Robert J. McManus was installed as the fifth Bishop of Worcester in 2004. In 2008, he completed his term as the Chairman of the Committee on Education for the USCCB.

on the night before his sacred Passion. The Eucharist belongs to the church, to God's holy people, and is to be celebrated for the glory of God and the salvation of souls in a manner that is dignified and beautiful.

In my own name and in the name of the church I sincerely thank the Church Music Association of America for promoting throughout our country the solemn and reverent celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass which is, indeed, in the words of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, that "sacred banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and the hope of future glory is worthily given to us." Amen.

St. Cecilia Church
Leominster, Massachusetts
October 14, 2023
The Feast of St. Callistus, Pope and Martyr ❖

St. Cecilia Church, Leominster, Massachusetts

At the Blessing of the New Organ in St. Peter's Basilica

The new organ is a symbol of unity and the renewal of the Christian life.

by Pope St. John XXIII

This address was reported in L'Osservatore Romano, *September 27, 1962 (Italian text "Nel fervore di questa"). The translation was prepared by Rev. Austin Vaughan and published in the U.S. quarterly* The Pope Speaks *(vol. 8, no. 4, 1963). The blessing of a new 8,500-pipe organ, installed in the apse of St. Peter's, was the occasion of the Holy Father's talk. This organ was built by the Tamburrini Company of Crema, Italy, to accompany the existing organ of similar size installed ten years earlier. Thanks to* Adoremus, *which published a piece about this allocution some years ago.*

A New Organ for St. Peter's Basilica

Venerable Brethren, beloved sons.

In the midst of the fervor that surrounds us on this eve of the Council, the solemn and joyful liturgical ceremony which we have just concluded—the blessing of the new organ in the Vatican Basilica—was perfectly fitting. It shows how much We have at heart whatever concerns the beauty and splendor of the greatest temple in Christendom; and what pleasure and joy are stirred in Our heart by this expression of beauty and art which enriches it further.

The blessing of an organ is a sacred and memorable event that raises the Christian populace to a lovely and mystical exultation. And today, because the Basilica of St. Peter is concerned, it takes on a new and deeper significance.

Music, Most Spiritual of the Fine Arts

Here, in fact, within the majestic walls of the venerable temple that is the focal point of the devotion and the admiration of the faithful throughout the world, where the vital life of the Church can be seen and felt and where can be found matchless expressions of human genius—here, We say, it is only natural that music—the most spiritual of the fine arts—make its own contribution toward lifting men up to the throne of the most high, and toward suggesting to them sentiments of adoration, of exultation, of gratitude.

Effects of Organ Music

"Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus." Praise the Lord in His sanctuary. The Christian populace is led to these thresholds by the sound of the organ. Truly it is the king of sacred musical instruments; and as such it belongs to the temple in a very special way, for it is destined solely for the praises of the Lord. As the sacred rites unfold, it becomes spokesman for the feelings of all, for

their noblest and holiest flights. Its melodies make it easier for the mystical movements of the sacred event to penetrate into the depths of the soul: admiration of virtue or desire for it, resolutions of penance and mortification, a longing for a more intimate union with God, a pledge to struggle against evil, a foretaste of the happiness of heaven. In this way the soul opens wide to the mystical influences of grace.

Dome of St. Peter's Basilica

Oh, how well St. Augustine recalled these effects in his book of *Confessions*: "What tears were shed, as I felt myself embracing the heart of the sweet melody of the hymns and canticles that re-echo in thy church! What psalm-melodies entered my ears, and truth poured itself into my heart and stirred up the flame of affection, and I wept with consolation."[1]

Here you have the primary and most obvious significance of this ceremony today; and at this particular time, on the anxious eve of the Ecumenical Council, it takes on added importance.

We can see a gentle touch of Divine Providence in this coincidence.

Symbol and Prelude of Christian Renewal

It seems to Us that the Vatican basilica now is offering, in the more powerful sound of its organ, a quite effective symbol and prelude of that renewal of Christian life expected from the ecumenical sessions and taking its beginning from this temple.

Oh yes, the sweet and penetrating sound of the organ can well serve as a symbol of the life-giving breath of that spirit of the Lord that fills the whole world: "spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum, et hoc quod continet omnia scientiam habet vocis."[2] Its sound will undoubtedly help the Fathers of the Council feel the solemnity of the historical event; it will help the faithful to hear the rustle of new life that will be spreading through the Church; and it will cause more fervent prayers to well up in hearts—asking God that his Divine Spirit—We are always so happy to repeat this—renew "in our day the wonders of a kind of new Pentecost."[3]

A second thought suggested by St. Augustine comes to Us which expresses the wonderful function of an organ in the temple of God, and especially in St. Peter's.

Image of the Church

The Holy Doctor points out how the giving of a proper and ordered harmony to different musical sounds is an image of the well-governed city, where peace and order reign, thanks to the harmonious union of various elements: "diversorum sonorum rationabilis

[1]St. Augustine, *Confessions*, book 9, c. 6.

[2]Wisdom I:7. "The spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world; and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice."

[3]Prayer for the Ecumenical Council.

moderatusque concentus concordi varietate compactam bene ordinatæ civitatis insinuat unitatem."[4] How can we but see in this unity amid variety, for which the organ can serve as a symbol, the image of the Church herself with her basic attributes, a living symphony, an image of the heavenly Jerusalem and a kind of echo of the divine harmonies? But here beneath the vault of this temple where the faithful—despite their differences of race, of language, of national origin—still feel themselves more united than ever before as members of a single family, the sound of the new organ blending all their voices into a single chorus will be more than a mere symbol; it will be a living expression and an active principle of the unity of the church.

The organ will find in this temple, better than elsewhere and—we might say—more completely, a terrain adapted to its function of guiding and blending into one great melodious spirit all the faithful who lift themselves up to God with their whole heart and call upon Him "una voce dicentes: sanctus."[5]

We will behold this sight particularly in the days just ahead, when the Pastors of the "plebs christiana,"[6] gathered here for the Ecumenical Council, show themselves to be vivified and to be harmoniously united for the expression of the unity of the faith in all its beauty.

A Foretaste of the Heavenly Liturgy

The organ, as it blends the voices of all into its melodies, will then invite the Christian faithful to form a kind of single harmonious chorus with their bishops and with the priests. The strings of the lyre will be different, but one single symphony will come forth. In this way, the Church, although still a pilgrim upon earth, will show that she is united with the never-ending procession of the blessed in heaven, who sing hymns in praise of the spotless lamb.

Oh, what a wonderful sight, an anticipation of and preparation for that heavenly liturgy in which our spirit will be completely satisfied!

With the hope that these wishes and predictions of Ours may be crowned with an abundance of heavenly grace and meet with a loyal response in your hearts, We pour forth in a paternal fashion upon you, Venerable Brethren and beloved sons, and upon all those who have helped to make this possible, the strength and consolation of Our Apostolic Blessing. ❖

[4]St. Augustine, *The City of God*, book 17.

[5]From the end of the Preface in the Mass, "saying with a single voice: holy."

[6]Christian people.

Is a Choir Retreat in Your Future?

Knowing the particular character of your choir will help you choose the best retreat for your singers from among many options.

by Mary Jane Ballou

There are few choir directors among us who have not read glowing accounts of choir retreats. Happy singers learning new music, dining together, sharing family anecdotes, and connecting on a deeper level than is possible in the cycle of rehearsals and services. Turning to your own choir, is this a possibility? Before you book the retreat center, call the caterer, or make any announcements, take a moment to reflect. A very long moment.

What makes a choir retreat a success? No, it is not the special guest speaker or artist or the catered lunch. It is not the babbling brook near the meeting hall. It is the singers themselves, what they bring to the retreat and what they take away. So, your reflections should be focused on these folks, the ones who come to the mid-week rehearsals, no matter how tired they are from work and family. These are your singers who are there for you on ordinary Sundays, as well as Christmas and Holy Week.

Consider first your choir demographics. Are they predominantly college students or mid-life adults or older singers? Is your choir a mix of all three? This consideration will play a large role in determining what kind of retreat would work. College students are governed by the academic calendar; they probably scatter during holidays and in the summer. Mid-life adults are building careers and raising their families. They may have to travel for work. Children need to be ferried to soccer games, ballet lessons, and play dates. Older singers may still be working. They may also be caregivers for family members or proud grandparents who prioritize family visits. All of us live with multiple demands on our time.

Music is your passion, particularly sacred music—at least I hope so. However, this is not necessarily the case with your choir members. They may be perfectly happy to come to rehearsals and sing on Sunday at Mass with little interest in taking on concert preparation or challenging music. After you have done your demographics, you need to take the "temperature" of the choir. What would you want them to gain in a retreat and would they be interested in participating. Considering that, you can then "cut your coat to suit your cloth."

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

While your members may not have the time for an extended retreat, you might question whether that would be to your benefit even if it were possible. What about singer stamina and extended interest. Perhaps a morning of singing and learning might be just right. Bring in another director in your area whose skills you admire to teach a piece. Perhaps the pastor could be persuaded to talk about the upcoming liturgical season and its special music. Spend the time you never have at rehearsals to warmup thoroughly and play choir games. Allow for a coffee break with small snacks and close with whatever you can afford for lunch. This will let your singers get to know each other a little better without being shushed for talking during rehearsals.

What about financing a retreat? Can your existing budget stand some extra expenses? Could you ask your choir to contribute? Do you think the parish council could provide some extra funds? Is it time for a bake sale? If you want to go off-site, you will need to check facility rentals and catering. Would your singers pay for their own transportation and housing? Special speakers rarely come free, even if you stay on-site. Before you stop reading in despair, think about some alternatives. Could you pair up with another parish choir? Could your diocesan director of liturgy be persuaded to offer a multi-parish one-day event at a nearby retreat center, enabling the costs to be divided among the diocese and participating parishes?

It should be clear from the foregoing that this requires long-range planning, even for a morning retreat. Throw out some initial teasers to see if there's interest. Do not listen only to your most enthusiastic members who would follow you up the Nile. Solicit suggestions at an informal choir meeting and make sure that someone in the group writes them down. Then you can start your own planning for the next year, whether it will be a weekend in the woods or morning retreats at the beginning of Advent and Lent.

Leaving aside the mechanics and finances of a choir retreat, what would you do with your choir if you could take them away from the weekly round of propers, hymns, motets, and responses? Are there a few great anthems or motets that are "almost good enough"? Would a concentrated time with those bring them up to performance level for the liturgy or a special program? How about enough time to voice your choir—moving the singers around to find the best balance, allowing stronger singers to help the weaker voices? If your singers would balk at quartet singing, try octets, remembering that each group should receive enthusiastic applause from everyone else.

The average parish choir, one with no choral scholars or a core of paid professionals, brings limited resources to a retreat. The choir may be "out of balance" in terms of voice parts. If many of the singers are older, their vocal ranges may be limited. Music reading and sight singing skills may not be the best.

Subjecting the choir to a grueling rehearsal of a new work will only bring aggravation. Creative directors need to grow their singers in ways that align with their current abilities, pushing them just a little further along the road to musical excellence. One possibility is not to look for something harder but something different.

Has the choir ever sung Gregorian chant (or Anglican or whatever)? Have someone do a short presentation on the history of chant and follow that with some easy and useful chants. These could include the

Ave Maria, *Ave Verum Corpus*, Kyries, etc. Make sure that the chants are short, attractive, and usable in that liturgical environment. Remembering that a pastor is allergic to Latin, to chant, or chant and Latin would suggest a different approach. However, if that is not a problem, let the learning begin. Do not waste time on technical issues of neumes and rhythms; teach by rote. Everyone learned that way for millennia. Then divide the men and the women, letting each side have different phrases.

Another approach that keeps everyone on task is singing rounds. There are liturgical rounds. There are sacred rounds, such as William Billings' *When Jesus Wept*. Rounds test memory, the ability to hold a part, and the development of an on-pitch choral blend. Even better they can be fun to learn and sing.

There is one critical element to teaching rounds to a group of singers—the director must know the round with absolute certainty. Teach one part incorrectly and it will remain in the singers' heads forever! Of course, starting with the familiar rounds of childhood is the best way to introduce rounds to wary singers. The Boyce Alleluia only requires one word. What could be a better place to focus on pitch and blend?

The foregoing are only suggestions. Thirty minutes on a search engine will give you articles on choir retreat ice breakers, games, plans of action, and more. Explore new warmups and movement exercises. If you have excellent financial resources, great. If you do not, a morning in the fellowship hall might be a good start. If possible, hold your retreat in a different location than your weekly rehearsals. It will have a refreshing effect on the group.

Make sure that new singers are welcomed and introduced. Allow time for your "old timers" to tell of earlier choir triumphs or trials. If you are new to your choir, share some interesting facts about yourself. Under no circumstances should you forget welcoming snacks and beverages, more snacks for a break, and lunch for fellowship.

Not all your singers will be able to come, and some of them may not want to come. Be comfortable with whatever level of contribution they can make. Be prepared to adjust your plans as needed and remain expectant and positive. You and your choir can both learn and enjoy a good retreat.❖

What makes a choir retreat a success? No, it is not the special guest speaker or artist or the catered lunch. It is not the babbling brook near the meeting hall. It is the singers themselves, what they bring to the retreat and what they take away.

Review

Frank La Rocca's *Messe des Malades*

La Rocca creates a masterpiece by combining traditional and contemporary musical elements with innovative harmony.

by Martin Rokeach

Composer Frank La Rocca's *Messe des Malades* (*Mass for the Ill*) for SATB chorus and organ, written in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes, premiered February 11, 2023 at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, California.[1] The impressive Benedict XVI Choir, under the direction of Richard Sparks, sang with sumptuous tone, articulate Latin diction, and profound reverence.

From the beginning of the opening Kyrie, the music plunges the listener into a world both traditional and contemporary. Pungent dissonances, often with luxuriously delayed resolutions, speak to the modern ear. A rich cadence occurs in m. 10 on an unexpected subdominant eleventh chord, a harmonic choice no composer of earlier eras would have made.[2] Both the chord extension (an eleventh) and the phrase settling on the unusual location of the fourth degree of the scale depart from past practice. At the same time, the melodic beauty and the reverence of the music, with its use of Latin text, is in keeping with the best tradition of sacred music.

In m. 30 we hear a C major augmented eleventh chord, the added F# being somewhat jarring. Traditionally, the only business a foreign chord like C major has in the key of B minor is a Neapolitan sixth (the bane of every music theory student) preceding a resolution to the dominant F#. That is not the function of this chord. Like a strange planet invading a solar system, it is a neighbor chord, a minor second above tonic, hovering for a long sixteen seconds before settling back down to comfortable B minor. It's a good example of *neo-tonal* harmonic practice—music that is in a key (a solar system of notes and chords) but with expanded boundaries.

The contrasting Christe section in mm. 19–27 bears the weight of history. It employs imitative counterpoint, a technique more than five hundred years old.

[1]The whole Mass can be viewed on YouTube.com; search Frank La Rocca's *Messe des Malades.*

[2]A brief digression about seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords, a.k.a. extended chords: if a regular chord such as A major or A minor is like a scoop of ice cream, an extended chord is like layering syrup, whipped cream, nuts, and a cherry on top. It enriches the harmony.

Martin Rokeach is a composer and Music Professor Emeritus at Saint Mary's College of California. On May 19, 2023 the Oakland Symphony premiered his oratorio, Bodies on the Line: The Great Flint Sit-Down Strike.

Then, at m. 28, the independent, interweaving melodies rejoin as one with a decisive intoning of "Christe eleison." The final chord in this section is again a surprising C augmented eleventh. Both the root of the chord (C) in the key of B minor and its added dissonant note (F#) create force and tension, and belie any notion that the composer is merely copying historical practice. A dramatic pause follows, and then in m. 35 there is a return to the Kyrie text. We are back in the home key of B minor, an event most listeners will not be consciously aware of, but they'll feel the effect of being grounded somewhere familiar. Yet this traditional practice of returning to a starting key lasts for just one short syllable: "Ky-." As the choir continues on "-rie" a dissonant 2-3 suspension in the bass is used to create the expectation of a resolution to a normal V7 (i.e., F#7) chord. But instead the dissonance resolves into . . . nothing. For three beats we hear only silence. And then as "eleison" is sung, seventh, ninth, and eleventh chords modulate to the new key of E major, a fresh landing pad for the ear, but we arrive there so subtly to be hardly noticeable. Meanwhile, sopranos and altos echo one another as they reiterate "Kyrie."

In the movement's final moments the choir's pitches, with organ support, continue the gentle harmonic momentum that has informed the entire movement. They subtly travel through the keys of A minor and C major, finally arriving on a B dominant chord and creating the expectation of a new key in the coming Gloria.

La Rocca's harmonies continually tease without stressing the ear, hovering within reach but often not quite landing where expected. The effect: a beautiful balance between yearning and repose.

Almost all playwrights, choreographers, painters, and composers constantly ask themselves: "Is my work sufficiently unified so it feels cohesive? On the other hand, does it have just the right amount of contrast to avoid tedium, or staleness, without becoming muddled?" Addressing these questions is how artists wrestle with form, i.e., the architecture that underpins a sturdy composition. No one-size-fits-all formula can be applied; each work is an individual, including *Messe des Malades*. How Frank La Rocca achieves this balance between unity and variety can be gleaned, in part, by comparing the Kyrie and Gloria and also examining how contrast is created internally within the Gloria itself.

Before peeking under the hood of the Gloria, a brief digression regarding what exactly a key is and the art of changing keys: the seven notes in a key are not all equal. One is always the most important note, the one that all the other notes orbit around like planets around a sun. In the key of C,

La Rocca's harmonies continually tease without stressing the ear, hovering within reach but often not quite landing where expected. The effect: a beautiful balance between yearning and repose.

the other six notes (D, E, F, G, A, B) orbit around C. In the key of A-flat the other six notes (B-flat, C, D-flat, E-flat, F, G) orbit around A-flat. So it goes for all twenty-four major and minor keys.

Music slips from one key to another, a process called modulation, easily or intricately, suddenly or gradually, obviously or imperceptibly. Composers modulate to create momentum and to alter the aroma of a musical environment, like walking from outdoors into a house where brownies are in the oven. Some keys are quite compatible with other keys, like good friends. For a composer it's easier to modulate between these. Other keys have less in common, like you and your new in-laws. Modulating to and from these more foreign keys takes more expertise, but the effect can be quite dramatic—like the lighting in a Vermeer painting, like a revelation. The liturgical text guides La Rocca's key choices; his modulation technique is masterful.

The priest sings the chant incipit of the Gloria to open the second movement. Beginning in A minor, it contradicts the key that the ear was led to expect and, like a spritz of air freshener, reinvigorates the atmosphere. It modulates to the neighborly key of A major to brighten the text: "Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam." At m. 30 the key changes without transition to the darker D minor, and the homorhythmic[3] texture is interrupted by imitative counterpoint between the altos and basses; the text is "Domine Deus, Rex cælestis Deus Pater omnipotens." A homorhythmic texture resumes on "Domine Fili unigenite." The change from a homorhythmic to a contrapuntal texture and back again is one of many examples of artfully balancing unity and variety while maintaining cohesiveness.

The larger a composer's toolbox, the better nuances in the text can be conveyed. In addition to altering textures and changing keys, La Rocca uses slower tempos to heighten select phrases and create the contrast necessary to maintain pulse and poignancy. Steady rhythmic motion[4] is interrupted by slower tempos to heighten specific liturgical moments: "Iesu Christe," and later "Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe."

In the closing three bars of the movement, we hear a dramatic modulation. By way of a wholly unexpected, sunlit Neapolitan sixth chord, the final word, "Amen," is heard as if from another world.

A simple rhythmic motif—two majestic half notes followed by a beat of silence—conveys each syllable of the word "Sanctus." Intoned three times, each one rising higher, the motif informs and unifies the entire fourth movement. It returns with (follow underlined syllables) "ple-ni; sunt cæ-li; et ter-ra; gloria tu-a." As in the opening, these words also majestically rise, and the ripe chords carefully selected by the composer amplify the text's meaning. The two-notes-followed-by-silence motif recurs with repeated iterations of "Ho-san-na."

As always, contrast is needed to prevent staleness. At m. 24 the Benedictus section offers rhythmic variety, a new contrapuntal texture of fluid, overlapping melodies, and modulation from E minor to the closely related key of B minor.

[3]The voices move together in the same rhythm while singing different notes.

[4]Notes of the same duration, e.g., all quarter or eighth notes.

"Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna" returns and with it the two-note rhythmic motif introduced in m. 1. More than a mere technical device employed to unify a composition, each and every sounding of a well-used motif subtly conveys the emotional scent of the entire movement. In this Sanctus, it is majesty.

Tenors and basses introduce the Agnus Dei softly and simply, without melodic or harmonic adornment. Sopranos and altos join; they add volume and rich chord extensions to accentuate "miserere nobis." So far the texture is homorhythmic, but the composer will continually vary it, both to delineate the text and keep the movement musically alive. The texture thins as the women reiterate "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi." As "miserere nobis" repeats, it transforms into beautiful, expertly crafted five-part imitative counterpoint between the four parts of the chorus (SATB) plus the organ. The remainder of the movement returns to simplicity. The texture is again homorhythmic, the volume diminishes, and the tempo calms. A few well-placed chord extensions are used for poignancy as the *Messe des Malades* closes.

Despite the influence of Gregorian Chant, Latin text, and use of historic techniques such as modulation and imitative counterpoint, Frank La Rocca's *Messe des Malades* does not seek simply to recapture the world of the past. It draws on the traditions of the Catholic church to address today's needy world. The composer's intimate understanding of the liturgical text and extraordinary technical facility and musicality to create a work of exceptional poignancy. "Masterpiece" is not a word to be used casually, but to my understanding and my ear this Mass stands shoulder to shoulder with the great masterworks of the Renaissance. ❖

"Masterpiece" is not a word to be used casually, but to my understanding and my ear this Mass stands shoulder to shoulder with the great masterworks of the Renaissance.

Last Word

Thermometers, Thermostats, and Modern Man

Professor Michael Foley discusses ways for the modern man to increase his capacity for sacred awe.

by Kurt Poterack

Anyone who has seen Cameron O'Hearn's *Mass of the Ages* trilogy knows his approach. He combines liturgical scholarship, presented in doses appropriate to the populist medium of the internet, with a winsome and often youthfully savvy style. His pairing of the pop-style church "songs" of the last forty plus years with their apparent source songs in *Episode Two* of the trilogy is wickedly funny. For example, the editing that brought the theme for *My Little Pony* and Dan Schutte's Gloria together is superb. One does not have to explain to the viewer that Schutte's music is trivial. The juxtaposition of the two makes it abundantly clear.

Being hip, technologically savvy and, let's be honest, mocking the pieties of their elders was supposed to be the trademark of the boomer generation. They were to be the future of the church. They were the quintessential "modern man" for whom the liturgy was to be reformed. In 1969, Pope Paul VI himself said about the soon to be released "New Mass" that, "participation by the people is worth more [than Latin]—particularly participation by modern man, so fond of plain language which is easily understood and converted into everyday speech." Yet, after fifty years, all the statistics for Mass attendance are down, especially among young people, as survey after survey shows. Compare this to pilgrims sixteen thousand strong, half of them twenty years old or younger, marching across the French countryside to Chartres for the traditional Mass last May. How many young people would do this for the current vernacular Mass? Have the tables been turned on the boomers?

This is where O'Hearn's latest release, somewhat awkwardly entitled *Michael Knowles Explains the Latin Mass in Five Levels of Difficulty*, comes in handy. In this film, internet personality Michael Knowles discusses the Traditional Latin Mass with five different groups of people: children, a young adult, a rather polite internet atheist (Alex O'Connor), a priest, and a theologian.

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

The idea is that, intellectually, the discussions get more and more sophisticated. While the whole film is worth watching (it only takes about half an hour), the theologian, Professor Michael Foley, best gets to the point that I would like to make.

He treats Pope Paul VI with utter respect, especially in his desire to respond, in some way, to "modern man." Although the term "modern man" has been mocked and ridiculed by some conservatives, Foley fully admits that there is such a thing. "We live modern lives, and our modern lives are different than those of our ancestors. We don't have the same connection to the land, to the food we eat. We have different sleep schedules, thanks to electric lights. We don't see the stars the way we used to because we live in cities with light pollution. We're harried and anxious. We privilege efficiency. . . . Paul VI, I give credit for being very sensitive to this. He was very sensitive to the fact that modern man was an oddity in the history of humanity. And so his goal was to make a liturgy that would, in a sense, be more user-friendly for modern man. . . . [Yet] I personally disagree with his solution to the problem . . ."

Professor Foley then says that "if I could talk to Paul VI I would say, 'Yes, you had a brilliant goal, but ironically, the pre-modern rite is the better antidote to this modern problem.'" He then goes on to say that modern man does not need a *thermometer* that "merely reflects his own temperature," he needs a "*thermostat* that helps to raise the temperature" to get him out of the funk of modern life. He needs to experience a world "where time isn't measured so closely" and "experience a world of beauty" and of "sacred awe." "Modern man needs something different from modernity to help his soul."

Is this what young people are responding to when they show such an interest in older liturgical forms? I think so. They know the modern world quite well, and it has gotten more "modern" than it was fifty years ago. "We've had enough of that, thank you very much," they seem to be saying. "Don't you have anything else to offer us?" I think that they are seeing liturgical tradition through fresh eyes, just as I did some forty years ago when I first encountered *ad orientem* worship. To me it was a revelation of how to worship God in a powerful way. Perhaps to someone older it may have just been a painful reminder of the "bad old days," when Sister X would slap his knuckles with a ruler. However, is this an association that, while subjectively real, is also accidental? We need to look at these things afresh and this needn't be exclusively about the Old Rite. I think that Professor Foley strikes the right tone.

OK boomers, let's talk! ❖

Modern man needs something different from modernity to help his soul.

Support the CMAA Annual Fund

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

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

Donations are needed for these Annual Fund projects and programs:

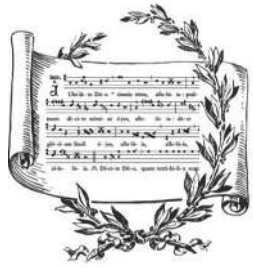
- ☐ **Online publication of a comprehensive free library** of educational materials for choir directors and others, including numerous books on chant, as well as the many materials published by the CMAA.
- ☐ **Redesign** of our website for ease of access to resources.
- ☐ **Publication and distribution of new publications,** such as the ***Parish Book of Motets***.
- ☐ **Future recording projects.** These chant recordings would be hosted at our site for easy use by chant choirs everywhere.
- ☐ **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, in addition to Spanish-language masses by Jeffrey Quick and David Hughes.
- ☐ **Member portal** for member-only content now available to help our members connect with us and each other, offering additional resources and better communication.
- ☐ **Scholarships for students and seminarians** to attend our programs. Every year we receive many requests for funding; providing scholarships and lower student/seminarian rates to support these requests is crucial for the future of the Church in promoting sacred music to seminarians and students.

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

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

CMAA ♦ 322 Roy Foster Rd. ♦ McMinnville, TN 37110 ♦ churchmusicassociation.org

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



CHURCH MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

☐ Please accept my gift to the CMAA Annual Fund.

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

____ I am grateful for all that the CMAA has done for me, including providing access to free online resources
____ I want to support the work and programs of the CMAA, including scholarships
____ I believe in the value of sacred music in the liturgy and would like to support new music composition commissions and/or book publications
____ I want to make a donation in honor of _____
____ I want to make a donation in memory of _____
____ I would like to help underwrite a CMAA training program
____ I would like to underwrite a special event, such as the 2023 Colloquium
____ Other: _____

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

Your gift of $50 allows us to scan and upload an out-of-print issue of Sacred Music, Caecilia, *or* Catholic Choirmaster *to our archive.*
Your gift of $100 allows us to scan and upload an out-of-print book to our resources page.
Your gift of $150 allows us to offer a studentseminarian rate tuition to one worthy applicant in 2023.
Your gift of $300 allows us to offer two student/seminarian rate tuitions to two worthy applicants in 2023.
Your gift of $500 allows us to offer one full-tuition scholarship to the 2023 Colloquium.
Your gift of $1000 allows us to offer two full-tuition scholarships to the 2023 Colloquium.

Name _____
☐ *I prefer to remain anonymous.*

Address _____

_____

City _____ State _____ Zip +4 _____

Email _____ Phone _____

____ I have enclosed a check

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

Credit card number: _____

Expiration _____ Validation Code (3 or 4 digit Code on back of card) _____

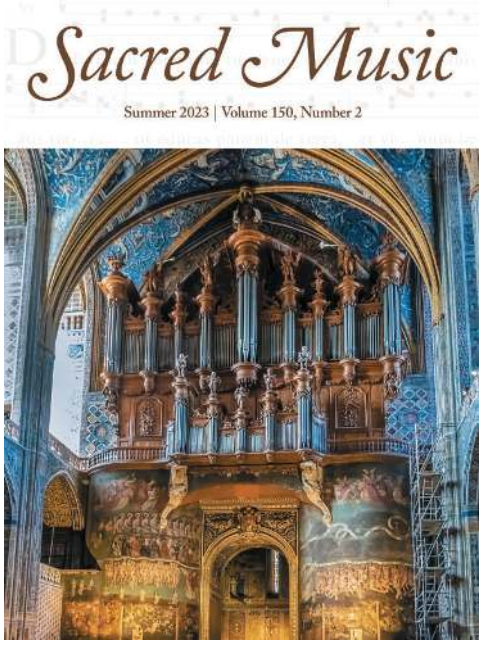
Signature _____

Name of Cardholder (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Please mail your donation to: *Church Music Association of America*
322 Roy Foster Road, McMinnville, TN 37110
You may also make an online contribution or stock donation at our website: http://musicasacra.com/giving/annual-fund/

Give the Gift of Sacred Music

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



Music Director | Pastor
Seminarian | Choir Member
Music Teacher | Liturgist

Would your parish benefit from having a *Parish Membership*?

Benefits of Membership:

- Discounts on CMAA events, including summer courses and the annual Sacred Music Colloquium
- FREE access to virtual event recordings and **member portal**
- Up to 6 members' access to **portal** with **parish membership**
- Members-only virtual events
- Book discounts at our events
- A subscription to *Sacred Music*, the oldest continuously-published journal of music in North America, **now available** to members in digital format at our **member portal**

Each issue of *Sacred Music* offers:

- Liturgical, musical, and practical ideas for your parish or schola
- The newest scholarship on sacred music
- Instruction on pedagogical methods and performance practice of chant
- Catechesis about important church documents
- Sheet music for polyphonic repertoire in an excellent edition, along with practical, historical, liturgical, and theological notes on the piece
- An insightful editorial from our editor
- Commentary on current events

"The greatest need of liturgy today is the restoration of the sense of the sacred."
William Mahrt, CMAA President

Please help us continue our work. Join today!

ChurchMusicAssociation.org

UPCOMING CMAA VIRTUAL EVENTS

November 24, 2023

Reflection with our Chaplain, Fr. Robert Pasley

Join Fr. Pasley for his encouraging reflection as we enter the Advent season.

This session is open to everyone free of charge. Register for this Zoom session at https://connect.churchmusicassociation.org

Future Sessions (Members Only):

***January 16** (Tuesday): Forum for Organists*
Discuss such topics as:

- *Transitioning from piano to organ*
- *Improvisation techniques*
- *Suggested repertory*

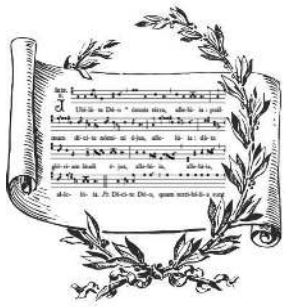
***February 12** (Monday): Hymnals, Pew Resources, and General Q&A*

***April 16** (Tuesday): How to Get Started in Moving a Parish toward Sacred Music*

Future Sessions (Open to All):

***May 6** (Monday): Q&A in Spanish*

If you have a topic to suggest, please send it to us at: gm@musicasacra.com



CHURCH MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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

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

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

Who should join? We encourage active musicians to join us, as well as anyone who favors sacred music as part of a genuine liturgical renewal in the Catholic Church.

Return this form:

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Email _____ Telephone _____ Country _____

Address _____ City _____ State/Prov. ____ Zip _____

___ I've enclosed my check for $60 for an annual membership that includes an annual subscription to *Sacred Music* ($60 for Canada, $65 for all other non-U.S. members)
___ I've enclosed my check for $300 for a full parish annual membership that comes with six copies of each issue of *Sacred Music* ($300 for Canada, $325 for all other non-U.S. members)
___ I've enclosed an additional donation of $_____

Church Music Association of America
322 Roy Foster Rd. | McMinnville, TN 37110 | gm@musicasacra.com | 804-877-1721
ChurchMusicAssociation.org

Save the Date!
2024 Sacred Music Colloquium

June 24-29, 2024

St. John Newman Center
Champaign, Illinois

Member discount Code: NMN24

Information regarding registration forthcoming at ChurchMusicAssociation.org.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us next summer.

Save the Date!
2024 Summer Courses

June 18-22, 2024

St. John's Newman Center, Champaign, IL

Course Offerings:

Chant Intensive – Jeffrey Morse
NEW!!! Organ Techniques – Dr. Horst Buchholz*
Vocal Intensive – Dr. MeeAe Cecilia Nam

Member Discount Code: **SUM24**

Information regarding registration forthcoming at ChurchMusicAssociation.org

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us next summer to expand your skills.

* *Organ Techniques course limited to 5 students.*

Announcing the CMAA's New Member Portal

https://connect.churchmusicassociation.org

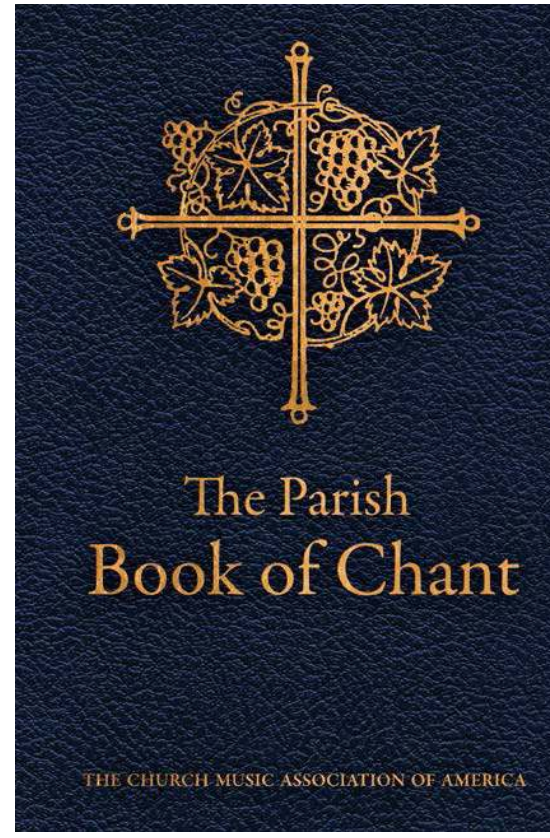
The CMAA is thrilled to introduce you to the newest feature of CMAA membership: our member portal for membership, digital events, and communication.

- **View your membership status**. This new portal allows you to renew your membership, check the status of your account, and receive notifications when renewal is due.
- **Upcoming CMAA events at a glance**. The member portal will be your one-stop for a quick review of upcoming CMAA events and how to register (in addition to full descriptions on the main website at https://churchmusicassociation.org.
- **Find CMAA members in your region.** By joining one or more regional groups, you can connect with other CMAA members in your region to collaborate on workshops, join forces for events, and offer local encouragement to each other. If desired, a regional group can share communication on the portal in a non-public forum.
- **Digital *Sacred Music* journal.** The *Sacred Music* journal will now be available in digital format on the portal for members to read immediately (before your copy arrives in your mailbox).
- **Past virtual events and recordings** that were available only to members in the past are now easily accessible at the portal for you to view.
- **Parish memberships** can have up to **six (6)** total member logins. So if you are a pastor or director of music who created a parish membership, you can invite other members of the parish to also share in the membership benefits online. *These other parish members can choose to receive one of your six copies of the journal delivered directly to their own addresses, rather than having all copies of the journal delivered to one address.*

Help for your first visit to the portal:

- Your **username** will be your **email address** that you designated when you joined the CMAA (you can tell which email address we have by the address where you receive any CMAA notifications).
- **Reset your password** the first time you visit so that you can create your own password.
- **Update your profile** as you wish. The information on your membership profile is the information we had on file for you. Keeping your mailing address and email address up to date helps us to make sure we stay in contact with you and your journals get to the correct address. *You can designate that personal information is not viewable by others on any field by choosing the "lock" icon to the left of the field. Currently, information is set to be viewable by other members only.*
- **If your membership has lapsed**, you can easily re-join and pay for your renewal at the portal, choosing automatic renewal if you choose.
- **Once you have logged in,** click on the **CMAA logo** on the upper left to get to the main member page for all the news and events.
- If you still have trouble logging in, please contact us at gm@musicasacra.com for assistance.

Announcing the
Parish Book of Chant Recording Project



The Church Music Association of America is happy to announce our next big resource project is underway. In an effort to make high-quality recordings available for use in parishes around the country (and around the world), we have asked CMAA Board Member **David Hughes** and the **Viri Galilaei** singers to record all the chants from the Parish Book of Chant.

They will be at work this fall, rehearsing and recording these chants, which will be posted on our website for easy access.

The wonderful engravings completed by **Richard Rice** have been such a valuable tool for so many who are striving to bring Sacred Music to their parishes. With his help, we will provide individual PDF files for each chant for easy access, and a recording of the chant for use in teaching and practice.

As the project continues, and the recordings are made available on our website, we will be contacting you via email when the new resources are available. If you need to provide us with an updated email address, please contact us at: gm@musicasacra.com.

To access our online resources, visit our website at:

ChurchMusicAssociation.org

VI

De fructu * ópe-rum tu- órum, Dómi-ne, sa-ti- ábi-

tur ter- ra: ut edúcas panem de terra, et vi- num læ

tí- fi-cet cor hómi- nis: ut exhí- la- ret fá-ci- em

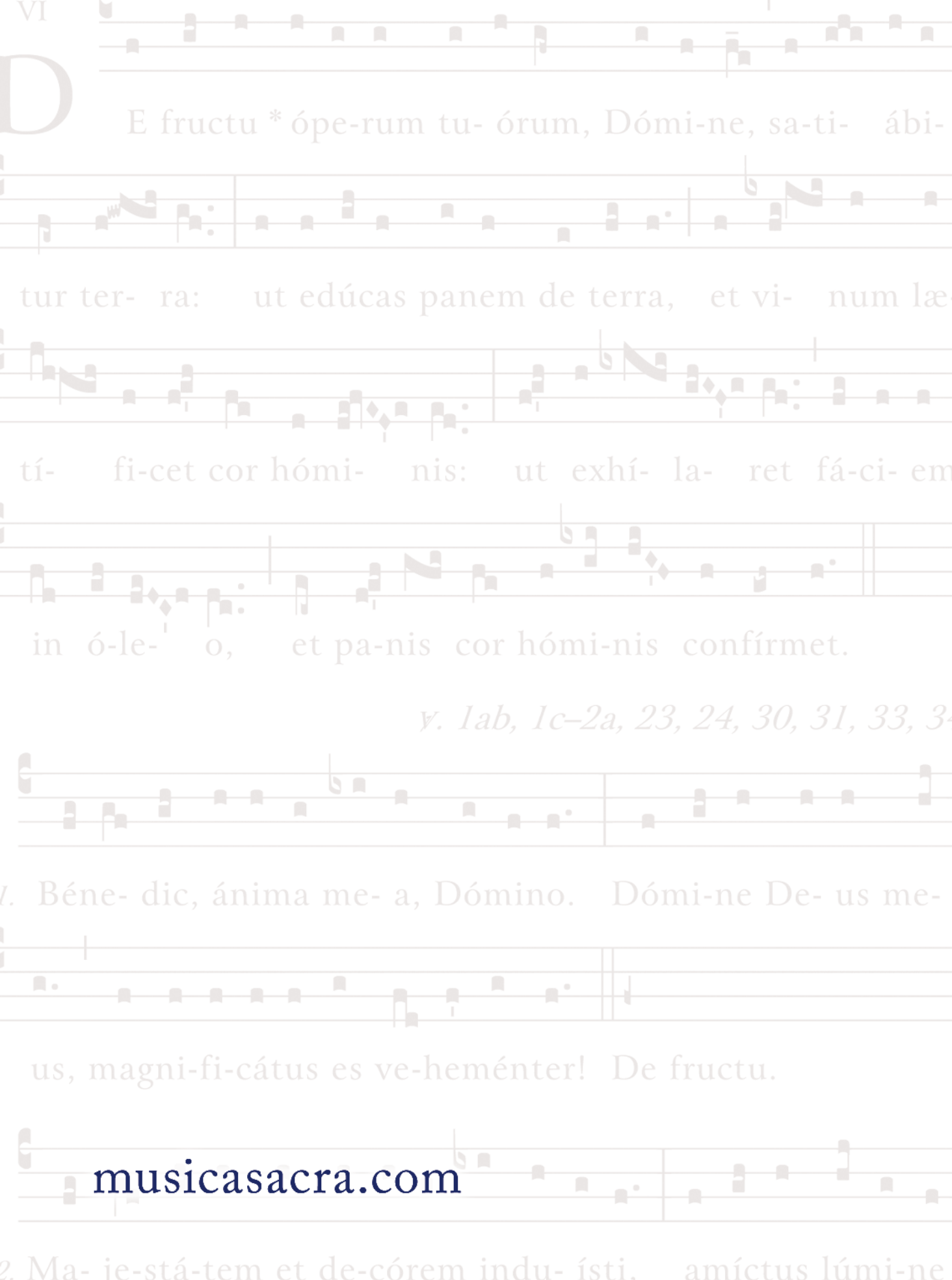
in ó-le- o, et pa-nis cor hómi-nis confírmet.

℣. 1ab, 1c–2a, 23, 24, 30, 31, 33, 3

1. Béne- dic, ánima me- a, Dómino. Dómi-ne De- us me-

us, magni-fi-cátus es ve-heménter! De fructu.

2. Ma- je-stá-tem et de-córem indu- ísti, amíctus lúmi-ne


VI
E fructu * ópe-rum tu- órum, Dómi-ne, sa-ti- ábi-
tur ter- ra: ut edúcas panem de terra, et vi- num læ-
tí- fi-cet cor hómi- nis: ut exhí- la- ret fá-ci- em
in ó-le- o, et pa-nis cor hómi-nis confírmet.
℣. 1ab, 1c–2a, 23, 24, 30, 31, 33, 3
℣. Béne- dic, ánima me- a, Dómino. Dómi-ne De- us me-
us, magni-fi-cátus es ve-heménter! De fructu.
musicasacra.com
2. Ma- ie-stá-tem et de-córem indu- ísti, amíctus lúmi-ne