Sacred Music

Winter 2023 | Volume 150, Number 4

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Formed as a continuation of *Cæcilia*, published by the Society of St. Cæcilia since 1874, and *The Catholic Choirmaster*, published by the Society of St. Gregory of America since 1915. Published quarterly by the Church Music Association of America since its inception in 1964. Office of Publication: 12421 New Point Drive, Richmond, VA 23233. Email: sacredmusic@musicasacra.com; website: www.musicasacra.com.

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Membership & Circulation: CMAA, 322 Roy Foster Road, McMinnville, TN 37110

Membership in the Church Music Association of America includes a subscription to the quarterly journal *Sacred Music*. Membership is $60 annually (U.S.), $60 (Canada), and $65 (other countries). Parish membership is $300 (U.S. and Canada), $325 (other countries) for six copies of each issue. Single copies are $15. Send requests and changes of address to *Sacred Music*, 322 Roy Foster Road, McMinnville, TN 37110. Make checks payable to the Church Music Association of America. Online membership: www.churchmusicassociation.org. *Sacred Music* archives for the years 1974 to the present are available online at www.churchmusicassociation.org/journal/archives. Electronic access to the most recent issues is now available via the CMAA member portal: connect.churchmusicassociation.org.

LC Control Number: sf 86092056

Sacred Music is indexed in the Catholic Periodical and Literature Index, Music Index, Music Article Guide, and Arts and Humanities Index.

ISSN: 0036-2255

Sacred Music is published quarterly for $60 per year by the Church Music Association of America.
322 Roy Foster Road, McMinnville, TN 37110
Periodicals postage paid at Richmond, VA and at additional mailing officies. USPS number 474-960.
Postmaster: send address changes to SACRED MUSIC, 322 Roy Foster Road, McMinnville, TN 37110.

Editorial

Eucharist

Cultivating a liturgy that is tangibly sacred and beautiful will increase belief in the Real Presence.

by William Mahrt

According to a Pew Research Center Study of 2019, only sixty-three per cent of U.S. Catholics who attend Mass at least once a week, believe in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.[1] The American bishops have responded to such statistics by proposing a program of National Eucharistic Revival culminating in 2024 with a Eucharistic Congress, in the hope of improving belief in the Eucharist and its importance among the laity.

What accounts for these statistics? There must be several factors, in both liturgy and education. After the Second Vatican Council, some abrupt changes created a lack of continuity with what had been more secure Catholic belief and practice, and we are still experiencing their results.

First of all is the liturgy. The most important aspect of the liturgy is the Eucharist, its "source and summit." As embodied souls, we require an embodied liturgy, that is, a liturgy that is tangibly sacred and beautiful.

For the sacredness of the liturgy to be embodied, there must be a distinction between what is done in church and what belongs to everyday life; this is what is meant by "sacred," something set aside for a specific and important purpose. Music pervades the liturgy, and it can be the means of preserving or contradicting its sacredness. Thus it is important that the music of the liturgy be distinct from the everyday, particularly from the styles of current popular music. The ideal of Gregorian chant as really sacred music was stated by Pope St. Pius X:

> The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.[2]

[1]For self-described Catholics including those who do not attend Mass weekly, it is 50%; 34% of all surveyed, whether Catholic or not, knew the Catholic teaching.

[2]Pope St. Pius X, Motu Proprio, *Tra le Sollecitudini* (Nov. 22, 1903), ¶II, 3.

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Pope St. John Paul II followed up on the principles of Pius X in making a further statement about liturgical suitability of music:

> Liturgical music must meet the specific prerequisites of the liturgy: full adherence to the text it presents, synchronization with the time and moment in the liturgy for which it is intended, appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite. The various moments in the liturgy require a musical expression of their own. From time to time this must fittingly bring out the nature proper to a specific rite, now proclaiming God's marvels, now expressing praise, supplication or even sorrow for the experience of human suffering which, however, faith opens to the prospect of Christian hope.[3]

The sacredness of the liturgy can be emphasized by architecture. Many churches are in a style that is unambiguously sacred. This involves the use of excellent materials with orderly but ample decoration. Symmetry of elements is essential, since this creates a focus. And the focus that is supportive of the belief in the Eucharist draws the attention to the tabernacle, which is the ultimate location of the Eucharist; all other sacred elements, side altars or shrines, the reredos surrounding the tabernacle, even a ceiling, whose height reaches to the heavens, can draw our attention to the Eucharist. The construction of the nave can project an image of the heavens: side aisles bounded by rows of columns, stained glass windows in orderly placement, ceiling beams which draw the attention upward and forward, all contribute to a sense of motion toward the focal point.

Music can be yet another support of the sacredness of the space. The organ is a sacred instrument; its principal repertory is sacred; fugues derive from motets, which carry sacred texts; preludes speak of the approach to a sacred action. The organ is congruent with sacred vocal polyphony in that its tone is sustained, just as in singing.

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The piano does not serve well as a sacred instrument; its associations stem from the parlor in the nineteenth century and the stage in the twentieth. Its tone decays, contrary to the sustained tone of vocal polyphony. An organ prelude played in the church while people are assembling strongly conveys the sense that they are entering into a sacred space. The same can be said for a postlude after Mass. If, at the conclusion of the Mass, the sacred ambience is maintained by beautiful organ music, members of the congregation may depart quietly or remain in prayer. But if there is no music, or if the music is inappropriate, the congregation may be inclined to relax their sense of the sacred, and break into conversation. A whole congregation taking part in con-

[3]Pope St. John Paul II, *Chirograph of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II for the Centenary of the Motu Proprio* Tra le Sollecitudini *on Sacred Music* (Nov. 22, 2003), ¶5 <https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20031203_musica-sacra.html>.

versation immediately at the end of Mass conveys a lack of the sense of the sacredness of the space, the purpose of which is to emphasize the Eucharistic presence, which remains upon the conclusion of the Mass to be adored.

A notable change after the Second Vatican Council has been the celebration of Mass facing the people, though the council never prescribed it. It was said that now the congregation can see what is going on. But what is significant is only visible to the eyes of faith, and the priest's handling of the sacrament at the altar may not reinforce the sacredness of the action in the view of the congregation. When the Mass is celebrated *ad orientem,* i.e., facing liturgical East, the congregation does not see anything but the sacred host or chalice being held up for their adoration. Likewise, after communion, is it best for the congregation to see the priest purifying the vessels, or is this best done out of sight of the congregation, by the priest facing the altar?

The most sacred thing we have in the liturgy is the Eucharist. It is most appropriately placed at the center of the sanctuary, where it is perceived as central to the whole church and its action. It is thus most appropriate for all coming into the church to genuflect before the tabernacle. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM, #274) gives specific criteria for genuflection:

> During Mass, three genuflections are made by the Priest Celebrant: namely, after the elevation of the host, after the elevation of the chalice, and before Communion. . . . If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is situated in the sanctuary, the Priest, the Deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself. Otherwise, all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession.

It used to be, when the priest faced the altar in the celebration of the Mass, that he genuflected frequently during the Mass. When celebration of Mass facing the people became frequently practiced, it was thought that his attention should be on the altar of sacrifice rather than the tabernacle, and so the limitation of the genuflection to the tabernacle by the priest during Mass, but this applies only to the priest and ministers. Clearly, the text above retains the obligation of genuflection before the Blessed Sacrament for all others. Since this applies particularly to those facing the people, should not others, including acolytes, who face the tabernacle, genuflect as well?

When the restrictions on genuflection by the priest at Mass were instituted, priests often replaced genuflection with a bow, though I do not know any official prescription for this.[4] It was not long at all, however, that the laity began to pick up on that practice, so that today, in my observation, many people bow to the tabernacle, and few genuflect. This is in direct contradiction to the GIRM. Could this be a factor in the belief that the Eucharist is merely a symbol?

The difference between the bow and the genuflection is significant. Genuflection, the bending of the knee, signifies an

[4]The GIRM provides a description of the use of the bow (¶276), but this pertains to gestures of reverence at the mention of holy names and similar points in the Mass.

acknowledgement of the priority of the person reverenced. In the Middle Ages, such a genuflection was given to a Lord; today it is given to *the* Lord in the Eucharist. Bows are more often exchanged between equals. Consider the incensation, where the acolyte bows to the congregation and they bow back to him, an exchange between equals. Our reverence of Christ in the sacrament is to the whole person of Christ and anything but the gesture of one equal to another.

The bow has recently taken on another function, also between equals, at the greeting of peace before the Agnus Dei of the Mass. This greeting was introduced, at least in the United States, by a handshake. I have always felt that this was not a sufficiently sacred gesture, especially since it occurs at one of the most solemn moments in the Mass. This inappropriateness can sometimes be observed in the casual conversation that accompanies the handshake at this point in the Mass: "Peace, Bob, how's your new car?" When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, our bishop decreed that there should be no handshake and no communion on the tongue. This was dutifully observed, but when the restriction was relaxed, many went back to communion on the tongue, but the handshake had nearly disappeared. People often exchange a bow—clearly between equals. So the bow has its place, but genuflection is still necessary when the gesture is toward one who is greater than oneself.

There has perhaps been a compromise of the sacredness of the Eucharist by the introduction of communion in the hand. I understand that this was a custom in the early church and would concede that it can be done reverently. Still, one justification at its introduction was "self-communion": "I don't want a priest to give me communion, I want to do it myself." But administration of the sacrament is the function of an ordained priest; he feeds us with the sacrament; this may be better represented by its being given directly into the mouth. This is consistently observed in the Eastern Rites and Orthodox practice. There is the additional problem that the host may be taken away without being consumed. This could be completely innocent, but that may not always be the case. We have an acolyte who assists at communion, who watches for people not consuming the host but taking it back, and reports that this does occasionally occur at Mass.

Finally, silence is important for the cultivation of the sense of the presence of the Eucharist. Especially in the church when the liturgy is not being celebrated, silence conveys to all present the importance of attention to the Eucharist. I recall having dropped into the church of Sacré Cœur in Paris. The outside steps were filled with people, in various states of dress, chatting, eating and drinking, having a good time. Stepping into the church was almost a shock: the Eucharist was exposed for adoration, and the silence in the church was palpable. A considerable number of people were on their knees, motionless and adoring. The total silence bespoke the intensity of their attention upon the presence of the Lord upon the altar. There are moments in the liturgy of the Mass when such silence is also appropriate, particularly at the consecration and elevation of the Blessed Sacrament. If such adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is regularly cultivated, how can belief in the Real Presence be far removed?

Articles

William Byrd's *Cantiones Sacræ*

Cantiones sacræ *range from reminiscences of liturgical events to extended independent expression of lamenting, pertinent to the state of the church for recusants of Byrd's time.*

by William Mahrt

The Cheque Book of the English Chapel Royal in 1572 gives a notice: "Robert Parsons was drowned at Newwark uppon Trent the xxv[th] of Januarie, and Wm. Bird sworne gent in his place at the first the xxij[th]of ffebruarie."[1] This event placed William Byrd alongside Thomas Tallis in the premiere musical institution of the country, and they soon collaborated, acquiring an exclusive patent from the queen to publish music, even to sell music imported from the continent, as well as to print lined music paper.

Their first effort at the publication of music was an ambitious enterprise, a collection of thirty-four pieces of sacred music, though its exact title, *Cantiones quæ ab argumento sacræ vocantur* (Songs which from their texts are called sacred), may have placed less emphasis upon their sacred character than a more forward title might have done. The collection was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, at the occasion of the seventeenth anniversary of her accession to the throne and is thought to have been presented to her on the celebration of this anniversary. It included a variety of polyphonic music, half by Tallis and half by Byrd. It was expressly meant proudly to propagate English music

William Byrd (top) and Thomas Tallis (bottom)

[1] *The Cheque Books of the Chapel Royal*, ed. William Lovegrove, John Harley, Andrew Ashbee, and Marmaduke Alford (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 21.

upon the continent. However, because of its dedication to Elizabeth, it clearly could not include Masses, Marian motets, or compositions dedicated to the saints.

I am indebted to two great works of scholarship on the *Cantiones 1575*. First, John Milsom, one of the most acute scholars of English Renaissance music, published in 2014 a masterly comprehensive edition, including extensive commentary and editions of the possible versions of the pieces—instrumental versions, sometimes earlier than the texted pieces, and settings of English texts to the music.[2] Second is Kerry McCarthy's new book on Tallis. This book is a masterful account of the biography and musical works of Tallis; it is in as stark a contrast with her book on Byrd as the personality and careers of the two composers differed.[3]

The collection consists of groups of three pieces by each composer in turn, with a concluding piece attributed to Tallis, with the possible assistance of Byrd. Each composer thus contributed seventeen pieces, and this has been understood as part of the homage to Elizabeth on her anniversary. It may well be that the significance of seventeen occurred only in the compilation, since the parts of a couple of multipart works were listed as separate pieces, allowing the count of seventeen for each composer. It should not be surprising, however, that this significance may have occurred only in the development of the collection, since the crowning aspect of great works often comes only in their near completion.

I have been interested in what is meant by the title *Cantiones sacræ*. Polyphonic music has a variety of genres. In the fifteenth century, the word motet described a solemn piece composed for a ceremonial occasion, based upon a liturgical melody and sung in long notes (a cantus firmus) drawn from the liturgy. An example is *Nuper rosarum flores* by Guillaume DuFay, for the consecration of the Florence cathedral upon the completion of its dome by Brunelleschi. It was a high, formal style and out of it grew the cyclic polyphonic Mass, even a few late manifestations of ceremonial usage, for instance Lasso's motet for the welcome of Cardinal Reginald Pole to the Munich court.

Byrd's pieces are often called motets,[4] but I would suggest that in the case of Byrd, the title *Cantiones sacræ* designates pieces that follow a tradition of derivation from song rather than liturgy. A *cantio* was a song, either sacred or secular (French translation, *chanson*), with a lyrical setting in a discant-dominated style, a more intimate piece, composed for the purpose of devotion and not necessarily based upon a formal text or chant from the liturgy. An example is *Quam pulchra es*

[2]Thomas Tallis & William Byrd, *Cantiones sacræ* 1575, ed. John Milsom, Early English Church Music, vol. 56 (London: Stainer & Bell, 2014).

[3]Kerry McCarthy, *Tallis, The Master Musicians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[4]The very well-regarded *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* gives a definition of the motet since the time of Josquin des Prez as "a sacred polyphonic composition with Latin text." But a definition must include all the instances named by it and exclude all those not. But no one would call a Mass a motet, though it is also a sacred polyphonic composition with Latin text. The same would be the case for Magnificats, Lamentations, votive antiphons, gradualia (i.e., Mass propers), etc. We would not call any of those motets.

by John Dunstable. By the sixteenth century, a synthesis of these genres had been achieved but their link to the liturgy was often retained, and on the continent they were sometimes called motet, sometimes *cantio*. In England, the title motet seems to have occurred only first in Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, though Byrd's collections continued to be designated *cantiones*.

The use of the term *Cantiones sacræ* is actually quite common on the continent. Most of the motets of Orlando di Lasso were published in collections entitled *cantiones sacræ* or *cantica*, or *moduli*, less frequently *motetti*. Similar works of Clemens non Papa are found in collections generally entitled *cantiones sacræ*. Today, these are generally called motets, but this is not quite the usage of the period. The liturgical identity of these polyphonic works was often not evident, but yet it would not be called a motet or *cantio* if it were understood to be a mass, a polyphonic hymn, a lamentation, or another liturgical genre. The genre of the *cantio sacræ* in the hands of Byrd has a particular character that will be explored below.

My purpose here is to examine the texts of the *Cantiones,* not simply as sacred texts, but principally as they represent a variety of liturgical genres. By genre, I mean the various kinds of liturgical event and musical composition that make up the wondrous variety of liturgical action and music. The function of a liturgical action, such as a procession or a lesson, is made distinct by the music that accompanies it. This includes the text and the style of the music. A text pertains to the purpose of the action and to the context of the festival to which it belongs. Music distinguishes the character of each action through differences in style. For example, a psalm verse can be sung as a psalm antiphon, a brief refrain sung before and after the chanting of a whole psalm. It provides just enough melodic activity to complement the rather neutral psalm verses. But the same text can also be sung as a gradual, the meditation chant, which follows the singing of a lesson from the scripture. Here its purpose is to provide a meditative contrast to a lesson of many words with a musical setting of few words but many notes, with a few notable passages in melismata, many notes per syllable.

Yet, for Tallis and Byrd, many polyphonic pieces retained a liturgical identity. Of the thirty-four *cantiones*, at least twenty-two can be identified as being based upon a particular genre of the liturgy. Tallis's membership in the Chapel Royal under Queen Mary (1553–1558) gave him the opportunity to compose the responsories of Matins, and between the two composers, eleven such responsories are found in the *Cantiones*. Between the two, five metrical hymns are found. There are other genres as well: introit, psalm, processional antiphon, psalm antiphon, and so forth.

For Tallis and Byrd, many polyphonic pieces retained a liturgical identity.

That these works must have had a liturgical origin is suggested by the fact that for each composer, there is a set of pieces whose texts occur successively in the liturgy. For Tallis, there are three responsories for the Matins of the First Sunday of Lent, the

third, the fourth, and the fifth. For Byrd, there are three from the Office of the Dead; another pair by Byrd includes the text of a lesson from the Office of the Dead and its following responsory. A few of the *cantiones* do not show a liturgical model; particularly interesting are two that are based upon early authors, St. Isidore of Seville and St. Augustine of Hippo; the authors of these texts have recently been identified by Kerry McCarthy.[5] For another piece, the source of the text may be directly the Gospel, for a few, no source has been found.

Now to the point of my discussion: how can the liturgy be the source of the pieces, since it was prohibited exactly seventeen years before? I contend that the composers were steeped in the liturgy and its melodies, and, retaining their sense of its significance, they composed music upon this foundation. This means that the *cantiones* have a kind of hybrid existence, a parentage from the liturgy, but also a musical practice that builds on that parentage with more intensely musical techniques that rely upon the solidarity of a community of composers who still cherish the liturgical tradition.

I draw an illustration from a work composed before the *Cantiones,* the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* by Tallis. My own choir sings the Office of Tenebrae the Wednesday evening of Holy Week. This office is sung with the progressive extinguishing of candles, until the church is dark, a symbol of the death of Christ, at which a great noise is made—the only time in the liturgy that noise is made, a cosmic chaos representing the death of Christ. The first three lessons of this office are from the beginning of Lamentations, and they are often sung in polyphonic music. On occasion, we have sung the Tallis setting, though usually we sing that of Victoria. We have reflected upon the Tallis settings and come to the conclusion that they were not ideal for the liturgy; we have recently sung only the Victoria. Our experience was that they exceeded the needs of the day, composed to draw attention to them more than is appropriate to the occasion—they involve really extraordinary musical expressions. Tallis's setting of the Hebrew letters is a good example. In Hebrew, the Lamentations are alphabeticons—each line of text begins with the successive letter of the alphabet, aleph, beth, ghimel, etc. A literal translation, which St. Jerome was bound to make, could not chose the right words with the alphabet letters at the beginnings of the lines of text;[6] so he simply set the letters before the lines which they begin in the Hebrew. Tallis sets each of these letters to a pitch related to the letter—aleph on a, beth on B-flat, ghimel on G, heth on C—but this to an eloquent section of polyphonic music. This must come from a self-consciousness about the composition that draws attention to itself. The texts of the Lamentations were set by Tallis, Byrd, Whyte, and Parsley. These derive from the period when it was no longer possible to sing Lamentations in the liturgy. I view them as mutual exercises in the genre, as a lamentation of the loss of the occasion to sing lamentations and as contributions to the fellowship of composers.

[5]McCarthy, *Tallis*, 167f.

[6]An attempt at a translation keeping alphabet letters at the beginnings of lines was made in *The Holy Bible: A Translation from the Latin Vulgate in the Light of the Hebrew and Greek Originals*, tr. Msgr. Ronald Knox (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), pp. 732–36.

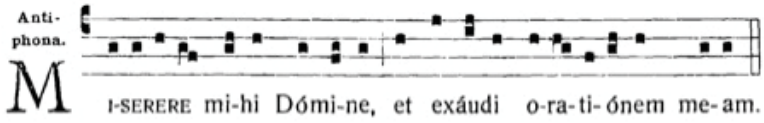


Figure 1. Miserere mihi Domine, *from Compline.*

This suggests a paradigm for considering the *Cantiones*. Upon the tradition of liturgical genres there are now compositions that are exercises in the composition of the liturgical genres as musical pieces, expanding the liturgical tradition for the sake of creating essentially musical pieces. For each piece the parameters are slightly different: some keep a cantus firmus, others keep an imitative texture independent of any chant melody, and some are in a more direct and homophonic texture.

I would like to illustrate the paradigm I am proposing with an example from Byrd with brief mention of several other works from the collection. *Miserere mihi Domine* is a psalm antiphon for Compline (see Figure 1).

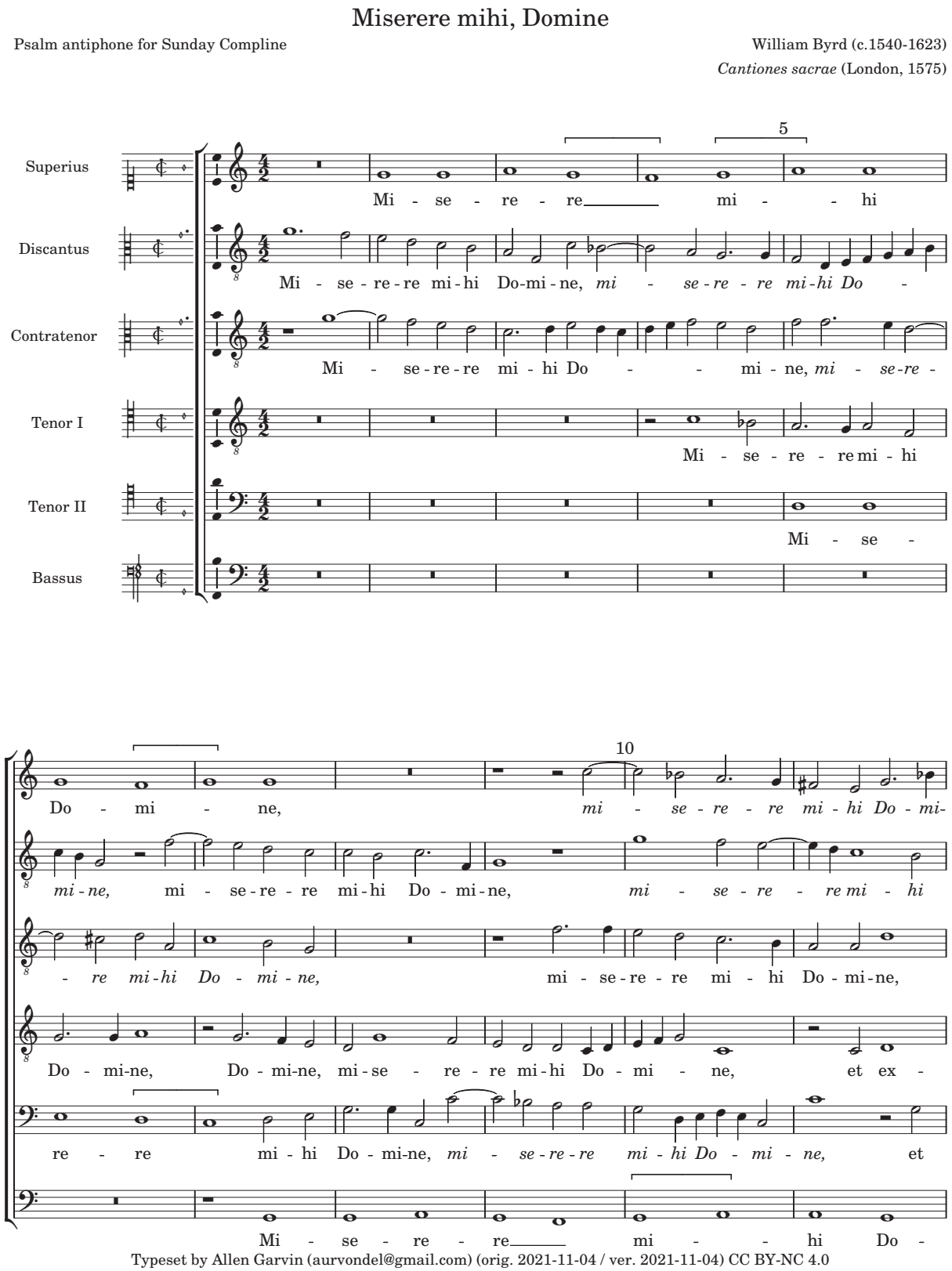
It is characteristic of the chant of psalm antiphons that it is brief and quite syllabic. This one sets the typical dynamic parallelism of the psalm verse—two halves of the verse being complete but complementary statements, the second of which exceeds the first in one way or another. Here the first line remains at a low pitch, reflecting the humility of the speaker, but the second rises to an expressive height to express the plea to God.

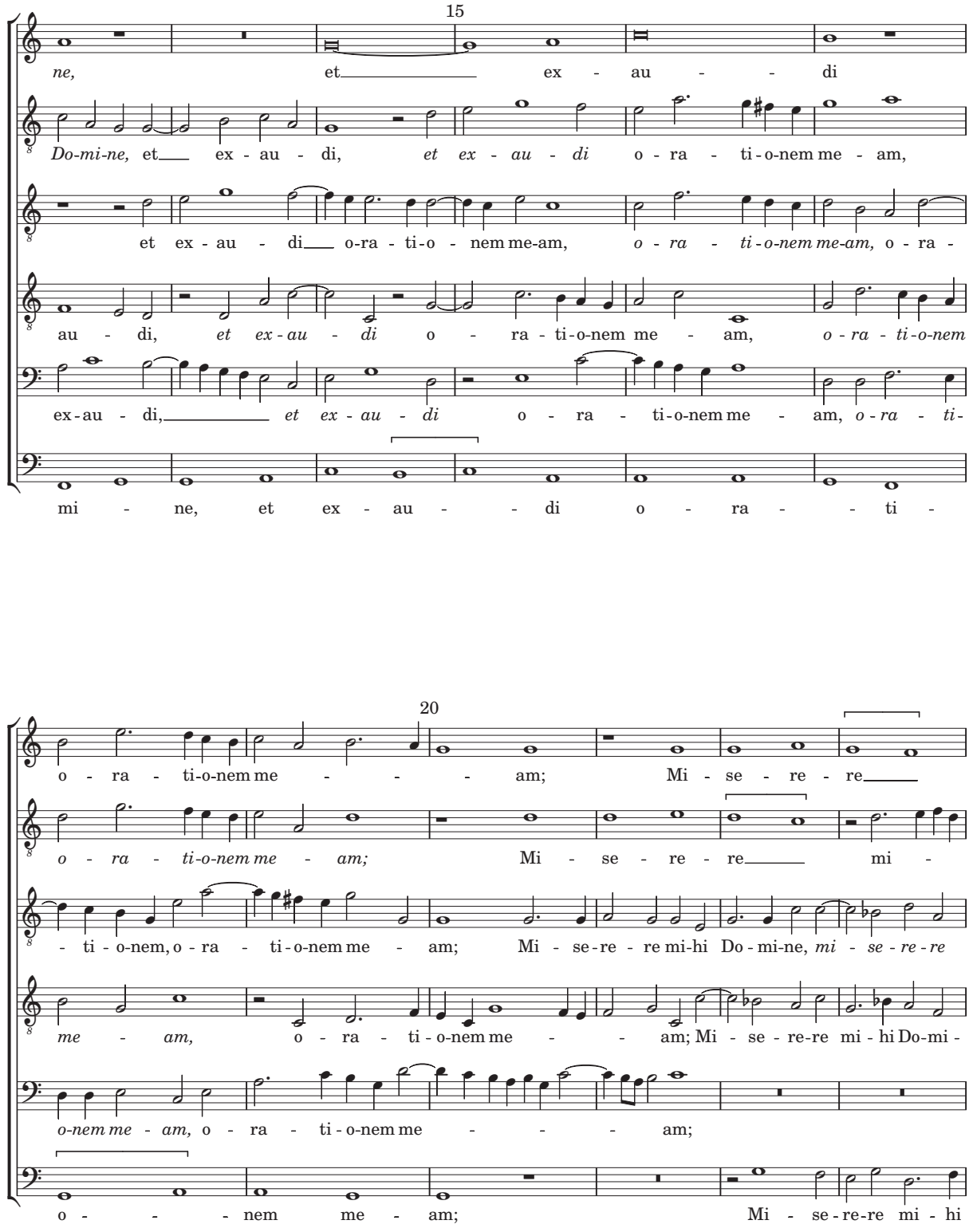
Byrd, *Miserere mihi Domine*[7] (see Figure 2). This very antiphon was the basis of numerous English polyphonic settings for instruments. But Byrd also exercised a friendly competition with the composer Alfonso Ferrabosco, in which they each composed eighty different ways to set it in canon. Here Byrd makes a musical treatise on this antiphon, first stating its beginning in long notes in three-voice imitation. This is accompanied by counterpoint in three other voices, whose descending motion and pungent passing notes give intense expression to the plea for mercy (mm. 1–13). Then the final imitation is extended to include the whole chant in the bass (mm. 13–20). The whole chant is then restated in a four-part canon, two voices taking the tune, two taking the counterpoint (mm. 20–36). Byrd's composition displays a technical prowess that far exceeds the needs of a compline antiphon. But the amazing thing is that it is also stunningly beautiful.

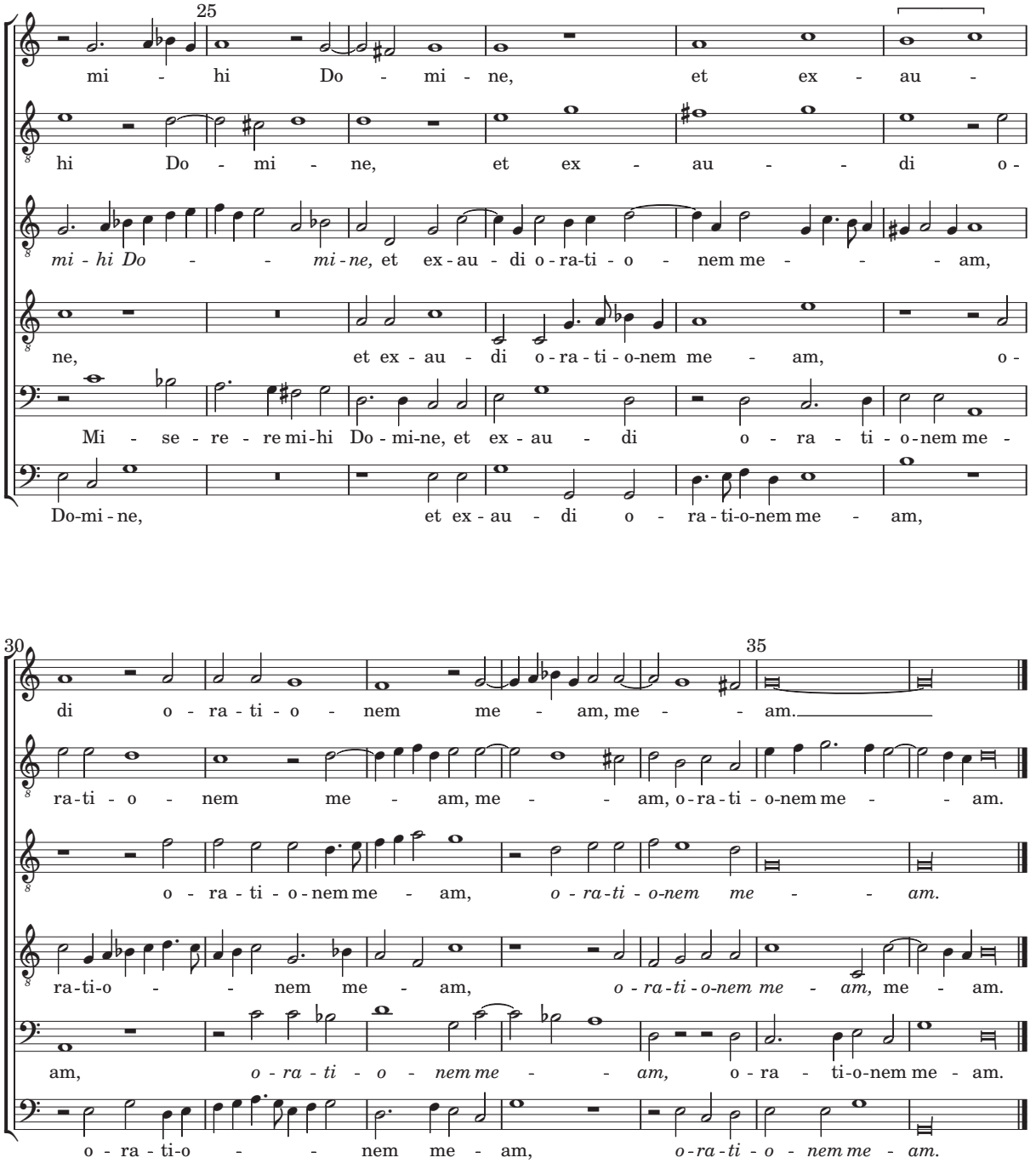
It is characteristic of the chant of psalm antiphons that it is brief and quite syllabic.

[7]Example from Choral Public Domain Library, transcribed by Alan Garvin. All the polyphonic examples mentioned here can be viewed on the Choral Public Domain Library online; recordings are available on YouTube.

Figure 2. William Byrd, Miserere mihi Domine, *from* Cantiones sacræ, *(1575).*







Miserere mihi Domine,
et exaudi orationem meam.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord,
and hearken unto my prayer.

Tallis, *Dum transisset Sabbatum*. The third responsory for Matins of Easter and of the Easter octave as well as the Sundays after Easter. It embodies the chant of the responsory in equal long notes without rests. The performance of the whole responsory would include verses sung in chant with repeats of portions of the polyphony.

Tallis, *Te lucis ante terminum*. This is the compline hymn, which has its own chant melodies, which would be required for a compete setting.

Tallis, *O nata lux*. This is the hymn for the Sarum feast of the Transfiguration, but it is not set in arrangement for a typical alternation with chant; rather the polyphony sets the long meter in an inventive way.

Byrd, *Emendemus in melius*. Here is a well-known and well-loved liturgical text. A responsory for Ash Wednesday and the First Sunday in Lent. There is no chant melody as a cantus firmus nor an intricate contrapuntal texture but rather an almost completely homophonic texture. It is famously modeled upon *Qui fundasti terram* by Alfonso Ferrabosco. However, the harmonies of Byrd's setting are strikingly more original and interesting than those of Ferrabosco's.

Tallis, *Salvator mundi I*. This is a processional antiphon, but there is no trace of a chant melody; rather, its phrases are set in imitation—for each line of text. This is the continental model of a motet, but the result is, because of Tallis's very English counterpoint, hardly continental.

Tallis, *In jejunio et fletu*. This is the third responsory for the First Sunday of Lent, but here there is no trace of a chant melody. Instead there is, in the words of John Milsom, "a dramatic text, elusive tonality, side-stepping harmonies, biting cross-relations, and low notated pitch," with juxtaposition of major, minor, and Phrygian modes, all of which create perhaps the most unusual piece of the collection.[8]

Here are musical works, most but not all of which were drawn out of the tradition of sacred liturgical genres, now the subject of original and innovative musical treatment. It was not just to avoid close scrutiny of Protestants, including the queen, over the use of sacred Latin texts, but also to indicate that the sacred precedents were points of departure for purely musical developments, well exemplified by the collection.

After the publication of the *Cantiones sacræ* of 1575, Byrd remained active in composition, and his pieces were circulated and performed by many. But he published no more until he began a flurry of publication again in 1588 with another collection of *Cantiones sacræ* in 1589. He describes his project in the dedicatory preface to this collection:

> Some persons joined to me by true bonds of friendship and of substantial reputation, when they recently perceived that certain of my musical songs, owing to the carelessness of scribes in making copies, had suffered a certain amount of error (which had assuredly not crept out of our little music-establishment), finally induced me by their requesting to send the songs themselves to the press, but only when they had first been brought to the lathe and made more correct. However, there was such a miscellaneous mass of them, that I have thought that

[8]Tallis & Byrd, *Cantiones*, ed. Milsom, 355.

> it should be distributed into different books, as leisure shall permit, and published each at its appropriate time.[9]

This included the first new set of *Cantiones sacræ* of 1589, but also a collection of *Psalmes, Sonets, & Songs of Sadnes and Pietie,* 1588*,* with another set of *Cantiones sacræ* in 1591 as well as *Songs of Sundry Natures,* 1589*,* and *My Lady Nevell's Book,* keyboard music, 1591. Much later he published two books of *Gradualia,* 1605 and 1607, and *Psalms, Songs and Sonnets*, 1611, and *Tears or Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soul,* 1614.

While much of the music of the 1575 collection represented reminiscences of old liturgical genres, the *Cantiones sacræ* of 1589 and 1591 are quite different. Byrd composed pieces, which for recusant Catholics were an *anamnesis,* in this case, giving ancient history a particular relevance to the present.

Anamnesis. Recollection, remembrance. This is the Greek word used in the scripture for the account of the Last Supper: "Do this in remembrance of me" (do this in *anamnesis* of me). This is not simply the memory of a past event, but rather a bringing of this past event into the present. This occurs continually in the liturgy. Palm Sunday is a telling example.

On Palm Sunday the liturgy creates a procession, in which the entire congregation enters the doors of the church in re-enactment of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. What is crucial is that this re-enactment does not so much take us back into an event of history, as it does bring that event into the present. In this liturgy, we are there in Jerusalem today accompanying Jesus into the Holy City.

Even more importantly, every celebration of the Eucharist, as an *anamnesis*, makes present the Last Supper: it is not a separate offering of the sacrifice of Christ, but an *anamnesis* of the same sacrifice about which he said, "Take and eat this all of you, for this is My Body which shall be given up for you," and "Do this in remembrance of me."

Joseph Kerman in a 1979 article in the *New York Review of Books*, "William Byrd and the Catholics,"[10] made a strong argument for Catholicism as a crucial element of Byrd's compositions, even those from 1575 on. It took a Jewish scholar to make such an imposing argument, for if by a Catholic, it might be seen as special pleading, and a Protestant might not be inclined to make such a strong argument.

In sixteenth-century England, those Catholics who recused to take part in the services of the Elizabethan (Anglican) Church were called recusants, and they sacrificed much to retain the old Catholic religion, especially its liturgy. This liturgy whose narration of all the events of the history of salvation had a special significance to them: the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt and particularly in Babylonia, the destruction of Jerusalem and its lamentation, and the looking forward to redemption from oppression. Each of these events was a special *anamnesis* in their unhappy situation. The fall of Jerusalem and the captivity of God's people were immediately experienced in their everyday struggle to maintain the old faith, as the fall of the

[9]*Cantiones sacræ I* (1589), ed. Alan Brown, The Byrd Edition, vol. 2 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1988), p. xxi.

[10]Joseph Kerman, "Byrd and the Catholics," *New York Review of Books*, May 17, 1979.

old church and their own repression by the present reign.

The decade of the eighties was a difficult one for Catholics; Elizabeth had been excommunicated in 1570, and Catholics recusants had experienced increasing tensions. After the martyrdom of Edmond Campion in 1581, pressure on them increased, and it was risky to celebrate Mass. Faithful who had experienced a great tradition of sacred music found themselves deprived of it, and the *cantiones* of Byrd probably gave them a respite.

The old liturgy had been expressed by a long-standing tradition of elaborate and symbolically rich music, first plainsong—Gregorian chant—and then elaborate polyphonic music. William Byrd experienced the old religion at least in the reign of Queen Mary, and as a Catholic and musician, retained a sense of the liturgy and its music. The cultivation of music under Mary included not only a restoration of the entire round of plainsong services of the Sarum rite, but also the composition of elaborate polyphonic works based upon the liturgy of the Divine Office, especially the responsories of Matins. Byrd himself composed numerous works of Latin music, the earliest of which reflected the liturgical tradition from the court of Mary. While he and Thomas Tallis contributed pieces which were in genres belonging to that tradition, he also contributed a few pieces which reflect a new notion of *cantiones sacræ*, works whose texts were chosen not for their place in the liturgy, but for their potential for expressive musical setting.

This is evident on the continent somewhat earlier. As an extreme example, composers discovered the expressive potential in texts from the scripture, which were the lamentation of an Old-Testament father upon the death of his son. A good example is the motet attributed to Josquin des Prez, *Absalon fili mi*. The motet collections of Clemens non Papa and Orlando di Lasso contain many settings of sacred texts whose independence from the liturgy gives the composer the freedom to make an expressive setting. Many of these collections are designated *Cantiones sacræ*, and Byrd might have picked up this title from them.

But what is crucial is the kind of expressiveness they represented. While generally pieces in the liturgical tradition derive their expressive value from the liturgical circumstance for which they were composed and usually have an objective character, *cantiones*, by being based upon texts freely chosen like those laments from the continent, could be the occasion of highly intense expression.

The texts of many of the *cantiones* are texts of a distinctly penitential character; on the one hand they are texts of personal confession and begging forgiveness of sins. On the other hand, many of the texts are communal; they speak of "us" rather than "me" and of the community. They draw especially upon Old Testament texts, for which the Hebrew community, epitomized by Jerusalem, is a paradigm for the Catholic community; the captivity of the ancient Hebrews is seen as an allegory of the state of the church in the present. The sources of the texts are not only the Psalms, but also Isaiah and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Lamentations are essential to the Holy-Week office of Tenebrae, where a progressive extinguishing of candles symbolizes the death of Christ, and where the singing of texts from the Lamentations of Jeremiah is concluded by a call to Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God!"

Moreover, while some of the texts are drawn from continental motet collections, such as those of Clemens non Papa or Lasso, many seem to be the special choice of Byrd, who in some cases refashions the text or conflates texts from several sources. As distinct from liturgical texts, like those of the Mass or Office where the liturgy prescribes the text and gives the composer little choice, here the composer by his own choice, focuses upon texts most pertinent to his singers and the listeners, as well as to the composer himself. This allows him the opportunity to shape the texts by music that provides expression and consolation to Catholics, who have been deprived of their liturgy. Kerman points out that in Byrd's *Deus venerunt gentes*, "the cover of some blameless verses from Psalm 79," in which the spectacular details of the martyrdom of Campion vividly appear, take on extraordinary meaning.[11]

> O God, the heathen have set foot in thy domain, defiled thy holy temple and laid Jerusalem in ruins.
>
> They have thrown out the dead bodies of thy servants to feed the birds of the air; they have made thy saints carrion for the wild beasts.
>
> Their blood is spilled all around Jerusalem like water, and there was no one to bury them.
>
> We suffer the contempt of our neighbors, the gibes and mockery of all around us.

Who has not, when singing a psalm, come across a verse with compelling personal significance that lights up like a light bulb and gives the whole psalm a special significance? Particularly Byrd's setting of this psalm, with its striking declamatory beginning including half-step imitations but emerging quickly in a powerful full-voiced texture, would have brought home its connection with the martyrdom of Campion eloquently for recusant Catholics.

I would suggest that even when Byrd adopts a text found in a continental source, the process of personalization of the text for Byrd would have been powerful. Recall his description of the composition of a sacred piece, which he gave in the dedication to the *Gradualia:*

> 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.[12]

Each of Byrd's settings ranges widely through various textures and modes as a complex expression of its text. Inflections, quickness or slowness of rhythmic motion, ascent or descent as visual depictions, and the careful representation of the proper lengths of the syllables all enhance the gravity or mirth of pieces in Byrd's collection. Indeed, the overwhelming impression of the 1589 collection is that of a dichotomy

[11]Joseph Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*, The Music of William Byrd, vol. I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 44.

[12]Joseph Kerman, "William Byrd and Elizabethan Catholicism," in *Write All These Down: Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 88.

of affect, the contrast of "grave and merrie." Byrd's collection of secular songs the same year, which bore the explicit title, *Songs of Sundry Natures, Some of Gravity and Some of Mirth,* sets this dichotomy forth. Thomas Morley in the *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) picks up upon this distinction in his disquisition upon fitting music to its text. He says that you must:

> dispose your music according to the nature of the words which you are therein to express, as whatsoever matter it be which you have in hand, such a kind of music must you frame to it: if a merrie subject you must also make your music merrie. For it will be a great absurditie to use a sad harmony to a merrie matter, or a merrie harmony to a sad, lamentable, or tragical dittie.

He goes on to suggest other dichotomies, between sharp thirds and sixths and flat ones, between long and short notes, the use of suspensions, and the use of diatonic or chromatic notes.

Though Morley only hints at modal expression, Byrd's collection shows a preponderance of minor-mode settings for grave texts and some major-mode settings for merrie texts. Yet there are some problems: the glorious Jerusalem lament *Ne irascaris* is in the Ionian mode, while the exultant *In resurrectione tua* ends in the Phrygian. Moreover, given the number of lamenting texts, why are there so few instances of the Phrygian mode? While it is true that Morley gives a summary account of Glarean's twelve-mode system later in his treatise, it must be remembered that Glarean himself, after having labored to demonstrate the expansion of the eight-mode system to twelve, admits that only three are in actual practical use: Ionian, Aeolian, and Phrygian, precisely the three Byrd uses. So the question I address here is what is the role of modality in the intense expression of affect we experience in the *Cantiones*? Traditional analysis has sought to classify a piece according to its principal mode, and this is possible for Byrd. But this principal mode is often only a backdrop for more varying and interesting usage. The beauty of the works most often consists in a free play of modal elements over and above the principal mode, and often designated in the period as *commixtio,* commixture of modes.

As illustrations of the variety of textures and techniques, I give two examples. *Defecit in dolore* begins in a five-part point of imitation, but the imitations are diverse: the first subject begins with an expressive half-step rise, E-F-E, but it is answered by a half-step descent, A-G#-A, and the next two voices follow suit. See Figure 3. The fifth voice, however, finds another half-step rise, B-C-B, making this a three-pitch imitation, each entrance of which features the expressive half-step. A subsequent point of imitation ("et anni mei in gemitibus") makes use of a striking descending subject, descending through an F triad to arrive at a cadence

Byrd's collection shows a preponderance of minor-mode settings for grave texts and some major-mode settings for merrie texts.

Defecit in dolore vita mea

Psalms 30/31:11, 38/39:3

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Liber primus sacrarum cantionum (Thomas East press, London, 1589)

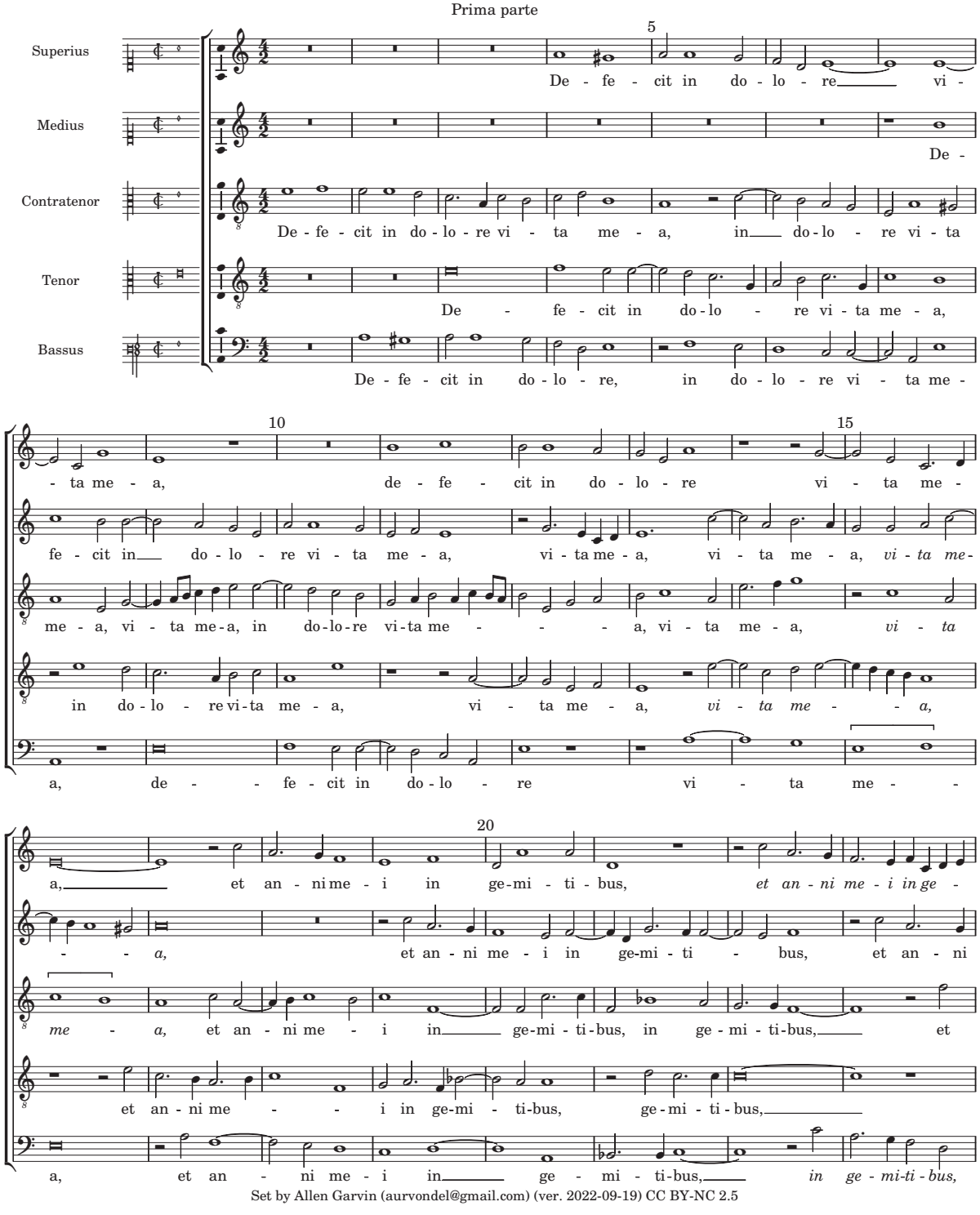


Figure 3. William Byrd, Defecit in dolore, *from* Cantiones sacræ, *Book 1 (1589).*

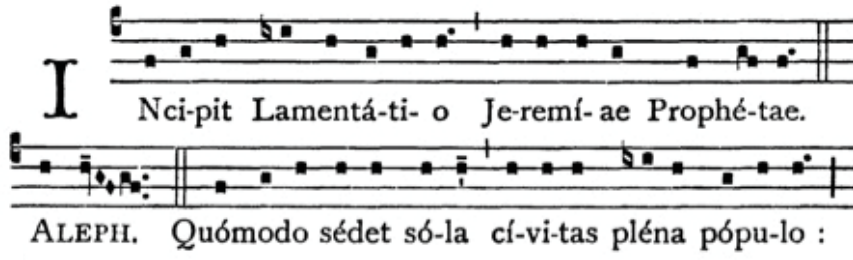


Figure 4. Lamentations of Jeremiah *from Holy Thursday.*

on D, but as before, each subject is slightly different, one beginning on A, one on E.

The major mode can be the subject of a lamenting text. Perhaps this is in imitation of the tone for the Lamentations of Jeremiah in the Tenebrae of Holy Week. Here the Hebrew letters are sung to a rising major third: see Figure 4.

Ne irascaris Domine begins with a call and response, one voice answered by two. See Figure 5. While the beginning is clearly in the major mode, the melody skips the third rising immediately to the fourth degree, exceeding the first notes of Lamentation tone. Then a descending subject using the same pitches follows in imitation on "iniquitatem," until "Ecce," (behold) breaks the mood with strikingly disparate utterances of the word, forming the centerpiece of the first part of the work. Then ascending imitation on "populus tuus" reverses the direction of the melody still using the same pitches; it finally rises to a peak for an eloquent conclusion to the first part of the work.

These techniques create works of considerable duration, which sustain and develop the affect of the text. This distinguishes the genre of *cantio* from many other genres of the period. This duration is Byrd's unique presentation of his meditation on the text turned into pieces of extraordinary textural and modal variety and extension. This stands in remarkable contrast with the pieces of the *Gradualia*, whose musical economy of means served the purpose of the musical elaboration of a clandestine liturgy, yet in a short time due to the possibility of discovery.

The virtue of the *cantiones* is their lack of specific occasion, such as liturgy, allowing the free development of the affections and musical ramifications of their texts. Byrd famously reported the intrinsic relation between the subject of his works and their realization in the citation from the *Gradualia* above.

I suggest that Byrd's singers would have felt in each of these pieces meditative experiences similar to those that engendered Byrd's composition in the first place, meditative experiences greatly deepened by their experiences of recusancy and religious troubles. These meditative experiences formed sensible consolation for their state of life. While we experience very different states of life, the context of Byrd's composition may even aid in the consolation these pieces give us.

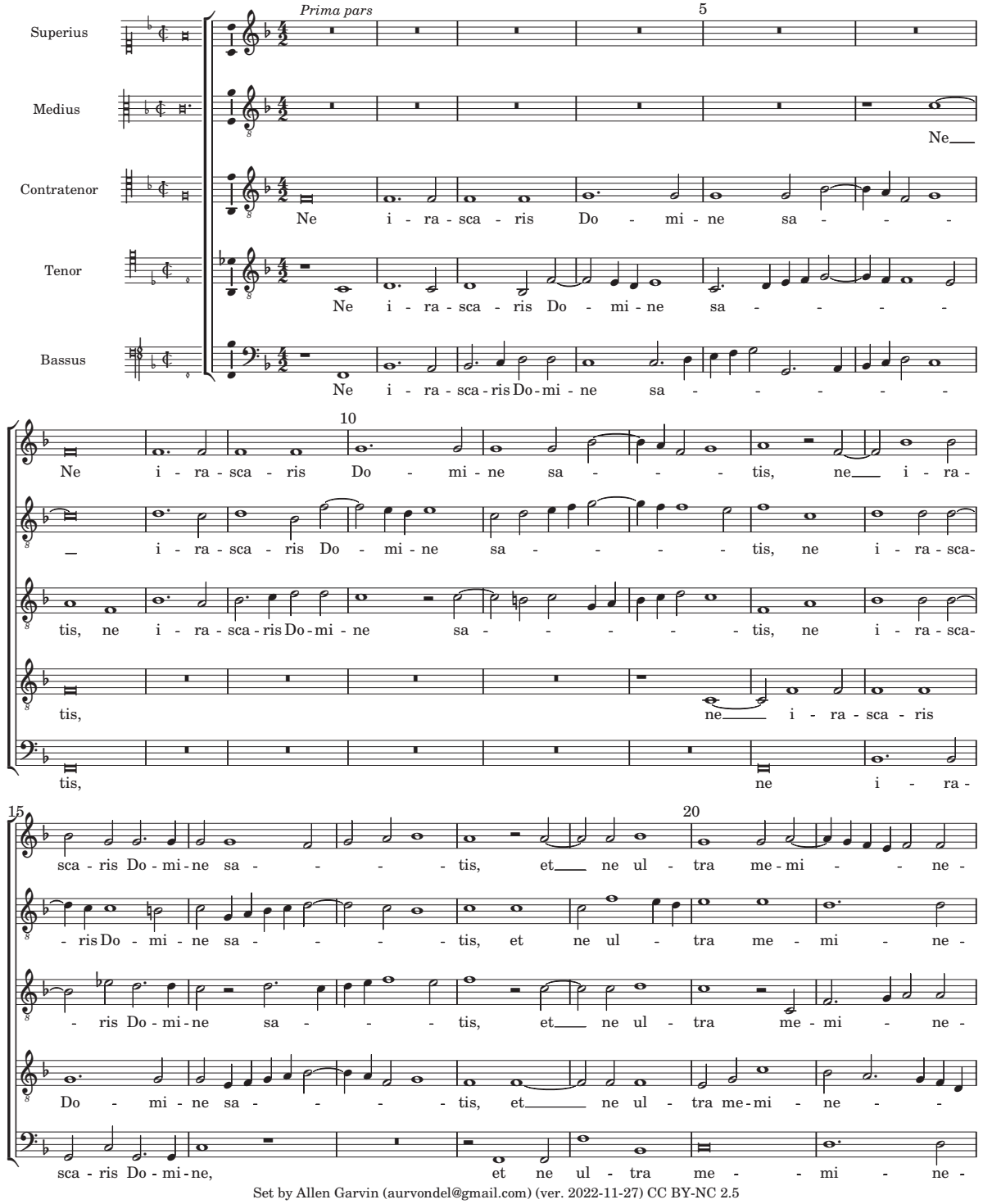
Figure 5. Ne irascaris, from Cantiones sacræ, *Book 1 (1589).*

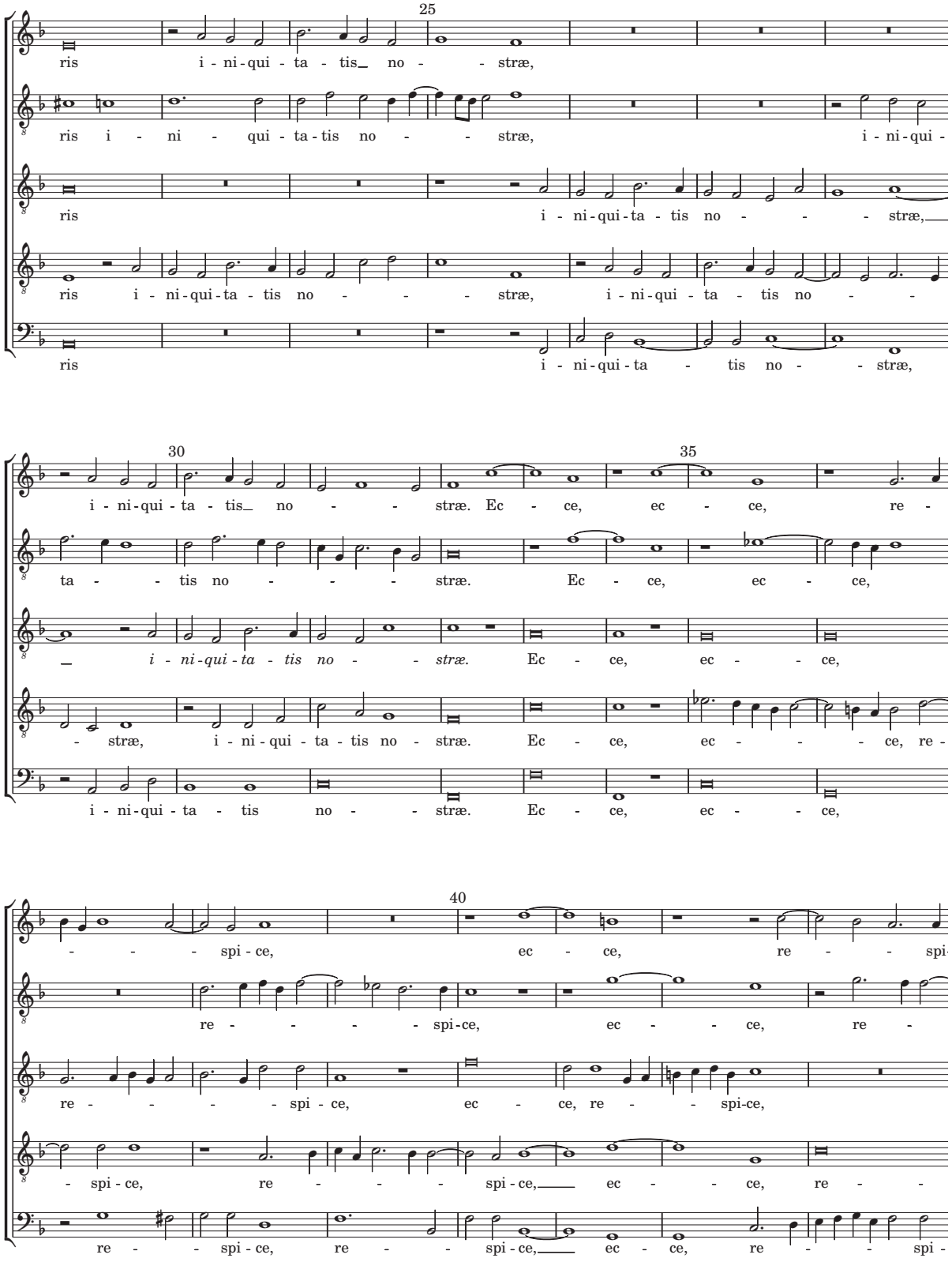
Ne irascaris Domine satis

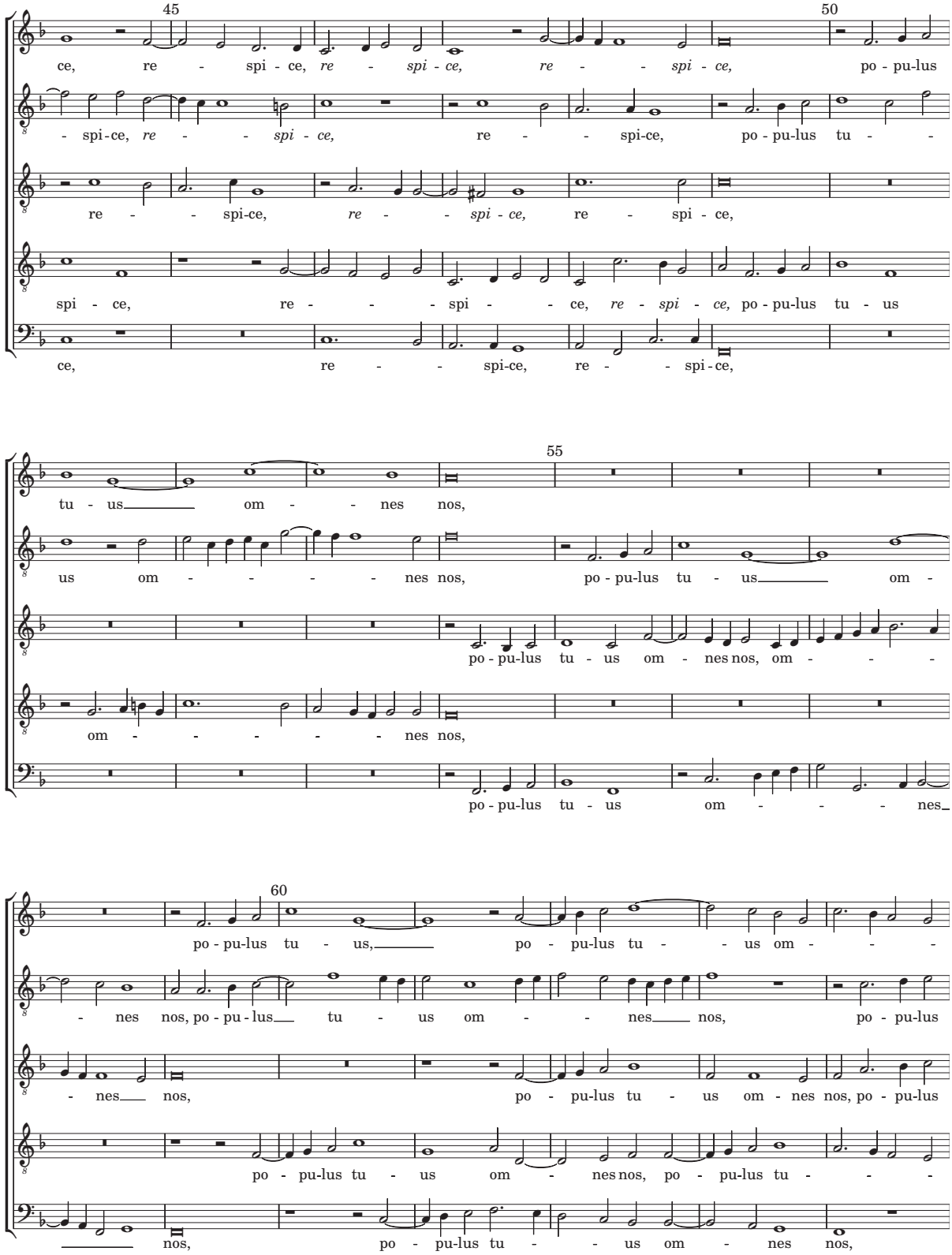
Isaiah 64:9-10

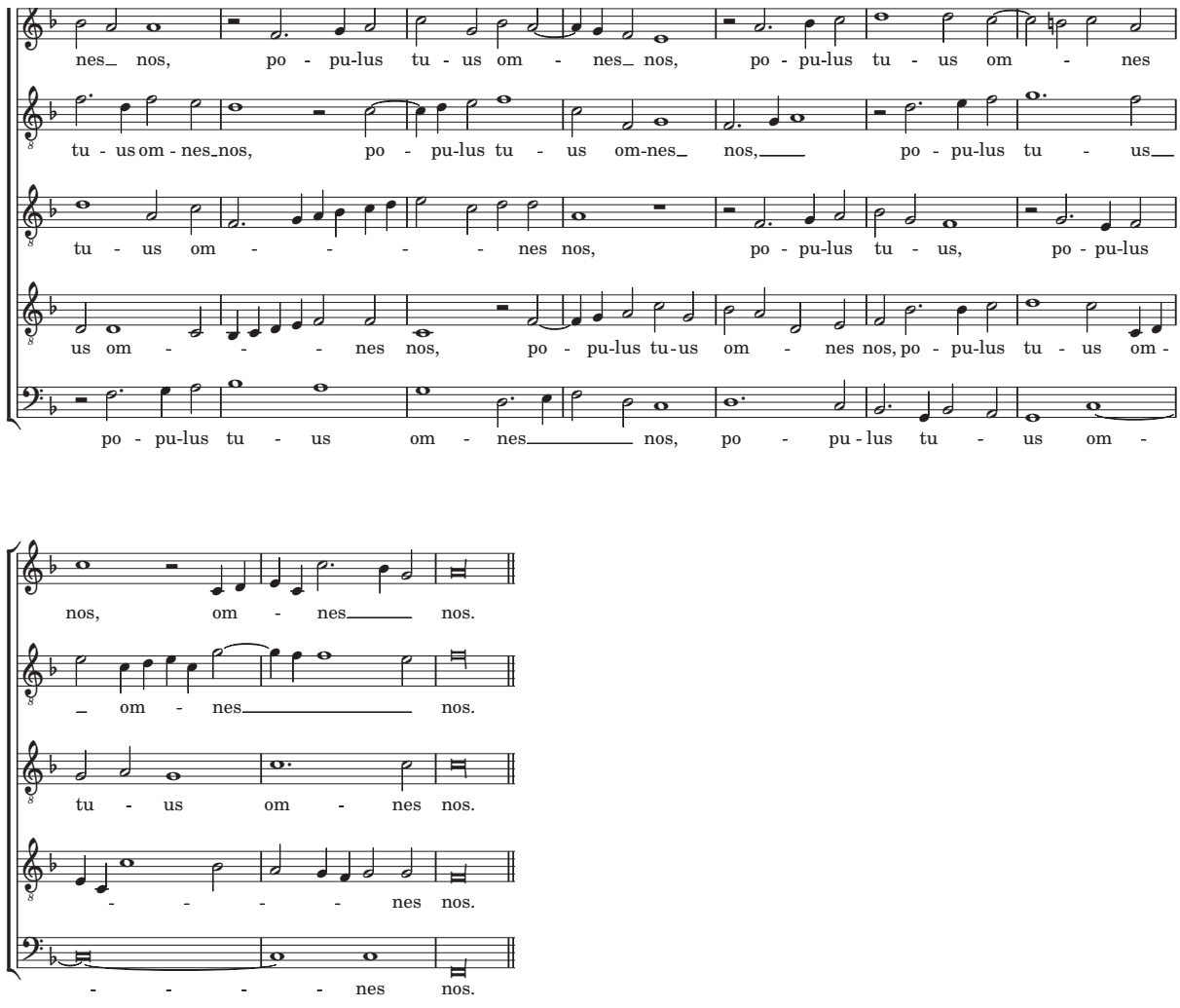
William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Liber primus sacrarum cantionum (Thomas East press, London, 1589)









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Rereading Psalm 109 in Old Testament, New Testament, and Liturgical Contexts

The first installment of a new series on Sunday Vespers explores the historical meaning of the first psalm of Vespers and the various interpretations highlighted by its antiphons.

by Fr. Joshua Neu

Psalm 109 (110) provokes a wide array of associations, not least insofar as its imagery is taken up in New Testament explorations of Christology. The psalm is rooted in Old Testament associations with the king chosen by the Lord, and Ancient Near Eastern imagery more generally. The church's liturgical use of the psalm then suggests additional layers of interpretation, rereadings according to the mysteries of Christ and the church. As if that layered complexity were not enough, the text itself, both in the Hebrew and Greek versions, presents profound textual critical conundrums. Giving a complete account of the original text and meaning of the psalm, its New Testament reinterpretation, and its liturgical application would be nearly impossible. So I here propose a more modest aim: to offer considerations from each of these levels of analysis and thereby reveal insights for an attentive praying of the psalm.

The psalm is divisible by two direct quotations of the Lord, the first being an oracle and the second an oath:

> The Lord says to my lord, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." (v. 1)

> The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." (v. 4)

The translation, "The Lord says to my lord," depends in part on a tradition of translation found in the Septuagint, in which the verb is *eipen* (said). The Hebrew versions, however, contain a noun, *nᵉ'um*. Not to be confused with a square note, *nᵉ'um* refers to an utterance or a whisper, sometimes rendered as "oracle." Indeed, the phrase "an oracle of the Lord" is found throughout the Old Testament as a sum-

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mary statement declaring the divine origin of some prophetic speech.[1] Thus, the Hebrew version reads, "An oracle of the Lord to my lord." This subtle difference foregrounds the essentially prophetic character of the psalm. The speaker here is not merely a psalm-singer but a prophet, pronouncing the Lord's words to an unnamed king ("my lord") in the direct quotation and, as prophets do, elaborating the meaning of the Lord's declaration in the verses that follow.

The oracle itself—"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool"—depicts not merely a place of high honor, but a co-enthronement, with the king sitting on the same heavenly throne as the Lord and thereby sharing in the Lord's governance. An Egyptian painting in Abd el Qurna, dated around 1400 B.C., depicts the pharaoh enthroned on a deity, while the pharaoh's enemies lie stacked as a stool for his feet (see Figure 1).[2] The imagery of the oracle, then, depicts the Lord, who vanquishes foes on the king's behalf, associating the king in the Lord's reign.

The same prophetic speaker declares the Lord's oath in v. 4, noting that unlike other commitments, the Lord will not change his mind on this occasion. Although the Lord changes his mind (literally, "repents") in various Old Testament texts,[3] this attestation in a royal psalm recalls divine repentance for making Saul king—"I repent that I have made Saul king" (1 Sam. 15:11a). Unlike the Lord's decision to enthrone Saul, this decision will not change.

Figure 1. Painting from a tomb in Abd el Qurna with nine enemies of the pharaoh placed under his feet as his footstool.

Surprisingly, the oath appears at first glance to have little to do with the addressee as king: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (v. 4). In the monarchic period in Israel and Judah, kings and priests were distinct, though kings occasionally engaged in apparently priestly activity, such as David offering sacrifices (2 Sam. 6:18) or Solomon dedicating the temple and blessing the people (1 Kings 8). Still, by the post-exilic period, positions of authority in governance were more distinct. For this reason, the manner of the king's priesthood is specified: that of Melchizedek, the

[1]See for example, 1 Sam. 2:30, Isa. 1:24, and Amos 2:11.

[2]Frank Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101–150*, tr. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia Series (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), p. 148. See plate 2, originally sourced from Carl Richard Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien V* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1853), pl. 692.

[3]See for example, Gen. 6:6 and Exod. 32:12, 14.

priest-king of God most high (Gen 14:18), rather than that of the Levitical, Aaronic, or Zadokite priesthood. He is of the order of Melchizedek because Melchizedek unites the offices of king and priest. I note, however, that a popular aspect of the Melchizedek story for Christian interpretation, the offering bread and wine, does not appear pertinent to this psalm.

With these two direct quotations dividing the psalm in two parts, the prophetic speaker elaborates the meaning of the oracle in vv. 2–3 and the meaning of the oath in vv. 5–7. In both sections, the Lord is the primary agent, whereas the king appears relatively, though not entirely, passive. In v. 2, for example, it is the Lord who sends out the royal insignia, though in the same breath the prophetic speaker commands the king to "rule in the midst of [his] foes." That word *rule* renders the Hebrew verb *r-d-h*, found also in Gen. 1:26, 28, in which God creates man to "have dominion over" the other creatures. Thus in v. 2, the Lord extends the king's rule, and the king is to have dominion in a manner envisioned as man's proper role in the created order itself.

The third verse raises many textual critical questions, and the scholarly discussion is notoriously complex. The Hebrew and Greek versions differ extensively, resulting in highly divergent translations. The New Revised Standard Version follows the Hebrew text:

> Your people will offer themselves willingly on the day you lead your forces on the holy mountains. From the womb of the morning, like dew, your youth will come to you.

This differs strikingly from the Greek, which is the basis for the Latin liturgical text, as in the Gallican psalter:

> *Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum: ex utero ante luciferum genui te.* (With you is the principality on the day of your strength in the brightness of the holy ones; from the womb before the morning star, I begot you.)[4]

I suspect that the Hebrew version more accurately preserves the original composition, though this is not to say that the Greek is "wrong." The Hebrew version maintains second person address throughout, following v. 2, whereas the Greek switches to first person speech, presumably the voice of the Lord, and introduces the mysterious begetting of "my lord." The shift to first person divine speech is peculiar since the transition is not marked by an introductory phrase, as in vv. 1 and 4.

I suspect that the Hebrew version more accurately preserves the original composition, though this is not to say that the Greek is "wrong."

[4]Translation mine.

In Hebrew, only the consonants were written, with vowel markings added much later. Because the vowels denote how a Hebrew term is being used in a particular instance, a series of consonants without context has multiple possible meanings.

The root of this discrepancy may be attributed to the peculiarity of the Hebrew language and alphabet. In Hebrew, only the consonants were written, with vowel markings added much later. Because the vowels denote how a Hebrew term is being used in a particular instance, a series of consonants without context has multiple possible meanings. Imagine writing only the consonants of various forms of the English verb *to break*, without context and oral tradition to fill in the vocalic gaps. The written form *brk* could be read as *break* or *broke*, or even *bark* or *Bork*.

The Hebrew term for "your youth," as in the NRSV, is *yalduṯêḵā*, but vocalized as *yᵉliḏtîḵā*, it means "I begot you," as in the Gallican psalter. Perhaps, then, the translator of the Greek version reanalyzed the vocalic pattern and thereby produced the mysterious phrase, "I begot you," basing his choice on an available, though in my view contextually less likely, reading of the Hebrew consonantal text. The result is two strikingly different readings, a Hebrew version which emphasizes the newness of the king, symbolized by youth, morning, and dew, and a Greek version that breaks out in a divine declaration of the king's sonship. While the Hebrew version suggests a new youthful ruler, perhaps one who might restore the promised Davidic dynasty (2 Sam. 7:16), the Greek version recalls the father-son relationship of the Lord and the son of David (2 Sam. 7:14a).[5]

As vv. 2–3 elaborate the meaning of the oracle, vv. 5–7 elaborate the meaning of the oath. Somewhat unexpectedly, the prophetic speaker focuses not on the cultic but the martial. By turning to images of conquest, the speaker focuses on the idea of this priest as king, rather than on cultic responsibility. The Lord, who has traded positions so as to be at the king's right (v. 5a), "will shatter kings on the day of his wrath" (v. 5b). The imagery turns quite gruesome in the Hebrew version and is toned down in the Greek. Translating the Hebrew, the NRSV reads: "He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter heads over the wide earth" (v. 6). Rather than "corpses," the Gallican psalter follows the Greek with "implebit ruinas" (he will fill ruins). In either case, the psalm depicts the wholesale conquest of enemies, though the subject of the conquest is emphatically the Lord, not the king himself.

[5]For discussion of similar ideas, see Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 149 and Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, Continental Commentary Series (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 350.

The final verse is the most obscure: "He will drink from the stream by the path; therefore he will lift up his head" (v. 7). In this verse, we are left to wonder who the subject is. Grammatically, the subject is the Lord, but the invisible God does not drink, an anthropomorphism quite foreign to Biblical imagery.[6] If not the Lord, then the king must be the subject, though the king has not been at war. Regardless, the peculiar images of drinking from the stream and lifting the head symbolize the consummate victory the warrior Lord over all the enemies, a triumph of the Lord for his co-enthroned king.

Having reviewed basic aspects of the psalm "on its own terms," as it were, we are now positioned to appreciate the New Testament's usage of it. The New Testament refers or alludes only to vv. 1 and 4, but it does so more than thirty times.[7] The oracle (v. 1) is taken up in many New Testament texts, including the synoptic gospels, Acts, some Pauline epistles, Hebrews, 1 Peter, and Revelation. Jesus himself invokes v. 1, in a dispute variously with the Pharisees (Matt. 22:44), with the scribes (Mark 12:36), and with the Sadducees along with the scribes (Luke 20:42–43). He presents his interlocutors with an enigma:

> While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet."' David himself calls him Lord, so how can he be his son?" And the large crowd was listening to him with delight. (Mark 12:35–37)

Here Jesus draws on two Old Testament traditions, apparently familiar to Jesus' audience and Mark's readers,[8] to suggest his possession of a divinely bestowed authority of the messiah-king that is greater than the authority even of David himself.

First, Jesus draws on the theology of a coming messiah, an idea developed to explain an irrevocable divine promise that appeared to have been broken, namely the divine commitment to David to give him an everlasting dynasty. When David proposes to build the Lord a house, that is, a temple, the Lord states instead that he will make David a house, that is, a dynasty. David's son will be a son to God, and the dynasty will be everlasting, unlike that of Saul: "I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me . . . But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:14a, 15–16). During the post-exilic period, when there was no longer a Davidic king, this divine promise of an everlasting dynasty with the Lord and the king in a father-son relationship appeared to have been broken, an apparent "breach of contract" that inspired the hope for a messiah who would restore the house of David. While this messianic hope

[6]Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 151–52.

[7]For a list of these references and allusions, see David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity*, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series, vol. 18 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), pp. 163–66.

[8]Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia Series (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), p. 579.

may not have underlain the initial composition of the psalm, nor even have been a typical interpretation in the Second Temple Period, in the New Testament Jesus associates the psalm with the restoration of the house of David through the messiah.[9]

Secondly, Jesus draws on the Jewish tradition of ascribing the authorship of the psalms to David, an idea rooted in stories of David being a musician.[10] While Davidic authorship of many psalms is unlikely, by the time of Jesus, David had become a sort of paradigmatic author of Biblical poetry,[11] much as Moses was eventually treated as the paradigmatic author of legal texts and Solomon the paradigmatic author of wisdom texts.

Drawing on these two traditions, Jesus invokes the oracle to "question the adequacy of the epithet 'son of David' for the messiah."[12] Jesus is the son of David, but not as one might have expected. This restorer of the house of David relates to God as son to father in an utterly unique way, and he will be, in his resurrection and ascension, co-enthroned at the right hand of God.

Whereas many New Testament texts refer to the oracle, the Lord's oath (v. 4) is taken up only in Heb. 5–7. After declaring that Jesus has "been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:10), the author explains the value of this sort of priesthood, first by focusing on Melchizedek's ambiguous heritage and life: "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever" (Heb. 7:3). The simple fact that Gen. 14:18–20 does not mention the death of Melchizedek, nor his father and mother, does not justify, on its own, this mysterious and mystical description. Rather, in this comment, the author's progression of thought "started with the contemplation of Christ, in whom he saw the fulfillment of Psalm [109]; he then considered the oracle of the psalm, and was led, finally, to go back from the psalm to the story of Genesis."[13] The author uses the peculiar depiction of Melchizedek in Gen. 14:18:20 to draw attention back to a key element of the oath in Ps. 109: "You are a priest *forever*."

The author of Hebrews, in contemplating Jesus through the psalm, also draws out another element: the superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood to that of the Levitical priests (Heb. 7:4–10), and therefore the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus when making the same comparison (Heb. 7:11–28). Because Jesus' priesthood resembles that of Melchizedek, as "one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent but through the power of an indestructible life" (Heb. 7:16), Jesus' priesthood and priestly work are far superior to

[9]Ibid., 579–80: "Since Psalm 110 apparently was not interpreted messianically in Second Temple Jewish texts, at least not to any significant degree, the Synoptic usage probably presupposes Christian exegetical activity."

[10]See 1 Sam. 16:14–23.

[11]For clear and extensive discussion of the superscriptions that mention David, see Rolf Rendtorff, "The Psalms of David: David in the Psalms," in *The Book of Psalms: Composition and Reception*, ed. Peter W. Flint and Patrick D. Miller, Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 53–64.

[12]Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 582.

[13]Albert Cardinal Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest According to the New Testament* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2009), p. 151.

that of the Levitical priests. Indeed, "Jesus has also become the guarantor of a better covenant" (Heb. 7:22), and "he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever" (Heb. 7:24). Thus, the author of Hebrews interprets the oath of the psalm as summarily expressing both the eternality and superiority of Jesus' priesthood and priestly work. Notably again, as with Ps. 109, Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine does not appear at all in the Heb. 5–7.

Viewed from the context of the psalm itself, such a rereading draws out ideas that are not the focus of the original composition, though certainly not contradicting it. The Hebrew *l^e`ôlām* and the Greek *eis ton aiona* need not be read as "forever," but are more simply "for a long time" or perhaps "for all time."[14] Contextually, the psalm's allusion to Melchizedek is not focused on eternality or superiority of priesthood but on Melchizedek's royalty. The author of Hebrews introduces a distinct layer of interpretation by focusing not on Melchizedek's royalty but on his and even more Jesus' priestly eternality and superiority.

After this brief foray into New Testament interpretations of the psalm, I turn now to interpretations suggested by antiphons attached to it in the liturgy. William Mahrt has already spoken on this topic with respect to some antiphons, so I will here recall some of what he proposes, along with additional considerations. Mahrt illustrates "the various liturgical functions of the antiphons in relation to their psalms."[15] In some instances, the first verse of a psalm is used as the antiphon, such as the antiphon for Ps. 109 on Sundays throughout the year. In other instances, the antiphon highlights a different verse, suggesting that verse as a sort of hermeneutic for interpretation on that particular day, and "psalm verses as antiphons are often adjusted,"[16] sometimes moderately, sometimes substantially.[17] Elsewhere, the antiphon is a verse from a different text. Occasionally, the antiphon is "drawn from the *vita* of a saint."[18]

In the *Usus Antiquior*, Ps. 109 is the first psalm of Vespers on all feasts of Our Lord and of Our Lady, and prior to the reforms of St. Pius X, it was sung on duplex and semiduplex feasts of saints, though not on the rare simplex or feria. On Sundays through the year, the beginning of the first verse, the oracle, supplies the antiphon: *Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede a dextris meis*. (The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand.) This antiphon indicates "the overall Messianic content of the psalm,"[19] an interpretation dependent upon the New Testament rereading of the psalm in light of Jesus' identity as messiah. Noting, however, the distinctly prophetic character of this oracle, the antiphon likewise suggests a prophetic aspect of the liturgical act itself. By declaring the

[14]See Nancy deClassé-Walford, Rolf Jacobson, and Beth LaNeel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), p. 836.

[15]William Mahrt, "The Role of Antiphons in the Singing of the Divine Office," in *Psallite Sapienter: The Liturgy of the Hours: Proceedings of the Eleventh Fota International Congress*, ed. Joseph Briody (Wells, Somerset: Smenos Publications, 2019), 142. See pp. 143–48 for Mahrt's categories of liturgical functions of antiphons.

[16]Ibid., 144.

[17]Ibid., 144–45. Among these, Mahrt's examples and discussion of the antiphon for apostles and evangelists and the antiphon for Epiphany are particularly noteworthy.

[18]Ibid., 147.

[19]Ibid., 143.

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oracle on the Lord's day, the choir prophetically proclaims the divine plan for a messiah who would die and rise. The oracle is clipped, however, leaving off the image of God stacking up enemies under the king's feet. Instead, the antiphon declares only the co-enthronement of the king and God, drawing to mind the Trinitarian sharing of all things divine.

The antiphon of Vespers I of Christmas suggests a different mode of interpretation. Whereas the psalm graphically depicts the Lord mowing down the king's foes, the antiphon contrasts martial victory with peaceful reign: "*Rex pacificus magnificatus est, cuius vultum desiderat universa terra*." (The king of peace is magnified, he whose face the whole earth desires.) Mention of a peaceful king recalls the "Prince of Peace" in Isa. 9:6, itself the basis of the introit antiphon of the third Mass of Christmas. Although the psalm depicts the establishment of royal rule by means of divine warfare, even filling the land with corpses, the antiphon suggests that such divine conquest occurs through peace, not violence. Thus, the antiphon provokes a rereading of the psalm in which the Lord's conquest of the king's foes is understood metaphorically. The king born this day rules completely and totally, though peacefully, to the same extent that the psalm depicts the Lord vanquishing foes.

Vespers II of Christmas highlights an internal verse, rather than the initial one, thus pointing out "a crucial verse for Christmas, for on Christmas Day, the liturgy celebrates a double mystery, the eternal begetting of the Son from the Father, and the earthly birth of Jesus Christ."[20] The antiphon, based on the Greek text of the psalm, reads: "Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ, in splendoribus sanctorum, ex utero ante luciferum genui te." (With you is the principality on the day of your strength in the brightness of the holy ones; from the womb before the morning star, I begot you.) This antiphon draws attention to the Father-Son relationship of the first two persons of the Trinity, a relationship mysteriously foreshadowed in the father-son relationship between God and the king, though fulfilled

[20]Ibid.

in a way far beyond what could realistically be expected by the original prophecy of 2 Sam. 7 and Ps. 109 on their own.

I will conclude by considering how one last antiphon provokes a rereading of the psalm, adding to the original layer of the composition and to the New Testament interpretation, with each voice sounding harmoniously. The antiphon for Corpus Christi reads, "Sacerdos in æternum Christus Dominus secundum ordinem Melchisedech, panem et vinum obtulit." (A priest forever, Christ the Lord, according to the order of Melchizedek, offered bread and wine.) With this antiphon, the oath takes on yet another meaning. Ps. 109, read on its own, introduces the figure of Melchizedek because he is both priest and king, unlike the Levitical priests, who were not kings. Heb. 5–7 presents Christ as of the order of Melchizedek in order to argue for the eternality and superiority of Christ's priesthood and priestly work by comparison to Levitical priests. Neither text suggests Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine to be particularly important, but viewed within the framework of Christian theology of the Eucharist, Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine appears as a type for Christ's Eucharistic sacrifice. With this antiphon as the lens for rereading the psalm, the priestly offerings come to the forefront. Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, insofar as his is a royal priesthood as the psalm depicts, and insofar as his priesthood is eternal and superior to the Levitical priesthood as Heb. 5–7 argues, but also insofar as Jesus, typologically foreshadowed by Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine, offers a superior sacrifice of his body and blood.

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Aligning Your Conducting Gestures to Reflect Your Musical Intention

Many choir conductors unintentionally communicate musical meaning with their gestures. Attention to these nonverbal cues can profoundly shape a choir's musical sound.

by Sarah Maria Craig Penner

The essence of conducting is nonverbal communication. No matter how much time one spends in rehearsal providing verbal instructions, a conductor's communication with his ensemble during liturgy or performance is entirely nonverbal. Research and experience have shown that a conductor's nonverbal signals can heavily influence an ensemble's musical expression since the ensemble reacts to what they see and produces music accordingly. It is therefore imperative that a conductor becomes a master in nonverbal communication to elicit the best possible music.

During his early teaching career, Rodney Eichenberger noticed that the same choir sounded differently with different conductors. He also found that as a conductor changed his body posture, facial expressions, arm position, and conducting gestures, the same choir sounded drastically different. This led him to conclude that there is "no right or wrong way to conduct, but the most efficient conducting makes use of the entire body to encourage a natural response in keeping the musical effect the conductor wishes to achieve."[1]

Body Posture and Facial Expression

The posture and facial expression of a conductor are his first communicative signals. Kenneth Philips states that "good posture is of utmost importance in establishing a leadership role"; and that a good conducting posture is with feet

> flat on the floor (and kept on the floor), approximately six inches apart, with the weight distributed toward the ball of each foot . . . knees are relaxed and the hips tucked under. The spine is stretched and the sternum elevated. The shoulders are back, down, and relaxed. Finally, the head should be held high with the chin neither lifted nor tucked back.[2]

[1] *What They See Is What You Get*, directed by Rodney Eichenberger & Andre Thomas (Glendale, Calif.: Hinshaw Music, Inc., 2007), DVD.

[2] Kenneth H. Phillips, *Basic Techniques of Conducting* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 6.

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Not only does a conductor's tall, singer-like stance demonstrate a conductor's confidence as a leader, it also encourages singers to sing freely with good posture and good vocal production. Much like how a person naturally wants to yawn when a person close by yawns, "mirror neurons" encourage singers to mimic the conductor's behavior. In Eichenberger's video *What They See Is What You Get*, he demonstrated how a conductor's stance and facial expression alone affect a choir's tone quality and intonation as well as vowel shape. He asked several of his graduate student conductors at Florida State University to lead an unrehearsed choir on the familiar round *Dona nobis pacem* without the use of a conducting pattern. Each conductor was given a specific instruction on body posture and facial expression privately. One conductor conducted with a pleasant smile and produced from the choir a light, less supported sound with spread vowels, while another conductor who conducted with a bright facial expression and tall stature elicited a rich and full sound with tall vowels. One conductor slouched with his weight shifted onto one leg, and the choir sounded unenergetic and was under-pitched. However, when he altered his posture to stand taller and modelled taller vowel shapes, the same choir sounded more anchored, in tune, and sang with taller vowels.[3]

Bending the knees at every beat, as many habitually do, implies the act of one sitting down. It shifts one's posture and causes intonation to sag. Eichenberger asked a choir to hold one pitch, and as the conductor bended his knees up and down, the pitch rose and fell accordingly.[4] Not only does bending knees negatively affect intonation, but it also creates an additional ictus point for the singers to focus on.[5] Each singer must then decide which to follow; meanwhile these extra focal points interfere with the ensemble's rhythmic accuracy and unity. The same concept applies to floppy wrists and bobbing heads as well.

Iconic Conducting Gestures

When a person wants to indicate the sky, he often points upwards to help illustrate his thoughts. As these types of iconic gestures have the ability to communicate the actual thought and semantic content of speech,[6] it makes sense to incorporate them into conducting gestures to illustrate musical ideas. For instance, if a conductor wants singers to sing more softly, he should reduce the size of his gestures. To smooth out a vibrato-laden passage, he can use the same kind of motion when one describes a smooth surface, moving a flat hand back and forth from left to right parallel to the ground.[7] Wilhelm Ehmann, the "dean" of choral conductors, described his legato gestures to be "like mixing cold and hot water in a tub with your hands, except that you do it all in a conducting pattern."[8]

[3] *What They See is What You Get*, DVD.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Alan McClung and Rodney Eichenberger, "The Relationship between Nonverbal Communication and Conducting: An Interview with Rodney Eichenberger," *The Choral Journal*, 36, no. 10 (1996), 22.

[6] Joseph Kevin Ford, "Implications for Non-Verbal Communication and Conducting Gesture," *The Choral Journal*, 42, no. 1 (2001), 21.

[7] Ibid.

[8] James M. Jordan, "Toward a Flexible Sound Ideal through Conducting: Some Reactions to Study

Even the manner in which the hands are held affect the sound. Rhonda Vieth Fuelberth studied the effects of left hand conducting gestures on inappropriate vocal tension. Of the six conditions studied—palm down, sideways phrase-shaping, no change, palm up, stabbing gesture, and fisted gesture—the stabbing gesture and fisted gesture generated the most inappropriate vocal tension; tension then leads to harsh tone quality. On the other hand, palm down and sideways phrase-shaping gestures generated lower levels of tension, even at the highest pitches.[9] Conductors should become aware of how their gestures influence singers' vocal health and hence tone quality. To help sopranos reach those celestial high notes, one might consider giving them space by supporting them with a low, open, and sideways gesture instead of "punching" the air to "hit" the high notes.

Functions of Rhythm and Direction of Music

Recall the conducting pattern diagrams commonly shown to beginner conductors: a down-in-out-up pattern for 4/4 time, down-out-up for 3/4 time, and a hook-like pattern for 2/4 time. After learning these basic patterns, conductors then applied them to a given piece of music. The problem with this mechanical, time-beating approach is that the gesture is superimposed onto the music. There is a tendency for beginner conductors to think of ictuses as arrival points. On the contrary, music occurs between beats. John Dickson insightfully stated that "the vast majority of music moves 'up' or 'away' rather than 'down' or 'toward,' which necessitates a re-programming of the conductor's earliest learned gestures."[10] Eichenberger categorized the four functions of rhythm: downbeat, away, offbeat, and into. As these names imply, there is directional movement at each beat.

The character of any piece of music is determined by the number of these elements in the music—music with all downbeat functions will sound differently than music with a combination of different functions.[11] Conductors' gestures should therefore reflect expressive phrasing; as singers see more nuanced conducting, they intuitively sing with more expressivity. One should note that not all first beats are a downbeat function. An obvious example would be any given polyphonic piece. This applies to other textures as well. In the homophonic *O nata lux* by Thomas Tallis, for example, on the

Conductors' gestures should reflect expressive phrasing; as singers see more nuanced conducting, they intuitively sing with more expressivity.

with Wilhelm Ehmann," *The Choral Journal*, 25, no. 3 (1984), 5.

[9]Rhonda J. Vieth Fuelberth, "The Effect of Left Hand Conducting Gesture on Inappropriate Vocal Tension in Individual Singers," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 157 (2003), 62–70.

[10]John H. Dickson, "The Training of Conductors Through the Methodology of Kinesthetics," *The Choral Journal*, 32, no. 8 (1992), 18.

[11]*What They See is What You* Get, DVD.

first beat of the second full bar lies the syllable –ne of the word "lumine." Depending on one's interpretation, this particular beat could be treated as either the "away" or "into" function.

The height of a conductor's horizontal plane illustrates the weight and support of sound. A lower plane, i.e., around the belly button, encourages a deep singer's breath and elicits a full, well-supported sound. A higher plane, i.e., in front of the chest, however, will draw out a shallower breath and a lighter, perhaps more delicate sound. The character of the music, down to the individual note level, should then determine where the horizontal plane lies. The general plane on which a conductor uses for Mozart's *Lacrymosa* will perhaps be different from the chant *In paradisum*. In the opening phrase of the hymn *Adeste fideles*, one might consider placing the final syllable of the two words -te and -les on a higher plane, with a less active gesture, but -des and -de on a lower plane with more energy.

The basic pattern achieves the essential function of rhythmic unity. However, when a conductor accurately incorporates the vertical, horizontal, and sagittal directions of music into the conducting gesture, ensembles can then make music more expressively, that is, in synchrony with the conductor's musical intentions.

Nonverbal Versus Verbal Instruction

Synchrony between conductor and ensemble can be improved even more greatly when there is mutual understanding of gestural meaning. Julie Skadsem's study on the degree to which singers respond to dynamic changes based on different instructional methods found that college students who have received at least one year of conducting experience respond better to gestural conditions, whereas the high school student group with no conducting training respond better to verbal instructions.[12] To help singers who are seemingly oblivious to gestural changes, one can invite them to join in some non-verbal eurhythmic activities that illustrate the meaning of a gesture. To use an example stated above, if a passage is too heavy and vibrato-laden, conductors can ask the singers to first swing their forearms in a circular motion (which will elicit a wobbly sound), then have the singers calmly smooth out an imaginary bed sheet in front of them (which will then lighten up and smoothen the sound).[13] Similarly, one can devise short exercises to illustrate gestures of dynamic changes by asking the singers to sing the same phrase while the conductor varies the size, weight, intensity, etc. of his gestures, such that singers make the visual, aural, and kinetic connections between what they see and how they sound.

Verbal instruction is a necessary element in the rehearsal process; however, conductors must learn to keep them short and succinct. Rehearsals are most enjoyable when much music-making takes place. On the other hand, the ensemble may engage in off-task behavior when verbal instruction is overused.[14] Many rehearsal issues not related to incorrect pitches may first be corrected by adjusting the conductor's gesture before ver-

[12]Julie A. Skadsem, "Effect of Conductor Verbalization, Dynamic Markings, Conductor Gesture, and Choir Dynamic Level on Singers' Dynamic Responses," *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 45, no. 4 (1997), 509–20.

[13]*What They See is What You Get*, DVD.

[14]Skadsem, "Effect on Conductor Verbalization," 510.

bally describing the change. Not only does this strategy increase rehearsal efficiency, but it also demands that the ensemble look at the conductor and pay attention to the conducting gesture,[15] thereby improving expressivity and even lending spontaneity to music making.

To achieve this efficacy, however, conductors must ensure that their gestures match their intentions. One can tell the choir to sing softly, but if the gesture remains large and weighty, verbal instructions will need to be repeated several times until the choir learns to ignore the mixed messages.[16] Due to people's natural tendency to mimic what they see ("mirror neurons"), one wonders if this is entirely possible.

There is a deep connection between nonverbal communication and sound. No gesture is inherently illicit; however it can work for or against a conductor depending on how it is used. Conductors should therefore take great care to ensure their entire body reflects their musical intention not only to avoid sending mixed messages to the ensemble, but to make use of this powerful tool for expressive and beautiful music making. To conclude I offer a checklist that conductors can use to evaluate their conducting gesture.

There is a deep connection between nonverbal communication and sound.

A Conductor's Checklist

- Does what I hear match my musical intention?
- Am I maintaining a singer's stance?
- Are my knees bending, or am I grounded? Am I adding any extra ictuses from my knees, elbows, wrist, and/or head?
- Do I maintain eye contact with the ensemble, especially at onset of phrases?
- Do my facial expressions reflect the character of the music?
- Am I breathing with the ensemble?
- Do my gestures reflect the musical character, e.g., dynamics, articulation, rhythm, etc.?
- Do my gestures reflect the musical direction or phrasing I want?
- Does my conducting plane reflect the musical weight and tone color I want?
- Are my gestures helpful in maintaining good intonation?
- Do my gestures promote a healthy, unrestrained sound?
- Are my verbal instructions short and succinct?

[15]William M. Folger, "The Seven Deadly Sins of Choral Conducting," *The Choral Journal*, 53, no. 3 (2012), 47.

[16]Ford, "Implications," 22.

Healthy Vocal Technique for Gregorian Chant

Singing Gregorian chant requires finding a balance between vocal subtlety and expressive power.

by MeeAe Cecilia Nam

The eminent twentieth-century composer, Paul Hindemith, called Gregorian chant the "cradle" of Western music. I consider singing Gregorian chant as a medicine for vocal and spiritual wellness. A single melody created on distinctive scale patterns (medieval modes) is sung without a harmonic accompaniment, creating a free-form melody. Unlike most Western songs using a predictable meter, Gregorian chant is non-metric and closely follows the natural rhythm of the Latin words, with the distinctive modal melodic contour fitting the text. All these traits of Gregorian chant allow singers to focus on the text and the meaning of the words, leading voices to a pure and meditative sound.

Most other vocal music requires a wide range, far from a speaking voice. Vocal music, such as classical art songs, operatic arias, and Broadway songs, demands challenging skills to produce the extreme high and low end of one's voice and to project over other instrumental accompaniments ranging from solo instruments to a big orchestra.

Known as sung speech, Gregorian chant is usually sung in the low to middle part of the singer's vocal range, which does not exceed more than the tenth or eleventh of musical intervals, a little over an octave, and never exceeds two octaves. The melody moves mostly stepwise with occasional divine vocal leaps as the spirit responds to the words. Therefore, singers feel vocally less challenged, and articulation of the sung words is close to spoken gestures and naturally produced. Therefore, one can experience singing Gregorian chant, the most natural way to connect the voice with the spirit, without worrying about the vocal demands.

The characteristics of Gregorian chant contribute to creating a reverent and contemplative atmosphere conducive to prayer and meditation. It is often said that chant is a form of music, but more so, it is sung prayer. The melody flows with elegance and reverence, gently cradled within an artistically balanced speed between moderately slow and quick but never too slow or too quick, allowing the words to be sung with clarity and intention; thus, singers reflect on their meaning.

Even flowing melismatic passages (multiple notes sung on one syllable) encourage prayerful reflection. The solemn and meditative character truly enriches the spiritual

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life, allows the congregation to participate actively in the prayers and meditation of the words, and encourages prayerful reflection. The modal melodies, fitting to the words, create a unique emotional quality and mood.

Canon Coudray's statement from the chapter "Fruits of the Study of Gregorian Chant" in *An Applied Course in Gregorian Chant* beautifully sum up the importance of the study of Gregorian chant: "The study of Gregorian chant will bring us to experience abundant and very pure *artistic pleasures,* will obtain for us very appreciable *spiritual fruits,* and will . . . have the deep desire . . . for the finest liturgical praise."[1]

Some Mistakes in the Aesthetics of Singing Chant

Singing chant requires a distinct approach compared to other vocal styles. I aim to explore general concepts and methods of chant singing to address common misunderstandings about its aesthetic perception, which can result in inefficient vocal production. Additionally, I will guide practicing chant singing to meet its performance requirements effectively.

What type of singers are best suited to sing in a chant schola? Singing chant necessitates a gentler and introspective vocal approach as opposed to other vocal styles. It emphasizes a pure and concentrated vocal sound without excessive vibrato or dramatic embellishments. Consequently, directors of chant scholas often prefer voices that can maintain a controlled quality, free from vibrato. There is the misconception that classically trained singers with powerful voices are not suitable for singing in a chant schola. However, it is important to note that many professional vocal artists have the ability to sing chant with the subtlety and vocal nuance that are necessary for the style.

Singing chant requires a distinct approach compared to other vocal styles.

It is a matter of vocal efficiency rather than the level of vocal projection. Singers can struggle with control and subtlety if they always like to hear themselves among others and always aim for a loud volume level. This type of singer tends to have one vocal color and is often referred to as a hyper-functional singer since they tend to prioritize vocal projection and over-support their singing. This approach can cause issues not only in solo performance but especially in choral singing and a chant schola, as singing in a group requires vocal flexibility to unite with other voices for a homogenous sound. Clearly, this type of singing is not considered professional.

If you identify as a hyper-functional singer, it is essential to reflect on the purpose of singing and develop vocal agility to meet the demands of the music you sing. Healthy and artistic singing goes beyond just projection. Even in opera, where singers must be heard over a large orchestra, proper vocal techniques and artistic expression ignite performance energy. Good voice teachers and coaches do not simply ask singers to sing loudly. They promote proper physical conditioning for healthy and consistent vocal quality and instruct students

[1]Joseph Robert Carroll, *An Applied Course in Gregorian Chant* (Toledo, Ohio: Gregorian Institute of America, 1956), p. 5.

to prioritize good pitch, rhythm, and meaningful delivery of text while staying true to the style of the music being performed.

On the contrary, a belief that singing softly is mandatory for singing plainchant can often result in under-pitched and devitalized sounds, along with poor diction. Attempting to sing softly without proper technique can lead to more physical fatigue. It is about finding the right balance and conducting your voice as part of the ensemble, allowing the style, words, and the music itself to naturally dictate the dynamic play. Soft singing is often mistakenly associated with poor posture and immobility of the articulators (locked mouth). Usually, frequent misapplication of pure and soft singing leads singers to a passive sound-making process, causing a closed throat, inefficient movement of the articulators, and tension in the mouth.

Singing softly can indeed be more challenging than singing loudly because it requires careful control of breath support and vocal production. Singers are often fully occupied with fear that their voice is louder than others, causing mental and physical stress. This misguided approach to singing can stem from an incorrect understanding of what constitutes good sound, a lack of proper breath support, fear of standing out from the group, and a lack of confidence. These factors not only contribute to vocal and physical fatigue but also take away the joy of singing the sacred text set to divine music. A world-renowned vocal pedagogue, the late Richard Miller, said, "'Undersinging' is as destructive as 'oversinging,'" introducing a pedagogical idea of "increasing energy but not volume."[2]

For singers who struggle with hypo-functionality, I encourage them to develop a more nuanced understanding of what constitutes good sound, to build confidence through repeated practice of the melody and words, and to focus on the words with a prayerful mindset. Finding the balance between a clear, supported sound and maintaining the meditative and contemplative nature of Gregorian chant is key.

Skills Needed to Sing Gregorian Chant

Singers with good pitch and solid fundamental musical skills, or even without musical skills, can easily learn to sing chant. However, developing and refining vocal skills can greatly enhance the quality and artistry of singing Gregorian chant, elevating it to a higher level of expression and spiritual depth.

Good Vocal Habits in Mid-Voice

Developing adequate vocal skills in the mid-voice range, often considered the root of the voice, is essential. Singing in this range with ease and fluidity promotes good pitch, clarity, and accurate vocal diction. To maintain consistent airflow, intonation, and clear diction, it is crucial to relax the throat both while inhaling and singing. Constriction in the throat can lead to various problems, including vocal fatigue. It is important to note that singers do not directly control the throat, as it mainly serves as a passage for air. The true source of sound production lies within the vocal cords, where airflow enhances the volume and quality of the sound.

The palatal vault is essential whether you sing chant or operatic arias and whether you

[2]Richard Miller, *Solutions for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 23.

sing high or low in the vocal range. It can offer a sense of head resonance, supporting the pitch and clarity of the voice. When a deep breath is taken, the larynx (voice box) automatically falls, and the soft palate rises.[3] Therefore, correct breathing skills without engaging throat tension or depressing the tongue root are mandatory and an important key to enhancing vocal quality.

Maintaining a steady flow of breath is essential for achieving resonance and consistent vocal placement, regardless of singing loudly or softly, and differentiating stressed and unstressed notes. In chant singing, it is common to notice a lack of breath energy, particularly when the final note falls on an unstressed syllable like "no-bis." It is crucial to maintain clarity in carrying the vowel sound, whether stressed or unstressed. Rather than weakening the support on the unstressed note, focus on increasing energy on the accented syllable. When a note is sung without sufficient support, the sound tends to retreat to the throat, leading to a drop in vocal placement and a loss of resonance, ultimately causing a decline in pitch.

Performance Practice

Singing Gregorian chant does require a distinct understanding of performance practice, particularly when it comes to dynamics. Unlike other vocal music, where dynamics are often marked explicitly in the sheet music, Gregorian chant relies heavily on the interpretation of semiology to indicate the nuances of expression and dynamics.

Semiology, the study of signs and symbols within Gregorian chant notation, offers performers detailed guidance on how to approach dynamics in their interpretation. It involves analyzing various symbols and neumes to understand the desired musical effects and expressive qualities. Some of the common symbols used in Gregorian chant notation to indicate dynamics include dotted or dashed lines, diagonal lines, episemas (horizontal strokes), and specific neumes such as liquescents or puncta.

Chanters must carefully consider these symbols and their intended meaning to shape the dynamics of the chant. This might involve emphasizing certain words or phrases, using subtle changes in volume or intensity, and creating a sense of ebb and flow throughout the performance. The goal is to bring out the inherent beauty and emotional depth of the chant through these nuanced dynamic choices. Therefore, to sing Gregorian chant authentically, singers should study and familiarize themselves with the principles of semiology to understand the detailed indications for dynamics and other expressive elements found within the notation.

Avoid Micromanaging

Certain highly skilled musicians who have strong attention to detail may become overly focused on adhering strictly to the direction of the semiology. This approach can result in producing unmusical and unexpressive sounds, as well as disrupting the natural flow and shape of the musical phrase, detracting from the emphasis on delivering the lyrics. Frequently, this pursuit of perfectionism can lead to frustration in singing and cause a disconnect from the natural sense of vocal expression and enjoyment of singing. When singing

[3]Barbara M. Doscher, *The Functional Unity of the Singing Voice,* second edition, (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1994), p. 120.

When singing Gregorian chant, it is important to focus on clear and precise vowel production, smooth melodic lines, and a sense of flow and fluidity.

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Dynamics

When singing at higher pitch levels, it is common for the intensity of the sound to feel amplified. However, when singing chant, it is important to maintain a sense of subtlety that is aligned with the reverent and prayerful nature of the music. It is crucial to understand that singing higher does not necessarily mean singing louder.

In general, to sing high notes with ease, it is important to relax the throat and manage any excessive tension. Increased tension often arises from the fear of hitting high notes and misguided beliefs about breath support and creating space in the mouth. Vocal techniques should always be applied with a gentle touch to find the best solution. The notion that more volume equates to better singing does not apply. My advice for singers is to isolate the concept of higher sound from volume.

Singers should have the ability to vary their volume and dynamics for expressive purposes. Practice singing every note where you can easily vary its volume elastically, which I refer to as a normal medium ground that serves as a baseline. It is crucial to be able to sing both louder and softer as needed at all times. Practicing dynamics, regardless of whether the melody is ascending or descending, or the lyrics are sung on a repeated note, is very helpful in developing musical expression. Being able to vary volume adds depth and emotional richness to the performance.

Use of dynamics in singing Gregorian chant is distinctively different from singing other vocal music. It requires an understanding of the performance practice, which is indicated in great detail in semiology.

Meaningful Text Declamation

It is also important to respect and honor the word accent and the meaningful handling of sung words in Gregorian chant. Singing the ending weak syllable as loud as the antepenultimate stressed syllable goes against the natural rhythm and accentuation of the Latin language and can detract from the beauty and purpose of the chant.

Sing various psalms (or the daily responsorial psalm) on one of the eight psalm tones of your choice. Or recite the verses on a random note, solely focusing on developing efficient diction skills. The efficient function of the articulators is a great part of vocal techniques. When it comes to musical recitation and text declamation, it is important to find a balance between clear diction and allowing the melody to flow.

Avoid Over-Pronouncing

Sometimes, singers can fall into the trap of hyper-pronouncing consonants, which can create a tense and gripping sound. While

it is important to articulate the consonants clearly, it is equally important to let the emotions be expressed through the unconstrained sound of the vowels. Finding this balance allows for a more natural and heartfelt delivery of the text.

Here are a few tips to help you check your articulation:

- Pay attention to how your mouth, jaw, and tongue feel during singing. If you notice any tension, tightness, or rigidity, it may be a sign that you are not articulating the consonants efficiently.

- Efficient articulation allows for easy mobility of the mouth. You should feel a sense of freedom and flexibility as you pronounce the consonants. If you feel restricted or hindered in any way, try to find a more relaxed and effortless approach.

- Use Natural Pronunciation. Good articulation of consonants should not draw excessive attention from the singer. The focus should be on the overall musical expression, with the consonants seamlessly blending into the flow of the lyrics. If you find yourself overly fixated on pronouncing certain consonants, it may be helpful to practice them separately, focusing on creating smooth and light physical actions.

Remember, the goal is to maintain a balance between clear diction and ease of vocal production. By being mindful of any tension or rigidity in the articulation and working towards a more relaxed and effortless approach, one can achieve efficient consonant articulation while maintaining a smooth and expressive vocal performance. The vowels carry the majority of the tone and emotion in singing, so allowing them to resonate freely while maintaining clear diction will enhance the overall musical expression. Keep practicing and finding that balance between diction and emotional connection!

Articulation

Given the intricate and reverent nature of chant singing, vocal diction often becomes subdued. When performing chant singing, prioritize the delicate and prayerful aspects of the music while still maintaining clear and articulate vocal diction. It may be beneficial to find a balance between the two, ensuring that the lyrics can be understood while still conveying the desired tone and emotion of the chant. Practicing and experimenting with different vocal techniques can help achieve this balance.

Overall, singing Gregorian chant requires a delicate balance between proper technique, vocal expression, and honoring the linguistic and meditative aspects of the music. By paying attention to breath support, vocal placement, and maintaining clarity of the vowel sounds, singers can bring out this ancient musical tradition's rich beauty and spiritual intensity.

In summary, developing strong legato skills, the ability to sing smoothly from note to note, is crucial for a pleasant and controlled vocal sound. By focusing on relaxation and proper technique in the mid-voice range, you can avoid potential issues and achieve a more consistent and enjoyable singing experience.

Vocal and Spiritual Wellness

Gregorian chant is not only a rich musical tradition but also a powerful tool for vocal and spiritual wellness. Singing chant allows singers to focus on the meaning of the words and connect with the spiritual aspect of the music. It offers a unique opportunity for vocalists to cultivate a pure and meditative sound, without the vocal demands often required in other vocal genres.

Though singing Gregorian chant requires a distinct approach compared to other vocal styles, it is accessible to singers of all skill levels. Developing and refining vocal skills can greatly enhance the quality and artistry of singing chant, allowing for a deeper expression and connection with the music.

Precise attention to vocal technique, including proper breath support, vocal placement, and clear articulation of the words is essential for a successful rendition of Gregorian chant. Understanding the dynamics and expressive qualities indicated in the semiology of the chant notation adds depth and nuance to the performance.

Finding a balance between vocal subtlety and expressive power is key in singing Gregorian chant. Singers must avoid the pitfalls of hyper-functionality or hypo-functionality and develop vocal agility to meet the demands of the music. The goal is to maintain a clear, supported sound while staying true to the meditative and contemplative nature of chant.

By honing their vocal skills and approaching chant singing with reverence and understanding, vocalists can fully experience the spiritual and artistic pleasures of performing Gregorian chant. It is through this combination of vocal technique and spiritual connection that the true beauty and power of Gregorian chant can be realized.

Appendix: Eight Helpful Vocal Exercises

Here are eight essential vocal exercises that are easy to practice. These exercises are not just for chant singing; they also help develop healthy vocal habits for singing in general. Singing chant with the right vocal skills and styles can establish a solid foundation for singing techniques, and one can learn a lot about singing by practicing chant.

Exercise 1. Wind-like Gentle Siren for Mid-Voice Stretch.

Establishing a healthy mid-vocal range is imperative not only for singing Gregorian chant but also for singing all other vocal repertoire, for the mid-voice is the root of the entire vocal range.

When approaching the low-middle voice, using a gentle wind-like siren without focusing on a specific musical pattern can be helpful. Start the siren around your ideal speaking pitch, gradually move upward as high as you can comfortably, and then go back down to the starting pitch. Allow your voice to increase in height lightly with a positive spirit so your soft palate does not drop.

Make this exercise on a small "oo" sound with a slightly closed lip position, being careful not to tighten the corners of your mouth. Move up or down a half step to explore the high and low end of your vocal range. If you find it difficult to sing on "oo," causing tension on your tongue, experiment with singing on other syllables, "wee," "ee," "thi," "tha," or "fo" instead.

It is helpful to place the fronts of your hands on the sides of the cheeks in front of your ears while doing this exercise to check any tension on the jaw or around the mouth. Having hands on the sides of the

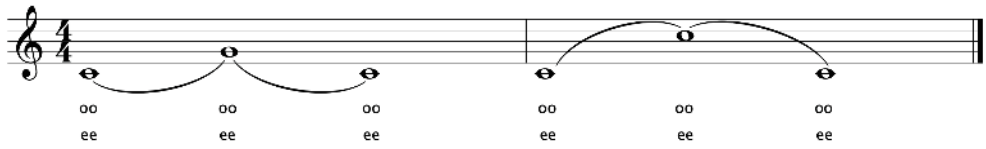


Figure 1. Wind-like gentle siren for mid-voice stretch.

cheeks offers several benefits, including creating a comfortable sensation in the mouth and throat and improving pitch perception, as you can easily hear the pitch in the head.

If you tend to tighten your throat, try practicing exhaling gently through your mouth a few times. Instead of manipulating your voice in the throat, focus on producing sound that is carried through the air, similar to the sensation you have from exhaling through the mouth. This can help alleviate throat tension and promote a more relaxed and natural sound production.

Exercise 2. Focused Pitch with Consistent Breath Flow.

This exercise aims to help you maintain a focused pitch and a smooth flow. Imagine yourself as a mother serenading her child with a calming lullaby. Move up or down a half step to explore the medium-high and low part of your vocal range.

Singing the exercise at a gentle and flowing allegretto tempo is recommended. Singers often lean towards singing at a slower tempo, which can cause their voice to feel heavy and their singing to become stagnant.

You can use the syllables "O-ra pro-no-bis" or "Can-ta te do-mi-no" if they fit well with your voice. Feel free to modify the syllables to ones that promote a positive and spiritual mindset. Alternating between singing on syllables and doing lip trills is also helpful for maintaining an easy breath flow.

You can also integrate dynamic contrast into this exercise. Start softly and gradually increase in volume (crescendo) as you ascend in pitch, and gradually decrease in volume (decrescendo) as you descend back down to the starting note. When the volume diminishes, maintain your breath energy and spirit to secure a focused pitch and clear tone. You can also reverse the dynamic directions to enhance vocal flexibility.

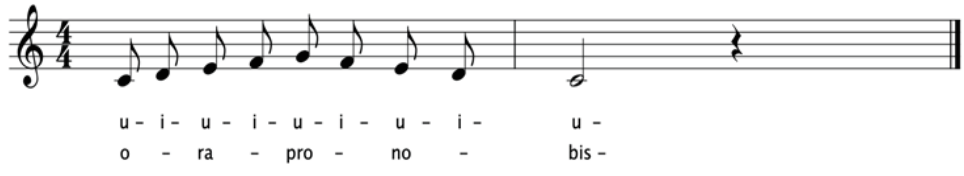
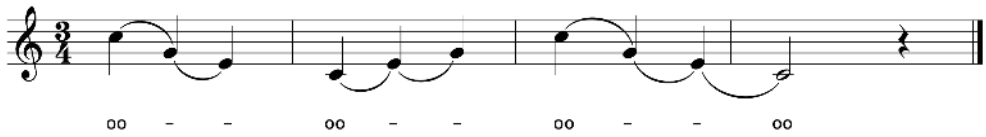


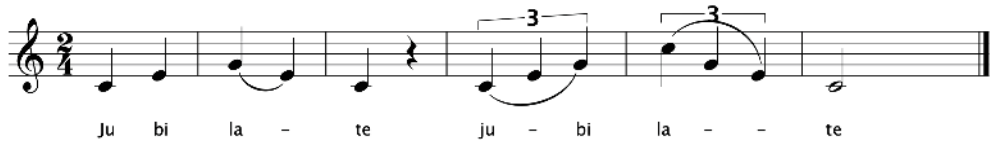
Figure 2. Focused pitch while maintaining a consistent breath flow.

Exercise 3. Even Tone and Easy Travel from Low to High.

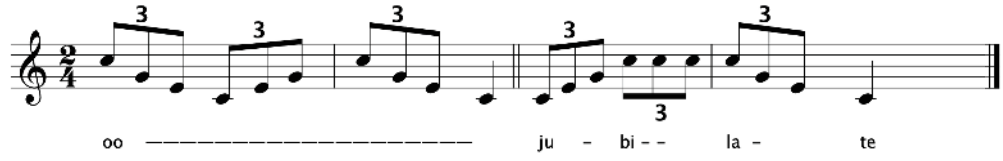
3a.



3b.

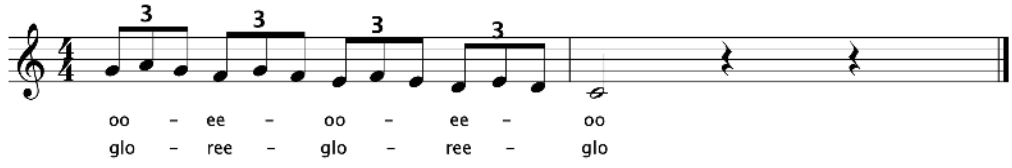


3c.



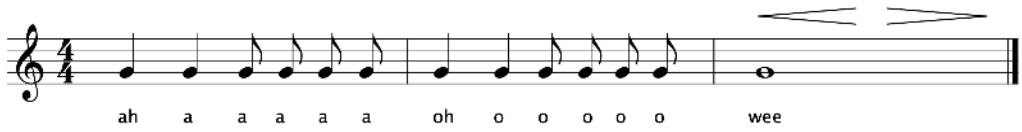
Incorporate the ideas for Exercises 1 and 2 into practicing these examples.

Exercise 4. Vocal Agility in Close Intervals.



Feel free to modify the syllables to ones that work best for you, such as "wee, wee, wee, wee, wee," and "plo, plee, plo, plee, plo," or "tha, tho, tha, tho, tha." The initial consonant "th" is helpful for singers who experience tongue tension.

Exercise 5. Gentle Repeated Notes.

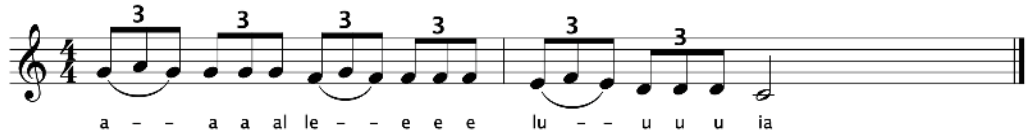


Keep each note gently separated and detached, like staccato, while making a long musical phrase by alternating between singing in a crescendo and a decrescendo as you play the exercise. When practicing staccato exercises, it is important to avoid a throaty tone.

To achieve a clear and non-throaty sound, focus on engaging your breath support and using proper vowel placement. Make sure to create a crisp and pure staccato sound released through the breath. It is helpful to imagine the sound of "h" without actually vocalizing it.

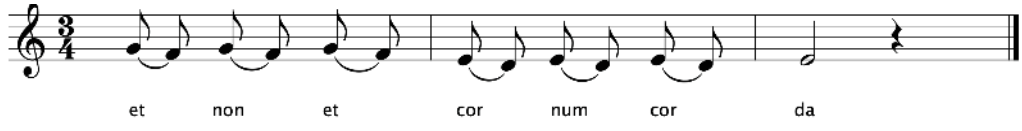
Additionally, pay attention to your tongue and jaw position. Keep your tongue relaxed and the back of your tongue gently lifted to avoid any tension that may contribute to a throaty tone. Locking the jaw means locking the breath. Keep your jaw relaxed to allow for airflow. To perform this exercise, think of a quick puff of air being released without closing your throat. This creates a staccato sound.

Exercise 6. Legato Versus Staccato.



Be sure to aim for a long line so that the staccato notes do not draw attention from the listeners and blend smoothly into the rest of the line.

Exercise 7. Eighth-Note Groupings.



To execute the special effect on a group of two eighth notes in Gregorian chant, follow these steps. Accent the first note. Give emphasis and slightly increase the intensity on the first note of the group. This helps distinguish the two notes and adds a sense of dynamic shaping.

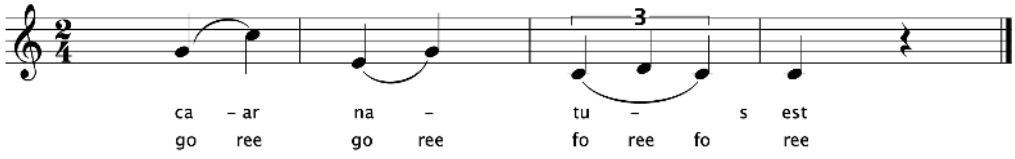
On the second note, allow the shortening of the vowel sound and quickly articulate the consonant when the final consonant is a stop-plosive, such as d, t, b, or p.

On the second note, when the final consonant is a voiced consonant (such as m, n, l, r, or ng), sing the consonant on the

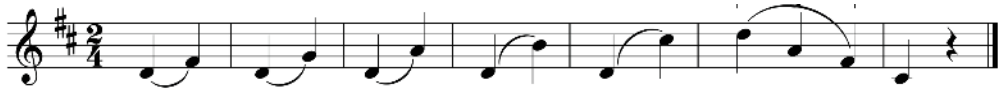
second lower note instead of carrying the vowel sound over it. This means the pitch of the second note will be sung on the consonant.

Remember to practice these techniques with attention to accuracy and clarity. Start slowly and gradually increase speed while maintaining control and precision in your articulation. By incorporating these special effects, you will add nuance and depth to your performance of Gregorian chant.

Exercise 8. Expressive Vocal Leaps.
8a.



8b. On any vowel or text of your choice



Avoid any breaks or pauses between the notes of the leap. Aim for a seamless connection between each pitch, maintaining a consistent flow of breath. Visualize the leap. Mentally imagine the pitch you are aiming for before you begin singing. Visualizing the leap can help your voice anticipate the correct pitch and make the transition smoother. To sing expressively, consider the emotions and meaning of the words. Adjust your tone, volume, and expression to convey the desired mood through the leap.

To sing expressively, consider the emotions and meaning of the words. Adjust your tone, volume, and expression to convey the desired mood.

Repertory

Puer natus est: Christmas Polyphonic Treasures for the Parish Choir

Three motets beautifully set Christmas liturgical texts and are also accessible to choirs of varying ability.

by Elijah McMahon

Jesus Christ is born, the angels sing, and the faithful come to worship the Lord in the manger . . . in five months. Meanwhile, the small-town music director is preparing the all-important Christmas liturgies. The director knows that the church's first musical language is Gregorian chant, and then polyphony[1] and that the latter is a fitting adornment to solemn liturgies. Given a scarcity in musical resources—budget, rehearsal time, and experienced musicians chief among them—utilizing polyphony could seem an impossible task. In a parish where popular Christmas carols are the norm, and the small choir is filled exclusively with volunteers, what polyphonic treasures of the sacred repertory could possibly be used to beautify this high solemnity? To answer this question, we will start with the assumption that the director has already taken Jeffrey Tucker and Arlene Oost-Zinner's first steps toward introducing polyphony: garnering public support for its use and beginning with small, versatile motets and chants.[2]

As with sacred music in general, it is best to begin with the text. There are four Christmas Masses: the Vigil Mass, the Mass during the Night, the Mass at Dawn, and the Mass during the Day. Each underlines a unique theological focus, and so has its own set of proper texts.[3] Since the Mass during the Day is often the best attended of the liturgies, a small-town director may choose to concentrate musical resources there. Numerous polyphonic settings may be found for the propers, especially the introit *Puer natus est* and communion *Viderunt omnes*. Given that motets are most typically offered as a post-communion or offertory, several well-known liturgcal texts may also fittingly be

[1]Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (4 December 1963), §116.

[2]Jeffrey Tucker and Arlene Oost-Zinner, "Bringing Chant and Polyphony to a Small Parish," *Sacred Music*, 130, no. 2 (Summer 2003), 10–11.

[3]William Peter Mahrt, "The Masses for Christmas and their Gregorian Chants," *Sacred Music* 121, no. 4 (Winter 1994), 19.

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used; *O magnum mysterium* or *Hodie Christus natus est* are set to polyphony particularly often. When deciding whether any given piece from the repertoire is feasible for his or her choir, the director is looking for a combination of pared-down choral forces and overall length, idiomatic ranges, smooth voice leading, limited chromaticism, memorable repetition, and sections of homophonic or homorhythmic writing. Using these parameters, public domain settings of these propers and popular motet texts are often found to be too lengthy and difficult for wide use. However, there are several options from the sacred repertory that are both accessible to the small, volunteer parish choir and are available in the public domain.

Stadlmayr's *O magnum mysterium*

For many musicians, the popular motet *O magnum mysterium* is synonymous with Victoria's gorgeous setting or perhaps Morten Lauridsen's later work. However, Johann Stadlmayr's contribution to the text is a perfect version for the average parish choir and could be used by musical directors who are just starting to introduce polyphony to their choirs and parishes. Stadlmayr (1580–1648) was a successful chapel master for the Archbishop of Salzburg and the Hapsburg Archdukes of Innsbruck. He often set Mass texts for grand double choirs and brass,[4] yet he exemplified the reforms set out by the Council of Trent requiring textual intelligibility in polyphony.[5] While he was reportedly a well-known composer in his day, his works have largely fallen out of use.

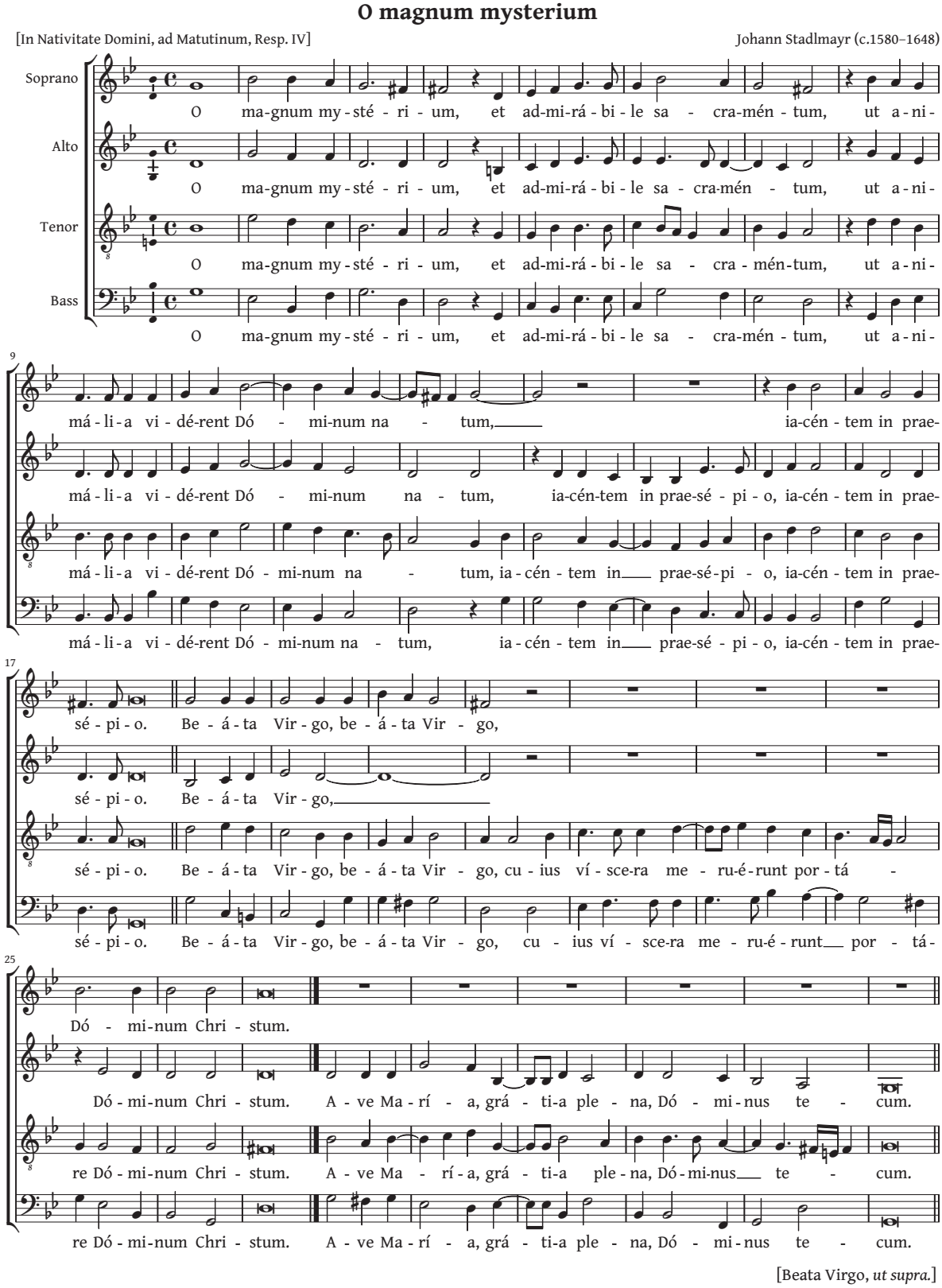
O magnum mysterium (O Great Mystery) represents Stadlmayr's textual clarity at its simplest. Three quarters of the piece is spent in a homophonic texture, with the polyphonic sections tastefully and intuitively interspersed as tension-heightening transitions (mm. 21–24, select voices in single measures elsewhere, see Figure 1). It is set solidly in a minor tonality, displaying well-shaped counterpoint and intuitive use of musica ficta. Small, idiomatic ranges predominate (the bass being by far the largest), and smooth voice-leading should allow for quick note-learning. The greatest challenge lies in mm. 21–24; Stadlmayr pares down the texture to the tenor and bass while simultaneously introducing the piece's most complex rhythms. Practicing rhythmic independence, especially on rhythms that cross barlines, will aid in addressing the possible pitfalls in this short section.

Stadlmayr's deft treatment of the word "Dominum" (Lord) illustrates the motet's inherent musical value. The word, important for its juxtaposition of God's majesty with the humility of Christ's birth, marks the first moment of a heterorhythmic texture in m. 11. This technique allows the polyphony to suggest a more elaborate grandeur suited for announcing our Lord. "Dominum Christum" is again used as a similar moment of expansion in m. 25, when the alto and soprano voices are reintroduced to emphasize the majesty of Christ. A preeminently useful "learning piece," Stadlmayr's *O magnum mysterium* retains a noble simplicity which cements its place in the sacred Christmas repertory by subtly and effectively painting a profound text.

[4]Charles Weaver, "A Succinct Mass by Johann Stadlmayr," *Sacred Music*, 149, no. 4 (Winter 2022), 49.

[5]Hilde H. Junkermann, "Stadlmayr, [Stadlmair, Stadelmaier, Stadelmayer, Stadelmeyer] Johann," *Grove Music Online* (accessed July 6, 2023) <www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Figure 1.



Morales' *Puer natus est*

The second of these accessible treasures is *Puer natus est* by Cristóbal de Morales. Morales (ca. 1500–1553) was a renowned Spanish composer of the mid-Renaissance, placed by contemporaries and later theorists in the same category as Willaert, Josquin des Prez, Arcadelt, and Palestrina.[6] Indeed, his works were included in anthologies alongside these exalted composers as early as 1539.[7] This long-time papal choir member and itinerant choirmaster was noted for his eminently singable treatment of melodies,[8] and his introit for Christmas Day is no exception.

Morales sets *Puer natus est* (Unto Us a Child is Born) for three voices, a relief for choir directors with few male voices in their choirs. The original key of F covers reasonable ranges in each voice (see Figure 2). For the choir with male-dominated voicing, several transpositions are freely available in the public domain.

The original introit strongly influenced Morales, who retains nearly the entire incipit from the original chant as well as the introit's strong presence of the perfect fifth. Other than that interval, motion in each voice is overwhelmingly stepwise, and the only musica ficta present to trip up the average parish choir member is an easily-learned recurring bass line in mm. 34, 47, and 54. Another factor in the singability of the piece is that melodic fragments are often repeated in vocal lines. For example, the rise and fall in mm. 32–33 of the soprano line is duplicated in mm. 46–47 and 52–53.

While each melodic line is expertly crafted to fit the human voice, Morales' *Puer natus est* is almost completely polyphonic in texture; only two voices ever sing the same words using the same rhythm and that is only at the opening and closing of the "alleluia" section. This leads to inherent difficulties with choirs who may struggle with vocal independence. While these challenges will be partially mitigated by the idiomatic nature of each line and the three-part voicing, directors should know that this piece will take substantial learning time for small, inexperienced parish choirs.

Why take the time to learn this polyphonic treasure? The word "alleluia" has rarely been set in a more uplifting, beautiful way. In mm. 30–35 and 45–57, the serene interplay of the alto and tenor support simple rises and falls in the soprano; the effect is sublime. While there is very little homophonic material in the Morales' *Puer natus est*, its smooth diatonic voice leading, memorable repetition, and joyful presentation of the text make it both accessible and enjoyable for small parish choirs.

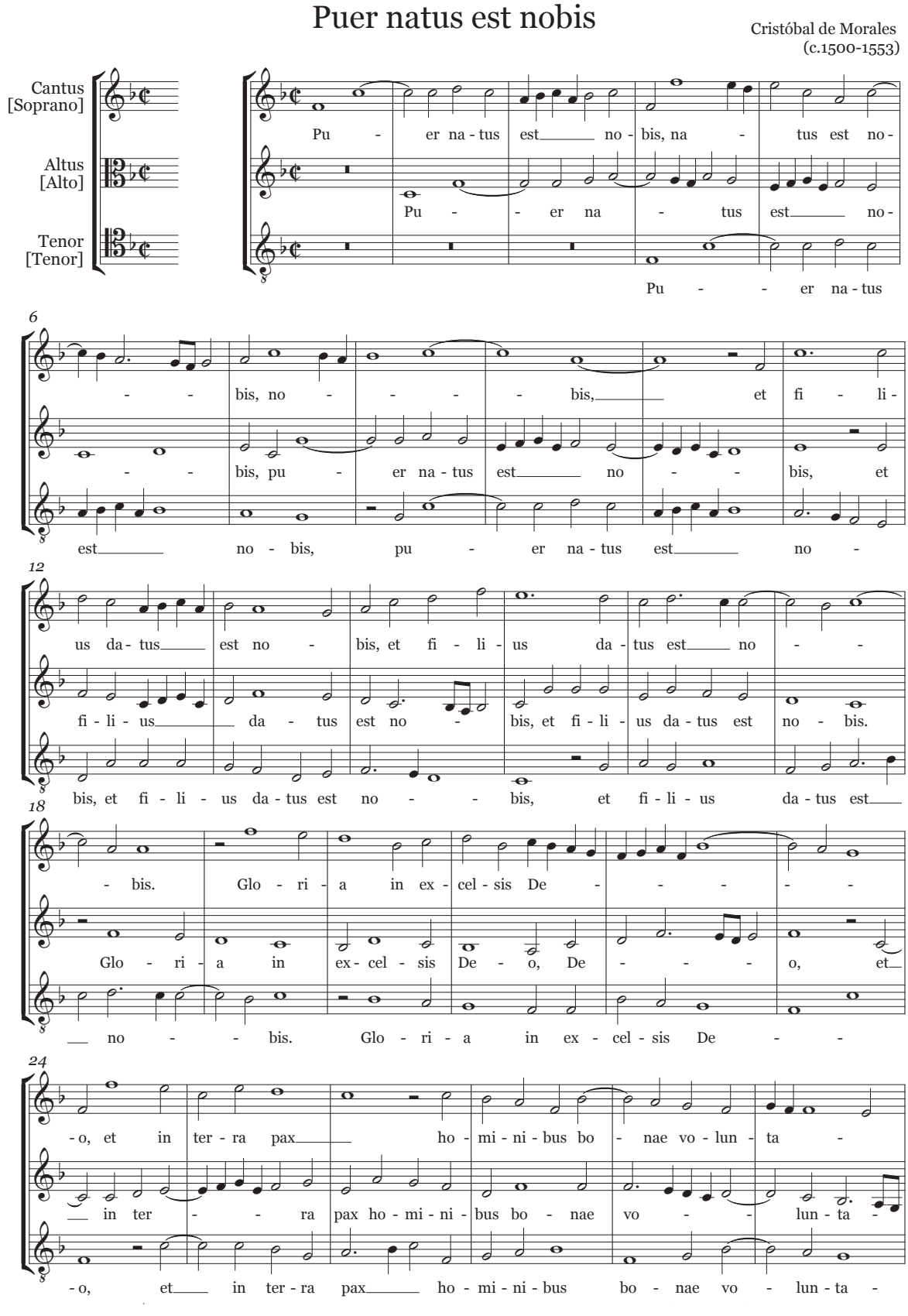
The original introit strongly influenced Morales, who retains nearly the entire incipit from the original chant as well as the introit's strong presence of the perfect fifth.

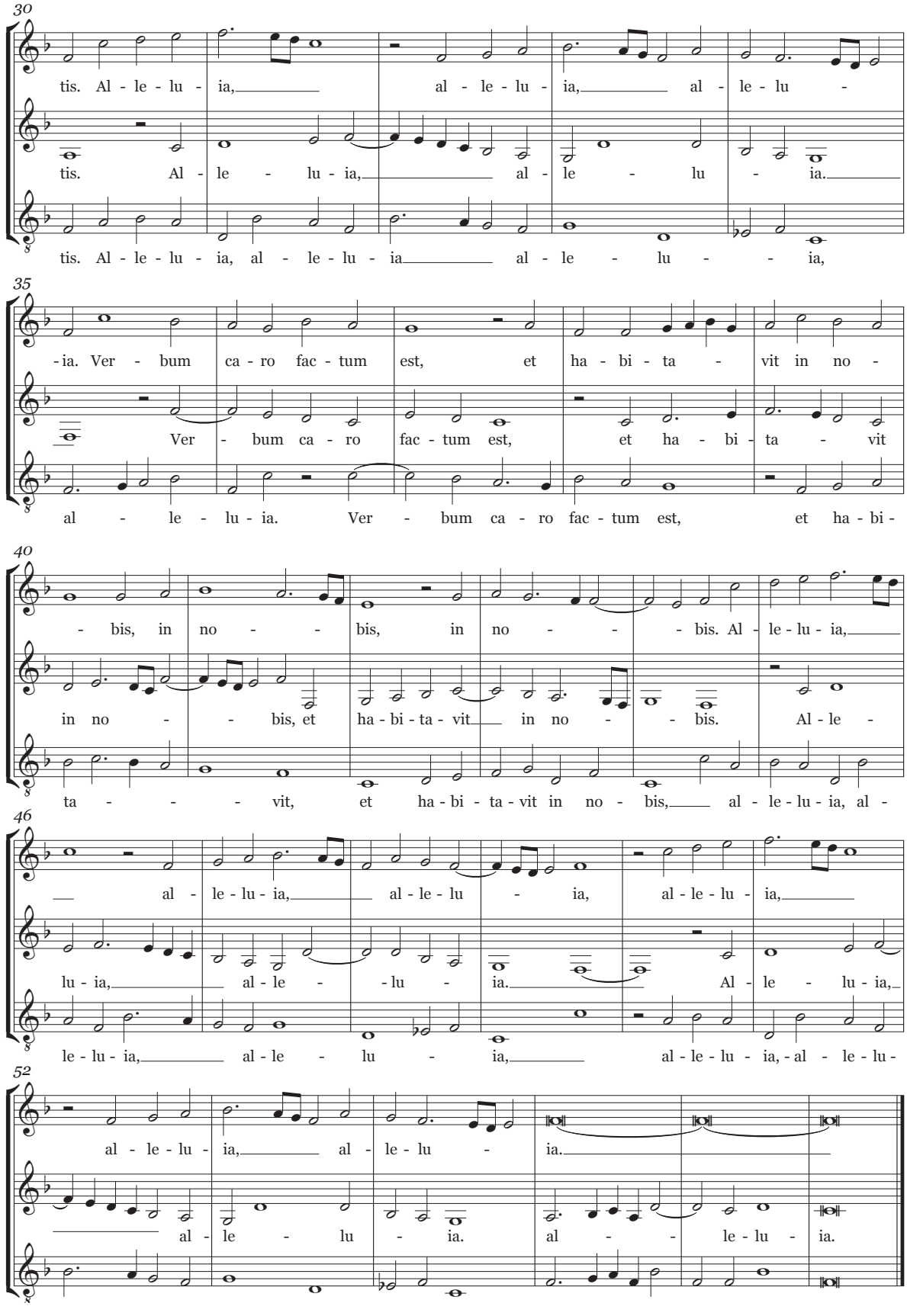
[6]Robert Stevenson, "Cristóbal de Morales (ca. 1500-53): A Fourth-Centenary Biography," *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1953), 4–5.

[7]Ibid., 19.

[8]Ibid., 38.

Figure 2.


Puer natus est nobis
Cristóbal de Morales
(c.1500-1553)
Cantus [Soprano]
Altus [Alto]
Tenor [Tenor]
Pu - er na - tus est no - bis, na - tus est no -
Pu - - er na - tus est no -
Pu - - er na - tus
6
- - bis, no - - - - bis, et fi - li -
- - bis, pu - er na - tus est no - - bis, et
est no - bis, pu - er na - tus est no -
12
us da - tus est no - bis, et fi - li - us da - tus est no - -
fi - li - us da - tus est no - bis, et fi - li - us da - tus est no - bis.
bis, et fi - li - us da - tus est no - - bis, et fi - li - us da - tus est
18
- bis. Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - - - -
Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o, De - - - o, et
no - - bis. Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De -
24
- o, et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - nae vo - lun - ta -
in ter - - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - nae vo - - lun - ta -
- o, et in ter - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - nae vo - lun - ta -


30
tis. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -
tis. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
tis. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia al - le - lu - ia,
35
-ia. Ver - bum ca - ro fac - tum est, et ha - bi - ta - vit in no -
Ver - bum ca - ro fac - tum est, et ha - bi - ta - vit
al - le - lu - ia. Ver - bum ca - ro fac - tum est, et ha - bi -
40
- bis, in no - bis, in no - - bis. Al - le - lu - ia,
in no - - bis, et ha - bi - ta - vit in no - - bis. Al - le -
ta - - - vit, et ha - bi - ta - vit in no - bis, al - le - lu - ia, al -
46
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia,
le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, - al - le - lu -
52
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
al - le - lu - ia. al - - le - lu - ia.

Byrd's *Viderunt omnes*

A more adventurous small-town director with greater musical resources may use the proper communion antiphon, *Viderunt omnes*, as set by William Byrd. Byrd (1540–1623) was an English Catholic who lived a unique life working as a court composer for the Protestant Queen Elizabeth while also composing and performing clandestine Catholic Masses. Fear of discovery and the real possibility of martyrdom may have been a factor in his keeping individual propers short in duration.[9] Given the fraught political conditions, Byrd was surprisingly well-published in his time, and his music is widely performed and admired as the height of polyphonic art to this day.

Byrd's communion *Viderunt omnes fines terrae* (All the Ends of the Earth) represents well the style found in his monumental collection of propers, *Gradualia*. Set for four voices, it is a short piece containing substantial polyphonic material which does not correspond to the Gregorian melody.[10] Significantly more difficult than Morales' *Puer natus est*, its main claim to accessibility for the average parish choir is simply its brevity in comparison to other settings of the text. When a choir has to learn only one minute (twenty measures) of material, difficult lines become manageable. While the polyphonic texture sounds incredibly complex, there are melodic fragments in each voice from which the choir can learn the bulk of their individual parts: mm. 3–4 and 11–12 of the soprano are quoted, transposed, or otherwise subtly manipulated throughout the piece in each voice (see Figure 3).

While this piece of Byrd's formidable repertoire is manageable, it does pose significant challenges to the parish choir. First, the tenor line is very difficult; it covers a wide range and contains a large number of problematic intervals, notably the tenth in m. 6. The second challenge is that there is no homophonic material outside of the opening three measures in the tenor and alto voices. Thirdly, some of the musica ficta creates unexpected harmonic changes; for example, the altos jump a minor third to a C-natural immediately following a strong cadence to an A major chord in m. 9. Compared to the bulk of Christmas polyphony, this piece is possible for the more experienced small parish choir. However, it would require significant rehearsal time to perfect.

Byrd's imitative counterpoint provides a contemplative, captivating setting of the communion text. A reserved, plaintive setting of the opening section (especially clear in the opening minor sixth motion) gives way to a "salutare" (salvation) that is joyfully passed back and forth between the voices in mm. 10–18, even including a cheerfully syncopated entrance for the soprano in m. 11. This contrast serves to highlight the gratuitous gift of God's salvation to the nations: Jesus Christ, our Lord. A choir could certainly add an accompanying psalm tone to this polyphony, which, in Byrd's words, was written "to adorn certain holy and delightful phrases of the Christian rite."[11] *Viderunt omnes* certainly fulfills this function and is

[9]Roseanne Sullivan, "Christmas Music of William Byrd, Paradoxical Catholic Court Composer for Protestant Elizabeth I," *Sacred Music*, 147, no. 4 (Winter 2020), 58.

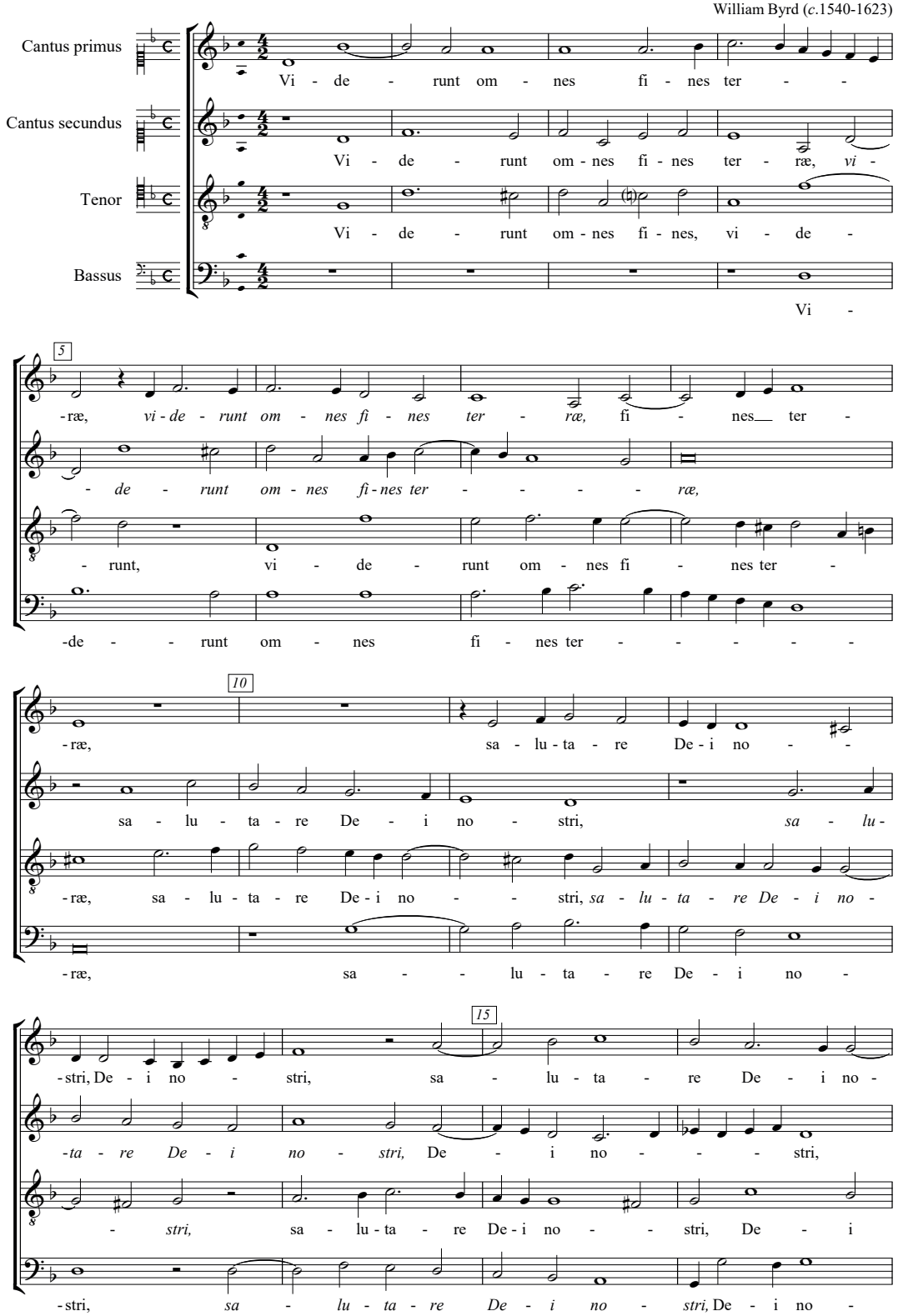
[10]Ibid., 57.

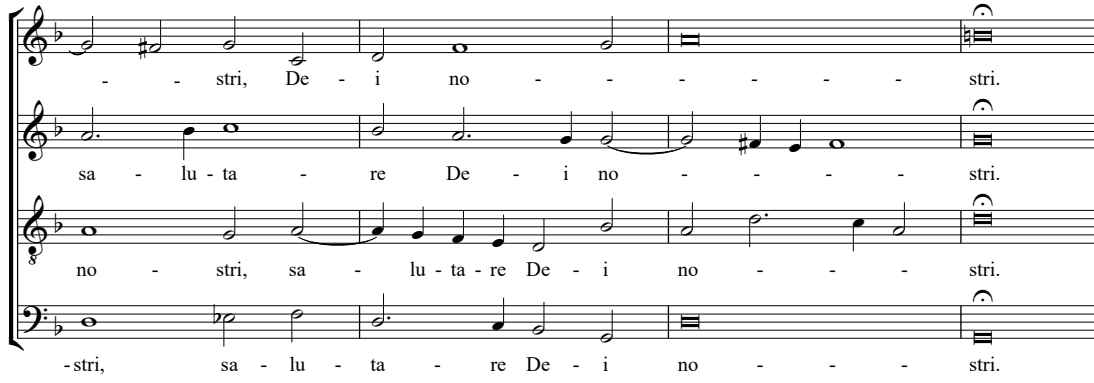
[11]Kerry McCarthy, *Byrd*, The Master Musicians (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 4.

Figure 3.

Viderunt omnes

William Byrd (*c.*1540-1623)





worthy of the effort and rehearsal time necessary to learn the short piece.

While the bulk of polyphonic repertoire for the Christmas Mass during the day is beyond the capacity of simple parish choirs with few musical means, these selections show that a variety of settings are still available to beautify this important liturgy. For the choir just beginning its polyphonic experience, *O magnum mysterium* by Johann Stadlmayr provides an eminently accessible post-communion motet or choral prelude. *Puer natus est* by Cristóbal de Morales allows a choir of moderate experience to easily sing a beautiful polyphonic introit. For the more experienced choir, Byrd's short communion *Viderunt omnes* could be effectively paired with psalm verses to garnish that most elevated part of the liturgy. These last two options also introduce the frequently overlooked Christmas Day propers, which speak to the mystery of the revelation of God to the nations in Jesus. All three motets serve as a suitable, accessible way to elevate the liturgy in small parishes everywhere.

All three motets serve as a suitable, accessible way to elevate the liturgy in small parishes everywhere.

Let the Earth Acclaim Christ Jesus: Hymn of the National Eucharistic Revival

The winner of the USCCB's hymn competition for the National Eucharistic Revival explains the inspiration for her prize-winning text.

by Kathleen Pluth

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus prayed to the Father that we, his followers, might be "consecrated in the truth." Everything the church does in Jesus' name should lead to this "consecration in the truth." As a hymn writer, I feel I have a special responsibility to write the truth about Jesus Christ—Truth himself—and about all of his mysteries. After all, the intention of the hymn writer is for other Catholics to sing to and about God, in prayer, and even in liturgical prayer, the privileged meeting point of God and humankind. Hymns can affect dispositions to receive the scriptures and the sacraments. Hymns must be true.

This responsibility is especially important when singing about the Blessed Sacrament, which is widely misunderstood, even by Mass-going Catholics. It came home to me when my hymn text won the Eucharistic Revival Hymn Competition sponsored by the USCCB:[1]

> Let the earth acclaim Christ Jesus, God the Father's equal Son,
> in the Virgin's womb incarnate when the course of time had run.
> He became for us a servant, bore the cross and crushed the grave,
> and remains, a living Presence, to complete his plan to save.

[1]Text copyright © 2023, USCCB. The text is set to the hymn tunes HYFRYDOL, HYMN TO JOY, and NETTLETON and can be downloaded in both English and Spanish: <https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/post/sheet-music-available-for-new-eucharistic-hymns>. The text alone can also be downloaded and could be set to any hymn tune with 87 87 meter.

Kathleen Pluth (kathleenpluth.com) holds Licentiate and Master's degrees in Sacred Theology and is the Hymn Consultant for Word on Fire's Liturgy of the Hours. *She is the author of* Hymns for the Liturgical Year *and* Hymn Tune Introits: Singing the Sundays of the Liturgical Year.

For the same divine Lord Jesus, by our gracious Father sent,
comes to us upon the altar in the Blessed Sacrament.
Here he stands and knocks for entry. See, the King of glory waits!
Open wide the door in welcome. Lift up high the ancient gates!

Jesus rose upon the third day as the Holy Spirit willed,
like a seed once dead and buried till the times had been fulfilled;
and his glorious Resurrection raises not the Lord alone:
those who eat and drink his Supper stay in him, become his own.

God, pure goodness ever-living, source of everlasting days,
gives this pledge of life eternal to the Church he works to raise:
by this foretaste of the Kingdom weakened souls begin to thrive,
darkened minds are filled with wisdom, stony hearts and wills revive.

In this festival of gladness may we be transformed, O Lord,
Sacrifice, O Source and Summit, Jesus, Eucharist adored.
Jesus, Sacrament most holy, Jesus, Sacrament divine,
may all praise and all thanksgiving be at every moment thine.

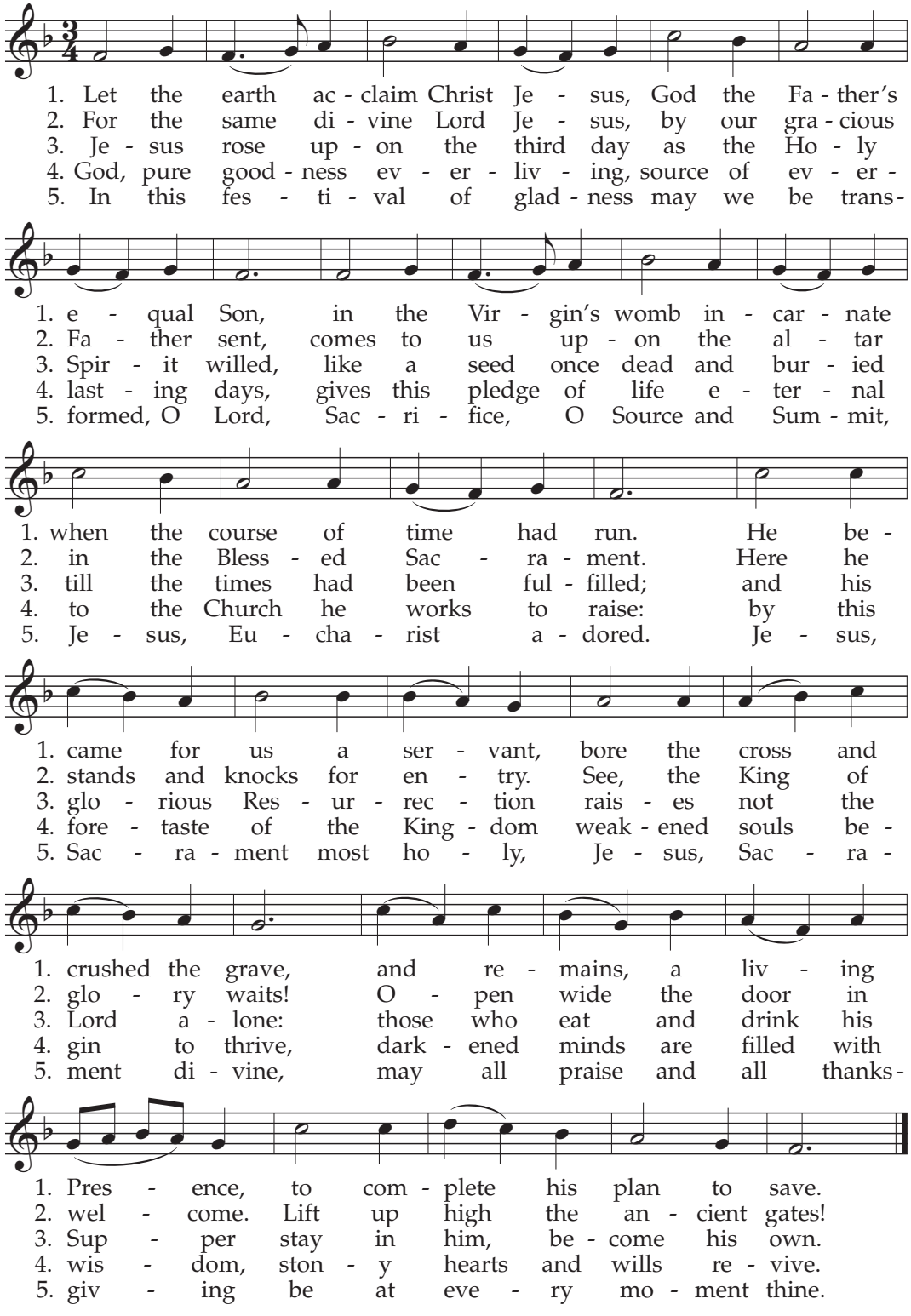
In writing this text, my goal was first of all to praise the Lord. This is impossible to do in a completely satisfactory way. As St. Thomas Aquinas wrote in his *Lauda Sion*: "Dare to praise him as much as you can, for he is greater than all praise; nor can you praise enough." We cannot praise enough—but we can do our best and strive to always praise better.

Secondly, my hope was to give a basic retelling of the facts: the Lord himself is really and truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Although wonderful, this is also very reasonable for those who know the scriptures. It is just like Jesus to humble himself in this way—he who humbled himself to assume a human nature and die on a cross.

Thirdly, I wanted to bring to light a fascinating causal link that the Lord himself made in John 6 between the Eucharist and the Resurrection: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you" (John 6:53). Some ideas about this relationship are teased out in verses three and four.

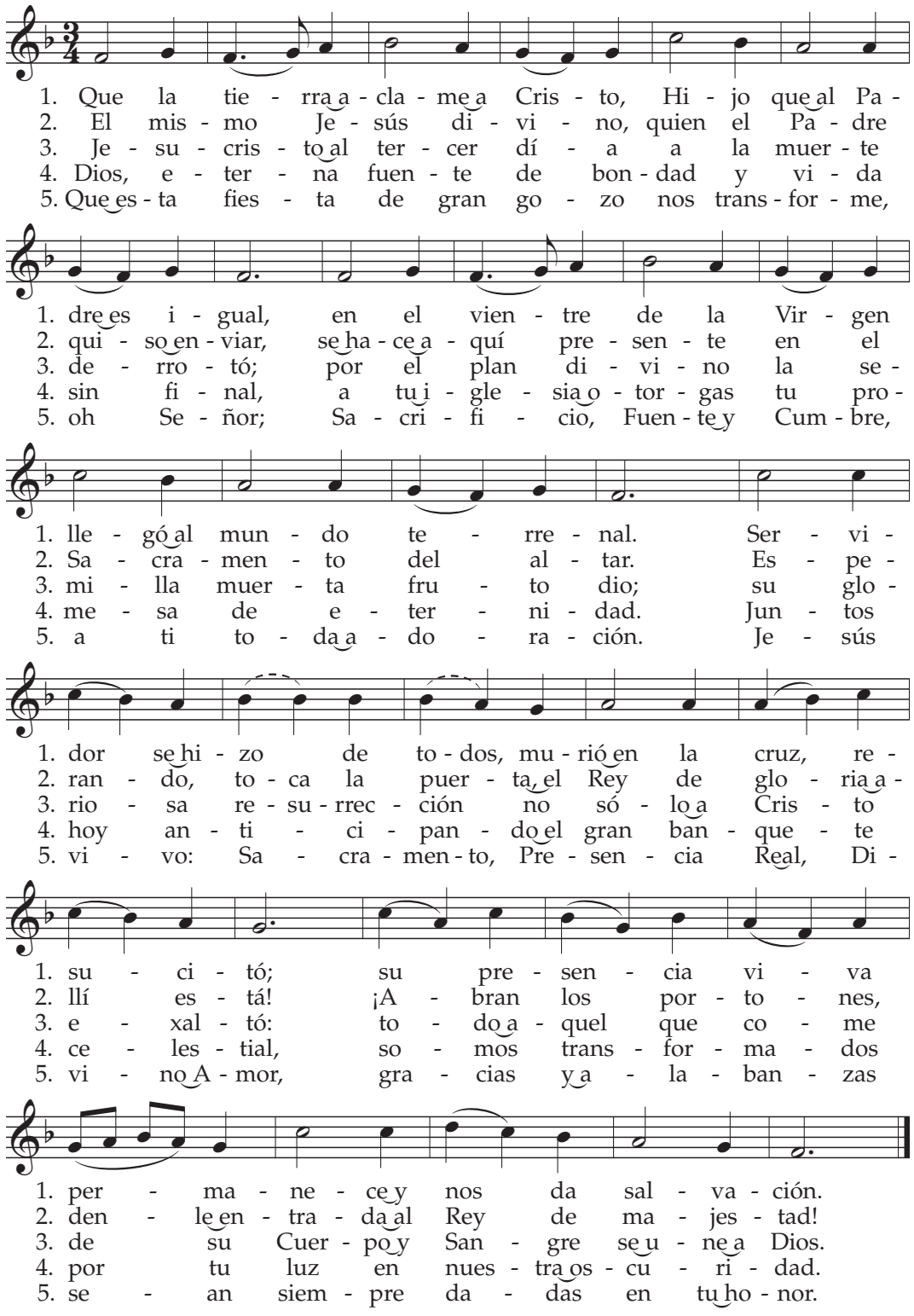
Throughout the hymn, I relied heavily upon scripture and the Creed since they resonate broadly with diverse Christians, including those who are separated from the Eucharist through those divisions we know all too well. My hope is that the hymn as a whole might have an apologetic and evangelical effect outside of the church and a strengthening role within the church, helping all of us to hope in Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament ever more completely.

Let the Earth Acclaim Christ Jesus



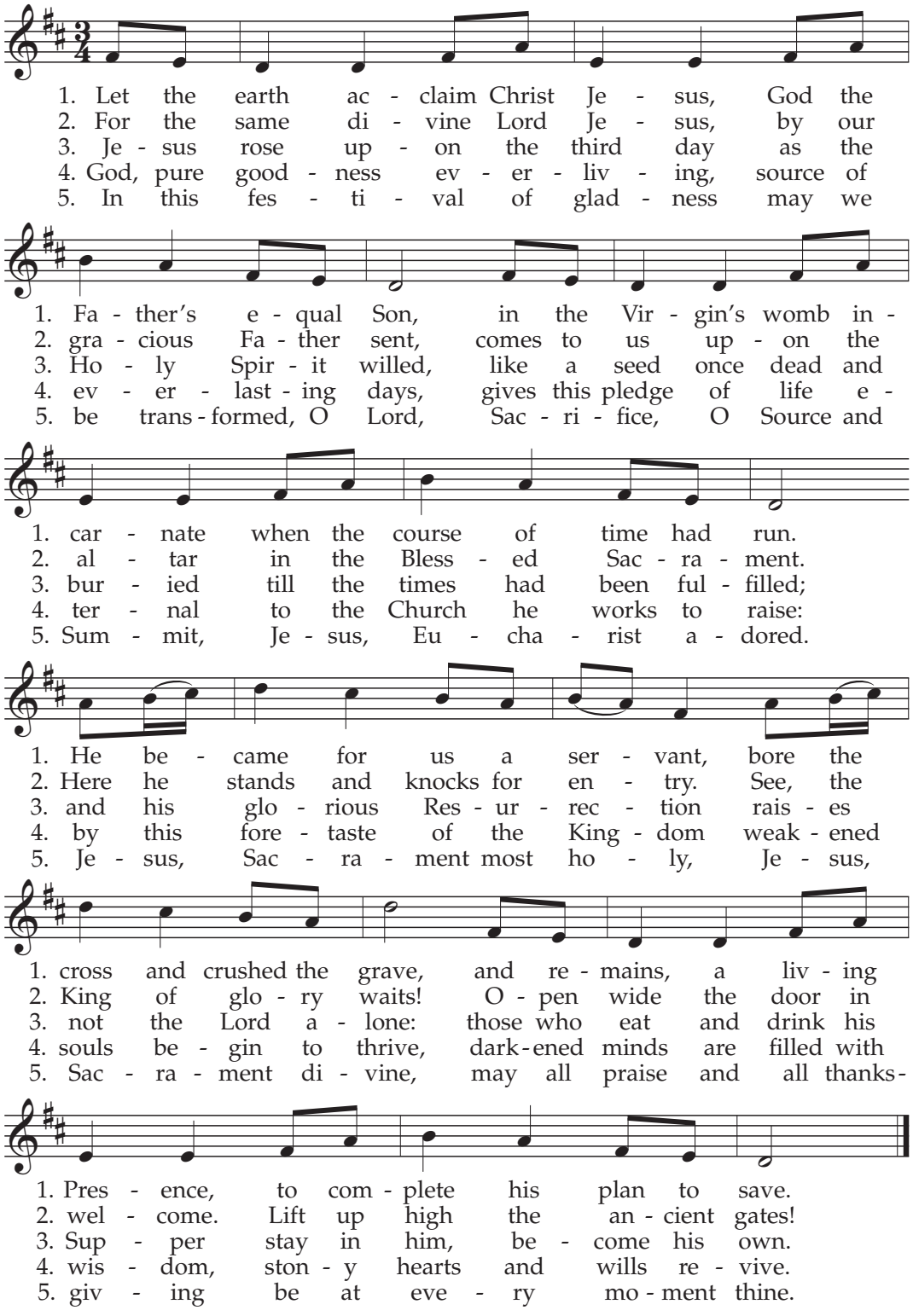
Music: HYFRYDOL, 87 87 D; Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

Que la Tierra Aclame a Cristo



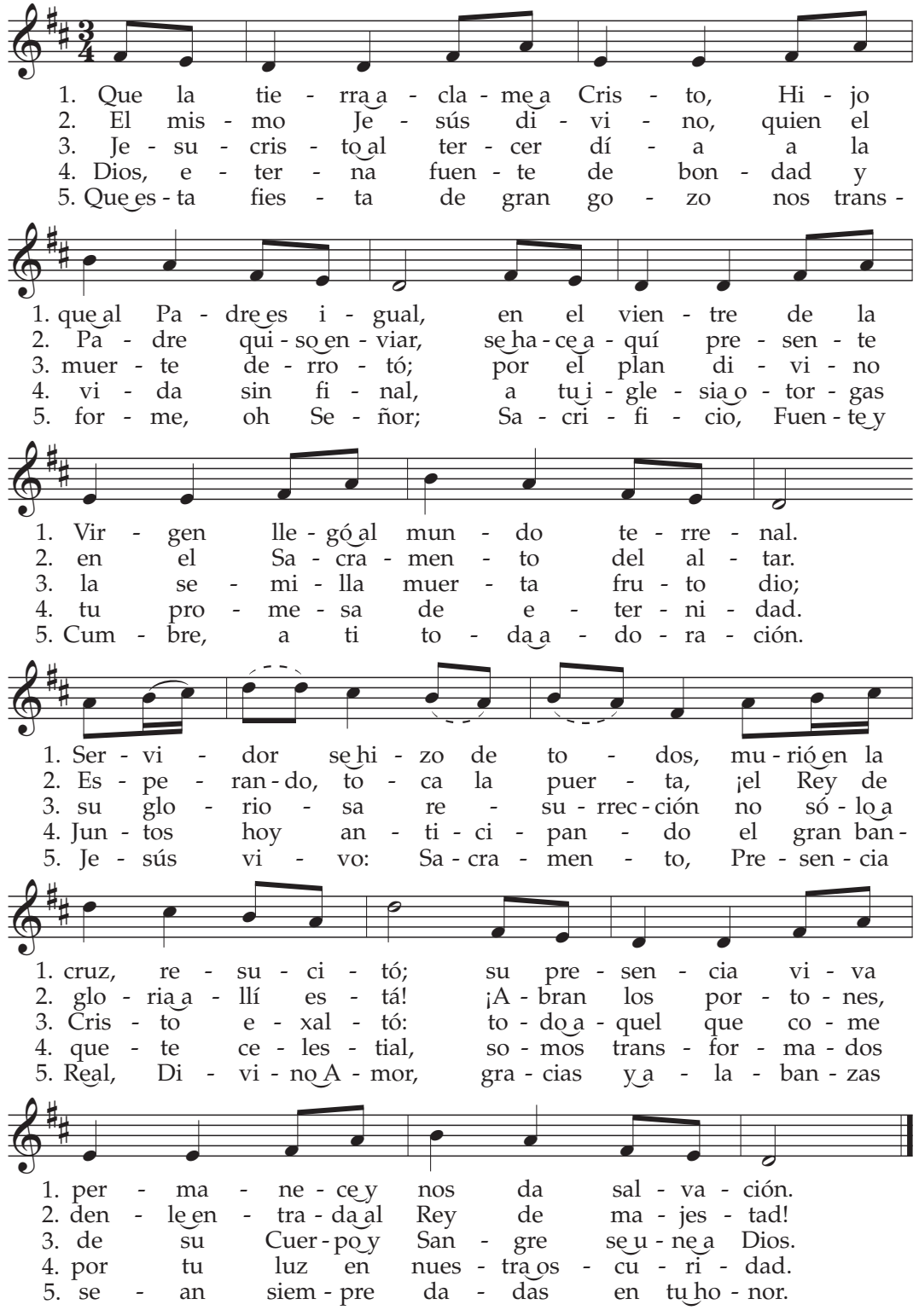
Música: HYFRYDOL, 87 87 D; Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

Let the Earth Acclaim Christ Jesus



Music: NETTLETON, 87 87 D; John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music,* Part Second, Harrisburg, 1813

Que la Tierra Aclame a Cristo



Música: NETTLETON, 87 87 D; *Repository of Sacred Music* de John Wyeth, Segunda Parte, Harrisburg, 1813

Commentary

Christmas Organ Music

From traditional carols found in The Parish Organist *to lesser-known noëls of the French baroque to favorite Bach chorales, the Christmas season has music for every organist.*

by Christopher Berry

I remember, as a young organist, looking forward to the time of preparation of Christmas music. These times may have been the only times in my life when I looked forward to practicing, but that is another story! Perhaps you too would like to look forward to musical Christmas preparations. Or perhaps you would even like to motivate yourself to have an inspiring and fulfilling season of preparing organ voluntaries—a season of preparation that will have its fulfillment in a satisfying Christmastide of wonderful organ music.

Many of us spend plenty of time striving to plan the most elegant, expansive, musically interesting programs of Christmas liturgical music possible, only to later realize that the congregation really just wanted to hear carols and other simple, recognizable Christmas music. All of this planning, preparation, and practice does not come without the concomitant stress, worry, and anxiety. So, I ask: why not recapture that childlike love of Christmas music, which at the same time will edify our parishioners and simplify our busy lives as church musicians? Let us delve into simple, beautiful, recognizable Christmas organ music.

I think highly of and have frequently used *The Parish Organist*, published in multiple volumes by Concordia. These venerable editions, albeit originally intended for Lutheran parishes, can still be of great use to the modern Roman Catholic organist, particularly the Advent and Christmas collection (volume 5) and the Christmas and Epiphany collection (volume 6). Some of these pieces use pedal, but many do not. They are all by the great composers of the canon and also provide useful models for improvisation. In a similar vein is the seminal *80 Chorale Preludes by German Masters of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Edition Peters). There are many Christmas pieces in this edition, as well as solid music for the other liturgical seasons.

Of course, every Catholic organist should be armed with his or her share of French organ noëls. The noëls are the traditional French Christmas carols, quite a

Christopher Berry is the director of sacred music and organist at St. Stanislaus Oratory in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He also teaches organ at Carthage College and has been on the faculty of the CMAA's annual colloquium.

few of them recognizable to modern Americans, and all of them charming and redolent of the spirit of Christmas. The standard noël composers are Louis-Claude d'Aquin, Jean-François Dandrieu, and Claude-Bénigne Balbastre. Though one can of course procure each of their noël collections separately, Dover Music for Organ has published an anthology: *French Noëls for Organ*. I must admit that at first I hesitated to suggest noëls to a general audience because their successful performance requires knowledge of appropriate registrations and performance practice of French baroque organ music. The "bible" on this topic, by Fenner Douglass, is called *The Language of the Classical French Organ*. A good overview of French classical registrations can be found on the website of the Organ Historical Society.[1] Do be aware that older editions of this music, many by Alexandre Guilmant, contain suggested registrations that are not based on historical principles, so one has to do one's homework here. That said, of course we have to make the music sound its best on the organs we have at hand.

A good overview of French classical registrations can be found on the website of the Organ Historical Society.

Now, we must turn to the master himself, J. S. Bach. Many of the chorales Bach set in his organ music are used in the modern Catholic Church; in fact, many of them come from chant tunes, so rightly belong in our liturgical music making. I understand that some Catholics can be reticent about using Bach's music, but the CMAA's own Dr. Edward Schaefer has addressed these issues and helped point out chant-related repertoire in his masterful *Bach for Catholics: Using Chorales in the Liturgy*.[2]

The best edition of the complete Bach organ works is the Bärenreiter Urtext in eleven volumes, being the most scholarly available and yet handsome and easy to read. The Advent and Christmas chorales from the *Orgelbüchlein* can be found in volume one, which also contains the famous (and favorite of many priests I know) *Wachet auf* (BWV 645) from the Schubler Chorales. The third volume has wonderful settings, including the masterpiece for understanding how to begin improvisation in Bach's style, *In dulci jubilo* (BWV 729). In between each imaginatively harmonized phrase of the chorale are single-line cadenza-like passages, full of whimsy and improvisational lessons for us. Learn and play this piece for its own merits as a composition and the immediate familiarity of its tune. Then, return to study it for what it can teach us of Bach's improvisational methods and apply these lessons to your own improvisations. For example, after you learn this piece, take a (Catholic) hymn or chant of your own choosing, and use your creativity in harmonizing the melody. Force yourself–do not use a printed harmonization! Then let your imagination and inspiration take flight, as you add single-line connecting cadenzas between phrases of the melody.

[1]See <https://organhistoricalsociety.org/OrganHistory/history/hist029.htm>.

[2]Pastoral Press: Washington, D.C., 1987.

In improvising in this way, you can utilize traditional chant tunes that are underrepresented in printed organ settings, and in so doing, teach them, or recall them to your parishioners. Dr. William Mahrt, in his magisterial book *The Musical Shape of the Liturgy*, has called our attention to the fact that an essential role of the organ in Catholic worship is an *aide de mémoire*—an instrument that can viscerally connect the listener, through engaging his or her recollection of traditional, beloved tunes, to the vital musical sap of the faith. As those subjected to listening to me on a regular basis might attest, I stand ready at the slightest provocation to quote Marian themes upon even the briefest mention of the Blessed Mother in a homily in my post-sermon organ music. If you are daunted by improvisation, just make sure you have some basic music theory under your belt, then see the wonderful improvisational series from Wayne Leupold Publications and the amazing instructional series by Sietze de Vries.[3]

To close, I would be remiss if I did not recommend the eminently playable and imaginative Christmas organ settings of Wilbur Held and Michael Burkhardt, available from Morningstar. This music, together with repertoire from a collection like the *Oxford Book of Christmas Organ Music*, will bring you the best of modern, accessible carol settings, and get your improvisational juices flowing.

Whether playing repertoire or improvising, I pray that your Christmas organ music may be edifying to you, your choir members, clergy, and parishioners. If you find yourself starting to feel stressed about Christmas music, just remember the great patrimony of carol and chorale settings, and get into the spirit of this quote of a great colleague of mine: "You know, what people really want to hear at Christmas is . . . carols!" Now, Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

[3]See <https://www.sietzedevries.nl/improvising/>.

If you find yourself starting to feel stressed about Christmas music, just remember the great patrimony of carol and chorale settings, and get into the spirit of this quote of a great colleague of mine: "You know, what people really want to hear at Christmas is . . . carols!"

The Well-Dressed Choir: Questions to Consider

Many options exist to help a choir look its best. Which would you choose?

by Mary Jane Ballou

What should a Roman Catholic choir wear while singing in the church? This is an easy question to ask and a difficult one to answer. Full disclosure on the author's part: I have not worn a choir robe since I was seven years old and singing at the Reformed Church in Bronxville, New York. The choir with which I currently sing simply wears all black—obviously modest, but otherwise the singer's choice.

When I launched into the world of robes, cassocks (not Cossacks), cottas, surplices, scapulars, and stoles, I was overwhelmed by the options and horrified at the cost. Initially, the question should be considered as though price were not an issue. Perhaps the Lord will provide a donor or a stipulated bequest.

Here are points to consider:

- The pastor
- Advantages of uniform dress
- Disadvantages of uniform dress
- Layout of the church
- Customs of a particular church on women's dress
- Prior experience of the choir with robes

Options

- Cassock
  - Black or colored
  - Surplice or cotta or scapular
- Alb in white or flax or colored
- Robe alone
- Robe with stole or scapular
- All-black secular dress

Before proceeding any further with your plans, the pastor and other clergy should be consulted. If they are not interested, the best you can do is the all-black secular dress option. Of course, you would not consider proposing any of this without a written plan that identified advantages and calculated costs, maintenance, and storage. If the clergy are not opposed to this idea, solicit their opinions and work with it.

Many churches have multiple choirs. Who gets robes? Only the choir at the principal Mass? What about an established children's choir? The cantors? Be sure you have thought of this before you launch into a presentation. Anticipate questions and have the answers ready.

Choir dress can play an important role with your singers. It indicates that they are doing something special; it recognizes their

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.*

Choir dress can play an important role with your singers. It indicates that they are doing something special; it recognizes their commitment to the church and the music program.

commitment to the church and the music program. It can promote a sense of unity and it also conceals differences of taste, income, and size. Did the choir have robes in the past? How did people feel about them? You may have singers who object to covering themselves up with choir garb. Be prepared to answer objections if they come.

The geography of the church has a great deal to do with the "vesting question." In many modern or renovated churches, there is no loft. The choir is often to the side and thus visible to the congregation. In this case, some form of uniform dress serves to distinguish the choir from the assembly and indicates that they have a special role in the liturgy.

If the church has a choir loft, the singers are less visible. However, if your singers travel downstairs for communion, a vested choir will look better going up the aisle and will not seem to be jumping the communion line. At the same time, some older singers may be uncomfortable negotiating stairs with long cassocks or robes. If your choir stays in the loft at communion time, this may be less of an issue. Again, if building a sense of unity and respect in the choir is important, upstairs or downstairs, uniform choir dress may be useful. Many lofts do have a somewhat private area where singers could put on their robes, so that might be a solution (and perhaps a storage location for the choir's dress).

A possible obstacle to the cassock or the cassock/surplice combination is the concern that such dress implies the clerical state. My research does find cassocks that are double-breasted (with a hidden zipper, thank goodness) and with a collar that is laid, i.e., not mandarin, thus avoiding similarities to clergy dress. Some churches where this might be a problem have opted for cassocks in dark red or blue. One disadvantage in some cassocks is that the sleeves are fitted rather than loose. Make sure they are loosely fitted or be prepared for complaints. In addition to the styling of the cassock, the surplice can be longer than is used for clergy in choir or acolytes. Scapulars are another solution; however, they can get off center easily and look untidy.

Another possibility is the choir alb. It can be found in a "natural linen" color or black, red, blue, etc. It is loose-sleeved and does not mimic clerical garb or require some additional finishing piece. Again, it is a matter of taste and style. Do not forget the pastor's preferences. Whatever your choice, be sure that the fabric has sufficient weight that it will hang well and not cling to whatever your singer is wearing underneath.

Another option, less desirable in a Roman Catholic setting, is the classic choir robe. Its origins are Protestant. The yoke and front gathers are great for churches in the Reformed tradition. They are also popular with high school choirs because they are close to one-size-fits-most. Often paired with stoles or collars, your congregation

might wonder if the Baptists had arrived for an interdenominational choral festival. However, if you already have these, cottas or scapulars might "calm" them. Beware of inexpensive and shiny robes, which are associated with gospel choirs.

Last of the options is all-black dress for men and women. Black pants and shirt for the men and black dresses, skirts, and modest tops for women. However, this open alternative leaves room for fretting: is the top suitably modest, what about hosiery, etc. An alternative is selecting reasonably priced outfits from a company such as Formal Fashions. A stress-free skirt and top can be found for under $100 and they make sizes to fit anyone. The clothing is indestructible and never needs ironing. I used it with a women's schola and the process was painless. No one had to worry their way through their closet, and we appeared as a unified ensemble. It was suitable for Masses and concerts.

After you and your staff have sorted through all the possibilities, there is still the hard part: the money. Many of the ensembles described above will cost close to $200 per singer. Multiply that by the number of choir members and it is probably your music budget for the year, if not more. Bake sales, fundraising concerts, singing telegrams. How can your choir raise the money? Of course, this presupposes that the choir is with you one hundred percent on this project. Spend some time along the way to make sure of their support. While the choir dress will belong to the church, they are the ones who will be wearing it week after week. Consider also that your fundraising efforts might inspire a donor or two and it will not be years of brownies. Instead, a stalwart parishioner might step forward to cover the cost. If this happens, be sure to honor the donor(s) lavishly.

The internet is awash with retailers of choir garb. You can easily be overwhelmed with the options. If you have a choir committee, enlist their help. Also, you should talk with your colleagues. You may opt to do something or nothing or you may need to shelve this project further down the road. What you want is a great choir, confident and tuneful, ready to do their best for the Lord. Keep your eyes on that.

What you want is a great choir, confident and tuneful, ready to do their best for the Lord. Keep your eyes on that.

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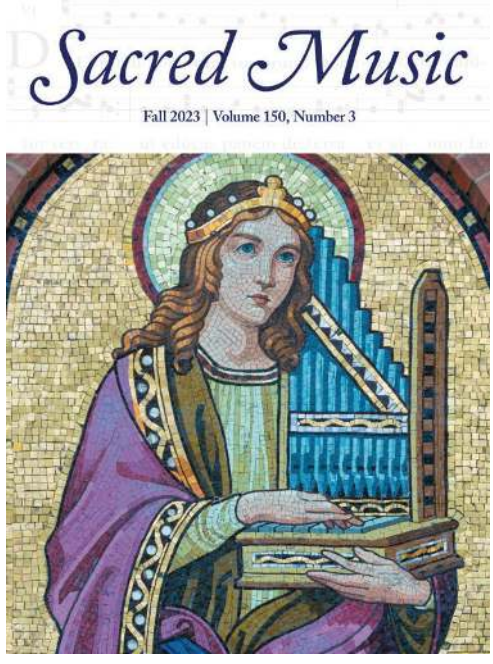

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- Book discounts at our events
- A subscription to *Sacred Music*, the oldest continuously publish journal of music in North America, **now available** to members i digital format at our **member portal**.

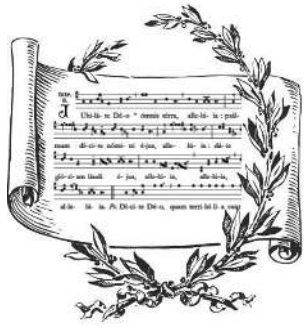
Each issue of *Sacred Music* offers:

- 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



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

UPCOMING CMAA VIRTUAL EVENTS

January 16 (Tuesday):

Forum for Organists *with Dr. Horst Buchholz, Dr. Nathan Knutson, and Christopher Berry*

Discuss such topics as:

- *Transitioning from Piano to Organ*
- *Improvisation Techniques*
- *Suggested Repertory*

This is a **members-only** event. Register for this Zoom session at https://connect.churchmusicassociation.org.

Future Events (Members Only):

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.

Save the Date!
2024 Sacred Music Colloquium

June 24 - 29, 2024

St. John's Newman Center
Champaign, Illinois

Chapel, St. John's Newman Center

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 Improvisation* — 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 improvisation 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.
- **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 the **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.
- If you still have trouble logging in, please contact us at gm@musicasacra.com for assistance.

Update on the *Parish Book of Chant* Recording Project

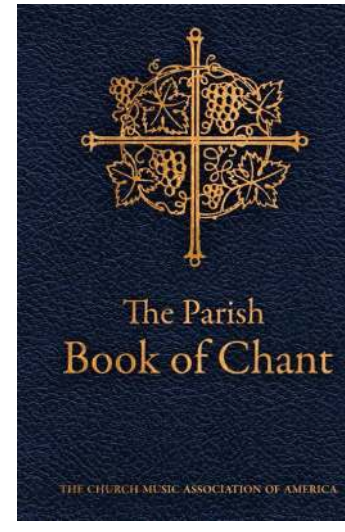
At a small church in Georgetown, CT, the sound of Gregorian chant rings forth three nights a week, as the recording project goes forward.

Sacred Heart Oratory has made the men of *Viri Galilaei* welcome as they prepare recordings for you with their conductor, **David Hughes**.

The engravings from all the chants of the *Parish Book of Chant* are becoming available in sound on our website. These recordings can be used as a practice or teaching tool for your choir members—particularly useful for those who are new to chant.

We will email you when the new resources are available.

If you need to provide us with an updated email address, please contact us at: gm@musicasacra.com or update your member data at the member portal at: https://connect.churchmusicassociation.org.



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

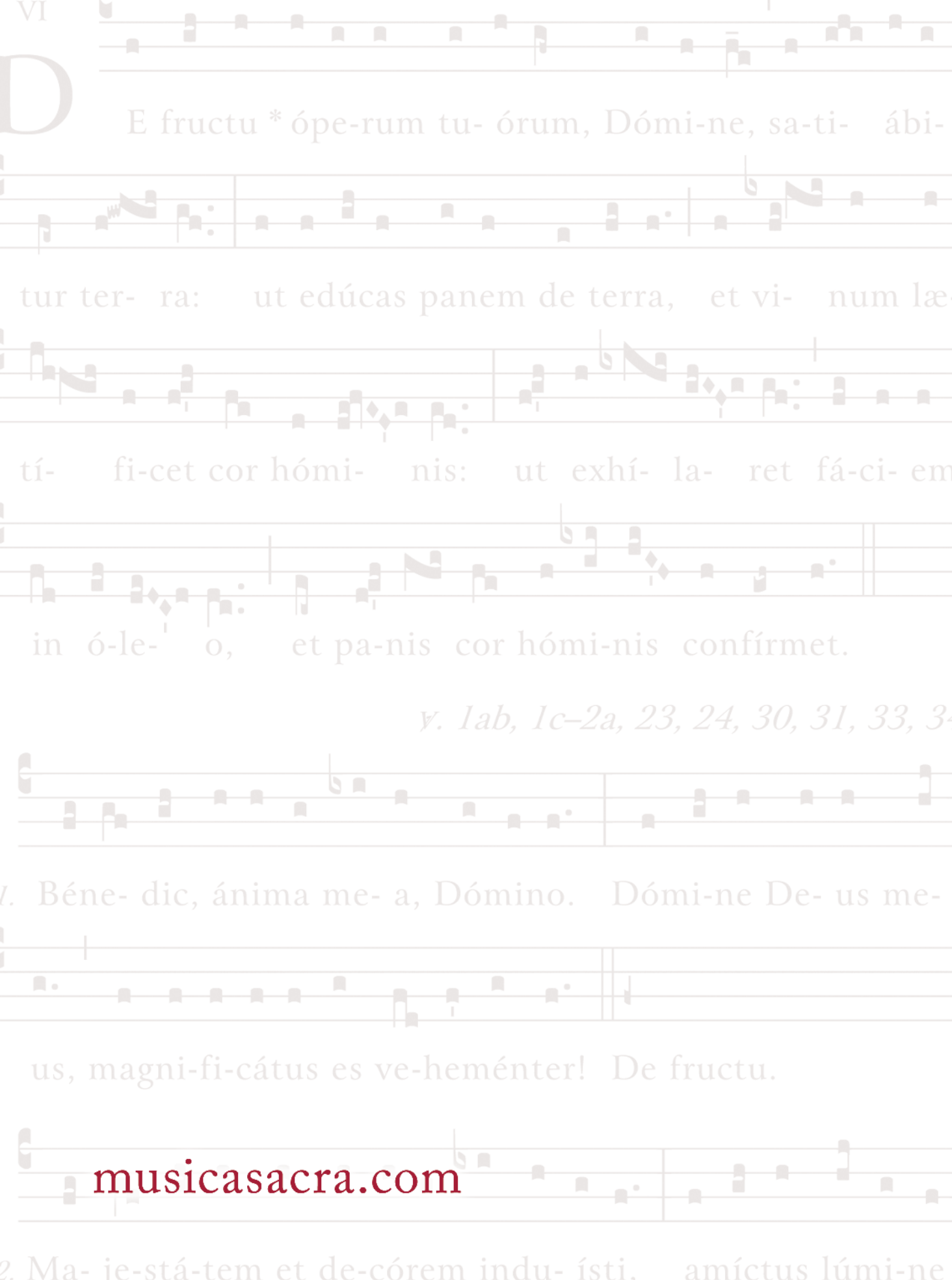
in ó-le- o, et pa-nis cor hómi-nis confírmet.

℣. 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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musicasacra.com
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