

**The Musical Prelude to Vatican II: Plainchant, Participation, and Pius X****Walter William Whitehouse****Publication Date**

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THE MUSICAL PRELUDE TO VATICAN II:  
PLAINCHANT, PARTICIPATION, AND PIUS X

VOLUME II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School  
of the University of Notre Dame  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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## CHAPTER 4

### THE LATER RECEPTION

#### 4.1 The Liturgical Movement

*We deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.*<sup>1</sup>

It is fitting to open the final chapter with this most famous quote from the *motu proprio*, probably the most famous liturgical words of the twentieth century. By the 1950s some felt this paragraph had been used in liturgical discourse almost to the point of annoyance, its key phrase “active participation” (hereafter *AP*) now a “slogan” that was approaching exhaustion from over-use. At the same time, a new English translation of *TLS* (that of Clement McNaspy) appeared in 1950, for the reason that, “unthinkable as it ought to be, there still exist Catholic musicians, not to say clerical musicians, who have only the slenderest notion of the Church’s ‘Juridical Code of Sacred Music.’”<sup>2</sup> Therein lies the tale of this last chapter: while the liturgical movement had pressed forward the implications of Pius X’s seminal phrase with great energy and fruitfulness, the church

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<sup>1</sup> *TLS*, Introduction, from Wienandt, 162, quoting *Papal Documents on Sacred Music*, pp. 7-11.

<sup>2</sup> C. J. McNaspy, SJ, *The Motu Proprio of Church Music of Pope Pius X: A New Translation and Commentary*. (Toledo: Gregorian Institute of America, 1950) 1.

music community to a great extent carried on “business as usual” with heads in the sand, or actively sought to oppose newer developments toward congregational singing. “[W]hat has all this to do with the music of the Church?” asked Paul Hume, music editor of the *Washington Post* and Catholic convert. “[T]he music of the Church exists for the sole purpose of serving the immutably sacred liturgy, and the liturgy is not revised yearly in accordance with the latest news from Trendex.”<sup>3</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Active Participation

*“Socius Christifidelium labor requiritur”*<sup>4</sup>

*TLS* had yielded “active participation,” [AP] and that phrase in turn yielded an enormous theological harvest in the twentieth century. The effects of AP became manifest in ecclesiology (development of the Mystical Body concept), and sacramental theology (baptism and the priestly identity of the faithful), and consequently returned to profoundly affect liturgy itself. As even the *Catholic Encyclopedia* has it, “one can see that it was only by degrees that the promoters of the movement became fully aware of the theological foundation and true nature of the participation they were sponsoring.”<sup>5</sup>

Pius X, beginning the work of reform of the liturgical books in 1913, had predicted that

In fact this all demands, according to the view of the experts, a work both detailed and extensive; and therefore it is necessary that many

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<sup>3</sup> “Music Of Our Own Time,” CAT 43 (1957) 56. Italics added.

<sup>4</sup> “Common effort is required of the Christian faithful.” (Translation mine.)

<sup>5</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Liturgical Participation,” 906.

years should pass, before this liturgical edifice, so to speak, . . . reappears in new splendor in its dignity and harmony, once the marks of old age have been cleared away.<sup>6</sup>

Indeed it was some fifty years later that the “marks of old age” were cleared away in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, a document that Pope John Paul II attested on its 25th anniversary to have been “a source of hope for the life and the renewal of the Church.”<sup>7</sup> “The moment,” says John Paul, “had been prepared for by a great liturgical and pastoral movement,”<sup>8</sup> giving due recognition to the role of the liturgical movement through six decades of the twentieth century. Using the very words of Pius X from the *Motu proprio*, John Paul recalled: “Such an overall reform of the Liturgy was in harmony with the general hope of the whole Church. In fact, the liturgical spirit had become more and more widespread together with the desire for an ‘*active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.*’”<sup>9</sup> It was from this two-word phrase of Pius X that a rich theological “edifice” had indeed grown up. By the time of Vatican II, SC could name its starting-point by simply stating,

In the reform and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people *is the aim to be considered before all else*  
...<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Motu proprio Abhinc duos annos* (23 October 1913), quoted in Pope John Paul II, Apostolic letter *Vicesimus Quintus Annus* (4 December 1988) I.3. <http://www.adoremus.org/JPII25SC.html>.

<sup>7</sup> *Vicesimus* 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* I.4, quoting from *Tra le sollecitudini*, n.14. Italics added.

<sup>10</sup> *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereafter SC) Chapter I: II.14. Italics added.

And this starting-point was justified by immediately invoking the now-classic phrase of Pius X,

. . . for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit . . .

Jozef Lamberts sums up, “[SC] made active participation a *sine qua non* for all real liturgy.”<sup>11</sup>

For the liturgical movement, the Second Vatican Council was indeed a long-incoming vindication, something of an apotheosis, as its principles were enshrined in the council documents. The movement had “aimed at nothing less than the meaning of the Mass itself,” and the essential achievement here was an understanding (or re-appropriation) of the Mass as a corporate action of the assembled Body of Christ, the *Corpus Mysticum*. Pius XII gave official recognition to this understanding in a celebrated passage in the encyclical *Mediator Dei*:

Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of man is manifested by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which is proper to each of these signs; in the liturgy full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and his members.<sup>12</sup>

The Dominican A.M. Roguet drew out the implications of this definition by offering in 1954 an early “Theology of the Liturgical Assembly”:

The theology of the liturgical assembly ought to investigate that mystery of the presence of Jesus Christ in His assembled members according to His promise that “When two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” (MT 18:20) This presence is

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<sup>11</sup> Jozef Lamberts, “Active participation as the gateway towards an ecclesial liturgy,” in Charles Caspers and Marc Schneider, eds., *Omnes Circumstantes: Contributions towards a history of the role of the people in the liturgy* (Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok, 1990) 252.

<sup>12</sup> *Mediator Dei* (hereafter MD) 528-9, translation from Lamberts, “Gateway,” 252.



real, though of course it is of a different manner than His eucharistic presence. And yet it is this presence which invites and conditions the eucharistic presence: for there is no eucharistic presence without a presence of baptized; there is no “*Mysterium fidei*,” no “Mystery of faith,” without an assembly of the faithful; there is no “*vinculum charitatis*,” no bond of charity, without an assembly of brethren.<sup>13</sup>

Lamberts, writing in the post-Vatican II era, offered a similar explication:

The centre of Liturgy is the celebration of Christ’s paschal mystery as the perfect glorification of the Father and the sanctification of humanity. This priestly office is exercised by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Head and its members. This means by Christ and those associated with Him in his Church. It is the people of God, gathered by the Holy Spirit and together with their Chief, that is seen here as the subject of liturgical action. . . . Such an approach to liturgy requires by definition the active participation of all those who belong to the celebrating community. This participation is presupposed by the nature of liturgy itself. In a certain sense there is no real liturgy if only some are involved while others are only spectators. Liturgy is not only an activity for the people, but also an activity of the people.<sup>14</sup>

It was on this fundamental understanding of the corporate nature of the Mass that “To change these *spectators* into *participants* in the Banquet of the Church . . . [became] the ultimate aim of the proposed reforms,”<sup>15</sup> and hence the *by-words* of the liturgical movement were said to be “active participation.”

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<sup>13</sup> “The Theology of the Liturgical Assembly,” *Worship* 28 (February 1954) 135.

<sup>14</sup> Lamberts, “Gateway,” 252-3. Indicative of a theology in flux, Roguet in 1954 (and certainly Lamberts in 1990) went beyond where Pius XII was willing to go with the implications of the people’s participation. In *Mediator Dei* Pius is careful to try and “steer a middle course,” not giving in too far to the liturgical movement: “[T]hough . . . the very nature of the sacrifice, as offered by the Mediator between God and men, must be regarded as the act of the whole Mystical Body of Christ, still [methods of participation] are by no means necessary, to constitute it a public act or to give it a social character. . . . [T]he High Mass . . . though it should be offered with only the sacred ministers present, possesses its own special dignity due to the impressive character of its ritual and the magnificence of its ceremonies.” *MD*, 106.

<sup>15</sup> Rev. H. A. Reinhold, *Bringing the Mass to the People* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960) 29. Emphasis original.

By reason of these developments Pius X, while often called a “spiritual forebear” of the liturgical movement, is not usually connected with the actual “beginning” of the movement.<sup>16</sup> The distinction is an important one. For Pius, *AP* meant a more fervent and intentional involvement of the laity with the official worship of the church, a sort of “signing on” to an event which nevertheless had its own discrete reality and ongoing life. (To use the sporting-event analogy, the spectators were to be more vocally raucous in joining in the cheers and the chants, but they nonetheless remained spectators, outside the ring of an official event.) That is why Gregorian chant was so emblematic: it was *the song of the Church*, the “official” (and newly excavated) Tradition. For the people, it was the *means of joining* the timeless Liturgy of the Church.

But the *AP* which Pius X initiated flowered into the much broader theology referenced above. The faithful were not simply “attendees” at an ecclesial event, even if vigorous vocal participation made their presence felt; they were in fact substantially the *subject* of this event: the Body of Christ, offering and becoming the worship of Christ to the Father, Head and Members all. This theological reality made their active participation not only desirable but in fact nothing less than essential. Herein lay the difference: for Pius X, the worship of the Church was understood as the tradition of its official cultic acts, among which resided the important musical treasury of Gregorian Chant; for the liturgical

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<sup>16</sup> There is a certain preference for giving that distinction to Dom Lambert Beauduin of Mont César, for his paper presented at the Malines Conference, September 1909. See e.g. Dom Olivier Rousseau, OSB, *The Progress of the Liturgy* trans. The Benedictines of Westminster Priory, Vancouver, BC, Canada (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1951) 161-70; Lancelot C. Sheppard, “Liturgy: the Present Predicament,” in Lancelot Sheppard, ed., *True Worship* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963) 119; Pecklers, *Unread Vision*, 12. Koenker nods toward Beauduin (*Renaissance*, 14; 205 n. 8.) but places more weight on the introduction of the *missa recitata* at Maria Laach under Dom Herwegen. See above, Chapter 3, p. 105, n. 333.

movement, the worship of the Church was understood to be the activity of the whole Body of Christ, in a corporate and unified movement of response to the Father. This liturgical act, understood as the Church's great gesture of thanksgiving, its *eucharistia*, privileged singing as a normative component, not only from historical record but by “the very nature of things.”<sup>17</sup>

For Pius, then, Gregorian Chant was part of the “essentials” of worship (the Church's tradition), the singing of which was a means of active participation for the faithful. For the liturgical movement, on the other hand, *singing itself* became one important emblem of *the* essential nature of liturgy, namely the worship of the Body of Christ, realized in the active participation of Head and members. An essential reversal had taken place. For Pius, singing at worship called above all for the Church's own “liturgy” (here, Gregorian chant); for the liturgical movement, the Church's own liturgy called above all for participation, and where this meant singing, the participatory mandate gradually “turned toward” the people, and called into question the inherited Gregorian “tradition.”

#### 4.1.2 The Pastoral “Turn”

In light of such a thorough-going review of the theology of the Mass, the question of music, though important in its own right, came to be seen as secondary or derivative. H.A. Reinhold states that in discussing the “ritual aspects of the Mass . . . [o]ther liturgical matters, such as vesture, language or even music, . . . though they are important

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<sup>17</sup> The issue of music's “normativity,” however, its function as *pars integrans* in the liturgy, is complex and still cloudy. A good synopsis of the issues is in Winter, *Why Sing?*, 205-212.

in themselves, may even be regarded as relatively peripheral in the discussion of so central a theme.”<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the ritual use of music came to be highly regarded in liturgical research and reform, eventually reversing the legacy of the 1570 Missal which *de facto* had made Low Mass the norm.

The principles which guided the liturgical movement generally were said to be two-fold: historical and pastoral.<sup>19</sup> Both aspects reinforced the notion of sung mass as normative to the sacred liturgy of the church. Historical research re-highlighted the likelihood of sung liturgy in the early church, and corporate participation moreover in the singing. Joseph Jungmann defended the value of this evidence, and placed it in its new perspective, by asserting,

Concerning the people singing at Mass, we are not interested in reviving a custom simply because it once prevailed: we wish rather to reinstate something which was more clearly appreciated in early times for the very reason that it is in harmony with *the timeless meaning of the Mass and its liturgy*.<sup>20</sup>

The historical importance of corporate liturgical singing is so key that Jungmann attributes to its loss in the Middle Ages the obscuring of this “timeless meaning of the Mass”:

The people began to lose their voice. . . . At the same time the musicianship of the choir progressed and polyphony arose. . . . Church music had filled up the vacuum created by the silence of the

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<sup>18</sup> Reinhold, 15.

<sup>19</sup> Reinhold, 25. The renewed ecclesiology of Vatican II was to express these in three principles of reform: 1. Simplification; 2. adaptation to the “geniuses and traditions of peoples”; 3. return to the “roots” of liturgy. See Lamberts, “Gateway,” 257.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph A. Jungmann, SJ, “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” in *Pastoral Liturgy* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962). Reprinted in CEC 91 no. 2 (Summer 1964) 71-79, here 74. Italics added.

people. . . . *Awareness of the Church vanished, as did understanding of the Mass in its complete sense as Eucharistia and sacrifice of the Church.*<sup>21</sup>

By the same token, it began to dawn that the re-gaining of the “essence” of the Mass as the work of the entire people of God carried then tremendous implications *toward* the people. This was the pastoral “turn” which indeed so characterized theological discourse leading to Vatican II. For Pius X, of course, as well as the liturgical movement, liturgy had *always* been “pastoral” in the sense of being concerned finally with the inner conversion and union of each individual Christian with the triune God. Pius X’s objective, in his celebrated passage, was the gaining of “true Christian spirit” for the faithful. Pius XII, somewhat concerned about the developing emphasis on external acts of participation (singing first among them), emphasized in *Mediator Dei* that “. . . the chief element of divine worship must be *interior*. For we must always *live* in Christ . . . This recommendation the liturgy itself is careful to repeat, as often as it prescribes an exterior act of worship. . . . Otherwise religion clearly amounts to mere formalism.”<sup>22</sup> And no less an apostle of the outward, social demands of the gospel, Virgil Michel, stressed the priority of the inner movement:

Many persons, even some professing interest in the liturgical movement, have continued to look upon the liturgy rather in its external aspects than as the inner worship of soul and the divine action of Christ and of God that is enacted through the visible elements of the liturgical rites. It is under this mistaken emphasis that the aim of the liturgical movement was by them narrowed down to an external participation of the faithful in the Mass, say, by means of the

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<sup>21</sup> Jungmann, “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” 75. Emphasis added.

<sup>22</sup> MD 24, in Hayburn, 337. Italics added.

*Missa recitata* drilled conscientiously but with no attempt to gain a real understanding of the inner action of the Mass . . .<sup>23</sup>

Though the early movement focused on the “beauty” of the liturgy as a way to “move men’s souls,” these later developments led to an eschewing of any “rubricism or aestheticism,” seeking to reach spiritual interiors by meeting people on their own terms. H. A. Reinhold expressed well the growing concern with liturgy as a *pastoral* matter:

At no time has [the liturgy] been a hobby or passing fad in my life, nor was I ever attracted by the mere aesthetics of the thing. My concern with it has always been essentially a pastoral one. It was the realization of the profoundly pastoral implications of the liturgical movement that made it seem worth while to belong to a minority for almost forty years. It was the vision of the Church, in her most intimate self-understanding as the Body of Christ, become a lived and experienced reality to her members, that impelled my colleagues and myself to find new ways to open the closed world which the liturgy had become – and in many ways still is – to the Christian people, not archaic diletantism, sheer joy of novelty, or esoteric fadism.<sup>24</sup>

Thus for the liturgical movement, the “pastoral” question became, “How can we best *actualize* the Mass to express the corporate action of the People of God? What can we do to *facilitate* the people’s participation? What are the *dimensions* of that participation?” The twentieth century liturgical movement bore in mind as well the lessons of past failures at liturgical reform, such as at Pistoia: they did not want to proceed without “bringing the

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<sup>23</sup> Virgil Michel, OSB, “The Scope of the liturgical movement,” *OFW* 10 (1936), 485-490. Reprinted in Paul B. Marx, *Virgil Michel and the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1957) Appendix 3, 439-443, here 440.

<sup>24</sup> Reinhold, 24. Dom Vitry gave eloquent expression to the pastoral imperative in a 1952 letter to Fr. Michael Mathis: “What a world of irreligion under the power of money and the glamor of education! What immense possibilities to bring Christ to a panting world! That will not be with administration and organization; it can only be through transmitting to the souls, abandoned and pent up, the mystery of Christ. This is the essence of the liturgical apostolate, and we should accomplish it. I am finished with the shell of modernized Catholicism, and more and more convinced that it is just time to go to the people. I am becoming a spiritual communist.” Letter from the S.S. Contessa, Sunday of the Palms, April 7, 1952. (N.D. archives, folio 19-75.)

people along” with them, nor by going outside official channels. Reflecting that concern, and in words portending the future, Pius XII was said to have quipped, “Now that we have brought people to the Mass, it is time to bring the Mass to the people.”<sup>25</sup>

The primary search for the answer to “bringing the Mass to the people” came to be seen in the area of *intelligibility*. “To lead back to such a degree of intelligent participation of the faithful in the liturgical worship of the Church is the primary objective of the liturgical movement,” attested Virgil Michel.<sup>26</sup>

Intelligent participation of the faithful in the Mass means primarily a participation by understanding and will according to the capacity of the member. . . . Christian participation in the Mass is the more meritorious the more it is done with an understanding of the true nature of the prayer-action of the Mass and with the willing joining of heart and soul in that action as it unfolds itself before the senses.<sup>27</sup>

The *means* of intelligibility came finally to imply the breeching of the “closed world” to which Reinhold refers: the sacred liturgy of 1570. And by the 1950s, two great pillars symbolically stood at the entryway to that closed world: the Latin language and Gregorian chant.

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<sup>25</sup> Reinhold, 24. Reinhold took the name of his book from this comment.

<sup>26</sup> Michel, “Scope of the liturgical movement,” 440.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

## 4.2 Decade before Vatican II: Picture

*“The theory is good, it just doesn’t work out so well in practice.”*<sup>28</sup>

The last decade before Vatican II presented a picture of worship largely unchanged in American Catholicism. In spite of the vigorous theological ferment around liturgical matters, of “our present preoccupation of getting the people in the pews to take their share of public worship,”<sup>29</sup> things were not going so well “on the ground” – i.e., at the parish level. The evolving situation gave rise to views of the glass as murkily half-empty or half-full.

There is sufficient cause to be optimistic, therefore, from the point of view of the diffusion of information on the theory of the liturgy and the extent to which it is being read. There is, however, another view of this stained glass window through which not so much rosy light radiates. It is at the point where the principles of liturgy are translated on the parish level into terms of action, or more particularly, the moment when the people are called upon to give exterior expression to their interior disposition of religious devotion. Here new sets of problems have arisen, the general attitude toward which is perhaps anything but optimistic . . .<sup>30</sup>

Liturgists were popularly considered over-zealous, “wacky.” Low mass remained the norm.

Resistance to participative worship and the negative attitude toward Gregorian chant seemed over time to demonstrate a certain intractability. On a global level, there may have

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<sup>28</sup> Rev. Eugene A. Walsh, SS, “The Parish Sings,” CAT 41 (1955) 102.

<sup>29</sup> Rev. John C. Selner, SS, “The Ministry of Music,” CAT 43 (1957) 179.

<sup>30</sup> Theodore N. Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” in William J. Leonard, SJ, ed., *Liturgy for the People* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing, 1963) 104-119, here 105.



been reason for a bit more optimism, as Pius XII indicated to world delegates at the Assisi Congress in 1956:

If the present position of the liturgical movement is compared with what it was thirty years ago, it is clear that undeniable progress has been made both in extent and in depth. Interest brought to the liturgy, proposals put into practise [*sic*], and the active participation of the faithful have developed to an extent unthought of at that time.<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, the Archbishop of Mainz at the same Congress took an optimistic view of Gregorian chant, telling the Assisi delegates

In numerous places in every part of the world – in dioceses, seminaries, monasteries and parishes – Gregorian chant has found a new home. The fact that we here in Assisi can during these days in such a wonderful fashion communally sing the Pontifical Masses, is surely proof that the exhortations of the Popes in the last fifty years have fallen upon good ground.<sup>32</sup>

And there were to be sure some successes in the United States. The famous parochial example was Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel's Church of the Holy Cross in St. Louis,<sup>33</sup> and Fr. Eugene Walsh gave a glowing report in 1955 for the Cathedral in Baltimore.<sup>34</sup> As for *scholae cantorum*, Fr. William J. Finn's efforts to establish such a school on a national basis never succeeded, but his Paulist Choir of Men and Boys in New York City became

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<sup>31</sup> Rt. Rev. Robert J. Sherry, "Song in the Liturgy," CAT 44 (1959) 145.

<sup>32</sup> Most Rev. Albert Stohr, "The Encyclical 'On Sacred Music' and Its Significance for the Care of Souls," in *The Assisi Papers: Proceedings of the First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press / St. John's Abbey, 1957) 190-191. Bishop Stohr went on tellingly, however: "But much remains to be done in this respect, in order that also the third characteristic of Gregorian chant, its *universality*, becomes more evident." Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. *The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish 1864-1964* (St. Louis, MO: n.p., 1964). (Parish centennial volume.)

<sup>34</sup> Walsh, "The Parish Sings," 99-102, 110.

legendary, spawning a similar Paulist ensemble in the Archdiocese of Chicago.<sup>35</sup> An American parish in Nashville, Tennessee succeeded in founding its own boys' Choir School,<sup>36</sup> though Paul J. Hotin noted that by 1959, only one Archdiocesan choir day-school had been established in the U.S., that in Cincinnati. (In 1963 Theodore Marier urged his newly-formed St. Paul Choir School of the Archdiocese of Boston as a national model.)<sup>37</sup> *The Tablet* of Brooklyn reports brightly in 1959 that

Most dioceses have a Commission on Sacred Music, and many have diocesan choirs of men and boys. One of the foremost is the Brooklyn Diocesan Choir. The Pius X School of Music at Purchase, N.Y. has achieved worldwide renown. Our Religious Brothers and Sisters do well in training children because they themselves are usually well trained in their novitiates.<sup>38</sup>

"Yet," *The Tablet* continued, "many people remain lethargic,"<sup>39</sup> and what successes there were seemed only to be exceptions which proved the "rule of resistance."<sup>40</sup> "Who has ever attempted to teach entire parishes the high Mass without seriously wondering whether a

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<sup>35</sup> Rev. John C. Selner, SS, "Paulist Choristers," CAT 37 (1951) 99-101, 140; also Selner, "Father Finn," CAT 47 (1961) 51-3, 84-5. See also William Ripley Dorr, "Father William Joseph Finn, C.S.P. and the Paulist Choristers," CEC 88 no. 2 (Summer 1961), 70-73. Dorr mentored under Fr. Finn, and subsequently spent a long career at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Long Beach, California. *Caecilia* notes, "His famous choristers placed a stained glass window in St. Luke's, commemorative of the English School of Polyphony. There, beside the names of Byrd, Tallis, Tye and the rest, is inscribed the name of Father Finn." *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>36</sup> Cyr de Brant, "Eleanor Fossick and Christ the King Choir School," CAT 47 (1961) 14 f..

<sup>37</sup> Marier, "The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School," 104-119.

<sup>38</sup> "Our Organists," *Brooklyn (N.Y.) Tablet*, 26 September 1959, reprinted in CAT 45 (1959) 142.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Paul J. Hotin gives a representative overview of the "mixed results" by 1959 at the Notre Dame Liturgical Week: "There are very few people in the United States today who can reasonably doubt that, in the field of liturgical music at least, we *have* made some progress in the past fifty-six years . . . And yet, no one can honestly claim that we have done much more than break ground." "The Role of the Choir School in the Restoration of Sacred Music," in *Participation in the Mass: 20<sup>th</sup> North American Liturgical Week* (Washington, DC: The Liturgical Conference, 1960) 114.

great deal of this energy was being misplaced? . . . The rare exceptions, accomplished after tremendous investment of time and energy, and with groups usually not typical, only reinforce the argument.”<sup>41</sup> By the 1950s the goals of participative worship seemed to be giving way to a sense of reduced expectation. Some took the long view, including a bishop:

[I]t takes more than a spirit of obedience to put the *Motu Proprio* into effect. It requires knowledge and deep understanding and available musical material. It requires zeal, patience, and perseverance in teachers and faithful and superiors to overcome the obstacles in the way, such as the accumulation of apathy, indifference, inertia, ignorance, lethargy, bias and prejudice, the rut and rust of old ingrained habit and custom.<sup>42</sup>

“This process,” added a monk, “takes time. The chasm between the modes and modern music, between free and measured rhythm is so vast that it will take many years, a generation or two before Gregorian chant will be a living prayer again.”<sup>43</sup> Ominously, others were ready to throw in the towel:

Since there is no hope that his side of eternity we will ever reach the ideal of complete sung participation in solemn Masses by all, we must face the reality that some will never get beyond the point of dialogue and vernacular-hymn participation.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Clement J. McNaspy, SJ, “The Language of Prayer,” in Leonard, ed., *Liturgy for the People*, 92. For an example of a non-typical congregation, see Sister Mary Immaculate, “A Model Wedding,” CAT 42 (1956) 223.

<sup>42</sup> Sherry, “Song in the Liturgy,” 144.

<sup>43</sup> Gastineau, “Sure the People Can Sing,” 57.

<sup>44</sup> Rev. Cletus Madsen, “The Dialogue Mass and Hymns,” in 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*, 107.

As late as 1964 William F. Pohl would write, “In spite of recent promotion by the highest authorities of the Church [including now Vatican II], [congregational singing] has not yet been generally reintroduced, and there is still considerable resistance to it.”<sup>45</sup>

#### 4.2.1 Low Mass

Up to the time of Vatican II, Low Mass remained by far the norm in American Catholic worship. J.B. O’Connell, in his commentary on the 1958 Instruction [I58], states that “Low Mass has grown to be, for various reasons, the typical form of Mass and by far the commonest in use.”<sup>46</sup> And American low masses remained largely non-participatory. O’Connell describes the typical situation:

The priest celebrated “his” Mass at the altar, taking no account of anyone except the server; and the people “heard” their Mass, while, for the most part, saying their private prayers, or just saying and doing nothing at all, being physically present with the minimum of attention and intention demanded by the moral theologians to fulfil the obligation of “hearing Mass.”<sup>47</sup>

The provision for the Dialog Mass, intended at least to “get people vocal,” found much greater success in Europe than in the United States,<sup>48</sup> and even vernacular hymn singing, ever robust at devotions, would not catch on at low masses where it was now allowed. “In six months I have rarely heard a hymn,” noted a visiting English Jesuit:

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<sup>45</sup> “Congregational Singing,” CEC 91 no. 2 (Summer 1964) 63.

<sup>46</sup> J. B. O’Connell, *Sacred Music and Liturgy: The Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1958* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1959) 46. The 1958 Instruction is hereafter abbreviated I58, using O’Connell’s translations.

<sup>47</sup> O’Connell, *Sacred Music and Liturgy*, 46.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 53. On Dialogue Mass see also *ibid.*, 52, and Madsen, “Dialogue Mass and Hymns,” 105-108.

My picture of American hymn singing is limited to one verse of “Holy God We Praise Thy Name” sung sentimentally after Benediction. . . . It has been a surprise to discover how rare is evening Mass in many parts of the country, how few have seen an offertory procession or can answer dialogue Mass.<sup>49</sup>

Marier affirms in 1963 that the “‘most noble form of eucharistic celebration,’ as Pius XII termed the Solemn Mass, is either regularly avoided on the parish level as a matter of principle, or, in the place of Latin and the Chant, linguistic and musical improvisations are substituted and affixed to the Low Mass . . .”<sup>50</sup> When summertime came, people looked forward to the “merciful schedule of low Masses,” after “a final burst of harmonic glory on Pentecost or Trinity Sunday.”<sup>51</sup> John Selner, in lampooning the common musical fare at such Low Masses, provides us a humorous but likely reliable picture:

[The organist] is bound to find her way to the gallery . . . turn on the organ blower during the prayers at the foot of the altar, and begin some mood music on a buzzing salicional, or worse still, on a plooping stopped diapason. With remarkable perseverance she will accompany the Mass from start to finish, with an impressive pause for the elevation. . . . [Y]ou can be sure there will be quite a variety of dynamic levels and gradual or sudden openings of the crescendo pedal, bringing out the tremolo in full force . . .

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<sup>49</sup> Fr. Bernard Bassett, SJ, in “Chronicle and Comment,” CAT 45 (1959) 182. The conundrum to liturgical observers was that congregational hymn singing continued to be so vigorous at devotions and novenas, and had a universally defined repertory. CAT 41 (1955: “Inquiries,” 33-34) reports that practically all novenas included the hymns “Good Night, Sweet Jesus,” “Mother Dearest, Mother Fairest,” “O Mary, Conceived Without Sin,” and “Mother Dear, O Pray for Me.” These hymns of course were condemned by the St. Gregory Society! At the time, however, devotions in some major churches had tens of thousands of worshippers each week, and “much of the attraction comes from the very fact of ‘audience participation.’” [Ibid.] “Should they tamper with a formula that is accomplishing so much good?” mused the author, Richard Ginder. Pius XII was forthright in his support of devotions and the popular hymns and songs (“often sung in the language of the people”) which accompanied them, most prominently in MSD (35-37): “Hence these popular religious hymns are of great help to the Catholic apostolate and should be carefully cultivated and promoted.” (MSD 37).

<sup>50</sup> Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 106.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

Meanwhile the people are down in the well of the church, following the Mass more or less remotely, some with rosaries, some with prayer-books, some beating the air violently with the undertaker's complimentary fan. But ABC or XYZ on the organ bench above is bravely trying to lighten the Sunday obligation for the crowds below, however unappreciative they may seem at times.

Now the serious question is: What does the organ contribute to devout attendance at Holy Mass? . . . [If played as above], it will – at best – serve only the purpose of keeping people calm until the “dreary experience” of going to Mass is over. We say “at best.” Actually, the effort seldom reaches that level. So the result is chiefly annoyance.<sup>52</sup>

This practice with the organ was apparently so common that it warranted specific condemnation in *I58*:

In addition, it should be noted that if there is a custom anywhere of playing the organ during low Mass, without the congregation taking their part in the Mass either by reciting prayers in common or by singing, the practice of playing the organ, harmonium or other musical instrument almost *continuously* is to be condemned.<sup>53</sup>

*I58* in fact limits the use of the Organ to four specific places in the liturgy. O'Connell comments, “That the faithful . . . may not be distracted from, at all events, the minimum participation in the rite and encouraged in a merely passive attitude the continual playing of the organ or other instrument is reprobated – a strong legal term – and moments of silence imposed. The organist must not be substituted for the celebrant as the focus of attention.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> “A Tune at Low Mass?” CAT 46 (1960) 50.

<sup>53</sup> *I58*, 29. Emphasis added.

<sup>54</sup> O'Connell, *Sacred Music and Liturgy*, 48-49.

#### 4.2.2 High Masses

In our own time [1960] the sung mass has virtually disappeared from Catholic parochial life because it has ceased to be a true expression of worship for most Catholics and has degenerated into artistic formalism.<sup>55</sup>

The vision of Pius X, of course, related to the High Mass, the sung liturgy, in which the faithful would join in a regular way in singing the plainsong Ordinary. This ideal was strongly affirmed by Pius XI and Pius XII, who in 1955 in *MSD* even outlined a further category of congregational participation as singing of the Propers. But sung masses in America, Ordinary and Proper, remained almost exclusively the provenance of the choir, right up to the eve of Vatican II. Neither pastors, music directors, nor congregations were much inclined to take on the prescriptions of congregational participation so clearly put forth in the directives from Rome; the challenges were understood to be daunting, the resistance ingrained. From the leadership side, both pastors and musicians exhibited reluctance: “Congregational singing is a subject viewed with mixed feelings by many choirmasters, organists, and clergy, particularly in parishes where a long, sustained effort has been made to develop a fine choir in accord with high liturgical and musical standards,” reports J. Robert Carroll in 1959.<sup>56</sup> Musicians moreover certainly had their ear to the ground, were wary of attempts to intrude on what was traditionally “their turf,” and were ready to retaliate: “In those parishes which have begun congregational singing without sufficient spiritual preparation, the first blow to the pastor is usually the

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<sup>55</sup> Rev. Stanley Russell, “Shall We Abandon Choirs?” *CAT* 46 (1960) 178, 185.

<sup>56</sup> J. Robert Carroll, “Congregation and Church,” *CAT* 45 (1959) 154.

disbanding of the choir,” CAT reports in 1957.<sup>57</sup> The conclusion that all too easily presented itself to parish priest and musician was that “There would be no particular advantage, either from a practical, religious, or artistic standpoint to assign the total burden of singing to an untrained, or at best, unwieldy crowd of people.”<sup>58</sup>

Abetting the situation, lay resistance to active participation and to Gregorian chant in particular remained strong and seemingly intractable. One observer in 1957 listed the “more common objections on the part of well-meaning lay people”:

- “This congregational singing is a distraction to my devotional attendance at Mass.”
- “It doesn’t sound as good as when the choir sang the Mass.”
- “I’m not a singer – I’ll just ruin it.”<sup>59</sup>

And popular resistance to GC remained fierce. O’Connell in his *I58* commentary described the picture diplomatically: “Such modern forms of music [as Gelineau Psalmody] are helpful since Gregorian chant is difficult for an ordinary congregation without much training – often they don’t understand it or appreciate its beauty and so dislike it.”<sup>60</sup> Others were less tactful:

The fact is this: that many of our congregations are unfortunately bewildered by the music which emanates from the choirloft. Many people are actually alienated from good Church music because nothing was done to prepare them for it. . . . How often has this

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<sup>57</sup> Jean Anthony Dargis, “Let Everybody Sing!” CAT 43 (1957) 14.

<sup>58</sup> Rev. John C. Selner, SS, “The Ministry of Music,” CAT 43 (1957) 179.

<sup>59</sup> Dargis, “Let Everybody Sing!” 12.

<sup>60</sup> O’Connell, 50.



remark been heard: “Oh, the music this morning sounded like a funeral dirge – must have been some of that Gregorian Chant!”<sup>61</sup>

The result on the whole was bleak, termed a “serious problem” for Catholic worship by prominent Jesuit commentator C.J. McNaspy.<sup>62</sup> Fr. Selner had reported in 1957 that “The variable parts of the Mass . . . could never be sung by a whole congregation, and to be realistic, you still have a few fingers left over if you start to count the number of congregations in the parishes of this country which can carry even the ordinary parts of the Mass.”<sup>63</sup> By 1963 McNaspy confirmed that estimate, asserting that

In fact, only the tiniest fraction of parishes in Europe, North and Latin America, where I have made extensive inquiries, are able to perform Gregorian Chant in a way that could be judged beautiful or even tolerable. That we can point to admirable exceptions is owing to the extraordinary efforts of a few talented and courageous musicians.<sup>64</sup>

For McNaspy, as for many, the situation was now judged unworkable and could not continue: “[T]he modalities and rhythm of Gregorian Chant are so strange that most people find them bizarre and foreign, rather than really prayerful. To expect the *people* . . . to be able to use [chant] effectively – to participate in it, not simply to admire it from afar as visitors do at Solesmes and elsewhere – is utterly unrealistic.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> James M. Burns, “To Help the Congregation,” CAT 40 (1954) 56.

<sup>62</sup> “The Language of Prayer,” 98.

<sup>63</sup> “The Ministry of Music,” 179-80. Adds “Soeur Monique,” “I have suffered from Catholic singing for a long time now. If it is any good as music, they can’t sing it or they sing it with no life to it, after having drilled themselves blind on it. And they usually sing Plainchant with little peewee voices as though the great Catholic Church were a boarding school for girls.” Correspondence: “The New Hymnal,” CAT 42 (1956) 87.

<sup>64</sup> “The Language of Prayer,” 98.

<sup>65</sup> McNaspy, “The Language of Prayer,” 98. Modern visitors to Solesmes report that upon being invited to pray the offices with the monks, they are also requested *not* to join in the singing!

#### 4.2.2.1 *Excursus: The Music at High Mass*

At the great majority of High Masses, where they continued, the musical settings of the ordinary were sung by choirs and not by the people. The choral ordinaries were rarely done to Gregorian chant, nor to the Viennese classical settings which since the time of Pius X had been in decline. Rather what one had was the “correct but deadly dull” type of Cecilian composition. These were neither artfully written, nor generally well-performed. Similarly, the majority of organists were not highly trained, and reportedly made many note errors. The resulting overall situation was often termed a “climate of mediocrity.”<sup>66</sup> As for the propers, they were even more rarely done to the Gregorian settings, but normally sung to psalm tones or simply monotoned, or even recited.

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<sup>66</sup> NCWC News Service, “Bishop Says ‘No Excuse for Mediocrity’,” CAT 44 (1958) 129-30, 133.

### 4.2.3 Why?

#### 4.2.3.1 A Silent Generation

“What happened? Why did we seem so dead in 1958?”<sup>67</sup> By the late 1950s, the matter of congregational participation in general, and of Gregorian chant in particular, had become obvious enough problems so as to prompt not so much exhortation to obedience as worried re-analysis. Such analysis was found in various articles in the current literature,<sup>68</sup> as well as proceedings from musical and liturgical congresses, including several notable presentations emanating from the 1959 North American Liturgical Week, held at the University of Notre Dame (titled *Participation in the Mass* and whose focus was the 1958 *Instruction*).<sup>69</sup> Latin and Gregorian chant, even though increasingly recognized as the “elephants in the room,” were still to a large extent considered “sacrosanct” – the Roman church simply did not change things at that level. Thus the frustrating failure of active lay participation in the liturgy gave rise to analysis within other categories: historical (cultic tradition and habits of piety), cultural, psychological (a newer approach), and in terms of leadership (musical and clerical).

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<sup>67</sup> Cyr de Brant, “The ‘Secret’ of 1903,” CAT 46 (1960) 59.

<sup>68</sup> See e.g. Burns, “To Help the Congregation,” 56f.; Pohl, “Congregational Singing,” 63-70.

<sup>69</sup> Proceedings in 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*. See especially papers by sociologist Rev. Andrew Greeley (“Participation Problems in the Modern Parish,” 18-23); by psychiatrist Thomas E. Caulfield, M.D. (“A Layman Looks at Participation,” 24-30); and by the Study Group on Music in the Liturgy (105-131).

#### 4.2.3.2 Historical

As long as the liturgy was thought of within a Baroque framework – as something to be wondered at from afar, a kingly ceremonial, an awesome hierophany, with little part actively taken by the people – the more remote, hieratic, and mystifying, . . . the better.<sup>70</sup>

Fr. McNaspy thus sums up the simple historical reality of the Roman liturgy since Trent, and critics recognized that the Catholic faithful had developed ingrained habits of piety around this Baroque cultic event that were not going to give way easily. The privatistic and subjective nature of these habits was a constant target of the liturgical movement: “[M]ay we suppose that many more [people] simply feel that participation disturbs their attention at Mass? . . . I have heard more than one layman voice his resistance to participation with the comment, ‘Sunday Mass is the one place I can still go for a little peace and quiet.’”<sup>71</sup>

Andrew Greeley confirms the recalcitrance of this piety:

Even after years of the sung Mass, many members of the congregation will tell their parish priest that, while they enjoy the singing, it still seems hard to “pray” and “sing” at the same time. Even people who are deeply committed to the liturgical movement intellectually will admit in their heart of hearts that *active participation makes “prayer” more difficult*.<sup>72</sup>

Congregations which *did* manage some form of sung participation continued to feel, even after a year, that singing was a “novelty,” the more so because they were usually isolated in the practice.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> McNaspy, “The Language of Prayer,” 91.

<sup>71</sup> Caulfield, “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 25.

<sup>72</sup> Greeley, “Participation Problems in the Modern Parish,” 21. Italics added.

<sup>73</sup> Dargis, “Let Everybody Sing!” 15.

#### 4.2.3.3 Cultural

Mid-twentieth century America offered fertile ground as well in looking for suspect cultural influences. Andrew Greeley discussed three such cultural “obstacles” to the liturgy in his Notre Dame paper: “the religious individualism of our country, the competition of a vividly sensate popular culture, and the hectic pace of our style of life.”<sup>74</sup> The individualism Greeley refers to is not the habit of piety described above, but rather that modern cultural phenomenon, the “alienated human,” who finds authentic community impossible anywhere: “Such a confused and unhappy individualist simply does not have the intellectual or emotional equipment for liturgical participation.”<sup>75</sup>

Modern culture moreover is sensate to the extreme: “the liturgy must compete for the attention of eyes and ears that are jaded by a fantastic agglomeration of sense images.”

Where popular culture is sensual, the liturgy is restrained; where popular culture achieves its effect quickly, the liturgy works slowly and subtly. Where popular culture is ephemeral, direct, and standardized, the liturgy is profound, indirect, and symbolic. The two are products of totally different types of civilization.<sup>76</sup>

Theodore Marier adds that sensualism/secularism was particularly available in the musical world (this was the era of Elvis Presley): “the secular music environment in which we live in the United States is perhaps unique in the world for the sheer density of its saturation.”<sup>77</sup> Because we “get our music by listening to the radio, or to a hi-fi player, or to TV,” Fr. Guentner told the Notre Dame congress, “[t]here is much truth to the accusation

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<sup>74</sup> “Participation Problems in the Modern Parish,” 19.

<sup>75</sup> Greeley, “Participation Problems in the Modern Parish,” 21.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>77</sup> Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 107.

that is sometimes made: *we are a silent generation*.”<sup>78</sup> Greeley adds as a third problem the frenetic pace of modern life, and by the 1950s it was simply a cultural commonplace that people felt music at mass made it “take too long.”

Let the priest hurry from the epistle side to the gospel side of the altar after himself reciting the texts – of gradual and alleluia or tract, and the choir’s singing seems like an unnecessary and valueless prolongation of the service.<sup>79</sup>

#### 4.2.3.4 Psychological

One of the more interesting “analyses” of liturgical difficulty was presented at the 1959 Notre Dame Liturgical Week by psychiatrist Thomas E. Caulfield, M.D.<sup>80</sup> Caulfield spoke at a time when psychiatrists, like liturgists, were still a suspicious breed in American culture: “Of you, I hear the phrase ‘liturgical nuts’; of me, ‘It takes one to catch one.’”<sup>81</sup> His general approach is to note the various forms of resistance to liturgical change, which from a psychological point of view may mask deeper motives or anxieties:

For the psychiatrist, the real key to the solution of the problems that are brought to him is to be found in the working through of resistance. If this can be successfully done, the principal block to healing disappears. There can be no magic, no wishful thinking.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Rev. Francis J. Guentner, SJ, “The Use of Religious Music,” in 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*, 113.

<sup>79</sup> Brunner, “Singing the Propers of the Mass,” 17. Brunner continues on the Gregorian propers: “One of the chief objections to the singing of the intervenient chants, so-called [i.e., Gradual/Alleluia/Tract], is because of their length. . . . Unless and until we come to realize that the chants between the readings are, as Fr. Jungman [sic] calls them, ‘lyrical rejoicing after the word of God has reached the ears of men,’ we will continue to think of them as interminable intrusions!” (Ibid., 18).

<sup>80</sup> “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 24-30.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 29.

Noting the general Catholic resistance to active participation, he remarks that through of his own interest in the liturgical apostolate, “I was being considered by some of my friends as having experienced a rather peculiar kind of ‘conversion’ – a conversion which was considered more than a little dangerous.”

It was as if I had joined . . . a new religion. . . . And I think it was assumed that thereafter I would give up . . . the love of Catholic practice in which I had been reared. May we speculate that for some, at least, their reaction to participation is akin to “desertion” – a desertion of the “old religion” provocative of an amused dismay in our circle of friends?<sup>83</sup>

Speaking to lay resistance, Caulfield discusses (as only a “meagre [sic] sampling”) four types of personalities. Of the *compulsive*, he notes (of both priests and laity) a “devotion to immutability which is highly compulsive” and which unconsciously begins to equate “Tradition” with what is merely customary.<sup>84</sup> “For those whose total security is founded on a faulty conception of the meaning of stability, participation insofar as it means ‘change’ will constitute a disturbing threat. Their threshold of resistance will be both high and rigid . . . ‘Why did they have to go and change everything[?]’”

Caulfield’s other categories include *the bashful*, *the reticent*, and *the over-cautious*.

Similar resistances are suggested:

- for Catholics, “to speak in church is strange, is disturbing. . . . To speak is to act. To speak involves us in a kind of exposure.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Caulfield, “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 24-25.

<sup>84</sup> SC addressed this very problem in the opening article (21) of section III, The Reform of the Sacred Liturgy: “For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time . . .” Trans. CEC 90 no. 4 (Winter 1963-4) 188-220, here 194-5.

<sup>85</sup> Caulfield, “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 25-26.

- Participation makes one appear like a “Holy Joe,” “holier than thou.”
- A sense of abasedness in church, of “humility” internalized as inferiority, leading to “backwardness, shyness, keeping quiet.”
- Anxiety and skepticism at newly given permission to modify long-ingrained prohibitions.

Highlighting the role of unconscious forces, Caulfield sums up

Participation is disturbing to a well-known and well-worn pattern of piety, devotion and interior feeling of worship to which we have been accustomed for many years. Perhaps some feel that any deviation from a pattern will produce such uncomfortable and anxious self-consciousness that it cannot easily be tolerated.<sup>86</sup>

Daring for the time, Caulfield also takes a look at the psyches of priests, who, he reminds us, “are human too.” For priests, who are formed in a system of high standards and expectations, of rigid “shoulds,” there is great anxiety in changing the “system”: “Things must have been all right. We’ve been doing it this way for over two hundred years. Why change now?”<sup>87</sup> Caulfield suggests that *attachment* to security symbols can be masked as “*devotion* to the liturgy.”

This “attachment” is a strong source of security, bringing with it a great deal of comfort and a kind of peace (I could almost say complacency) that comes with the preservation of the *status quo*, where nothing needs to be re-examined, or reviewed.<sup>88</sup>

Lay participation might awaken other fears latent within the clergy, such as “the laity taking over,” or (like the laity) a fear of “exposure”: “They will see in participation (although it is

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<sup>86</sup> Caulfield, “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 26.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. Caulfield continues, “The loss of something or someone to whom we have been devoted does not appreciably alter our capacity for devotion, but the loss of something to which we have become ‘attached’ can be cataclysmic in its effect upon our total feeling of security.” (Ibid., 28.)



not really there) the threat that, after so many years of the safety that comes with silence, they now must really speak to the people, in a manner and context that will be unfamiliar and disturbing.”<sup>89</sup> Finally, Caulfield offers the challenging suggestion that attachment to the “traditional liturgy” can really be a mask for “the sentimental approach to a way of life.”

Here precisely is the difficulty. Sentimentality wears such baffling disguises – by the time it becomes conscious – so as to “deceive, if possible, even the elect.” It may appear as a strong urge to protect and defend that which is of value because it is “time-honored,” because of the place it occupies in our *own* past. I wonder if among some of our priests the abandonment of the old ways does not constitute the emotional equivalent of the rejection of a mother when she has become old . . . ?<sup>90</sup>

#### 4.2.3.5 Problems of Leadership

*Intelligent and active participation on the part of the faithful cannot be realized unless they receive adequate instruction. – 158*

*“Usually with a dull thud.” – Paul Hume*

#### Musicians.

“It is only by singing the chant according to the manner in which it was composed, in its entire beauty, that you will realize the extent to which it can be for you a magnificent means of ‘Catholic Action,’ in the strictest sense of the word.”<sup>91</sup> Dom Joseph Gajard of Solesmes (though probably referring to the Solesmes style in particular), here touched on a central problem (for both choirs and congregations) in the United States in their

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>90</sup> Caulfield, “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 29.

<sup>91</sup> Dom Joseph Gajard, *The Rhythm of Plainsong* (Liverpool: Rushworth & Dreaper Ltd., 1943) 14. Quoted in Margaret Leddy, “Orientation of Church Musicians to Chant,” 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*, 122.

encounter with Gregorian chant: its performance at the Sunday high Mass was generally inferior. That judgment is routinely found in the literature of the period, along with a common diagnosis: "Of the various categories of sacred music performed in our churches, Gregorian chant is by and large the least well done. Why? The answer is simple and obvious! Many well-meaning, conscientious, and dedicated people are trying to teach it without being adequately instructed themselves."<sup>92</sup> The lack of trained musical leadership in sufficient numbers in the American Catholic church by mid-twentieth century is frequently attested.

Those who can look back some thirty or forty years are well aware of the conditions in this country, poorly prepared teachers and few available courses of instruction that were even a week long. Naturally, progress was slow and even today one will find discouraging conditions in evaluating the place and singing of the chant on the parish level.<sup>93</sup>

Richard Schuler states baldly:

[O]ne can safely estimate, I think, that well over half of the important musical positions in this country, both parochial and institutional, are held by those who could not successfully pass the most elementary tests in theory, history or repertoire. This lack of training, culpable or not, produces the mediocrity which now binds us, and in turn it breeds a complacency and worst of all an insincerity, the result of attempts to conceal inadequacies.<sup>94</sup>

Poorly trained leadership was reflected both in the liturgical rendering of chant, as well as the effective teaching and transmission of it to the laity. Those who advocated

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<sup>92</sup> Leddy, "Orientation," 120.

<sup>93</sup> Cyr de Brant, "A Golden Jubilee," CAT 44 (1958) 102. De Brant goes on, however, to "rejoice at the progress made on the seminary level" by 1958.

<sup>94</sup> Correspondence, "Calls for 'Liberation' of Church Music," CAT 42 (1956) 222. The title and some contents of this correspondence are highly ironic in light of Schuler's post-Vatican II polemics.

chant saw the damage that would be done by its poor presentation, including both Pius X and the reigning pontiff: "Pope Pius XII gives the norm. He stated that parishioners should be educated to love the chant by its perfect rendition."<sup>95</sup> Yet many parish music programs, undoubtedly in a spirit of obedience, attempted to go forward with chant programs at the hands of those less trained, resulting in the notorious high masses so bad artistically they were lampooned as "occasions of sin":

We cannot convince others nor extract from them what we are uncertain of ourselves. Lack of a deeply rooted knowledge makes us uneasy, self-conscious, and apologetic. If I may make an observation, these are the adjectives which describe much of the singing of chant in our churches.<sup>96</sup>

"The key to the whole program," said Paul Hume, "is the choir director-organist . . . on him the music of the parish will stand or fall, usually with a dull thud."<sup>97</sup> In the writings of the period, one not infrequently senses a swipe made by professionally trained musicians at these more amateur "liturgical enthusiasts" who attempted chant:

Sometimes an organist is a charitable persons [sic] who knows modern music but has only a sketchy grasp of the Church chant and liturgy. Such a person has much to learn before he can be considered a representative choirmaster. He cannot perform his musical portion of the liturgy exactly in form and perfectly in execution. The choir is apt to render a distorted and far from pleasing chant unless the organist has a knowledge of its theory, execution, and accompaniment. The choir director cannot adequately coach untrained voices unless he is familiar with voice production. His knowledge of Latin should be adequate to interpret the musical text in an artistic manner.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> N.a., "Our Organists," CAT 45 (1959) 180.

<sup>96</sup> Leddy, "Orientation," 120.

<sup>97</sup> "Critic Scores 'Deficient Choir' as Unnecessary," CAT 41 (1955) 35.

<sup>98</sup> N.a., "Our Organists," 142.

Richard Schuler was devastating yet descriptive:

We have little or no true scholarship in our ranks; we have published practically nothing of value capable of being compared with contemporary European editions. Even church musicians holding important posts lack a knowledge of music theory, music history, and especially the great traditions and repertoire of the Church, knowledge that choirmasters possess in those countries that still demand that he be a trained professional musician and not a mere amateur, clerical or lay, who has read the papal pronouncements and thereby become an infallible interpreter of the mind of the Church and a promoter of the apostolate of church music, an unerring arbiter of what is good and bad, artistic or ugly, legal or not.<sup>99</sup>

“We have seen,” William Pohl sums up, “that congregation [sic] singing must be led by persons of musical talent and training. Without them, congregational singing will be no more successful, generally, than has been choir singing in the last fifty years.”<sup>100</sup>

Much of the difficulty, for both leaders and people in the pew, was in turn laid at the feet of Catholic education. Theodore Marier notes that

Until recently, with some exceptions, the subject of music itself – not to speak of Church music – was not admitted into the regular curriculum of our Catholic elementary schools. The study of music, and with it that of Church music, is still absent from the curriculum of the majority of Catholic high schools . . .<sup>101</sup>

Paul Hume notes the fallout on the parish level:

The real tragedy of the deficient choir is that it is so unnecessary. Our choirs should be packed with people who learned to know and sing the best of Church music at the same time they were learning multiplication tables and geography.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> “Calls for ‘Liberation’ of Church Music,” 221.

<sup>100</sup> “Congregational Singing,” 68.

<sup>101</sup> “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 107-8. Of course there were notable exceptions, see again e.g. Saint Joseph Academy, Wheeling, WV: “A Model Wedding,” CAT 42 (1956) 223.

<sup>102</sup> “Critic Scores ‘Deficient Choir’ as Unnecessary,” 35.

On higher education, Rembert Weakland, OSB, comments,

Our Catholic colleges and universities in the past were inadequate in the arts. Only in the past few years has more and more attention been given to the need for such departments, but even few schools are permitted the budget needed for exceptional departments in art, music, drama, sculpture, and so on. Few Catholics with talent, on the other hand, had the money required for study at the great secular universities and conservatories or to study abroad.<sup>103</sup>

Marier concurs, "From these facts it becomes clear that the musical leaders of tomorrow are neither being formed nor motivated by the Church for specialization in the field of Church music, and that the leakage from the Church's own reservoir of potential musical talent increases day by day . . ." <sup>104</sup>

Indicative of the dire situation, two of the seven papers presented in the Study Group on Music at the 1959 Notre Dame congress focused on the training and education of church musicians. It was noted that "Priests and laymen who are in a position to observe the church-music scene in our land tell us that there are more good church positions available today than there are competent musicians to fill them."<sup>105</sup> The noted organist Theophane Hytrek, OSF, spoke to the delegates that "Unfortunately, here in America we have many pseudo-organists, people who have had, perhaps, a piano background, but few or no lessons on the organ. What they know, they have picked up on their own initiative. The results are far from inspiring," going on to point out the "careless

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<sup>103</sup> "The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge," in Leonard, *Liturgy for the People*, 132-146, here 135-6.

<sup>104</sup> Marier, "The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School," 108.

<sup>105</sup> Hotin, "The Role of the Choir School in the Restoration of Sacred Music," 114.

playing with an inexcusable number of wrong notes.”<sup>106</sup> René Dosogne of DePaul University prodded the gathering with the provocative statement that “the primary requisite of a church musician is to be able to read the correct notes on a page.”<sup>107</sup> Dosogne, fully aware of the need of liturgical training as well, felt that such liturgical guidance for musicians could be provided by properly educated clergy, whereas “the greatest deficiency” among active musicians was in the matter of technical competence.<sup>108</sup>

### Clergy

*Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing [the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy] unless the pastors themselves, in the first place, become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it.*

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 14.

The hierarchical culture of Catholicism prior to the Second Vatican Council made for a marked reluctance to criticize publicly the clergy as pastors or as church leaders in general. Yet the impact of clergy attitudes on liturgy and parish music programs was an undeniably felt reality, eventually to be pointedly addressed as above in SC.<sup>109</sup> Yet even in the 1950s cautious critiques mounted over clergy who did either too little, or “too much, too soon.” On the one hand was the pastor who

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<sup>106</sup> Sister M. Theophane, OSF, “Repertoire and Rubrics for the Use of the Organ in Church,” in 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*, 123.

<sup>107</sup> “Theoretical and Practical Preparation for Church Organists,” *ibid.*, 127.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Article 16 of SC goes on to mandate the study of sacred liturgy as among the “compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religious houses of studies; in theological faculties it is to rank among the principal courses.”

must get large crowds of people in and out of the church building many times on a Sunday morning, and may be annoyed by endless “Amens” and “Alleluias,” while the organist may think that the pastor is reducing the papal decrees to the whims of restless Americans.<sup>110</sup>

A similar pastoral indifference to the music program was noted in the common treatment of boy choirs, who instead of the luxury of *scholae cantorum* were forced to rehearse during recess time or after school at the parochial school, rendering choir duty “simply an extracurricular activity” and “the pursuit of a systematic program of training in matters pertaining to music and liturgy . . . virtually impossible.”<sup>111</sup> To potential choir-boys, the lesson was clear: “since there is no time in school for the study of choir music, it cannot be important.”<sup>112</sup> Paul Hume urgently highlighted the role of pastors in searching out and hiring rising talent:

The conservatories and college music departments of this country are bursting at the seams with talented graduates who would love to supplement their incomes with a church position. The trick is for the pastor to find one, pay him a decent salary, give him a free hand, and back him up in any ensuing controversy.<sup>113</sup>

Marier discussed the failure of leadership on a national level to engage and patronize trained musicians:

Our music conservatories and the music departments of our nonsectarian colleges are training more young people than anywhere

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<sup>110</sup> N.a., “Our Organists,” 142.

<sup>111</sup> Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 112.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 113. Marier goes on, “By giving up recreational time to which they are entitled, the choir boys logically come to the conclusion that only they and the director think the work of preparing for the solemn liturgical observances is important, that actually the choir is extracurricular to the real work of learning and growing in the Christian life.” (Ibid, 113. Author’s note: I happen to strongly agree with this analysis.)

<sup>113</sup> “Critic Scores ‘Deficient Choir’ as Unnecessary,” 35.

in the world . . . Yet the Church in the United States seems to be deriving little from the qualitative and quantitative musical effort that is everywhere being exerted in our land. In fact, there is no observable evidence that the Church is even actively engaged in the competition for musical talent here.<sup>114</sup>

On the other hand one regularly reads accounts of intense popular resentment stirred by the “liturgically-minded” pastor (and/or musician) who attempted to “go too fast” with some aspect of the chant or lay participation effort. By the ’50s a common conclusion was that people had to be properly “prepared” to sing in church, let alone chant. “Many people are actually alienated from good Church music because nothing was done to prepare them for it,” reflected James Burns in 1954.<sup>115</sup> Jean Dargis fills out that picture:

The procedure which consists of having the choir sing the proposed congregational music for a few Sundays, and then expecting the people to pick up the music and sing spontaneously with no technical preparation whatsoever, has proved to be disastrous in many parishes and is not recommended here.<sup>116</sup>

The resultant cry was “*festine lente*,” and one can hear the resentment in Burns’ account:

Instead of “making haste slowly” these self-styled “choirmasters” have entered upon their positions with praiseworthy alacrity, but like the well known “bull in the china shop” they have managed to create nothing but havoc and confusion. . . . Instead of surveying the situation and finding out what was done previously, what can still be used, what customs and traditions are peculiar to this particular parish, they rush in “where angels fear to tread” and promptly launch their own variety of “what is meet and right and just” in the line of

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<sup>114</sup> Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 107.

<sup>115</sup> Burns, “To Help the Congregation,” 56.

<sup>116</sup> Dargis, “Let Everybody Sing!” 14.



music for the house of God. The end result – havoc, confusion, and the ultimate dissatisfaction of all concerned.<sup>117</sup>

Because of these kinds of experience, those who advocated for or were associated with the liturgical movement – whether musician or priest – became in many quarters, in Marier’s word, “suspect.”<sup>118</sup> Caulfield notes the currency of the term “liturgical nuts,” the stigmatizing of liturgists along with groups like psychiatrists as “pretty far out” types who were “considered more than a little dangerous.”<sup>119</sup>

#### 4.3 The Eclipse of Gregorian Chant

*“Wherefore a head-on collision is inevitable”*

*It looks as if this generation is about to witness, in the sphere of liturgy, a spectacle sometimes fancifully imagined in the sphere of mechanics – namely, the impact of an irresistible force upon an immovable object.*<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> “To Help the Congregation,” 57. Joseph H. O’Neill argued from the standpoint of “choice,” asserting that a “quiet mass” – “permitting a soul to meditate quietly on the august Sacrifice being enacted on the altar, if he should so desire” – should at least be an available option, in light of the “holus-bolus efforts of some clerics to vocalize the faithful.” “A Matter of Choice,” CAT 47 (1961) 177-179. While the importance of interior participation cannot be contravened, the danger of privatization within communal celebration is evident in O’Neill’s conclusion that “the silent Mass will still have its appeal for some souls. *They* feel the need of those silent moments in which to commune with *their* God.” Ibid., 179 (italics added.) It would seem that even the most “participative” masses today preserve important times of silence (particularly during the reading of scripture and the canon), and that if any style impinges on a meditative atmosphere it is the fully-flowered, carnivalesque Tridentine mass. Certainly individuals needing silent communion with “their God” can find abundant opportunities outside the communal mass. While I disagree with O’Neill’s reasoning, however, I support his view that a diversity of available liturgical styles (within limits) is not a bad thing; having made our best judgments, we can leave it to God to sort out finally how worthy they are.

<sup>118</sup> Marier, “The Schola Cantorum and the Parish School,” 104.

<sup>119</sup> “A Layman Looks at Participation,” 24.

<sup>120</sup> Clifford Howell, “But What About the Chant?” in Leonard, *Liturgy for the People*, 120-131, here 121.

It is perhaps difficult for those who did not live through the period immediately preceding the Council to grasp the sense of enormous pressures that were at work, of uncertain anticipation, of a crisis building which would have to yield in some fashion to liturgical changes. The liturgical movement had succeeded in generating enough momentum that the English Jesuit Clifford Howell termed it an “irresistible force,” localized particularly in the “drive toward intelligibility.”<sup>121</sup> As such, this force took aim at the liturgical norms of Latin and Gregorian chant, the twin historic monuments – some were saying encrusted artifacts – of the Roman rite.

For many centuries the obstacle has successfully resisted the force because this had not attained its full strength. But all the signs are that it is now building up to a point where it will be irresistible. When this happens there will inevitably be a head-on collision . . .<sup>122</sup>

Latin and its musical partner, Gregorian chant, were indeed monuments enough of the Roman rite to be yet considered “immovable objects”; it was difficult to imagine them expendable. Only a few years before, the golden anniversary of Pius X’s *motu proprio* had been celebrated, its precepts newly affirmed; and as late as 1962 John XXIII again proclaimed the preeminence of Latin in the liturgy in the encyclical *Veterum sapientiae*. No one knew in advance how the deliberations of the Council would affect the vernacular issue, and hence axiomatically the chant; and in the event the liturgical provisions of SC were experienced as a wrenching change to a great number of Catholics. But in retrospect, one sees in the literature of the period a number of “nails in the coffin” of Gregorian

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<sup>121</sup> Howell, “But What About the Chant?” 121.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

chant, nails that were being quietly set on a variety of fronts; it would take a number of them to secure the lid on so powerful a legacy.

#### 4.3.1 Parish Sunday Mass

Participation was not working. As outlined above, Gregorian chant in American parishes was not *sung* well (by the choirs)<sup>123</sup>; it was not *taught* well to the people; it was thus not *participated* in by them; and on all these counts, it was generally *disliked* by virtually everyone. This is probably the greatest cause of the eclipse of GC – it simply failed on the popular level. By 1963, Clement McNaspy would state flatly that “there are reasons for seriously questioning its suitability for ordinary parochial liturgy”; and Fr. Howell would be even more categorical:

For it is undeniable that in practice Gregorian (apart from the simplest syllabic chant) has been confined to monasteries for the past thousand years. The *Liber Usualis* is by nature and origin a monastic songbook; *for the Church at large it is an unsingable songbook and will ever remain such.* In monasteries it need not die; in parishes *it cannot live for it has never lived*, and all the efforts which enthusiasts may make, and all the decrees which they may induce higher authority to hand down *will never breathe life into it for parochial use.* Any parish wherein the *Liber* is habitually used is now, and will ever be, an astonishing exception.<sup>124</sup>

#### 4.3.2 Intelligibility

The fundamental goal of the liturgical movement was said to be *active participation*, and the primary means toward this goal came to center on *intelligibility*. Gregorian chant

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<sup>123</sup> Michael Driscoll describes it as “too heavy, squared off, and ill accompanied. Didn’t bear much resemblance to Plainchant.” (Personal note.)

<sup>124</sup> Howell, “But What About the Chant?” 123. Italics added.

stood as a monument of *un*-intelligibility, on two fronts: linguistic and musical. Chant of course was wedded to Latin, and as such suffered by association from ever-growing pressures for vernacular in the liturgy. The realization had dawned that the faithful in fact had little chance of *ever* properly understanding the liturgy in an ancient language. Figures as prominent as the archbishop of Mainz, Albert Stohr, did not shy away from publicly confronting “one of the most profound and difficult problems of sacred music”:

[The problem] arose from the gradual drifting apart of the Latin language and mother tongue through the centuries. Catholic Christendom has been suffering from this problem to an ever increasing degree since the close of the middle ages . . .

In a striking move, the value of the sacrosanct Gregorian *music* was relativized to the understood text, *even when that implied the vernacular*:

If [continued Archbishop Stohr] . . . the sacredness of Gregorian chant consists precisely in the fact that it interprets the texts and expresses them in melody, and thus as it were infuses into the ears of the listeners the inner *suavitas* (sweetness) that is proper to these texts, then it must be a great concern of the Church not only that the melodies be sung, but that the meaning of the Latin texts be understood by as many as possible of the faithful.<sup>125</sup>

It was trenchantly observed that in any event choirs did not sing Latin clearly enough so as to be understandable even as Latin! “[N]o Catholic choir that I have heard yet . . . including our own Sisters’ Schola Cantorum, ever sings so you can understand a word they say,” complains Soeur Monique of New York. (She goes on, “I tell them to listen to Dinah Shore and learn how to pronounce words.”)<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Stohr, “The Encyclical ‘On Sacred Music’ and Its Significance for the Care of Souls,” 1934.

<sup>126</sup> Correspondence: “The New Hymnal,” CAT 42 (1956) 87.

Apart from the question of Latin, the musical idiom of chant – that most sacred of cows – came under increasing suspicion as to its ability to communicate. Pius XII had stated the classic position as late as 1955 in MSD:

This chant, because of the close adaptation of the melody to the sacred text, is not only most intimately conformed to the words, but also in a way interprets their force and efficacy and brings delight to the minds of the hearers.<sup>127</sup>

But Stohr offered a gentle yet weighty shift at Assisi:

. . . [T]he mere hearing by those who don't know Latin of even the most perfectly executed Gregorian melody, can never achieve the same inner experience of participation as in the case of those who understand the words, and for whom the deeper meaning of the texts is unlocked by the nuances of melody which like so many wings lift their souls on high.<sup>128</sup>

And some like McNaspy simply held back no longer:

For one thing, the modalities and rhythm of Gregorian Chant are so strange that most people find them bizarre and foreign, rather than really prayerful. To expect the *people* (again, I am not speaking of monks or seminarians, who have a steady diet of chant) to respond and “resonate” to a style of music that was living and vital a thousand years ago, without undergoing the arduous training of musicians or seminarians, is to misunderstand the psychology of music.<sup>129</sup>

The question of the *musical* relevance of Western chant took on even more obvious and pressing repercussions in the missions field.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> MSD 15, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 48 (1956) 6, quoted in Stohr, “Care of Souls,” 190. (This argument is undercut by the fact that several chants are used over a variety of texts.)

<sup>128</sup> Stohr, “Care of Souls,” 194.

<sup>129</sup> “Language of Prayer,” 98. McNaspy probably did not live to see the surprising popular reclamation of GC in the late twentieth century; it may have made a statement about the enduring power of pure music *qua* music, over and above “psychological” or cultural questions.

<sup>130</sup> See below, *Missiology*, pp. 389 f.

Clifford Howell among others felt that the pressure for vernacular in the liturgy would soon “breach the walls of the hitherto impregnable Latin fortress,” and indeed the vernacular made considerable headway in the period just prior to Vatican II. The pontificate of Pius XII approved a “flood” of bilingual rituals in the 1940s and ’50s, including ones for France, Italy, Holland, the foreign missions (under *De Propaganda Fide*), and an English bi-ritual approved for use in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and by English-speaking congregations in India, Burma, Ceylon, and Malaya.<sup>131</sup> Of particular pastoral significance was the limited approval – “*Benignissime toleratur*” – during wartime of an “immemorial and more than a century-old custom” in the German and Austrian dioceses<sup>132</sup> of a “*missa cantata cum populi cantu in lingua vernacula*.”<sup>133</sup> Stohr notes that this so-called *Singmesse*

. . . is the most beloved and also the most frequented, not least of all by the ordinary people, and above all by the men. . . . One has to have experienced such a Mass celebration in the midst of a community, and have come under the influence of the sweeping power of such hearty, unisonous community singing, to appreciate how valuable this form of Mass celebration is *pastorally*, and why we German bishops under no circumstances want to be without it.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> See Rev. Gerald Ellard, SJ, “A Report: First International Congress on Pastoral Liturgy, Assisi, September, 1956,” *Liturgical Arts* 25 (1956-57) 19.

<sup>132</sup> Stohr also notes the practice existed behind the Iron Curtain in Catholic Poland and Slovenia: “Care of Souls,” 192.

<sup>133</sup> Stohr, “Care of Souls,” 192. This is described, p.191, as a Latin Mass in which the priest “celebrates and sings all that pertains to him in Latin, and the people likewise answer the short responses in Latin. But in place of *all the other Latin chants*, the people sing songs in their mother tongue, songs which for the most part follow closely the action of the Mass and its respective texts, and often also correspond to the Church year.” Italics added.

<sup>134</sup> Stohr, “Care of Souls,” 192.

The archbishop noted that this kind of liturgy both preserves the primacy of Latin, yet “permits in a satisfactory manner that the need of the people for [note:] *genuine* participation in the mother tongue be met.”<sup>135</sup> A request went out to the Holy See in 1953 from the Third International Study Week, at Lugano, “to permit songs in the mother tongue in the Latin *high* Mass, according to the needs of [particular] dioceses,”<sup>136</sup> and Pius XII gave a (very guarded) accession to this request in *MSD*.<sup>137</sup> More warmly and universally affirmed in *MSD* was the singing of vernacular hymns at Low masses,

a powerful aid in keeping the faithful from attending the Holy Sacrifice like dumb and idle spectators. They can help to make the faithful accompany the sacred services both mentally and vocally and to join their own piety to the prayers of the priest.<sup>138</sup>

Borrowing a phrase from his predecessor, Pius XII gives tacit acknowledgment here that the inclusion of some vernacular language may “mentally” help access the Latin liturgy. In spite of these exceptions, Pius XII did not let down the strong solicitude of the papacy toward Gregorian chant:

Furthermore, even where it is licit to use these exemptions, local Ordinaries and the other pastors should take great care that the faithful from their earliest years should learn *at least the easier and more frequently used Gregorian melodies*, and should know how to employ them in the sacred liturgical rites, so that in this way the unity and universality of the Church may shine forth more powerfully every day.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 194-5. Emphasis added.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 195. Emphasis added.

<sup>137</sup> See *MSD* 47. The liturgical words themselves were still forbidden to be spoken or sung in the vernacular.

<sup>138</sup> *MSD* 64.

<sup>139</sup> *MSD* 46. Italics added.

Yet even here we can detect the “thin wedge” of the eventual demise of chant: “at least let’s learn the easy ones.”<sup>140</sup>

The concept of the “unity and universality” of the team of Chant and Latin, seen in the above passage, was also seriously critiqued in the 1950s. The “*nota universitatis*” was typically enunciated in *MSD*:

And if in Catholic churches throughout the entire world Gregorian chant sounds forth without corruption or diminution, the chant itself, like the sacred Roman liturgy will have a characteristic of universality, so that the faithful, wherever they may be, will hear music that is familiar to them and a part of their own home. In this way they may experience, with much spiritual consolation, the wonderful unity of the Church. This is one of the most important reasons why the Church so greatly desires that the Gregorian chant traditionally associated with the Latin words of the sacred liturgy, be used.<sup>141</sup>

The argument seemed geared toward the “world traveler,” who would be comforted in hearing the familiar Latin and chant in foreign climes; but the concept was lampooned as the *argumentum ex turismo* (the “argument from tourism”).<sup>142</sup> McNaspy asked pointedly, “can anyone seriously maintain that the liturgy should be geared to the artificial conditions of travel?”<sup>143</sup> before driving home what seemed to be the far more important point: “[T]ourists expect some language problems when they go abroad. When they are at home,

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<sup>140</sup> In an attempt to keep the more accessible chants available at the parish level, *Jubilate Deo* was published after the Second Vatican Council, as was the *Graduale Simplex* from Solesmes.

<sup>141</sup> *MSD* 45, in part.

<sup>142</sup> See Paul Winninger, *Langues Vivantes et Liturgie* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1961) 66-70, and 82-85, referenced in McNaspy, “Language of Prayer,” 97 n.12.

<sup>143</sup> McNaspy, “Language of Prayer,” 97.



however, it is strange that they are asked to be foreigners in their Father's house – having to hear an archaic, unintelligible tongue.”<sup>144</sup>

The drive for intelligent participation naturally led to the search for intelligibility, and Gregorian chant was called in as a chief culprit both on its own merits (or de-merits), and for its alliance with Latin: “Why has [vernacular liturgy] not come already? All kinds of things have held it back, and one of these, beyond doubt, is the implacable opposition of those whose prime interest is the Gregorian chant,”<sup>145</sup> asserts Howell. He then adds the stunning *coup de grâce*: “Experts in Gregorian chant tell us that the admission of living languages into the Mass would sound the death knell of the chant. If they are right we cannot but grieve while making the inevitable choice of living language essential for living liturgy.”<sup>146</sup>

#### 4.3.3 Rejecting the “Art Principle” of Worship

Official Roman Catholic documents have never rejected, in fact have always asserted, the appropriate place of “beauty” in liturgy. The *Motu proprio* itself proceeds from the very “solicitude” of the Papacy for “*il decoro della casa di Dio*”<sup>147</sup>; indeed, *TLS* prefaces its discussion of the “chief duty” of music (clothing the sacred text) with the comment that

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Howell, “But What About the Chant?” 121.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 122. It should be noted that Howell in fact goes on to demonstrate that “they” are NOT right: “Is it not possible to save the chant – at least in some form – and yet have an intelligible and pastorally effective liturgy?” Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Italian translation from Vatican documents on line: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_x/motu\\_proprio](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/motu_proprio), p. 1. “*Il decoro*” is variously translated ‘beauty’ or ‘decorum,’ which can have somewhat different connotations in English.

“[sacred music] helps to increase the beauty and splendor [*il decoro e lo splendore*] of the ceremonies of the Church.”<sup>148</sup> Typical of many subsequent locutions, Pius XII gives strong affirmation to beauty in MSD:

31. The dignity and lofty purpose of sacred music consists in the fact that its lovely melodies and splendor beautify and embellish the voices of the priest who offers Mass and of the Christian people who praise the Sovereign God. Its special power and excellence should lift up to God the minds of the faithful who are present. . . .

34. . . . There can be nothing more exalted or sublime than [sacred music’s] function of accompanying with beautiful sound the voice of the priest offering up the Divine Victim, answering him joyfully with the people who are present and enhancing the whole liturgical ceremony with its noble art.<sup>149</sup>

Following TLS, Dom Ildefons Herwegen of Maria Laach had written an influential book (that went to five editions) on *The Art-Principle of the Liturgy*, wherein he extolled the “artistic elements” which Catholic liturgy had evolved over time, and which shared in the transformation of human lives through liturgy.<sup>150</sup> Among musicians, the general sense of

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<sup>148</sup> TLS I.1. Hayburn 224.

<sup>149</sup> Pope John Paul II expresses an eloquent philosophy of art beginning with the Greek notion of *kalokagathia*, “beauty-goodness”: “The power of the Good has taken refuge in the nature of the Beautiful.” (Plato, *Philebus* 65 A). John Paul stresses the social vocation of the artist who, “reaching beneath reality’s surface,” unveils beauty for the common good and alerts us to the deeper dimensions of existence. Even the knowledge and experience of faith can be “enriched by artistic intuition,” and this is the case with Gregorian chant, which, “with its inspired modulations, was to become down the centuries the music of the Church’s faith in the liturgical celebration of the sacred mysteries. The ‘beautiful’ was thus wedded to the ‘true,’ so that through art too souls might be lifted up from the world of the senses to the eternal.” “Letter of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to Artists,” *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* 1999. On this function of art in disclosing mystery (moving *from* the world of the senses), see Jean-Luc Marion, “The Blind Man of Siloe,” *Image: A Journal of Religion and the Arts* 29 (Winter 2000-2001) 59-69 and the commentary of Nathan Mitchell, “Éclairs sur L’au-delà . . .” *Worship* 79 no. 6 (November 2005) 564-6.

<sup>150</sup> Dom Ildefons Herwegen, OSB, *The Art-Principle of the Liturgy*, trans. (from fourth and fifth German editions) William Busch (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1931). The natural interest of the Liturgical Arts Society in this idea was shown regularly in such articles as Very Rev. Albert Hammenstede, OSB, “The Liturgy as Art,” *LAS* 5 no. 2 (Second Quarter 1936) 41-6. Interestingly, the great apostle of the social dimension of liturgy had a strong aesthetic appreciation: see e.g. Virgil Michel, “Liturgy and Art,”

the need for “artistry” in liturgy was manifest regularly in what Rembert Weakland called the “golden package” syndrome: our musical efforts are to offer to God “our best,” a beautifully-wrapped musical package conceived in aesthetic and technical terms.<sup>151</sup> And though musicians regularly did not live up to the principle, no music was held to be more beautiful or appropriate, none a more priceless artistic inheritance than Gregorian chant.<sup>152</sup>

But as the twentieth century progressed toward its mid-point, the idea of the *functionality* of art gained currency both within and without the Church, particularly in the visual arts and architecture. The principle that “form follows function” overturned prior notions of aesthetics; “decoration” gave way to ideals of simplicity. Much of the struggle of the church and liturgists with these issues was played out in the Catholic Liturgical Arts Society, which after twenty-five years found itself struggling to “clarify our thought on what

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*Catholic Art Quarterly* 19 no. 1 (Christmas 1955) (written in 1936, two years before his death); also Michel, “The Liturgical Chant: I. Art and the Liturgy” in *The Liturgy of the Church According to the Roman Rite* (New York: Macmillan, 1942) 316-20. Says Michel, “For the spirit of the liturgy is a supreme expression of the spirit of art. . . . The liturgy is essentially the external embodiment of an interior soul and spirit. In fact, in its sacramental mysteries it is above all else the incarnation of the truly Divine . . . By means of the external all true art brings us into contact with the unseen, with the spiritual. . . . From this standpoint the liturgy is the most precious, the richest art . . .” Ibid., 317. Pope John Paul II later echoed the idea: “Every genuine art form in its own way is a path to the inmost reality of man and of the world. It is therefore a wholly valid approach to the realm of faith, which gives human experience its ultimate meaning. That is why the Gospel fullness of truth was bound from the beginning to stir the interests of artists, who by their very nature are alert to every ‘epiphany’ of the inner beauty of things.” *Letter to Artists*, sec. 6.

<sup>151</sup> Rembert Weakland, OSB, “Music as Art in Liturgy,” *OFW* 41 no. 1 (January 1967) 5-15.

<sup>152</sup> See for an eloquent example, Basilius Ebel (Abbot of Maria-Laach), “The Basis of the Relationship between Cult and Chant,” *CEC* 88 no. 2 (Summer 1961) 58-70. Ebel poses the question, “How is [chant] to be *understood* by the western church, whose fate it is to be not a singing but a talking species? Can such a church still have a positive relation to ritual chant, when it no longer understands, or expresses itself in sacred song?” Ibid., 58. Italics added.

liturgical art really means.”<sup>153</sup> Its orientation evolved from concern over objects and their style (e.g. pulpits and fonts) to a functional one: “art at the service of the church, the Church’s official worship”:

The very term *liturgy* indicates that the spirit of the art which the Society encourages should reflect, by its very nature, not only rubrical correctness but the spirit of that official worship itself, the spirit of the Church praying. . . . It is not the idea of the liturgical arts movement to dogmatize on schools or types of art, or to be attached to any one style.<sup>154</sup>

If the spirit and meaning of liturgy were best realized and made manifest with the active participation of the faithful, then music’s chief *function* was to enable that participation. Hence the *form* of liturgical music absolutely demanded participability: it had to be “receivable.” As for chant, McNaspy clearly expressed the developing outlook: “the problem here is not whether the chant is excellent *sacred* music, but how well it fulfills its function of being ideal *liturgical* music. . . . Since the liturgy is the worship of the whole Mystical Body, *what is ideally liturgical is whatever is best adapted to the needs of God’s holy people in their public, social worship.*”<sup>155</sup> The element of “art,” one of Pius X’s three main features of sacred music, found itself severely challenged by the principle of participation, Pius’ liturgical legacy. Given the difficulties congregations had experienced with Gregorian chant, the ascendant concern with active participation increasingly pushed questions of “artiness” off the table.

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<sup>153</sup> Their noted chaplain, Rev. John LaFarge, SJ, gives a nuanced account of the evolution of their thought in “A Quarter Century Retrospect L.A.S.,” *Liturgical Arts* 25 (1956-57) 3-6.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>155</sup> McNaspy, “Language of Prayer,” 97-98. Italics added.

Francis Schmitt was characteristically keen to sound the alarm on such a shift:

There is today a considerable body which challenges the art principle of the liturgy, and it is felt in some quarters that liturgical music is at a cross-roads, if not, indeed, altogether on the block. For many, music is no longer music by definition. The official attitude of the American Liturgical Conference, for example, is this: "The liturgical movement is not 'arty', it is rather almost *brutally practical* in its view of the arts and aesthetic values." A prominent prelate . . . has recently said that the parish without a choir is fortunate indeed. In some areas, the services of competent church musicians are being dispensed with as inconsequential to the carrying out of the latest instructions. [158 in this case. ]<sup>156</sup>

Venues such as the International Congress of Church Music, held at Cologne, Germany in 1961, retorted that liturgically "functional" music need not be artless:

There is no question of "downgrading" the services with merely "functional music," but rather there is an "upgrading" since the emphasis is on the integration of the best liturgical music with the action of the altar.<sup>157</sup>

But there were voices which asserted that the *act* of singing was more important than whatever music was sung, or how it was sung; it was better to sing *anything* than not to sing at all; or as Schmitt put it, "that it is not important whether the children can sing, as long as they do."<sup>158</sup>

Adding impetus to the turn away from the "high art" of Gregorian, Papal pronouncements (notably MSD and its instruction, 158) had not only allowed but affirmed the role of popular hymnody, including vernacular song, and not only at "non-liturgical

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<sup>156</sup> Editorial: "The Problem of Church Music," CEC 88 no. 1(Spring 1961) 3. Italics added.

<sup>157</sup> Rev. James M. Burns, SS, "International Congress of Church Music - Cologne 1961," CAT 47 (1961) 156.

<sup>158</sup> "The Problem of Church Music," 3.

ceremonies” but at low masses.<sup>159</sup> Some saw simpler, accessible music as a way-station to getting congregations to *eventually* sing chant:

We must remember that our immediate aim is not that the people sing Gregorian Chant, but that they sing! . . . If there is some hope for this artistic value [in singing Chant], and some assurance that the response will be favorable, the use of chant cannot be urged too greatly. If not, however, the best means would be the immediate use of a simple unison mass in “figured” music, with some modal harmony in the accompaniment, and a chant or free rhythmic Credo.<sup>160</sup>

But Schmitt was astute in reading the writing on the wall: there were those prepared to adapt, curtail, or even abandon the “art” legacy if necessary. Howell again, for example, pays tribute to the giants of the chant revival even while relativizing their importance as only table-setters: “But for the aesthetic and archaeological zeal and the reverent piety of such men as Dom Guéranger, Dom Pothier, and Dom Mocquereau we might never have had a Dom Beauduin; and but for the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 occasioned by the plainchant movement we might not have had *Mediator Dei* of 1947 to guide the liturgical movement.”<sup>161</sup> He then delivers a troubling axiom regarding art and the liturgy:

But the aesthetic enthusiasm so valuable in early days has now been superseded by pastoral considerations; while Gregorian chant remains important it cannot be given pride of place. *A living liturgy is more vital to the welfare of souls than a beautiful liturgy; if a choice has to be made between one and the other, then surely beauty must be sacrificed.*<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> For MSD see numbers 36, 37, 47, 62-66; for I58 see numbers 30 and 33.

<sup>160</sup> Dargis, “Let Everybody Sing!” 13.

<sup>161</sup> Howell, “But What About the Chant?” 122.

<sup>162</sup> Howell, “But What About the Chant?” 122. Italics added.

In the heat of the day, such an arresting statement may have seemed justified. But given the church's traditional, even sacramental acceptance of "beauty," it seems that such a stark dichotomy between life and beauty need not be erected.

#### 4.3.4 The Acceptance of Modern Music

*"For music is a great gift of God, even when clothed in a new and perhaps unfamiliar beauty."*<sup>163</sup>

If the exhortations of Pius X toward congregational singing met a very mixed success, his characterizations of "sacred music" had quite the opposite effect: these passages of *TLS* had a powerful and chilling effect on church music composition in the United States until the 1950s. "The Church composer today," said Rembert Weakland, "inherits this idea that Church music must be technically and stylistically different from secular music, not just esthetically. This has left him very often in the camp of the ultraconservative and has forced him into a sterile and academic idiom."<sup>164</sup>

Pius X's very *definition* of "sacred music" of course began with Gregorian chant, "the supreme model of all sacred music," in which inhered, *in se*, the qualities of holiness, true art, and universality:

These qualities [*holiness, true art, and universality*] are found, in the highest degree, in Gregorian chant, which consequently is the chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant that she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded throughout the centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own . . .

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<sup>163</sup> Fidelis Smith, "Modern Music: Let's Face It!" *CEC* 84 no. 1 (February 1957) 32-44, here 44.

<sup>164</sup> Weakland, "The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge," 141.

For these reasons Gregorian chant has always been considered the supreme model of sacred music, so that the following rule may rightly be set down: *The more closely a composition for church approaches the Gregorian melody in movement, inspiration, and flavor, the more sacred and liturgical it is, and the more it departs from that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.*<sup>165</sup>

*TLS* goes on to address two other types of composition: Roman school polyphony, and “modern music.”<sup>166</sup> Roman [“classical”] polyphony is esteemed for its “excellent liturgical and musical worth” precisely because it “is quite close to the supreme model of all sacred music, namely Gregorian chant, and for that reason deserved to be received together with Gregorian chant in the most solemn functions of the Church . . .”<sup>167</sup> The following paragraph of *TLS* then gives really a quite favorable approach to modern music, “admitting to the service of worship”

everything good and beautiful that genius has been able to discover throughout the centuries . . . Consequently, modern music is also admitted in church, as it also offers compositions of such goodness, seriousness, and gravity that they are not at all unworthy of liturgical functions.<sup>168</sup>

Pius X however then added the well-known cautions about modern music having “risen principally for profane uses,” and as a result, chant and polyphony held sway as models for half a century, almost completely pushing modern music out of the picture. Alec Robertson, in his historical volume *Christian Music*, published as late as 1961, continued to characterize Gregorian chant as “on practical, aesthetic and spiritual grounds the only

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<sup>165</sup> *TLS*, II.3. McNaspy 8. Italics added.

<sup>166</sup> *TLS*, II.4,5,6.

<sup>167</sup> *TLS*, II.4. McNaspy 9.

<sup>168</sup> *TLS*, II.5. McNaspy 9.



perfect liturgical music.”<sup>169</sup> Francis Guentner, writing in the wake of Vatican II, well describes the impact of the papal directives:

[T]he lavish (and deserved) praise given to both Gregorian Chant and renaissance polyphony in the *Motu proprio*, as well as in the *Divini cultus* of Pius XI (1928), had the effect of drawing the attention of practically all good-willed and conscientious directors, composers, and publishers to these hitherto neglected styles of music. And in view of the rule laid down by St. Pius X that “the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration, and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes,” the conclusion *seemed* inevitable that the twentieth-century composer, in searching for an appropriate musical expression, could look in only one direction: backwards.<sup>170</sup>

In that backward look, composers regularly tried their hand at mimicking earlier styles, normally turning toward a “pseudo-Palestrina,” “Cecilian” type of composition, widely used and occasionally reviewed with a severe lashing:

If one watches closely the greater amount of sacred music for Catholic churches that is being published today, he realizes that the bulk of it is nothing more than a rehash of styles that were new and great in their own day, but that are now neither great nor original. Some composers show a distinct imitation of the sixteenth century idiom; others reveal the clear influence of Gounod, or Wagner, or Verdi; a great number have followed in the footsteps of Witt and the strict Cecilians. While it is true that most of these compositions are liturgically tolerable, still the question to be answered is: are we supposed to stand still and make no progress in *creative* sacred music?<sup>171</sup>

Such music was ubiquitous in Sunday worship among Catholic choirs in the pre-Council era; Guentner attributes its popularity to its accessibility for the largely unskilled choirs

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<sup>169</sup> Robertson, *Christian Music* (33), in David Greenwood, review of *Christian Music* by Alec Robertson, CEC 89 no. 1. (Spring 1962) 35.

<sup>170</sup> Rev. Francis J. Guentner, SJ, “Horizons,” *Musart* 16 (January 1964) 40.

<sup>171</sup> Guentner, in *Liturgical Arts*, Feb. 1945. Quoted in Smith, “Let’s Face It,” 43 n. 39.

which were prevalent.<sup>172</sup> He describes, however, the trap that this “accepted style” constructed, and reflects that such music was “in the long run injurious to the cause of Catholic worship”:

[The “liturgical composer”] had somehow or other to immerse himself in the spirit and theory of chant and polyphony – and then compose a music which was both old and new. Such an approach negated any possibility of creating a living music or a personal style, for the polyphonic style had passed into history centuries ago. It takes no great knowledge of the history of art to realize that this philosophy of liturgical composition can only lead to a dead end.<sup>173</sup>

Such a dead-end was indeed felt among many observers by mid-century. Writing in 1963, Weakland laments the legacy of the “chant model” era:

Unfortunately, the liturgical reforms that we are witnessing today come at an unpropitious moment in the history of music in general and of Catholic Church music in particular. They come at a time when there are so few exceptional Church composers, almost none in truth in this country. . . . What of the creative arts? If the picture drawn [by John Tracy Ellis] of the intellectual ghetto that has characterized our Catholic society in this country must be painted in somber colors, should not the canvas of the creative arts be left totally blank? . . . I feel, moreover, that music, of all arts, is in the worst state in this country, and the picture in Europe is only somewhat brighter.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Guentner, “Horizons,” 40. Guentner goes on to quote the British writer Nicholas Temperley in *The Musical Times*: “The Americans have succeeded, perhaps, better than any. Their church music, such of it as I have seen, is confidently hypocritical. It does not try to be modern, original, or even particularly musical. An American congregation usually supports its church financially, and it expects in return that the services should provide evidence of money invested. The choirmaster will therefore look for music which is easy, superficially impressive, respectable in its similarity to other church music, and in no way disturbing. An almost endless supply of such stuff is published with hardly any regard for merit. Compositions and arrangements of inconceivable banality and technical incompetence find their way into print.” Ibid., 40-41.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>174</sup> Weakland, “The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge,” 133-134.

As the twentieth century wore on, however, an increasing number of voices advocated openness to modern music, by implication challenging the paradigm of chant as sacred music. Papal directives giving overt, if limited, approval to modern music received new attention and scrutiny; yet because of the characteristically careful language of these pronouncements, disagreement arose over whether the attitude of the papacy was changing around this “hot button” issue. Francis Schmitt saw a progressive restriction on the use of modern music from Pius X to Pius XII, not without documentary evidence. The guardedly warm tone of *TLS* toward modern music, noted above, was altered in Pius XII’s *Mediator Dei* essentially from encouragement to toleration:

It cannot be said that modern music and singing should be entirely excluded from Catholic worship. For, if they are not profane nor unbecoming to the sacredness of the place and function, . . . then our churches must admit them since they can contribute in no small way to the splendor of the sacred ceremonies, can lift the mind to higher things and foster true devotion of soul.<sup>175</sup>

And MSD, following on, is cast largely in cautionary language:

21. Certainly no one will be astonished that the Church is so vigilant and careful about sacred music. . . . It is the intention of the Church . . . to protect sacred music against anything that might lessen its dignity . . .
22. Now we are aware of the fact that during recent years some artists, gravely offending against Christian piety, have dared to bring into churches works devoid of any religious inspiration and completely at variance with the right rules of art.
30. These laws and standards for religious art apply in a stricter and holier way to sacred music, because sacred music enters more intimately into divine worship than many other liberal arts, such as architecture, painting and sculpture. . . . Hence the Church must take the greatest care to prevent whatever might be unbecoming to sacred worship or anything that might

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<sup>175</sup> MD, 193.

distract the faithful in attendance from lifting their minds up to God from entering into sacred music, which is the servant, as it were, of the sacred liturgy.

46. We are not unaware that for various reasons, some quite definite exceptions [to the primary use of Gregorian chant] have been conceded by the Apostolic See. We do not want these exceptions extended or propagated more widely . . .

Finally, *I58* states the matter clearly in the negative:

50. Compositions of modern sacred music must not be used in liturgical functions unless they are composed in conformity with liturgical laws and the rules that pertain to sacred music, in accordance with the encyclical *Musicae sacrae disciplina*. . . . In this matter, judgment must be given by the Diocesan Commission for Sacred Music.

It is of course quite likely that the progressive tone of these restrictions was in reaction to an increased appearance of newer forms of music in the liturgies. Yet others sensed even in the same documents a progression of acceptance toward modern music from the Vatican during the twentieth century. *MSD*, for example, also contains the following passages:

17. The progress of this musical art clearly shows how sincerely the Church has desired to render divine worship ever more splendid and more pleasing to the Christian people. It likewise shows why the Church must insist that this art remain within its proper limits and must prevent anything profane and foreign to divine worship from entering into sacred music along with genuine progress, and perverting it.
56. . . . As Our predecessor of immortal memory, St. Pius X, says, the Church “unceasingly encourages and favors the progress of the arts, admitting for religious use all the good and the beautiful that the mind of man has discovered over the course of the centuries, but always respecting the liturgical laws.”<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Hayburn, 347, 352. No. 56 references “*Acta Pii X*, 80.”

Guentner adduces “a definite broadening of the Pope’s thought on the use of art and music” in MSD, arguing that Pius XII is asserting that

the Church opens wide the doors of its temples to artists and musicians who are oriented and motivated by faith – to the artist who “expresses and manifests the truths he holds and the piety he possesses so skillfully, beautifully, and pleasingly in colors and lines or sounds and harmonies that this sacred labor or art is an act of worship and religion for him.”<sup>177</sup>

“I am inclined to think,” says Guentner, in a rare swipe at Pius X, “that if this point of view had been thus explicitly stated at the beginning of this century, the evolution of church music would have followed entirely different lines than it actually did in the United States.”<sup>178</sup> Supporting Guentner’s contention, Pius XII showed himself more openly positive toward modern music in other less formal but still significant communiqués:

Together with classical polyphony, modern religious music merits detailed study. When such music has the necessary technical qualities and is animated by the proper spirit of the sacred place it can give the ceremonies of worship the unction and greatness which are necessary.<sup>179</sup>

In a letter to the Second International Congress on Sacred Music in Vienna, 1954, this pope reveals a startling openness to development in church music. The letter is all the more significant in that the Congress was commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of TLS:

To sketch the condition of Catholic Church music fifty years after the *motu proprio* of St. Pius X – the Congress itself bears the title “Catholic Church Music in the Spirit of the *motu proprio* at the Dawn of a New Era” – entails, on the one hand, to emphasize adherence to

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<sup>177</sup> Guentner, “Horizons,” 39.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Pius XII, “Letter to Inter-American Congress of Sacred Music, Mexico City, 1949.” Hayburn, 343.

the basic principles of Church music, which retain their force for all time, and, on the other hand, it involves giving heed to that development, which is inherent in every organism, through which it maintains its existence, and by which it seeks to increase its capacities.

The consequence must be: No change in the principles, which, as essential, have permanent force, but their further advance and development in form . . .

Propriety naturally dictates a becoming respect for traditional Church music, but nevertheless the house of God should open its portals to the new, which, following the path of the golden age of Church music, is composed by gifted artists in a true Catholic spirit, even though in the modern style and contemporary technique.<sup>180</sup>

On the “popular” level, the new sounds and harmonies in secular modern music were demonized by some Catholic writers as “chaos” and even “Communist.”<sup>181</sup> And as the newer techniques began to surface in *Church* music, no less, they were met with great alarm. The appearance of the new Psalmody of Père Gelineau occasioned a vitriolic polemic penned by no less eminent a liturgist than Ermin Vitry.<sup>182</sup> But other more cogent voices not only urged the *rapprochement* of the Church with modern musical culture, but more fundamentally challenged the very concept of an “inherently sacred” music.<sup>183</sup> Here are three representatives of this view:

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<sup>180</sup> Hayburn, 345.

<sup>181</sup> See e.g. Fidelis Smith, OFM, Correspondence: “The Chaos in Modern Music,” CAT 41 (1955) 47; and reply of Francis Guentner, “Denies ‘Chaos’,” CAT 42 (1956) 122-3.

<sup>182</sup> “Psalmody – Rejuvenation or Deterioration?” CEC 86 no. 3 (1959) 91-96. A positive view of Gelineau was voiced in J. Robert Carroll, “Congregation and Church,” CAT 45 (1959) 155.

<sup>183</sup> A parallel movement was occurring in the visual arts: “And is it even possible to use the term contemporary when speaking of sacred art? Like all art, sacred art does not exist in the abstract; there is no ‘sacred art’ distinct from art, and sacred art is always contemporary when it interprets, in a language proper to it (painting, the plastic arts, architecture), the spiritual exigencies of an era.” (Wladimir d’Ormesson, “The Contemporaneity of Sacred Art,” *Liturgical Arts* 25 [1956-57] 8.) See e.g. Thomas F. O’Meara, “Modern Art and the Sacred: The Prophetic Ministry of Alain Coutrier, O.P.” *Spirituality Today* 38 no. 1 (Spring 1986) 31-40. In his Liturgical Arts Society retrospect, John LaFarge notes: “It is not the idea of the liturgical arts

Richard Schuler:

Contrary to what some people say, musical sounds or devices in themselves are not sacred or secular any more than we can say that mathematical tables or building blocks or wax candles are sacred or secular in themselves, although they may be used for sacred purposes and in their use they do become sacred. So also with musical sound. When it is employed fittingly, to adorn the sacred texts, it is sacred music.<sup>184</sup>

[A]ctually nothing in musical devices themselves can be called secular or sacred, for it is the interpretation of the text in fitting music that makes a composition sacred, not anything inherent in the music itself.<sup>185</sup>

Rembert Weakland:

If [a composer] chooses to write in a modern style, will his music be labeled at once as secular? . . . The very concept of a *stilo antico* to designate Church music and a *stilo moderno* to designate non-Church music would have been unintelligible to a Renaissance composer such as Palestrina. But even to the Baroque composer these terms were only technical distinctions, not functional. He wrote Church music in both styles . . . There has always been a difference between religious and nonreligious music even in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The difference, however, was not one of technique and style but of spirit, text, and function.<sup>186</sup>

Fideles Smith:

To imitate the liturgical fitness of chant ought not to be an impossible task for modern composers, as it was not for Josquin, DiLasso, and Pierluigi da Palestrina. If we are to keep Palestrina as a model, let the church musician not forget that despite la musica

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movement to dogmatize on schools or types of art, or to be attached to any one style. On such matters the Holy Father himself has not dogmatized. . . . [The movement] refuses to canonize the past, merely passing down that which was once, in its own time, considered to be a daring innovation, but has now become lifeless." ("A Quarter Century Retrospect L.A.S.," 4.)

<sup>184</sup> Richard Schuler, "The 'Modern' Question In Church Music," CAT 44 (1958) 34.

<sup>185</sup> Schuler, "Liberation of Church Music," 222. See also Schuler, "The Motu Proprio and the Progress of Church Music," CAT 39 (1953) 99-101.

<sup>186</sup> "The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge," 140. It is interesting that Schuler and Weakland, later antagonists, agree on this issue prior to the Council.

comuna which he espoused, Palestrina was more contemporary to his age than scholars had thought in recent times. Imitating the spirit of Palestrina would result in emulation of his linear melodic content in contemporary manner, without recourse to sterile historicism. The pale, lifeless Palestrina rendered in many places today, ignores the actual performance method of Renaissance polyphony anyway.<sup>187</sup>

Such challenges as these would make possible a hitherto unthinkable turn away from Gregorian chant.

The “modern” question had another facet: in the “pastoral” climate of the era, the matter of music as simply *relevant* to “modern man” became a fair, posable question; the beginnings of Vatican II’s *aggiornamento* were stirring. In his allocution to the 1956 Assisi Congress, Pius XII himself reflects a striking concern over engaging contemporary culture:

The present-day liturgy interests itself also in a number of particular problems concerning, for example, the relation of the liturgy with the religious ideas of the world today, contemporary culture, social questions and depth psychology.<sup>188</sup>

In his own great document on music, *MSD*, Pius XII hints at relativizing the sacrosanct *motu proprio* of Pius X: *TLS*, he says, was “brought . . . together as the conditions of [then] modern times demanded,”<sup>189</sup> intimating that new times may call for new measures.<sup>190</sup>

Indeed while praising *TLS* and its sainted author, he explicitly hopes it may be “shown in a

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<sup>187</sup> Smith, “Let’s Face It,” 43.

<sup>188</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Allocution,” in *The Assisi Papers*, 223-236, here 236.

<sup>189</sup> *MSD* 20.

<sup>190</sup> John Paul II used similarly suggestive language in his “Chirograph for the Centenary of the *Motu Proprio*” (<http://liturgy.nd.edu/documents/chirograph112203>), indicating that “The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council did not fail to reassert these principles with a view to their application in the changed conditions of the times.” (2) Implied is that “new times” may call for “new application,” and John Paul goes on to indicate his position on current problems.



new light . . . adapted to contemporary conditions and in some way enriched . . . ”<sup>191</sup> In his great 1958 pastoral letter as Archbishop of Milan, Giovanni Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) speaks of “the liturgy as central problem of pastoral life *today*,” taking as his theme: “The truths of the faith do not have a purely speculative value; *they always have some reference to our life.*”<sup>192</sup>

To [the “workingman”], and to all, we shall have to demonstrate finally how the celebration of liturgical worship is not divorced from secular life, but sees the secular life as a sort of ladder leading to itself; and how the liturgy is then spontaneously prolonged in everyday life.<sup>193</sup>

McNaspy shows how the concern for relevancy bumped up against church music, particularly Gregorian chant. While musicians engaged in a war over chant practices, he sought to address “the center of the problem: Are the *people* disturbed?”

[S]hould we be too concerned about certain niceties that belong to one or other (doubtful) system? From a musical viewpoint, this may make some difference and be of interest. But, from a *liturgical* viewpoint, the question should not be whether it sounds to our ears like Solesmes or Beuron or other styles, but *whether the music is prayerful and helpful to God’s people.*<sup>194</sup>

By 1964, Guentner is ready to fault Pius X in print, regretting the lack of “a positive philosophy [which] might well have encouraged the development of a musical language that spoke for the twentieth-century Christian; [such a philosophy] would have suggested

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<sup>191</sup> MSD 3.

<sup>192</sup> John Baptist Cardinal Montini, “Liturgical Formation,” Pastoral letter to the archdiocese of Milan for Lent, 1958, trans. Leonard Doyle. *Worship* 33 no. 3 (February 1959) 136-164, here 136. Italics added.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>194</sup> McNaspy, “Language of Prayer,” 101. Italics (at end only) added.

that the expression of faith in our times is bound to be different than it was in the sixteenth century.”<sup>195</sup> In the spirit of that time, however unwittingly, he drove another nail into the “Chant-coffin” with such assertions as: “Like many other elements in American church life and practice, our liturgical music stands in need of a healthy updating.”<sup>196</sup>

#### 4.3.5 Missiology

*“An unmistakably Western mask”*

*You must not make the slightest effort or try in any way to persuade the people to change their rites, their customs, or their ways of life, so long as there is no clear conflict with religious or moral principles.*

Propaganda Fidei, 1659.

So the first Vicars Apostolic of Asia were instructed by the Propaganda Fidei in 1659. But in the ensuing centuries, it was evident that Christian faith had been presented in foreign mission fields, perhaps not surprisingly, in largely Western idioms. The need to amend this approach presented itself with new urgency by the mid-twentieth century, and helped undermine the notions of a “universality” in sacred music, propounded in the *motu proprio*, particularly in reference to Gregorian chant.<sup>197</sup> The Liturgical Arts Society attested

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<sup>195</sup> Guentner, “Horizons,” 39. Professor John Allyn Melloh has described the “pent-up” energy that was unleashed with SC after decades of regulatory inhibition, opening a flood-gate of experimentation in music that is only now being gradually moderated. It is telling that even so stoic a public defender of chant as Ermin Vitry could write privately in 1942, “Oh! if there would be some chance to do something new and fresh, free from all inhibitions, sincere and loving! Amen.” Letter of April 7, 1952, to Michael Mathis, CSC, from aboard the S.S. Contessa. (Archives, Hesburgh Library, University of Notre Dame, folio 19-75.)

<sup>196</sup> Guentner, “Horizons,” 4.

<sup>197</sup> In establishing the Consocietas for Sacred Music on November 22, 1963, Paul VI asserted the desire that “the Apostolic See might have at hand a kind of international institute whose resources might help solve problems necessarily proper to the field . . . that special help might be offered to those who labor in mission lands, where the problems of church music are of grave moment . . .” (“Pope Paul VI on the Consocietas for Sacred Music,” [22 November 1963] CEC 91 no. 1 [Spring 1964] 10.) The issue of

to a traditional Western bias in missionary art generally, noting that in “the not so distant past, the Church had it in mind at first to require nations newly come to Christ to confine themselves to the forms of western iconography as against their own artistic tendencies which were, perforce, expressed in a quite different idiom.”<sup>198</sup> At the International Congress on Missions and Liturgy at Nijmegen in 1959, Clifford Howell reported on the liturgical aspect of this problem:

The theme of the whole study was the fact that Christianity as hitherto presented to the peoples of the mission fields wears an unmistakably Western aspect, especially in its liturgy. How difficult the task is if the Church which preaches the Gospel and administers the sacraments appears alien to the peoples who have to be evangelized! Yet this is so in many ways, not least in the liturgy.<sup>199</sup>

The problem of missions and liturgy was for example the focus of an International Study Week at Uden, Holland, in 1959, where it was asserted that “in the present situation of the Church in the missions there are probably no more necessary nor more urgent matters than social and liturgical action.”<sup>200</sup> In his opening remarks, Cardinal Gracias of Bombay addressed the Congress on the matter of liturgy and culture:

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enculturation was encountered in SC in articles 39 and 40, where the challenge of “an even more radical adaptation of the liturgy” was presented. Article 119 dealt with the musical application of that challenge, noting that “especially [in] mission lands, people have their own musical traditions” and “due importance is to be attached to their music and a suitable place given to it . . . in adapting worship to their native genius. . . [Missionaries should] become competent in promoting the traditional music of the people, both in schools and in sacred services . . .” *The Liturgy Documents*, 17, 31.

<sup>198</sup> D’Ormesson, “The Contemporaneity of Sacred Art,” 10. This article credits Celso Cardinal Constantini, Apostolic Delegate to China, who understood “this approach . . . to have hindered the evolution of legitimate possibilities in mission lands.” *Ibid*.

<sup>199</sup> From *London Catholic Herald*, quoted in “Liturgical Briefs,” *OFW* 33 no. 10 (November 1959) 657. Howell goes on in this article to provide concrete examples of liturgical symbols which created cultural conflict, such as kissing the altar.

<sup>200</sup> Augustine Cornides, OSB, “The International Study Week on Missions and Liturgy,” *OFW* 33 no. 10 (November 1959) 645-650, here 646.

To make the liturgy what it is meant to be – community worship in spirit and truth, and a school of Christian spirit – the liturgical movement calls for a ‘living liturgy,’ a liturgy which the faithful understand, which offers them a medium in which they can express their religious sentiments and which can become for them a real religious experience.<sup>201</sup>

The conference referred to Pius XI’s concern that “the methods and aims which in the beginning guided the propagation of the Gospel and the establishing of the Church of God among the various peoples have perhaps never been sufficiently considered,” and how these early methods had displayed a “splendid elasticity.”<sup>202</sup>

In the period we are discussing, Pius XII was forthcoming on the problem of culture, faith and liturgy. As noted above, he assured the delegates at Assisi that the “interests” of contemporary liturgy included “the relation of the liturgy with the religious ideas of the world today, with contemporary culture . . . .”<sup>203</sup> Two letters of 1955 reveal his outlook:

The Catholic Church . . . does not identify herself with any one culture; but she is ready to effect an alliance with every culture.<sup>204</sup>

The Church is conscious of having received her mission and her task for all times to come and for all men, and, consequently, of not being bound to any determined culture. . . . The Catholic Church does not identify herself with any culture; her very nature forbids her to do so.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 647.

<sup>202</sup> Cornides, OSB, “The International Study Week on Missions and Liturgy,” 647.

<sup>203</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Allocution,” 236.

<sup>204</sup> Letter to Bishop Freundorfer of Augsburg.

<sup>205</sup> Address to the Tenth International Congress of Historical Sciences in Rome. Quoted in Johannes Wagner, “Liturgical Art and the Care of Souls,” *The Assisi Papers*, 57-73, here 67.

There is of course an inherent and severe tension in these assertions with the notions of holiness, artistry, and universality operative in *TLS*. Pius XII demonstrates some of these significant shifts in his own encyclicals on music. The relevant operative ideas in these documents are not always obvious, shifts are sometimes subtly made; Jan Michael Joncas has carefully sifted them in a recent volume, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*.<sup>206</sup> Joncas notes, for example, that though *MSD* “continues *TLS*’s suspicion of post-sixteenth-century musical styles as appropriate for Roman Rite worship,”<sup>207</sup> the document officially recognizes a “new” category of music at mass, “popular religious hymns.” Though restricted liturgically to the *missa lecta*, nevertheless “vernacular singing during the liturgy is here officially recognized as a possibility for the entire Roman Rite and not just by indult for particular territories.”<sup>208</sup>

In *I58* the category “popular religious hymns” is nuanced to “popular religious singing,” with subtle but important consequences. It is worth quoting the text:

9. “Popular religious singing” is that which springs spontaneously from that religious sentiment with which human beings have been endowed by the Creator himself. For this reason, it is universal and flourishes among all peoples.

Since this song is very suitable for imbuing the private and social life of the faithful with a Christian spirit, it was cultivated by the Church as far back as the most ancient times . . . , and is recommended today for arousing the piety of the faithful and for

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<sup>206</sup> Jan Michael Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997) 16-18.

<sup>207</sup> Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, 16.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

giving beauty to pious exercises. *Sometimes it can even be permitted in liturgical functions themselves.*<sup>209</sup>

Joncas astutely notes three critical elements in this short article:

- a. The shift from the term “religious *hymns*” to “religious *singing*” signals an understanding that “there are cultures which produce popular religious singing that does not fit the European model of hymnody.”<sup>210</sup>
- b. *I58* here dissociates popular religious singing from being *rooted in Chant*, an idea which had survived in *MSD*.
- c. Most importantly, a new definition of “universality” in sacred music appears here. For *TLS*, universality was proposed to subsist within a particular music, Gregorian chant; ergo, sacred music had its “*lingua franca*.” In *I58*, however, “what is universal is not a particular repertoire, but *the human instinct to express religious feeling with musical means*.”<sup>211</sup>

By the late 1950s, the very possibility of a universally-functioning “collective art” (such as Gregorian chant) was being challenged. Brother Antoninus, O.P., presents an insight on the issue:

Most of sacred art as it has come down to us, due to the historical conditions of Christianity, has been a kind of collective art. The major instances of sacred art which are commonly listed – Gregorian Chant, mosaics, cathedrals – these three examples are all collective art. They reveal the ability of a religious movement or community to consolidate itself in terms of collective performances, probably over against the secular world, in order to insure the permanency of registration of its value.

It was in modern times that that collective mold was broken at the Renaissance. Out of this new order emerged the individual ego freed from the collective. The problem became different. It is not possible

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<sup>209</sup> Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, 18. Italics added.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid. Stohr, “Care of Souls,” 192. Italics added

for us to revive at this time anything like a liturgical art of collective authenticity.<sup>212</sup>

Rembert Weakland expresses the viewpoint so fatal to Pius X's vision for Gregorian chant:

"The longing for a medieval collective art is unrealistic and could only be satisfied if we Catholics were living in an artistic and cultural vacuum."<sup>213</sup> Weakland, however, does not propose a descent into "subjective" art, but rather "an objectivity . . . [which] should be the outcome of the struggle between – or at least the confrontation of – the living redemptive act of Christ operating in the Church and within himself and the contrary forces of the society in which he is living. If it were not so, all the periods of religious art would be alike."<sup>214</sup> Emerging was a sense of *particularity*, perhaps not as *anti-universality* but as a changed, newer apprehension of a *different* universality, one which could appear in various places, at various times, in various guises:

Let us not embrace the madness of thinking that Baroque and Rococo are the final style, which will now and to the end of time govern the form and ceremonial of churches and of the Church. Let us not embrace this madness, that we may not fall victim to needless anxiety when all this will one day perhaps be destroyed. The foundation of the Church is the rock of Peter, which is neither Jewish nor Greek nor Roman nor German nor French nor Spanish nor Slav, but which supports all, and will continue to support all in future, even though it be Indian or Chinese or African: it will carry the future, and carry its style, so long as both it and its style will freely and without

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<sup>212</sup> "The Artist and Religious Life," *The American Benedictine Review* XI (1960), 234-235. Cited in Weakland, "Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge," 137-8. Formatting added. This insight represents one impulse of the liturgical movement – the desire to "connect" with the faithful via various avenues of intelligibility, all of which touch the cultural. However "the individual ego freed from the collective" stands in tension with another impulse of the liturgical movement, that of the "communal sense" of the Mystical Body of Christ being manifest in liturgy. Virgil Michel was the great apostle of this latter ideal.

<sup>213</sup> Weakland, "Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge," 138.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

deceit allow themselves to be carried by this rock. The Church is “Catholic.” Perhaps this cannot find sensible expression either in space or in time *simul*, all at one time. Well, then, let it happen from place to place, and at various times. But happen it must.<sup>215</sup>

#### 4.3.6 Immutability

It is probably true to say that, as they unfolded in practice on the local level, the ritual reforms of Vatican II caught not only lay people but liturgists by surprise. No one could have foreseen, for example, the radical shift in the way musical resources (both performers and repertory) came to change. What is particularly striking was that such deep change occurred in the face of an aura of *immutability* that had grown up around the post-Tridentine Roman Rite right up to the time of Vatican II. Francis Guentner reflects that

. . . for several centuries now – and events in Rome during the Council have made us increasingly aware of this – there has been a strong conservatism on [sic] the Church. There is no doubt that this conservatism has acted as a safeguard for the essential dogmas of our Catholic faith. But the notion of immutability gradually pervaded many other areas of church life and thought . . .<sup>216</sup>

As Fr. John Selner observed in 1961, a prime enclave and symbol of this immutability had become the liturgy: “Not very long ago, as time is computed in the Church, most people accepted the whole liturgical set-up as final and irrevocable.”<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Theodore Haecker, source not given, in Wagner, “Liturgical Art and the Care of Souls,” 68.

<sup>216</sup> Guentner, “Horizons,” 4, 39.

<sup>217</sup> “New Things in the Old Church,” CAT 47 (1961) 1. A similar “immutable objectivity” in Catholic world-view popularly held sway in catechetical and moral areas. John LaFarge of the Liturgical Arts Society, bemoaning the lack of *creativity* (“which is the sign of the presence of the spirit of God in the world”) in the inexpensive, mass-produced, yet popular religious art which adorned the greater number of Catholic churches, commented: “It is one of the curious anomalies of the present time that we as Catholics, who are so insistent upon what is objective in matters of rational conduct and ethical responsibility, should be so willing to yield to complete subjectivism in a field where the practice of our own faith is so intimately concerned.” LaFarge, “Quarter Century Retrospect,” 5.



Latin and Gregorian chant were the twin monuments of that liturgical facade, symbols of its changelessness (even if all did not go so well in practice). But during the 1950s, a number of liturgical changes took place which began to loosen the strict sense of immutability surrounding the Roman rite. Sometimes the changes were subtle, as noted above in the progression from “popular religious hymns which derive their origin from the liturgical chant itself” [MSD, 62] to “popular religious singing . . . which springs spontaneously from that religious sentiment . . .”<sup>218</sup> Sometimes the changes were overt and breathtaking for the time, such as the restoration of the Holy Week rites. But in any event, the sense that “things could change” became a possibility, all the more potent in that initiatives for change sometimes originated and always were promulgated under the aegis of the Holy See.

Regarding music for liturgy, a number of changes in legislation have been referred to already, which may be summarized:

*Musicae Sacrae Disciplina* (1955)<sup>219</sup>

- Relaxes the strictures of *TLS* toward the use of instruments in worship. Instead of providing a forbidden list, it rather encourages the use of instruments, within the usual boundaries of liturgical propriety. Notably, it singles out stringed instruments – the staple instrument of the classical Masses – as having “indescribable power” over the soul. (Art. 59)
- Seems to approve more favorably than *TLS* the legacy of developed sacred art-music (beyond the *a capella* chant and polyphony):

Art. 15: “[I]n order to increase the glory of the sacred rites . . . power and splendor were increased when the sounds of the organ and

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<sup>218</sup> MSD translation from Hayburn, 353.

<sup>219</sup> For a commentary on the significance of the changes in MSD, see Stohr, “The Encyclical ‘On Sacred Music’ and Its Significance for the Care of Souls.” (n. 32 above.)

other musical instruments were joined with the voices of the singers.”

Art. 16: “[Sacred music] gradually progressed from the simple and ingenuous Gregorian modes to great and magnificent works of art. To these works not only the human voice, but also the organ and other musical instruments, add dignity, majesty, and a prodigious richness.”

- In “a theme which, so far as I know, has never before been treated by a Pope, in the whole history of sacred music,”<sup>220</sup> MSD acknowledges “popular religious hymns which derive their origin from the liturgical chant itself,” most of which “are written in the language of the people” and “are closely related to the mentality and temperament of individual national groups.” Admits these to usage at Low Masses. (Art. 62-64).<sup>221</sup>
- Allows compositions of religious music at non-liturgical services which “had previously been completely excluded from the Church.”<sup>222</sup> (Art. 36)
- Urges the use of indigenous musics in mission lands, not to “minimize or neglect entirely this effective help.” (Art. 70)
- Relaxes the prohibition (generally ignored in practice anyway) of women or girl singers in choirs; insists on their placement outside the sanctuary, however. (Art. 74.)

The 1958 *Instruction* caused a stir and seemed novel not so much by way of new regulation, as from the sense that it gave practical implementation to and confirmed so much of the language of participation which preceded it.<sup>223</sup> In outlining the procedures for the faithful to participate at High and Low Masses, *I58* re-emphasizes participation by

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<sup>220</sup> Stohr, “The Encyclical ‘On Sacred Music’ and Its Significance for the Care of Souls,” 197.

<sup>221</sup> Stohr, Bishop of Mainz, refers to this item in MSD as “that *really new* directive which the Holy Father referred to in the beginning of his encyclical and which from the pastoral viewpoint has profound significance for the future. I refer to his concern for popular singing in the vernacular.” Ibid. Italics original.

<sup>222</sup> Hayburn, 345.

<sup>223</sup> “[I58] reduces to practice – by detailed directions – the great principle of the active participation of the people in public worship enunciated by St. Pius X some fifty-six years ago.” O’Connell, 11.

means of “prayer and song *in common*”<sup>224</sup> and by re-iterating the permission for “popular religious chants.”<sup>225</sup> Dialogue masses were still fairly new in the U.S., and *I58* distinguishes four levels of participation at such masses, with flexibility to adapt the forms. It was clear new things were afoot: “The present Instruction,” says O’Connell, “has changed the status of the dialogue Mass; it is no longer merely tolerated, it has entered the Roman rite as one of five ways in which the Holy Sacrifice may be celebrated.”<sup>226</sup>

But the changes in music legislation probably paled before the more overt alterations made by Pius XII in the liturgy generally. The more dramatic of these included:<sup>227</sup>

- Power of confirmation granted to parish priests (Decree, Sept. 14, 1946)
- Relaxation of the eucharistic fast (*Christus Dominus*, 1953)
- Allowance of post-noon Masses (*Sacram Communionem*)
- Simplification of the Rubrics (1955)
- Restored Order of Holy Week (1951/1955)
- Authorizing “a flood of bi-lingual [i.e., partial vernacular] rituals”<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> *I58* Art. 30, italics added.

<sup>225</sup> *I58* Art. 33.

<sup>226</sup> O’Connell, 52.

<sup>227</sup> Partial summaries of the liturgical advances of this period are found in O’Connell, 10-11; Rev. Bernard L. Mullahy, CSC, “Pastor Angelicus: Pius XII,” in 20<sup>th</sup> *North American Liturgical Week*, 4-6, 14-15; Cyr de Brant, “The Choirmaster and The liturgical movement,” *CAT* 43 (1957) 54-5. For Breviary reforms of John XXIII, see “Reforms of the Breviary and Missal,” *CAT* 46 (1960) 109 ff.

<sup>228</sup> Ellard, “A Report: First International Congress on Pastoral Liturgy, Assisi, September, 1956,” *Liturgical Arts* 25 (1956-7) 19. The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith itself twice urged missionary Ordinaries to make partial translations of the Ritual, and empowered them to approve the translations. See Cornides, “International Study Week on Missions and Liturgy,” 648.

No one could have predicted the almost total eclipse of Gregorian chant that occurred in the wake of the second Vatican Council. But by the 1950s a certain distant rumbling was forming, undoubtedly stoked by the many factors described above. It did not escape the notice of “the musicians,” to whom we now turn.

#### 4.4 The Musicians Respond

*“All of Catholic church music is at the crossroads.”*  
F.S. Schmitt<sup>229</sup>

In this final section, we will look at the “forces” of congregational participation and the “forces” of Gregorian chant as they clashed on the eve of Vatican II, from the point of view of “the musicians.” It should be stated at the outset that there was no univocal voice among church musicians, and one encounters a range of opinions on all matters relating to liturgical music, what the repertoire should be, who should sing it, etc. Yet in regard to the *motu proprio*, there was a substantial body of opinion – by now a “camp” – which felt it was defending the view of church music expressed in *TLS*, indeed defending a vital part of Catholic civilization itself, in an atmosphere of “barbarians being at the gates.” The “barbarians” in this case were their brothers in the faith, the so-called “liturgists” – the other “camp” – who by the late 1950s were perceived to be in open conflict with “the musicians,” not least of all in regard to the Chant.

It seems that a war is being fought in the field of church music. There seem to be two opposing sides. One camp is held by the “liturgiologists”. They are armed with storehouses of papal

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<sup>229</sup> CEC 87 no. 1 (Spring 1960) 8.

documents, psychological and sociological studies, and mass cards for lay participation in the liturgy. They stress congregational singing and the use of simple music. The other camp, the fortress of the opposition, is held by the trained church musicians. This force is armed with hard-won music degrees from our leading universities, F.A.G.O. and A.A.G.O. certificates and extensive repertoires of good church music. Good composition and fine choir work are their main interests.

. . . There is a lack of real cooperation between the two parties.<sup>230</sup>

The most public, prolific and pugnacious warrior for the musicians was the redoubtable editor of *Caecilia*, Very Rev. Francis Schmitt, director of the Boys Town choir among other activities. “Historically, it is a matter of keen regret,” noted Schmitt in 1957, “that these two apostolates seem to drift further and further apart.” He goes on naturally to fault the liturgists, branding them the “deserters”:

What has happened, it seems to us, is that the liturgists have run a long, long way, tossing aside this music and that, until they have come to a point of assigning new roles for music, and indeed have faced themselves with the necessity of inventing new music altogether. The trouble is that in their meanderings they have tossed the liturgical musician aside too, and they begin to look frightfully like children at play.<sup>231</sup>

Church musicians would lament many developments through this period, which we will survey below. But when faced with the prospect of newer, more “participable” music finding its way into the church, they gathered to fight under the banner of Gregorian chant. “For, as we have indicated often enough,” warned Schmitt, intoning the

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<sup>230</sup> Letters to the Editor, “Congregation vs. Choir?” by Rev. Robert L. Wurm. *CEC* 87 no. 4 (Winter 1960) 143.

<sup>231</sup> [Francis Schmitt], Editorial: “Liturgical Music and the Liturgical Movement,” *CEC* 84 no. 1 (February 1957) 6-7.

battle-cry, “the chant itself is on the block.”<sup>232</sup> Here is where they felt most invincible, most unimpeachably justified in resisting change. As early as 1957, understanding that a real division had developed, these musicians sought a “*modus vivendi*” with liturgists over chant:

Let it be said right off that our chief interest lies in the singing and preservation of the chant, for despite the great propaganda Gregorian chant has enjoyed, both its use and its preservation are in mortal danger. The danger comes from curious sources – those who imagine themselves to be in the advance guard of a) the liturgical movement, especially the vernacular folk, b) congregational singing enthusiasts, c) educational simplification. . . . Many of the chant’s erstwhile proclaimers have cast it out.<sup>233</sup>

Yet the defense of chant was somewhat of a convenient and recent harbor for the musicians. As indicated above in our “picture” of this period,<sup>234</sup> it had been primarily the liturgists who heeded and pressed the call of Pius X for active participation through chant, while parish musicians generally went about business as usual with very little in the way of Gregorian – Ordinary or Proper, congregation or choir. Yet when liturgists began to abandon the Gregorian project and look for simpler, more accessible music, a great hew and cry went up among musicians. Ever ready to furnish some diatribe, here is Schmitt at his pungent best:

[A]ll of Catholic church *music* is at the crossroads as never before in its history. . . . Even the minimum chants (how far a cry from Wagner’s – and Solesmes’ – hopes for the Kyriale!) suggested in the September Instruction [I58] are being overrun by rubbish the like of which would send Barclay street skipping off to a haloed and heavenly

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<sup>232</sup> Editorial: “Peter Wagner’s Abwehr,” CEC 87 no. 1 (Spring 1960) 8.

<sup>233</sup> Editorial: “The Chant: A *modus vivendi*,” CEC 84 no. 2 (May 1957) 79.

<sup>234</sup> See above in Chapter 4, pp. 329-340.

rest with Tammany and Teapot Dome. I am not prepared to say that the church musicians have fallen down. I am prepared to say that many were not church musicians in the first place, or that they were mere vendors. The music of today is proposed not by church musicians but by liturgical tinkers. And any witless cleric who equates liturgical music to bath-tub singing makes headlines in nearly all of the Catholic press. All of this in the name of gigantic encyclical directives from the Holy Father on Sacred Music. And so thousands of lay folk, nuns, and clergy of every rank follow. It is hardly safe to say where.<sup>235</sup>

#### 4.4.1 Paeans to Chant

*“Airily, we cast it aside.”*

Since the time of Pius X, articles about Gregorian chant had appeared in the Catholic musical press. They continued to do so in the 1950s, but with a new urgency, a new defensiveness in the shadow of the gathering threats on the horizon.<sup>236</sup> The greater number of these articles were paeans, extolling and exhorting the virtues of chant, which generally were given in three areas: 1) Chant as *“the Church’s own music”*; 2) Chant as *holy*, as *prayer*; 3) Chant as *high art*. Dom David Nicholson, OSB, furnishes a representative statement summing up the three aspects: “To approach the chant from any position, it must be treated as the most perfect vehicle for the official prayer texts of the Church’s Liturgy, and as one of the most supreme and perfect forms of artistry in the realm of

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<sup>235</sup> “Peter Wagner’s Abwehr,” 8-9.

<sup>236</sup> Of many examples, John Selner, SS, wrote a lead article in *CAT* in 1956 (v. 42, p. 130f.) on “Sacred Chant and the Liturgy” that ran to seven pages. Sulpicians had much influence on seminary educators in the US.

music.”<sup>237</sup> Quotes from the literature could be multiplied without end here; a sampling is given below to allow the times to speak for themselves:

#### 4.4.1.1 “The Church’s Own Music”

The ideas here included not only the sheer *historicity* of chant in the Roman church, but its legitimacy *because* it was mandated by the Holy See:

- (John Selner): The Gregorian Chant is the Church’s musical form of prayer; she makes it a part of her worship, her liturgy. . . . Nor does she use this form out of a certain timid love for tradition, or merely to exercise her maternal discipline over us, but because she is convinced that no type of music on earth can more nearly approach the requirements of her devotional life; because she knows that in itself the chant will serve not only as an adequate but a sublime expression of her prayers.<sup>238</sup>
- (Selner): Were we . . . to look upon the liturgy as the Church’s way of expressing our corporate praise and love of God, and even our corporate petitions, we would accept her directions in the matter of music, not only with greater docility, but with intense good will. We should feel, then, that in singing as the Church directs, we are giving worship to God not according to some whim or fancy . . . but according to the manner best pleasing to God because it is offered under the auspices of the Church to which He entrusted the obligation of teaching us how to pray.<sup>239</sup>
- (Ermin Vitry): Exactly what differentiates a secular and a Catholic approach to the art of music? One thing: the Chant of the Church. . . . Alone, for twenty centuries, she offers to the human heart that song which is, without fancy or detour, a song of life. That song is her Chant which, in the very words of Pius X, is her own. It grew from her life; it is not superimposed over it. Therefore, it is evident that to be immersed in the

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<sup>237</sup> Dom David Nicholson, OSB, *Singing in God’s Ear* (New York, Tournai et al: Desclee, 1959) 12.

<sup>238</sup> “Sacred Chant and the Liturgy,” 130.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.



Chant is the surest way to develop a musical consciousness which is truly and thoroughly Catholic.<sup>240</sup>

- (Francis Schmitt): I should have hoped that after all the years of jealous guardianship of the official integrity of the chant, and especially after the strictures of the 1958 Instruction<sup>241</sup> (which has become the basis for the denouement [sic] of the High Mass) that someone might have said: “This vast treasury belongs to the church. In case you do not know it, it has always been her very own. You do not tinker with it except as the church shall appoint and advise.” But nobody did.<sup>242</sup>

#### 4.4.1.2 “Chant as Holy, as Prayer, as Worship”

- (Dom Joseph Gajard): Gregorian chant, however beautiful we may judge it to be, is not merely an art. It is primarily a matter of prayer, and by it we are raised at once to the consideration of things on the supernatural plane.<sup>243</sup>
- (Eleanor Walker): Such experience as we have had in teaching the chant at Grailville leads us to believe that the baptized soul willing to open itself to the power of the chant can come to some foretaste at least of the harmony and integration promised by the Redemption.<sup>244</sup>
- (John Selner): But the purest emotion to look for in the true spirit of the Liturgy, it seems to me, is the joy of participating in the worship of God, the recognition of the adequacy of the chant to express our corporate prayers . . . the recognition of the good order of such prayer – which St. Thomas calls the chief characteristic of a good prayer; the sense of its thorough objectivity and its power to please God; the realization that when the Church’s prayers are sung to this music they are enhanced by it without recourse to dramatic

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<sup>240</sup> Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB, “A Crisis from the Beginning,” *CEC* 85 no. 2 (Spring 1958) 160-165, here 163.

<sup>241</sup> Schmitt would likely be referring to statements in the Instruction such as: “Gregorian Chant is the Roman Church’s very own sacred song, preeminently so. And for this reason not only may it be used in all liturgical services, but normally it is to be preferred to other kinds of sacred music.” (158, 16) Others of course saw the basic tone of the document as a guardedly progressive one.

<sup>242</sup> Editorial: “Vale Atque Ave,” *CEC* 91 no. 4 (Winter [1964-] 1965) 138.

<sup>243</sup> *The Rhythm of Plainsong* (Liverpool: Rushworth & Dreaper Ltd., 1943) 14. Quoted in Leddy, “Orientation of Church Musicians to Chant,” 121.

<sup>244</sup> “Music at Grailville,” *CEC* 84 no. 1 (February 1957) 53.

outbursts or subtle sentimentalities – all of which, excellent for fantasy and theatrical exhibitions, do not reach the reality in worship.<sup>245</sup>

- (Selner): [Chant's] character as music is not only in perfect accord with the prayers for which it is used, but it actually springs from those prayers . . .<sup>246</sup>
- (Francis Schmitt): "His obvious genius for the *chant as worship*, as pure music." (Eulogy to Dom Ermin Vitry)<sup>247</sup>
- (Selner): However, we should bear in mind that no type of music enters so intimately into the liturgy of the Church as the Gregorian Chant; no type of music so properly expresses the prayerful moods of the Church as that Chant; and no music fulfills the objectives of divine worship unless it gets its movement, its inspiration and its savor from the Sacred Chant of St. Gregory.<sup>248</sup>

#### 4.4.1.3 "Chant as High Art"

- (Selner): [C]hant preserves the acoustical relationship between notes which is indispensable for true melody; and therefore, because it is true melody, it is the very essence of music; . . . because it is essentially music and is perfectly adapted to its use, it becomes an idealized expression and is therefore true art. . . . [T]he chant is a highly cultured and scientifically exact form of musical expression; it has its roots in the natural laws of physics and of acoustics. . .<sup>249</sup>
- (Selner): The diatonic modes remove all chance for mere sentimentality, or flippancy, or moodiness, or for any kind of exaggerated subjectivism. It eliminates the possibility of dramatic expression because the dramatic is essentially imitative, and prayer must be genuine, direct. It even takes out of musical prayer the element of entertainment which is one of the objectives of other kinds of music.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> "Sacred Chant and the Liturgy," 165.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>247</sup> Editorial: "Father Vitry," CEC 87 no. 3 (Autumn 1960) 108. Italics added.

<sup>248</sup> "Sacred Chant and the Liturgy," 161.

<sup>249</sup> Selner, "Sacred Chant and the Liturgy," 161-2.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 162-3. The notion of chant's "objectivity" or "intellectual nature" has been effectively challenged. Beyond the obvious ecstatic nature of the *jubilus* of the proper Alleluia, Calvin Bower has termed the development of the medieval Gregorian Sequence "an ecstatic preparation for the Gospel." (Course

#### 4.4.1.4 Inward and Outward

Two other forms of homage to chant went through this period which bear mentioning: the internal musicological controversy over various elements of chant (particularly rhythm), and the passionate, outward-directed exhortations simply to *use* the chant. The musicological controversies, mainly over the rhythm of chant, represented an extremely acerbic and perennial debate within the musical community itself (Catholic and secular, clerical/monastic and lay), going back to the early fissure between Dom Mocquereau and Dom Pothier over the Vatican editions. These unresolved debates were finally gathered into a published doctoral dissertation, John Rayburn's *Gregorian Chant: A History of the Controversy Concerning Its Rhythm*.<sup>251</sup> Schmitt was astute and practiced enough to realize that these debates had little to do with how chant was actually performed in parish settings, and virtually nothing to do with getting people to sing in the first place; yet he was grateful at least for signs of life regarding chant, since "quarrels never arise from the

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notes, University of Notre Dame, 2000.) The notion of Renaissance polyphony also as detached, interior and emotionless – prevalent too in this period as a way of defending tradition – has been critiqued. Jonathan Saville speaks of "Emotional intensity, achieved by various strategies . . . [as] an essential aesthetic element here – and so is an emphasis on sensual excitement, the excitation of the senses produced by colors, textures, forms, words, images, and sounds. . . . Palestrina, Byrd, and Victoria – all of them Catholic composers of impeccable piety – knew that the sensual is the road to the spiritual. What actually goes on in their music proves it. . . . How else could singers, either in the 16th Century or the 21st, expect to convey to listeners the dazzled awe they should feel before the stupendous doctrines of the Faith?" (Jonathan Saville, "Sensuality and Symbolism: Is passion really appropriate to Catholic church music?" review of *The Sixteen: "Renaissance Masters," San Diego Reader*, n.d.) In the 1950s, Eleanor Walker of Grailville lamented, "[I]t seems to be mainly the jazz musicians and a few scattered thinkers who are actually aware of our full capacity to respond. Is it not a pity that we all know what it means for a jazz composition to "send" us, while we so rarely taste the ecstasy described by St. Augustine on hearing the psalms chanted in church?" ("Music at Grailville," 52-3.)

<sup>251</sup> John Rayburn, *Gregorian Chant: A History of the Controversy Concerning Its Rhythm*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981). Reprint of 1964 edition, copyright by author, dissertation at Columbia University, New York.

dead.”<sup>252</sup> On the grounds of preserving the Church’s right to determine its own worship, Schmitt and others generally opposed the Solesmes “archaeological” approach to chant, expressing the wish that “[t]oday we may at least learn from the lesser mistakes of the liturgical movement, and avoid the temptation to shackle the chant with an equation of tradition to any given archeological moment or antiquarian period.” This for the reason that “In the matter of the tradition the church establishes for her worship, the musicologist steps out of his field. Here the song of yesterday and today and forever comes in.”<sup>253</sup> This romanticism would in time prove less astute, however, its logic eventually turning on itself: if the Church were not shackled to any historical period, much less would it be shackled to any particular music.

When by the late-1950s the “writing on the liturgical wall” began to show signs of serious threat to Gregorian chant, musicians responded both by disparaging the idea of active participation by the faithful,<sup>254</sup> and paradoxically by exhorting the use of chant among them. This last was the somewhat irritated “Just do it” approach. “There is no question about it: our people will sing the chant if only they are given it to sing; if only

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<sup>252</sup> Francis Schmitt, “The Chant: A modus vivendi,” 79. Schmitt was further keenly intuitive about the perilous straits of chant by the 1960’s, relative to the prior luxury of debating its finer points: “If Pothier and Mocquereau had not gotten around to saying hello to each other beyond the gates ere 1965, I suspect that they are holding each other’s hand in commiseration now. And I can see Father Vitry spitting out some of the brandy he used to take to rid himself of the taste of Solesmes.” Editorial: “Exit Gregorian Chant,” CEC 91 no. 4 (Winter 1965) 136.

<sup>253</sup> Schmitt, “The Chant: A modus vivendi,” 81.

<sup>254</sup> See the next section.

they can sing it year by year and follow the Church in her cycle of worship through the years of their lives.”<sup>255</sup>

We will never know the beauty of this Vatican treasury by observing the closed black book resting in a dark corner of the choir library or on a dusty library shelf for reference. It was never meant to be preserved in these printed editions, no matter how beautiful, but in the living voice of a simple or solemn liturgy for which it was designed. In a word, it is music that is holy, beautiful, and universal. Why not use it?<sup>256</sup>

A fair amount of “scolding” went on: “Of course, no one can have a very clear understanding of the purpose of chant or its function in divine worship unless he has lived to a great extent in the liturgical life of the Church.”<sup>257</sup> Schmitt took the schools and vernacularists to task:

[O]ur schools, designed primarily for the preservation of the faith and participation in its mysteries, ought not be remiss in teaching the rudiments of the language of these mysteries, even if it finally devolves upon the religion or chant teacher to do so. It is a fair conjecture that if the time, energy, and enthusiasm spent on vernacular notions were applied in the opposite direction we might be happily on our way. . . . Whatever the case may be, sing the chant!<sup>258</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Questioning Active Participation

*The chant of St. Gregory is excellently adapted to its use; it has what St. Pius X calls goodness of form and in its own sphere it accomplishes its purpose superbly as a form of musical worship.*<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Selner, “Sacred Chant and the Liturgy,” 166.

<sup>256</sup> DeBrant, “A Golden Jubilee,” 102.

<sup>257</sup> Selner, “Sacred Chant and the Liturgy,” 166.

<sup>258</sup> Editorial: “Sing the Chant,” CEC 84 no. 3 (August 1957) 169-170.

<sup>259</sup> Selner, “Sacred Chant and the Liturgy,” 165.

*“A propaganda which is as often as not both unhistorical and monumentally impractical”*

Those musicians who raised paeans to Gregorian chant as the “perfect vehicle” for musical worship preferred to look away from its suitability for the active participation of the faithful. When they did consider the failure of this liturgical objective, usually it was the concept of active participation rather than the vehicle of GC that was faulted. What other choice was there? It was not possible to think of another kind of music coming into the church outside of the chant and the “treasury of church music”:

It would be a less evil that she should sacrifice some of her sweetness and her power, than that she should be the means of dragging adoration down to the world’s prose, or the flesh’s baseness, or the devil’s art of diversion. It would be better to silence her forever in the sanctuary than bring in over the Church’s threshold an atmosphere of unworthy passion, or mundane frivolity, or even of mere human and heathen art, unhallowed by the Blood of the redemption.<sup>260</sup>

Musicians who defended “the treasury” thus attempted to challenge the notion of AP on two historical grounds: 1) What did the history of the early liturgy actually show? and 2) In any event, how normative is the early church?

#### *4.4.2.1 What did history show?*

One of the outgrowths of TLS and the liturgical movement was an evolving belief that the Propers of the mass were the responsibility of the choir, whereas the Ordinary of the mass belonged by right to the faithful as their musical part. By the early 1960s, a further opinion was being voiced by “a number of persons” that “the people ought to sing

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid., 163.

everything possible whenever they are present at a High Mass.”<sup>261</sup> (Schmitt decried this development as “the lets-all-stand-up-and-holler period.”<sup>262</sup>) The growth of musicology and liturgical scholarship during the twentieth century led to historical investigations of this matter.<sup>263</sup> Problematically the results were somewhat vague, not unexpectedly in the study of early liturgy. Jungmann and Schuler agree that the earliest chants, now long lost, *were* congregational, but were extremely simple cantillated settings (“spoken chorally with slight intonation, at most in a dignified recitative”)<sup>264</sup> originally of psalms, hymns, responses/antiphons, and litanies, and later of the Ordinary as it developed (starting with the Sanctus in the 2nd century.) Nevertheless, Jungmann insists that along with the development of choral art music for the *scholae cantorum*, the faithful continued singing their parts, and the “Ordinary was the People’s portion.”<sup>265</sup> Ebel agreed that “Until the 8th or 9th centuries [the songs of the Ordinary of the Mass] were to a greater extent songs of the congregation, derived from the formulae of the litany and acclamations.”<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> J. Robert Carroll, “Lay Participation and Common Sense,” CAT 46 (1960) 102-4, 131; here 102. Carroll was reporting on the 1960 North American Liturgical Week at Pittsburgh, where this opinion was voiced.

<sup>262</sup> Editorials, “God Bless the Women,” CEC 84 no.3 (August 1957) 172.

<sup>263</sup> The most careful treatments I have seen from the period include: Joseph Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*; Richard Schuler, “The Congregation: Its Possibilities and Limitations in Singing”; Basilius Ebel, “The Basis of the Relationship between Cult and Chant”; Robert Carroll, “Lay Participation and Common Sense”; Rene B. Lenaerts, “Problems of the Mass in their Historical Perspective,” CEC 88 no. 4 (Winter 1961) 150-160.

<sup>264</sup> Jungmann, “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” 74.

<sup>265</sup> Jungmann, “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” 75. Schuler however holds that “History has shown that the proper and much of the ordinary, for the most part, were not sung by the congregation.” (“Congregation: Its Possibilities and Limitations,” 324).

<sup>266</sup> Ebel, “The Basis of the Relationship between Cult and Chant,” 66.

Schmitt's essential arguing point was that the Proper was the earliest sung content of the mass, while the Ordinary was introduced over centuries in various stages; and the Proper clearly was always a "choir" chant.

It was the Propers, not the Ordinary, which deserved to become known as the "Missa." So that it is a simplification, much overwrought by people who declaim about "when the people sang," to simply assign the Ordinary to the Congregation. It grew gradually, and when the different parts of it were introduced it was likely the prerogative of the assisting clergy to sing the new songs. (One thinks especially of the Gloria.)<sup>267</sup>

#### 4.4.2.2 *How Normative is History?*

In any event this argument at base sprang from defense of the art-music heritage of the Roman church; and as with congregational participation, history could be trumped by that heritage.

In this matter, it must not be history, let alone a mistaken notion of history, which must be the norm, but practicality. It is alright to talk about pastoral considerations, but what value have these considerations, say, in the large city parish of shifting population? Worship as worship, and the dignity thereof, ought to be the prime consideration.<sup>268</sup>

For these musicians the *function* of church music was other than participatory. Its purpose was to act *on* rather than emanate *from* the gathered worshippers. In that construction, to abandon the art-heritage of Roman church music was, in Schuler's words, "to fail in one's obligation to bring the congregation to devotion through music, and above all it is to fail in

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<sup>267</sup> Francis P. Schmitt, "Project 90 (II)," CEC 90 no. 3 (Autumn 1963) 107-119, here 110.

<sup>268</sup> Schmitt, "Project 90 (II)," 111. Contrast Jungmann's notion of tradition: "Concerning the people singing at Mass, we are not interested in reviving a custom simply because it once prevailed: we wish rather to reinstate something which was more clearly appreciated in early times for the very reason that it is in harmony with the timeless meaning of the Mass and its liturgy." ("Liturgy and Congregational Singing," 74).



providing through music an artistic setting for the renewal of the mysteries of the Redemption.”<sup>269</sup> In his final editorial at *Caecilia*, Schmitt betrays a stunningly bitter hint that, regardless of history and all the edicts from Rome, he simply *never believed* in congregational participation in singing the mass:

No lost tradition can be restored by fiat, however official. The better [modern English] ordinaries deserve to be sung in controlled situations, say in schools and convents, but to expect a congregation to essay endless series of intervals, when music has not been an integral part of their education, is like asking a cage full of monkeys to read the arabic [sic] alphabet, form words, sentences, periods. Such, however, is the new task which the liturgical pundits require of the choirmaster.<sup>270</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Losing Choirs, Losing the Treasury

*“So that the music of the church will be properly and reverently performed.”*<sup>271</sup>

“Active participation of the faithful” threatened the musical establishment on two major fronts: the *repertory* of music to be used in worship (the “treasury” of the church’s musical heritage) and those who “delivered the treasure,” the church *choirs*. In voluminous literature of the period, musicians mounted a fierce defense for these two institutions;

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<sup>269</sup> Richard Schuler, “Materials for the Restored Holy Week Ceremonies,” *CEC* 84 no. 1 (February 1957) 48-51, here 51.

<sup>270</sup> “Vale Atque Ave,” 139. The “recent discontinuance of the High Mass at St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville” (in 1963) was a particular blow to Schmitt. He quotes one correspondent: “You may already be aware of the fact that the Sunday conventual mass at the Abbey here is now a low Mass with a potpourri of English-Latin talking-singing ‘participation.’ As a layman, all too often caught up in the rush of secular life . . . I for one look to the great abbeys of our land to shine forth with all the splendor of the liturgy. For the bread that I and others seek, the monks of St. John now hand us a stone.” Schmitt bitterly goes on, “this switch on the part of the authorities came to us as no particular surprise, though it likely would have caught Alcuin Deutsch and Virgil Michael [sic] napping. Novelty for novelty’s sake, and a convenient disregard for the plain pronouncements of the Holy See in these matters has been in the wind for years.” Editorial: “Murder in the Abbey,” *CEC* 90 no. 3 (Autumn 1963) 104-5.

<sup>271</sup> Richard Schuler, “Regarding the Practical Realization of the Sung Liturgy,” in “Project 90 (II),” 118.

from this material, the following principles may be adduced upon which their defense was based:

1. Beauty has a legitimate place in worship, on its own merits. “Mere functionalism” (as for active participation) is an improper parameter for music and the arts in worship.
2. Toward God, the legitimate end of music is an offering of nothing less than “our best”: the “golden package” idea.
3. Toward humanity, the legitimate end of music in worship is to “act *on* people.” (In this outlook, people are more the “objects” of music than its active subject.) The *goal* of acting on people is to produce a spirit of “reverence.” The *means* of this “passive participation” is listening.<sup>272</sup>
4. In order to achieve #2 and #3, worship music must be *different* from other music. It is not a suitably divine offering in liturgy, and not able to effect reverence in people, if it is not distinct from secular music.
5. In order to achieve #1, 2 and 3, worship music must be skillfully performed. This is the indispensable role of the trained choir and cantor. Choirs exercise a legitimate ministry *to* the faithful (acting “on” them) and *on their behalf* (producing the “golden package”). [Punctuation here??]
6. In the pursuit of the above objectives, the church’s historic treasury of sacred music furnishes the sufficient and necessary resource. It carries a beauty worthy of offering to God, and capable of producing a proper reverence in humans. It represents the Church’s legitimate claim to authentic development.

On the eve of Vatican II, the Society of St. Caecilia (under the leadership of Fr. Schmitt) undertook a national referendum entitled “Project 90”. The results were published in the pages of *Caecilia* and sent in the form of a petition to the American hierarchy and the

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<sup>272</sup> The interplay of principles 2 and 3 is evoked by John Selner: “No one should forget the fundamental principle that public worship is a partial fulfillment of our duty to give praise, adoration, love, thanksgiving, and atonement to God; that we go to church to give, not primarily to get. But men have to be put into the mood for this. Hence, while church decoration, the solemnity of services, well-ordered ceremonial, good church music, are directed to the glory of God, they may also react very favorably on the people’s dispositions, both emotional and intellectual.” (“The Ministry of Music,” CAT 43 [1957] 178.) These two principles of course are simply elucidations of the traditional “bi-partite purpose” given to worship music, “the glorification of God and the sanctification and edification of humanity.”

Fathers of the Council. Project 90 well summed up the principles expressed above, giving as its purpose “*that the ideals of a reverential and artistic musical worship may be realized.*” Its first article on “Regarding the place of music in the liturgy” read:

In view of the fact that the church has always regarded the function of the cantor and the trained choir, as well as that of the singing congregation, as an integral and necessary element of public worship, this Society is sincerely hopeful that the Fathers of the Council, before making any changes which might affect the structure of the services, will give earnest consideration to the importance of these traditional elements.<sup>273</sup>

And “Regarding the Ordinary of the Mass”:

It therefore also pleads that the great treasures of medieval chant and classical polyphony, as well as the riches of modern and contemporary music, not be discarded on the untraditional plea that there is not place for participation by listening.<sup>274</sup>

Active participation was perceived by musicians as a threat not only to choirs and the treasury of church music, but to entrusting the underlying ideal of beauty (requiring *skill* and *competence*) to the unwashed laity. “Since the beginning of the liturgical revival a century ago, musicians have deplored the deterioration of the musical values of liturgical worship when these values are given over to the untrained, loosely organized gatherings of the faithful.”<sup>275</sup> Voices even hinted that *all* liturgical singing belonged to the gathered people: “some have gone all out and the choir or schola is likely to be a memory.”<sup>276</sup>

It is no secret that many over-zealous “liturgists” are supplanting the choir by the unison singing of the congregation. Musically this is

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<sup>273</sup> Editorial: “Articles,” CEC 90 no. 2 (Summer 1963) 43.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>275</sup> J. Robert Carroll, “Congregation and Church,” CAT 45 (1959) 154.

<sup>276</sup> De Brant, “The ‘Secret’ of 1903,” 59.

quite unsatisfactory, and liturgically it is destructive of the tripartite balance between celebrant, choir (schola) and people.<sup>277</sup>

John Selner replied in a way showing that such a frightening development was simply unimaginable:

Referring again to our present preoccupation of getting the people in the pews to take their share of public worship, it would not be out of place to remember that however far off the day of general participation in the singing may be, it is hardly feasible or consonant with church law to eliminate the choir. There would be no particular advantage, either from a practical, religious, or artistic standpoint to assign the total burden of singing to an untrained, or at best, unwieldy crowd of people. The variable parts of the Mass, for example, could never be sung by a whole congregation. . . .<sup>278</sup>

As Vatican II drew nearer, however, it became evident that even such structural elements as the traditional Proper were under review, toward the end of a participating congregation.

“Regarding the Propers of the Sung Mass,” Project 90 petitioned

If any changes are to be made in the structure of the Proper of the Mass, this Society respectfully urges that the Fathers of the Council give careful thought to the fundamental structure of the service, and therefore to the meaning and value of each part, clearly preserving the roles of the cantor and trained choir. This Society also begs that art and beauty, which are inherent and not foreign to the casting of the Proper parts, not be sacrificed to the single issue of simplicity and brevity.<sup>279</sup>

Well expressing a summation of all the above fears, a 1959 report of the Liturgical Committee of the NCMEA (in response to *I58*) read in part:

III. While recent directives of the Church strongly encourage the active, vocal participation of the faithful, it is necessary to insist on the

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<sup>277</sup> Francis A. Brunner, CSsR, Review: “More Masses on Gregorian Themes for Choir and Active Congregation,” CEC 88 no. 3 (Autumn 1961) 129.

<sup>278</sup> Selner, “The Ministry of Music,” 179.

<sup>279</sup> Project 90 “Articles,” 43.

importance of the choir not only for the success of congregational singing itself, but also for preserving the musical heritage of the Church. Every effort, therefore, must be made: (a) to maintain and perfect the calibre of choral music in the liturgy; (b) to resist any suggestion that the choir is to be replaced by the congregation; (c) to encourage in our schools the formation and training of boy choirs for liturgical services; (d) to encourage the singing of the traditional Gregorian Propers whenever possible; (e) to promote among our school and parish choirs the use of sacred polyphony and the best contemporary compositions.<sup>280</sup>

#### 4.4.4 Rebuttal and Balance

In fairness to musicians, it must be said that church music journals also ran the liturgists' "side of the story," as well as attempts at balanced compromises over the issues of participation. In a *Catholic Choirmaster* article proposing such a compromise, J. Robert Carroll does not hesitate to take musicians to task for past attitudes. First, the often painful incompetence of most parish choirs hardly argues against giving some singing to the congregation. "Is the heyday of the polished liturgical choir, an ideal not yet even attained in some areas, to be as brief as it has been elusive?"<sup>281</sup> In fact due to choirs, another liturgist noted, "[i]n our own time the sung mass has virtually disappeared from Catholic parochial life because it has ceased to be a true expression of worship for most Catholics and has degenerated into artistic formalism."<sup>282</sup> Moreover, musicians had long ignored standing official directives toward congregational singing, in favor of building their own musical "empires" and sense of personal accomplishment based on their choirs:

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<sup>280</sup> Editorial: "Don't Bash the Choirs," CEC 86 no. 3 (Autumn 1959) 90.

<sup>281</sup> "Congregation and Church," 154.

<sup>282</sup> Rev. Stanley Russell, "Shall We Abandon Choirs?" CAT 46 (1960) 178, 185.

One cannot help but feel . . . that much of the moaning and groaning is coming from somewhat strange sources. A number of the musicians who have, in our experience, done the most complaining are also those who, in spite of perfectly clear legislation on the subject, have built their musical houses on the sand of the mixed choir. . . . Yet it is this same personal satisfaction with the choir's doing the lion's share of the music in the parish which has elicited the weeping and gnashing of teeth over the growing movement in favor of congregational singing.<sup>283</sup>

Nothing less than "an examination of some long-cherished notions about sacred music" was in order, Rev. Stanley Russell insisted, alerting musicians to the fundamental notion of sacred music as "*the sung prayer of the Christian community.*"<sup>284</sup> "[T]here remains the temptation to forget it is *sung prayer*. The church musician will fall into this pitfall if he thinks of liturgical music as musical entertainment. In the Church's worship, music does not exist for its own sake, nor should it attract attention to itself."<sup>285</sup>

The liturgical movement may further challenge the church musician to adjust his concept of sacred music if he does not think of it as the sung prayer of the Christian community. The greatest danger here is that the organist or director, singer or composer will transpose, consciously or not, the image of the concert hall or theater to the parish church. He may tend to view the choir and congregation in terms of an active orchestra entertaining a passive audience. But in the liturgical celebration, *all* are actors; all are members of Christ the Priest offering praise in song and gift to the Father.<sup>286</sup>

Various articles sought a way of moving forward toward a balanced solution, some quite sensitive proposals attempting to allay the anger of musicians that choirs were simply being "bashed," fears they were on the "chopping block." On historical grounds, Robert

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<sup>283</sup> Carroll, "Congregation and Church," 154.

<sup>284</sup> Russell, "Shall We Abandon Choirs?" 178. Italics added.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid. Italics original.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

Carroll suggested giving over only *part* of the Ordinary to the people (the Sanctus-Benedictus, Credo and Gloria), asserting that “[a]t no time in her past history . . . has the church experienced generally the congregational performance of the complete ordinary as we now have it.”<sup>287</sup> He goes on to note that this “does not mean that [the complete ordinary] should not be done,” but warns against “the danger of carrying this principle to extremes.”<sup>288</sup> Echoing an oft-voiced concern among musicians (one increasingly discounted by liturgists), Carroll re-asserts the aesthetic principle, giving as his yardstick “the quality of the performance and the enthusiasm of the people”:

Let us hope that we shall not create, through irrational haste in achieving the letter of the law, a tradition of half-hearted, half-rehearsed congregational participation, spread to every detail allowed the people, but lacking that vigor and inner life which can come only through deep-rooted, intelligent training and unhurried, careful cultivation.<sup>289</sup>

To the question of “Do you think that you can keep your ‘old faithful’ choir members happy on a diet of chant propers and motets?” Carroll answers in the affirmative, suggesting polyphonic propers for festal occasions, and the newly-produced “people’s” masses which still furnished a choral part.<sup>290</sup> Schmitt takes a similarly cautious tack in Project 90 (including some forward-looking instincts regarding structure), “earnestly recommending”

that the congregation be encouraged to share in the singing at Mass, not necessarily according to the medieval and mistaken norm of the

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<sup>287</sup> J. Robert Carroll, “Lay Participation and Common Sense,” 104.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> See “Congregation and Church,” 154-5, 174.

Ordinary as a unit, but with due regard for the place the various chants have in the fundamental structure of the service.<sup>291</sup>

Seemingly prescient of post-Vatican II developments, Schmitt urges a musical Low Mass “as the norm for congregational service . . . a simplified form of sung Mass that requires only the service of a trained cantor to supplement the singing of the congregation.”<sup>292</sup> His purpose here, however, was to preserve the traditional prerogatives of the choir at High Mass.

Joseph Jungmann, in a very irenic passage from *Pastoral Liturgy*, proposed a context for attempting to find a balance between congregation and choir.

The liturgical movement has fittingly been called a renaissance which the Church has experienced in our own day, a rebirth in which a formerly attained happy condition has been brought back. . . . But no true renaissance can ignore the years that lie between; it must always try to understand the value of the immediate tradition, and to bring into harmony with the re-discovered values of the ancient model.”<sup>293</sup>

Taking in the impulses of both liturgists and musicians, Jungmann outlines the complexities of the matter:

The liturgy is the public worship of the Church. Therefore it is and remains an ideal that the whole Church, the congregation here assembled, present its praise to God as a living organism. But the liturgy is the Church’s service to God; it is God, infinite, eternal and almighty, who is to be given honour. In all ages and amongst all peoples it has always been accepted as obvious that for the glorification of God only the best is good enough, that to show homage to Him the very highest of which man is capable must be offered. Thus religion and its cult has always been that central point

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<sup>291</sup> Project 90 “Articles,” 44.

<sup>292</sup> “Project 90 (I),” CEC 90 no. 3 (Autumn 1963) 106.

<sup>293</sup> Quoted in “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” 75-76.



around which the arts have gathered: architecture, plastic and pictorial arts, and music.<sup>294</sup>

“Congregational singing must be admitted,” continues Jungmann, “because the liturgy is the *Church’s* worship; but the potentialities of the Church’s musical art must also be admitted because the liturgy is *God’s* service. The question now is how to achieve the right balance.”<sup>295</sup> Jungmann’s words were published in *Caecilia* in 1964, under the editorship of Francis Schmitt.

#### 4.4.5 Attempting to Meet the Challenge

[I]f some people are today in favor of doing away with the chant as if it were anti-liturgical, they are wrong. It is arguable, however, whether this style, this particular technique, ought to be replaced by a different one more easily accessible to the listener. For one of the lessons that the history of cultic singing in the church has taught us is that no achievement of whatever perfection can claim absolute prevalence. It can be a standard, a type, a model; but in its individual character it has to give way to others, once its time is over.<sup>296</sup>

Not all musicians met the currents of liturgical change in the 1950s with a reactionary posture. Many attempted to meet the “newer” impulses of active participation in a spirit of cooperation, sensing the unmistakable movement of the larger Church. Undoubtedly a good number of parish musicians made unheralded but sincere attempts at getting congregations to become vocal at mass. Many of these attempts were reflected in a

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>295</sup> Jungmann, “Liturgy and Congregational Singing,” 78. The author goes on to suggest several practical solutions for Sunday and Festal Masses.

<sup>296</sup> Ebel, “Basis of the Relationship Between Chant and Cult,” 66.

genre of “how to” articles appearing in the literature.<sup>297</sup> Other musician/composers sought to provide new musical settings for liturgical use, in order to meet the ever-growing pressure to get the people to sing. For even though the liturgical movement, with the ascendancy of active participation, had threatened the “status quo” of musical tradition (choirs and repertoire), it nevertheless endorsed the place of music itself in liturgy as the primary mode of participation. Given this weighty new “responsibility” for liturgical music, either the tradition had to be made to work, or new musical expressions had to be created, for the purpose of getting congregations to sing. The liturgical movement had thus identified a major *lacuna*, and created – however unintentionally – a new, extensive and open challenge for church musician/composers:

While the liturgical movement is thus restoring sacred music to a position of prominence in the parochial life of the Church, it is also creating new challenges for the contemporary church musician. It invites him to fill the need for worthy hymns and good musical settings of the psalms for popular use.<sup>298</sup>

#### 4.4.5.1 Plainsong Adaptations

Recognizing that traditional Gregorian chant was proving overly difficult for most congregations, a number of adaptations were put forward, in the spirit of enabling participation while yet preserving the heritage. The June, 1961 International Congress for Church Music at Cologne showcased six different forms of High Mass in which congregations were able to participate in varying degrees with the choir; these included traditional Gregorian ordinaries shared in various ways, and a modern Ordinary “*cum*

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<sup>297</sup> See the next section.

<sup>298</sup> Russell, “Shall We Abandon Choirs?” 177-8.

*populo activo.*"<sup>299</sup> While this Congress sought "the cultivation of the highly melodic cantus gregorianus, timeless monument to the supranational character of Universality and fount of our musical culture," it nevertheless turned attention to "the many tongued songs of the nations . . . the multiplicity of forms and phases of musical development in every land, but especially in Catholic missions . . ." <sup>300</sup>

An earlier International Congress for Church Music, that at Vienna in 1954, had petitioned the Sacred Congregation for Rites for a second *Kyriale*, to contain the simpler items of the Ordinary, in order that "the repertoire of authentic chants usable for congregational singing, hitherto very small, [may] be enlarged."<sup>301</sup> For a long time, the propers of the mass had been published in various editions, set psalm-style to the eight Gregorian tones; considerably easing the difficulty of the traditional melismatic settings, these were widely used. Both of the above developments were decried by Schmitt as "add[ing] to the plethora of spoon-fed education."<sup>302</sup>

A number of masses were written by composers who did not wish to abandon traditional Gregorian settings, yet still make it possible for people to share in singing the Ordinary *alternatim* with the choir. These took various forms and were of uneven quality; most were catalogued in two reviews by Francis Brunner in *Caecilia*.<sup>303</sup> In a similar vein,

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<sup>299</sup> See "IV International Congress for Church Music," CEC 87 no. 3 (Autumn 1960) 120-122; also CAT 47 (1961) 155-7. The Proper of these masses always was reserved for the *schola*.

<sup>300</sup> "IV International Congress for Church Music," 122.

<sup>301</sup> Ebel, "Basis of the Relationship Between Chant and Cult," 67.

<sup>302</sup> Editorial: "The Chant: A *modus vivendi*," 79.

<sup>303</sup> See CEC 86 no. 4 (Winter 1959) 181-185; "More Masses on Gregorian Themes for Choir and Active Congregation," CEC 88 no. 3 (Autumn 1961) 129-131.

Rev. Carlo Rossini in 1961 offered “A Gregorian Mass ‘arranged’ for the participation of the congregation,” in which “the people’s part [was] properly [sic!] *simplified and ‘homogenized’* to the extent that it can be easily memorized . . .”<sup>304</sup> This kind of “bowdlerization” of chant appears not well-conceived on the face of it, and apparently found little success.

#### 4.4.5.2 Gelineau

One of the developments that, from the amount of heated press it generated, caused a great stir in the 1950s was the setting of Psalmody by the French Jesuit Joseph Gelineau. A supportive review gives one side of the picture:

Choirmasters have reason to rejoice in the creation of new music by composers aware of the changing circumstances of the choir in the growing lay participation program. Perhaps the most successful such music, and the best known at this time is the collection of the Gelineau psalms, translated from the Hebrew Psalter and set to music according to the Hebrew principles of versification. These simple, modal-style settings have gained a great following in Europe, and in the last few years have taken a foothold in the United States.<sup>305</sup>

O’Connell cites the Gelineau Psalms in his commentary on *I58* as “a special responsorial chant,” one form of *cantus* now allowed in the vernacular at low mass. “Such modern forms of music are helpful since Gregorian chant is difficult for an ordinary congregation without much training – often they don’t understand it or appreciate its beauty and so dislike it.”<sup>306</sup> Expanding on this participative purpose, Dom Gregory Murray further

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<sup>304</sup> “A Singing Congregation,” CAT 47 (1961) 113.

<sup>305</sup> Carroll, “Congregation and Church,” 155.

<sup>306</sup> O’Connell, 50.

promoted the Gelineau in the pages of *Jubilee*, stating that “The purpose of the Gelineau psalms is emphatically not a musical one.”<sup>307</sup>

The church-music world went apoplectic. Gelineau’s most distinguished detractor, Dom Ermin Vitry, weighed in with a full six-page diatribe in the pages of *Caecilia*.<sup>308</sup> Vitry expressed the fear that “a publication at best destined to serve as a relaxation in the field of religious sentiment, now tends to obliterate . . . the traditional form of Christian psalmody” and would do nothing less than “an irreparable harm to liturgical worship.”<sup>309</sup> *Caecilia* carried much subsequent correspondence over the issue, one writer asserting

There is no use in encouraging the congregation to sing if this involves watering down the liturgy to this extent, that the music no longer suggests the marvelous and unique religion which it accompanies. The Gelineau Psalms are redolent of a Jackson Heights Church in the worst sense, they kill wonder and interior illumination. Musically they say nothing. . . . [The music] kills wonder with the first few notes and is tonewise like dried dung.<sup>310</sup>

Schmitt too attributed an emblematic role to the Gelineau Psalms, asserting that “their proper place is *not* understood” in an almost conspiratorial displacement of chant, and that the whole thing had “a sad scent of materialism about it.”<sup>311</sup> The fact that Gelineau utilized the vernacular even prompted an insightful, sensitive (and long-overdue) article

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<sup>307</sup> *Jubilee*, June 1959. Quoted in Ethel Thurston, Letter to the Editor, CEC 87 no. 1 (Spring 1960) 3-4. In a letter in the same issue of CEC, Murray states positively “The purpose of the Gelineau Psalms is simply this: to bring the best of all hymns within the reach of the laity in a form which they can understand (i.e. in their own tongue) and sing.” (Ibid., 3.)

<sup>308</sup> “Psalmody – Rejuvenation or Deterioration?” CEC 86 no. 3 (1959) 91-96.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>310</sup> Thurston, Letter to the Editor, 3-4.

<sup>311</sup> “Peter Wagner’s Abwehr,” 8-9.

which finally dared to assert the feasibility of English with Gregorian chant (in another attempt at heading off its supercession.)<sup>312</sup> Murray's slyly provocative comment about the "non-musical purpose" of these psalms produced a predictably non-comprehending and bitter response from much of the musical community, sadly showing a lack of touch with developments in liturgical thought to the time.

#### 4.4.5.3 "People's" Masses

So difficult is the task that some composers, faced with the problem of composing a Mass suitable for congregation and choir, have simply abandoned both the chant and part-writing in favor of a unison choir-*cum-populo* Mass, in which the congregational part is not from the traditional chant ordinary but a newly composed part . . .<sup>313</sup>

In the wake of *I58*, a great number of worship aids were published seeking to help establish the various "levels of participation" so clearly outlined in that document. Prominent among these was a variety of congregational singing materials, especially "People's Masses." One which found particular success, often mentioned glowingly in the literature, was Dom Gregory Murray's *A People's Mass*. A number of these masses are surveyed in the pages of *Caecilia* by Rev. Richard Schuler (with a fair amount of jaundice).<sup>314</sup> Joseph Roff, one of

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<sup>312</sup> See John F. Mahoney, "The Gelineau and Gregorian Psalmody," *CEC* 87 no. 2 (Summer 1960) 79-85. The present writer's personal background in the Anglican church, where plainsong was regularly used to English texts, often has caused puzzlement at assertions that such a marriage would not "work." Mahoney's article properly challenges the accentual theory of Latin on which its "unique" weddedness to chant is asserted.

<sup>313</sup> Brunner, "More Masses on Gregorian Themes for Choir and Active Congregation," 128. Brunner lists several of these mass settings.

<sup>314</sup> Of John Selner's *The Parish Mass*, Schuler says "For lack of beauty, inspiration or musical art few printed compositions can equal this." ("Congregational Singing Materials," *CEC* 87 no. 2 [Summer 1960] 90-93, here 90.) Murray's mass, says Schuler, "is able to produce a tedium equal to the other in a short time." *Ibid.*, 91.

the composers raked over in the review (“similar in tediousness . . . some parallel fifths and octaves”), later responded:

Fr. Schuler laments in bitter terms the rash of recent publications of congregational singing materials. A particular target for his vicious attack are the so-called People’s Masses. He speaks of the monotony of the melodies and the tedium that these are bound to produce. I wonder whether he fully realizes what a People’s Mass is meant to be.<sup>315</sup>

Roff, referring to “the noble work of restoring greater congregational participation,” goes on to say that “The fact that these Masses sell very well is not necessarily proof of the quality of their music, I admit, but it is an indication at least that they are liked.”<sup>316</sup> Roff’s instinct was confirmed by Rev. Eugene A. Walsh, the esteemed and long-time director of music at the Baltimore Cathedral. Writing an account in *Catholic Choirmaster* of his success with congregational singing at the Cathedral, Walsh notes “Some prefer, and some insist that we must use Gregorian Chant, and only Gregorian Chant for congregational singing. The theory is good, but it just doesn’t work out so well in practice. The people do not respond as readily to plainchant as they do to a non-chant Mass. I don’t know for sure what the reason is; I only know the fact.”<sup>317</sup> Speaking of his success with the congregation, Walsh relates

The secret lies in using the right music, and the right music is the most simple music. At the Cathedral and elsewhere we use for a beginning “A People’s Mass” by Dom Gregory Murray. This is a very simple non-chant Mass. You just cannot fail with this Mass! As one man said in writing about his experience of attending our Mass at the

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<sup>315</sup> Letter to the Editor, CEC 87 no. 3 (Autumn 1960) 107.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> “The Parish Sings,” CAT 41 (1955) 101-2.

Cathedral, "I could not have kept quiet unless I had a vow of silence.  
So I joined in."<sup>318</sup>

These unison Latin masses formed a bridge to the early spate of englished unison masses (many by the same composers, e.g., Roff, Peloquin) that were used in the first wake of Vatican II.<sup>319</sup>

#### 4.4.6 The *Motu Proprio* and the Modern Composer

Though its influence was not always evident, *Tra le sollecitudini* continued to exert a strong and felt presence in the church music community right up to the Council.

Whatever the developments in liturgical thought, the principles of *TLS* were *ipso facto* understood to be valid for all time even if it were not clear how they should be applied.

Preeminent influence had been exerted by the passage of *TLS* that read:

"The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration, and spirit the Gregorian melody, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more it is at variance with the supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple."

Rembert Weakland addressed an important essay to contemporary church music composers in this period, sensing that "From among the recent trends one could single out

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<sup>318</sup> Walsh, "The Parish Sings," 101.

<sup>319</sup> Schmitt was at his lethal "best" in the last issue of *Caecilia* "as such," lampooning these early attempts at singable masses, Latin or English: "Our musicians, judging from the plethora of new Peoples' Masses 'in English', 'dedicated to Pope John XXIII', 'for the People of God' (and the copyright owners), 'for Unity', 'To Saint Apoplexus', 'In Honor of Vatican II', and God knows what, have finally given the lie to their own ineptitude which must have always been there, and which now, exposed, is more glaring than ever." (Editorial "Vale Atque Ave," *CEC* 91 no. 4 [Winter 1965] 139. Punctuation *sic*.) And: "I do know that every other priest, nun, organist, and choirmaster in the country has a vernacular High Mass ready for the big changeover. That most of them are apt to be laughable attempts does not alter matters. If they can do them, they will. Their contribution. And we will be in for the longest siege of un-commercial triviality since the Great Schism." (Editorial: "En Route," *CEC* 91 no. 3 [Fall 1964] 89.) In a less belligerent manner, Rembert Weakland too acknowledged the difficulty of writing for the new liturgy. See next section.



the repeated emphasis on lay participation as the most exacting of the new demands.”<sup>320</sup>

Weakland raised the challenge of “looking for a basic idiom for lay participation” while yet honoring the legitimacy of *TLS*. He faulted most twentieth-century liturgical music as seeking to observe the spirit of the *motu proprio* either through the thematic use of chant melodies (“encrusting them in a Romantic, or, more frequently, an Impressionistic, frame”)<sup>321</sup> or through the use of modal harmonies and faux-sixteenth century imitative counterpoint.

Composers have too long readily assumed that by using as a basis for their compositions a Gregorian theme they will make their music liturgical. Such an assumption is far from true. . . . Much of the insipid music that is heard in our churches today is considered appropriate simply because it is based on Gregorian themes, but it is far removed from the inspiration and spirit of Chant. . . . [B]ecause a piece is based on a chant theme it does not of necessity thereby participate in the inspiration and spirit of the Chant and become liturgically appropriate. I would say, however, that most of the contemporary pieces based on Chant themes tend to be academic and artificial. It takes a genius to avoid such sterility.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> “The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge,” 132-146.

<sup>321</sup> “The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge,” 142. Maurice Duruflé and the French school of choral and organ composition especially come to mind here.

<sup>322</sup> “The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge,” 142-3. Influenced by the plainsong restoration in his time, French organist-composer Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) sought “to turn away from the subjective spirit with ‘a special kind of music, the music of the eternal, awakening thoughts of immortality’” by utilizing plainsong themes in his *Symphonie gothique* (opus 75, 1895, based on the Christmas Day introit “*Puer natus est*”) and *Symphonie romane* (opus 73, 1899, utilizing the “*Haec dies*” of the Easter gradual as well as *Victimae paschali laudes*). This was a change of conception for Widor, seeking to write less “for his instrument” as such, than “for the church”: “I can no longer think of any organ art as holy which is not consecrated to the church through its themes, whether it be from the chorale [acknowledging the Bach-Lutheran tradition] or from the Gregorian chant.” (John R. Near, ed., *Charles-Marie Widor: The Symphonies for Organ. Symphonie gothique*. Recent researches in the music of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, vol. 19. [Madison, WI: A-R Editions, 1996] Introduction, vii-viii.) Widor thereby intuited the principle of the future *motu proprio* that concerns Weakland above: “The more closely a composition for church approaches the Gregorian melody in movement, inspiration, and flavor, the more sacred and liturgical it is.” (*TLS*, II.3. McNaspy) Unlike the compositions which Weakland laments, however, Widor’s work was in the realm of genius, as was the work of Duruflé.

Insisting that the modern composer “must be of the twentieth century,” since “[i]f he loses touch with contemporary existence, he condemns himself to artistic futility and barrenness,”<sup>323</sup> Weakland sought to distinguish between the *technique* and the “*esthetic*” [sic] of chant. He insisted that the judgment of Pius X about chant “be considered as nothing but the extraordinary insight of an enlightened and divinely guided pontiff,” but that it referred to an *esthetic* rather than a *technique*. All too briefly, Weakland hints at that esthetic as “the Chant’s simplicity and balance.”<sup>324</sup> Weakland understood the complexity of the task which the liturgical movement had thus laid down for the composer: music for worship had to be contemporary, participable and artistic, and therefore the “answer to the stylistic problems . . . cannot be stated in oversimplified terms.”

[The composer] cannot be told merely to write music that the people will understand, to write in a style they are accustomed to, and to disregard more advanced techniques. Most of the new *populo* Masses written with such a criterion in mind will soon be obnoxious to the people themselves and, we can be certain, will be unknown to the next generation of Catholics.<sup>325</sup>

It is a challenge that is with us still.

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<sup>323</sup> “The Church Composer and the Liturgical Challenge,” 141.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid., 144.

## POSTSCRIPT

### “Ce délicat problème”<sup>1</sup>

Of the two critical aims of *Tra le sollecitudini* – active participation of the people, and the singing of Gregorian chant – one saw its apotheosis and the other its demise in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, a liturgical watershed unparalleled in the history of the Roman Catholic Church (both for those who supported its aims, and those who did not). The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy paid due homage to the “pride of place” of Gregorian chant, to the “treasury of inestimable value” represented by the musical tradition, as well as to that generative idea of Pius X, so potent in the twentieth century, that “the true Christian spirit is found in the active participation of the faithful in the Liturgy.” Because this latter impulse “carried the day,” the reforms of the Council occasioned a musical upheaval in the American church similarly without historical parallel. Released suddenly into the open pastures of a once-forbidden vernacular, Catholic church music found itself urgently in need of a new musical clothing, and turned whole-heartedly (and under the ready influence of a handful of publishers) to highly-derivative secular musical idioms which not only had been formerly forbidden, but would have been unimaginable in the Church only a few years earlier. Such a turn to secular influences,

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<sup>1</sup> Yves Jolly, “Vie Liturgique et Musique d’Église,” *Études* vol. 317 (April 1963) 18-36, here 18.

while motivated in large part on behalf of congregational participation, nevertheless occasioned the demise of Gregorian chant (especially as dreamed by Pius X) in the church's worship, and flew in the face of centuries of official strictures, not the least of which are found in *Tra le sollecitudini*. This new "enculturated" musical idiom has by now become the *lingua franca* of worship music in the American Catholic church, and an identifying feature of the post-Vatican II era. It has in turn exercised a surprising influence and been adopted (both in style and in actual repertoire) to a great extent in American Protestantism.

*Ce délicat problème*, however – the delicate problem of church music – is that it retains in Yves Jolly's analysis a *double function*: it must serve *both* as the language of Revelation of the Church, addressed to the believer; and in the other direction, it is an act of believers by which community is established. Both of these acts have corporate natures; the personal, private effect of music ("*comme un stimulant interieur*") is far too limited a criterion to employ.<sup>2</sup> If we grant the power of absolute music to speak, then we *must* ask what language is being spoken – particularly whether music speaks the language of Revelation within the cultic act. Albert Gerhards makes the point that inasmuch as Gregorian chant largely sets biblical texts, it stands as a hermeneutic, completely within the church's tradition of text-interpretation; and thereby chant (as other music) carries *meaning*. Moreover, the meaning is disclosed *beyond* the level of text alone, taking place within the

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<sup>2</sup> "La musique sacrée, en effet, ne doit point être considérée simplement comme un stimulant intérieur, une motion personnelle, une extase de l'âme; dans la liturgie chrétienne, sa mission est double. D'une part, la musique sacrée est un élément du langage de Révélation que l'Église, dans son culte, adresse au chrétien; d'autre part, elle est une action par laquelle le croyant, en communion avec ses frères, accepte la Parole de Dieu, et un acte qui permet la réalisation même de la communauté des croyants." Jolly, "Vie Liturgique," 19.

complex of text, musical setting, and rite. The question then becomes the *adequacy* of music chosen for the intended disclosure; and Gerhards suggests that the *way* in which chant presents the texts of faith should be investigated as a measuring-rod for any style of church-music.<sup>3</sup> An Abbot of Maria-Laach spoke along the same lines:

The church has restored the chant, not to save any valuable manifestation of culture from oblivion, but because in the chant something of that spirit which taught the church to sing charismatically has been handed down. Chant can still inspire it to sing new melodies . . .<sup>4</sup>

Dom Ermin Vitry wrote in 1958 that, as regards Gregorian Chant, “We are now, after fifty years of futile squabbles, at the crossroads of our musical venture. It will be restoration or disaster. May God grant that the Chant shall not die a second death; for, from the latter, it would never revive.”<sup>5</sup> Dom Vitry’s fear was largely borne out in the US in the years after Vatican II: if chant had been on life-support for some time, the plug was abruptly pulled after the council. “Pride of place” was granted of course in SC, but with qualification – “other things being equal,” *caeteris paribus* – a phrase, says Chadwick, “with a somewhat oracular effect, which reads like a courteous genuflection towards Pius X before preparing to abandon him.”<sup>6</sup> Yet neither Vitry nor anyone could have foreseen the somewhat puzzling re-emergence of Gregorian chant on the *secular, popular* level some years later. It is a fact that secular “concerts” which feature early music and chant are robustly

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<sup>3</sup> Albert Gerhards, “Liturgiewissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf den gregorianischen Choral,” *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* 85 (2001) 17-30.

<sup>4</sup> Ebel, “The Basis of the Relationship between Cult and Chant,” 70.

<sup>5</sup> Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB, “A Crisis from the Beginning,” 165.

<sup>6</sup> Chadwick, “Why Music in Church?” 212.

well attended (the audience doing just that – “attending,” devotedly listening, and at the end, madly applauding). This was a new and unexpected “reception,” intimation of a second resurrection from the second death. Yet it remains a sad fact also that when such music is available in services of worship, the public response is considerably more limited; and it is difficult to rejoice at the popular reception of chant outside its role in worship. It is wearying too that, within the Church, music is largely “politicized,” such that many reject the use of Gregorian chant out of suspicion that it represents an agenda to return to the “old days”; just as sadly, some do profane its use for that purpose.

What is clear is that, for all the ecclesial gains that have been made by congregational singing – gains as significant as they are necessary – and for whatever other positive reasons it may have been eclipsed, the loss of Gregorian still stands on its own as pure loss, as immeasurable loss. Yet after fifty years, only a short time in the life of the Church, we are still in the early wake of Vatican II, and church music remains unsettled and emergent – a highly controversial matter to this day, *Snowbird Statements* parrying *Milwaukee Statements*. May God grant that Dom Vitry’s dire prediction not finally prove true, but that the inspired liturgical vision of St. Pius X, and the embrace it represented toward the *entire* tradition – *both* for Chant and Active Participation – find a welcome place and abundant future life in the divine liturgy of the church.

APPENDIX A

“ORDNUNG IN DEM SINGAMT ZU HALTEN”

*Katholisch Manual oder Handbuch,  
Darinne begriffen seyndt:  
Die Evangelia mit den Episteln . . .  
Cantuale oder Psalmbüchlein,  
Teudtscher und Lateinischer meistentheils alter Gesäng . . .  
Klein Catechismus D. Petri Canisii.*

Hildesheim, 1625

1. Wenn das Amt gesungen wird, sollen Introitus, Kyrie, Gloria, Collekten und Episteln, darnach das Alleluia lateinisch gesungen werden.
2. Vor das Gradual oder Tractum auch vor dem Sequenz auch bisweilen vor das Alleluja, wann keine hohen Feste sein, mögen die Kirchner ein teutsches Gesang aus diesem Büchlein nehmen, wie es die Zeit oder das Fest mitdringen, jedoch müssen diese Gesang nicht allzu lang sein.
3. Wann aber große, hohe Feste sein, wird das Alleluja billig gesungen, wie auch der Sequenz, unter welchem doch auch etliche kurze bekannte gewöhnliche teutsche Vers mögen mitgesungen werdern, als  
in den heil. Weihnachten: Grates nunc omnes, und Gelobet seist du Jesu Christ;  
in den heil Ostern: Christ ist erstanden, und Victimae paschali;  
in den heil Pfingsten: Nun bitten wir den usw [i.e. heiligen Geist] unter dem Sequenz Veni Sancte Spiritus allzeit nach zwei lateinischen Versen;
4. Das Evangelium soll gesungen werden, die Christen sollen nichts darunter singen.
5. Nach dem Evangelio, wenn der Priester will predigen, soll er erst das Credo lateinisch anfangen; darauf kann der Kirchner anfangen den kathol. Glauben aus dem Catechismo, und wenn der Glaube ausgesungen, hebt man die Predigt an. Nach vollender

Predigt singt der Kirchner das Vater unser und Ave Maria, unter des verfügt der Pastor wieder zu dem Altar, singt oder spricht das Dominus vobiscum und lieset das Offertorium; darunter oder vor daselbig mag das Volk aber ein teutsch Gesang singen bis zur Prefation.

6. Prefation und Sanctus sollen gesungen und nie ausgelassen werden.
7. Vom Sanctus bis zur Elevation ist mit teutschen Gesängen still zu halten . . .
8. Nach der Elevation soll allzeit ein teutsch Gesang vom heil. Sakrament gesungen werden . . .
9. Wann Große Fest sein, soll das Pater noster und Agnus Dei gsungen werden . . .
10. Wann viele Kommunikanten seien, werden etliche Vers aus dem “Ave vivens hostia” teutsch und lateinisch gesungen, bis zur Postcommunio.
11. Postcommunio, Ite missa est oder Benedicamus sammt Deo gratias sollen allezeit gesungen werden.
12. Nach dem Deo gratias mag man das Amt beschließen mit einem kurzem Gesang von dem fürfallenden Fest, oder von unser lieben Frauen, oder von dem Patron des Orts.

“Diese Ordnung soll gehalten werden zu dem Singamt.”

Source: Adolph Cardinal Bertam, *Geschichte des Bistums Hildesheim*, vol. 2, p. 353 ff., in Paul Graff, *Geschichte der Auflösung der alten gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939) vol. 1, p. 269. Courtesy of Professor Mary E. Frandsen.



## APPENDIX B

### "VEXILLA REGIS"

*Hymns of the Church*  
 Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB  
 O'Fallon, MO: Copyright by Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB, 1943.

UPON THEE LIFE DID DEATH ENDURE

Forth came the ban — ner of the King;  
 Ve — xil — la Re — gis pró — de — unt

Hail, Cross, thou mys — ter — y a — dored!  
 Ful — get Cru — cis mys — té — ri — um

Up — on Thee Life did death en — dure  
 Qua — vi — ta mor — tem pér — tu — lit

And yet by death did life pro — cure.  
 Et mor — te vi — tam pró — tu — lit.

Most royally enpurpled o'er,  
 How beautifully thy stem doth shine.  
 How glorious was its lot to touch  
 Those limbs so holy and divine.

Arbor decóra et fúlgida,  
 Ornáta Regis púrpura,  
 Elécta digno stípíte  
 Tam sancta membra tángere.

Thrice blest, upon whose arms outstretched  
 The Savior of the world reclined;  
 Balance sublime! upon whose beam  
 Was weighed the ransom of mankind.

Beáta, cujus bráchiis  
 Prétium pepéndit saéculi:  
 Statéra facta córporis,  
 Tulítque praedam tártari.

Hail, Cross, thou only hope of man,  
 Hail on this holy Passion day!  
 To saints increase the grace they have;  
 From sinners purge their guilt away.

O Crux ave, spes única,  
 Hoc Passiónis témpore:  
 Píis adáuge grátiam,  
 Reísque dele crímina.

## APPENDIX C

### LESSONS FROM THE FIELD: MONKIS IN MINNESOTA

Lucien Duesing, OSB

- The people were not interested in “spearheading” any great movement of reform for their part of the country, etc. Nor were they motivated by the thought being models of obedience to the wishes of the Pope or the Pastor. Authoritarian admonitions from the Pastor (“sing and do what the Pope wants you to do, or get out of church”) “did not improve the situation. In fact, we noticed a decided retrogression after each sermon of this type.”<sup>1</sup>
- People responded better to the idea that “the privilege and duty of participation is theirs,” that their functions at the altar had been taken away “through the machinations of the devil.”
- Even before practicing the simple sung responses (*Amen* and *Et cum Spiritu tuo*) a better preparation would have been to practice the various body postures during Mass – an “elementary phase of corporate participation.”
- The monks’ entire work suffered from lack of regular human contact with the congregation. They were seen as two “ictus pushers,” divorced from the community, “attempting to perform weekly hypodermic injections of liturgical formulae and modal melodies.”<sup>2</sup>
- To facilitate teaching, parishioners were divided into three focus groups: the school-age children; teen-agers and the young unmarried; and the adults. Contact had to be arranged:
  - a. Contact with school children was easy by their regular presence.

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<sup>1</sup> II: 92.

<sup>2</sup> II: 71.

- b. A young-peoples club was formed (similar to C.Y.O.) which held weekly meetings and “astonishingly regular attendance.”
- c. Thursday, and then Saturday evening sessions in church, arranged for rehearsing the adults, showed rapidly diminishing attendance, and forced another approach.
- Parish *Kyriales* from St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville, were purchased: while handy, the inclusion of a number of masses meant the probability that some were always looking at the wrong one. Recommended: a Mass book containing only one mass, with English translation below the Latin text (as used at the St. Louis Liturgical Week).
  - Latin hymns were “enthusiastically seized upon” by the children, who led the congregation in their singing at the dialogue mass.
  - The men’s choir for several years offered the “easy” Rossini Propers (on Psalm tones), but were slowly able to incorporate single movements from the *Liber Usualis* (“hard”).
  - Very few, if any, men’s voices in the *congregation* were ever heard.
  - Mass XVIII of the *Kyriale* (*in Feriis Adventus et Quadragesimae*) was successfully learned by the congregation for Advent. Attempting for Christmas to sing Mass IX, *Cum iubilo*, however, especially without practice, proved “an ill-fated musical expedition. . . . [The people] couldn’t sing this Mass then, and we doubt if they ever will be able.”<sup>3</sup>
  - Even after a successful beginning in Advent, the Sundays following Christmas showed the fragility of progress: Saturday evening rehearsal attendance fell “pitiably low,” and Sunday mass was “discouraging to hear.”
  - It actually was better for congregational singing *not* to be accompanied by the Organ, first noticed on Ash Wednesday.
  - “Boring repetition” was *not* a reason people dropped out of singing: in fact, attempting to learn a new mass for Lent “immensely retarded the progress.”<sup>4</sup> “Too often, leaders give way to their own inclinations for variety when the lay musical mind has no desire for it.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> II: 92.

<sup>4</sup> III: 140.

<sup>5</sup> III: 141.

- Searching for reasons for non-participation can lead to faulty paths; sometimes there is a simple answer: “If the majority of the parishioners were still not singing, it was because they were either not interested in participating, or just couldn’t sing.”<sup>6</sup>
- For Easter, attempting another new Mass (I, *Lux et origo*) and the hymn *O Filii et Filiae* was again too much; and the *Vidi Aquam* “proved much too difficult for the congregation. What we need is a simplified musical setting for these glorious words.”<sup>7</sup>
- Resuming the second year, the monks were astonished at how the children remembered virtually everything from the previous year, and the adults “almost as much.”
- The “great problem” of the adult rehearsal was solved in this instance (perhaps because of the small and rural nature of the parish) by going to a shortened practice (five or ten minutes) *after* Mass on Sunday, with the cooperation of the pastor in giving slightly shortened sermons.
- It is necessary for the music leader to use “just a modicum of tact . . . [and] administer the lesson with appeal,” in order to avoid “generating the attitude of indolent passivity.”<sup>8</sup>

Source: CEC 78 no. 2 (Jan-Feb 1951) 70-72 Part I; no. 3 (Mar-April 1951) 88-92, 127 Part II; no. 4 (May-June 1951) 140-141, 165-6 Part III.

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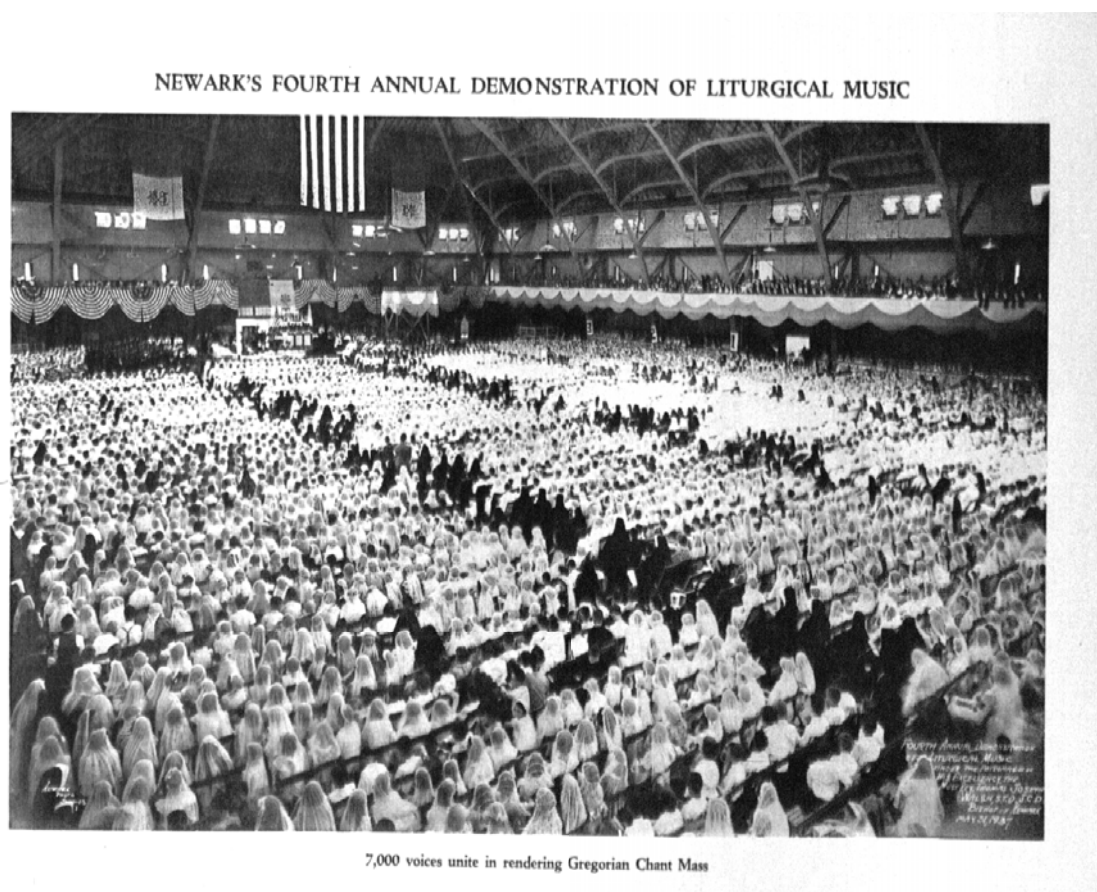
<sup>6</sup> III: 140.

<sup>7</sup> III: 165.

<sup>8</sup> III: 166.

APPENDIX D

“THE FOURTH ANNUAL DEMONSTRATION OF LITURGICAL MUSIC”



Diocese of Newark  
CAT 23 (1937): 60.

APPENDIX E

CHANT CURRICULUM: GRADE SCHOOLS,  
ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE, 1954

OUTLINE OF GREGORIAN CHANT  
COURSE OF STUDY FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS GRADES I – IV  
(Milwaukee, Wisconsin)

The Chant that is to be taught in these particular grades consists primarily of a few simple Chant Hymns, in Latin or English. Such appropriate hymns can be found in *OUR PRAYER SONGS*, by the School Sisters of St. Francis, published by McLaughlin & Reilly Company, and in *SONGS OF REDEMPTION*, published by the Gregorian Institute. In Grades III and IV the children are taught a simple Chant *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, as for example Mass XVIII. They are also taught the Mass Responses. All of these Chants are taught be rote and the children are not held responsible for any theory in these first four grades

CHANT OUTLINE FOR GRADES V – VIII

The school year is divided into six periods — six weeks to each period. An outline of suggested required work is presented for each period:

GRADE FIVE

First Period	Second Period	Third Period	Fourth Period	Fifth Period	Sixth Period
<b>A. Requiem:</b> Sanctus Benedictus Agnus Dei	<b>Requiem:</b> Introit Communio	<b>Requiem:</b> Gradual (recto tono) Tract Sequence: 1-2; 7-8; 13-14	<b>Requiem:</b> Sequence: 3-4; 9-10; 15-16	<b>Requiem:</b> Complete Sequence Begin Offer- tory	<b>Requiem:</b> Offertory Review
<b>B. Salve Mater</b> Salve decus Ave Plena Gratia	Christus Vincit Ecce Panis O Salutaris	Ave Maris Stella Puer Natus Veni Domine Jesu	Tantum Ergo Ave Regina Attende Domine	Adoro te Ave Jesu	Review
<b>Theory:</b> Staff, Do-clef, Punctum, Bar lines Episema	<b>Theory:</b> Podatus and Clivis, Salicus Quilisma	<b>Theory:</b> Review Latin accent Guide	<b>Theory:</b> Porrectus Climacus Dotted notes	<b>Theory:</b> Torculus Review	<b>Theory:</b> General Review

NOTE: *Plan A* is outlined for those who wish to teach the *Requiem* in Grade Five.  
*Plan B* is outlined for those who wish to follow the Chant Hymn schedule.

*Suggestions for the teachers:*

Conduct your Gregorian Chant class in a well-prepared manner, so that as a result of your work, the children's participation in Church services, particularly the Mass, will prove an inspiration to themselves and to all those present. Explain the points of theory in connection with the Chant Hymns that are taught during each six-weeks period. DO NOT ISOLATE CHANT THEORY AND TEACH IT AS A SEPARATE UNIT. Use only a short part of the Chant period for theory; the greater part of the period should be devoted to singing Chant. Remind the children at all times that the Chant should be sung with a light, floating tone.

## GRADE SIX

First Period	Second Period	Third Period	Fourth Period	Fifth Period	Sixth Period
A. Mass: Kyrie Sanctus	Benedictus Agnus Dei	Gloria (first half)	Gloria (sec- ond half)	Review the Gloria	Regina Coeli Ave Maria
B. HYMNS: Sancti Angeli Protector Sanctae Ec- clesiae	Rorate Coeli Ave Maria	Alma Re- demptoris	Vexilla Regis	Regina Coeli Confirma Hoc	O Sacrum Convivium
<b>Theory:</b> Review some of the neums taught in Grade Five: Podatus Clivis	<b>Theory:</b> Review Cli- macus Scandicus Fah-clef	<b>Theory:</b> Flat Bistropa Review all neums	<b>Theory:</b> Review all special neums taught in Grade Five	<b>Theory:</b> Tristropa Review	<b>Theory:</b> General Review

NOTE: Section A is outlined for those who wish to teach the Mass. Any one of the following Masses may be selected: VIII, IX, X, XI, or XV.

Section B is outlined for those who wish to teach Hymns only.

*Suggestions for the teachers:*

Try to give the children a love for and an understanding of the Liturgical music of the church. Do not attempt to explain all the neums in the particular hymn or Chant melody you are studying. Specialize on one or two which appear in the particular Chant the children are learning. Never isolate the terms to drill as a separate project, ALWAYS TEACH THE THEORY IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHANTS THAT ARE TAUGHT.

## GRADE SEVEN

First Period	Second Period	Third Period	Fourth Period	Fifth Period	Sixth Period
A. In Paradisum Mass: Sanctus	Libera	Mass: Kyrie, Benedictus, Agnus Dei	Mass: Gloria, Review Sanctus, etc.	Mass: Gloria, Begin Credo: 1, III, or IV	Mass: com- plete Credo, Review
B. Veni Crea- tor, In Paradisum	Salve Regina Ave Verum	O Sacrum Convivium Ave Maria	Adoremus and Laudate	O Filii Tantum Ergo, No. 2	Ave Maris Stella Angelus ad Virginem

*Theory to be taught during the six periods:*

Review work from all previous grades: simple and special neums; new work: Compound neums: Podatus subpunctis, Scandicus Subpunctis; interpretation.

*Suggestions for the teachers:*

You may follow either *Plan A* or *Plan B*. Whether you are following *A* or *B*, select only those neums or points of theory included in the phrase you intend to teach. Most of the theoretical points in this grade will be a review of the work taught in Grades V, VI, and VII. Explain the hymns or parts of the Mass to be taught, in order that the children can interpret the music with greater intelligence and prayerfulness.



## APPENDIX F

### "MUSIC WORKSHOPS HONOR JUBILEE OF MOTU PROPRIO"

#### Music Workshops Honor Jubilee of Motu Proprio

##### DePaul University

The DePaul Liturgical Music Workshop expanded its program this year to include not only the professional liturgical musician, but also the grade teacher who is responsible for the teaching of chant in the classroom. Of special interest this summer were demonstrations which were a practical application of the classes in chant methods. Four groups of children of various ability levels were used in this practical application of theory.

Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B., addressed the workshop students on July 23 and demonstrated his *Praise and Song Series* which was used in the workshop methods classes. This series is designed to offer a thorough and progressive experience in making the chant an integral part of elementary school education.

##### Gregorian Institute of America

The Gregorian Institute of America dedicated its summer sessions on liturgical music this year to the commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of *Motu Proprio*. Fifty-six sessions were held in various cities of the United States, each with an attendance of from 100 to 500 organists, choirmasters and classroom teachers of Gregorian chant.

For the fifth summer, the Institute staff conducted a session at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., the center of its summer school program. The Right Reverend Abbot Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B., was host to about 200 students, both religious and lay.

Other sessions were held at Marmion Military Academy, Aurora, Ill., at the invitation of the Rockford Diocesan Unit; at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Mount Carmel, New Orleans, sponsored by Mother Rita, O. Carm., and at the Dominican College, New Orleans.

##### Marywood College

A Music Education Workshop co-sponsored by Marywood College, Scranton, Pa., and the American Institute of Music Education, drew well over 100 religious and lay music teachers and supervisors to the Marywood campus this summer. The workshop was designed to impart a general view of an integrated music program from kindergarten through high school, at the same time giving students an opportunity to concentrate on the problems of a particular age group. Daily sessions included lecture-demonstrations with a class of junior high school students; student participation courses in elementary methods and rhythmic; workshop conferences on special interest problems, and lecture-demonstrations on the use of audio-visual aids. Dr. Harry Wilson, director of vocal music at Columbia University was one of several famous guest-lecturers. Sister M. Lucretia, I.H.M., was chairman of the workshop, and Sister M. Clare, I.H.M., was coordinator.

##### Mt. Saint Scholastica College

Mount St. Scholastica College, Atchison, Kansas, sponsored a choral workshop under the direction of its music department faculty, with Sister Karlene Hoffmann, O.S.B., as chairman. The workshop covered choral vocalises, repertory, interpretation, motivation, organiza-



Each Friday during the DePaul University Summer Workshop, students sang and conducted a Mass to give practical application to classes in chant methods.

tion, teaching methods, and solutions for choral problems, with a special class in Gregorian Chant conducted by the Reverend Anselm Lewellyn, O.S.B., of St. Benedict's College, Atchison. The workshop was climaxed by a Sisters' Chorus of eighty voices in a concert of Gregorian chant, sacred polyphony and modern music, conducted by student conductors.

##### Nazareth College, Rochester

A summer workshop was held this summer at Nazareth College, Rochester, New York, under the direction of Sister M. Kathleen, S.S.J. The sessions concentrated on elementary vocal music, junior and senior high school vocal music, instrumental music (brass, woodwind, strings), and piano (class and private instruction).

##### Fred Waring Workshop

Catholic choral conductors, religious and lay, were well represented in the six one-week sessions of the Fred Waring Choral Workshop this summer. The Workshop, held for the first time in the new Waring headquarters in beautiful Delaware Water Gap, Pa., offered an intensive, rapidly-paced course which included basic choral techniques, program building, rhythm response, choral arranging, microphone techniques, with special emphasis on television orientation. Members of the famous Pennsylvanians were on hand for evening recitals.

##### Mount Mary College

Under the direction of Sister Mary Louis, S.S.N.D., and under the co-sponsorship of the Vocal Department of the NCMEA and Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a very successful Vocal-Liturgical Workshop was held this summer at Mount Mary. Dr. Harry Seitz, chairman of the NCMEA Vocal Department, directed the voice classes including studio and classroom problems, physiology of voice production, choral materials, and choral conducting. Madame Felice d'Antbourg and others of the Mount Mary faculty assisted Dr. Seitz. Phases of opera work were under the direction of Dr. Hans T. Wolmut of the Wisconsin College of Music. The Reverend Cletus P. Madsen, chairman of the Liturgical Committee of the NCMEA, directed the lectures and demonstrations on liturgical music, giving special emphasis to modern sacred music. Sister Mary Theophane, O.S.F., well known to NCMEA members as an authority on organ style and repertory, lectured and presented demonstrations on the use of organ music.

##### Boys' Town, Nebraska

The Music Department of Boys' Town, Nebraska, conducted a five-day Church music workshop last month under the direction of the Reverend Francis P. Schmitt of Boys' Town. Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B., headed a faculty of famous names in music education. Such subjects as chant, organ, and music in the liturgy, were included in the course. There were five lectures on "Liturgical Music Law" by the Reverend Francis Brunner, C.S.S.R.

##### College Misericordia

Dr. Claude Rosenberry, chief of the music division of the State Department of Education, and the Reverend John J. Maher, superintendent of Scranton schools, addressed the Summer Workshop of College Misericordia in Dallas, Pa. The workshop stressed rhythmic experiences through the media of rhythm bands, symphonettes, and orchestra. One hundred and fifty Catholic and public school music teachers from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, South Carolina attended.

##### Catholic University of America

At its Workshop held from June 12 to June 23, Catholic University of America's Music Department concentrated on in-service training and administration and supervision of school music programs. John B. Paul, Head of the Department, has announced that future workshops will present a program designed to integrate music with the Christian Social Living program.

##### St. Meinrad's Abbey

The Right Reverend Abbot Ignatius Esser, O.S.B. of St. Meinrad's Abbey, St. Meinrad, Ind., was host to a large group of liturgical musicians who attended the Abbey Workshop from August 17 to 21. The week was devoted to a prayerful study of the doctrine of Pius X.

##### The Lafayette, Ind. Unit

His Excellency, Bishop John G. Bennett was host to a one-day clinic on Gregorian chant under the sponsorship of the Lafayette Unit of the NCMEA. The Reverend Lawrence Heman and Betty Minneman lectured.

##### Nazareth College, Michigan

The Reverend John C. Selner, S.S. was guest lecturer at the week-long observance of the anniversary of *Motu Proprio* at Nazareth College, Nazareth, Michigan. Sister M. Stella, S.S.J. is in charge of the Schola and music at Nazareth.

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