

“A Necessary or Integral Part:” The Choral Ordinary and Proper in the Roman Catholic Mass after the Second Vatican Council

By

Jared Ostermann

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Chairperson Michael Bauer

Paul Tucker

Paul Laird

Scott Murphy

Kevin Vogt

Michael Murray

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The Doctoral Committee for Jared Ostermann

certifies that this is the approved version of the following doctoral document:

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ABSTRACT

The ritual texts of the Roman Catholic Mass have inspired many of the choral masterworks of Western music. For many composers, one of the central considerations in setting these texts has been to determine the proper relationship of music with the ritual action it accompanies. From the Middle Ages onward, the Catholic liturgy was characterized by its multiple streams of parallel ritual activities. The music of the choir and the private devotions of the congregation proceeded alongside the sacramental prayers and actions of the clergy. In this setting the choir enjoyed a great deal of freedom, as it ornamented most of the liturgy with elaborate music. In the twentieth century this musical-ritual relationship underwent a profound change as a result of the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Specifically, in the post-conciliar Mass the priests, choir, and congregation are asked to focus together on each text, hymn, or prayer. In addition, the Catholic Church has called for an increase in congregational singing in the twentieth century—culminating in the directives of the council. The musical implications of these official reforms are significant.

This document describes the key characteristics of the pre-conciliar Mass, as well as the musical implications of its liturgical structure. Twentieth-century reforms are then examined, through the relevant church documents. This analytical process clarifies the place of both inherited choral music and new compositions in the post-conciliar liturgy. A large part of the existing sacred choral repertoire—a body of music encompassing over six centuries of masterworks by numerous famed composers—no longer functions well in a Catholic liturgical context. In particular, choral settings of the Mass Ordinary have become very difficult to integrate into the post-conciliar liturgy. On the other hand, choral settings of the Mass Proper

texts continue to work well liturgically. These Proper texts also present abundant opportunities for future liturgical compositions.

This document seeks to explain the musical characteristics and dynamics of the post-conciliar Mass. It is hoped that this treatment will be helpful for researchers, church musicians, and composers who concern themselves with the Catholic liturgy.

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INTRODUCTION

The most recent ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church—the Second Vatican Council—began its discussion of sacred music with the following famous declaration:

The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this preeminence is that, as sacred song closely bound to the text, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.¹

This short statement beautifully encapsulates the unique nature of Catholic liturgical music,² incorporating the ideas of artistic worth, living tradition, textual centrality, and ritual integration. These characteristics, while complementary in an ideal sense, have frequently proved difficult to harmonize in practice. In fact, the history of Catholic church music could be described as a constant attempt to hold various competing ambitions in balance with one another. The surface beauty of music, while valued for its power to affect the human spirit, can in its very appeal hold the danger of sensuality.³ The art of polyphony, one of the great innovations at the heart of Western music, has often come into conflict with the need to communicate sacred texts with clarity. On the other hand, a desire to give full musical expression to those same texts has at

¹ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” Art. 112, in Thomas C. O’Brien, ed., *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 23.

² “Liturgical” as a musical designation will be discussed in greater depth below. As a preliminary definition, however, “liturgical” music is that music intended for use within the ritual framework of the church’s public worship. This designation contrasts with the larger category of “sacred music”—that is, music with a sacred text or theme, which may be intended for devotional use outside of liturgy or for a concert format.

³ Saint Augustine’s internal struggle with the sensual quality of church music is immortalized in his *Confessions*: “Thus I vacillate between the peril of pleasure and the value of the experience, and I am led more . . . to endorse the custom of singing in church so that by the pleasure of hearing the weaker soul might be elevated to an attitude of devotion. Yet when it happens to me that the song moves me more than the thing which is sung, I confess that I have sinned blamefully and then prefer not to hear the singer.” Qtd. in James McKinnon, ed., *Music in Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 155.

times led composers toward theatricality—or toward musical forms too large to be integrated into the liturgy.⁴ Yet another tension can arise between the ideal of artistic creativity—singing a “new song for the Lord”⁵—and the handing down of older musical forms. Even as ornate polyphonic vocal or instrumental forms developed, the church voiced concern that the traditional chant melodies remain intact.⁶ Instrumental music also presents a series of tensions in liturgical use: the God-given voice versus the human-built instrument; abstract versus texted music; theatrical versus sacred; Old versus New Testament; and so forth.

One question for much of the church’s history, and the central focus of this document, has been the place, or proper role, of choral music within the liturgy. To describe the historical situation in very broad terms, early Christian worship was characterized by the unison singing of the entire gathered assembly. After Christianity developed into an officially-sanctioned, high-profile religion in the fourth century, it became increasingly elaborate in its forms of worship. A corresponding differentiation of roles followed, with musically proficient cantors and choirs taking the lead in public singing.⁷ With greater specialization came the possibility of establishing liturgical music as a professional discipline, complete with schools and structured training programs. The prototypical institution of this kind in the Western church was the Roman *schola cantorum*,⁸ most likely founded during the seventh century.⁹ This singing school played

⁴ Concerns addressed by Pope Pius X in his 1903 *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*. See especially articles 6, on theatricality, and 23, on the length of liturgical music. English translation available in Robert F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music, 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1979), 223-231.

⁵ See Psalms 33:3, 40:3, and 96:1.

⁶ A concern addressed in the 1324 papal bull *Docta Sanctorum Patrum*. English translation available in Hayburn, *Papal Legislation*, 20-21.

⁷ For a concise summary of these early developments, see Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), ch. 5-6.

⁸ A term which can refer to either the institution (as in “school of singing”) or to the choir itself (as in “the *schola* sings the response”).

an important role in the development of the chant repertoire, both in its composition and in its consistent performance.¹⁰ In addition, the formal model served as an example for similar schools in other parts of Europe. Even with increasingly prominent choirs, however, some compromise between congregational and professional singing remained in place during the early Middle Ages and Carolingian period. As Anthony Ruff notes,

In Carolingian times, the entire congregation generally sang the Sanctus, perhaps the Kyrie acclamations in alternation with a schola, perhaps the Gloria at Masses with a bishop, and perhaps the response to the Agnus Dei. Where the Creed was a part of the liturgy, it was generally sung by all.¹¹

Over time this choral-congregational balance gradually began to tip in the favor of the musical specialists, as the communal character of worship weakened and largely disappeared. A tripartite division during Mass became increasingly predominant: the clerical enactment of the ritual, choral singing, and the largely silent lay assembly. Such a conception of worship was often given architectural expression in the form of the rood screen, separating the laity in the nave from the choir and clergy in the sanctuary.¹² By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the congregation was primarily occupied by watching (albeit piously and prayerfully) the priest's actions at the altar "like spectators looking on at a mystery-filled drama of our Lord's Way of the Cross."¹³ The priest, for his part, began to take all responsibility for the validity of various ritual

⁹ While tradition suggests an earlier date, in connection with Pope Gregory the Great, recent scholarship places the *schola's* foundation during the seventh century. For a discussion of the foundation of the Roman *schola* see James W. McKinnon, *The Advent Project: The Later-Seventh-Century Creation of the Roman Mass Proper* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 84-89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 375-403, contains a discussion of the *schola's* establishment of standard repertoire, after an earlier improvisational tradition.

¹¹ See Anthony Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform: Treasures and Transformations* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2007), 510. For a more detailed description of the Carolingian period, see Josef A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans. Francis A. Brunner, 2 vols. (New York: Benziger, 1951), 1:85.

¹² Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:83-84.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 117.

actions on himself. One key element of this change was the requirement for the priest to recite all ritual texts—even those texts sung by the choir.¹⁴ Thus the choir neither led congregational music, nor did it function as a necessary participant in clerical ritual. By the High Middle Ages the Catholic church choir had become a semi-autonomous vocal ensemble, its music performed alongside the actions of the priest and the private devotions of the assembly.

The conception of liturgy as the simultaneous, or parallel, enactment of various individual roles—sacramental, musical, devotional, and so forth—was to remain essentially unchanged until the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁵ The Council of Trent, while effecting many superficial alterations, served to standardize and prescribe the essential nature of medieval liturgy for much of the Western church. Liturgical parallelism was only conclusively removed as a result of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the 1960s.

This liturgical change has created a certain tension in the Roman Catholic understanding of liturgical music. On one hand, the church has continually affirmed the importance of the choir and of inherited repertoire—the ‘treasury’ of sacred music—both before and after Vatican II.¹⁶ On the other hand, the liturgical reforms called for by the council dramatically changed the ritual framework for performance of that repertoire. In addition, a central theme of twentieth-century liturgical reform has been the restoration of the singing participation of the assembly. The old tension between choral and congregational music—for all intents and purposes laid to rest in the Middle Ages—has come back to the forefront with renewed vigor. Church musicians working in

¹⁴ A development Jungmann places at 1140 in its inception, and 1246 in more widespread regulations. See *ibid.*, 106.

¹⁵ The parallel conception extended even beyond individual Masses, with the result that many different Masses could be celebrated simultaneously at side altars in the same church building. See *ibid.*, 129-131.

¹⁶ As a central focus of his book, Anthony Ruff traces this idea of a “treasury” of sacred music through twentieth-century reform documents. See Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, chapters 13-16.

a Catholic context today are often faced with a seemingly impossible task, as they attempt to balance the artistic heritage of sacred music with the demands of the post-conciliar liturgy.¹⁷ Discussion of this situation since the council has often been quite heated, with participants displaying a tendency to fall into various ideological camps. This is hardly surprising, considering that countless priceless musical works and many venerable choral institutions seem to be pitted against immovable theological principles—such as the integrity of the sacred liturgy or the right of the laity to participate in Mass—in a grim battle for survival. This document will attempt to contribute to the current discussion in as pragmatic a manner as possible, by examining how the fundamental liturgical changes of the twentieth century affect the integration of inherited repertoire into the reformed Roman Rite. In addition, models for new compositions will be examined in light of liturgical reform. It is hoped that this treatment will lend clarity to the present situation, and be of use to musicians, composers, and scholars interacting with the music of the Roman Rite.

The Inherited Choral Repertoire and the Reformed Liturgy

It is worthwhile at the outset of this project to consider the sheer size and cultural importance of the inherited choral repertoire in question. The sacred choral tradition of the Western church can be traced back to Gregorian chant, and from there to the polyphonic experiments of the Middle Ages. It is no accident that the medieval separation of choir and clergy from the more passive laity in the nave coincided with increasing activity from musical specialists. As liturgical scholar Josef Jungmann puts it:

¹⁷ The term “post-conciliar” in this document will be used exclusively to describe the time since the Second Vatican Council.

A clear parallel to the conception and presentation of the Mass-liturgy as a dramatic play which appeals primarily to the eyes of the onlooker was to be found in the efforts made to enrich also the audible side of the liturgical action.¹⁸

Such enrichment included the continuing development and melismatic elaboration of the chant repertoire, as well as the genesis of polyphony in the ninth century.¹⁹ As the priest began to focus on his own parallel recitation of texts, the polyphonic repertoire could move beyond traditionally elaborate chants such as the Gradual, to include chants such as the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, and *Agnus Dei* as well.²⁰ Catholic liturgy, composed of various simultaneous streams of activity, formed the ritual framework for the earliest polyphonic music—and even for later parts of the developing chant repertoire. Any music written for use in the Mass between that time and the mid-twentieth century was composed in the context of this parallel liturgical model.

Of the official Mass texts set to music, two sets or groupings emerged and became pre-eminent over time. The first set is known as the “Ordinary”²¹ of the Mass, composed of those texts that stay the same from week to week.²² The second set is known as the “Propers,” and is

¹⁸ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:123.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 123-126.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 124-126. For further discussion of the musically liberating effect of priestly recitation, see Thrasybulos G. Georgiades, *Music and Language: The Rise of Western Music as Exemplified in Settings of the Mass* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 33-34. See also Michael Kunzler, *The Church's Liturgy*, trans. Placed Murray et al. (London, New York: Continuum, 2001), 119.

²¹ Some hold that the terms “Ordinary” and “Proper” are outdated, and no longer serve as useful labels within the reformed liturgy. For example, Anthony Ruff claims that “the Ordinary/Proper distinction is a principle of organization inadequate for understanding the structure of the reformed Eucharistic liturgy.” Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 545. For further reading on the matter, *ibid.*, 345n25. Such concerns seem to stem from the idea that “Ordinary” and “Proper” are arbitrary schemas, which do not take the liturgical function and nature of each individual chant into account. However, while acknowledging these concerns, it must also be said that the traditional terms reflect the basic reality of the two sets of texts. Specifically, some texts stay the same each week, while some change based on the liturgical occasion. Throughout this document the terms Proper and Ordinary will be used to refer to the two groups of texts. In addition, “Ordinary” and “Proper” will be capitalized throughout, to avoid confusion with the common adjectives.

²² The *Kyrie*, *Gloria* (outside of Advent and Lent), *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*.

made up of changeable texts—texts ‘proper’ to a particular Sunday or feast day.²³ Chant settings of the Ordinary and Proper texts made up the foundational repertoire of music for the Mass. As polyphony developed, there was a tendency to elaborate on the Proper chants first—particularly the melismatic Gradual and Alleluia.²⁴ Thus polyphonic settings of the Propers form a significant part of the inherited choral repertoire. However, as time went on, these works were vastly surpassed in importance by the unique liturgical-artistic construct of the polyphonic Mass Ordinary setting. During the fifteenth century, the concept of setting all of the Ordinary texts as a large-scale cyclic musical work took hold. Such pieces came to be synonymous with the liturgy—thus, a composer could write “a Mass” based on some overarching musical idea or material. By the mid-fifteenth century the “Mass” was a standard compositional goal for any composer interested in writing sacred choral works.

The significance of the Mass in the sacred choral repertoire would be difficult to overstate. This body of music encompasses over 600 years of musical history, from Machaut’s 14th-century *Messe de Notre Dame* to contemporary compositions. Many of the greatest composers of Western music have added to the genre, in each musical era. The compositional scale in each age ranges from the compact (e.g. a *Missa brevis* of Palestrina or Haydn, or the three-voice Masses of William Byrd and Antonio Lotti) to the monumental (e.g. the Alessandro Striggio Mass for sixty voices,²⁵ the Bach B minor Mass, or the Bruckner F minor Mass). The

²³ The three processional chants - Introit, Offertory, and Communion; as well as the Gradual psalm and Alleluia verse. During the season of Lent, the Tract replaced the Alleluia, and was proper to the day. In addition, the sequences remaining in use after the Council of Trent are proper to the day.

²⁴ See Walther Lipphardt, *Die Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen Proprium Missae* (Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle, 1950), 22-26.

²⁵ The largest choral performing forces of any Renaissance work. For details on this piece, see Davitt Moroney, “Alessandro Striggio’s Mass in Forty and Sixty Parts,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 60, no. 1, (Spring 2007), pp. 1-70.

composers of this repertoire managed to incorporate dominant musical idioms of their day: isorhythmic motets, madrigalisms, early monody, the full Classical or Romantic orchestra, operatic solos, cutting-edge harmonic language, and so on. Yet through all of these musical innovations, the text remained constant—always culturally prominent as a part of living liturgical tradition. Although many other sacred forms were explored—among them music for the Divine Office (such as hymnody and Magnificat settings) and oratorios—the Mass remained the quintessential sacred masterwork. Among the greatest musical accomplishments of any era, there were sure to appear Masses by the most illustrious composers.

The cultural importance of the Mass genre is readily apparent in the field of choral music today. Even if no Mass settings were ever heard again in their liturgical context, performances would abound around the world from community or scholastic choirs, and at concert halls, music festivals, and other non-religious venues. Masses are always valuable for programming purposes, given their powerful and evocative texts. Within one multi-movement work the listener can experience calls to God for mercy (the *Kyrie*), a jubilant hymn of praise (the *Gloria*), a resolute statement of faith (the *Credo*), an evocation of angelic music in heaven (the *Sanctus*), and an appeal to the incarnate God for mercy and peace (the *Agnus Dei*). It should come as no surprise that these texts—even experienced purely as devout poetry—have inspired so much beautiful music over the years. For both listener and performer there is an incredible range of stylistically varied compositional genius to explore in the Mass repertoire. Running through all of this diversity is the common thread of the text, always providing a sense of stability and familiarity to those involved.

These brief reflections are included in an attempt to help the reader understand what is at stake for many Catholics in modern musical and liturgical reform.²⁶ If Mass settings are beloved by performers and audiences throughout the world for their sheer beauty and emotional resonance, they are even more treasured by countless people for their religious significance. To all of the above characteristics of Masses as cultural artifacts, must be added the significant role that this music plays in the lives of many believers as sung prayer in the context of communal worship. The Mass Ordinary texts, as time-honored expressions of faith or as Biblical quotations, naturally have spiritual meaning for many Christians. However, even beyond this general religious significance it must be remembered that the vast majority of Mass settings were written for performance within a specific ritual context: the Catholic Mass.²⁷ Thus for many Catholics the Mass repertoire is more than beautiful music, more than a prized artwork, and even more than a meditation of deep spiritual worth. It is a treasure of inestimable value, a religious tradition, centuries in the making, and a unique response of human creativity to the heavenly nature of corporate worship on earth.²⁸

²⁶ The phrase “many Catholics” is used here to impart a cautionary note to the discussion. The Mass Ordinary repertoire is primarily a Western European artistic construct, while the Catholic Church is a worldwide institution encompassing many different cultures. In addition, even Catholics who consider themselves part of modern Western European culture may have widely varying understandings of the importance of this music or its liturgical value. The following remarks are in no way intended to imply that every Catholic, as a matter of religious identity, experiences the Mass repertoire in the same way. Rather, the intent is to uncover some of the deeper layers of meaning this music can possess in a religious or liturgical context rather than in a concert setting.

²⁷ Of course, the cultural importance of the texts was such that some composers have written Masses simply as an artistic pursuit, with no liturgical use in mind. Still, these works (for example, the *Requiem* of Giuseppe Verdi) are prominent exceptions rather than the rule. It should also be noted that not every monumental or symphonic Mass was necessarily conceived of as a concert piece. One famous example is Anton Bruckner’s enormous F minor Mass, premiered in 1872 during Mass at the *Augustinerkirche* in Vienna. The devout Bruckner defended its liturgical suitability, saying “I have made it short enough. If I had recorded all my praises of God, it would have been even longer.” Anton Bruckner, quoted in Alan Crawford Howie, “The Sacred Music of Anton Bruckner” (Ph.D. diss., Victoria University of Manchester, 1969), 98.

²⁸ As the Second Vatican Council phrases it: “In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the

On a more pragmatic level, and because of their musical importance, Masses have often served as a central part of the traditional Catholic music program. For centuries, liturgical performance of a Mass has been an aspiration for choirs the world over, a celebratory way to mark a particular feast day or event, or a suitable offering in honor of some person in attendance—perhaps a civic leader, pope, or archbishop. By selecting Masses for performance a Catholic choirmaster could handily combine the appeal of mastering large works as a communal goal for the performers (and mark of prestige for a music program), with the necessity of providing special music for important occasions. In addition, the choirmaster selecting a Mass could be confident that the greater part of music for the liturgy would be stylistically coherent—even cyclically linked—and of high artistic value.

In more recent times the vast scope of available repertoire meant that a piece could be selected to match the particular performing forces, instruments, and musical abilities at hand. For composers or churches intending to commission works, many of the same benefits applied. If an existing setting was a good performance choice for special occasions, a new Mass might be even better. New Mass premieres could lend even greater prestige to an historic event, such as a cathedral dedication or the installation of a new bishop. They also gave many choirmasters an opportunity to show off their compositional prowess. As an added benefit, even by the end of the Renaissance, composers could build on a long and venerable tradition of musical techniques and conventions as they wrote a Mass. Thus for practicing church musicians, in addition to an appreciation of the cultural or theological worth of Mass settings there has been a long practical tradition of turning to the Mass genre whenever a major liturgical work is needed.

right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle; we sing a hymn to the Lord's glory with the whole company of heaven." See O'Brien, *Documents*, 6.

One final observation is warranted before the post-conciliar situation can be examined. To some extent the preceding discussion of Mass Ordinary settings could be applied to certain other sacred genres. The most obvious is the Magnificat, which forms an integral part of Vespers and thus shares with the Mass Ordinary the liturgical character of a text for use in public worship. There is a long and venerable tradition of artistic musical settings of the Magnificat, with an expansive repertoire contributed to by many famed composers. Where the comparison weakens is in the length of the texts in question, which lend the Mass Ordinary an inherently larger scale. In addition, the religious importance of Vespers is not equivalent to that of the Mass, which is the central act of public worship for Catholics. Another large sacred musical form of great historical importance is the oratorio. However, while the compositional scale of this genre is usually even greater than that found in Mass settings, the oratorio has no inherent liturgical connection. More importantly, there is no material unity within the category—an oratorio may be composed on any freely-chosen sacred text. Even with these reservations, though, it is possible to describe some commonality between the inherited Mass repertoire and other sacred masterworks. At least in the realm of artistic value, cultural resonance, and a long history of famed compositions or composers, certain other sacred genres share the prestige of the Mass Ordinary setting.

One portion of sacred musical tradition that cannot claim such a high cultural standing is the polyphonic Mass Proper repertoire. Although the term “Mass” could refer to either a complete Ordinary or Proper cycle as late as the mid-fifteenth century,²⁹ the Ordinary soon afterwards became the dominant liturgical form. The Proper texts have certainly been set by

²⁹ Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 31.

many illustrious composers since the advent of polyphony, but almost always as separate pieces—e.g., a motet or concerted piece for the offertory or communion. Thus, while there is now a vast extant repertoire of individual choral Propers in various musical styles, the notion of a “Proper cycle” as a multi-movement major work has never gained traction. Many Propers by famous composers are a treasured part of the sacred repertoire—the Graduals of Bruckner, for example, or the Offertories of Palestrina—however, these stand-alone choral works considered separately cannot compare with the great Mass Ordinary cycles in terms of artistic scale or cultural significance.³⁰

With this brief description of the Mass Ordinary and Proper in place, it is possible to consider the current situation in more detail. As this document will show, the fundamental reform of the Roman Rite after the Second Vatican Council was a shift away from liturgy characterized by multiple simultaneous streams of activity. The reformers hoped to remove the tripartite division between priest, choir, and congregation that had grown up in the Middle Ages, with the aim of integrating all participants into one communal action. Thus, instead of allowing the private devotions of the laity and musical performance of the choir to proceed in parallel to the priest’s actions at the altar, the reformed liturgy calls for communal focus on one central ritual action at a time. The post-conciliar model will be referred to as “sequential” liturgy throughout this document, in contrast to the pre-conciliar “parallel” model.

³⁰ The two major exceptions—and it is significant that only two choral collections could be justly called exceptions to the historical Mass Ordinary dominance—are the *Choralis Constantinus* of Heinrich Isaac, from the early sixteenth century, and the early seventeenth century *Gradualia* of Willam Byrd. These works will be discussed in greater detail later in this document.

Whatever the theological or pastoral components of this reform, the fundamental relationship between music and liturgy was changed as a result. Pre-conciliar music was created from prescribed texts, certainly, but also in an atmosphere of autonomy and artistic freedom on the part of the choir. The music produced by the choir, as only one of a number of simultaneous elements of the Mass, was not meant to carry the entire liturgy on its own. Simply stated, there was a great deal of time to fill during Mass, as the priest and servers carried out various prayers and rituals at the altar. The congregation, although hopefully devoutly attentive to the Mass, did not play a significant musical role in the liturgy. Within the natural limits of the Mass itself, musicians enjoyed a great deal of latitude in their selection, composition, and performance of choral repertoire. Following Vatican II, the liturgy was streamlined into a sequential progression of events—events in which the congregation was meant to participate, either by singing texts or listening to others sing them. Now each performance of a text by the choir could be seen as taking music away from the singing congregation—a musical display (or offering) to be completed before anyone present, including the priest, could continue with the liturgy.

The implications of this liturgical reform for choral music are enormous. Choral forms and models that have been traditions for centuries have had to be reconsidered. Tensions have appeared between inherited repertoires of sacred music and the reformed liturgy. Specifically, the beloved Mass Ordinary settings of the past six hundred years have become difficult to integrate with the reformed liturgy. As some consolation, many choral settings of the Mass Propers still do serve well as liturgical music. The processional Propers in particular—the Introit, Offertory, and Communion—continue to accompany other liturgical actions in the post-conciliar liturgy. At least at these ritual moments, the choir may perform elaborate Proper settings without unduly lengthening the liturgy. However, in spite of its liturgical suitability the

inherited Proper repertoire cannot be considered equal to the Ordinary tradition in terms of artistic or cultural significance.

The threat to the Mass Ordinary repertoire has contributed to the turbulent post-conciliar situation in Catholic church music.³¹ Abandonment of the genre (or relegation of the Mass Ordinaries exclusively to sacred concerts) leaves something of a void for choristers, conductors, and composers who interact with the post-conciliar Roman Rite. This fact gives rise to a series of practical questions. What compositions *should* be commissioned or performed during the Mass presently, within a large and active music program? Are the possibilities limited to small-scale works—to individual motets, hymns, or responsorial psalms? What piece should be performed to mark Easter or the visit of a pope or the ordination of a bishop? Or, by abandoning the Ordinary repertoire does one also reject the entire idea that a major work can be part of a liturgy? Retaining the Mass Ordinary in liturgical use solves many of these artistic quandaries, but raises an objection that is even more difficult to answer. For a choral Mass to be used within the reformed rite, the new liturgy must be “stretched” to fit the old music. This fact conflicts with one of the pillars of twentieth-century liturgical reform—that the music must be subservient to the liturgy.³² Between the incorporation and disuse of the repertoire, it is possible to compromise by using only some of the Ordinary movements during Mass.³³ However, this

³¹ See Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 531-39 for a treatment of post-conciliar controversy regarding the choral Mass Ordinary.

³² As seen in Pope Pius X's *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini* of 1903: “As a general principle it is a very grave abuse, and one to be altogether condemned, to make the liturgy of sacred functions appear a secondary matter, and, as it were, the servant of the music. On the contrary, the music is really only a part of the liturgy and its humble attendant.” Translated in Hayburn, *Papal*, 230.

³³ Anthony Ruff proposes some useful norms for partial performance of the Mass Ordinary. See Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 518-525.

fragmentation seems to defeat the aesthetic purpose of performing a large-scale cyclic work in the first place.

Although there are no easy answers to the questions facing modern Catholic church musicians, this document will attempt to clarify the current situation for those working with the Roman Rite. The focus will be on the mid-twentieth-century change from parallel to sequential liturgy, and on the effect this change has on incorporation of choral Ordinary and Proper settings into the reformed Mass. While due attention will be given to use of inherited repertoire in the modern Roman Rite, the central question of this document concerns the future of Catholic church music: Has the era of symbiosis between the Catholic Mass and the large-scale liturgical masterwork definitively passed? Finally, suggestions will be offered delineating the areas in greatest need of professional attention—as regards future compositional, theoretical, and musicological efforts related to the Roman Rite.

Summorum Pontificum and the Two Forms of the Roman Rite

An interesting situation currently exists in the Roman Rite, which should be noted as a preliminary to this study. The pre-conciliar liturgy did not completely disappear from use after Vatican II and the publication of the reformed Roman Missal³⁴ of 1970.³⁵ Given the attachment of many Catholics to the older form of the Mass, concessions were made for continued use of the most recent pre-conciliar Missal—the 1962 Missal.³⁶ In the most recent development, the 2007

³⁴ A “Missal” is a liturgical book containing the instructions and texts necessary for the celebration of the Mass.

³⁵ For an account of the motivations and struggles of those who continued celebrating the pre-conciliar Mass, see László Dobszay, *The Restoration and Organic Development of the Roman Rite*, ed. Paul Hemming (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 42-46.

³⁶ In 1984, following a four-year period of review concerning implementation of the reformed liturgy worldwide, the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship issued the letter *Quattor abhinc annos* (“after four years”). This

motu proprio Summorum Pontificum,³⁷ Pope Benedict XVI further liberalized use of the 1962 Missal. This decree made it easier for the older Missal to be used, stating that:

In parishes, where there is a stable group of faithful who adhere to the earlier liturgical tradition, the pastor should willingly accept their requests to celebrate the Mass according to the rite of the Roman Missal published in 1962.³⁸

Further, it was made clear that the faithful had a degree of entitlement to concession from their bishop:

If a group of lay faithful, as mentioned in art. 5 §1, has not obtained satisfaction to their requests from the pastor, they should inform the diocesan bishop. The bishop is strongly requested to satisfy their wishes.³⁹

In addition to discussing these disciplinary measures, the Pope made a key statement about the nature and relationship of the two Missals:

The Roman Missal promulgated by Paul VI [that is, the 1970 post-conciliar Missal] is the ordinary expression of the “Lex orandi” (Law of prayer) of the Catholic Church of the Latin rite. Nonetheless, the Roman Missal promulgated by St. Pius V [in 1570] and reissued by Bl. John XXIII [in 1962] is to be considered as an extraordinary expression of that same “Lex orandi,” and must be given due honor for its venerable and ancient usage. These two expressions of the Church’s Lex orandi will in no way lead to a division in the Church’s “Lex credendi” (Law of belief). They are, in fact, two usages of the one Roman rite.

pronouncement allowed bishops to grant special permission to groups of the faithful interested in celebrating Mass according to the 1962 Missal. Conditions for this concession included a public statement from the group acknowledging the validity of the reformed Missal, and a faithful adherence to the 1962 Missal without any mingling of reformed elements. An English translation of the letter is available at Adoremus Society, “Quattuor Abhinc Annos” <http://www.adoremus.org/Quattuorabhincannos.html> (accessed November 2, 2012). Four years later Pope John Paul II affirmed this concession in his *motu proprio Ecclesia dei*. An English translation of *Ecclesia dei* is available at Adoremus Society, “Ecclesia Dei” <http://www.adoremus.org/EcclesiaDei.html> (accessed November 2, 2012).

³⁷ The pope can issue various types of documents—some of which are teaching documents, and some of which (the ‘apostolic constitution’ and ‘motu proprio’) introduce new church legislation. As John Huels summarizes, “the apostolic letter *motu proprio* [“of his own will or impulse”] is so-called because the pope acts on his own initiative in creating new legislation in his own name rather than merely approving a decree or other document issued in the name of a curial congregation.” John M. Huels, *Liturgical Law: An Introduction* (Washington D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1987), 8.

³⁸ *Summorum Pontificum*, Article 5.1. An English translation, along with the original Latin document, is available at United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Apostolic Letter “Summorum Pontificum,”” USCCB Publishing http://old.usccb.org/liturgy/extraordinary_form.shtml (accessed November 2, 2012).

³⁹ *Summorum Pontificum*, Article 7.

It is, therefore, permissible to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass following the typical edition of the Roman Missal promulgated by Bl. John XXIII in 1962 and never abrogated, as an extraordinary form of the Liturgy of the Church.⁴⁰

Following this document, the Roman Rite is said to exist in the Extraordinary Form (according to the 1962 Missal) and the Ordinary Form (according to the post-conciliar Missal).⁴¹

This situation gives some nuance to the idea of “pre-conciliar” and “post-conciliar” liturgy. Currently, Catholics have the ability to continue to attend Mass celebrated as it was before the council. This does not change the fact that the vast majority of Masses worldwide do follow the post-conciliar Missal. However, due to increased liberalization of the pre-conciliar Mass, the Ordinary and Extraordinary forms exist side-by-side in many Catholic parishes and communities. For the purposes of this study, it is important to note that “pre-conciliar” practice does not exist merely as an object of historical study or interest. Rather, the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite remains a living liturgical tradition for many Catholics. On a musical level, then, it is possible in certain places to experience historical works performed in their original liturgical (if not cultural) context. Thus, scholars, composers, church musicians, and other interested parties have the opportunity to gain a more visceral appreciation of twentieth century liturgical reform by observing parallel and sequential liturgies in person.

⁴⁰ *Summorum Pontificum*, Article 1.

⁴¹ A formulation that has come in for its share of criticism from various quarters, given the extent of the reforms. See Dobszay, *Restoration and Organic Development*, 47-50. The Extraordinary Form is often referred to as the “Latin Mass” colloquially, reflecting the fact that Latin is required by its rubrics. The term “Latin Mass” is inaccurate however, as Latin is also allowed and even encouraged in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite. In other words, in the Ordinary form one has freedom to use either Latin or the vernacular; while in the Extraordinary Form only Latin may be used in the celebration of Mass.

Key Terms

In order to avoid confusion when dealing with something as multi-faceted as Catholic liturgical music, certain terms should be defined before continuing into the body of this study.

Liturgy: The term ‘liturgy’ is often used interchangeably with “Mass” or “worship” to describe the public worship of the church. In Catholic understanding, however, this is not entirely accurate. The word “liturgy” is taken from two Greek roots: *laos* (people or public) and *ergon* (work). In its original context, *leitourgia* meant “public work,” in the same sense as a modern public works department. “Liturgy” was some action done for the common good (such as civic repairs). The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes Christian appropriation of the term in this way:

The word “liturgy” originally meant a “public work” or a “service in the name of/on behalf of the people.” In Christian tradition it means the participation of the people of God in “the work of God.” Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through his Church.⁴²

Such participation by the people of God takes place through the physical signs called sacraments: “efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us.”⁴³ The term “liturgy” then, includes all sacraments of the church in its broad sense.⁴⁴ It also includes the church’s public prayer—the Divine Office or “liturgy of the

⁴² Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), art. 1069. See Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1994), 278.

⁴³ CCC, art. 1131, in *ibid.*, 293.

⁴⁴ “There are seven sacraments in the Church: Baptism, Confirmation or Chrismation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.” See CCC, art. 1113, in *ibid.*, 289.

hours.”⁴⁵ Through these various means, Catholics are understood to take part in (and receive the benefits of) Christ’s “public work.”

The Eucharist is the central sacrament—or as the Second Vatican Council phrased it, “the source and summit of the Christian life.”⁴⁶ The term Eucharist can be confusing, as it applies both to the body and blood of Christ (under the appearance of bread and wine), and to the “Eucharistic liturgy”—the public worship ritual characterized by scripture readings, music, memorial of the Last Supper, communion, and so forth.⁴⁷ The term “liturgy,” then, is often used interchangeably with “Eucharistic liturgy,” or “Mass,” although its full meaning extends to the Divine Office and other sacraments. The Divine Office (or “liturgy of the hours”) does have a significant liturgical music component (psalmody, responsories, the Magnificat, hymnody, and so forth), and was materially affected by twentieth century reforms. However, this study will focus throughout on liturgical music intended for use within the Mass.

Mass: The prototypical act of Christian worship—a communal gathering for scripture reading and memorial of the Last Supper—has had many different traditional names.⁴⁸ The name “*missa*” became the most common in the Latin-speaking western church, as an extension of the closing blessing and dismissal formula “*Ite missa est.*” As Jungmann explains:

Missa = mission = dimissio. It meant, in late Latin, a dismissal, the breaking up or departure after an audience or public gathering. Thus too in the language of the

⁴⁵ See CCC, art. 1174-1178, in *ibid.*, 304-305.

⁴⁶ Austin Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations* (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company; Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1996), 15.

⁴⁷ With this understanding, one could be correctly said to both participate in Sunday Eucharist, and to receive the Eucharist at communion.

⁴⁸ The Catholic Catechism lists, among others: “The Eucharist,” the “Eucharistic liturgy,” the “Breaking of Bread,” the “Lord’s Supper,” the “Holy and Divine Liturgy,” and so forth. See CCC, art. 1328-1332, in Catholic Church, *Catechism*, 335-336. See also Jungmann’s discussion of historical names in Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:169-175.

Christian liturgy, it was used both to announce the closing of the assembly in the *Ite missa est* and to designate what preceded this close.⁴⁹

In English, *missa* is rendered “Mass.” As discussed above, the overarching category of “liturgy” is composed of the “Eucharistic liturgy” (“Mass” in the western church), the other sacraments, and the Divine Office. To distinguish the particular rite in question from other western Latinate traditions, the Mass can be designated the “Roman Mass” or the “Mass of the Roman Rite.” The term “Mass” in this study refers to the public Eucharistic worship of Roman Rite Catholicism, as distinct from the Divine Office and the services of other Christian traditions.

Sacraments and Validity: In Catholic theology, the sacraments are physical signs that “confer the grace that they signify.”⁵⁰ The understanding is that these signs are not merely representational, but actually effect particular changes. For example, washing with water is symbolic of cleansing. However, in Catholic thought Baptism is not just a ritual representation of cleansing of the soul. Rather, “by Baptism *all sins* are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins.”⁵¹ In connection with this idea of effect the Catholic Church sets rules for sacramental form and matter, norms that must be followed in order for the sacrament to be efficacious—to “work.” To return to the example of baptism, the matter of the sacrament (the physical material used in its enactment) is water. The form consists of prescribed ritual actions and texts. According to Catholic theology, if a baptism used the correct matter (water) but an incorrect form (such as a non-Trinitarian formula of baptism), the sacrament would not be valid. A person baptized in an invalid manner would need to be baptized again to ensure validity in the eyes of the Catholic Church.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 173.

⁵⁰ CCC, art. 1127, in Catholic Church, *Catechism*, 292.

⁵¹ CCC, art. 1263, in *ibid.*, 321-322.

This basic idea of sacramental validity helps explain Catholic concerns during the Mass, such as whether the correct words or ritual actions are used. The idea of validity is also central to the rise of liturgical parallelism, in its reductionist form. The tripartite division discussed above between priest, choir, and congregation, is in part a separation of the sacrament-validating actions of the priest from various accompanying (but non-essential) actions of the rest of the assembly.

Sacred or Liturgical Music: For the purposes of this study, dealing as it does with choral music, the category of “sacred music” includes any musical setting of a Christian sacred text (whether scriptural or freely composed). Within this extremely broad category, there is the smaller subset of music designated as “liturgical.” “Liturgical music” is that sacred music intended for use within the liturgy. Thus, for example, an oratorio is sacred but not liturgical music (although a movement of the oratorio could well be excerpted for liturgical use). It is also possible for a liturgical form (such as the Mass Ordinary) to be set to music specifically as a concert piece. However, this study will focus on music that is intended for use within the liturgy.

Scope and Methodology

The scope of this study is very broad, in one sense, and extremely reductive in another. In the wider sense, it will cover around one thousand years of liturgical and musical history. The sheer amount of information encompassed by this time period threatens to be overwhelming—even when the fields of liturgical and musical studies are taken separately. Care will be taken, then, to reduce this study to the simplest level. As much as possible, only the basic question of parallel vs. sequential conceptions will be considered on the liturgical side. As far as sacred or liturgical music is concerned, this is not the place for a comprehensive history of the genres. Rather, the focus will be on the implications of sequential and parallel liturgy for the performance of music in its ritual context. Historical genres will be examined in connection with liturgical performance in the post-conciliar Roman Rite, and as possible models for future sacred compositions. It is hoped that this reductive approach will be helpful in cutting through many of the issues surrounding church music in general, in order to clarify one key conceptual shift in twentieth century Catholic liturgy.

In approaching such a broad topic, it is almost as important to identify what will not be addressed as what will be. Some preliminary decisions are outlined here:

1. This study will focus on the Roman Rite, in its pre-conciliar and present form. It is important to note that the Roman Rite is not the only system of liturgical practice in the Catholic Church. From the early church through the Middle Ages, liturgy tended toward local regulation and practices in various cities or geographical regions.⁵² In Western Europe, the Roman Rite experienced a long, gradual rise to prominence and eventually

⁵² A helpful introduction to this liturgical plurality can be found in Kunzler, *Church's Liturgy*, 180-182.

dominance over these other traditions.⁵³ A major catalyst in this process, apart from association with the Pope's city and liturgical practice, was the adoption of the Roman Rite throughout the kingdom of the Franks in 754 A.D. Thus the Roman Rite became an important part of Carolingian centralization and empire-building in the early Middle Ages. The rise of the Roman Rite culminated at the Council of Trent in the mid-sixteenth century, when it was made the normative rite—certain local traditions of long usage excepted—of the entire Western Catholic Church.⁵⁴ It is this liturgy, then, which was reformed at the Second Vatican Council in the twentieth century. By this time it was of worldwide significance due to the colonial and missionary activities of Western European Catholics. While it is acknowledged that some other important rites have continued to exist alongside the Roman Rite, the Roman usage will serve to represent Roman Catholic liturgy in this study.

2. Even within the Roman Rite, most local or temporal variants are not of import to this study. Rather, the central idea of parallel liturgy will be examined in pre-conciliar practice, in order to define the change to sequential liturgy in the twentieth century.
3. The first chapter will examine the rise of parallelism in greater detail, as well as providing some examples of historical genres connected to parallel liturgy. However, the major focus for the rest of this study will be on reforms and legislative changes experienced during the twentieth century.

⁵³ The definitive history of the Roman Rite is still Joseph Jungmann's *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*. A more streamlined historical overview, incorporating the changes of Vatican II, is available in Josef Jungmann, *The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1976), 17-93. For an excellent concise summary of the historical rise of the Roman Rite, see Kunzler, *Church's Liturgy*, 180-187.

⁵⁴ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:138.

4. Emphasis will be placed on official legislation and documents, rather than on examples of liturgical or musical practice. Thus, this study will proceed mainly through an examination of papal, curial, and conciliar decrees, as well as official liturgical books such as Missals. The aim, again, is to define and describe an epochal shift in the church's official conception of the liturgy. It has always been possible for various church constituents—from individual priests or bishops to entire cities and regions—to implement the liturgy with differing levels of fidelity to the church's directives. Both before and after the council it is possible to find many examples of practice that do not correspond with the official liturgical legislation of the church. The danger in placing undue emphasis on the anecdotal, the local, or the singular practice is that the significance of the universal norm is obscured. Even for those creating rather than implementing liturgical practice, the official liturgical directives stand as a key point of departure. Official legislation in its various forms, even if rejected in whole or in part by some, shapes the general course of practice, variation, and discussion in its time. Although it can rightly be said that many unofficial liturgical practices exist before and after Vatican II, this study will focus on the official changes found in liturgical directives.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ This methodology is inspired in part by an important article on the Council of Trent: Craig A. Monson, "The Council of Trent Revisited," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55, no. 1 (2002), 1-37. Monson set the record straight—and showed the necessity of revision in many textbooks—by examining what the Council of Trent actually decreed about music. This fundamental declaration had to be untangled from disputes and drafts circulated during the council proceedings, and from various local practices (especially in Rome and Milan) after the council. In the end, Monson showed conclusively that the old theory about the Council "requiring textual clarity in church music" was false. Much similar work remains to be done in describing what the Second Vatican Council actually decreed. The following statement from a recent music history textbook shows the danger of conflating practice—in this case the common practice of abandoning the chant repertoire after Vatican II—with legislation: "Only with the Second Vatican Council of 1963-1965 did the tradition of plainchant as a vital element of the Roman Catholic liturgy come to an end." Mark Evan Bonds, *A History of Music in Western Culture* (Upper Saddle River, NJ:

5. As fascinating and valuable as they are, discussions of musical theology, the nature of music, the power of music, musical aesthetics, the place of music in Christian or Catholic thought, and so forth will not play a part in this study.⁵⁶ Such overarching considerations affect music, whether it is integrated with parallel or sequential liturgy.
6. Finally, within the musical repertoire a focused treatment of fundamental genres will guide this study. The choral Mass Ordinary genre, as described above, does indeed encompass an enormous body of music. Various traditions grew up within this genre—the various Renaissance techniques of parody, paraphrase, and *cantus firmus* for example, or the Viennese orchestral Mass tradition. Something the variants share, however, is the underlying conception of the Mass as a multi-movement major work. In this sense the Mass can be discussed as a basic musical genre, and its liturgical appropriateness after Vatican II can be examined. Certain works, such as Masses intended only for concert use, serve as exceptions proving the rule of the form’s essential liturgical nature.

Ideological Controversy and Value Judgments

Questions of church music in general, and congregational singing in particular, can become quite contentious and value laden. The view summarized by Paul Westermeyer below is certainly not limited to Protestant writers:

Prentice Hall, 2006), 52. In fact, far from ending the chant tradition, the Second Vatican Council re-affirmed its importance. Much clarification of general statements regarding the Second Vatican Council remains to be done in current textbooks.

⁵⁶ Many excellent resources exist on these topics. Two of the best books bringing such theological and philosophical considerations to bear on the current Catholic situation are Anthony Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, and Edward Schaeffer, *Catholic Music through the Ages: Balancing the Needs of a Worshipping Church* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2008). In another recent book, Joseph Swain develops a theory of liturgical music from the perspective of musical analysis: Joseph P. Swain, *Sacred Treasure: Understanding Catholic Liturgical Music* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2012).

It has . . . been easy and not uncommon in some Protestant circles to interpret the history of the Christian church from the time of Gregory the Great or so to the time of the Reformation as a great apostasy in which the people were shut out of worship, a gray period of lifeless dullness was ushered in, and music was one of the marks of the church's "fall."⁵⁷

On the Catholic side, priest and liturgical scholar James Crichton describes the ascent of choral music as an attack:

It is *natural* to sing the praises of God, natural to sing if one loves God . . . Yet ever since the eighth century in the West there has been tension between music and the Mass. Then began the invasion of music for the choir (experts) and the people gradually fell silent. Even now the problem has not been wholly solved.⁵⁸

As another example of a generally grim view of Catholic liturgical history, here is an excerpt from a presentation given by the influential Benedictine priest and liturgist Godfrey Diekmann in 1959:

How far back into history, then, do we have to go to discover when the doctrine of the Mystical Body [defined earlier as lay participation in the Mass] became obscured; when the laity lost living, devotional contact with the Eucharist and the other sacraments; when private devotion began to develop parallel to, and then to a large extent, apart from its sacramental sources? . . . I believe it can be stated with certainty, as a result of modern research, that the doctrine of the Mystical Body became obscured in the five centuries that intervened between the era of the Fathers, ending say, with Gregory the Great, about 600, and the beginnings of scholasticism. In other words, between 600 and 1100. . . . in the two thousand years of the Church's existence, there has never been a more momentous change of outlook and practice in Christian spirituality than in these five centuries. . . . [during this period] a barrier had been erected between altar and nave that was never effectually removed until the twentieth century, a barrier of which the roodscreen in later Gothic churches was only a logical external expression.⁵⁹

In fact, liturgical history in this sense seems to focus on power struggle; the Second Vatican Council representing a kind of revolution and return of power to the people of God (long

⁵⁷ Westermeyer, *Te Deum*, 121.

⁵⁸ J.D. Crichton, *Lights in Darkness: Forerunners of the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 9-10. Crichton's assessment of the pre-conciliar liturgy may be surmised from the title of his book.

⁵⁹ Godfrey Diekmann, "Popular Participation and the History of Christian Piety" in *Participation in the Mass: 20th North American Liturgical Week* (Washington D.C.: The Liturgical Conference, 1960), 52-53, 56.

suppressed and confined passively in the nave). Then-cardinal Joseph Ratzinger⁶⁰ responded to such an overarching characterization of liturgical decay and degeneration with a wry (even sarcastic) observation:

A momentous change of perspectives has obviously occurred here. A chasm separates the history of the Church into two irreconcilable worlds: the preconciliar and the postconciliar. Indeed, in many circles there is no worse verdict than being able to say that a Church decision, a text, a particular structuring of the liturgy, or a person is “preconciliar.” Accordingly, Catholicism must have been imprisoned in a truly dreadful situation until 1965.⁶¹

He goes on to address the concept of liturgy as a battleground between priest and congregation:

In this endeavor [of examining the nature of liturgy] we run into one of the alternatives which stems from the dualistic historical view of a pre- and postconciliar world. According to this alternative, the priest alone was the celebrant of the liturgy before the Council, but since the Council it is the assembled congregation. Therefore—so the conclusion—the congregation as the true subject determines what happens in the liturgy. . . [however] the polemical alternative “priest or congregation as celebrant of the liturgy” is absurd; it obstructs an understanding of the liturgy instead of promoting it, and it creates that false rift between preconciliar and postconciliar which rends the overarching coherence of the living history of the faith. It is based on a superficial kind of thinking in which the real issue no longer appears at all.⁶²

In contrast Ratzinger holds up what he considers to be a healthier understanding, in light of Catholic theology:

Liturgy is God’s work or it does not exist at all. With this “first” of God and of his action, which looks for us in earthly signs, the universality of all liturgy and its universal public nature are given; we cannot comprehend them from the category of congregation, but only from the categories of people of God and body of Christ. Only in this large framework is the reciprocal relation of priest and congregation correctly understood. . . . In sum we can say that neither the priest alone nor the community alone is the celebrant of the liturgy, but the whole Christ is the celebrant, head and members. The priest, the assembly, and the single individuals are all celebrant insofar as they are

⁶⁰ Elected Pope Benedict XVI in 2005.

⁶¹ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord*, trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 167.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 169.

united with Christ and insofar as they represent him in the communion of head and body.⁶³

Connecting such theological ideas with the practicality of choral versus congregational singing,

László Dobszay offers the following observation:

In the Middle Ages, scientific education reached only a narrow segment of the population, though it was not restricted to the clergy. A fuller participation of the faithful in the “communication system” of the liturgy was also limited by linguistic boundaries. As a consequence, the *schola* gradually assumed the role of the congregation in the basic stratum of liturgical chants, that is to say, in the cantillation of responses and Mass Ordinary. . . . Though it is fashionable today to profess that one is scandalized by these changes, from a theological point of view they are in no sense an abuse. Sane principles solidly support the belief that the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered not by those present, but always by the universal Church. When Holy Mass is celebrated or, so to say, realized and actualized in its right order, the Church acts for the benefit of the entire community, every member of which partakes of its blessings through the channels of grace. The content of the liturgy is what the Church says and does in it; the participants join in the *action praecellenter sacra* [“sacred action surpassing all others”] according to their own way and capacity.⁶⁴

Others warn against a too-narrow view of the congregational situation that only takes the Mass—and the high choral Mass of the day at that—into account. Monsignor Richard Schuler, an important American proponent of the Catholic choral tradition after Vatican II, sketches a fairly optimistic picture of medieval musical life:

The faithful sang in religious processions, at vigils for the feasts of martyrs, for burials, rogation days, translation of holy relics, and many other ecclesiastical occasions. Thus alongside the marvelous growth of the *scholae cantorum*, the flowering of the great artistic treasure of the Gregorian chant, the elaboration of papal, episcopal and monastic rites, the singing of the people continued in all parts of the West in the Celtic, Mozarabic, and Gallican forms of the Latin liturgy as well as in the parochial churches of Italy.⁶⁵

⁶³ Ibid., 171-172.

⁶⁴ László Dobszay, *The Bugnini-Liturgy and the Reform of the Reform*, Musicae Sacrae Meletemata (Front Royal, VA: Catholic Church Music Associates, 2003), 105.

⁶⁵ Richard J. Schuler, “The Congregation: Its Possibilities and Limitations in Singing” in *Cum Angelis Canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honor of Richard J. Schuler*, ed. Richard Skeris (Saint Paul, MN: Catholic Church Music Associates), 321.

Schuler emphasizes, as others have done,⁶⁶ that the congregation maintained an active musical life despite the choir's appropriation of the basic Mass texts. Also notable in this excerpt is the conception of "marvelous growth" and "flowering" in connection with the rise of the trained choirs. Was this a beautiful and wonderful development in Christianity? Or, is Paul Westermeyer's analysis more accurate:

[After the ninth century] The congregation lost its musical office in worship. A healthy tension came apart. One might say that the tendencies were to deny Christ's humanity, let high art prevail at the expense of folk art, and turn beauty into idolatry. . . . the people lost their birthright.⁶⁷

For better or worse, the rise of choral music and the great experiment of polyphonic music are inextricably linked with parallel (or "specialist") medieval liturgy. The few quotations above could be endlessly multiplied, due to the controversy surrounding this musical-ritual history. Liturgical-musical historiography, it should also be said, is only one of the debates raging in the Catholic sacred music world. Questions of appropriate styles and degrees of inculturation for sacred music also play a major role in modern discourse.

This author, while noting such important debates, will attempt to maintain an objective distance from them. It is not the purpose of this study to argue for the inherent goodness or badness of choral dominance or elaborate polyphonic music in Catholic liturgy. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider whether parallel liturgy is a richly beautiful, multi-faceted spiritual environment, or a corruption of the communal character of true Christian worship. Value judgments of this sort will be studiously avoided throughout. Whether Vatican II was a great victory for the long-silent people of God or an unnatural break with organic liturgical tradition, it did have certain practical effects on the fundamental conception of Catholic liturgy in

⁶⁶ See for example, Westermeyer, *Te Deum*, chapter 9, on the overall musical life of medieval people.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 110. Westermeyer does note the need to qualify this statement somewhat, in chapter 9 of his book.

the Roman Rite. These changes, in turn, have certain objective consequences when it comes to integrating choral music with the reformed Mass. Again, the goal of this study is not to show that choirs *must* have an active role in the Catholic Mass; rather, the point is that *if* choirs sing during the Mass they will have to take into account the objective differences between pre- and post-conciliar liturgy. Similarly, without arguing whether choirs *must* or *should* sing traditional music from the historical repertoire it is possible to examine how that repertoire interacts with the reformed liturgy. It is hoped that by avoiding many of the current church music debates this study can clarify an essential, fundamental shift in Catholic liturgical thinking of the twentieth century. If there is an implied value judgment, it is as follows: beyond questions of musical style, repertoire, tradition, and inculturation, the change from parallel to sequential liturgy is the most significant and transformational liturgical legacy of the Second Vatican Council.

CHAPTER 1

THE CHORAL ORDINARY AND PROPER IN THE ROMAN RITE BEFORE THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

The purpose of this chapter is to place the liturgical and musical reforms of twentieth-century Catholicism into a broader historical context. Early liturgical parallelism will be examined first, in order to give some indication of why and how it developed. This early liturgical history will be followed by a discussion of the principal choral genres in the Mass—the Ordinary and Proper. The aim of this background material is to contrast the Proper and Ordinary repertoires, both stylistically and in reference to the liturgy. A basic understanding of their respective origins and liturgical character is necessary, in order for the musical consequences of twentieth-century liturgical reform to be clear.

This chapter will conclude with a brief treatment of the Council of Trent, which codified and universalized much of the medieval liturgy for the Western church. This council made it possible for liturgical parallelism, with all of its musical implications, to continue to characterize the Roman Rite until the middle of the twentieth century.

The Origins of Liturgical Parallelism

As discussed in the introduction, the Roman Rite saw a gradual shift in the early Middle Ages toward liturgical division and parallelism. In this respect, the adoption of Roman liturgy throughout the kingdom of the Franks in the eighth century was a turning point for the Western church.⁶⁸ On one hand, it guaranteed the rise and dominance of the Roman liturgy—as the official liturgy of the dominant political power of the day. On the other hand, this arrangement had some unintended consequences. First of all, the liturgical books sent from Rome to the Franks were primarily focused on the most elaborate and solemn form—the “stational” liturgies celebrated by the pope and his entourage at various important churches around Rome. These liturgies involved numerous ministers who moved to and from the altar in elaborate processions, and included a trained choir (the *schola cantorum*) that travelled with the pope.⁶⁹ This exceptional service was certainly not the most common, even in Rome. As Jungmann notes:

Of course in eighth-century Rome divine service was also conducted in another fashion. In the titular churches of the city and in the country towns of the vicinity, which as a rule had only one presbyter and one or the other extra cleric, the arrangement was necessarily quite different; the Mass was the Mass of a simple priest, not that of a bishop. As a rule it was neither necessary nor possible to have a trained choir.⁷⁰

Still, because of the availability of liturgical books describing this papal liturgy, an elaborate version of the Mass became normative.

The pre-existing Gallican liturgical customs in the Frankish kingdom in turn had their effect on the imported Roman books. Jungmann traces two key Gallican elements to Eastern Christian rather than Roman roots: “a predilection for the dramatic and a delight in endlessly

⁶⁸ In the 754 decree by the Frankish King Pepin. For further discussion of this development, see Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:74-75.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 67-74.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

long prayers.”⁷¹ The dramatic found expression, for example, in increasingly grand gospel processions with a great deal of incense and ceremonial. The proliferation of prayers was focused on the priest. Significantly,

[I]n a number of places in the Mass the private praying of the celebrant in a low voice is extended, with more and more texts appearing as the next few centuries go by. The prayers which serve for this last-mentioned purpose are mostly couched in the singular, unless some older specimens are utilized. No longer is it “we” but “I” that dominates.⁷²

Thus, in the mixing of Roman liturgy with Gallican traditions, the foundation of parallel liturgy was established. More dramatic and thus lengthy ritual actions (such as processions) coupled with numerous quiet prayers on the priest’s part to stretch the framework of the liturgy. More liturgical time was created, which could then be filled with music, private devotions, and so forth. In addition, the priest began to become more absorbed his own private prayers.

Another key aspect of medieval parallelism was the Latin language of the liturgy. As the Romance dialects in France grew more distant from Latin, much of the Roman Rite became directly comprehensible only to the clergy and those with advanced education.⁷³ The Mass necessarily became divided into clerical specialists (who could understand and enact the rituals found in liturgical books) and the general congregation. Corresponding to this practical linguistic separation, theological understanding of the Mass began to emphasize God’s *descent* at the time of consecration⁷⁴ more than the *ascent* of the church’s offerings of gifts and prayers.

⁷¹ Ibid., 77.

⁷² Ibid., 77-78.

⁷³ Jungmann does note that the earlier Gallican liturgies were in Latin. However, the Roman books standardized and retained this language even as popular dialects changed. See Ibid., 81.

⁷⁴ That moment during Mass when the bread and wine are believed to change into the body and blood of Christ.

Thus “the Mass becomes all the more the mystery of God’s coming to man, a mystery one must adoringly wonder at and contemplate from afar.”⁷⁵

As the priest’s actions became increasingly an object of devout observation, a vast, complex system of allegorical interpretations grew up to explain the Mass to the congregation. One of the chief medieval authors contributing such explanations was Amalarius of Metz, active in the first half of the ninth century. Amalarius describes some parts of the Mass in this way:

The *introit* alludes to the choir of the Prophets . . . , the *Kyrie eleison* alludes to the Prophets at the time of Christ’s coming, Zachary and his son John among them . . . the Epistle alludes to the preaching of John, the *responsorium* to the readiness of the Apostles when our Lord called them and they followed Him; the Alleluia to their joy of heart when they heard His promises or saw the miracles He wrought . . . the Gospel to His preaching.⁷⁶

A famous later example can be found in the *Rationale* of the thirteenth-century cleric William Durand. Some degree of the intricacy involved in medieval allegorical explanations can be seen in the following excerpt—which has been considerably condensed from Durand’s treatment of the arrangement of the entrance procession at Mass:

While the Introit is being chanted, the bishop or priest, dressed and adorned with sacred vestments leaves the sacristy and advances toward the altar, manifesting to us how Christ, waited for by the people, having drawn his most holy flesh from the incorruptible flesh of the Virgin, goes forth to the world. He departs from his impenetrable dwelling place in heaven, and from his secret retreat in the womb of the Virgin, like a husband from his nuptial bed. The priest or bishop advances from the sacristy towards the altar between two individuals, namely another priest and a deacon. . . . The bishop or priest walking between the two people mentioned symbolizes Christ between the Old and New Testaments. Christ is clearly announced to the world by both Testaments, by the Prophets and by the Apostles. And as Christ, who had to enter into the world, sent before him prophets, sages and scribes, so also the priest is preceded by the subdeacon, who carries the Scriptures and is qualified to prepare the sacred vessels for use in Sunday

⁷⁵ Ibid., 84.

⁷⁶ Amalarius of Metz, from the shorter *Expositio* (c. 813), quoted in Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 89.

Masses. Sometimes an archdeacon and a priest accompany the bishop and they are preceded by the deacon and subdeacon, symbolizing the Apostles and the disciples that Christ sent before him. . . the subdeacon preceding the bishop represents also John the Baptist . . . And the subdeacon carries before him the book of the Gospels, because John the Baptist initiated the Gospels by preaching “Be ye penitent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” . . The bishop follows the Gospel to indicate that he should always have his eyes fixed upon the Gospel and have it present in his heart. It is carried before him because the doctrine of the Gospels prepares us for the way of Christ which leads to life.⁷⁷

Such explanations, while undeniably rich in their imagery, also show some of the conceptual distance that grew up within medieval liturgy. Rather than simple participation in the ritual by the congregation, there was a strong tendency toward observation and the imposition of meanings not inherent in the Mass itself. As one liturgical scholar puts it, in the midst of countless interpretive devices “the intrinsic value and the intended purpose of the liturgical actions themselves played as good as no further role.”⁷⁸ The liturgical actions became the work of specialists, to be viewed from a distance and ornamented mentally with intricate symbolic constructs.

The first stage of parallel liturgy, then, could be defined as the separation of clerical actions in the sanctuary from the private devotions and devout, symbolically or theologically informed observations of the laity in the nave. The architectural representation, or consequence, of this divide was the rood screen.⁷⁹ Such separation is only part of the story, however. The

⁷⁷ Guillaume Durand, *The Rationale Divinorum Officiorum: Books I, III, and IV*, trans. Rama Coomaraswamy (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2007), 269-270. According to Jungmann, Durand’s work is part of a later and simpler(!) medieval tradition which—following the example of Pope Leo III—reacted against “increased overloading of the interpretation of the Mass.” See Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:111-112.

⁷⁸ Kunzler, *Church’s Liturgy*, 184.

⁷⁹ The term ‘screen’ is in some instances not a strong enough description. At one of the great Western churches, Notre Dame in Paris, the entire sanctuary was enclosed by a stone wall around 1300. This wall stood until dismantled in part in the seventeenth century. The edifice was massive enough that “although the populace might sit at the base, or *socle*, of the outer perimeter of the wall and listen to the ritual unfolding inside the chancel and

choir was still included on the priest's side of the rood screen, and was considered to have a clerical role.⁸⁰ In order for completely parallel liturgy to develop, there needed to be some kind of divide between the various clerics in the sanctuary—between the priest and the singers.

A preliminary step to this divide was the proliferation of personal prayers, recited in a low voice by the priest. With such prayers, he already began to execute his own private ritual during the Mass. Another indication of the gradual autonomous separation of the priest was the combination of various liturgical books into a single *missal* containing everything necessary for the celebration of Mass. In the eleventh century the books themselves still showed a division of roles—the sacramentary for the priest, the lectionary for the lector, the antiphony for the choir, and so forth. Inherent in this arrangement was the notion that various clerical specialists must work together in community in order to enact the liturgy. Around the beginning of the twelfth century, however, the situation started to change:

A new arrangement of the liturgical books breaks into the picture; on the strength of this the priest can take over the roles of lector and chanter and thus discharge the duties of his office independently of them. . . . in the thirteenth century the *Missale Plenum* displaces the sacramentary.⁸¹

sanctuary, the people were physically unable to see or participate in the service. . . . By the Late Middle Ages Notre Dame had thus become two buildings under one roof: to the east, inside a wall of painted stone, was a church for the clergy; and to the west, in the nave, was an auditorium belonging to the people.” Craig M. Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500-1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 12.

⁸⁰ A distinction that, like much else regarding choirs, can be traced back to the Roman *schola cantorum*. In the 1903 *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*, Pope Pius X reiterated past tradition in the statement that “the singers in church have a real liturgical office, and . . . women therefore, being incapable of such an office, cannot be admitted to the choir.” Translated in Hayburn, *Papal*, 228. For a discussion of the historical clerical nature of the choir, and how this concept changed during the twentieth century liturgical reforms, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 382-394.

⁸¹ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:104.

With all of the required texts conveniently assembled in one book, the priest could easily celebrate the liturgy by himself. The “private” Mass, celebrated by the priest even with no other clerics or lay people present, became more and more common.⁸²

The final liturgical shift separating the priest from the choir was the requirement that he recite all texts of the Mass—even those sung by the choir. This obligation represents a change in the understanding of the sacramental validity of the Mass. In addition to taking various roles (readings, prayers) upon himself, the priest also began to assimilate all responsibility for the validity of the sacrament. While such independence was a given during a private Mass, when no other ministers were present, the mentality of priestly autonomy was only gradually transferred to the communal Mass from the mid-twelfth century onward.⁸³ According to Jungmann,

From the thirteenth century onwards the priest joined in praying also in silence the sung texts of the choir (for example Gloria, Credo etc), in order to fulfill them as it were “validly.” What others prayed and performed in the Mass had become irrelevant for its validity, the priest alone celebrated “*rite et valide*” [Lat., that is, “properly and validly”].⁸⁴

Thus, by the mid-thirteenth century a significant divide between the priest, congregation, and choir had fully developed. From this point until the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Rite was characterized by the simultaneous enactment of various devotional, musical, and sacramental roles by those present.

⁸² Ibid., 107. See the section “Low Mass and High Mass” below for further discussion of the private Mass.

⁸³ Jungmann places the first mention of the practice in 1140, with wider use and extension to all chant texts by the mid-thirteenth century. See Ibid., 106.

⁸⁴ Kunzler, *Church’s Liturgy*, 185.

The Early Polyphonic Mass Ordinary

While a survey of the Mass Ordinary genre is beyond the scope of this document, the origin of the form will be examined here in connection with liturgical parallelism. The priest's recitation of all liturgical texts—even those sung by the choir—marks a key turning point in the history of Catholic church music. Musicologist Helmut Hucke pinpoints the widespread adoption of this practice in the thirteenth-century *Rationale* of William Durand:

Thereby [with the *Rationale*] a relationship is established between Catholic church music and the liturgy unique among all denominations and cults—and the fundamental problem of Catholic church music in western music history is created: Music and the performance of the liturgy have been separated from one another. Music has gone from being a component of the liturgy to being a decoration.⁸⁵

It is at this point that the choir is freed from an integral role in the liturgy—that is, the musical proclamation of necessary texts—and shifts mainly to the task of ornamenting the Mass celebrated by the priest. Given this new relationship to the liturgy, the choir was able to expand its polyphonic performances beyond the chants between the readings (the Gradual and Alleluia).⁸⁶ The rest of the story of the Mass is well known. Polyphonic Mass Ordinary movements are extant from the early fourteenth century, with the first complete setting by one composer of all movements as a unit found in the famous *Messe de Notre Dame* of Guillaume de Machaut in the 1360s.⁸⁷ Machaut's achievement was of incredible importance, “both as a

⁸⁵ Helmut Hucke, “Geschichtlicher Überblick,” in *Gestalt des Gottesdienstes: Sprachliche und nichtsprachliche Ausdrucksformen*, ed. Hans Bernhard Meyer et al. (Regensburg: Pustet, 1990), 151. Translation by author.

⁸⁶ See Georgiades, *Music and Language*, chapter 4. Georgiades notes that “these chants, then [the Gradual and Alleluia], had the character of an interlude from the very beginning; they were genuine (and in fact quite long) musical insertions between the lessons.” *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸⁷ For further details on dating, see Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *Machaut's Mass: An Introduction* (New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 8. It should also be noted that the idea of uniting musical settings of the Ordinary into a complete (although not cyclic) Mass Ordinary collection extends into many 12th-14th century chant books. See Hucke, “Geschichtlicher Überblick,” 152.

summa of previous attempts to unite one or more parts of the Ordinary, and as a precursor to the scores of polyphonic Masses that survive from the fifteenth century and beyond.”⁸⁸

The final stage in the establishment of the Mass Ordinary genre took place in the fifteenth century with the development of various musical unifying devices. A progression can be seen from Machaut’s Mass, which is structured around appropriate chant melodies in each movement,⁸⁹ and the early fifteenth century English cyclic Masses.⁹⁰ The English innovation was to use one chant melody as the foundation for all movements of the Ordinary. Such a method of achieving musical unity may have been the key development, prompting other composers to see the Ordinary as a connected large-scale form. However, as Thrasybulos Georgiades notes in his study of the history of the Mass:

[With the single cantus firmus for all movements] that ideal association with the sacred liturgical delivery of the text was no longer as important as it had been earlier. The cantus firmus was no longer regarded as a surrogate of dogma. Its conceptual significance was now narrowed down; it was looked upon as a purely musical phenomenon. The composer discovered in it that element which would furnish the skeleton for the musical structure of a composition; it appeared to be a useful means of achieving musical unity. Consequently, one single cantus firmus was chosen for all movements of the Mass; but while this produced *musical* unity in the Mass setting, *liturgical* continuity was lost . . . [t]he musical setting of the Mass confronts us in the fifteenth century not only as a component of the liturgy but also as an independent work of art.⁹¹

With artistic gain came a certain liturgical loss. The polyphonic tradition, which had started as an ornamentation of various chant melodies in their proper liturgical place, had now

⁸⁸ Anne Walters Robertson, *Guillaume de Machaut and Reims: Context and Meaning in His Musical Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 257.

⁸⁹ The Kyrie, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, and Ite Missa Est each contain a verbatim chant cantus firmus, and the Gloria and Credo contain paraphrases and references to their respective chants. See Leech-Wilkinson, *Machaut’s Mass*, 14-53 for a detailed analysis.

⁹⁰ The chief composers of this English tradition were John Dunstable (c. 1390-1453) and Leonel Power (c. 1370-85 – 1445). For a discussion of the development of cyclic devices in this English school, see Manfred F. Bukofzer, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1950), 217-226.

⁹¹ Georgiades, *Music and Language*, 36-37.

severed its official musical link with the Mass.⁹² As artists providing an auditory ornamentation of the liturgy, composers felt entitled to base their works on freely-chosen musical materials. Such elements even began to include music from outside the sacred chant repertoire, such as romantic *chanson* melodies. Admittedly, much of this experimentation (especially the slow sounding of a cantus firmus melody) would probably not have been immediately apparent to listeners. A key conceptual change was evident, however, in the fact that polyphony became an artistic construct based on its own internal musical rules rather than an ornamentation of the integral chants of the Mass.⁹³ On the musical side, such emancipation led to the creation of countless works of art. The loss on the liturgical side, however, has caused recurring complications for the church since the fifteenth century. With the congregation as devout spectators, the priest as silent enactor of the ritual, and the choir as the performer of large-scale musical works, the distinction between concert and religious ritual can easily be lost.⁹⁴ Thus, although parallelism in the liturgy aided the development of independent musical forms, it also increased the potential for conflict between artistic and religious ideals in the Mass. The concept

⁹² The inherent importance of the chant melodies can be seen in Pope John XXII's 1324-25 proclamation *Docta Sanctorum Patrum*: "certain exponents of a new school, who think only of measured time, are composing new melodies of their own creation with a new system of notes, and these they prefer to the ancient, traditional music . . . these abuses have brought into disrepute the basic melodies of the Antiphonal and Gradual . . . [t]he mere number of notes, in these compositions, conceal from us the plain-chant melody, with its simple, well-regulated rises and falls which indicate the character of the Mode." See Hayburn, *Papal*, 20-21.

⁹³ As Manfred Bukofzer puts it, "The distinction between musical and liturgical unity is a crucial point . . . It takes a very bold and independent mind to conceive the idea that the invariable parts of the Mass should be composed not as separate liturgical items, but as a set of five musically coherent compositions. In the latter case the means of unification are provided by the composer, not the liturgy. This idea which is the historical premise of the cyclic Ordinary, betrays the weakening of purely liturgical consideration and the strengthening of essentially aesthetic concepts. The "absolute" work of art begins to encroach on liturgical function." Bukofzer, *Medieval and Renaissance Music*, 218.

⁹⁴ Helmut Hucke notes that the Masses of the Renaissance were a precursor to the idea of public musical concerts. See Hucke, "Geschichtlicher Überblick," 156. Manfred Bukofzer compares the scale and importance of the Mass genre in the Renaissance to the centrality of the symphony in the 18th and 19th centuries. See Bukofzer, *Medieval and Renaissance Music*, 217.

of a Mass Ordinary cycle has been a central contributor to this ideological tension since its inception.

The Polyphonic Proper Repertoire

Unlike Mass Ordinary settings, polyphonic Propers cycles never developed into an independent musical form. While they were often grouped together in more or less complete polyphonic settings of all Propers for a given day, these sets were linked by their liturgical texts rather than by some kind of unifying musical device. This lack of large-scale masterworks may explain why the polyphonic Mass Proper has received much less scholarly attention than the Mass Ordinary.⁹⁵ Two small volumes from 1913 and 1950 are still the standard works on the history of polyphonic Propers.⁹⁶ Of these only the 1950 book by Walter Lipphardt attempts to trace the genre past the sixteenth century. Much work needs to be done on this topic, even to fill in basic gaps in the historical account.⁹⁷ The historiography of the genre is itself problematic, as there is no logical developmental endpoint analogous to the arrival of the cyclic Mass Ordinary in the early fifteenth century. As no conception of the stand-alone musical edifice exists within

⁹⁵ In a recent book on the cultural context of the cyclic Mass, Andrew Kirkmann explores the role of late-Romantic historiography in focusing scholarly attention on the Mass. Ideals of the hero composer, the epochal masterwork, the massive artistic construction, and so forth, helped to elevate the cyclic Mass to its perceived place as the central musical achievement of the Renaissance. See Andrew Kirkman, *The Cultural Life of the Polyphonic Mass: Medieval Context to Modern Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3-25.

⁹⁶ Georg Eisenring, *Zur Geschichte des mehrstimmigen Proprium Missae bis um 1560* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1913); and Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*.

⁹⁷ The editors of a 2011 essay collection on the subject note the irony of this continued obscurity, in light of the historical importance of the Propers: "Music for the Mass proper lies at the heart of the origins of polyphony itself in the European tradition: the earliest significant surviving body of European polyphony, the Winchester Troper (dating from ca. 1020) consists largely of settings of this kind, as does the first repertory with fixed rhythm, the Parisian polyphony of the *Magnus Liber Organi*. Yet the history of polyphony for the proper of the Mass presents a much more puzzling and fragmentary picture than that of its counterpart, the Mass ordinary, and a continuous history from those spectacular beginnings through to the Renaissance is difficult to trace." David J. Burn and Stefan Gasch, "Chant Adorned: The Polyphonic Mass Proper in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance," in *Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. David J. Burn and Stefan Gasch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 27. *Ibid.*, 27-30, includes a discussion of needed research.

any one Proper cycle, the historical account instead tends to focus on large collections of such cycles as the highpoints of the form. With the understanding that a developmental account is not particularly helpful in describing the polyphonic Proper, a brief discussion of the repertoire in its various historical periods will be included here. This is not meant to be a comprehensive survey of the genre; rather, the intention is to show the importance of the polyphonic Proper in different musical eras. In addition, some important contrasts between the Mass Ordinary and Mass Proper will be considered.

The central difference between the Ordinary and Proper is evident in the respective chant repertoires. Even before the invention of polyphony, the Mass Proper chants had more of the character of choral art music than the Ordinary chants. If James McKinnon's thesis is correct, the Proper chants were created as a compositional project of the Roman *schola cantorum* over a relatively short period of time in the seventh century.⁹⁸ This concentrated origin contrasts with that of the Mass Ordinary chants, which were incorporated into the liturgy at various points in church history. For example, the Nicene Creed—the last Ordinary text to become part of the Mass—only came into general use in the eleventh century.⁹⁹ As an affirmation of orthodoxy, it was meant to be recited or sung by the entire congregation.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, the other chants of the Ordinary had—at least in their origin—a congregational character. Thus there is an important distinction between the fundamentally choral and/or soloistic Proper chants and the Ordinary chants that were merely taken over by the choir.

⁹⁸ See McKinnon, *Advent Project*, 1-3, 14-15. *Ibid.*, chapter 14, contains a narrative summary of the process.

⁹⁹ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:469-470.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 470-471.

One further feature of the Proper chants is important to note, as regards liturgical parallelism. There are two kinds of Proper chants: those accompanying processions, and those inserted between the readings. The first category is comprised of the Introit, Offertory, and Communion chants; while the second includes the Gradual, Alleluia verse, Tract, and the sequence repertoire.¹⁰¹ The processional chants originated as an artistic accompaniment to certain necessary movements of clergy and congregation. The chants between the readings, on the other hand, had a purpose similar to that of the readings themselves. They were meant to be listened to—functioning as a proclamation of the Word of God and given ornate treatment by a skilled singer. With either set of Propers, the thirteenth-century arrival of fully parallel liturgy was not particularly important. Even without parallel recitation by the priest, the various processions of Mass simply took a certain amount of time to execute. In order for an artistic repertoire to be performed at these times, it was only necessary to accept that the choir would sing instead of the congregation. As the chants between the readings already had the character of an interlude, they were even less affected by parallelism. Thus, liturgical division and differentiation of roles in the Mass had more effect on the development of the Ordinary during the Middle Ages.

Given their distinctive nature, it is not surprising that the soloistic chants in the Proper repertoire were of central importance in the development of polyphony.¹⁰² The Winchester Troper of the early eleventh century contains many two-voice settings of Gradual, Alleluia, and

¹⁰¹ Of these the Gradual and Alleluia retain some traces of a patristic-era responsorial tradition in the fact that a chorus alternates with the soloist. The choral responses of these elaborate chants can thus be considered a vestige of congregational singing. See *ibid.*, 421-423.

¹⁰² The Gradual and Alleluia, which alternate a choral response with a melismatic solo verse, and the Tract – a solo chant throughout. McKinnon notes the *schola's* standardization of a common melismatic style for the chants between the readings - the Gradual, Alleluia, and Tract. See McKinnon, *Advent Project*, 273.

Tract melodies.¹⁰³ A similar focus on Graduals and Alleluias is found in the famous *Magnus liber organi*.¹⁰⁴ Lipphardt notes that the innovation of performing such elaborate polyphony in the Mass must have been balanced somewhat by the fact that only the melismatic sections reserved for the soloist received polyphonic treatment.¹⁰⁵ There is a natural progression, then, between the ornate—even ostentatious—solo chants and their later polyphonic elaborations.

There is no real historical narrative connecting the *Magnus liber organi* with later polyphonic Propers. A major gap exists in scholarly understanding of the repertoire from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁰⁶ Reinhard Strohm offers the following explanation for the fourteenth century:

Mensural polyphony and motet composition of the fourteenth century entirely eschews the Mass proper, and, when the genre reappears in written composition in the fifteenth, the settings are not motet-like at all. I therefore suggest we are dealing not only with accidents of source transmission but with a real aesthetic and performative change affecting these genres. The compositional technique of the Ars Nova motet seems not to have been deemed suitable for the chant material at hand: probably its style of cantus firmus manipulation could not cope with long, coherent antiphonal chants and psalmody, and even less with the words.¹⁰⁷

Another possibility is that Propers were mainly sung as improvised rather than written polyphony in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the explanation, it is difficult to demonstrate any musical tradition of composed polyphonic Propers during this time.

¹⁰³ Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 22.

¹⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, 23-25. According to Craig Wright, the Alleluias would have been more common in liturgical use, with both Gradual and Alleluia sung polyphonically to mark more important feast days. See Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 265-266.

¹⁰⁵ Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 25. See also Reinhard Strohm, “The Medieval Mass Proper, and the Arrival of Polyphonic Proper Settings in Central Europe,” in *Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. David J. Burn and Stefan Gasch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 35.

¹⁰⁶ See Burn and Gasch, “Chant Adorned,” 28-29.

¹⁰⁷ Strohm, “Medieval Mass Proper,” 35.

¹⁰⁸ See *ibid.*, 36

The major sources for polyphonic Propers from the fifteenth century are the Trent codices, a hand-copied collection of manuscripts discovered in the nineteenth century at the Cathedral of Trent in northern Italy. Many works from important composers around Europe are brought together in these manuscripts, including numerous individual Proper motets and complete Proper cycles.¹⁰⁹ The music included in the collection was compiled between about 1435 and 1475.¹¹⁰ The question of why polyphonic Proper composition was abruptly taken up with so much energy is just one of the intriguing problems surrounding the genre in the fifteenth century. Philip Cavanaugh proposes that the Council of Constance was a catalyst, as it marked the end of a lengthy papal schism:

The sudden reappearance of Proper items c. 1425, after a century of largely secular musical activity, may be attributed to a new tide of religious feeling engendered by the reunification of the Church successfully undertaken by the Council of Constance, 1414-1418. In 1417, for the first time in nearly four decades, the Western Church was again united under one Pope and, thanks to the zealous leadership of Martin V and his successor Eugene IV, a promising degree of ecclesiastical reform was initiated.¹¹¹

Reinhard Strohm finds another possibility in the elaborate liturgies of the Council of Basel, which was a focal point in Europe between 1431 and 1449:

It may be suggested that the interest in the polyphonic introit was enhanced by the ceremonial life of the Council of Basel and the courts imitating its procedures: the processions of the delegates and the solemn Masses preceding each conciliar session must have been perfect opportunities for elaborate music. It is possible, therefore, that in the 1430s and in the orbit of the Council written composition of introits and

¹⁰⁹ Including eleven Mass cycles by Dufay. See Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 28.

¹¹⁰ For an outline of the dating and contents of each section, see Charles Hamm et al., "Sources, MS, IX: Renaissance Polyphony" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2nd ed., 29 vols. (New York: Grove, 2001), 23:900-901.

¹¹¹ Phillip Cavanaugh, "Early Sixteenth-Century Cycles of Polyphonic Mass Propers, an Evolutionary Process or the Result of Liturgical Reforms?," *Acta Musicologica* 48, no. 2 (1976), 153.

sequences had just come into fashion while other proper items were still more usually sung polyphonically *super librum* [that is, in improvised polyphony]—if at all.¹¹²

It seems likely that the renewed prominence and unity of the Catholic Church in the early fifteenth century led to a desire for more magnificent liturgical music—whether sections of the Proper or Ordinary, or combinations of the entire Ordinary and Proper in “plenary” Masses. Two major works of this kind are extant from around 1430: Guillaume Dufay’s *Missa Sancti Jacobi* and Reginald Libert’s *Mass of the Blessed Virgin*.¹¹³ Events such as the Council of Basel, which brought representatives from around Europe together, could have helped spur the resurgence of elaborate sacred music in this period.

The central difficulty in using polyphonic Propers is that the texts change with every Mass. It would have taken a great deal of compositional energy, along with highly trained choristers, to effectively produce such music on a regular basis. For this reason only important centers such as cathedrals or court chapels would have been able to include music from the genre in the liturgy. While the Trent codices are by far the largest fifteenth-century collection of this music, it is possible that other similar sources have been lost. Strohm points to a record from Cambrai Cathedral, which indicates that a large collection of music for the Mass was compiled from 1449 to 1450:

Scholars agree that these must have been supervised or influenced by Guillaume Du Fay, then resident at Cambrai, and that they probably contained some or all of his proper cycles later copied in the manuscript Trent 88. Thus certain French institutions now produced written settings of the proper on a large scale, as in the times of the Notre-Dame musicians, but we know of them only through indirect evidence. How many other

¹¹² Strohm, “Medieval Mass Proper,” 42-43. For further discussion of the possible role of the Council of Basel in the compilation of the Trent codices, see Brian Edward Power, “The Polyphonic Introits of “Trento, Archivio Capitolare, Ms 93”: A Stylistic Analysis” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1999), 4-7.

¹¹³ For a discussion of these settings, see Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 28-30.

centers had such manuscripts that are now lost, and the respective archival documents have not yet been found?¹¹⁴

The possibility that other centers beside the cathedral of Trent collected and commissioned such music for liturgical use is intriguing. As rich in content as the Trent codices are, they may offer only a glimpse of the polyphonic Proper repertoire of the fifteenth century.¹¹⁵

Three specific compositional characteristics of the Trent repertoire are pertinent to the present document, and will come into greater focus in the discussion of compositional models for the post-Vatican II era. First, the techniques of cyclic composition are not evident within this Proper repertoire. This fact is quite interesting, as many of the Proper cycles were by Dufay—a composer central in establishing the cyclic Mass Ordinary in continental Europe. For some reason, he was comfortable using a single cantus firmus to unify the movements of the Mass Ordinary, but did not apply a similar technique to the Proper texts. In the absence of such an overarching musical unifying device, the sets included were linked primarily by the fact that the Proper texts for a single liturgy were all set polyphonically.

The second compositional characteristic found in the Trent codices is the treatment of the chant melody in a polyphonic texture. While fifteenth-century cantus firmus Masses were built around freely chosen sacred or secular melodies, the Proper settings in the Trent codices tend to retain their original chant melodies. This attention to the chant tradition is further highlighted by the common practice of placing the chant melody in the soprano rather than the tenor voice, and

¹¹⁴ Strohm, “Medieval Mass Proper,” 44.

¹¹⁵ Strohm argues that many other institutions must have attempted such composition and compilation projects, especially by the later fifteenth century. *Ibid.*, 57.

setting it in shorter note values than a typical cantus firmus.¹¹⁶ As Lipphardt describes the practice:

This method of holding on to the chant applies not only to the Mass of [Reginald] Libert, but also . . . to the entire range of Proper compositions in the Trent codices. In its inner relationship to the chant this new Proper-art [*Proprienkunst*] of the 15th century shows a relationship to the style of early Gothic organum. However, some things are changed. The chant is no longer committed to being a supporting lower voice in long note values; but rather set in reworked, ornamented form as the single melodic voice in the Soprano.¹¹⁷

Thus, in addition to abandoning the cyclic cantus firmus technique when setting the Propers, composers such as Dufay tended to balance polyphonic writing with a prominent statement of the original chant melody.¹¹⁸ While the melody was still paraphrased and mensurated to some extent in order to fit it into measured, cadence-driven music, the basic outline of the melody would be clearly audible to any listener familiar with the original tune. The chant melody, through this compositional device, retains pride of place in the polyphonic Proper tradition.

A third noteworthy compositional characteristic of the Trent repertoire is the fluidity of the designation “Mass.” In this collection, the term “Mass” is used indiscriminately for Proper cycles, Ordinary cycles, and “plenary” cycles combining all of the Ordinary and Proper for a given day. Thus for major composers in the mid-fifteenth century there was still complete flexibility in the decision of what texts to set for a particular occasion. The five-movement Mass Ordinary cycle was not yet the standard large-scale liturgical masterwork. While this situation

¹¹⁶ That is, in semibreves rather than breves—in modern notation half notes rather than whole or dotted whole notes.

¹¹⁷ Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 29-30. Translation by author.

¹¹⁸ See Reinhard Strohm’s discussion of the soprano cantus firmus in Strohm, “Medieval Mass Proper,” 36-41. See also Robert Gerken’s historical overview of the practice in Robert Edward Gerken, “The Polyphonic Cycles of the Proper of the mass in the Trent Codex 88 and Jena Choirbooks 30 and 35” (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1969), 23-34. Gerken notes that the soprano discant technique is used almost exclusively in Trent codex 88, which contains numerous Dufay settings. In addition, Brian Power shows that all but four of the sixty-one polyphonic Introits of Trent 93 use the soprano *cantus firmus* technique. See Power, “Polyphonic Introits,” 146-148.

changed in the sixteenth century, the remnant of the “plenary” Mass concept can be found in the polyphonic and concerted Requiem Mass tradition.

The practice of using polyphonic Proper cycles in the liturgy, demonstrated by the groupings in the Trent codices, was likely well known at important courts and cathedrals by the end of the fifteenth century.¹¹⁹ The sixteenth century sees a continuation of this trend, as exemplified by the massive *Choralis Constantinus* of Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450-55–1517).¹²⁰ This collection of Proper cycles for the entire church year was published well after Isaac’s death in three volumes; the first in 1550 and the second and third in 1555.¹²¹ It is made up of works commissioned in 1508 for the Constance cathedral, as well as later commissions for the Imperial Chapel of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I.¹²² In addition, parts of the publication were completed after Isaac’s death by his pupil, Ludwig Senfl (c. 1486–1542). The massive scale of the collection is shown in this summary of its contents:

The first volume, CCI, (1550) contains 47 cycles for Sundays throughout the year, prefaced with a setting of the “Asperges me,” to be sung at the beginning of each Mass. The Sundays begin with Trinity Sunday and continue through 23 Sundays after Pentecost before arriving at Advent, the traditional start of the liturgical year. There are then settings for four Sundays in Advent. After these comes the Sunday in the octave of Epiphany, those that follow it, those that lead up to and occupy Lent, and those that follow Easter. Easter Sunday itself is not included, nor is Pentecost (these are found in CCII). . . . CCII (1555) contains 25 proper-cycles for high feasts, both of fixed calendar date, such as Christmas, as well as moveable, such as Easter and Pentecost. The major

¹¹⁹ See Strohm, “Medieval Mass Proper,” 57.

¹²⁰ One other major collection helps fill in the historical narrative, but will not be discussed here. This is the Jena choir book collection, which was compiled between 1500 and 1520 and contains numerous Mass proper cycles. See Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 32-34 for an overview of the collection, and Gerken, “Polyphonic Cycles,” parts IV and V for analysis and discussion of the Mass cycles in the Jena Choirbooks.

¹²¹ The most comprehensive recent study of Isaac’s work on the *Choralis Constantinus* is David J. Burn, “The mass-Propser Cycles of Henricus Isaac: Genesis, Transmission, and Authenticity” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2002). For a detailed account of the publication process see Royston Gustavson, “Commercialising the *Choralis Constantinus*: The Printing and Publishing of the First Edition,” in *Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. David J. Burn and Stefan Gasch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

¹²² For a discussion of the division between Constance and Imperial commissions see David J. Burn, “What Did Isaac Write for Constance?,” *The Journal of Musicology* 20, no. 1 (2003).

Marian feasts are included, but so too are those of saints of significance to Constance (St. Conrad, St. Geberhard, St. Pelagius). CCIII (also 1555) is structured in four sections: 1) Propers for the Common of Saints; 2) Marian proper-cycles; 3) Proper-cycles, under the heading of “seorsum de sanctis,” setting feasts of the same type as those found in CCII; and 4) Mass ordinaries.¹²³

This publication presents a practical arrangement of polyphonic Propers for the entire church year. Although collections such as the Trent codices and Jena choir books show a longstanding interest in such liturgical groupings, the comprehensive nature of the *Choralis Constantinus* is without precedent. Also significant is the fact that its scope was never approached in any subsequent publications.

Stylistically, the *Choralis Constantinus* uses original Proper chant melodies throughout as the foundation for polyphonic elaboration. The melodies are stated in the soprano voice in volumes I and II, and in the Bass voice in volume III.¹²⁴ In addition to this use of the chant melodies in full statements, “individual motifs of the cantus firmus, such as pitch repetitions or large leaps, are often taken up in the counterpoint to amplify their dramatic force.”¹²⁵ Thus the Proper chants become pervasive in their influence on the musical texture. Isaac continues what seems to be a tradition for the polyphonic Proper—the chant retains pride of place in these settings.

The scope of the *Choralis Constantinus* publication might appear to demonstrate the great importance of the Proper cycle in the sixteenth century. However, one of the striking things about the collection is its lack of successors. The only other large-scale collection of Mass Proper cycles after the sixteenth century is the *Gradualia* of William Byrd, published in

¹²³ Ibid., 49-50.

¹²⁴ For details on the chant placement in each volume, see *ibid.*, 50.

¹²⁵ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Isaac, Henricus,” by Reinhard Strohm and Emma Kempson, accessed November 5, 2012, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/subscriber/article/grove/music/51790>.

two volumes in 1605 and 1607. This work contains 109 polyphonic settings, including complete polyphonic Proper cycles for the major feasts of the church year. The *Gradualia* was completed and published while Byrd was still alive, and thus represents his own compositional vision and system of organization throughout. The liturgical context of the collection is far removed from the triumphal Catholicism of continental European courts and cathedrals. Byrd's Proper cycles were written for the underground Catholic community in England, and thus for liturgies celebrated in noble houses under conditions of secrecy.¹²⁶ This simpler liturgical context was probably one motivation for a certain compositional economy in the *Gradualia*, as compared to works from earlier in Byrd's career.

Stylistically, Byrd's *Gradualia* breaks with the continental practices represented by Isaac's *Choralis Constantinus*. With only a few exceptions, the Proper movements of Byrd's work are completely independent of the original chant melodies. This style is surprising, in light of the fact that he was skilled in the art of chant-based composition.¹²⁷ Kerry McCarthy gives the following description of Byrd's compositional choices:

The guiding principal of his *Gradualia* can be summed up in a single line: *the ideal of tonal and expressive unity took almost immediate precedence over the authority of the chant*. This, more than anything, is what sets Byrd's polyphonic Mass proper cycle apart from all other surviving examples of the genre. He may have been a conservative composer, working in relative isolation, but he took a surprisingly progressive approach to setting the Mass proper: liturgical music built purely around large-scale modal structures and freely composed melodic gesture.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ For a discussion of Catholic recusant liturgy and the place of Byrd's polyphony, see Kerry Robin McCarthy, "Byrd as Exegete: His "Gradualia" in Context" (Ph.D. diss, Stanford University, 2003), chapter 4.

¹²⁷ A fact Byrd demonstrates by basing one of his pieces in the *Gradualia* on a traditional long-note cantus firmus - the Easter processional antiphon *Christus resurgens*. For details on this piece, see Kerry Robin McCarthy, "Byrd and the Mass Proper Tradition," in *Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. David J. Burn and Stefan Gasch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 410-411.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 415.

The style of the *Gradualia*, along with its liturgical execution in secretive liturgies, renders it unique in the polyphonic repertoire. Thus it is difficult to describe this work as a true successor to either the *Choralis Constantinus* or to continental practice in general.

Even if the *Gradualia* were considered an integral part of the European tradition of complete Proper cycles, it would necessarily represent the end of the practice. By the second half of the sixteenth century, the notion of Proper “cycles” was restricted primarily to collections of individual movement types. For example, Lipphardt describes a 1560 collection from Venice containing Introits and Alleluias for the high feast days of the year.¹²⁹ Collections of Introits for the church year continued to be popular in Italy in the later sixteenth century.¹³⁰ The most important polyphonic Propers from this time period, however, were the Offertories for the church year of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525-1594) and Orlando di Lasso (c. 1530-1594). These works, both through the fame of their composers and through their grand style, signaled an important shift in the relative importance of the Proper texts. Earlier, according to Lipphardt, the Introit and Communion were the most important Propers—a fact evidenced by the complete lack of Offertories in the *Choralis Constantinus*.¹³¹ With the works of Palestrina and Lasso, the Offertory became a kind of artistic high point of the liturgy.¹³² The focus on

¹²⁹ Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 52.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 53-54.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

¹³² This is likely connected to the decreasing liturgical importance of the Introit and Communion processions as well. Jungmann notes a shortening of the processional character of the Introit in the Middle Ages, with the result that the chant came to accompany only the prayers at the foot of the altar and the entrance of the priest into the sanctuary. See Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:323-325. This, in combination with the trained performing forces necessary, may help explain why polyphonic Introits were limited to only the most important cathedral and court liturgies. The case of the Communion chant is easier to explain – for there to be a procession at this point in the Mass, it is necessary for the congregation to walk forward to receive communion. As lay reception of communion practically vanished during the Middle Ages (with the exception of one or two high feast days during the year), there would have been no need for lengthy music covering the procession. For a discussion of lay communion in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, see *ibid.*, 2:395-397. The question in this case is whether the

individual Proper settings in general, and on the Offertory in particular would characterize the post-sixteenth century polyphonic Proper repertoire.

The Council of Trent and Liturgical Standardization

The Council of Trent was a key event in the history of the Roman Rite. The Council, which met in twenty-five sessions from 1545 to 1563, was marked by two competing tendencies. On one hand it stood as a culmination of reform tendencies stretching back hundreds of years. In this reform tradition the council worked to remove certain medieval accretions that had worked their way into the liturgy and into private spirituality. The reform spirit resulted in much “pruning” of earlier traditions:

The liturgical cycle was relieved of a multitude of saint’s feasts with which the Middle Ages had overburdened it, causing the Sundays to disappear; only those saints’ feasts were to be celebrated that Rome had accepted before the eleventh century. The result was a hundred and fifty days set free, without counting octaves. . . . [i]n the Ordinary of the Mass most of the sequences were eliminated; order was introduced into the private prayers and gestures of the celebrant by excluding the undisciplined expressions too often resulting from unschooled devotion.¹³³

The second tendency was to reiterate church tradition and teaching in dogmatic terms, as a strong reaction to the Protestant reformers. This counter-reformation mentality meant that many practical liturgical changes were rejected:

The council took up defensive positions not only with regard to the Real Presence and the sacrificial character [of the Mass], but also with regard to the external course of the Mass. Thereby the development towards a clerical liturgy was fixed in writing. Many good proposals, which were put forward on the part of Catholic humanists (for example

polyphonic Proper cycles of Trent and Jena or the *Choralis Constantinus* were connected with any resurgence of lay reception of communion.

¹³³ Robert Cabié, *The Eucharist*, ed. Aimé Georges Martimort, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell, *The Church at Prayer: An Introduction to the Liturgy*, vol. 2 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 175. See also Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:136.

vernacular, chalice for the laity, greater participation by the congregation) were not given a chance.¹³⁴

Thus, while the church year and the structure of Mass were clarified, the basic tripartite division of clergy, choir, and congregation remained in place. The priest continued to effect the valid recitation of Mass texts himself, in parallel with the choir's singing.

The Council of Trent had very little to say on the subject of music, instead leaving practical questions to the various bishops.¹³⁵ The only official decree touching on the performance of music came in 1562 at the twenty-second session of the council:

So that the house of God should truly appear to be rightly called a house of prayer compositions in which there is an intermingling of the lascivious or impure, whether by instrument or voice, and likewise every secular action, idle and even profane conversation, strolling about, bustle, and shouting must be ousted from the churches.¹³⁶

There is certainly concern here for the character of music used in a church. However, the council did not attempt to regulate how music should interact with or integrate into the liturgy. In this sense the council set an important precedent for determining the worthiness of church music: assuming that the correct Mass text was used, a piece was to be judged on the purity of its musical content rather than on its suitability as an integral part of the liturgy. As long as a setting was appropriate for use in a sacred space, it was acceptable as an ornament for sacred time during the Mass.¹³⁷ Thus in spite of the council's insistence on sacred purity in church music, choral music after Trent retained its place as a parallel decoration or accompaniment of the liturgy.

¹³⁴ Kunzler, *Church's Liturgy*, 186.

¹³⁵ For an in-depth discussion of the council proceedings (regarding music), and the musical implications of the Council of Trent, see Monson, "The Council of Trent Revisited."

¹³⁶ Hayburn, *Papal*, 28.

¹³⁷ See Hucke, "Geschichtlicher Überblick," 154.

The reformed missal of the Council of Trent was published in 1570, with the groundbreaking assertion that it was to be used universally in the Western church. Only liturgical traditions with over two centuries of use were allowed to persist alongside the Roman Rite—this included the rites of certain religious orders, as well as the liturgies of some major cities.¹³⁸ This unprecedented centralization and standardization of liturgical practice was accompanied by strict measures to slow future developments in the Mass. In 1588 a liturgical regulatory committee was established by Pope Sixtus V—the Congregation of Sacred Rites. The Congregation was meant to deal with practical questions of implementation, as well as any needed interpretation of the new Roman Missal. Jungmann describes the limited duties of this committee:

It had to settle doubts, to give out dispensations and privileges, and since there was always a chance of introducing new feasts, it had to provide the proper formularies for them. On the other hand it was not in the ordinary power of the Congregation to change the rubrics or alter the wording of prayers. Thus the Congregation of Rites was not to be an organ for liturgical evolution . . . the Congregation was to act as a regulator, charged with the duty of seeing that the status of things established by the Missal of Pius V be in no way altered or endangered.¹³⁹

The era following the Council of Trent, then, was characterized by centralized and conservative liturgical authority in Rome. With certain local traditions of long standing excepted, the Roman Missal became the universal standard of the Western church. This liturgical book underwent a variety of revisions in the following centuries; however, the fundamental structure of the Mass was not affected.¹⁴⁰ The practice of liturgical parallelism thus

¹³⁸ Such as the Ambrosian rite in Milan and the Mozarabic rite in Lyons. For a discussion of the rites left in place after the Council of Trent, see Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:138.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹⁴⁰ Changes included revisions of the calendar, revision to individual prayers and texts, clarification of rubrics, and so forth. The editions of the Missal through 1940 are examined in detail in John Berthram O'Connell, *The Celebration of Mass; a Study of the Rubrics of the Roman Missal*, 3 vols. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1940), 8-11.

continued unbroken from at least the thirteenth century (with widespread priestly recitation of texts sung by the choir), through the final pre-conciliar Roman Missal published in 1962.

Low and High Masses

One final clarification is necessary as regards the development of the Roman Rite. Two levels of liturgical solemnity coexisted between the early Middle Ages and the Second Vatican Council: the Low Mass and the High Mass. The Low Mass is a development of the medieval private Mass, which Jungmann defines as “a Mass celebrated for its own sake, with no thought of anyone participating, a Mass where only the prescribed server is in attendance, or even where no one [aside from the priest] is present.”¹⁴¹ These private Masses gradually became more common from the ninth century onward, with individual clergy frequently celebrating Mass multiple times on the same day. In places with numerous resident clergy, private Masses would often be celebrated simultaneously at side altars.¹⁴² The period of greatest growth for the practice was the thirteenth century, a fact Jungmann attributes to “the growth of the clergy in larger cities.”¹⁴³ The theological impetus behind private Masses was the belief that each valid liturgy necessarily caused sacramental grace to flow. It followed, then, that if more Masses were celebrated, more grace would be available. In this sense, the private Mass was considered a powerful prayer that could be offered for some special purpose—such as the repose of a dead relative’s soul. Laypeople could request that such Masses be offered for a particular intention, typically providing a stipend to the celebrating priest.

¹⁴¹ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:215. Jungmann traces the private Mass, in turn, to the domestic Mass of the early church. For a discussion of this history, see *ibid.*, 212-217.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 221-223.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 222.

On a practical level, the private Mass began to develop its own modified rubrics in the thirteenth century. The most noticeable of these was the fact that the priest could quietly read aloud, rather than sing, the texts and prayers of the Mass.¹⁴⁴ Thus another name for the Low Mass is the *missa lecta* or “read Mass.” The private character of this kind of Mass became less distinct as it was celebrated in many places with a congregation present, often as the standard parish Mass. This form of the Mass was codified in the reforms of the Council of Trent, and retained through the pre-conciliar 1962 Missal. In fact, Trent served to enshrine the Low Mass as the standard form, “describing the special ceremonies of the solemn high Mass as a sort of appendix.”¹⁴⁵ As a development of the private Mass, the Low Mass stood as the most extreme form of liturgical parallelism. The priest celebrated more or less silently, and with almost no reference to the congregation or choir (if they were even present). There was a certain freedom in the musical traditions that grew up around Low Mass, as there were no required liturgical texts for the congregation, musicians, or choir. As one example, in some places vernacular hymnody could be sung by the congregation while the priest celebrated Mass.¹⁴⁶ Ironically, then, the most extreme division between sanctuary and lay faithful resulted in the best opportunities for congregational singing.

The High Mass, in contrast, assumes the presence of the choir and the singing of the entire Mass. Jungmann traces this form of the Mass to the more elaborate liturgy celebrated by

¹⁴⁴ See *Ibid.*, 228-229.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 229.

¹⁴⁶ This was especially the case in Austria and Germany—probably as an emulation of the Lutheran tradition. For a discussion of this Catholic musical tradition, see Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:146-148. See also, Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 577-586.

the bishop and his assisting clergy in Christian antiquity.¹⁴⁷ The High Mass thus has an inherent communal and public nature when compared to the Low, at least as regards the choir and clerics in the sanctuary. With the affirmation given to the Low Mass at the Council of Trent the High Mass became exceptional—celebrated as the most important Mass of the day, or to mark higher feast days.¹⁴⁸ The High Mass, though not the most commonly celebrated form, is certainly considered more than the Low Mass in the discussion of music history. As the High form required the singing of the entire Ordinary and Proper, it was the liturgical context for any polyphonic or concerted settings of those chants. For certain other musical genres, however, especially that of vernacular hymnody, the distinction between Low and High Mass was of central importance.

Conclusion – The Roman Rite at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

As described in this chapter, a tripartite division of roles between clergy, choir, and congregation had fully developed in the Roman Rite by the thirteenth century. Within this ritual context the choir, largely freed from its clerical role as an integral participant in the liturgy, was able to focus on filling liturgical time with beautiful musical ornamentation. With such independence came the possibility of elaborating not only the traditionally choral Proper chants; but also the simpler Ordinary chants with polyphony. Finally, with the invention of various unifying devices, the polyphonic Ordinary began to stand on its own as a large-scale musical edifice. In contrast, the polyphonic Proper repertoire—with the notable exception of the Byrd *Gradualia*—maintained its ties with the traditional chant melodies of the liturgy. Perhaps

¹⁴⁷ This ancient tradition makes the High Mass, in Jungmann's estimation, the ideal or best form of the Roman Rite. See Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:195-202.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 206-207.

because it did not develop into an integrated multi-movement form, however, the complete Proper cycle disappeared after the sixteenth century. Thus the major sacred form for the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras remained the Mass Ordinary. The essential parallel nature of the Mass, codified by the Council of Trent, provided an unchanging framework for all of this impressive musical activity. At the beginning of the twentieth century this imposing musical-liturgical structure would begin to undergo its first major reforms in over four hundred years.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

The Second Vatican Council cannot be understood as an independent watershed event in the history of Roman Catholic liturgy. Rather, it was the culmination of a series of official reforms and ideological developments on the part of the church. These official pronouncements were in turn greatly influenced by the international scholarly and pastoral phenomenon known as the “Liturgical Movement.”¹⁴⁹

The chapter will begin with an overview of the Liturgical Movement, in order to demonstrate the widespread reform spirit affecting Catholicism in the early twentieth century. Following this general treatment, the musical implications of the Liturgical Movement will be discussed.

General History of the Liturgical Movement

Following the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, the Roman Rite was characterized by centralized liturgical control in Rome. While certain small changes were made in various editions of the Roman Missal, the general focus was a preservation of the liturgy as codified in 1570. Certain reform efforts can be identified after this time, whether focused on the liturgy itself or on participation within the existing framework.¹⁵⁰ For example, in eighteenth

¹⁴⁹ Capitalization of the term “Liturgical Movement” varies. Capitalization reflects the consciousness of many leaders that they were part of a major international coalition for reform and renewal of the liturgy. Throughout this document, the term “Liturgical Movement” will be capitalized.

¹⁵⁰ J.D. Crichton’s book on liturgical reformers, although polemical in its characterization of pre-twentieth century liturgy as dark and disordered, offers valuable examples of reforms from before the late nineteenth century. See Crichton, *Lights in Darkness*. For a contrasting approach, see Alcuin Reid, *The Organic Development of the*

century Germany and Austria the practice of congregational singing during the High Mass developed—the so-called *Deutsche Hochamt* (German High Mass). In this tradition, the congregation rather than the choir would sing the Mass Ordinary movements in metrical vernacular versions.¹⁵¹ However, as the basic structure of the liturgy was unchanged, the assembly simply took on the choir's role of providing music while the Mass was celebrated. The distinction between parallel activity during Mass and participation in the clerical liturgy itself remained in place.

The story of the Liturgical Movement, and of substantial structural reform of the Roman Rite, begins in 1833 with the establishment of a small Benedictine Abbey in Solesmes, France. The founder and first abbot, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805–1875), saw the faithful celebration of the Roman Rite as the central means of revitalizing Catholicism in his country after the destruction wrought by the French Revolution.¹⁵² Further, he believed that monasteries should serve as the locus of this religious renewal, primarily in their careful attention to the liturgy. Thus, for Guéranger, the liturgy was meant to be a formational spiritual center for the general populace as well as for the clergy and those in religious orders. As Jungmann notes, this focus on the lay faithful was central to later reforms:

It was from him [Guéranger] and from what he established that the most momentous impulses proceeded for that intense rapprochement of the liturgy to the people and for that far-reaching reorganization of divine service which we witness today [this from the 1949 edition of Jungmann's work]. . . . It led to a knowledge of the ways and means to bridge, at least in some scant manner, the thousand-year old cleft between the Mass-

Liturgy: The Principles of Liturgical Reform and Their Relation to the Twentieth-Century Liturgical Movement Prior to the Second Vatican Council, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), chapter 1.

¹⁵¹ The practice was not officially licit, as the Ordinary could only be sung in Latin during the High Mass. An official allowance of the German tradition was not granted until 1943. For further information on the German vernacular Ordinary tradition, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 300-301.

¹⁵² Both as an ideal form and as an alternative to the various local liturgies that had developed in France in place of the Roman Rite. See Crichton, *Lights in Darkness*, 44-51 for an introduction to the French (neo-Gallican) liturgies.

liturgy and the people, without using allegory and also without any fundamental changes.¹⁵³

The idea that the faithful could be drawn into the liturgy *as it existed* was important for Guéranger. He and other early reformers attempted to lessen the division between clergy and congregation without a revision of the basic structure of the Mass. Instead, the emphasis was on clarity and beauty in the celebration of the liturgy on one hand, and on better instruction and spiritual formation for the laity on the other.

In addition to his concern for the congregation at Mass, Guéranger set another important precedent for later reformers. His two major works—the *Institutions Liturgiques* and *L'Année Liturgique* (“The Liturgical Year”)—included scholarly treatment of liturgical history and the liturgical seasons. Guéranger’s scholarship is not thorough by modern standards, and is heavily charged both with his own idealization of the Middle Ages as the high point of Catholic history¹⁵⁴ and with his agenda of bringing the Roman Rite into universal use. Still, he helped establish the idea that liturgy could and should be studied in an organized, scholarly manner.

Guéranger’s interest in scholarship and historical source materials informed his other major legacy: the restoration of the Gregorian chant tradition.¹⁵⁵ Dissatisfied with the chant books of his day, he believed that new editions should be drafted based on careful study of the oldest available documents. This called for years of research, as many of the ancient manuscripts used forms of notation that had yet to be deciphered. Numerous scholars continued

¹⁵³ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:159.

¹⁵⁴ An outlook related to Romantic neo-Gothicism in general. For a critique of Guéranger’s ideology and scholarship, see Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), chapter 2.

¹⁵⁵ Full treatment of the Solesmes chant restoration can be found in Pierre Combe, *The Restoration of Gregorian Chant: Solesmes and the Vatican Edition* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003), as well as in Katherine Bergeron, *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes*, California Studies in 19th Century Music (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

Guéranger's project over the years, publishing many chant books and comparative studies of the sources. This critical study of chant at Solesmes, along with the preparation of scholarly editions, helped bring the genre back to the forefront of Catholic consciousness by the late nineteenth century. The chant repertoire, newly restored, features prominently in twentieth-century documents on music.

The liturgical project begun by Guéranger spread in the second half of the nineteenth century, through the foundation of other Benedictine monasteries in France, Belgium, and Germany. These institutions furthered the important aspects of his vision: attention to the celebration of the liturgy, care for the spirituality of the faithful, and liturgical scholarship. In addition, the movement remained primarily monastic through the beginning of the twentieth century and retained Guéranger's emphasis on working within the inherited Roman Rite.

Anthony Ruff notes this inherent traditionalism in the early movement, and its connection to the restored chant repertoire:

The leaders of the Liturgical Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century inherited from their predecessors a notion of liturgy as a given, a nearly untouchable patrimony from the past. There was initially little or no advocacy of reform of the liturgy. Rather, the goal was to bring laity to the liturgy in its inherited form and structure. . . . The inherited liturgical music of the Church, Gregorian chant, was seen on all sides as the model of worship music and the basis of congregational participation.¹⁵⁶

This connection to liturgical and musical history can be seen in the 1903 motu proprio *Tra le sollecitudini*, which will be discussed below. It is important to note that while there was not a widespread desire at the turn of the twentieth century for structural reform of the Mass, there was a great deal of international interest in restoring the existing liturgy to a prominent place—as the spiritual center of Catholic life.

¹⁵⁶ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 210.

The official Liturgical Movement is generally considered to begin in 1909, at the National Congress of Catholic Works in Malines, Belgium. At this conference the Benedictine monk Lambert Beauduin (1873–1960) of Mont-César Abbey presented a paper on the importance of lay liturgical piety.¹⁵⁷ Anthony Ruff outlines the key points of Beauduin’s paper:

The speech emphasized that the liturgy is a school of prayer, the primary way the Church teaches, a bond of unity, and a source of the true Christian spirit far superior to all private devotions. Beauduin remarked that the laity had unlearned the liturgical tradition over the course of centuries, and he expressed the hope that it not take so long for them to relearn it.¹⁵⁸

The Congress subsequently passed several resolutions regarding liturgical renewal in Belgium, which can be summarized as follows:

1. To spread the use of the missal as a book of piety and to popularize at least the whole text of each Sunday Mass and Vespers by translating it into the language of the people.
2. To make piety more liturgical: this included such things as the restoration of Compline as night prayers, of the parish High Mass [as opposed to Low Masses], of liturgical customs in the home, as well as suggestions about music and chant (including that choir members make an annual retreat at a center of liturgical life, like Mont César or Maredsous [another Belgian abbey]).¹⁵⁹

With aids such as vernacular missals, congregants were meant to be able to follow the Mass closely and unite their prayers with the words or actions of the priest. The key concept in this effort was that the faithful should participate (at least interiorly) in the actual liturgy rather than engaging in their own parallel private devotions. In this way the liturgy itself could be the center of Catholic spirituality and piety.

¹⁵⁷ For a thorough account of Beauduin’s life and work, see Sonya A. Quitslund, *Beauduin, a Prophet Vindicated* (New York: Newman Press, 1973).

¹⁵⁸ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 214.

¹⁵⁹ Summarized by Sonya Quitslund in Quitslund, *Beauduin*, 24.

The proceedings at the congress in Malines soon took on international significance, due to the industriousness of Beauduin and others. As Beauduin describes the aftermath of the conference,

The movement developed rapidly and multiplied its methods of action. Reviews and publications of all kinds, liturgical and Gregorian “weeks,” congresses and “days,” committees and circles of liturgical study, [and] a general secretariat, were instituted – in fact, all the various enterprises of which the Benedictine abbeys of Belgium became centers, and which gave the movement such a profound and efficacious vitality.¹⁶⁰

Anthony Ruff notes some further details:

The effects of the speeches of this congress were immediate and far-reaching. Monthly leaflets with translations of the liturgy began to be published. The first Liturgical Week was held at Mont-César Abbey in 1910. Further liturgical study weeks for clergy and educated laity were held. . . . Study weeks for chant and music were held at Mont-César beginning in 1911. Already in 1911 the *Revue Liturgique et Bénédictine* (“Benedictine and Liturgical Review”) issued at Maredsous reported on a French liturgical week at which a monk of Maredsous . . . proposed that the congregation participate at Low Mass by reciting in common the Latin responses of the Mass server.¹⁶¹

Through such study weeks, conferences, and publications, the Liturgical Movement became active as a public intellectual and pastoral initiative.

In 1914 Beauduin published *La Piété l'Église* (“The Spiritual Life of the Church”); in his words a book “written with the purpose of restating exactly, for Catholic clergy and laity alike, the true meaning of the liturgical movement and its organization, and of gaining for it further sympathy and support.”¹⁶² In this work Beauduin clearly states the main problem the movement hopes to solve:

The active participation in the liturgical life of the Church is a capital factor in the supernatural life of the Christian. . . . Is it necessary, on the other hand, to prove the

¹⁶⁰ Lambert Beauduin, *Liturgy the Life of the Church*, trans. Virgil Michel (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press), 43.

¹⁶¹ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 215.

¹⁶² Beauduin, *Liturgy*, vi.

existence of almost complete ignorance or apathy among the faithful in regard to the liturgical worship? That matter is too evident, and we shall not stop to describe it.¹⁶³

Beauduin takes it as self-evident that the liturgy no longer has a central role in the spiritual life of the Catholic faithful. He does not suggest changing the liturgy in order to improve the situation; rather, he notes that mere observance of the rubrics is not in itself enough to revitalize lay spirituality:

Surely, care for detailed exactness and for reverence in the performance of liturgical acts is eminently priestly, and a source of edification to the faithful. . . . The minor prescriptions regarding the number of candles on the altar, the quality of the incense, the vestments of the acolytes, and so many others, that excite the sarcasm of unbelievers – all are worthy of our respect. But they form only one element of the liturgy. Looked at exclusively from their point of view, the liturgy can have only the value of external formalities.¹⁶⁴

In addition to careful celebration on the part of the clergy, the participation of the congregation must be encouraged:

Let us change the routine and monotonous assistance at acts of worship into an active and intelligent participation; let us teach the faithful to pray and confess these truths in a body: and the liturgy thus practiced will insensibly arouse a slumbering faith and give a new efficacy, both in prayer and action, to the latent energies of the baptized souls.¹⁶⁵

After outlining his vision of liturgy and the many blessings it can bring to the laity, Beauduin describes the practical steps to be taken by the international Liturgical Movement. His program of reform amounts to a charter for the movement, and is reproduced here:

The central idea to be realized by the liturgical movement is the following: “To have the Christian people all live the same spiritual life, to have them all nourished by the official worship of holy Mother Church.”

The means to be employed towards this end are of two kinds. The first have reference to the acts of the worship itself; the other to the liturgical activity exercised outside of these acts.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 8.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 11. Here Beauduin echoes the 1903 *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*, and Pope Pius X’s call for the active participation of the congregation.

The Acts of the Worship. In this field, the members of the liturgical movement desire to contribute with all their strength to the attainment of the following aims:

1. The active participation of the Christian people in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by means of understanding and following the liturgical rites and texts.
2. Emphasis of the importance of High Mass and of the Sunday parish services, and assistance at the restoration of the collective liturgical singing in the official gatherings of the faithful.
3. Seconding of all efforts to preserve or to reestablish the Vespers and the Compline of the Sunday, and to give to these services a place second only to that of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
4. Acquaintance with and active association with the rites of the sacraments received or assisted at, and the spread of this knowledge among others.

[Two further points follow]

Liturgical Activity outside of cultural acts. In this field there are four ways in which the members can assist at the furtherance of the liturgical movement:

A) *Piety.*

- 1) Restoration to a place of honor among Christians of the traditional liturgical seasons: Advent, Christmas Time, Lent, Easter Time, Octaves of feasts, feasts of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, the great missionary saints of our religion.
- 2) The basing of our daily private devotions, meditations, reading, etc., on the daily instructions of the liturgy, the Psalms, the other liturgical books, the fundamental dogmas of the Catholic worship.
- 3) Reanimating and sublimation of the devotions dear to the people by nourishing them at the source of the liturgy.

B) *Study.*

- 1) Promotion of the scientific study of the Catholic liturgy.
- 2) Popularization of the scientific knowledge in special reviews and publications.
- 3) Promotion of the study and, above all, the practice of liturgical prayers in educational institutions.
- 4) Aiming to give regular liturgical education to circles, associations, etc., and to employ all the customary methods of popularization to this end.

C) *Arts.*

- 1) Aiming to have the artists that are called to exercise a sacred art, architecture, painting, sculpture, etc., receive an education that will give them an understanding of the spirit and the rules of the liturgy of the Church.
- 2) Making known to artists and writers the fruitful inspiration to art that the Church offers in her liturgy.

D) *Propaganda.*

- 1) Using all means to spread popular liturgical publications that show the import of the principal part of the liturgy: Sunday Mass, Vespers, Sacraments, Liturgy of the Dead, etc.,

- 2) Reawakening the old liturgical traditions in the home, that link domestic joys with the calendar of the Church; and using for this end especially the musical works composed for such purposes.

To all Catholics we address a burning appeal in favor of the activities that aim to realize as far as possible the program of liturgical restoration which we have here outlined.¹⁶⁶

This outline is remarkable for its clarity and practicality. In it Beauduin manages to condense his theological ideals into a concrete course of action for the whole church. The focus is on the education and spiritual formation of the faithful outside of the liturgy, and on the active participation and singing of the congregation during the liturgy. Beauduin's blueprint for the Liturgical Movement demonstrates his confidence that the existing Roman Rite could effectively nurture the laity—provided that they were properly formed. His strategy is based on personal, more than institutional reform.

While its growth effectively halted during the First World War, the Liturgical Movement began to spread again in the 1920s.¹⁶⁷ The American branch was started in 1926 by Benedictine monk Virgil Michel, from the Abbey of St. John in Collegeville, Minnesota.¹⁶⁸ In this year Michel began circulating the liturgical journal *Orate Fratres* ("Pray Brothers")¹⁶⁹ and published an English translation of Beauduin's *La Piété l'Église*.¹⁷⁰ The movement in England had its center in liturgical music at first, epitomized by the restoration of the chant and polyphonic repertoires at Westminster Cathedral, London. The Society of St. Gregory, founded in 1929 at

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 44-46.

¹⁶⁷ For a further account of the various international centers of the movement, see Lancelot C. Sheppard, *The People Worship; a History of the Liturgical Movement*, 1st ed. (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1967), 26-41.

¹⁶⁸ For a history of the Liturgical Movement in the United States, see Keith F. Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926-1955* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998).

¹⁶⁹ The current title, *Worship*, was adopted in 1951.

¹⁷⁰ The translation used in this document.

Ampleforth Abbey, broadened this musical focus to include educational weeks, liturgical conferences, and other offerings.¹⁷¹

While the Liturgical Movement spread to many countries in the 1920s and 30s, some of the most important developments took place in Germany and Austria. The Germanic Liturgical Movement centered on the Benedictine Abbey at Maria Laach, which attracted many university faculty and students to its liturgies. Jungmann describes the 1920s as an “academic phase” in the movement, which “gradually gave way to a much broader form . . . in several places it penetrated into the parishes, and induced a ferment into the old ways of pastoral care.”¹⁷² A scholarly bent continued to characterize the German and Austrian reformers, however, perhaps best exemplified in the work of Joseph Jungmann (1889-1975). Jungmann was both a Jesuit priest and a professor at the University of Innsbruck. His two-volume *Missarum Sollemnia* (given the English title “The Mass of the Roman Rite”), first published in 1948, remains the standard scholarly history of the Roman Rite.

By the 1930s, some members of the Liturgical Movement began to experiment more with the liturgy itself. There was a change in places from the laity merely reading along with the Mass in their translations of the missal, to their speaking various prayers or responses aloud. An interesting hybrid parallel form developed in Germany in the 1930s, combining features of the Low and High Mass.¹⁷³ In this variation the priest would celebrate a Low Mass in Latin

¹⁷¹ For an account of the Liturgical Movement’s spread in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, see J.B. O’Connell, “The Liturgical Movement in Great Britain and Ireland” in Josef A. Jungmann, *Liturgical Renewal in Retrospect and Prospect*, trans. Clifford Howell (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), 38-45.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁷³ The parochial and experimental approach to liturgical reform is exemplified by the work of Pius Parsch (1884-1954), a priest of the Augustinian community at Klosterneuburg Abbey in Austria. In addition to his scholarly work on the liturgy, Parsch pioneered such practices as the dialogue Mass described in this document. For more

according the usual rubrics. Meanwhile, a lay leader would read the Mass texts aloud in the vernacular—sometimes in dialogue with the congregation (thus the terms “dialogue” or “community” Mass to describe the practice). When movements from the German vernacular Mass Ordinary tradition were sung as well, the Mass was known as a *Betsingmesse* (“Pray-sing Mass”).¹⁷⁴ This practice, while involving a great deal of congregational activity, was not ideal liturgically. In fact, it represents an extreme form of parallelism. As Jungmann describes the difficulty,

The community or dialogue Mass achieves its goal by superimposing its own form like a shell over the fixed, permanent structure of the *missa lecta* or low Mass. The price it must pay is high, namely that the first *liturgus* [that is, “liturgist”—performer of the liturgy], the priest, is wholly in the background during the audible part of the Mass, the greetings and summonings excepted.¹⁷⁵

Thus the fundamentally divided nature of the Mass left the experimental members of the Liturgical Movement in a quandary. While they desired more outward congregational activity in the form of singing and speaking prayers, such additions necessarily remained a parallel to the priest’s enactment of the liturgy. More activity *during* the Mass did not necessarily equate with more congregational participation *in* the liturgy itself.

As the size and stature of the Liturgical Movement grew, it began to receive more official attention from the church hierarchy.¹⁷⁶ For example, in 1940 the German bishops appointed a commission to oversee further activities of the movement—thus effectively bringing it under church control in that country. In 1942 and the following year, these bishops gave approval to

information on Parsch and his activities, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 229-236. See also Jungmann, *Liturgical Renewal*, 24-27.

¹⁷⁴ For further description of this practice, see Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:162-163. See also Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 231-237.

¹⁷⁵ Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:165.

¹⁷⁶ For a discussion of Vatican involvement with the movement before 1948, see Reid, *Organic Development*, 126-143.

the dialogue Mass experiment through sets of guidelines for its implementation.¹⁷⁷ The decisive moment for the international movement was Pope Pius XII's 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*, which was taken as an affirmation of the need for reform. As J.D. Crichton describes the document,

In 1947, after the Second World War, no doubt in response to the ever increasing activity of the liturgical movement, came Pius XII's encyclical *Mediator Dei*, on Christian Worship, which brought to the forefront once again the priesthood of the laity which they share with Christ the Priest and by its analysis of the rite of the Mass showed how it is, by its very structure, the action of the community. Though in some parts it was cautious, it undoubtedly supported the main thrust of the liturgical movement, especially in the matter of participation and gave much encouragement to those who had been promoting the liturgical movement for so long.¹⁷⁸

The year after this encyclical was published Pope Pius XII established an official papal commission on liturgical reform, under the leadership of Annibale Bugnini (1912–1982). This committee was instrumental in drafting liturgical reforms during the 1950s, such as a revised Holy Week liturgy in 1955. Meanwhile, the Liturgical Movement continued its work through conferences, journals, books, and other activities.¹⁷⁹ While the fundamental structure of the Mass remained constant during this period, there was a sense for many within the Liturgical Movement that large changes might be possible. As Crichton describes the feeling on the eve of the Second Vatican Council, “hopes were high but fears were many.”¹⁸⁰ As the Council progressed, it became clear that a major change to the structure of the Roman Rite was indeed underway.

¹⁷⁷ For further details see Jungmann, *Liturgical Renewal*, 30-32. See also Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 239-240.

¹⁷⁸ Crichton, *Lights in Darkness*, 157-158.

¹⁷⁹ Alcuin Reid devotes a significant portion of his book on liturgical reform to this period between 1948 and the Second Vatican Council. Reid's book offers a useful description of the official reforms of the church and the activities of the Liturgical Movement during this time. See Reid, *Organic Development*, 164-301.

¹⁸⁰ Crichton, *Lights in Darkness*, 159.

The Musical Significance of the Liturgical Movement

The international Liturgical Movement was a major catalyst for the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Its stance on the importance of liturgy influenced countless Catholics, both lay people and those in higher church leadership. Even more importantly, the scholarship of the movement provided a fresh perspective on the liturgy. Historical studies, such as Jungmann's *Missarum Sollemnia*, removed some of the mystery from the rituals and actions of the liturgy. The Mass began to appear less as an intricate ritual system divinely inspired in every detail, and more as the product of cultural development and historical circumstance. In particular, scientific liturgical studies made it possible to look back to the pre-medieval church with greater clarity. Scholars such as Jungmann began to cast the historical narrative in terms of deterioration from an early Christian ideal, or of a pure form obscured through medieval accretions. Thus both the idea of looking back to Christian antiquity and the tools necessary to do so were provided in large part by members of the Liturgical Movement. The post-conciliar liturgy was greatly influenced by this model of scholarly reference to early Christianity.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ One important criticism of this return to early forms should be kept in mind throughout this section of the document. The return to the earliest sources and practices (as opposed to 'decayed' later forms) can be accused of a certain "archeologism" in the sense that academic historical studies replace the living liturgical tradition of the church. In a 1954 book the liturgical scholar Louis Bouyer, no proponent of the medieval liturgy, warned against the dangers of "any artificial attempt to revive some period of the past in all its details." He goes on to describe the difficult nature of liturgical reform: "The task which we now face is that of making a clear and working distinction between a true rediscovery of the liturgy which will be a new upsurge of its eternal vitality, and a false rediscovery which would be a mere wandering off into a more or less fantastic past." Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, 40. Some critics of the liturgical reform would contend that this task of balancing renewal and tradition was not executed well enough. Alcuin Reid is an important proponent of the principle of "organic reform" in the liturgy—reform which accepts change and additions over time. From this perspective, while some historical accretions to the Mass may have been misguided, it is generally perfectly acceptable for the liturgy to change its shape over time. In other words, Reid cautions against the categorical rejection of medieval (or later) changes—such developments may constitute part of the legitimate liturgical tradition. See Reid, *Organic Development*, 303-311 for a summary of this viewpoint.

Similarly, the post-conciliar musical situation was shaped in large part by the Liturgical Movement. Two aspects of the movement are particularly important in connection with choral music: the scholarly and the pastoral. As critical study began to clarify the parts of the Mass into foundational layers and subsequent developments, the origin of the different liturgical chants became more apparent. This was particularly important in undermining the idea of the Mass Ordinary cycle. Considered in their initial forms, the individual chants of the Ordinary each have a different character and liturgical function. The *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* are litanies and were originally executed in some kind of call-and-response format, while the *Gloria* and *Sanctus* are by nature hymns. The *Credo* was originally included in the Mass to counter heretical tendencies, and was meant to be a communal profession of faith. One thing all five Ordinary chants have in common is that they were initially congregational. Thus through historical analysis, it became clear that the original Mass Ordinary chants were neither choral nor inherently linked to one another. The concept of making these chants into cyclically linked “movements” of a large-scale musical work appeared highly artificial in light of this scholarly assessment.

The pastoral goals of the Liturgical Movement brought about even more condemnation of the choral Ordinary tradition. Critical historical analysis suggested that the practice of the early church—the entire assembly singing God’s praise with one voice—was supplanted in the seventh century by the rise of the choir (specifically, the Roman *schola cantorum*). While a certain balance had perhaps been maintained until the early Middle Ages, by the thirteenth century the choir had taken all of the Ordinary and Proper from the congregation. The development of the cyclic Mass Ordinary, then, was just another logical stage in a misguided process—beautiful, perhaps, but also highly problematic from a liturgical perspective. The choral Mass Ordinary—and especially its most elaborate Viennese orchestral form—came to

exemplify the pastoral problems of the Roman Rite. Anthony Ruff notes this sharp criticism of elaborate choral Ordinaries in his summary of a 1934 speech by Liturgical Movement leader Pius Parsch (who lived just outside of Vienna at Klosterneuburg Abbey):

The liturgy demands the active participation of all, Parsch stated, and music is the most important means of fostering this congregational participation. The role of the schola is to foster congregational singing. In strong language, Parsch stated that the choir had historically committed two sins: taking over the congregation's Propers in the seventh century, and taking over the congregation's Ordinary and moving to the choir loft in the seventeenth century. The first of the choir's sins Parsch judged as venial, the second as mortal! . . . Parsch characterized, somewhat sarcastically, the "blessings of polyphonic church music" as allowing the congregation, caught between a privately celebrating priest and a performing church choir, to be edified or artistically enchanted, depending on its attitude. Parsch predicted that in fifty years the polyphonic Mass Ordinary would have its place only in the concert hall, not in the worship of a liturgically renewed Church.¹⁸²

For reformers like Parsch, the singing voice of the congregation was a good to be cultivated above any other musical considerations. The Mass Ordinary stood as a focal point of this effort, both due to its unchanging texts (which facilitated congregational familiarity) and to its ancient place as the music belonging to the faithful.

One further aspect of the Liturgical Movement should be noted, in connection with post-conciliar music. Before the reformed Roman Missal of 1970 came into effect, the Low Mass provided the most flexible liturgical context for congregational singing. Due to the extreme parallel nature of this form of the Mass, the congregation was largely free to pursue vernacular hymn singing while the priest celebrated the liturgy. As described above, the Low Mass also proved a fertile ground for experiments such as the dialogue Mass. Thus one ironic effect of liturgical enthusiasm before the council was the promotion of the most divided form of the Mass.

¹⁸² Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 244.

Although the lay faithful could do more in this context, their efforts were unrestricted precisely because they were technically *present during* rather than *participating in* the Mass.

One musical result of this Low Mass tradition was that vernacular hymnody tended to receive more attention than the chants of the Mass Ordinary. Before the council it was certainly allowable and possible for the congregation to sing during High Mass. However, in doing so the faithful would be taking the place of the choir, which was required to sing the Ordinary and Propers in Latin. The ideal of returning at least the Latin Ordinary chants to the congregation—traceable to the 1903 motu proprio *Tra le sollecitudini*—proved very difficult to bring into practice.¹⁸³ Musically, it was much easier to encourage congregational singing through the vernacular options of Low Mass.

For the purposes of this historical narrative, the chief significance of Low Mass hymnody lies in its wholesale transference to the post-conciliar Mass. Outside of the German High Mass tradition,¹⁸⁴ vernacular hymnody was not used to replace the Mass Ordinary chants. Instead the hymns would be devotional texts, sung at other moments during Low Mass such as communion or offertory.¹⁸⁵ After the council this devotional music could not be used in place of the Ordinary (which would have to be sung in Latin or in an approved translation); however, it was useful as an accompaniment to the Entrance, Offertory, Communion, and Recessional processions. As will be discussed later in this document the Propers, unlike the Ordinary, could

¹⁸³ An excellent account of this struggle to maintain both active participation and the chant tradition in America can be found in Walter William Whitehouse, “The Musical Prelude to Vatican II: Plainchant, Participation, and Pius X” (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2008).

¹⁸⁴ The German High Mass tradition, mentioned earlier in this document, did involve vernacular Ordinary hymns during the High Mass. This practice was an exception to the historical norm, however, officially illicit until 1943 and not found outside of German-speaking areas.

¹⁸⁵ For a good summary of pre-conciliar hymnody during the Mass in various countries, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 567-592.

be replaced after the council by other texts. Thus, the practice of vernacular singing during Low Mass—encouraged by members of the Liturgical Movement as a form of congregational activity—was commonly transferred to the post-conciliar Mass as a replacement of the processional Propers.¹⁸⁶

In its treatment of the Ordinary and Proper chants, the Liturgical Movement had a profound influence on the music of the post-conciliar Roman Rite. Scholarship on the origin of the Ordinary chants conclusively showed the congregational nature of those elements of the Mass. Coupled with a strong advocacy of congregational singing, this historical understanding greatly weakened the place of the choral Mass Ordinary as liturgical music *par excellence*. In contrast, the Mass Proper repertoire was not as problematic for members of the Liturgical Movement. The Propers seemed the logical domain for the choir, both because of their choral origins and due to the practical difficulty of performing their constantly changing texts. While relatively unaffected by the reform spirit in a direct sense, however, the choral Propers did come into conflict with congregational vernacular hymnody after the council.

As the following church documents will show, the choral Ordinary became increasingly restricted by official legislation in the twentieth century. In this sense, the aims of the Liturgical Movement matched (or found expression in) the directives from the church. On the other hand, the possibility of choral performance of the Propers was clearly maintained in church documents. As regards this repertoire, the widespread vernacular hymn singing advocated by the Liturgical

¹⁸⁶ A development lamented by some, due to the resulting loss of the chant Proper tradition. For a critique of the practice, see László Dobzay, “The Chants of the Proprium Missae Versus ‘Alius Cantus Aptus’” in Dobzay, *Bugnini Liturgy*, 85-120.

Movement acted as a counterbalance to official legislation. It is important to remember this dual musical legacy of the movement, as the church documents of the twentieth century are discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHURCH DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

This chapter is devoted to an analysis of official church statements on liturgy and music. The church documents will be presented in chronological order, beginning with Pope Pius X's famous 1903 *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*. This chapter is not meant to provide a comprehensive discussion of the contents of each church document. Rather, excerpts will be examined that pertain to liturgical parallelism and the choral Ordinary and Proper. The goal is to show the development in church thinking that preceded the Second Vatican Council.

Liturgical Law

As the discussion will now shift to official church documents, a brief primer on the nature of liturgical law will be useful.¹⁸⁷ Canon Law expert John Huels notes that there are three primary sources for liturgical law:

1. The liturgical books themselves, in their introductory material and rubrics.¹⁸⁸ This category includes the Roman Missal—the liturgical book containing the texts and rubrics for the celebration of Mass—and its General Instruction.

¹⁸⁷ The church's rules governing how, where, when, and by whom the liturgy is celebrated.

¹⁸⁸ Huels provides further clarification: "The *praenotanda* [introductions] include theological background and major disciplinary rules affecting the preparation and celebration of the rites in question. Rubrics, which are found scattered throughout the liturgical books, usually are the more precise directions specifying what the minister or assembly is to say or do at a specific moment in the celebration. Rubrics get their name from the red color in which they are printed (from the Latin *ruber* for "red"), and this distinguishes them from the actual texts, printed in black, which are to be read, prayed, or sung at liturgy." Huels, *Liturgical Law*, 3.

2. The *Code of Canon Law*.¹⁸⁹ This source is primarily concerned with issues of sacramental validity (for example, directing the specific kind of bread and wine that may be used at Mass), as well as practical legal questions (such as how many times per day a priest may celebrate Mass, whether a Mass may be celebrated outside of a church, or how long an individual should fast before receiving communion). For this reason, the *Code of Canon Law* generally does not play a role in discussions of the structure of Mass or of liturgical music.
3. Church documents, such as papal or conciliar legislation.

The third category can be the most confusing, as varying levels of weight or authority exist among the various official documents. As regards papal documents, Huels notes the difference between those promulgating laws and those expressing teachings:

An obvious example of a non-legal document is the papal encyclical, which has a didactic character and serves as a vehicle for the pope to express church teachings and his own reflections on a particular subject. When the pope wishes to create a new law, however, he promulgates it principally by means of documents known as the “apostolic constitution” or the “apostolic letter *motu proprio*.” The apostolic constitution is the highest form of legal document issued by the pope. . . . The apostolic letter *motu proprio* is so-called because the pope acts on his own initiative in creating new legislation in his own name rather than merely approving a decree or other document issued in the name of a curial congregation.¹⁹⁰

In addition to the apostolic constitution and *motu proprio*, conciliar documents and instructions from committees within the Vatican (such as the Congregation for Divine Worship, which regulates the liturgy) are validated by papal approval. Some important liturgical documents, such as the 1958 *De musica sacra* and the 1967 *Musicam sacram*, fall into the category of

¹⁸⁹ The code was most recently updated in 1983. See Catholic Church et al., *The Code of Canon Law, in English Translation* (London: Collins, 1983).

¹⁹⁰ Huels, *Liturgical Law*, 9. For more information on the classification of papal documents in the twentieth century and historically, see Hayburn, *Papal*, 503-511.

instructions. These instructions are meant to expound on, or explain, earlier legislation rather than initiate new laws.

Two further clarifications are necessary as regards liturgical legislation. First, even authoritative legal documents may be superseded in whole or in part by later decrees. Thus when examining documents in chronological order, it is necessary to consider whether the more recent legislation supersedes earlier directives. The second clarification is between preceptive and directive law. As Hayburn explains,

A preceptive law contains strict orders which must be obeyed. It sets down a principle which must be followed in conscience and is not a matter of whim or caprice. . . . A directive law contains recommendations for the faithful.¹⁹¹

It is important, especially in discussions of sacred music within the liturgy, to bear in mind the difference between strict commands, general norms, and mere recommendations. The wording of a particular direction must be considered, as strong preceptive phrases such as “must be” or “is not allowed” carry a different meaning than directive phrases such as “is strongly recommended.”¹⁹² For example, if church legislation directs that a certain part of the Mass is “normally” sung by the entire congregation, the possibility of the choir singing that part alone is not necessarily excluded.

Finally, a word on the publication and titles of church documents is in order. The term “Apostolic See” refers to the diocese of Rome, in a physical sense, as well as to the legislative authority of Rome’s bishop—the pope—in a figurative sense. Thus, legislation promulgated with papal approval is said to have the authority of the Apostolic See. Documents validated by

¹⁹¹ Hayburn, *Papal*, 513.

¹⁹² For further discussion of legislative language, see Huels, *Liturgical Law*, 10-17.

the pope are published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, or “Acts of the Apostolic See.”¹⁹³

Publication usually occurs first in an official Latin version, which is then translated as necessary into the vernacular. The church documents are generally referred to by their opening words in Latin,¹⁹⁴ and included in a numbered list of official Acts. Thus, these documents are referenced by their Latin title and their AAS (Acts of the Apostolic See) or ASS number, along with the date of their inclusion in that publication.

1903: *Tra le sollecitudini*

Pope Pius X’s¹⁹⁵ *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*¹⁹⁶ stands as the foundational Catholic musical document of the twentieth century. While some of its directives were ignored in practice or superseded in later legislation, it served as a constant point of reference for Roman Catholic musical reform after its publication.

Although many important concepts and practical considerations are discussed in the *motu proprio*, two features in particular are central to the issue of liturgical parallelism: concern for the congregation, and attention to the liturgical integration of music. These areas of interest represent a departure from earlier musical legislation. At least since the Council of Trent, the

¹⁹³ From 1865–1908, the title of the publication was *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, or “Acts of the Holy See.” Both ASS and AAS are available publicly at Catholic Church, “Official Acts of the Holy See” http://www.vatican.va/archive/atti-ufficiali-santa-sede/index_en.htm (accessed August 10, 2012).

¹⁹⁴ One famous exception is the 1903 *motu proprio* of Pope Pius X, which was composed in Italian first and then translated into a Latin version. As the Italian remains the official text of this particular letter, the document is normally referred to by its Italian title – *Tra le sollecitudini*—rather than the Latin title *Inter sollicitudines*.

¹⁹⁵ Prior to his election, Pope Pius X (1835–1914) was named Giuseppe Sarto. Sarto was elected pope on August 9, 1903—the *motu proprio* was thus one of the first initiatives of his papacy. For more detailed information on the background of the document and its author, see Hayburn, *Papal*, 195-231. See also Whitehouse, “Musical Prelude,” 148-163.

¹⁹⁶ ASS 36 (1903-1904), 329-339 (Italian), 387-395 (Latin).

church had been content to grapple with issues of musical style and content.¹⁹⁷ As long as music was free of impure, theatrical, and secular associations, it could be considered suitable for use in a sacred setting. The groundbreaking claim of Pope Pius X's *motu proprio* was that, in addition to possessing a sacred style, music used in the Mass should include the congregation and be subservient to the liturgy.

The importance of the congregation is already evident in the opening paragraph of the *motu proprio*:

One of the chief duties of the pastoral office . . . is certainly to maintain and increase the beauty of the house of God, in which the holy mysteries of our faith are celebrated, in which the Christian people come together to receive the grace of the Sacraments, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar, to adore the Blessed Sacrament, and to join in the public and solemn liturgical prayers of the Church. Nothing then should be allowed in the sacred building that could disturb or lessen the piety and devotion of the faithful, nothing that could be a reasonable motive for displeasure or scandal, nothing especially that could offend against the dignity and holiness of the sacred rites, and that would therefore be unworthy of the house of prayer, or of the majesty of Almighty God.¹⁹⁸

The desire for worthy music in the liturgy is motivated in large part by the fact that the congregation is present. Still, the above paragraph could simply lead to a reiteration of the old notion that theatrical or impure music should be excluded from the liturgical experience of the faithful. As the *motu proprio* progresses, however, it becomes clear that the Pope has something new in mind. The central idea of twentieth-century liturgical reform is mentioned toward the end of the introduction:

And since indeed our first and most ardent wish is that a true Christian spirit flourish and be kept always by all the faithful, the first thing to which we must attend is the holiness and dignity of the churches in which our people assemble, in order to acquire

¹⁹⁷ As seen, for example, in the 1749 encyclical *Annus qui* of Pope Benedict XIV. This important encyclical deals primarily with instrumental music in the liturgy, and especially with the abuse of theatrical or operatic styles being used for sacred texts. For context, translation, and discussion of this document see Hayburn, *Papal*, 92-108.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 222.

that spirit from its first and most indispensable source, by taking an active part in the sacred mysteries and in the solemn public prayers of the Church.¹⁹⁹

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of the statement that the congregation should take an active part in the liturgy. The ideal of the laity's active participation became a central tenet of the Liturgical Movement, as seen above in the writing of Lambert Beauduin. More importantly, lay participation was reaffirmed in ever-stronger terms in the subsequent liturgical documents of the twentieth century.

Pope Pius X does not leave vague the concept of participation as a goal for the church. Instead, he makes clear that active participation should involve more than intellectual and interior involvement from the laity. Following a discussion of Gregorian chant as the model of sacred music, he gives the following directive in article three:

Especially should this chant be restored to the use of the people, so that they may take a more active part in the offices, as they did in former times.²⁰⁰

In 1903, at least at High Mass, the allowed repertoire would include only Latin chants. Still, the faithful are encouraged in this document to participate in the singing to the best of their ability. Also noteworthy in this excerpt is the reference to "former times," which implies that historical consciousness and study should influence liturgical reforms. While it is unclear whether the Pope is invoking an ideal from Christian antiquity or merely referring to early medieval practice, the implication is that something necessary was lost when the congregation was excluded from liturgical singing.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 223.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 225.

In addition to promoting greater participation from the congregation, Pope Pius X makes some key assertions about the nature of liturgical music in his *motu proprio*. In the first article, the Pope outlines some general principles of sacred music:

Sacred music, being an integral part of the liturgy, is directed to the general object of this liturgy, namely, the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It helps to increase the beauty and splendor of the ceremonies of the Church, and since its chief duty is to clothe the liturgical text, which is presented to the understanding of the faithful, with suitable melody, its object is to make that text more efficacious, so that the faithful through this means may be the more roused to devotion, and better disposed to gather to themselves the fruits of grace which come from the celebration of the sacred mysteries.²⁰¹

Two aspects of this statement stand out as principles of reform. First, music is assumed to be an integral part of the liturgy, rather than a mere decoration to fill sacred time. Second, the primary purpose of music is to “clothe the liturgical text” with melody—in order that the text may have more effect on the faithful. Thus sacred music is a vehicle for the proclamation of sacred texts, rather than an independent artistic creation that merely makes use of the texts according to its own internal rules. This point is made even more explicitly in articles nine and ten of the *motu proprio*:

9. The liturgical text must be sung just as it stands in the authentic books, without changing or transposing the words, without needless repetition, without dividing the syllables, and always so that it can be understood by the people who hear it.

10. Each part of the Mass and the Office must keep, even in the music, that form and character which it has from tradition, and which is very well expressed in Gregorian chant. Therefore, Introids, Graduals, antiphons, psalms, hymns, the *Gloria in excelsis*, etc., will be composed each in their own way.²⁰²

Sacred music, as shown in these statements, cannot simply take the liturgical texts as a kind of libretto—a starting point for musical creativity. Rather, the words have their own inner form,

²⁰¹ Ibid., 223-224.

²⁰² Ibid., 227.

integrity, and liturgical purpose that cannot be disregarded in musical settings. The arbitrary imposition of, for example, sonata form or of a multi-sectional scheme within a movement, could very well obscure the actual ritual function and meaning of the text.

The Pope does not conclude his directives with this treatment of the primacy of liturgical texts. He goes on to note that a composition could be rendered unsuitable for liturgical use simply by its sheer scale. Articles twenty-two and twenty-three of the *motu proprio* address this issue:

22. It is not lawful to make the priest at the altar wait longer than the ceremonies allow, for the sake of the singing or instrumental music. According to the laws of the Church, the *Sanctus* of the Mass must be finished before the elevation; wherefore in this point the celebrant must attend to the singers. The *Gloria* and the *Credo*, according to Gregorian tradition, should be comparatively short.

23. As a general principle it is a very grave abuse, and one to be altogether condemned, to make the liturgy of sacred functions appear a secondary matter, and, as it were, the servant of the music. On the contrary, the music is really only a part of the liturgy and its humble attendant.²⁰³

The key phrase here is the last sentence of article twenty-three. Music is to be subservient to the liturgy, acting as a humble attendant rather than as the primary focus of Mass. The Pope's concerns here show that, even in the existing parallel ritual context, overly lengthy music could cause the liturgy to proceed as a series of awkward stops and starts.

Lest there be any doubt as to which music best fits the liturgy, Pope Pius X holds up Gregorian chant as the "highest model of Church music."²⁰⁴ Renaissance polyphony ranks as a close second, epitomized by the music of Palestrina. This polyphonic music has an important place in solemn liturgies, and "especially in the greater basilicas, in cathedrals, and in seminaries

²⁰³ Ibid., 229-230.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 224.

and other institutions where the necessary means of performing it are not wanting.”²⁰⁵ Later music is also not excluded, provided that it respects the liturgy and the ideals of sacred music. The music considered least useful for the liturgy is “the theatrical style that was so much in vogue during the last century, for instance, in Italy.”²⁰⁶

Given this ranking of musical style, the genre most clearly targeted by the *motu proprio* is the orchestral Mass. In the Viennese tradition especially, the orchestral Mass includes associations with opera, musical conventions such as multi-sectional division of the Ordinary movements, and often in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a tendency toward a massive scale. While orchestral instruments were not banned wholesale by the *motu proprio*,²⁰⁷ the general musical characteristics of the Viennese orchestral Mass did come into conflict with official reforms. As discussed above, members of the Liturgical Movement generally shared this dim view of the genre. Thus, even in the context of the pre-conciliar liturgy the orchestral Mass began to come under open attack from proponents of liturgical reform.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 225.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 226.

²⁰⁷ Article 15 states that other instruments than the organ may be used, in seasons when the organ itself is permitted. Article 19 does exclude percussion instruments, such as the piano, drums, and cymbals. Article 20 states that “bands are strictly forbidden to play in church.” However, as shown clearly in Hayburn’s side-by-side comparison of the *motu proprio* with the earlier regional document it was based on, the term “band” is not synonymous with “orchestra.” See *ibid.*, 228-229. There appears to have been some confusion on this point, as evidenced by a 1905 query to the Congregation of Sacred Rites from the Cardinal Bishop of Compostella, Spain. The Cardinal asked “whether, and upon what feasts, may be allowed the use of the instruments, violin, viola, violin cello, double-bass, flute, clarinet, and trumpet.” The Congregation responded that these instruments were allowable in any seasons when organ and instruments would normally be used in the liturgy. Thus, the basic string and wind orchestra of the Classical era (excluding timpani and cymbals) was allowed in the liturgy as a matter of course following the *motu proprio*. For the full text of the query, see *ibid.*, 464-465. Anthony Ruff notes that a special exception was sought for Vienna following the *motu proprio*, given the strength of the orchestral tradition there. As the basic classical orchestra was not banned by the *motu proprio*, it is unclear what this exception consisted of—perhaps a permission to use percussion and other ‘questionable’ instruments. For more information see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 280n31.

As is often the case, the official program of musical reform outlined by Pope Pius X did not meet with widespread approval throughout the church. While the Liturgical Movement accepted the *motu proprio* enthusiastically, musicians in particular were slow to shift their focus primarily to chant and Renaissance polyphony. A primary difficulty seems to have been teaching congregations to sing the chant repertoire. Even the Ordinary chants, by nature simpler than the Proper chants and repeated at each Mass, proved difficult to restore as music for the laity. In his study of the American reception of the *motu proprio*, William Whitehouse describes a stark contrast between certain high-profile and musically exceptional events such as church music congresses, and the more common lack of congregational singing at the parish level. Whitehouse also notes a general lack of interest in American sources dealing with the papal document:

Throughout the 60-year period under discussion [between the *motu proprio* and Vatican II], three levels of reaction to *TLS* [*Tra le sollecitudini*] are regularly described: an enthusiastic reception (with varying emphases/interpretations); a virulent opposition; and in the middle, a vast, withering *indifference* to the whole enterprise, increasingly noted as a troubling indifference to the importance of liturgy in general.²⁰⁸

This indifference was directed in part at the document itself and in part at the basic idea of congregational singing during Mass. Compounding the issue was a feeling that Latin chants would simply not work as a practical repertoire for the faithful. In the end it was much easier to maintain Low Mass as the basic parish model, complete with options for vernacular hymnody.

²⁰⁸ Whitehouse, "Musical Prelude," 201.

An unenthusiastic response to the *motu proprio* seems to have been more the rule than the exception internationally.²⁰⁹ In spite of its bold vision and strong language, *Tra le sollecitudini* did not spark an immediate widespread reform of liturgical music.

1928: *Divini cultus sanctitatem*

Pope Pius XI (1857–1939)²¹⁰ promulgated the apostolic constitution *Divini cultus sanctitatem*²¹¹ (DCS) in order, as Hayburn puts it, “to reemphasize the preceptive character of *Tra le sollecitudini*.”²¹² The poor international response to the legislation of the *motu proprio* is referenced in the introduction to DCS:

It is greatly to be deplored, however, that in certain places these wisest of laws have not been fully observed, and thus the fruit which they were intended to produce has been lost. We are well aware that some have stated repeatedly that they are not bound by these laws which were so solemnly promulgated, and that others at first obeyed them, but have gradually come to countenance a form of music which should be entirely excluded from the House of God.²¹³

This document, then, proceeds to reaffirm and develop the principles outlined twenty-five years earlier in the *motu proprio*.

The notion of active congregational participation in the music of the liturgy is especially important in DCS. Expanding on the vague mention of “former times” in the 1903 *motu proprio*, Pope Pius XI begins his discussion of music with a more detailed picture of ancient practice:

For especially in the ancient basilicas, where Bishops, clergy and people joined alternately in singing the divine praises, liturgical chants were of no small avail, as history attests, in winning many barbarians to Christian worship and civilization. . . .[A]t

²⁰⁹ For a discussion of the mixed reception of the *motu proprio* in other countries, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 284-286.

²¹⁰ Pope from 1922–1939.

²¹¹ AAS 21 (1929), 33-41. English translation in Hayburn, *Papal*, 327-332.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 327.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 329.

Milan Saint Ambrose was charged by heretics with bewitching the multitude by his liturgical chants, the very same which attracted Saint Augustine and decided him to embrace the faith of Christ. Henceforth into the churches where the citizens formed as it were one great choir, there poured artisans, painters, sculptors and students of letters all imbued through the liturgy with that knowledge of theology to which so many remarkable monuments of the Middle Ages even to this day bear splendid testimony.²¹⁴

As this statement makes clear, the modern church can look back to at least the fifth century and the hymnody of Ambrose for a model of congregational singing. The “one great choir” of citizens at this time was one sign of a healthy and inspiring liturgy. The Pope continues by describing the fruits of the earlier *motu proprio*:

The faithful foregather at sacred shrines that they may draw piety thence, from its chief source, through actually participating in the venerable mysteries and solemn public prayers of the Church. . . . And this has been effected especially in sacred music; for wherever these regulations [of the 1903 *motu proprio*] have been diligently carried out, there the ancient beauty of an exquisite art has begun to revive and a religious spirit to flourish and prosper; and there also the faithful imbued more deeply with liturgical sense, have gained the habit of participating more zealously in the Eucharistic rite, in singing the Psalms and in the public prayers.²¹⁵

Thus, at least where liturgical reform has been implemented the laity has been able to participate more fully in the Mass through music. The final statement in DCS regarding congregational singing is found in article nine. Here, in even stronger terms than his predecessor, Pope Pius XI affirms the importance of congregational singing during the liturgy:

9. In order that the faithful may take a more active part in divine worship, let that portion of the chant which pertains to the congregation be restored to popular use. It is very necessary that the faithful taking part in sacred ceremonies should not do so as mere outsiders or mute spectators, but as worshippers thoroughly imbued with the beauty of the liturgy . . . so that that they may sing alternately with the priest and the scholae, according to the prescribed rule: in this event we should not find the people making only a murmur or even no response at all to the public prayers of the liturgy, either in Latin or in the vernacular.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Ibid., 328.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 328-329.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 331.

The three excerpts above show a clear three-step logical process in DCS. First, the singing of the entire assembly was a source of vitality and inspiration for the early church. Second, participation in the liturgy—with all of its resulting spiritual benefits—has been greatly supported by increased congregational singing in the modern church. Third, for the above reasons it is imperative that greater efforts be made to implement the *motu proprio* and include the faithful in the music of the liturgy.

It is important to note that the Pope's focus on congregational singing in no way devalues the traditional place of the choir. On the contrary, the Pope expresses a strong wish "that choirs such as flourished from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century be renewed and revived today."²¹⁷ In addition, he mentions the importance of boys' choir schools—institutions that have produced many important composers of church music.²¹⁸ While orchestral music—as in the 1903 *motu proprio*—is treated with suspicion,²¹⁹ Renaissance polyphony is again held up as a model of sacred music. Choirs continue to fulfill an important role by performing such worthy music in the liturgy.

DCS is quite informative as a companion document to the 1903 *motu proprio*. It specifically mentions that after twenty-five years practical implementation of the earlier legislation was either non-existent or regressing in some places. However, it also demonstrates a strong commitment to musical and liturgical reform on the part of the papacy—a commitment enduring beyond the personal vision of Pope Pius X. Perhaps most importantly, this document

²¹⁷ Ibid., 330.

²¹⁸ See article 6, in *ibid.*, 331.

²¹⁹ See article 7, in *ibid.*, 331.

maintains a balanced approach to sacred music in its affirmation of both complex polyphony and simpler hymns; and of both choral and congregational music.

1947: *Mediator Dei*

The encyclical *Mediator Dei*²²⁰ (MD) was the first of three important liturgical reform documents issued by Pope Pius XII (1876–1958).²²¹ In this encyclical the Pope gave the Liturgical Movement its first explicit mention and cautious official approval. Following MD, members of the Liturgical Movement began to play a more officially-supported role in liturgical reform through membership in Vatican or diocesan liturgical commissions, scholarly contributions, and church-sponsored conferences. The years between this encyclical and the opening of the Second Vatican Council were marked by ever increasing attention to the reform of the liturgy, on the part of the church hierarchy.

Throughout MD the Pope maintains a balanced approach to the controversial issues surrounding liturgical reform. For example, in paragraph sixty-two he mentions the great value of the scientific study of liturgical history. This enthusiasm is qualified by the statement that “it is neither wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device.”²²² Thus Pope Pius XII cautions against throwing out legitimate liturgical developments—such as statues, vestments, altars, and polyphonic music—in an attempt to recreate the primitive Christian church.

²²⁰ AAS 39 (1947), 521. Translation of the excerpts pertaining to music in *ibid.*, 337-341.

²²¹ Pope from 1939–1958.

²²² Hayburn, *Papal*, 338.

The Pope takes a similarly nuanced approach to congregational singing in the liturgy. In paragraph twenty-one he outlines the practices of the early apostolic church, noting that the lay faithful would join in singing—“obeying the behest of the Apostle Paul, ‘In all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual canticles, singing in grace in your hearts to God.’”²²³ However, the Pope also cautions against an overemphasis on such external participation. In article twenty-four he argues that external liturgical participation without a corresponding internal worship of God “clearly amounts to mere formalism, without meaning and without content.”²²⁴ Still, when true religious devotion and faith inspire the outward actions of the faithful, the Pope characterizes the church’s attitude toward the laity as follows:

She wants them present in crowds – like the children whose joyous cries accompanied His entry into Jerusalem – to sing their hymns and chant their song of praise and thanksgiving to Him who is King of Kings and Source of every blessing.²²⁵

Thus, as long as participation is understood properly—with internal devotion as primary, and secondary external actions as an expression of and support for true piety—the faithful should be encouraged to take part in the Mass:

They also are to be commended who strive to make the liturgy even in an external way a sacred act in which all who are present may share. This can be done in more than one way, when, for instance, the whole congregation, in accordance with the rules of the liturgy, either answer the priest in an orderly and fitting manner, or sing hymns suitable to the different parts of the Mass, or do both, or finally in High Masses when they answer the prayers of the minister of Jesus Christ and also sing the liturgical chant.²²⁶

This statement is notable for its mention of both hymns and the liturgical chants of High Mass as useful music for the promotion of congregational singing. The ideal found in earlier documents—that the congregation will join in singing the Latin liturgical chants of High Mass—

²²³ Ibid., 337. The scripture quotation is from Ephesians 5:19.

²²⁴ Ibid., 337.

²²⁵ Ibid., 337.

²²⁶ Ibid., 338.

seems to be tempered here by an acknowledgement of the pastoral importance of the hymn repertoire. As directed in many later documents, congregational singing is to be fostered through a variety of musical means.

As was the case with earlier documents, MD does not advocate this promotion of congregational singing in a way that excludes the choir. Rather, choirs are to be preserved and promoted “at least in the principal churches.”²²⁷ Pope Pius XII’s ideal in MD is of a musically balanced liturgy, with priest, choir, and congregation each contributing their voices to the celebration of the Mass.

1955: *Musicae sacrae disciplinae*

Pope Pius XII followed up *Mediator Dei* with a second encyclical on sacred music and liturgy in 1955. Anthony Ruff summarizes the scope of *Musicae sacrae disciplina*²²⁸ (MSD) as follows:

The encyclical MSD is a comprehensive statement on liturgical music. It offers a history of music in human and Judeo-Christian worship and a developed account of the role of music in Catholic Liturgy. . . . The document’s four sections offer respectively: a history of religious music, a statement of the worthiness of music as an art, directives for the employment of music in the liturgy, and specific directives for the teaching and encouraging of sound musical practice.²²⁹

The historical aspect of MSD is particularly interesting, showing as it does an increasing clarity in the church’s understanding of past musical practice. Pope Pius XII notes key Old Testament references to sacred music, such as the triumphal hymn sung by Miriam, the sister of Moses, to celebrate the Israelites’ safe crossing of the Red Sea. From the New Testament, the Pope

²²⁷ Ibid., 340.

²²⁸ AAS 48 (1956), 5-25. An English translation can be found in *ibid.*, 345-356.

²²⁹ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 296.

concludes that singing—and importantly, the singing of the entire assembly—was an integral part of Christian worship from the very beginning of the church.²³⁰ A treatment of patristic sources is followed in MSD by a history of the creation of the chant and polyphonic repertoires. Throughout this historical account the development of choirs and choral music is discussed positively, rather than as a phenomenon opposed to congregational singing.

Just as MSD expands on the history of sacred music in comparison with earlier church documents, it also elevates congregational singing to a central theme. For Pope Pius XII, the singing of the assembly is not merely a pastoral concern to be aided by artistic or liturgical compromises. Rather, congregational singing is foundational to any understanding of liturgical music. As the Pope puts it,

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. It should make the liturgical prayers of the Christian community more alive and fervent so that everyone can praise and beseech the Triune God more powerfully, more intently and more effectively. . . . There can be nothing more exalted or sublime than its 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.²³¹

Thus, by 1955 the church's official vision for musical and liturgical reform is intimately bound with the communal participation of the laity. The most exalted function of sacred music is to involve the priest and the assembly in the singing of the liturgy.

Pope Pius XII explains that congregational singing should be focused on two major repertoires: Gregorian chant and hymnody. The Pope acknowledges that certain exceptions to

²³⁰ See MSD paragraph 8 in Hayburn, *Papal*, 346.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 349.

the musical rules of the liturgy exist—a reference to such practices as the German High Mass—however, even in regions with those traditions he states that “local Ordinaries [bishops] and 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.”²³² While his promotion of the Gregorian chants is unequivocal, the Pope is more cautious when it comes to hymnody. On the one hand, he extols the virtues of hymnody as popular religious song—suitable for devotional and extra-liturgical use;²³³ on the other he holds to the understanding that vernacular hymns are not meant for liturgical use. Thus, he reiterates the fact that vernacular hymns can be used only at Low Mass, rather than at High Mass. At Low Masses, “these hymns can be 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.”²³⁴ Vernacular hymnody, for all of its value, remains music for the most highly parallel form of the Mass—allowable precisely because it is only sung *during* the liturgy rather than as an integral part of the Mass.

As a final note, it is important to clarify that Pope Pius XII does not promote congregational singing to the exclusion of choirs. On the contrary, he states the top priority for those wishing to take part in the church’s musical reforms:

²³² Ibid., 351.

²³³ See paragraphs 36-37 in Ibid., 350, and 62-63 in Ibid., 353.

²³⁴ Ibid., 353-354.

First of all see to it that there is a good school of singers in the cathedral itself and, as far as possible, in other major churches of your dioceses. This school should serve as an example to others and influence them to carefully develop and perfect sacred chant.²³⁵

Far from being anachronistic or a hindrance to the Pope's vision, choirs (and especially cathedral choirs) are to be the exemplars of liturgical and musical reform. Further, the great works of the past—and especially the polyphonic music of the 16th century—are to be enthusiastically promoted.²³⁶ There is no hint in MSD that choirs are to exist merely as facilitators of congregational singing. Rather, the encyclical follows the same balanced approach as earlier church documents of the twentieth century: both choral and congregational singing are to exist and complement one another in the liturgy.

1958: *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*

The 1958 instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*²³⁷ (DMS) was drafted by the Vatican's Congregation for Sacred Rites, and approved by Pope Pius XII shortly before his death. This instruction is meant to summarize and explain the various preceding documents on music and liturgy, "so that their content may be more easily and surely put into practice."²³⁸ To this end the broad reforms and ideals of earlier documents are outlined in DMS in the form of practical, detailed directives. These guidelines were in turn instrumental in shaping post-conciliar musical legislation.

²³⁵ Ibid., 355.

²³⁶ See paragraphs 52-56 in Hayburn, *Papal*, 352.

²³⁷ AAS 50 (1958), 630-663. English translation in *ibid.*, 356-377.

²³⁸ Ibid., 357.

One component of DMS in particular is helpful in clarifying the place of the sung Mass Ordinary and Proper: the set of directives dealing with Low (or “read”) and High (or “sung”) Masses. The instruction offers the following concise definition of the forms of Mass:

There are two kinds of Masses: the “sung Mass” and the “read Mass.” The Mass is called a “sung Mass” if the priest celebrant actually sings those parts which are to be sung according to the rubrics. Otherwise it is a “read Mass.”²³⁹

The document then goes on to suggest different levels of musical participation in each of the forms of Mass. Within the Low Mass, the faithful are encouraged to participate through interior piety, following the words of the Mass with a vernacular Missal, and various external motions such as kneeling at the proper times. In addition to this foundational level of piety, the faithful will reach a “more perfect participation” by saying out loud various acclamations and responses to the priest during Mass.²⁴⁰ The continued presence of liturgical parallelism becomes apparent in the directive that only Latin may be used for those responses and acclamations prescribed by the rubrics. However, “if the faithful wish to add some popular prayers or hymns to this *direct* liturgical participation . . . this may be done in the vernacular [Emphasis is original].”²⁴¹ Thus there is a clear distinction between the liturgy itself—which is given in the official books and rubrics and must be recited in Latin—and the various activities that may, for pastoral reasons, be allowed to proceed alongside the priest’s celebration. The vernacular hymns at Low Mass, while edifying and helpful for the faithful, are permitted only as an addition to the official structure of

²³⁹ Ibid., 358. This article goes on to mention a further slight distinction for the “sung Mass”—when a deacon and subdeacon assist the priest, the Mass is called a “Solemn Mass.” When the priest celebrates without those assistants, the Mass is a “Sung Mass” or “Missa Cantata.” Musically the forms are identical; the distinction is found in the presence or absence of deacon and subdeacon.

²⁴⁰ The particular responses and dialogues are given in article 31 of the instruction. See Ibid., 364.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 360.

the liturgy. In keeping with this mindset, the congregation is not allowed to sing any vernacular settings of official liturgical texts (such as the Ordinary and Proper) during Low Mass.²⁴²

In the context of High Mass there is by nature much less flexibility where congregational singing is concerned. This is because “everything which the liturgical books require to be chanted by the priest and his ministers, or by the choir and people, is an integral part of the sacred liturgy.”²⁴³ This means that at High Mass the official Latin texts, in their entirety, must be sung—and cannot be replaced or altered. The example of the Offertory chant may help to show the importance of this rule. While the Low Mass offers the congregation the option of singing a vernacular Offertory hymn after the priest’s recitation of the Proper text, the High Mass rubrics required either choir alone, or choir and people, to sing the Gregorian chant Offertory. Only two concessions to practical expediency are offered in DMS. First, if even the choir is not proficient enough to chant the Offertory a simple psalm tone may be used for the Offertory chant. Second, if the liturgical actions at Offertory stretch much longer than the chant “some short Latin Hymn”²⁴⁴ may be sung to fill the time. However, there is no allowance for vernacular singing within the structure of High Mass.²⁴⁵ When participating in the integral liturgical singing of the choir at High Mass, the congregation is expected to take part in the Latin chant tradition as well.

²⁴² Article 14 (c) of *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia* states: “It is strictly forbidden to say aloud the parts of the Proper, Ordinary and Canon of the Mass together with the priest celebrant, in Latin or in translation, and this applies either to the faithful or to a commentator, with the exceptions laid down in number 31.” *Ibid.*, 360. The article 31 referenced here delineates some parts of the Ordinary that may be recited (not sung) in Latin together with the priest. *Ibid.*, 364.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 360.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 363.

²⁴⁵ As always, certain very limited exceptions to this general rule are mentioned in the instruction, due to long local practice. See article 14a in *Ibid.*, 359.

This congregational participation in the singing of High Mass is held up by DMS as a central liturgical ideal:

The most noble form of the Eucharistic celebration is found in the *solemn Mass*, in which the combined solemnity of the ceremonies, the ministers, and the sacred music manifests the magnificence of the divine mysteries and prompts the minds of those present to the pious contemplation of these mysteries. Efforts must be made so that the faithful have that esteem for this form of celebration which it deserves and properly participate in it.²⁴⁶

The instruction, in article 25, suggests that the “active participation of the faithful in the solemn Mass can be accomplished in three degrees.”²⁴⁷ The first degree, or level of participation, includes the simple dialogues and responses of the Mass (such as “Amen,” “*Deo gratias* [Thanks be to God],” “*Et cum spiritu tuo* [And with your spirit],” and so on). The second includes the chants of the Mass Ordinary. The final level (strongly recommended for institutional congregations in seminaries and religious orders) incorporates congregational singing of the Proper texts. While practical in its suggestions for gradual implementation, this hierarchy does not allow the official texts themselves to be altered or sung in the vernacular.

There is a certain amount of tension between this High Mass model and the Low Mass musical directives described above. In the High Mass, the faithful are directed to focus on singing simple acclamations and responses first, followed by the Mass Ordinary and finally (if possible) the Mass Proper. All three categories are official liturgical texts, as prescribed by the rubrics. In the Low Mass, in contrast, the faithful are only allowed to sing non-liturgical texts—usually in the form of vernacular hymnody. In the liturgical framework described by the 1958 instruction, the congregation is thus asked to learn two different musical repertoires, each of

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 362.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 362.

which can only be used in a particular form of the liturgy. In the Low Mass the congregation may not sing the Ordinary and Proper; while in the High Mass they may *only* chant the Latin Ordinary and Proper (along with simple responses and acclamations). As the two repertoires—Gregorian chant and vernacular hymnody—are not compatible in the same liturgy, the community must choose between them in setting musical priorities. Perhaps most importantly, although official liturgical texts (especially the chants of the Mass Ordinary) are meant to be the congregation's primary focus, they may only be sung in Latin and in a chant idiom.

In a sense, by explaining in detail the different options for congregational singing during the Mass, the instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia* only highlighted the practical difficulties of pre-conciliar musical reform. The reform ideal of congregational singing, mentioned again and again in earlier documents, could only be pursued through means that left something to be desired. The vernacular hymn tradition, while allowing for immediate and strong participation by the congregation, was comprised of non-liturgical texts and tied to the Low Mass. On the other hand the Ordinary and Proper chants, while an integral part of the noblest form of the liturgy, were often difficult for the assembly to participate in.

In spite of these practical limitations, however, the instruction's graded system of congregational participation in the High Mass proved foundational for post-conciliar directives. In particular, DMS clarified a set of priorities for congregational singing of the Ordinary and Proper. Aside from some simple responses and acclamations, the Mass Ordinary was listed as the first major set of texts for the assembly to sing during the liturgy. Thus the notion of the Ordinary as congregational music was given explicit approval. This understanding informed conciliar and post-conciliar approaches to choral and congregational singing.

1962: The Roman Missal

The final pre-conciliar edition of the Roman Missal was published in 1962, with the approval of Pope John XXIII (1881–1963).²⁴⁸ While incorporating numerous changes to individual prayers and rites (such as the Holy Week liturgy revised in 1955), as well as to the church calendar, the new edition maintained the same basic liturgical structure as the 1570 Missal published after the Council of Trent. The 1962 Missal remained in use during the Second Vatican Council, and in the transitional post-conciliar years until the publication of the reformed Missal in 1970. In addition, the 1962 Missal remains in use for those priests who choose to celebrate the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite.²⁴⁹

The following table is constructed from the rubrics of the 1962 Missal, and will help to clarify the parallel nature of pre-conciliar liturgy. This table does not include every aspect of the Mass; rather, the intent is to summarize what ritual actions took place during the singing of the Mass Ordinary and Proper. As described in the above discussion of musical directives, the congregation was technically allowed to participate in some or all of the chanted Ordinary and Proper. The amount of musical elaboration for each part of the Mass ranged from a simple psalm tone recitation, to the full Gregorian chant setting (whether choral or congregational), to a polyphonic or orchestrated choral setting.

Several sources are helpful in examining the complex structure of the pre-conciliar Mass. The primary source used here is the *Ritus Servandus*—the rubrics included in the 1962 Roman Missal. For more detailed explanation and commentary, a standard English-language work is

²⁴⁸ Pope from 1958-1963.

²⁴⁹ For a discussion of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, see the Introduction to this document, pp. 14-16.

J.B. O’Connell’s 1940 “The Celebration of Mass.” Finally, Jungmann’s *Missarum Sollemnia* provides historical information on the development of each component of the Mass. The form of Mass outlined below is the “Solemn Mass”—that is, the sung High Mass with Deacon and Subdeacon assisting the priest.

Mass Ordinary (O) or Proper (P)	Ritual Actions
Introit (P) ²⁵⁰	The priest and ministers offer private prayers at the base of the altar steps, and enter the sanctuary. The priest advances to the altar, saying the prayer <i>Aufer a nobis</i> , kisses the altar, and recites a further private prayer. The priest now blesses incense and processes around the altar, incensing it, the cross, and any relics or icons in the sanctuary. ²⁵¹ The priest crosses to the Epistle side of the sanctuary, makes the sign of the cross, and recites the <i>Introit</i> .
Kyrie (O) ²⁵²	After reciting the <i>Introit</i> , the priest returns to the middle of the altar while reciting the <i>Kyrie</i> in alternation with the deacons and servers. ²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Catholic Church, *Ritus Servandus: Rites to be Observed in the Celebration of Mass*, trans. Dennis M. Duvelius (Chicago: Biretta Books Ltd., 2007), 6-11. There is some disagreement as to when the Introit should be sung by the choir. As the *Ritus Servandus* does not give explicit directions, liturgists such as J.B. O’Connell reference the *Ceremoniale Episcoporum* (the book containing rubrics for Mass celebrated by bishops). This book states that this chant only begins when the priest and ministers have reached the base of the altar steps. On the other hand, Liturgical Movement reformers such as Pius Parsch noted that the Introit was originally meant to be a processional chant; accompanying the procession of clergy and altar servers through the full length of the church nave and into the sanctuary. According to Parsch, “the liturgical movement is concerned to re-awaken the *Introit* from its long winter sleep. . . . it will be evident that a subordinate role ought to be ascribed to the prayers at the foot of the altar, and the *Introit* proper assume once more its rightful place as an entrance chant.” See Pius Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, trans. H.E. Winstone, 3rd ed. (London: Herder Publications, 1957), 108-109. As liturgist J.B. O’Connell shows, there is a discrepancy between the instructions in the Roman Gradual (the official chant book for the Mass) and the rubrics of the *Ceremoniale Episcoporum*: the Gradual seems to allow for chanting during the entire entrance procession. However, O’Connell sides with the *Ceremoniale* rubrics, arguing that they carry more weight than the chant book instructions. See O’Connell, *Celebration of Mass*, 551n85, for a discussion of this issue.

²⁵¹ Catholic Church, *Ritus Servandus*, 12-14.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 11-12.

²⁵³ The *Introit* and *Kyrie* thus flow together seamlessly, as the priest does not offer any public prayers until intoning the *Gloria*. In practice, and especially when elaborate settings are used, this means that the choir can perform *Introit* and *Kyrie* together, without a pause.

Gloria (O) ²⁵⁴	Standing at the middle of the altar, the priest intones the <i>Gloria in excelsis</i> [that is, he sings the first phrase of the hymn]. The choir or choir and congregation then sing the remainder of the hymn, beginning at “ <i>Et in terra pax hominibus.</i> ” Meanwhile the priest, deacon, and subdeacon continue to recite the <i>Gloria</i> in a low voice. If the singing of the <i>Gloria</i> is lengthy, the priest may go to his chair and sit after reciting the text; returning to the altar toward the end of the sung <i>Gloria</i> . ²⁵⁵
Gradual (P)/Alleluia (P)/Tract (P)/Sequence (P) ²⁵⁶	Following the <i>Gloria</i> , the priest recites the Collect prayer. Then the subdeacon chants the Epistle for the day. After this reading is chanted, the choir sings the Gradual-Alleluia unit. During Lent the Tract replaces the Alleluia, and for certain feast days the Gradual-Alleluia is followed by the Sequence. As the choir chants, the priest reads the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, Sequence, and prayer <i>Munda cor meum</i> in a quiet voice. The deacon then processes to the gospel side of the sanctuary; after the choir is finished singing, the deacon chants the gospel.
Creed (O) ²⁵⁷	The priest intones the Creed (that is, he sings the text “ <i>Credo in unum Deum</i> ”). The choir (with or without the congregation) then sing the remainder of the Creed. Meanwhile, the priest and deacons recite the text of the Creed in a low voice. If the singing of the Creed is prolonged, the priest and ministers may sit after reciting the text.
Offertory (P) ²⁵⁸	The priest recites the Offertory text. The priest and ministers then recite a number of prayers in low voices, while preparing the altar, bread and wine, and sacred vessels. The deacon incenses the priest, sanctuary, and congregation.
Sanctus-Benedictus (O) ²⁵⁹	The priest and deacons recite the <i>Sanctus</i> in low voices. The priest recites the first half of the Canon of the Mass (up to the Consecration of the bread and wine). When the choir sings a chant setting of the Sanctus, the entire

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 12-14.

²⁵⁵ See O’Connell, *Celebration of Mass*, 586-587.

²⁵⁶ Catholic Church, *Ritus Servandus*, 18-19.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 19-26.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 26-35.

	Sanctus-Benedictus is sung during the first half of the Canon. When a polyphonic or orchestrated setting is used, the Sanctus is sung before the Consecration; and the Benedictus is sung during the second half of the Canon (after the Elevation of the consecrated bread and wine). ²⁶⁰
Agnus Dei (O) ²⁶¹	While the choir sings the <i>Agnus Dei</i> , the priest recites the text. The priest and ministers then consume communion, after which the priest prepares to distribute communion to the assembly.
Communion (P) ²⁶²	Any of the congregation who will be receiving communion process forward to the altar rail to receive. After those present have received, any remaining hosts are returned to the tabernacle and the communion vessels are ritually washed.

As this simplified overview of the pre-conciliar Mass shows, every part of the Mass Ordinary and Proper accompanied a certain set of prayers and ritual actions on the part of the priest and deacons. While excessively long musical settings could still disrupt this form of liturgy (as witnessed by the church documents discussed above), a great deal of latitude remained for the choir. The challenge for both priest and musicians was to ensure that their respective actions proceeded in harmony with one another. This elaborate system of parallel, synchronized ritual actions comprised the liturgy of the pre-conciliar Catholic Church.

Summary: The pre-conciliar situation

As this chapter has shown, the sixty years prior to the Second Vatican Council were characterized by an atmosphere of change within the Catholic Church. Liturgical reform was

²⁶⁰ For these musical directions see O’Connell, *Celebration of Mass*, 553.

²⁶¹ Catholic Church, *Ritus Servandus.*, 37-38.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 43-44.

advocated by the international Liturgical Movement, as well as by Pius X and subsequent popes. Thus, the Catholic reform movement was both a grass-roots pastoral phenomenon and an official, top-down agenda for the church. The scholarly work and pastoral advocacy of the Liturgical Movement laid the groundwork for the changes that would follow at the Second Vatican Council.

In spite of the church's new openness to change, however, the liturgy retained the same fundamental form it had had since the Council of Trent in the mid-sixteenth century. Individual prayers and ritual actions were altered, the liturgy of Holy Week was revised, the calendar was expanded to include new saints, and the Divine Office was re-arranged. However, the Mass continued to progress as a series of parallel activities: the actions and prayers of the priest and ministers in the sanctuary, on one hand, and the musical contributions of the choir and congregation on the other. The congregation was encouraged to join in the choir's singing, but the divide between the choir and the priest's liturgical role remained. Many reformers within the Liturgical Movement and church hierarchy felt that this increased activity within the existing framework of the Mass was the end goal of liturgical renewal. Others hoped for a substantial change to the liturgy itself.

The sung Ordinary and Proper were significantly affected by the church's new liturgical ideas. A number of factors combined to greatly decrease the liturgical importance of the choral Ordinary repertoire: increasing scholarly criticism of the Mass Ordinary as a linked set of movements, pressure on liturgical musicians to avoid theatricality and large-scale music during Mass, and a new emphasis on encouraging congregational singing in the liturgy. Although difficult to achieve in practice, the church's ideal was for the assembly to learn and sing the

chants of the Mass Ordinary. Congregational singing of the Mass Proper was considered a lesser priority (as evidenced by the 1958 instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*)—one perhaps only practical within religious communities or seminaries. Thus, before the council a balance was maintained (at least in official policy) between the choral Proper chants and the congregational acclamations, responses, and Mass Ordinary chants.

Although this balanced approach could work well in the Latin-only context of High Mass, it did not apply to the Low Mass. Within the Low Mass, the congregation would focus on singing vernacular devotional hymns at various moments such as Offertory and Communion. The Mass Ordinary and Proper were not sung at all in this form of liturgy; rather, they would be recited by the priest. As the Low Mass was the most common form celebrated in the parishes, a certain tension developed between the church's musical ideals and the liturgical experience of the laity. While the church held up congregational singing of official liturgical texts at High Mass as the goal, the norm for most Catholics was hymn-singing as a devotional exercise during the priest's celebration of Low Mass. This distinction between singing the texts of Mass, and devotional singing *during* the Mass, would remain a central issue after the council. In particular, the place and role of the choral Proper hinges on this question. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the church's official guidelines remain at odds with widespread cultural practice to the present day.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND SUBSEQUENT REFORMS

This chapter will continue the examination of official church documents on music and liturgy. Four important documents will be considered here, in chronological order: the Second Vatican Council's 1963 Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the 1964 liturgical implementation document *Inter oecumeni*, the 1967 musical instruction *Musicam sacram*, and the reformed, post-conciliar Roman Missal of 1970. The primary objectives of this chapter are to document the shift from parallel liturgy to the post-conciliar sequential model, and to study in detail liturgical legislation regarding the Mass Ordinary and Proper.

1963: The Constitution on the Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum concilium*)

The Second Vatican Council was initiated by Pope John XXIII, and met from 1962 to 1965. Due to the Pope's death in June of 1963, most of the council was overseen and promulgated by his successor, Pope Paul VI (1897–1978).²⁶³ Over two thousand bishops from around the world attended council sessions in the fall of each year, to discuss and vote on texts proposed by the various conciliar commissions.²⁶⁴

Four major documents were approved by the council: the Constitution on the Liturgy in 1963, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in 1964, the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation in 1965, and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World in 1965.

²⁶³ Pope from 1963-1978.

²⁶⁴ For an overview of the drafting process of the Liturgy Constitution, see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 314-316. For a detailed account of the work of the conciliar liturgy commission, the standard work is the history by commission head Annibale Bugnini. See Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy, 1948-1975* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990).

In addition, twelve smaller decrees and declarations were issued during this time, such as the Decree on Ecumenism and the Decree on the Mass Media. Although many different topics were addressed in these documents, a central theme was the question of how the Church should interact with the modern world. The following passage from the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World will give an idea of the council's motivations:

In every age, the church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel, if it is to carry out its task. In language intelligible to every generation, it should be able to answer the ever recurring questions which people ask about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other. We must be aware of and understand the aspirations, the yearnings, and the often dramatic features of the world in which we live.²⁶⁵

The Council was thus characterized by a spirit of change and a new openness to modern sensibilities and culture. One modern influence apparent throughout the council documents is that of scientific inquiry and scholarship. For example, the Constitution on Divine Revelation notes the value of historical-critical scripture scholarship, while maintaining that such scientific study must be tempered by a theological understanding of scripture as divinely inspired.²⁶⁶ Similarly, the influence of the Liturgical Movement and its scholarly study of liturgical history can be seen in the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy. The general modernizing spirit of the Second Vatican Council, combined with the scholarly and pastoral legacy of the Liturgical Movement, provided the impetus for substantial reform of the Catholic liturgy.

The Constitution on the Liturgy²⁶⁷ was promulgated on December 4, 1963, after a nearly unanimous positive vote by the council bishops. Interestingly, this made it the first major

²⁶⁵ Catholic Church, "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," Article 4. English translation in Flannery, *Vatican II*, 165.

²⁶⁶ See Catholic Church, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" articles 12-13, in *ibid.*, 105-106.

²⁶⁷ AAS 56 (1964), 97-134.

document issued by the Second Vatican Council. Amidst all of the discussions and topics occupying the council, liturgical reform emerged as the first priority. The opening paragraph of the Constitution on the Liturgy (which was also the first statement issued by the council) shows the centrality of liturgy in the church's vision:

The Sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions that are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote the union of all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of humanity into the household of the Church. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.²⁶⁸

Following this introduction, the Constitution outlines some “general principles for the reform and promotion of the sacred liturgy.”²⁶⁹ In addition to offering a theological description of the liturgy and its relation to the church's life and mission, the document in article 11 emphasizes the importance of the congregation's involvement in the Mass:

But in order that the liturgy may possess its full effectiveness, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their minds be attuned to their voices, and that they cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain. Pastors must therefore realize that when the liturgy is celebrated something more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and lawful celebration; it is also their duty to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects.²⁷⁰

Articles fourteen through forty two of the Constitution are then devoted to a detailed set of directives for the “promotion of liturgical instruction and active participation.”²⁷¹ Article 14 is particularly noteworthy, as it gives the strongest official affirmation yet seen in the twentieth century of the importance of active participation:

²⁶⁸ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” Article 1. English translation in O'Brien, *Documents*, 4.

²⁶⁹ This is the title of Chapter 1 of the Constitution on the Liturgy. See *ibid.*, 5.

²⁷⁰ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 11, in *ibid.*, 7.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Pt 2:9, see 2:4-5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism. **In the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else** [Emphasis added].²⁷²

Here Pope Pius X’s 1903 call for active participation of the congregation is raised to the church’s preeminent liturgical consideration. In addition, this article clarifies that the ideal of active participation must not only inform the enactment of the existing liturgy, but also makes necessary a thorough reform of the liturgy. The substantial nature of the council’s reform agenda becomes clear in article 21:

In order that the Christian people may more surely derive an abundance of graces from the liturgy, the Church desires to undertake with great care a general reform of the liturgy itself. 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 if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become pointless. In this reform both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things they signify and that the Christian people, as far as possible, are able to understand them with ease and to take part in the rites fully, actively, and as befits a community.²⁷³

In this paragraph the scholarly historiography of the Liturgical Movement can be seen at work. The liturgy is described in this article as a combination of essential elements and unessential—even harmless or “pointless”—historical accretions. The language used here paves the way for changes to the fundamental structure of the Roman Rite.

The Constitution on the Liturgy follows this general assessment of the situation with a number of detailed directives governing the task of liturgical reform. Several of these guidelines directly address the issue of parallel liturgy. Article 28 states that “in liturgical celebrations each

²⁷² Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 14, in *ibid.*, 8.

²⁷³ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 21, in *ibid.*, 9.

one, minister or layperson, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to that office by the nature of the rite and the principles of the liturgy.”²⁷⁴ This is a key statement, as it begins to break down the notion that the priest must do everything in the liturgy. Instead, this article points back to the time before the inclusion of all books in the priest’s Missal—a time when the choir, lectors, and ministers each exercised their own complementary role in the liturgy.

Articles 34 and 50 deal with the question of simplicity:

34. The rites should be marked by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people’s powers of comprehension and as a rule not require much explanation.²⁷⁵

50. The Order of Mass is to be revised in a way that will bring out more clearly the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as also the connection between them, and will more readily achieve the devout, active participation of the faithful. For this purpose the rites are to be simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance; elements that, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated or were added with but little advantage are now to be discarded; other elements that have suffered injury through accident of history are now, as may seem useful or necessary, to be restored to the vigor they had in the tradition of the Fathers.²⁷⁶

The priest’s obligatory recitation of all Mass texts, even those read by others or sung by the choir, seems to be a prime example of the unnecessary duplication referenced in article 50. In this section and article 28, the council shows its preference for the distribution of liturgical duties between all present.

The liturgical duty of providing sacred music is treated in its own chapter in the Constitution on Liturgy. This chapter opens with the following famous quote:

²⁷⁴ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 28, in *ibid.*, 10.

²⁷⁵ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 30, in *ibid.*, 11.

²⁷⁶ Catholic Church, “Constitution on the Liturgy” 50, in *ibid.*, 14.

The musical tradition of the universal church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. . . . Therefore sacred music will be the more holy the more closely it is joined to the liturgical rite, whether by adding delight to prayer, fostering oneness of spirit, or investing the rites with greater solemnity.²⁷⁷

Two features of this paragraph stand out, in relation to the discussion of the sung Ordinary and Proper. The first is the article's reference to the "musical tradition" of the church as a great treasure. The second is the rationale for the importance of music: the fact that music forms a "necessary or integral part" of the solemn liturgy. These statements taken together suggest that historical settings of the integral Mass texts (primarily the Ordinary and Proper) form the pinnacle of Catholic sacred music. In addition, sacred music plays its most important role when "joined to the liturgical rite." The council avoids any mention of the sacred music of the past as a treasure suitable only for presentation in sacred concerts.

There is a certain tension inherent in this general treatment of sacred music, given the fact that the Mass Ordinary is such a central part of the historical sacred choral repertoire. In the 1958 instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*, the church had just recently listed the Mass Ordinary as the first major set of texts for the faithful to learn to sing. If the musical treasure of the past was meant to remain in liturgical use, it would necessarily come into some kind of conflict with the church's priorities for congregational singing. This tension can be seen in article 114:

The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care. Choirs must be diligently developed, especially in cathedral churches; but bishops and other pastors of souls must be at pains to ensure that whenever a liturgical service is to be celebrated with

²⁷⁷ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 112, in *ibid.*, 23.

song, the whole assembly of the faithful is enabled, in keeping with art. 28 and 30, to contribute the active participation that rightly belongs to it.²⁷⁸

The council continues to highlight this difficulty in article 116:

The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as distinctive of the Roman liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services. But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, provided they accord with the spirit of the liturgical service, in the way laid down in art. 30.²⁷⁹

The article referenced here, that is, the article governing the inclusion of elaborate choral music in the liturgy, states the following:

To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bearing. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence.²⁸⁰

In other words polyphony (and presumably other elaborate choral music) is not excluded from the Mass, as long as the congregation is still able to participate in the singing. Although it is clear that the choir cannot be allowed to sing to the exclusion of the congregation, the question remains of how the historical repertoire can be reconciled with the church's new musical priorities. Specifically, the choir's largest historical repertoire and the congregation's central liturgical music both make use of the texts of the Mass Ordinary.

Article 118 hints at a possible answer:

The people's own religious songs are to be encouraged with care so that in sacred devotions as well as during services of the liturgy itself, in keeping with rubrical norms and requirements, the faithful may raise their voices in song.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 114, in *ibid.*, 24.

²⁷⁹ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 116, in *ibid.*, 24.

²⁸⁰ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 30, in *ibid.*, 10.

²⁸¹ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 118, in *ibid.*, 24.

In combination with the council's loosening of restrictions on the vernacular,²⁸² this article expands the potential role of devotional songs and hymnody during the Mass. Given the existing Low Mass tradition of congregational vernacular music during the entrance, offertory, and communion processions, hymnody was one possible way to balance the choir and assembly. Congregational hymnody during the processions would give the assembly opportunities to sing, while allowing the choir to focus on the Mass Ordinary. Two factors detract from this compromise, however: the ideal of singing integral liturgical texts, and the church's own lists of musical priorities. The vernacular hymn repertoire, growing up as it did in the confines of Low Mass, was by nature not based on integral liturgical texts. In fact, the rubrics of Low Mass did not allow the congregation to sing vernacular translations of the official texts. Thus, the devotional vernacular hymns, even if licit within the reformed Mass, fell short of the church's ideal of integral liturgical music. In addition, as discussed above, the church listed the congregational Ordinary as a higher priority than congregational singing of the Propers. The old distinction between singing unrelated devotional texts *during* the Mass and singing the Mass itself remained a central difficulty of post-conciliar musical reform.

In summary, the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Liturgy laid out a program for comprehensive liturgical reform within the Roman Rite. This reform was based on the fundamental ideal of active congregational participation in the liturgy—"the aim to be considered before all else."²⁸³ The methodology of reform, drawing on the work of the Liturgical Movement, was in large part a critical historical analysis of the development of

²⁸² See article 36 in *ibid.*, 11-12; and article 54 in *ibid.*, 15.

²⁸³ Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Liturgy" 14, in *ibid.*, 8.

liturgy. Those elements or historical accretions deemed unhelpful or unnecessary—or even opposed to the spirit of the liturgy—were to be removed. The reformed liturgy was to exemplify simplicity, clarity, a connection to tradition, and the active involvement of all present in their respective liturgical roles. In terms of musical reform, the council limited itself to broad statements. The ideal of musical balance was clearly expressed—between the historical repertoire and new music; between the choir and congregation; and between integral and devotional texts—however, specific directives for harmonizing these competing goals were left for a later time.

The following documents will demonstrate how the council’s vision for liturgical reform was carried out. Of particular importance is the increasing detail and clarity evident in the church’s treatment of the sung Mass Ordinary and Proper.

1964: The Liturgical Implementation Document *Inter Oecumeni*

The liturgical reforms mandated by the Constitution on the Liturgy were deemed so necessary by Pope Paul VI that he began to implement some of them while the council was still in session. The 1964 *motu proprio Sacram Liturgiam*²⁸⁴ contains the following exhortation from the pope:

Accordingly, our foremost concern is clearly that the faithful, and especially priests, dedicate themselves first of all to the study of the Constitution on the Liturgy and from this moment on prepare themselves to carry out its prescriptions wholeheartedly as soon as these take effect.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ AAS 56 (1964), 139-144.

²⁸⁵ Pope Paul VI, “*Sacram Liturgiam*,” in O’Brien, *Documents*, 84.

While noting that some reforms would be contingent on the drafting of new liturgical books, the pope instituted a number of others. He also established an official commission in this *motu proprio*, to oversee the practical implementation of the council's directives. The first document issued by this commission was the instruction *Inter Oecumeni* in September of 1964.²⁸⁶ This instruction contained detailed instructions for the gradual implementation of liturgical reform, clearly delineating the role and authority of bishops and local liturgical commissions. The instruction also included some universal norms governing the process of reform.

The key directives dealing with parallel liturgy are found in articles 32 and 33 of the instruction:

32. Parts belonging to the choir or to the people and sung or recited by them are not said privately by the celebrant [priest].

33. Nor are readings that are read or sung by the appropriate minister said privately by the celebrant.²⁸⁷

Here the Catholic Church quietly ends a practice that had existed since at least the thirteenth century. The priest's obligatory recitation of all integral Mass texts, a central factor in the rise of the choral Ordinary as a parallel accompaniment to liturgical celebration, is one of the first things removed from the post-conciliar liturgy. Lest there be any confusion as to the parts of the Mass in question, the instruction includes the following details in article 48:

a. The celebrant is not to say privately those parts of the Proper sung or recited by the choir or the congregation.

b. The celebrant may sing or recite the parts of the Ordinary together with the congregation or choir.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁶ AAS 56 (1964), 877-900. English translation available in O'Brien, *Documents*, 88-110.

²⁸⁷ Catholic Church, "*Inter Oecumeni*" 32-33, in *ibid.*, 94.

²⁸⁸ Catholic Church, "*Inter Oecumeni*" 48, in *ibid.*, 98.

The differentiation of roles described in article 28 of the Constitution on the Liturgy is clarified in these articles of *Inter Oecumeni*. The post-conciliar Mass is to feature a division of liturgical roles between various ministers, the choir, and the congregation. Most importantly, the execution of each role is now considered sufficient in itself. When the choir sings a Proper text, there is no need for the priest to ensure the validity of the liturgy through his own private recitation of that text. The choir thus exercises its own legitimate and integral liturgical duty. Similarly, while the texts of the Ordinary *must* still be proclaimed (either through recitation or singing) in each Mass, only one statement of each text is necessary. This duty may be carried out by the choir alone, or by the choir and congregation together. In either case the priest is free to join in; however, he joins in the communal and public proclamation of the text rather than occupying himself with private recitation.

The directives of the instruction *Inter Oecumeni* lay the groundwork for the final post-conciliar Mass: a ritual form characterized by a single communal focus at each moment. The congregation and choir are now more directly involved in the enactment of the Mass, as they take full responsibility for the proclamation of integral liturgical texts.

1967: The Post-Conciliar Instruction *Musicam sacram*

The 1967 instruction *Musicam sacram* (MS), promulgated by Pope Paul VI, is the central post-conciliar document on liturgical music.²⁸⁹ As the most recent major Vatican musical instruction, MS continues to inform the integration of music into the Roman Rite. At the same time, as will be seen below, certain tensions exist between the 1967 instruction and the 1970

²⁸⁹ AAS 59 (1967), 300-320. English translations in O'Brien, *Documents*, 1293-1306; and in Hayburn, *Papal*, 547-558.

reformed Roman Missal. In addition, territorial authorities such as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have issued local documents that at times directly contradict the norms included in the Vatican instruction. The directives of *Musicam sacram* are thus partly counterbalanced by competing tendencies within the church hierarchy. A detailed description of this situation is essential in order to place the post-conciliar sung Ordinary and Proper in context.

The preface of *Musicam sacram* notes that the council's Constitution on the Liturgy had "given rise to some problems about music and its ministerial function."²⁹⁰ The instruction is meant to solve these problems and confusions through "a statement . . . of the principal norms that seem most needed at the present time."²⁹¹ Flexibility in the amount and style of liturgical music is one of the chief norms offered in the document:

7. The amount of singing determines the gradations between the most solemn form of liturgical celebrations, in which all the parts calling for singing are sung, and the most simple form, in which nothing is sung. For the choice of parts to be sung, those should be first that of their nature are more important and particularly those sung by the priest or other ministers and answered by the congregation or sung by the priest and congregation together. Later other parts, for the congregation alone or the choir alone, may be added gradually.

10. It is advisable that there be as much suitable variety as possible in the forms of celebration and the degree of participation in proportion to the solemnity of the day and of the assembly, in order that the faithful will more willingly and effectively contribute their own participation.²⁹²

These directives contrast strongly with the more rigid pre-conciliar distinction between the extremes of Low and High Mass. Rather than limiting pastors and musicians to High Mass—in which most liturgical texts are sung—and Low Mass—in which no liturgical texts are sung,

²⁹⁰ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in O'Brien, *Documents*, 1293.

²⁹¹ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1294.

²⁹² Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1295.

Musicam sacram proposes a more flexible set of choices. In fact, the instruction states that variety can be an effective aid to the project of encouraging congregational participation.

The nature of the assembly's participation is clarified in article 15:

15. The faithful carry out their proper liturgical function by offering their complete, conscious, and active participation. The very nature of the liturgy demands this and it is the right and duty of the Christian people by reason of their baptism.

This participation must be:

- a. Internal, that is, the faithful make their thoughts match what they say and hear, and cooperate with divine grace;
- b. But also external, that is, they express their inner participation through their gestures, outward bearing, acclamations, responses, and song.

The faithful are also to be taught that they should try to raise their mind to God through interior participation as they listen to the singing of ministers or choir.²⁹³

What is notable in this article is the inclusion of both internal and external activity in the congregation's active participation. This is a key clarification of the important twentieth-century ideal of "active participation." Specifically, the congregation is not directed to sing every single part of the Mass. On the contrary, they are to listen to the choir at times, participating through interior devotion and prayer.

The choir, for its part, is treated with great respect:

20. Over the centuries the choirs of basilicas, cathedrals, monasteries, and other major churches have won high praise because they have preserved and developed the priceless treasury of sacred music. . . . [S]uch choirs are to be continued in order to carry out liturgical celebrations with greater solemnity.²⁹⁴

However, this commendation is followed immediately by a caveat:

²⁹³ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1296.

²⁹⁴ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1297.

Nevertheless choir directors and parish priests (pastors) or rectors of churches are to ensure that the congregation always joins in the singing of at least the more simple parts belonging to them.²⁹⁵

The choir's role, as important as it is to the liturgy, is balanced with the necessity of encouraging the assembly to sing. This principle is made explicitly clear in article 16, which states that:

The practice of assigning the singing of the entire Proper and Ordinary of the Mass to the choir alone without the rest of the congregation is not to be permitted.²⁹⁶

Thus, the instruction establishes one outer boundary to help guide the division of music between assembly and choir. The congregation must have at least some part in singing the principal texts of the Mass—the Ordinary and Proper.

Following these general norms governing the musical involvement of the assembly and the choir, *Musicam sacram* proceeds to offer a detailed musical hierarchy for the Mass. As this set of priorities continues to inform musical choices in the post-conciliar liturgy, it is included here in full:

28. The distinction between the solemn, the high, and the low Mass, sanctioned by the 1958 Instruction (no. 3) remains in force, according to tradition and the current law. But for pastoral reasons degrees of solemnity for the sung Mass are proposed here in order that it will become easier, in accord with each congregation's capability, to make the celebration of the Mass more solemn through the use of singing. These degrees must be so employed, however, that the first may always be used without the others, but the second and third never without the first. Thus in all cases the faithful are to be brought to take part fully in the singing.

29. To the first degree belong:

- a) In the entrance rites
 - i) The priest's greeting and the congregation's response
 - ii) The opening prayer
- b) In the liturgy of the word
 - i) The gospel acclamations
- c) In the liturgy of the eucharist

²⁹⁵ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1297.

²⁹⁶ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1296.

- i) The prayer over the gifts;
 - ii) The preface, with the opening dialogue and the *Sanctus*;
 - iii) The Lord's Prayer, with the invitation and embolism;
 - iv) The greeting *May the peace of the Lord*;
 - v) The prayer after communion;
 - vi) The final dismissal.
30. To the second degree belong:
- a) *Kyrie, Gloria, Agnus Dei*;
 - b) Profession of faith [*Credo*];
 - c) General intercessions.
31. To the third degree belong:
- a) Songs for the entrance procession and for communion;
 - b) Chants after a lesson or epistle;
 - c) *Alleluia* before the gospel;
 - d) Songs for the presentation of the gifts [Offertory];
 - e) The Scripture readings, except when it seems better not to have them sung.²⁹⁷

This list builds on the priorities given in the 1958 instruction *De musica sacra et sacra liturgia*.

The striking new feature in *Musicam sacram* is the inclusion of a single list of priorities covering all sung celebrations of the Mass. Music is no longer divided into integral liturgical texts for the High Mass, and non-liturgical devotional hymns for the Low Mass. Rather, *Musicam sacram* proposes a fluid liturgical hierarchy incorporating all possible musical resources.

As in the 1958 instruction, the Mass Ordinary is given higher priority than the Mass Proper where congregational singing is concerned. The *Sanctus* is raised here to the first degree of sung texts, while the other Mass Ordinary chants remain in the second degree. All Proper texts are found in the third category: the processional chants, as well as the chants between the readings (the *Alleluia, Gradual, Tract, and Sequence*). The congregation is meant to focus on simple responses and acclamations at first, followed by the chants of the Mass Ordinary. When these have been mastered, the assembly may enter even more into the music of Mass by singing the Proper chants. Articles 32 and 33 further develop this topic of the congregational Proper:

²⁹⁷ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1298-1299.

32. In some places there is the lawful practice, occasionally confirmed by indult, of substituting other songs for the entrance, offertory, and communion chants in the *Graduale*. At the discretion of the competent territorial authority this practice may be kept, on condition that the songs substituted fit in with those parts of the Mass, the feast, or the liturgical season. The texts of such songs must also have the approval of the same territorial authority.

33. The assembly of the faithful should, as far as possible, have a part in singing the Proper of the Mass, especially by use of the simpler responses or other appropriate melodies. Of all the chants for the Proper the one coming between the readings as a gradual or responsorial psalm is particularly significant. It is intrinsically a part of the liturgy of the word and thus is to be sung with the whole assembly sitting, listening, and even, if possible, taking part.²⁹⁸

These articles are notable for the fact that they distinguish between the hymn tradition (the “other songs” of article 32) and the Mass Proper tradition. In other words the devotional hymn tradition, while now allowed in the sung Mass, does not replace the ideal of the congregational sung Proper. Given that hymns may now be used in place of the Propers, *Musicam sacram* still directs that efforts should be made to involve the assembly in singing the actual integral Mass texts when possible. As article 33 notes, this will involve a significant compositional effort: the crafting of simple refrains and melodies for these texts, with congregational singing in mind. The most significant Proper chant in this respect is the responsorial psalm between the scripture readings. The instruction thus calls for the construction of a new repertoire of Proper compositions that are simple enough for the congregation to sing.

This directive represents an epochal shift in the thinking of the Catholic church. The Mass Proper repertoire, in its texts and intricate chants, dates back to at least the seventh century and the work of the Roman *schola cantorum*.²⁹⁹ In other words, while there may have been an

²⁹⁸ Catholic Church, “*Musicam sacram*,” in *ibid.*, 1299-1300.

²⁹⁹ The phrase “at least” is used here, as there is some disagreement among chant scholars as to the precise genesis of the chant Proper repertoire. The late James McKinnon was the chief advocate of the theory that the Roman *schola cantorum* created the Proper repertoire in a relatively short period of time in the late seventh century. See

ancient Christian practice of congregational psalmody (whether during processions or as part of the liturgical scripture readings), the primary extant medieval repertoire for the Propers is choral in nature. The Catholic Church in 1967 had experienced at least thirteen hundred years of elaborate and specialist Mass Propers. As noted in article 32 of *Musicam sacram* the various processional hymn traditions of Catholic communities served as a replacement of the Propers, rather than as accessible congregational settings of integral texts. Thus the notion of taking the historically specialist Proper repertoire and setting it for congregational use was a groundbreaking idea. A fresh congregational repertoire would have to be created, literally from scratch, to meet this new liturgical ideal.³⁰⁰

One official query to the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship—the commission charged with regulation of the liturgy—sheds further light on official thinking in the post-conciliar years. This 1969 question and answer is included here, as it is directly applicable to the question of what the congregation should sing at Mass:

McKinnon, *Advent Project*, 1-3, 14-15. See Chapter 14 of McKinnon's book for a narrative summary of the process. Noted chant scholar Peter Jeffery disagrees with McKinnon's thesis, arguing instead for a longer organic development of the specialist (choral or cantatorial) Proper tradition – a development centered on monastic choirs and practice after the fourth century. See Peter Jeffery, "The Advent Project: The Later-Seventh-Century Creation of the Roman Mass Proper," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56, no. 1 (Spring, 2003), 169-179. Jeffery also criticizes the simplicity of what he calls the "'pastoral' revision of chant history" – an overgeneralized attempt by Liturgical Movement pioneers such as Joseph Gelineau to describe the rise of the *schola cantorum* as a sudden departure from the ancient Christian congregational singing tradition. See Peter Jeffery, *Re-envisioning Past Musical Culture: Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 76-86. Whether one accepts McKinnon's or Jeffery's thesis, it is clear that the Proper repertoire was choral in nature by at least the seventh century. This choral chant repertoire, developing through its transmission to the Frankish kingdom in the eighth and ninth centuries, is the basis of the Catholic Mass Proper repertoire.

³⁰⁰ Some commentators saw the choral provenance of the Proper repertoire as an insurmountable obstacle to congregational singing. For example, Helmut Hucke states the following: "The renewal in the liturgy of singing accompaniment cannot originate in the texts of the Roman Missal. These texts received their form from Gregorian Chant. They owe their present form to their original purpose of being presented by a choir, and from the fact that they were set to music by means which the Roman *scholae cantorum* employed in their day. The requirements of these forms do not permit a parish to make adaptations of the texts unaided, since the antiphon-texts are too numerous and too little practicable for singing by a congregation. . . . Today we can often succeed better with other texts and other music." See Helmut Hucke, "Musical Requirements of Liturgical Reform," in *Liturgy: The Church Worship*, ed. Johannes Wagner and Heinrich Rennings (New York: Paulist Press, 1966), 68.

Query: Many have inquired whether the rule still applies that appears in the Instruction on sacred music and the liturgy, 3 Sept. 1958, no. 33: “In low Masses religious songs of the people may be sung by the congregation, without prejudice, however, to the principle that they be entirely consistent with the particular parts of the Mass.” Reply: That rule has been superseded. What must be sung is the Mass, its Ordinary and Proper, not “something,” no matter how consistent, that is imposed on the Mass. Because the liturgical service is one, it has only one countenance, one motif, one voice, the voice of the Church. To continue to *replace the texts of the Mass being celebrated* with motets that are reverent and devout, yet out of keeping with the Mass of the day (for example, the *Lauda Sion* on a saint’s feast) amounts to continuing an unacceptable ambiguity: it is to cheat the people. Liturgical song involves not mere melody, but words, text, thought, and the sentiments that the poetry and music contain. Thus texts must be those of the Mass, not others, and singing means singing the Mass not just singing during Mass [emphasis in original].³⁰¹

Here the Congregation for Divine Worship states, in strong language, that the congregation is to sing the actual integral texts of the liturgy. Of particular note is the rationale for this stance: the fact that the liturgical service is “one.” As the post-conciliar Mass transitions from multiple streams of simultaneous activity to a sequential model, the liturgy does indeed display more unity. Specifically, the priest in the reformed liturgy shares responsibility for the valid proclamation of liturgical texts with the choir and congregation. Thus when a processional Proper is replaced by a devotional hymn, the Proper effectively disappears from the liturgy. Article 32 of *Musicam sacram* does allow for such substitution as an exception, however the church’s preference is clearly for the Propers themselves to be sung in the liturgy. The single communal focus of the post-conciliar liturgy raises every sung Mass text to a new level of prominence.

The Mass texts to be sung communally, as listed in *Musicam sacram*’s hierarchy of priorities for congregational singing, include the entire Mass Ordinary and Proper. Reinforcing this proposed goal, article 33 states that the laity should sing the Proper as much as possible. It

³⁰¹ Congregation for Divine Worship, *Notitiae* 5 (1969), 406, in O’Brien, *Documents*, 1299nR4.

would appear, then, that when the church's ideal has been reached there will be no place for independent choral pieces. However, such an interpretation is clearly negated by article 34:

34. When there is to be part singing for the chants of the Ordinary of the Mass, they may be sung by the choir alone in the customary way, that is, either a cappella or with instrumental accompaniment. The Congregation, however, must not be altogether left out of the singing for the Mass.

In other cases the chants of the Ordinary may be divided between choir and congregation or between one part of the congregation and another. The singing is then done by alternating verses or in any other way that takes in most of the entire text. **It is important in any such arrangement, however, to attend to the following.** Because it is a profession of faith, the *Credo* is best sung by all or else sung in a manner that allows the congregation's proper participation. Because it is an acclamation concluding the preface, the *Sanctus* should as a rule be sung by the entire assembly along with the priest. Because it accompanies the breaking of the bread, the *Agnus Dei* may be repeated as often as necessary, especially in concelebrations and it is appropriate as well for the congregation to have a part in it, at least by singing the final *Grant us peace* [emphasis added].³⁰²

This article is a critical post-conciliar treatment of the historical choral Mass Ordinary tradition.

The instruction grants explicit permission here for choral performance of the entire Mass Ordinary, whether *a cappella* or orchestrated. The only restriction is that the congregation must have some musical part in the Mass. This principle had already been given in article 16, which stated that "The practice of assigning the singing of the entire Proper and Ordinary of the Mass to the choir alone without the rest of the congregation is not to be permitted."³⁰³ The implication is that the choral Ordinary must be balanced by congregational Propers, acclamations, and so forth. Another key principle follows from article 34: if the choral Ordinary may be legitimately performed given congregational Propers, then it is safe to conclude that the reverse is also true. In other words if the choir can sing the Ordinary to the exclusion of the congregation, then they may certainly sing the lower-priority Proper in place of the congregation. In this case, the choral

³⁰² Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1300.

³⁰³ Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in *ibid.*, 1296.

Proper should be balanced by the congregational Ordinary— probably a more desirable division, given the musical hierarchy of *Musicam sacram*. The only option excluded outright is for the choir to sing the entire Ordinary and Proper, leaving no major liturgical texts for the congregation.

One further observation is necessary, in regards to this important section of *Musicam sacram*. The sentences emphasized in bold type above clearly show a two-part logical progression in article 34. First, it is explicitly allowed for the choir to sing elaborate settings of the Ordinary without the congregation. Second, “in other cases,” the Ordinary may be divided between choir and congregation. *In those cases*, a certain set of priorities will help guide the division of texts. For example, the *Credo* and *Sanctus* are logical first choices to assign to the congregation. Some commentators have misconstrued this two-part construction as an internal contradiction. For example, Anthony Ruff states that “it is difficult to understand the meaning of the final form of MS [*Musicam sacram*] 34, where it is stated that the choir may sing the entire “Ordinary,” but it is preferable that the entire congregation sing it.”³⁰⁴ In fact, article 34 never says that it is preferable that the entire Ordinary be sung by the congregation. The article does state that when the Ordinary is divided between choir and congregation it is preferable that the *Sanctus*, *Credo*, and possibly *Agnus Dei* be assigned to the assembly. Article 34 was, and continues to be, controversial, given its explicit allowance for the choral Mass Ordinary

³⁰⁴ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 346.

repertoire in the post-conciliar liturgy.³⁰⁵ However, there is no internal contradiction in the article's treatment of the choral and congregational Mass Ordinary.³⁰⁶

In summary, the 1967 instruction *Musicam sacram* stands firmly in the tradition of other major twentieth-century documents on sacred music. The active participation of the congregation is a central goal, to be fostered by choirs, pastors, and composers of liturgical music. Steps are to be taken to involve the assembly in singing the integral liturgical texts of the Mass—up to and including the entire Ordinary and Proper. At the same time, however, the choir continues to play a critical and distinctive role in the liturgy. Choirs, especially at major centers such as cathedrals and basilicas, are to continue their important work of preserving and developing the church's treasury of sacred music. Where the resources exist, choirs are free to make use of the church's entire repertoire of fitting sacred music, whether *a cappella* or orchestrated in style, whether monophonic or polyphonic. The choir's choices include elaborate settings of the Mass Ordinary and Proper, as long as the congregation is not excluded from the singing at Mass. The ideal of balance between choir and congregation, seen again and again in the twentieth-century documents, continues to govern musical choices after the Second Vatican Council. Given the necessity of such balance, the choral Ordinary and Proper repertoires appear to be equally viable options in the post-conciliar era. However, as will be discussed below, the liturgical structure and musical directives of the reformed 1970 Missal provide severe limitations for one set of texts.

³⁰⁵ See *ibid.*, 345-348 for a discussion of different viewpoints on the interpretation of article 34.

³⁰⁶ The most tension that could be inferred within the document *Musicam sacram* itself is between the musical hierarchy listing the Ordinary as a high priority for the congregation, and article 34's allowance for the choral Ordinary. However, the hierarchy of articles 29-31 in no way amounts to a preceptive command that the congregation must sing the Ordinary at every Mass. It is also worth noting that even without such a directive, practicality continues to limit the use of the choral Ordinary. The choral and instrumental resources necessary to perform elaborate Ordinary settings remain the exception rather than the rule.

1970: The Reformed Roman Missal

Pope Paul VI promulgated the post-conciliar reformed Roman Missal through his 1969 apostolic constitution *Missale Romanum*.³⁰⁷ However, due to a series of final revisions the complete Missal was not published until 1970. As of 2012, two further editions of the Latin document have been published—one in 1975 during the papacy of Pope Paul VI and one in 2002 under the authority of Pope John Paul II (1978-2005).³⁰⁸ Thus the Missal currently in use in the Catholic liturgy is the third official edition. This Latin original is translated into the various vernacular languages following its approval in Rome. The most recent official English-language translation was approved by Rome in 2010, after a multi-year translation project by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy. As with revisions of the 1570 Missal, later editions of the 1970 Missal introduced relatively minor changes—new feast days, slight alteration of prayers, and so forth. The fundamental structure of the liturgy, as introduced in the 1970 Missal, remains the same to the present. For this reason, this doctoral document will reference the 2010 English translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal. Any slight differences in comparison with earlier versions will be included in footnotes.

While a great deal could be analyzed in the post-conciliar liturgy, from the ancient provenance of certain prayers and revisions to the theology of the new Mass, this document will focus on two key aspects of the reformed Missal. The first is the transition from a generally parallel to a generally sequential liturgy. The second is the treatment given to the Mass Ordinary and Proper in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. These two components taken

³⁰⁷ AAS 61 (1969), 217-222.

³⁰⁸ Pope John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła, was pope from 1978-2005.

together will help to clarify the place, or role, of the choral Mass Ordinary in the post-conciliar liturgy.

In order to clearly demonstrate the sequential structure of the post-conciliar liturgy, a table for the Mass Ordinary and Proper will be used. Comparison with the table in chapter two of this document, which outlined the structure of the 1962 Missal, may be helpful. Quotations in the right-hand column are from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM).

Mass Ordinary (O) or Proper (P)	Simultaneous Ritual Actions
Introit (P)	The priest (or priests), deacons, and other ministers process to the sanctuary. When incense is used, the altar and cross are incensed.
Kyrie (O)	None
Gloria (O)	None
Gradual or Responsorial Psalm (P)/Sequence (P)	None. “[T]he whole congregation sits and listens, normally taking part by means of the response, except when the Psalm is sung straight through, that is, without a response.” ³⁰⁹ When there is a sequence, this follows the second scripture reading directly.
Gospel Acclamation (P) (The <i>Alleluia</i> , except during Lent, when another acclamation or the Tract (P) is used)	If incense is used, the priest places incense in the thurible and blesses it. The minister who will read the gospel carries the gospel book to the ambo.
Creed (O)	None
Offertory (P)	Money may be collected from the congregation. Following the collection, these gifts and the unconsecrated bread and wine for use in the Mass are carried forward to the altar in procession. The priest prepares the altar, then receives the gifts and bread

³⁰⁹ Catholic Church, “General Instruction of the Roman Missal,” art. 61. Available at United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “General Instruction of the Roman Missal” <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/roman-missal/general-instruction-of-the-roman-missal/> (accessed November 2, 2012).

	and wine at the foot of the sanctuary steps. The priest ritually washes his hands, and says prayers over the bread and wine. If incense is used, the priest, altar, and congregation are incensed.
Sanctus (O)	None
Agnus Dei (O)	“The priest breaks the Eucharistic Bread, with the assistance, if the case requires, of the Deacon or a concelebrant. . . . The priest breaks the bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation.” ³¹⁰
Communion (P)	The priest receives the Eucharist, and distributes it to any other ministers or servers in the sanctuary. The assembly processes forward to receive communion. Following this procession, the communion vessels are cleaned and any excess hosts are reserved in the tabernacle.

As this basic outline shows, the post-conciliar Mass is fundamentally different than the pre-conciliar. Four out of the five Mass Ordinary texts now stand alone as the central communal focus during their proclamation. All present, including the priest, are to occupy themselves with singing or saying these texts—no other actions take place simultaneously. Only when the text has been proclaimed in full does the liturgy move forward to its next component. The only Mass Ordinary text that still accompanies an action is the *Agnus Dei*, which takes place during the fraction rite. However, this simple act of breaking the Eucharistic bread and placing a fragment in the chalice does not require a great deal of time. In fact, the GIRM warns that this rite “should not be unnecessarily prolonged or accorded exaggerated importance.”³¹¹ The *Agnus Dei* litany is to accompany the rite, and end when the rite is completed. As the fraction rite is followed

³¹⁰ Ibid., art. 83.

³¹¹ Ibid., art. 83.

immediately by a public prayer before communion, it is not possible to begin communion while the *Agnus Dei* is still being sung. Thus even the one Ordinary movement that accompanies a ritual action is severely limited temporally.

The Mass Proper fares differently in this reformed Missal. The Introit, Offertory, and Communion chants continue to accompany processions, prayers, and actions on the priest's part. The amount of time required for these three processions can be significant, especially in sizeable churches or in Masses with large congregations. The other parts of the Proper—the psalm, sequence, and gospel acclamation, have their own distinct character. The psalm is meant to be listened to by all present, and perhaps sung through a simple response. However, the proclamation of the psalm to an attentive assembly follows naturally from the fact that the psalm is one of the scripture readings of the Mass. In those few cases when a sequence is used, the assembly may either sing or listen to it. Finally, the Gospel Acclamation accompanies the gospel reader's procession to the ambo. Thus with the exception of the psalm and sequence, each part of the Mass Proper accompanies some other necessary ritual action.

The clear distinction in the post-conciliar Mass between accompanying and independent chants is outlined in article 37 of the GIRM:

37. Finally, among other formulas [texts of the Mass]:

- a) Some constitute an independent rite or act, such as the *Gloria in excelsis* (*Glory to God in the highest*), the Responsorial Psalm, the *Alleluia* and Verse before the Gospel, the *Sanctus* (*Holy, Holy, Holy*), the Memorial Acclamation, and the *chant* after Communion;

- b) Others, on the other hand, accompany some other rite, such as the chants at the Entrance, at the Offertory, at the fraction (*Agnus Dei, Lamb of God*) and at the Communion.³¹²

With the *Agnus Dei* excepted, the Mass Ordinary texts are independent; while the Mass Proper texts primarily proceed alongside other actions. This fact alone has enormous implications for liturgical use of the inherited choral repertoire. To cite just one ramification, the use of a choral Ordinary movement now limits all but the choir to the role of listening. When such pieces are used in the Mass, even the priest is removed from external, vocal participation in integral rites. Further, the length of Mass Ordinary settings can quickly become an issue. The performance of a traditional five-movement polyphonic or orchestrated Mass setting adds nearly the entire performance time of the work to the length of the liturgy. Each movement must be performed in full, before the Mass can proceed. While such considerations do not translate to any explicit ban on the historical Ordinary repertoire, they do show that the dynamic between music and liturgy is greatly altered in the post-conciliar Mass.

The question of the choral Ordinary and Proper is further developed by the GIRM, in its instructions for the musical performance of each part of the Mass. As the GIRM is the most recent Vatican document dealing with the music of the Mass, its directives for each text are included here in full. For the sake of clarity the Mass Ordinary and Proper will be presented in separate tables, with the applicable quotes from the GIRM alongside.

³¹² Ibid., art. 37.

Mass Ordinary Text	GIRM Directive³¹³
<i>Kyrie</i>	52. After the Penitential Act, the Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy), is always begun, unless it has already been part of the Penitential Act. Since it is a chant by which the faithful acclaim the Lord and implore his mercy, it is usually executed by everyone, that is to say, with the people and the choir or cantor taking part in it.
<i>Gloria</i>	53. The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other. It is intoned by the Priest or, if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir; but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone.
<i>Credo</i>	<p>67. The purpose of the Creed or Profession of Faith is that the whole gathered people may respond to the Word of God proclaimed in the readings taken from Sacred Scripture and explained in the Homily and that they may also honor and confess the great mysteries of the faith by pronouncing the rule of faith in a formula approved for liturgical use and before the celebration of these mysteries in the Eucharist begins.</p> <p>68. The Creed is to be sung or said by the Priest together with the people on Sundays and Solemnities. It may be said also at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.</p> <p>If it is sung, it is intoned by the Priest or, if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir. It is then sung either by everybody together or by the people alternating with the choir.</p>
<i>Sanctus</i>	<p>79. The main elements of which the Eucharistic Prayer consists may be distinguished from one another in this way:</p> <p>b) The acclamation, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, sings the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy). This acclamation, which constitutes part of the Eucharistic Prayer itself, is pronounced by all the people with the Priest.</p> <p>147. Then the Priest begins the Eucharistic Prayer. In accordance with the rubrics (cf. no. 365), he selects a Eucharistic Prayer from those found in the Roman Missal or approved by the Apostolic See. By its very nature, the Eucharistic Prayer requires that only the Priest say it, in virtue of his Ordination. The people, for their part, should associate themselves</p>

³¹³ All GIRM references available at United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “General Instruction of the Roman Missal.”

	with the Priest in faith and in silence, as well as by means of their interventions as prescribed in the course of the Eucharistic Prayer: namely, the responses in the Preface dialogue, the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), the acclamation after the Consecration, the acclamation Amen after the concluding doxology, as well as other acclamations approved by the Conference of Bishops with the recognitio of the Holy See.
<i>Agnus Dei</i>	<p>83. The Priest breaks the Eucharistic Bread, with the assistance, if the case requires, of the Deacon or a concelebrant. . . . The Priest breaks the Bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation, namely, of the Body of Jesus Christ, living and glorious. The supplication <i>Agnus Dei</i> (Lamb of God) is usually sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation replying; or at least recited aloud. This invocation accompanies the fraction of the bread and, for this reason, may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has been completed. The final time it concludes with the words grant us peace.</p> <p>155. After this, the Priest takes the host, breaks it over the paten, and places a small piece in the chalice, saying quietly, <i>Haec commixtio</i> (May this mingling). Meanwhile the <i>Agnus Dei</i> (Lamb of God) is sung or said by the choir and by the people (cf. no. 83).</p>

The musical directives of the GIRM place the choral Ordinary in a new light. While four out of the five Ordinary texts were grouped together in the GIRM as independent rites, each text receives different performance guidelines. The *Gloria* is the only movement of the Ordinary accompanied by an explicit allowance for choral rather than congregational performance. The *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* are “usually” sung by both choir and congregation. The *Credo* “is sung” in one of two ways: either by all or by the assembly in alternation with the choir. Finally, the *Sanctus* “is pronounced by all.” Although some flexibility is implied by the use of the word “usually” for the *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei*, there does not seem to be any allowance for the inclusion of a choral *Sanctus* or *Credo*. Interestingly these latter two movements were the first listed by the instruction *Musicam sacram* as priorities for congregational singing, when the Ordinary is split between assembly and choir. While *Musicam sacram* does not require these chants to

include the congregation, the GIRM does. The GIRM, as a later Vatican liturgical directive, appears to supersede the earlier instruction on sacred music in this matter. Thus, in the most restrictive interpretation, the performance of a full five-movement Mass Ordinary setting in the reformed liturgy constitutes an illicit liturgical act. At the very least, the GIRM expresses that congregational singing of the entire Ordinary is the norm within the reformed liturgy.

The GIRM discusses the Mass Proper in a much more flexible manner, as seen in the table below.

Mass Proper Text	GIRM Directive
<i>Introit</i>	<p>47. When the people are gathered, and as the Priest enters with the Deacon and ministers, the Entrance Chant begins. Its purpose is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical time or festivity, and accompany the procession of the Priest and ministers.</p> <p>48. This chant is sung alternately by the choir and the people or similarly by a cantor and the people, or entirely by the people, or by the choir alone.</p>
<i>Psalm/Gradual/Sequence</i>	<p>61. After the First Reading follows the Responsorial Psalm, which is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word and which has great liturgical and pastoral importance, since it fosters meditation on the Word of God. . . . It is preferable for the Responsorial Psalm to be sung, at least as far as the people's response is concerned. Hence the psalmist, or cantor of the Psalm, sings the Psalm verses at the ambo or another suitable place, while the whole congregation sits and listens, normally taking part by means of the response, except when the Psalm is sung straight through, that is, without a response.</p> <p>64. The Sequence which, except on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost Day, is optional, is sung before the Alleluia.</p>
<i>Gospel Acclamation/Tract</i>	<p>62. After the reading that immediately precedes the Gospel, the Alleluia or another chant laid down by the rubrics is sung, as the liturgical time requires. An acclamation of this kind constitutes a rite or act in itself, by which the gathering of the faithful welcomes and greets the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel and</p>

	<p>profess their faith by means of the chant. It is sung by everybody, standing, and is led by the choir or a cantor, being repeated as the case requires. The verse, on the other hand, is sung either by the choir or by a cantor.</p> <p>a) The Alleluia is sung in every time of year other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary or the Graduale.</p> <p>b) During Lent, instead of the Alleluia, the Verse before the Gospel as given in the Lectionary is sung. It is also possible to sing another Psalm or Tract, as found in the Graduale.</p>
<i>Offertory</i>	<p>74. The procession bringing the gifts is accompanied by the Offertory Chant (cf. no. 37 b), which continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. The norms on the manner of singing are the same as for the Entrance Chant (cf. no. 48) [see <i>Introit</i>, above]. Singing may always accompany the rite at the Offertory, even when there is no procession with the gifts.</p>
<i>Communion</i>	<p>87. This [selected communion piece] is sung either by the choir alone or by the choir or a cantor with the people.</p>

The treatment given to the Mass Proper texts in the GIRM contrasts strongly with the document’s guidelines for the Mass Ordinary. Explicit permission is included for choral performance of each processional Proper—*Introit*, Offertory, and Communion. While allowances are made for the processional hymn tradition, the Proper text itself (performed either in a chant setting or some other musical setting) is the first option given in the GIRM.³¹⁴ Similarly, the GIRM allows for the traditional Gradual psalm to be sung through without a congregational response (although a psalm incorporating the assembly’s response is preferred).³¹⁵ Only the Alleluia must be sung by all present; with its verse performed by the

³¹⁴ See *ibid.*, articles 48, 87. The key phrase is the option for “another liturgical chant” (Latin: *alius cantus*), which is generally interpreted to include hymnody. For a criticism of this approach see László Dobszay, “Chants of the Proprium Missae,” 85-120.

³¹⁵ See United State Conference of Catholic Bishops, “General Instruction of the Roman missal,” art. 61.

choir or cantor. The choir thus retains complete freedom in the post-conciliar Mass, according to current liturgical legislation, to perform the processional Propers and Gradual psalm without allowing for congregational participation.

Summary

The Second Vatican Council, heavily influenced by the historical scholarship and pastoral agenda of the Liturgical Movement, called for a substantial reform of the existing Roman Rite. This reform was to hold the active participation of the congregation as its primary goal. To this end the various liturgical roles were to be more clearly delineated, with priest, choir, ministers, and congregation taking responsibility for their respective parts. This new mentality undermined the notion that the priest was solely responsible for the recitation of all integral liturgical texts. Sections of the Ordinary and Proper in the post-conciliar Mass were thus elevated to the status of independent rites, as opposed to accompaniments to the priest's liturgical actions. Finally, the Second Vatican Council directed that needless accretions and repetitions within the liturgy be removed, in the interest of simplicity and clarity.

The revisions called for by the council were taken up in the implementation documents *Inter Oecumeni* and *Musicam sacram*, among others. *Inter Oecumeni* contained the groundbreaking directive that the priest was no longer required to recite texts proclaimed by the choir or congregation. In one stroke this document ended one of the central elements of the pre-conciliar parallel liturgy—a clerical requirement dating back to the high Middle Ages.

The instruction *Musicam sacram* set general norms for music in the post-conciliar liturgy. One contribution of this document was the creation of a detailed musical hierarchy for the Mass, which explained the highest priorities for congregational singing. This hierarchy directed that

the Mass Ordinary should be the first major set of texts sung by the assembly (following some basic responses and acclamations). The Mass Proper, in contrast, was listed as the congregation's last musical priority.

The musical hierarchy suggested by *Musicam sacram* in turn harmonizes with the post-conciliar liturgical directives, found in the Roman Missal and its accompanying general instruction. In the GIRM, the clear norm is for the congregation to sing the entire Ordinary. In fact, it is questionable whether the directives addressing the choral *Sanctus* and *Credo* even allow for the possibility of choral singing (to the exclusion of the congregation). On the other hand, each processional Proper (*Introit*, *Offertory*, and *Communion*) is accompanied by the explicit provision that the choir may sing it alone. The treatment of the Ordinary and Proper in the GIRM fits well with the idea that the Ordinary is meant to be sung by the congregation. When this prioritization is combined with the GIRM's elimination of parallel ritual activities during four out of five Ordinary chants, the situation becomes even clearer. The historical repertoire of elaborate polyphonic or orchestral Mass Ordinary settings simply does not harmonize with the structure and liturgical legislation of the post-conciliar Mass. The single contradictory directive in this whole situation is article 34 of *Musicam sacram*, which does allow for the performance of a complete choral Ordinary setting. It is difficult to build a strong case on this 1967 directive, though, when it conflicts with the later legislation of the reformed Roman Missal itself.

Even if a legal compromise can be found that reconciles *Musicam sacram* with the reformed Roman Missal, the central distinction between parallel and sequential liturgy remains. Elaborate Ordinary settings that historically played out alongside various other priestly and lay

activities become the single liturgical focus during the post-conciliar Mass. The length of such settings, usually acceptable in the pre-conciliar rite, now stretches the liturgy disproportionately while the priest and congregation listen. In short, polyphonic and orchestral choral settings of the Ordinary interact with the reformed liturgy in a completely new way. Thus, alongside the legislative issues discussed above, significant liturgical compromises must be made in order to accommodate choral Masses in the post-conciliar Roman Rite. As difficult as it may be to accept, given the incredible artistic value and cultural heritage of the repertoire, the post-conciliar Catholic Church seems to have made a clear break with the choral Mass Ordinary tradition. This is not primarily an issue of musical style; rather, the ritual structure that supported the historical repertoire has undergone a fundamental change. In its historically-informed evaluation and reform of the liturgy, the Catholic Church elected to return to its musical roots. Following the council, the Mass is structured so that all present focus on each part of the Mass Ordinary. The originally congregational Ordinary chants are normally sung by all—priest, choir, and congregation—at these key moments. Meanwhile, the choir is free to accompany the processions of the Mass with its own elaborate music. This concept of balance between listening and singing; between choir and congregation; between simple and elaborate music, is the hallmark of the church’s reform documents throughout the twentieth century. The musical implications of this post-conciliar balanced approach will be discussed at greater length in the concluding chapter of this doctoral document.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ One further church document is worth referencing, in connection with the musical directives of the GIRM and instruction *Musicam Sacram*. In 2007, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a set of guidelines for liturgical music titled “Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship.” This document reiterates the musical options for the Ordinary Proper of the Mass, as found in the GIRM. One idiosyncrasy of “Sing to the Lord” is its hierarchy of congregational singing, which differs slightly from that found in *Musicam Sacram*. Specifically, vernacular hymnody is assigned greater importance in “Sing to the Lord” than in *Musicam Sacram*. For a discussion

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CHORAL ORDINARY AND PROPER IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

The purpose of this concluding chapter is to examine the current place of choral music in the Catholic Mass, in light of the historical and documentary information discussed throughout this document. This will be accomplished in two sections: the first part addressing the inherited choral repertoire, and the second part offering practical suggestions for new compositions. It is hoped that this chapter, and this document in general, will be helpful to those church musicians, composers, and researchers who interact with the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church.

Part 1a: The Historical Mass Ordinary Repertoire in the Post-Conciliar Liturgy

The Catholic Church's post-conciliar liturgical legislation and reformed liturgical structure both point to a clear division between the Mass Ordinary and Proper texts. Specifically, the Ordinary texts are better suited for congregational singing; while the Proper texts are quite flexible, and may even be replaced by other texts. This emphasis on the congregational Ordinary is supported by a number of factors: the congregational origin of the Ordinary chants, the nature of the chants themselves (as litanies, hymns, or professions of faith), the hierarchy of congregational singing found in the post-conciliar instruction *Musicam sacram*, the single communal focus on each Ordinary text in the post-conciliar liturgy, and the treatment of the Ordinary in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. In addition to these historical and legislative dynamics, the simple concern of practicality must also be considered. The

of Sing to the Lord and a comparison of its musical hierarchy with that of *Musicam Sacram*, see Schaeffer, *Catholic Music*, 175-177.

unchanging texts of the Mass Ordinary provide the congregation with some measure of stability in the liturgy. The same musical setting of the Ordinary can be used from day to day and week to week, facilitating the assembly's familiarity and comfort with the sung texts. In contrast, when approaching the Proper texts the Sunday congregation would face at least four new texts each week. The combination of practicality, historical scholarship, and official legislation renders the Mass Ordinary the incontestable domain of the assembly after the Second Vatican Council.

The question of the liturgical use of polyphonic or orchestrated choral Masses must still be addressed, however. The official church documents never actually ban the historical Mass repertoire from the post-conciliar liturgy.³¹⁷ Such Mass settings remain in liturgical use, especially at churches with major music programs.³¹⁸ Perhaps the most striking example in the United States is the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, Minnesota. The late Monsignor Richard Schuler,³¹⁹ pastor of St. Agnes from 1969 to 2001, maintained a tradition of regular orchestral and polyphonic Masses throughout the year. The custom continues, according to the St. Agnes website:

³¹⁷ Although the GIRM's treatment of the *Sanctus* and *Credo*, lacking any explicit allowance for choral performance, could be taken as a legislative argument against using those movements liturgically.

³¹⁸ One interesting resource in this respect is Peggy Ann Licon's 1989 doctoral dissertation on post-conciliar music. Licon surveyed eighty-four Catholic cathedral music directors in the United States, requesting a list of pieces in their respective choral repertoires. While anthems and motets formed the bulk of the results, numerous polyphonic and orchestrated Masses were reported by survey recipients—including works by Mozart, Palestrina, Victoria, Rheinberger, Schubert, Bruckner, Britten, and others. See Peggy Ann Licon, "Twentieth Century Liturgical Reform in the Catholic Church and a Survey of Current Choral Literature" (Doctoral diss., Arizona State University, 1989), 437-504.

³¹⁹ Monsignor Schuler (1920-2007) earned a Masters Degree from the Eastman School of Music in 1950, and a doctorate in Musicology from the University of Minnesota in 1963. For biographical information see Richard M. Hogan, "Monsignor Richard J. Schuler: A Biographical Sketch," in *Cum Angelis Canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honour of Richard J. Schuler*, ed. Robert A. Skeris (Saint Paul, MN: Catholic Church Music Associates, 1990).

The Second Vatican Council ordered that the treasury of sacred music be preserved and fostered with great care. It also commanded that the Latin language be used in worship and Gregorian Chant be given pride of place in liturgical celebrations.

We are trying to fulfill these directives of the Church's Highest authority by singing polyphonic Masses with orchestra, a capella compositions and the propers of the Mass in Gregorian Chant.³²⁰

Given his long oversight of one of the few parishes in the United States to include regular performances of choral Masses in its liturgies, Schuler is worth discussing here. As the following quotation shows, he was well aware of the importance of the congregational Ordinary:

In the proper, frequently changing texts prove too difficult. The ordinary texts are more easily memorized, especially if set with easily comprehended melodies. The Instruction [*Musicam sacram*] makes it clear what parts the congregation is expected to sing, and it should be stressed here that the obligation does not end with the accomplishment of these parts in the vernacular, but the Constitution [Second Vatican Council – Constitution on the Liturgy] and the Instruction both say that the people are to be instructed to sing also in Latin those parts of the ordinary that belong to them. . . . Many a congregation today could sing [Gregorian chant] Mass VIII or Mass IX, Credo I or III . . . even without rehearsal.³²¹

Here Schuler notes the key points pertaining to the sung Ordinary: the unchanging texts are more easily learned by congregations, and the church's legislation prioritizes congregational singing of the Ordinary. At the same time, Schuler points out that the 1967 instruction *Musicam sacram* contained directions for the continued use of the choral Ordinary:

Also, [in *Musicam sacram*] the "treasury of sacred music," mentioned in the constitution on the sacred liturgy of the Second Vatican Council, is carefully guarded and its use commanded, including the polyphonic settings of the ordinary of the Mass produced over the past six centuries by the greatest composers of every age; but the liturgists have all but eliminated this heritage as a reality in worship.³²²

³²⁰ The Church of Saint Agnes, "Sacred Music at Saint Agnes" <http://www.stagnes.net/music.html> (accessed November 2, 2012).

³²¹ Richard J. Schuler, "The Congregation," 328.

³²² Richard J. Schuler, "A Chronicle of the Reform" in *Cum Angelis Canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honour of Richard J. Schuler*, ed. Robert A. Skeris (Saint Paul, MN: Catholic Church Music Associates, 1990), 381.

Schuler's language is quite strong—it would be more accurate to say that the instruction allowed for the continued use of choral Ordinaries, rather than “commanding” their use. Still, the more important question is how the allowance of *Musicam sacram* harmonizes with its own priorities for congregational singing.³²³ Specifically, if the choir sings the Ordinary then the congregation should sing the other body of integral Mass texts—the Proper. If the Proper is replaced by hymnody (the most practical option), then the congregation has effectively been shut out of singing either the Ordinary or Proper at such choral Masses. Yet Schuler himself bewails the results when the integral liturgical texts are left out of the Mass:

One Sunday becomes as every other, and feast and ferial, solemnity and memorial, all become the same. The riches of the Roman rite are ignored. The same can happen when hymns replace the texts of the day, even though the hymns themselves may often be varied. The poverty of liturgical celebration experienced in the eighties is caused chiefly by the abandoning of the liturgical texts of the *Missale* or the *Graduale* in favor of general anthems or hymns.³²⁴

Thus the liturgical reform ideal that the Mass itself be sung creates a quandary for Catholics such as Schuler. The retention of the choral Ordinary fulfills an artistic goal, while simultaneously rendering it all but impossible for the congregation to sing any integral liturgical texts. If the inherently specialist Proper texts as well as the Ordinary are sung by the choir, then another clear directive from *Musicam sacram* is transgressed:

The practice of assigning the singing of the entire Proper and Ordinary of the Mass to the choir alone without the rest of the congregation is not to be permitted.³²⁵

An emphasis on the choral Mass tradition, then, creates its own series of difficulties and compromises with reform ideals and within church documents.

³²³ Article 34 of the instruction, discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this document.

³²⁴ Richard J. Schuler, “A Chronicle of the Reform,” 413.

³²⁵ Catholic Church, “*Musicam sacram*,” in O’Brien, *Documents*, 1296.

Schuler, in addition to skirting this textual problem, does not address the issue of the changed structure of the reformed liturgy. The Ordinary plays a different structural role in the post-conciliar Mass, as all present focus on each text until its complete recitation or performance.

Anthony Ruff states the problem succinctly:

The polyphonic [or orchestral] Mass Ordinary repertoire can no longer have the liturgical function originally intended when composed. The inherited repertoire was written for a different ritual system than that of the reformed liturgy. Most of the inherited repertoire was written as a sort of accompaniment not entirely synchronized with the celebration of the priest celebrant. . . . Polyphonic Ordinaries cannot possibly be used in their original setting as originally intended, but only in current settings for current reasons.³²⁶

As Ruff notes, this fact does not in itself negate the possibility of using the older repertoire.

However, it is necessary to consider the current liturgical role the older music is meant to play.

The historical repertoire cannot be imported into the post-conciliar Mass wholesale, simply because the texts are the same and a legislative loophole can be found. Inherent tensions, both with the documents and with the structure of the liturgy, must be addressed.

Two further arguments (beyond the allowance in article 34 of *Musicam sacram*) for the continued liturgical use of the choral Ordinary repertoire are worthy of consideration: the cultural argument and the argument from diversity. The cultural argument stems from the fact that polyphonic or concerted Ordinaries constitute a long-standing tradition in some communities or regions. The most obvious example is the city of Vienna itself, the center of the orchestrated Mass tradition.³²⁷ Orchestrated Masses continue to be performed regularly in liturgies around the city. For example, the *Augustinerkirche* in downtown Vienna is famed for its weekly high

³²⁶ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 543-544.

³²⁷ Ruff notes that official allowances for the continued post-conciliar use of orchestrated Masses were granted as early as 1969 in the diocese of Vienna. See *ibid.*, 525n58.

Masses with orchestra and choir.³²⁸ Another renowned musical center is Westminster Cathedral in London, England. The cathedral maintains a Mass Ordinary tradition dating back at least a century, to choirmaster Sir Richard Terry's revival of the Renaissance polyphonic choral tradition in England. At Westminster Cathedral, this tradition extends beyond Sundays and feast days to include choral Ordinaries even at daily Masses.³²⁹ According to the Westminster Cathedral Choir website, the ensemble "remains the only Catholic Cathedral choir in the world to sing daily Mass and Vespers." In the United States the best example of a vibrant choral Ordinary tradition is the Church of St. Agnes, as discussed above. The Church of St. Agnes is an interesting case as, in contrast to the Viennese churches and Westminster Cathedral, its choral Ordinary tradition began after the Second Vatican Council.³³⁰ Still, at St. Agnes and these other important musical centers, an argument can be made for the continuance of a cultural custom. For most, if not all, of the post-conciliar period, these churches have maintained an unbroken tradition of liturgical music. A strong case can be made that, although the choral Ordinary does not integrate smoothly with the post-conciliar Mass, the congregations at major musical centers are well-accustomed to the necessary liturgical compromises. Pastoral concessions, such as the assembly sitting to listen to a lengthy *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, or *Credo*, have in their turn become second nature to the congregation. At the very least, the structural and pastoral concerns caused by choral Masses have been smoothed over. However, the reform-movement ideal of the congregation singing integral liturgical texts goes unfulfilled. Thus, while the choral Ordinary

³²⁸ Music schedules for the past 20 years can be found at Augustinerkirche Wien, "Kirchenmusikprogramm" http://www.hochamt.at/augustines_programm.php (accessed November 2, 2012).

³²⁹ Programming details are published weekly at Westminster Cathedral, "Service Music" http://www.westminstercathedral.org.uk/music_list.php (accessed November 2, 2012).

³³⁰ Specifically, in the mid-1970s. For a history of the choral Mass tradition at St. Agnes see Richard M. Hogan, "The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale," in *Cum Angelis Canere: Essays on Sacred Music and Pastoral Liturgy in Honour of Richard J. Schuler*, ed. Robert A. Skeris (Saint Paul, MN: Catholic Church Music Associates, 1990), 251-259.

functions at specific cultural centers, it remains a compromise endeavor in light of twentieth-century developments in the Catholic Church. In addition, long-standing cultural constructs by their nature are not applicable to the average parish. At the vast majority of post-conciliar Catholic churches, a choral Ordinary tradition would have to be created from scratch—through many years of effort, education, and outreach. Thus, while justifying the practices of parishes such as St. Agnes, the argument from cultural tradition is not helpful as regards future musical efforts in the post-conciliar liturgy.

The argument from diversity is more persuasive as a general norm. Anthony Ruff outlines this argument in his summary of an article by Austrian liturgist Franz Karl Prassl:

Prassl appeals to diversity and variety as an important characteristic of Catholicism. He suggests that the few orchestral Masses employed in the liturgy in Vienna on Sunday be considered in the context of the approximately 850 Sunday Masses celebrated in Vienna on a weekend.³³¹

Prassl is correct that even in the city of Vienna—still the international center of the orchestrated Mass tradition—choral Masses are far from the norm. Even at a single parish church, the high choral Mass is usually only one liturgical offering out of many. The simple practical considerations of funding orchestras and rehearsing major works impose natural limitations on choral performances of the Ordinary. Thus, while the choral Ordinary should not (or cannot) be pursued as a foundational genre of post-conciliar liturgical music, it is still a useful exception to the rule. For example, a Mozart Mass might be a useful way of marking some exceptional event—such as the centennial of a church or the ordination of a bishop.

³³¹ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 538.

The central principle of this argument from diversity is also its weakness: choral Masses are exceptional events in Catholic liturgical life. As such, they can be allowed in the name of diversity without compromising the overarching liturgical goals of the post-conciliar church. At the same time, the very rarity of choral Masses renders them unhelpful as a model for the vast majority of times and places. An orchestral Mass may be featured once or twice per year; but what is a legitimate musical goal for all of the other liturgies in a particular community? In addition, it is very difficult for a congregation to become comfortable with an exceptional form of the liturgy. When a choral Mass is used in the reformed Roman Rite, both the congregation and priest must adjust to the role of listeners during five choral performances. The liturgy feels quite different to participants, as the five parts of the Ordinary are stretched to a much greater length than usual. Adjustment to these new liturgical proportions and the role of active listening is certainly not impossible for those present; but it is rendered more difficult by the exceptional nature of choral Mass settings in a given community. The chief danger surrounding such an extraordinary musical production is of the liturgy becoming more of a novelty than a communal ritual; and more of a concert than a sung prayer. Even when these pitfalls are carefully avoided, the choral Ordinary exists as an unusual musical event in the post-conciliar liturgy.

To summarize, use of the historical polyphonic or orchestrated Ordinary repertoire in the post-conciliar Roman Rite raises an attendant series of concerns and difficulties. Twentieth-century reform ideals and church documents in particular are difficult to reconcile with the older repertoire. The act of incorporating a choral Ordinary into the reformed Mass involves a definite stretching of the liturgical structure to fit the music—something the church documents argue

against since at least the 1903 *motu proprio* of Pope Pius X.³³² Certain reformist goals for congregational participation, such as the assembly's singing of integral liturgical texts, are also generally thwarted when a choral Ordinary is performed. Anthony Ruff's assessment of the situation is well-founded:

In a world where goods often enough stand in conflict with each other, the polyphonic [or orchestrated] Mass Ordinary will find liturgical employment because one good has been selected rather than another.³³³

The success of music programs such as that at St. Agnes Church does not negate the inherent compromise of the choral Ordinary in the post-conciliar liturgy. While the treasured choral Mass repertoire will continue to inspire such compromises, it can no longer serve as the model or foundation of the liturgical repertoire.³³⁴ The era of the Mass Ordinary as the quintessential liturgical masterwork definitively ended with the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Part 1b: The Historical Mass Proper Repertoire in the Post-Conciliar Liturgy

The liturgical structure of the post-conciliar Roman Rite, while limiting the suitability of choral Ordinary settings, allows for a great deal of freedom where the Mass Proper is concerned. The GIRM gives the following options for music during the entrance procession of Mass (the same options are listed for the Offertory and Communion processions):

³³² As Pope Pius X expressed it, "As a general principle it is a very grave abuse, and one to be altogether condemned, to make the liturgy of sacred functions appear a secondary matter, and, as it were, the servant of the music. On the contrary, the music is really only a part of the liturgy and its humble attendant." See Hayburn, *Papal*, 224.

³³³ Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 544.

³³⁴ The 1967 instruction *Musicam sacram* mentions the fact that some of the historical treasury will not be useful as liturgical music in the post-conciliar Roman Rite. According to the instruction, "parts [of the treasury of sacred music] that are incompatible with the nature of the liturgical service or with its proper pastoral celebration are to be transferred to an appropriate place in popular devotions and particularly in celebrations of the word of God." See Catholic Church, "*Musicam sacram*," in O'Brien, *Documents*, 1303.

(1) the antiphon from the Missal or the antiphon with its Psalm from the Graduale Romanum, as set to music there or in another setting; (2) the antiphon and Psalm of the Graduale Simplex for the liturgical time; (3) a chant from another collection of Psalms and antiphons, approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop, including Psalms arranged in responsorial or metrical forms; (4) another liturgical chant that is suited to the sacred action, the day, or the time of year, similarly approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop.³³⁵

For all practical purposes, the fourth option of non-integral but officially-approved chants has become the primary processional music of the post-conciliar liturgy. Most importantly, the key repertoire of vernacular hymnody fits into this category. Unlike the pre-conciliar liturgy, with its clear divide between High and Low Mass, the reformed Roman Rite suggests differing levels of solemnity within one basic form of the Mass. Thus the pre-conciliar Low Mass hymn tradition easily developed into a general musical norm after the council, as the various conferences of bishops approved the hymn repertoire for use in all Masses. Under the provisions of the GIRM, it was always and everywhere licit in the reformed liturgy to replace the Mass Propers with vernacular hymnody or other approved music. In spite of this practical reality, however, it is important to note the first option in the GIRM for the three processions of Mass: the Proper antiphon, either sung to the chant melody of the *Graduale Romanum* or in some other musical

³³⁵ Catholic Church, "General Instruction of the Roman Missal," article 48. This list of options is from the GIRM, with adaptations for the United States. Each bishops' conference has the right to propose slight variations to the GIRM, for use in its respective country or region. This four-option system in the United States is slightly more detailed than the local options in a number of other countries. For example, the Canadian bishops' conference includes the following options for the entrance chant in article 48: "In the dioceses of Canada the Entrance Chant may be chosen from among the following: the antiphon with its Psalm from the Graduale Romanum or the Graduale Simplex, or another chant that is suited to the sacred action, the day, or the time of year, and whose text has been approved by the Conference of Bishops of Canada." This version is available at Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "General Instruction of the Roman Missal" <http://www.romanmissal.ca/GIRM.pdf> (accessed November 2, 2012). Interestingly, the English translation offered on the Vatican website incorporates the variations approved for the United States. The French, Spanish, Italian, and Swahili versions are offered on the Vatican website as well. See Catholic Church, "Missale Romanum," http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_missaleromanum_index_en.html (accessed November 2, 2012).

setting.³³⁶ The historical Mass Proper repertoire is not merely allowed in the post-conciliar Mass; it is listed as a high musical priority.

This explicit approval of the processional Propers, coupled with the structure of the reformed liturgy, renders the historical Proper repertoire highly useful in the post-conciliar Mass. The length and elaboration of a polyphonic or orchestrated Proper is balanced by the length of the three major processions during Mass. As the choral Proper covers necessary ritual actions—processions, preparation of the altar, incensing of the altar, purification of the communion vessels, and so forth—the liturgy is never unnaturally stretched to fit the music. Of course, in selecting particular works it is still necessary to bear in mind the average time needed for the major processions of the liturgy. Still, at least at the three processions, it is possible to smoothly integrate elaborate or lengthy choral works from the past. This practice would be completely in keeping with both the musical directives of the GIRM and the reform ideal of balancing congregational and choral singing during the liturgy.

The high practical value of choral Propers in the post-conciliar liturgy is mitigated somewhat by the artistic limits of the music. While there is a vast repertoire of Propers, encompassing every era of Western music, the settings generally stand alone. The historical repertoire is, for the most part, a collection of individual motets and anthems based on the Proper texts of the liturgy. For whatever reason, the Proper cycles of the Renaissance never developed into thematically-linked musical masterworks. In contrast, the great Mass Ordinary settings are

³³⁶ The official chant book of the Catholic Church. See Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, *Graduale Romanum*. (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée & Co., 1974). This edition incorporates the rearrangements necessitated by conciliar reforms to the calendar and lectionary. These changes to the chant book are outlined in the Vatican document *Ordo Cantus Missae* (“Order of the chants of Mass”). An English translation of this document is available in O’Brien, *Documents*, 1344-1347.

very often cyclic in nature—the many movements forming a cohesive artistic edifice. One of the most satisfying aspects of performing an Ordinary setting in the liturgy is the knowledge that the five major liturgical texts are thematically or stylistically unified. It can be difficult for the historical Proper repertoire to fulfill the same artistic role as the less liturgically-suitable Ordinary repertoire.

In spite of the general lack of large-scale musical masterworks based on the Proper texts, the historical repertoire does present some artistically satisfying options. The greatest stylistic unity can be found in the chant and polyphonic repertoire. For example, consistency is certainly achieved when a complete set of chant Propers from the *Graduale Romanum* is performed in the liturgy. This musical option is strongly supported by the church's unceasing insistence throughout the twentieth century that Gregorian chant be maintained in the Roman Rite.³³⁷ In addition, the Proper chant from the *Graduale Romanum* is given as the first option for the processions of the post-conciliar liturgy.

Similar artistic unity can be found in the major Renaissance collections of polyphonic Propers. The Trent Codices, Jena Choirbooks, Heinrich Isaac's *Choralis Constantinus*, and William Byrd's *Gradualia* offer a great number of Proper cycles for use throughout the church year. These important collections are easily passed over by choirs, in favor of the much larger polyphonic Mass repertoire. However, given the importance of polyphonic Propers in the post-conciliar Catholic Mass, such cycles may rise to a new level of prominence. One Proper cycle already occupies a central place in the church's liturgical repertoire: the *Requiem* Mass. Settings

³³⁷ For example, the Second Vatican Council stated that: "The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as distinctive of the Roman liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services." See *ibid.*, 24.

of the *Requiem* Propers generally include an Introit, Offertory, and Communion movement, along with portions of the Mass Ordinary. The Proper movements, at least, can be smoothly integrated into the post-conciliar Mass. These *Requiem* Masses, many of them beloved masterworks, can serve as a useful model for the continued liturgical performance of complete Proper cycles.

Even aside from the few complete Proper cycles, the repertoire of individual motets and anthems based on Proper texts is large enough to allow for creative groupings by church musicians. In other words, even if a cycle does not exist it is often possible to compile a set of Propers within a certain stylistic period or individual composer's output. In addition, the all-encompassing fourth musical option of the GIRM for the three processions of Mass allows for texts other than the Proper to be used. Thus when a suitable motet or anthem based on the Proper cannot be found, it is perfectly licit for the choir to perform some other work. This flexibility allows the choir to maintain a high level of musical unity within a liturgy, even when a suitable Proper cycle does not exist in the repertoire.³³⁸

One final limitation of the choral Proper is worth discussing here: the number of possible performances during a Mass. A liturgy certainly has a more pronounced ornate character when all five movements of the Ordinary are reserved for the choir rather than the congregation. In contrast, a liturgy with choral Propers will generally only include elaborate non-congregational music during the entrance, offertory, and communion processions. Thus when musical extravagance is desired—perhaps to mark a special event or feast day—the smaller set of Propers

³³⁸ For a useful discussion of this hybrid approach—selecting linked motets from various sources for one liturgy—see Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 556-559.

may not be as satisfying as a full five-movement Ordinary setting. This concern is answered in part by the GIRM's allowance for a choral Gradual psalm:

In the Dioceses of the United States of America, instead of the Psalm assigned in the Lectionary, there may be sung either the Responsorial Gradual from the *Graduale Romanum*, or the Responsorial Psalm or the Alleluia Psalm from the *Graduale Simplex*, as described in these books, or an antiphon and Psalm from another collection of Psalms and antiphons, including Psalms arranged in metrical form, providing that they have been approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop. Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the Responsorial Psalm.³³⁹

Earlier in this same article, the GIRM states that “the whole congregation sits and listens [to the psalm], normally taking part by means of the response, except when the Psalm is sung straight through, that is, without a response.”³⁴⁰ The psalm, then, may be sung in a more elaborate setting without the participation of the congregation. As the Gregorian chant Gradual psalm is an alternation between the choir's response and a virtuosic soloist verse, the inclusion of elaborate music at this point in the liturgy follows a long historical precedent. Similarly, the Alleluia verse may be sung by a soloist or choir in the post-conciliar liturgy.³⁴¹ The Gradual and Alleluia, then, combine with the processional Propers to give a total of five options for specialist musicianship in the reformed Roman Rite.

These opportunities for elaborate choral and solo music in the post-conciliar liturgy are stated explicitly in the church's documents, and reinforced by the structure of the reformed Mass. The choral Propers are performed either during other necessary actions, or during the time when the congregation is meant to listen to the word of God. As long as the congregation sings the remainder of the integral Mass texts—primarily the Ordinary—the ideal of balance between the

³³⁹ Catholic Church, “General Instruction of the Roman Missal,” article 61. See footnote 336, above, for a discussion of the regional differences between editions of the GIRM.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, article 61.

³⁴¹ See *ibid.*, article 62.

choir and congregation is maintained. While the historical Proper repertoire does not include many cyclic masterworks, it is broad enough to be of great use in the reformed Roman Rite. The knowledgeable church musician can incorporate artistically significant and stylistically unified sets of choral Propers into the post-conciliar liturgy, without compromising official documents or the ideals of twentieth-century liturgical reform.

Part 2: New Choral Compositions for the Post-Conciliar Roman Rite

The structure and musical guidelines of the post-conciliar Roman Rite impose certain limitations on modern liturgical compositions. Specifically, choral Ordinary settings do not integrate smoothly with the sequential structure of the reformed Mass. A case can be made for the continued incorporation of the inherited repertoire in the liturgy, in spite of the accompanying compromises. The question, however, is whether the polyphonic and orchestrated Ordinaries of the past can serve as a model for new liturgical compositions. Given the fact that the Mass repertoire developed in a much different liturgical context, it is difficult to argue for continued post-conciliar additions to the genre. Although the historical repertoire will no doubt continue to see use at extraordinary liturgies and in certain communities,³⁴² new compositions will need to grow organically from the altered post-conciliar ritual structure. In this way the liturgy becomes the starting point for creativity, rather than a ritual framework stretched to accommodate pre-existing musical forms. Pope Pius X, in the foundational liturgical reform document of the twentieth century, expressed this ideal well:

³⁴² The term “extraordinary” is used here with a double intention. It can refer to exceptional liturgies, such as centennials or ordinations, or to exceptional communities such as St. Agnes Church in Minnesota. However, the “Extraordinary Form” of the Roman Rite should also be kept in mind. This form of the Mass, celebrated according to the pre-conciliar 1962 Roman Missal, has achieved new significance during the papacy of Benedict XVI. New compositions for the Extraordinary Form of the liturgy may very well follow older musical models.

As a general principle it is a very grave abuse, and one to be altogether condemned, to make the liturgy of sacred functions appear a secondary matter, and, as it were, the servant of the music. On the contrary, the music is really only a part of the liturgy and its humble attendant.³⁴³

While it can be tempting to follow in the six-hundred-year tradition of composing choral Ordinaries, such an approach places musical convention above liturgical reality in order of importance. In order to serve the existing Roman Rite through music, the modern composer must understand the structural dynamics and legislation of the reformed liturgy.

The nature of the reformed Roman Rite does open the way for a particular genre of new choral compositions: Proper cycles. At the very least, the restored processions of the post-conciliar Mass—entrance, offertory, and communion—present the modern composer with a significant amount of liturgical time to fill. Particularly in larger churches the length of the various processions allows for elaborate choral music to be performed, without any distortion of the ritual structure of the Mass. This practical reality combines with a number of other factors—the importance of the choir in post-conciliar documents, the choral nature of the Mass Proper chants, and the church’s legislative emphasis on the Propers—to render the processional Propers the most logical avenue for new liturgical compositions. When these three texts are combined with the choral Gradual and Alleluia verse (both allowed in the GIRM), there is even greater potential for a Proper cycle. A composer could conceivably set a cycle of five texts to music for each Sunday or feast day in the church year. Three of these texts (the processional Propers) could be larger in scope and instrumentation, depending on the size of the intended liturgical space and congregation. In addition, it would be perfectly in keeping with the Gregorian chant tradition to feature a soloist in alternation with full choir during the choral Gradual chant.

³⁴³ Pope Pius X, “Tra le sollecitudini,” in Hayburn, *Papal*, 229-230.

Finally, the Alleluia verse (in alternation with a congregational response) could be suitably elaborate to cover the Gospel procession to the ambo. The complete choral Proper cycle could thus form an artistically unified multi-movement work, featuring a variety of performing forces.

This large-scale conception may be a key to the revitalization of post-conciliar liturgical composition. In spite of the church's insistence on the importance of composers, many artists seem to have abandoned Catholic liturgical music as a suitable avenue for creativity. As an example of this mentality, Anthony Ruff quotes Austrian composer Daniel Schlee:

What is left for the composers of our day? It is recommended to them that they write Responsorial Psalms. . . . A look at the inventory of liturgical works of first-rate composers at the end of this [twentieth] century shows: the harvest comes out shockingly and symptomatically thin.³⁴⁴

While not taking such a pessimistic view himself, Ruff notes that "one cannot avoid asking with Schlee why some leading composers are so uninterested in the forms of the reformed liturgy, and why the amount of serious liturgical music written in our day is so minute."³⁴⁵ Ruff examines various possible limiting factors for liturgical music, such as the perceived need for simplistic or folk-style music in the post-conciliar liturgy, and the church's mandate to promote congregational participation.³⁴⁶ However, while not accepting that such factors exclude the possibility for high-quality choral music, he offers a relatively short list of examples for future compositions:

[T]hrough-composed verses for existing congregational Responsorial Psalm refrains, or choral/organ reharmonizations for selected stanzas of existing congregational hymns, or freestanding choral motets.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁴ Daniel Schlee, qtd. in Ruff, *Treasures and Transformations*, 431.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 431.

³⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, 417-445.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 444.

Schlee's criticism is telling, given such suggestions. It would seem that the largest work a composer can consider writing for the reformed Roman Rite is a choral motet. As composer

Max Baumann describes the situation:

Previously, composers and performers had the possibility of filling out a cyclic form of approximately 45 minutes' duration, in order thus to lead the congregation to genuinely religious reflection. But today's mini-forms cannot really amount to more than musical sketches, limited in both artistic and religious, meditative eloquence. . . . In such a situation, the composer of Catholic church music has but one alternative: to emigrate into the concert hall.³⁴⁸

Without the Mass Ordinary tradition to build upon, the contemporary liturgical composer appears to be limited to small scale works: short congregational refrains, choral psalm verses, and the occasional choral anthem.

The reality of the Mass Propers contrasts strongly with this extremely limited view. According to the church's reform documents and liturgical legislation, the post-conciliar liturgy presents a wealth of texts suitable for choral performance. As evident in the existing choral Proper repertoire, these texts have inspired great choral works by famed composers in every musical era. In fact, the history of Western choral music is traced back primarily to the Proper, rather than the Ordinary chants. The first polyphonic experiments centered on the Proper repertoire, and specifically the Gradual and Alleluia chants. In addition, a vibrant polyphonic Proper genre developed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—encompassing such collections as the *Choralis Constantinus* of Heinrich Isaac. Thus, although the Mass Ordinary emerged in the Renaissance as the preeminent large-scale liturgical form, the Mass Proper tradition cannot be discounted. The fluid designation “Mass” in the fifteenth century—a title applied both to

³⁴⁸ Max Baumann, “Catholic Church Music Today,” in *Crux Et Cithera: Selected Essays on Liturgy and Sacred Music*, ed. Robert A. Skeris (Altötting: Verlag Alfred Copenrath, 1983), 88-89.

Ordinary and Proper cycles—could offer valuable clues to the present-day liturgical composer. Specifically, the ritual re-structuring prompted by the Second Vatican Council has opened the way to a revitalized Mass Proper tradition. The liturgical composer may once again write large-scale “Masses” for important churches, feast-days, and events; works based, however, on a different set of integral ritual texts.

The inherited choral repertoire does not merely provide the formal precedent for large-scale Proper cycles. Through analysis of past models, the liturgical composer of choral Propers can draw on specific compositional conventions as well. Such grounding in musical tradition is encouraged in the post-conciliar instruction *Musicam sacram*:

In their approach to a new work, composers should have as their motive the continuation of the tradition that provided the Church a genuine treasury of music for use in divine worship. They should thoroughly study the works of the past, their styles and characteristics; at the same time they should reflect on the new laws and requirements of the liturgy. The objective is that “any new form adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing” and that new works will become a truly worthy part of the Church’s musical heritage.³⁴⁹

The Gregorian chant repertoire itself provides many clues for the modern composer: the relative elaboration of the various Proper chants, the fundamental structure of antiphons or responsories, the soloistic nature of the Gradual and Alleluia, and so forth.³⁵⁰ Without occasioning any anachronistic imitation of the older repertoire, chant studies can help elucidate general stylistic and structural principals for new compositions. Another important body of music is the continental repertoire of Proper cycles from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This

³⁴⁹ See Catholic Church, “*Musicam sacram*,” in O’Brien, *Documents*, 1304. The quotation in this excerpt is from the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Liturgy, article 23.

³⁵⁰ One important recent book in this regard is William Mahrt, *The Musical Shape of the Liturgy* (Richmond, VA: Church Music Association of America, 2012). In his book Mahrt explores the ramifications of Gregorian chant as a model for sacred music; examining the liturgical ebb and flow of the chanted Mass as well as the unique characteristics of the various chants.

polyphonic tradition, traced through the Trent Codices, Jena Choirbooks, and *Choralis Constantinus*, maintains a direct connection to the original chant Propers. Analysis of this repertoire could yield helpful models for the incorporation of chant in polyphonic textures. For example, the ubiquitous soprano or bass chant paraphrase found in these continental collections could be emulated in a variety of textures and harmonic idioms.³⁵¹ Finally, Mass Proper compositions from more recent musical eras could be analyzed in an effort to trace a stylistic history of the genre. Walther Lipphardt, in his 1950 history of the polyphonic Proper, discusses an excellent contemporary composer—a man who found a “satisfactory solution” to the stylistic problem of composing Graduals for choir.³⁵² Lipphardt’s vaunted composer of choral Propers in a modern harmonic idiom was the German composer Otto Jochum (1898-1969). It is possible that some of the best modern attempts to add to the Proper repertoire have come from such lesser-known figures.

As the examples above show, the present-day liturgical composer can find many models for the choral Proper in the church’s treasury of sacred music. Much research and analysis remains to be done in this genre, overshadowed as it is by the Mass Ordinary repertoire. Still, the choral Propers of the past constitute a venerable and artistically significant body of music. Those writing choral music for the post-conciliar Roman Rite have the opportunity to build on this historical foundation. Perhaps most importantly, composers of choral Propers are not limited to short, simple, or congregational music in their output. The post-conciliar Mass can still smoothly incorporate elaborate liturgical music for the choir in the form of individual Proper

³⁵¹ A twentieth-century example of soprano chant paraphrase in a motet can be found in the *Tantum Ergo*, Op. 10, of Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986).

³⁵² Lipphardt, *Geschichte des Mehrstimmigen*, 90-91.

settings and even multi-movement Proper cycles. These forms have the potential to balance the artistic creativity and freedom of the composer, with the textual and structural integrity of the liturgy.

Conclusion

This document concerns the place and characteristics of choral music in the post-conciliar Roman Rite. As discussed in the first chapter, the balance between choral and congregational music has often shifted during the history of the Catholic Church. While the *schola cantorum* and the singing assembly coexisted in the early medieval era, liturgical music gradually became more of a clerical preserve. As the liturgy developed into an elaborate and imperfectly synchronized system of parallel activities—devotional, musical, and sacramental—even the choir attained a certain degree of independence from the clerical ritual. The newly-autonomous choir took on an accompanying role—necessary in the sense that it was required by the rubrics, but supplemental to the sacramentally valid actions of the priest. Composers responded by filling liturgical time with increasingly elaborate musical constructs, including the polyphonic Mass Ordinary cycle. The unfortunate result of this artistic freedom, however, was the fact that the congregation generally ceased to have any musical place in the Mass. Certain regional traditions such as the German High Mass excepted, the congregation essentially lost its liturgical voice for over a thousand years.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the reform-minded Pope Pius X set in motion a series of liturgical and musical changes. With the Pope's call for the participation of the laity in Mass, the choral-congregational balance began to shift away from the specialist musicians. Further reform documents of the first half of the twentieth century continued to expand the

musical role of the assembly, while at the same time reiterating the importance of the choir. This trend carried forward into the documents of the Second Vatican Council itself, as well as the subsequent instruction *Musicam sacram* and the reformed Roman Missal of 1970. The hallmark of official twentieth-century reform efforts was musical balance within the liturgy. Neither party—choir or congregation—was to assume all musical responsibility, to the exclusion of the other. Unfortunately, and perhaps as an overreaction to a millennium of congregational silence, the post-conciliar balance often shifted entirely to the congregation in practice. The question arose of whether there was any place for the choir in the reformed liturgy—and thus whether there was any need for new choral compositions.

The structure of the reformed liturgy seemed to militate against the choir as well. The parallel pre-conciliar liturgy, which had allowed so much freedom for artistic elaboration in its choral component, was replaced by a sequential system. In this model, the entire community was meant to focus on each liturgical text or action. Thus each text sung by the choir alone seemed to reduce the congregation—and even the priest at times—to mute listeners. The “stretching” of the liturgical structure through lengthy choral Ordinaries became especially difficult to justify. Compounding the problem, liturgical scholarship definitively demonstrated that the Ordinary was originally congregational music. This fact was reflected in hierarchy of congregational singing from the 1967 instruction *Musicam sacram*, which ranked the Ordinary as the first major set of texts for the assembly to learn. Finally, the General Instruction of the reformed Roman Missal affirmed the congregational Ordinary as the norm. The structure and legislation of the post-conciliar liturgy rendered the continued use of choral Ordinaries an uneasy compromise at best. A liturgical genre that had developed over six centuries was, generally speaking, only welcome in concert settings after the council.

This development effectively barred the choir from performing elaborate settings of one major set of liturgical texts. However, the other group of texts—the Mass Propers—remains the domain of the *schola*. Explicit permission is given in post-conciliar legislation for the choral performance of the Proper. In addition, the structure of the reformed liturgy includes processions during three of the Proper texts. Thus choral music retains its role as an accompaniment to necessary ritual actions in these moments of the post-conciliar liturgy.

The choral Proper, combined with a congregational Ordinary, would seem to fulfill the church's ideal of balance in liturgical music. Unfortunately the post-conciliar suitability of choral Propers is obscured by the prevalence of the vernacular hymns in Catholic liturgy. This repertoire, encouraged by the Liturgical Movement as a means of congregational participation before the council, has been transferred wholesale to the post-conciliar liturgy. As the hymns were traditionally sung at the entrance, offertory, and communion processions, they came to replace the Proper chants. Although the Propers, as integral liturgical texts, are the first option in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, they are all but forgotten in practice. Thus the barrier to a revitalized choral Proper tradition is cultural rather than liturgical or legislative.

If post-conciliar Catholic dependence on vernacular hymnody can be moderated, at least at major churches with strong choral traditions, a wealth of musical possibilities will be revealed within the Roman Rite. The inherited Proper repertoire, especially in its chant and polyphonic settings, will have pride of place in this process. Just as importantly, significant new compositions will be conceivable. Choral settings of the integral Mass Proper texts, flowing naturally from the structure of the reformed Roman Rite, will fulfill the church's call for suitable

liturgical music. The *schola cantorum* will enjoy an honored place and bright future, wherever the reforms of the Second Vatican Council are faithfully implemented.

APPENDIX A: SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Musicology

A great deal of work remains to be done on the historical Mass Proper repertoire. Even the more famous collections, such as Isaac's *Choralis Constantinus*, have yet to be fully explored. Large gaps are still evident in the history of the polyphonic Proper. Why were large collections such as the Trent Codices or Jena Choir Books commissioned? Are these collections singular occurrences, or have many other such collections been lost? What cultural, musical, and liturgical factors caused the sudden emergence of Proper cycles in the fifteenth century? Is there any concrete evidence, in treatises or musical manuscripts, describing an improvisational Proper tradition in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? To what extent was there a true tradition of Proper composition in Medieval and Renaissance Europe? Why was there a shift after the mid-sixteenth century from complete cycles to collections of individual movements (Introits, Offertories, and so on)? Did post-sixteenth-century composers have any consciousness of a Mass Proper tradition, in terms of compositional models and musical conventions (analogous to the unbroken Mass Ordinary tradition)? These and many other questions surround the Mass Proper repertoire, a body of music that has not been subjected to as much scholarly scrutiny as the Mass Ordinary. A thorough modern history of the Polyphonic Proper is needed, to replace the still-standard general overview offered by Walter Lipphardt in 1950.

Given that polyphonic Propers are the most useful choral repertoire for the modern Roman Catholic liturgy, the above questions are of great practical import. Church musicians enjoy a broad and thorough literature dealing with the Mass Ordinary, but have very little to work with where the Propers are concerned. Furthermore, with the exception of certain famous collections such as the Palestrina Offertories and Byrd *Gradualia*, critical performing editions in modern notation can be difficult or impossible to obtain. Another practical aid would be a thorough catalogue of the historical Proper repertoire, cross-referenced with the Proper texts of the modern Roman Rite. In short, if the Mass Proper tradition is to be a central focus of post-conciliar Roman Catholic music, it will need to be better explored and understood.

Music Theory

As discussed in Chapter 1, polyphonic Propers in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance were often composed differently than Masses or motets. Further analytical studies may help determine whether such a distinct “Proper tradition” exists in other times and places, as well as what compositional devices or conventions distinguish the repertoire. This work could be done in a variety of comparative ways—within an individual composer’s output, within a specific collection, or within a geographical boundary or period of time. In cases where trends have already been identified, compositional mechanics could still be clarified. For example, comparative analysis within the Trent Codices could reveal how various composers approached Gregorian chant differently as the basis for polyphonic compositions.

Lecture Recitals

The historical Proper repertoire presents many opportunities for research-based performances. Such lecture recitals could highlight the musicological and theoretical research

discussed above. For example, a lecture might explore chant paraphrase techniques in a particular cycle of the *Choralis Constantinus*—followed by a performance that juxtaposes the cycle with its corresponding Gregorian chants. Similarly, a comparison of the compositional techniques of Heinrich Isaac and William Byrd could be followed by a performance of their respective Proper cycles for a given feast day. Another good possibility for lecture recitals is the exploration of lesser-known Proper composers. As just one example, there is the twentieth-century German composer Otto Jochum. Walter Lipphardt considers Jochum one of the few modern musicians to successfully compose excellent choral Propers. Research into the life and works of Jochum, coupled with a choral performance of his Propers, would be quite informative. Jochum and many other little-known composers from various time periods may come to light through these research efforts.

Finally, complete Proper cycles would be an excellent option for composition recitals. The collection of texts for a given day can form the basis of a multi-movement work. In addition, the composer has the opportunity to explore and build on various musical traditions—for example, the solo/choral dynamic of Gradual chants. If choral Propers feature prominently in the future of Catholic church music, professional composers may benefit greatly from familiarity with the genre.

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