

PLAINSONG PROPERS

ADVENT TO SEPTUAGESIMA

BOOK ONE

by the
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood
O'Fallon, Missouri

With Ecclesiastical Approval
Archdiocese of St. Louis
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FOREWORD

Several important considerations have converged to induce us to publish Plainsong Propers and "Plainsong Masses X and XVI" (on cards) in English. Foremost among these is the desire to maintain the "genius of the Roman Rite," that is, the chanting of Psalms or other Scripture texts at four key moments in the Eucharistic celebrations. By chanting the words of Sacred Scripture, the People of God make their commitment in the very words which God has given them: 1) when they assemble before his face, at the Entrance Song; 2) when they respond to his present message to them, at the Gradual; 3) when they gather round his altar bearing gifts, at the Offertory; 4) when they share "com-UNION" with God and with their fellow-Christians in the Eucharistic Banquet, at Communion.

A second consideration has been the fact that a real living Faith demands that man approach the all-holy God with great reverence. The transcendence of God, His essential "otherness" requires that man meet him in language, song, and gestures which are above those of his work-a-day life. (It seems to be taken for granted that people "dress up" to go to Holy Mass on Sunday.) We believe that this innate need for the exalted is satisfied by Gregorian melodies. In them one experiences a sense of the sacred.

On the other hand, since the melodies contained in this booklet and on the cards are simple, basic ones, they are universal enough to be true expressions of worship for all. Nor are they so highly ornate, that they would require professional training. Hence we feel confident that by these publications we are carrying out the directives of the CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY:

"The treasury of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care. . . to insure that, whenever the sacred action is to be celebrated with song, the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is theirs." #114

"The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services." #116

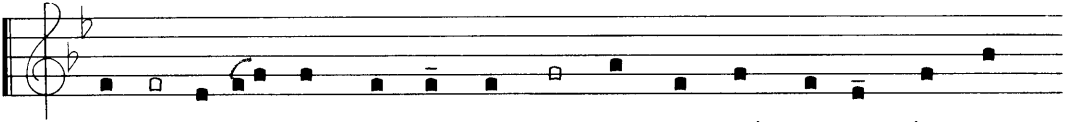
A few practical observations in regard to the music may be in order here. In the first place, since the melodies are meant to clothe the text, the speed of movement which best expresses the sacred words and which is most suitable to their liturgical function is most desirable. In most cases, a light flowing movement is preferable. The horizontal episema indicates a slight prolongation. The open white note is to be interpreted as a note of double time value. Although the propers have been composed primarily for parish choirs, many of the shorter melodies could very easily be sung by the congregation.

We wish to express sincere gratitude to Mr. Bernard Benziger for checking texts for us, and to N.C.W.C. for sending us photostatic copies of the official texts.

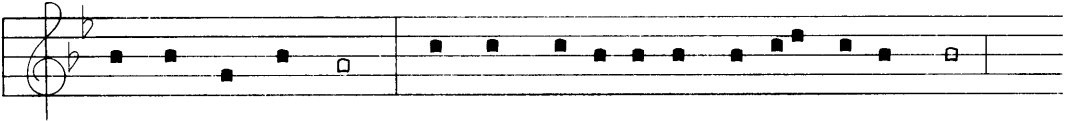
A very special word of acknowledgment is due to the late Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B., who bequeathed to the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood the fruits of his many years of research and study in Gregorian chant. His careful and authoritative analyses of hundreds of Gregorian antiphons have been the chief reference in the work of adapting these melodies to the vernacular texts.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ENTRANCE HYMN

8. 

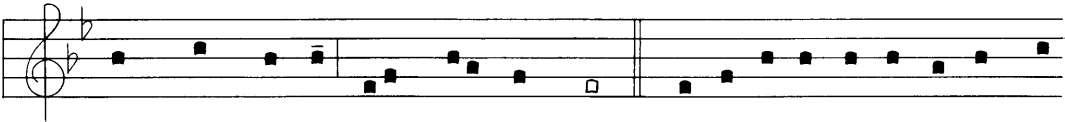
To you I lift up my soul; in you, O my God, I trust; let me




not be put to shame; let not my en-e-mies ex-ult o-ver me.



No one who waits for you shall be put to shame. Ps. Your ways, O Lord,



make known to me; teach me your paths. Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to

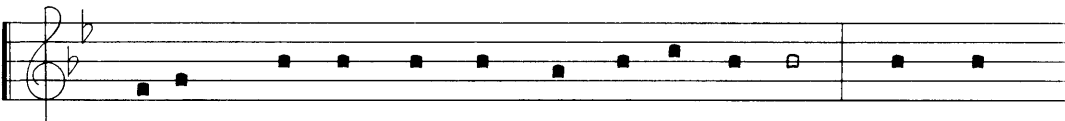


the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it. As it was in the beginning is now and ev-er

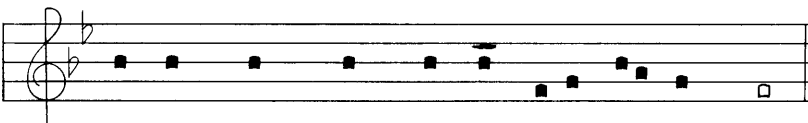


shall be world with-out end. A-men.

GRADUAL

8. 

No one who waits for you shall be put to shame.V. Your ways,



O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths.

ALLELUIA

8.

Al- le- lu- ia. ij. or Al- le- lu- ia. *ij.

Show us, O Lord, your kind-ness, and grant us your

sal-va-tion. repeat *Alleluia*.

OFFERTORY

2.

To you I lift up my soul; in you, O my God, I trust; let me

not be put to shame; let not my en-e-mies ex-ult o-ver me.

No one who waits for you shall be put to shame.

COMMUNION

1.

The Lord will give his ben-e-fits: and our land shall yield its in- crease.