RCIA: SESSION Twenty Nine Music & Art in the Catholic Church Week: 08/05/23 – 14/05/23

Catechism Reference:

CCC #1156-1158

Church Documents

GIRM – General Instruction of the Roman Missal Sacrosanctum Concilium Musicam Sacram Tra Le Sollecitudini

Additional Resources

Office for the liturgical celebrations Of the Supreme Pontiff How to Celebrate/2: Music and Song https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/details/ns_lit_doc_20120404_c ome-celebrare2_en.html

MUSIC IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Music as part of the liturgy is meant to play a role in the sanctification of the faithful as they lift their voices in worship of God. Music is the 'Servant of the Liturgy'. The primary purpose of music at the Eucharist is to enable the full, conscious and active participation of the assembly. Almost all texts of the liturgy may be set to music. However, it must be remembered that some parts ought to be sung by the entire assembly; others may be sung in part or in whole by the choir, cantor or presider. In general, the processional hymns, the responses and acclamations during the Mass are to be sung by the entire assembly.

Composers may embellish the song of the assembly with vocal harmonies or instrumental accompaniments, taking care to give the singing of the assembly the primacy it is due.

Among the many signs and symbols used by the Church to celebrate its faith, music is of greatest importance. As sacred song is united to words it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. Yet the function of music is ministerial; it must serve and never dominate. Music should assist the assembled believers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them and to nourish and strengthen their interior commitment of faith. It should heighten the texts so that they speak more fully and more effectively. Sacred music imparts a sense of unity to the assembly and sets the appropriate tone for a particular celebration.

LITURGICAL AND MUSICAL STRUCTURES

Liturgical texts often take a particular form. The most common are: **Acclamations** (e.g., Alleluia, before the Gospel, and the Holy, Holy [Sanctus], Memorial Acclamation, and Amen following the Doxology at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer).

Litanies (e.g., Lord, Have mercy (Kyrie) and the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei). **Responses to greetings** (e.g., the preface dialogue and the responses at the conclusion of readings and prayers).

Hymns and canticles

"Music should be considered a normal and ordinary part of any liturgical celebration. Music is not to be considered as an extra or something added to the celebration. In fact, the celebration is intended to be completely sung. When we chose not to sing, we are actually taking music out of the celebrating.' (General Instruction on the Roman Missal – GIRM). General principles in Church documents regarding the use of sacred music at Mass:

- Sacred music is for the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful (SC 26).
- Sacred music should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and in particular sanctity and goodness of form (*Tra Le Sollecitudini* 2).
- It must be holy, and must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it.
- The introduction into the celebration of anything that is merely secular, or which is hardly compatible with divine worship, under the guise of solemnity should be carefully avoided (MS 43).

On the one hand, there is pop music . . . aimed at the phenomenon of the masses . . . (it is) industrially produced and ultimately has to be described as a cult of the banal. "Rock," on the other hand, is the expression of elemental passions, and at rock festivals it assumes a cultic character, a form of worship, in fact, in opposition to Christian worship, in fact in opposition to Christian worship (Ratzinger, Joseph, The Spirit of the Liturgy, 148).

 Instruments that are generally associated and used only with worldly music are to be absolutely barred from liturgical services and religious devotions (MS 63).

Contemporary compositions often use a diversity of musical forms that have a certain dignity of their own. To the extent that they are helpful to the prayer of the Church they can prove a precious enrichment. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that instruments are suitable for sacred use, that they are fitting for the dignity of the Church and can accompany the singing of the faithful and serve to edify them (John Paul II, Tra Le Sollecitudini 14)

• Gregorian chant should be given pride of place in liturgical services (SC 116).

• There must be no innovations unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them, and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing (SC23).

GREGORIAN CHANT

Gregorian chant [also known as plain chant/plain song] is a monophonic style of liturgical music in the Roman Catholic Church, meaning there is only one melodic line. It is used to accompany the text of the mass and the divine office. Gregorian chant is named after St. Gregory I [Gregory the Great], during whose papacy (590–604) it was collected and codified. Gregorian chant is viewed as the highest model of Church music.

Gregorian chant was originally sung in one of two settings: by men and women in religious orders, in the chapels of monasteries and other such buildings; and by choirs (either men or boys) in churches.

Essentially, Gregorian chant was performed either during the Roman Catholic Mass, or during the monastic Office - the sequence of religious services, or times of prayer, among religious communities.

POLYPHONY MUSIC

The term 'polyphony' (from the Greek for "many sounds" is used to describe music that employs simultaneous yet independent melodies. Polyphony is a type of music where a typical choral piece has four, five, or six voice parts of nearly equal melodic interest: each presents the same melodic idea in turn, as in a round.

The Church's vast collection of polyphonic songs – usually called motets -grew out of Gregorian Chant in the Late Middle Ages (1100-1400 AD). It developed further in the Renaissance (1400 -1600 AD), owing to the works of composers such as Tomas de Victoria, Orlando de Lassus, and also Giovanni Perluigi de Palestrina, who is the best-known composer of polyphony, and whom Pope Pius X praised in his 1903 motus propio called *Tra le Sollecitudini*.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental music also has a place in the liturgy (as '*Musicam Sacram*' acknowledged), but it does not replace sung texts. Incidentally, the only instrument permitted by name at the Vatican Council II is the Pipe Organ which is to be held in high esteem (*magno in honorehabeatur*), for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds wonderful splendour to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts man's mind to God.

LITURGICAL TEXTS

The liturgical texts offer an essential guide to understanding the nature of the Mass texts which can be set to music.

The Roman Missal

This contains the Order of Mass and the proper texts for the liturgical seasons and the Saints. Also of interest to composers are the texts for the Entrance and Communion antiphons and other texts for processions, such as on the Presentation of the Lord and Palm Sunday, as well as hymns and other texts for the Easter Triduum.

The Lectionary

This contains the texts for the Liturgy of the Word, including the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation and the four Sequences.

The Graduale Romanum

This contains the proper Latin chants for liturgies in the Roman Missal. While no official English translation of the Graduale has been promulgated, some good translations are available, and will provide the composer with a wealth of texts from the liturgical tradition of the Church.

The Simple Gradual

This contains a simplified repertoire of Entrance, Offertory, Communion and diverse other chants for the liturgical year.

SUNG PARTS OF THE MASS

Entrance Procession & Hymn Penitential Act - Kyrie Gloria Responsorial Psalm Gospel Acclamation Credo Offertory Sanctus Mystery of Faith Doxology & Great Amen Agnus Dei Communion Recessional Hymn The priest may sing the greetings (The Lord be with you), the preface, the Eucharistic Prayer etc)

CLASSICAL LITURGICAL COMPOSERS

Johann Christian Bach Antinín Dvorak Edward Elgar Joseph Haydn Wolfgang Amadeus Mazart Gioachoni Rossini Franz Schubert Antonion Vivaldi William Byrd

IRISH LITURGICAL COMPOSERS

Seán O' Riada Fintan O'Carroll Ephrem Feeley Bernard Sexton Ian Callanan Liam Lawton

CONTEMPORARY LITURGICAL MUSIC COMPOSERS

John Rutter James MacMillan Fr. Michael Joncas Marty Haugen John Michael Talbot Arvo Part Karl Jenkins Dan Schutte Lucien Deiss David Haas John Foley SJ Bob Dufford SJ

CHRISTIAN MUSIC COMPOSERS/MUSICIANS

Chris Tomlin Matt Redman Lauren Daigle Casting Crows HillSong Worship Amy Grant Elevation Music Bethel Music

AUTHORS OF CATHOLIC HYMNS

John Henry Newman Frederick William Faber

SAMPLE CATHOLIC HYMNS

Abide with Me Amazing Grace Be Thou My Vision Ave Maria How Great Thou Art Lord of all Hopefulness Be Not afraid Silent Night Great I Thy Faithfulness Hoy to the Word O Come, O Come Emmanuel Morning Has Broken One Bread, One Body The Lord is my Shepherd

WHAT MAKES A HYMN CATHOLIC?

Two General Guidelines:

Is the hymn in conformity with Catholic Doctrine?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the best resource available. While the poet has a certain "license" for language chosen to serve an aesthetic purpose, it is important to avoid language that could be easily misconstrued in a way that is contrary to Catholic doctrine.

Is the hymn expressed in image and vocabulary appropriately reflective of the usage of Scripture and the public liturgical prayer of the Church?

Different hymns may legitimately express or reflect different aspects of one doctrine, but if all of the hymns relevant to a particular doctrine express only one dimension of the doctrine to the exclusion of others, then the catechesis offered by the hymnody would, as a whole, not be in conformity with Catholic doctrine.

For example, a collection of hymns that emphasized the Eucharist as table fellowship to the exclusion of the vocabulary of sacrifice, altar, and priesthood, would not represent the fullness of Catholic teaching and therefore would catechize those singing such hymns every Sunday with a deficient sacramental theology.

ART IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Truth, Beauty, and Sacred Art #2500-2503

"Art is a freely given superabundance of the human being's inner riches." CCC # 2501

Sacred art is true and beautiful when its form corresponds to its particular vocation: evoking and glorifying, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God—the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ, who "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature," in whom "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." This spiritual beauty of God is reflected in the most holy Virgin Mother of God, the angels, and saints. Genuine sacred art draws man to adoration, to prayer, and to the love of God, Creator and Saviour, the Holy One and Sanctifier.

Church Documents

Sacrosanctum concilium – Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Second Council of Nicea – Decree on Holy Images (#787) The Function of Art – Pope Pius XII 1952 Pope John Paul II – Letter to Artists, 1999 – The artist, image of God the Creator

Additional Resources

Pastoral Guidelines on Sacred Art - +Damian Iguacen Boaran, The Furrow -November 1980 The importance of Art in Catechesis, Claire Anderson 2021

What is art?

Any human activity where we are creative. It includes visual art (iconography), sculpture, decorative arts, applied arts, and architecture. Art illustrates Catholic truths.

Much of the great Christian art illustrates Bible stories so that we can understand them and visualize them better. Art can also inspire us. The beauty of form and content can lift our hearts and minds to higher, more pure and lofty things.

The Church, from early times, turned to art in its life, worship and mission. Art, in the form of figurative and symbolic images, was used to portray or signify important people, places and events in the Christian story. Art, in images of the Scriptures, the saints and history was used to catechise. Art, in churches and other sacred places, was used in a sacramental way to make present and to honour those whose images were portrayed – Christ crucified, the Virgin Mary, biblical figures and the saints.

The need for art in the explanation and defence of the faith rests in the fact that God is Beauty. He has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ and that revelation is an expression of Beauty. God is Truth; He is Beauty; He is Being. The expression of revealed Truth is supported by beauty, which is expressed through art. Created 'in the image of God,' man also expresses the truth of his relationship with God the Creator by the beauty of his artistic works.' CCC #2501

Art evangelises by prompting or impelling someone to see, to recognise what, or actually who, it is that they are longing for. Art evangelises by capturing the attention of the Catholic imagination, which is incarnational, and so open to expression via artistic media.

TIMELINE OF CHRISTIAN [CATHOLIC] ART

Beginnings

The earliest surviving artworks are the painted frescoes on the walls of the

catacombs and meeting houses of the persecuted Christians of the Roman Empire. The oldest Christian sculptures are from Roman sarcophagi, dating to the beginning of the 2nd century. Early Christian symbols include the dove, the fish, the lamb, the cross, symbolic representation of the Four Evangelists as beasts, and the Good Shepherd.



Early Christians also adapted Roman decorative motifs like the peacock, grapevines, and the good shepherd, all of which appear in the Catacombs of Rome.

In the 4th century, the Edict of Milan allowed public Christian worship and led to the development of widespread Christian art. Christians adopted the basilica, the Roman public building used for justice and administration as a model for basilica-churches (centre nave with one or more aisles at each side and a rounded apse at one end, a raised platform for the bishop and priests, and an altar).

Much Christian art borrowed from Imperial imagery, including Christ in Majesty, and the use of the halo as a symbol of sanctity. Icons of Christ, Mary and the saints, ivory carving, and illuminated manuscripts became important media.

Byzantine and Eastern art

The dedication of Constantinople as capital in 330 AD created a great new Christian artistic centre for the Eastern Roman Empire. Major Constantinopolitan churches built under the Emperor Constantine and his son, Constantius II, included the original foundations of Hagia Sophia and the Church of the Holy Apostles.[4] As the Western Roman Empire disintegrated and was taken over by "barbarian" peoples, the art of the Byzantine Empire reached levels of sophistication, power and artistry not previously seen in Christian art, and set the standards for those parts of the West still in touch with Constantinople.

This achievement was checked by the controversy over the use of graven images and the proper interpretation of the Second Commandment, which led to the crisis of iconoclasm or destruction of religious images, which rocked the Empire between 726 and 843. The restoration of orthodox iconodulism resulted in a strict standardization of religious imagery within the Eastern Orthodox Church. Byzantine art became increasingly conservative, as the form of images themselves, many accorded divine origin or thought to have been painted by Saint Luke or other figures, was held to have a status not far off that of a scriptural text. They could be copied, but not improved upon. As a concession to Iconoclast sentiment, monumental religious sculpture was effectively banned. Neither of these attitudes were held in Western Europe, but Byzantine art nonetheless had great influence there until the High Middle Ages, and remained very popular long after that, with vast numbers of icons of the Cretan School exported to Europe as late as the Renaissance. Where possible, Byzantine artists were borrowed for projects such as mosaics in Venice and Palermo. The enigmatic frescoes at Castelseprio may be an example of work by a Greek artist working in Italy.

The art of Eastern Catholicism has always been rather closer to the Orthodox art of Greece and Russia and in countries near the Orthodox world, notably Poland, Catholic art has many Orthodox influences. The Black Madonna of Częstochowa may well have been of Byzantine origin – it has been repainted and this is hard to tell. Other images that are certainly of Greek origin, like the Salus Populi Romani and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, both icons in Rome, have been subjects of specific veneration for centuries.

Although the influence has often been resisted, especially in Russia, Catholic art has also affected Orthodox depictions in many respects, especially in countries like Romania, and in the post-Byzantine Cretan School, which led Greek Orthodox art under Venetian rule in the 15th and 16th centuries. El Greco left Crete when relatively young, but Michael Damaskinos returned after a brief period in Venice, and was able to switch between Italian and Greek styles. Even the traditionalist Theophanes the Cretan, working mainly on Mount Athos, nevertheless shows unmistakable Western influence.

Catholic doctrine on sacred images

The Catholic theological position on sacred images is set out in the Libri Carolini, although this, the fullest medieval expression of Western views on images, was in fact unknown during the Middle Ages. It was prepared circa 790 for Charlemagne after a bad translation had led his court to believe that the Byzantine Second Council of Nicaea had approved the worship of images, which in fact was not the case. The Catholic counterblast set out a middle course between the extreme positions of Byzantine iconoclasm and the iconodules, approving the veneration of images for what they represented, but not accepting what became the Orthodox position, that images partook in some degree of the nature of the thing they represented (a belief later to resurface in the West in Renaissance Neo-Platonism).

To the Western church images were just objects made by craftsmen, to be utilized for stimulating the senses of the faithful, and to be respected for the sake of the subject represented, not in themselves. Although in popular devotional practice a tendency to go beyond these limits has often been present, the church was, before the advent of the idea of collecting old art, usually brutal in disposing of images no longer needed, much to the regret of art historians. Most monumental sculpture of the first millennium that has survived was broken up and reused as rubble in the re-building of churches.

In practical matters relating to the use of images, as opposed to their theoretical place in theology, the Libri Carolini were at the anti-iconic end of the spectrum of Catholic views, being for example rather disapproving of the lighting of candles before images. Such views were often expressed by individual church leaders, such as the famous example of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, although many others leant the other way, and encouraged and commissioned art for their churches. Bernard was in fact only opposed to decorative imagery in monasteries that was not specifically religious, and popular preachers like Saint Bernardino of Siena and Savonarola regularly targeted secular images owned by the laity.

Early Middle Ages

While the Western Roman Empire's political structure collapsed after the fall of Rome, the Church continued to fund art where it could. The most numerous surviving works of the early period are illuminated manuscripts, created by the clergy, often including abbots and monks. The most noted manuscript of this period of the highly decorated Book of Kells.



Romanesque



Romanesque art and Romanesque architecture developed in Western Europe from approximately 1000 AD until the rise of the Gothic style. Church-building was characterized by an increase in height and overall size. Vaulted roofs were supported by thick stone walls, massive

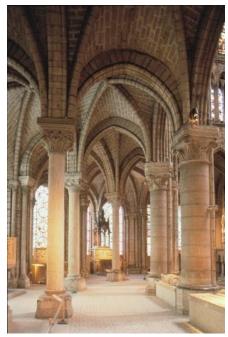
pillars and rounded arches. The dark interiors were illumined by frescoes of Jesus, Mary and the saints. The Last Judgement was normally shown on the western wall, with a Christ in Majesty in the apse semidome.



Gothic art

Gothic art emerged in France in the mid-12th century. While the majority of the artworks that came from this genre were architectural designs, such as cathedrals and stained-glass windows, as well as sculptures and illuminated manuscripts, some notable panel paintings and frescos were also produced.

The Basilica at Saint-Denis built by Abbot Suger was the first major building in the Gothic style. New monastic orders, especially the Cistercians and the Carthusians, were important builders who developed



distinctive styles. Franciscan friars built functional city churches with huge open naves for preaching to large congregations. The principal media of Gothic art were sculpture, panel painting, stained glass, fresco and the illuminated manuscript, though religious imagery was also expressed in metalwork, tapestries and embroidered vestments.

Gothic Artists

Giotto di Bondone Fra Angelico Carlo Crivelli Simone Martini Pietro Cavallini Ambrogio Lorenzetti Pisanello

Gothic Artwork

The Flight into Egypt – Giotto Madonna and Child – Duccio St. George Slaying the Dragon – Crivelli Coronation of the Virgin – Fra Angelico The Annunciation – Fra Angelico Adoration of the Magi - Giotto



Renaissance art

Renaissance art (14th – 16th Century), heavily influenced by the "rebirth" (French: renaissance) of interest in the art and culture of classical antiquity, initially continued the trends of the preceding period without fundamental changes, but using classical clothing and architectural settings which were after all very appropriate for New Testament scenes. Many Early Renaissance artists, such as Fra Angelico and Botticelli were extremely devout.

Most fifteenth-century pictures from this period were religious pictures. This is self-evident, in one sense, but "religious pictures" refers to more than just a certain range of subject matter; it means that the pictures existed to meet institutional ends.

The Church commissioned artwork for three main reasons:

- The first was indoctrination, clear images were able to relay meaning to an uneducated person.
- The second was ease of recall, depictions of saints and other religious figures allow for a point of mental contact.
- The third is to incite awe in the heart of the viewer, John of Genoa believed that this was easier to do with image than with words.

Considering these three tenets, it can be assumed that gold was used to inspire awe in the mind and heart of the beholder.

Renaissance Artists

Leonardo Da Vinici Michaelangelo Raphael Albrecht Druer Donatello Sandro Botticelli El Greco



Renaissance Artwork

The Last Supper – Da Vinci The Pietá – Michelangelo The Creation of Adam – Michelangelo



Sistine Chapel Ceiling – Michelangelo Praying Hands – Druer Annunciation – Jan van Eyck The Four Apostles - Druer The Baptism of Christ – Da Vinci

Council of Trent



The Last Judgment fresco in the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo (1534–1541) came under persistent attack in the Counter-Reformation for, among other things, nudity (later painted over for several centuries), not showing Christ seated or bearded.

Baroque art

Baroque art is derived from the Portuguese 'barocco' meaning 'irregular pearl or stone'. 17th to mid-eighteenth century. Baroque emphasises dramatic, exaggerated motion and clear, easily interpreted detail.

Baroque Artists

Caravaggio Gian Lorenzo Bernini Rembrandt Diego Veláquez Peter Paul Rubens, Johannes Vermeer Nicolas Poussin

Baroque Artworks

The Calling of St. Matthew - Caravaggio The Conversion of St. Paul = Varavaggio David - Bernini Death of the Virgin - Caravaggio Supper at Emmaus - Caravaggio Annunciation - Caravaggio Ecstasy of St. Teresa - Bernini The Elevation of the Cross - Rubens Adoration of the Magi - Velazquez St. Jerome Writing - Caravaggio



18th century

In the 18th Century, the rate of production of religious art was noticeably slowing down. The Church was now less important as a patron than royalty and the aristocracy, and the middle-class demand for art, mostly secular, was increasing rapidly. Artists could now have a successful career painting portraits, landscapes, still lifes or other genre specialisms.

By 1830 much of the best Catholic religious art was on public display in museums, as has been the case ever since. This undoubtedly widened access to many works, and promoted public awareness of the heritage of Catholic art, but at a cost, as objects came to be regarded as of primarily artistic rather than religious significance.

19th and 20th centuries

The 19th Century saw a Gothic Revival, a return to Gothic-influenced forms in architecture, sculpture and painting, led by people such as Augustus Pugin in England and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc in France. An example of Pugin's work includes St. Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy.

Outside these and similar movements, the establishment art world produced much less religious painting than at any time since the Roman Empire. The Immaculate Heart of Mary was a new subject of the 19th century, and new apparitions at Lourdes and Fátima, as well as new saints, provided new subjects for art.

Architects began to revive other earlier Christian styles, and experiment with new ones, producing results such as Sacre Coeur in Paris, Sagrada Familia in Barcelona and the Byzantine-influenced Westminster Cathedral in London.

The 20th century led to the adoption of modernist styles of architecture and art. This movement rejected traditional forms in favour of utilitarian shapes with a bare minimum of decoration.

21st century

Artists began to experiment with materials and colours. In many cases this contributed to simplifications which led to resemblance to the early Christian art. Simplicity was seen as the best way to bring pure Christian messages to the viewer.

Some of the most common subjects depicted in Catholic art: Life of Christ in art: Annunciation Nativity of Jesus in art Adoration of the Magi Adoration of the shepherds **Baptism of Jesus** The Last Supper Arrest of Jesus The Raising of the Cross The Crucifixion Descent from the Cross Noli me tangere Ascension of Jesus Christ in Majesty Mary:

Marian art:

Life of the Virgin Christ taking leave of his Mother Death of the Virgin Assumption of the Virgin Mary in art Coronation of the Virgin The Holy family Madonna Madonna and Child

Other:

The Trinity in Art Angels in art Evangelist portraits Stations of the Cross Tree of Jesse

Gospel Reflection: Sunday 14/05/23 is the Sixth Sunday of Easter and the Gospel reading is John 14:15-21. The text of the reading is below. The following format will be used for all Gospel reflections:

- Read the text aloud.
- Pause for a minute's silence.
- Read the text aloud again.
- Ask everyone to pick a word or a phrase that struck them. They just say the word or phrase without comment or discussion.
- Read the text again.
- Ask those present to comment on their word or phrase. What struck them about it? Why/how is it speaking to them?

• Continue with the discussion. The following questions may be helpful: What does this mean to me? How does it make me feel? Did I find the text disturbing/hopeful/confusing? What images of God emerge for me? What do I think that God is saying in this text? What impact does this have on my life?

GOSPEL READING

Reader: The Lord be with you. Response: And with your spirit. Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate

to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him,

because he is with you, he is in you.

I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you.

In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live.

On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.

Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you O Jesus Christ.

Appendix 1

General Principles Relating to Liturgical Music General Instruction of the Roman Missal ("GIRM")

GIRM 17-18: It is ... of the greatest importance that the celebration of the Mass or the Lord's Supper be so ordered that the sacred ministers and the faithful taking part in it, according to the state proper to each, may draw from it more abundantly those fruits, to obtain which, Christ the Lord instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his Body and Blood and entrusted it as the memorial of his Passion and Resurrection to the Church, his beloved Bride. This will fittingly come about if, with due regard for the nature and other circumstances of each liturgical assembly, the entire celebration is arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful, namely in body and in mind, a participation fervent with faith, hope, and charity, of the sort which is desired by the Church and which is required by the very nature of the celebration and to which the Christian people have a right and duty in virtue of their Baptism.

GIRM 39-40: The Christian faithful who come together as one in expectation of the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together Psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles (cf. Col 3:16). Singing is the sign of the heart's joy (cf. Acts 2:46). Thus St. Augustine says rightly, "Singing is for one who loves," and there is also an ancient proverb: "Whoever sings well prays twice over." Great importance should therefore be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of peoples and abilities of each liturgical assembly. Although it is not always necessary (e.g., in weekday Masses) to sing all the texts that are in principle meant to be sung, every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people not be absent in celebrations that occur on Sundays and on Holydays of Obligation.

GIRM 103-104: Among the faithful, the schola cantorum or choir exercises its own liturgical function, its place being to take care that the parts proper to it, in keeping with the different genres of chant, are properly carried out and to foster the active participation of the faithful by means of the singing. What is said about the schola cantorum also applies, with due regard for the relevant norms, to other musicians, and especially the organist... It is fitting that there be a cantor or a choir director to direct and support the people's singing. Indeed, when there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to direct the different chants, with the people taking the part proper to them.

GIRM 312: The schola cantorum (choir) should be so positioned with respect to the arrangement of each church that its nature may be clearly evident, namely as part of the assembled community of the faithful undertaking a specific function. The positioning should also help the choir to exercise this function more easily and allow each choir member full sacramental participation in the Mass in a convenient manner.

GIRM 313: In Advent the use of the organ and other musical instruments should be marked by a moderation suited to the character of this time of year, without expressing in anticipation the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord. In Lent the playing of the organ and musical instruments is allowed only in order to support the singing. Exceptions, however, are Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent), Solemnities, and Feasts. GIRM 45: Sacred silence ... as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times. Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration.

GIRM 30, 32: Among those things assigned to the Priest, the prime place is occupied by the Eucharistic Prayer, which is the high point of the whole celebration. Next are the orations, that is to say, the Collect, the Prayer over the Offerings, and the Prayer after Communion. These prayers are addressed to God by the Priest who presides over the assembly in the person of Christ, in the name of the entire holy people and of all present. Hence they are rightly called the "presidential prayers." … The nature of the "presidential" parts requires that they be spoken in a loud and clear voice and that everyone listen to them attentively. Therefore, while the Priest is pronouncing them, there should be no other prayers or singing, and the organ or other musical instruments should be silent.