

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Missae Cantata is provided to facilitate the celebration of a fully sung Mass. Music is provided in this edition for all the Sundays and principal feasts of the liturgical year. Some of the chants for the Triduum are not included. They will appear in a special Holy Week edition, which is in preparation.

The General Instruction to the Roman Missal and other introductory material typically printed in the Sacramentary are also not included in this text, which consists strictly of the music needed for the celebration of a sung Mass.

History

Missae Cantata is the result of a weekly celebration of a Gregorian Mass at Gonzaga University that began in 1997. From the beginning of this effort, the commitment was to a fully sung Mass using the traditional Gregorian melodies. Today, those parts of the Mass that are essentially formulaic in nature, including those in this Sacramentary and the Readings,* are sung in English. Those parts of the Mass that are composed to more defined melodies, that is, the Proper chants and the Ordinary chants, are sung in Latin. It is a somewhat unique celebration in which the desire to preserve the chant tradition of the Church is simultaneously honored and tempered with a certain pastoral sensitivity with regard to the use of the vernacular.

Editorial Procedures

Notation The notation used for this edition is that commonly called “Vatican Square-Note Notation.” It was selected for several reasons: 1) For those who can read “modern” notation, this notation is quite simple to read, at least with regard to the chants of the priest and deacon. 2) For many who do not read “modern” notation, this notation is simpler to learn, since it eliminates those conventions of modern notation, such as key signatures, stems, flags, etc. that are not necessary for the chant and that may tend to complicate the process of reading. 3) Without the conventions of “modern” notation that indicate measured rhythms, the Vatican notation is eminently suited to the supple, text-based rhythms of chant recitative.

Source of Chants All of the chants in this Sacramentary are drawn from or based on Gregorian melodies or formulas. They are taken from four sources:

- 1) the melodies in the Sacramentary approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America when those melodies are in general conformity with those of the Latin *Ordo Missae in cantu* (Solesmes, 1995);
- 2) the melodies of the *Ordo Missae*;
- 3) formulas based on Gregorian usage;
- 4) various other sources.

This final group constitutes a small number of melodies that deserve special mention. Those for the *Confiteor*, *Orate fratres* and the *Ecce Agnus Dei* (first option) are simple *recto tono* melodies. The sample formulas given for the General Intercessions are adapted from the *Graduale Simplex* (Rome, 1975). The melody for the second option of the *Ecce Agnus Dei* is newly composed, created with phrases that appear elsewhere in the Sacramentary, principally the second option for the introduction to the *Mysterium fidei*

* A notated Lectionary for Sundays and Feasts is in preparation.

and the epiclesis to the *Pater noster*. The melody for the *Mysterium fidei* (response) is based on that of the *Ordo Missae*, but essentially newly-composed due to the difference in the texts. The chant for the *Pater noster* is that of Robert Snow.

Prayer Formulas The melodies for the prayers are simply notated formulas. The application of traditional formulas to texts is not an exact science, and there may well be differences of opinions regarding the exact placement of the various cadential formulas. However, the art of applying the ancient formulas has been all but lost. Thus, it was considered important to notate the prayers as demonstrative of one way of applying the formulas to the various texts.

The Adaptation of Gregorian Melodies and Formulas to English Texts For some the adaptation of Gregorian melodies and formulas to English texts is unacceptable. This is most certainly understandable with regard to the melodies of the *Graduale* and the *Kyriale*. However, virtually all of the melodies sung by the priest and deacon at Mass are essentially formulaic in nature. Formulas, by definition, are designed to be adapted. Even though the adaptations sometimes present challenges for which there are no perfect answers – this is occasionally true even in the Latin - these formulas constitute a kind of melodic tradition that has merit of its own and deserves to be preserved.

In addition, the use of these formulas, adapted to English, permits an aesthetically pleasing mixture of English texts for those parts of the Mass that change or are somewhat complex, such as the Eucharistic Prayers, and Latin for those parts of the Mass that are fairly simple, such as the Ordinary chants, or completely unsuited to adaptation, such as the chants of the *Graduale*.

Blank Pages Every effort has been made to reduce the need for the celebrant to turn pages while singing any particular part of the liturgy. This effort has resulted in occasional blank pages, all of which are marked as such to eliminate possible confusion. Where page turns are unavoidable, they have been placed at what seem to be the least disruptive points. Occasionally this has resulted in pages only partially filled with printing.

The greatest number of page turns occur in the Eucharistic Prayers. For these, it would be advisable to have the deacon assist with the necessary page turns.