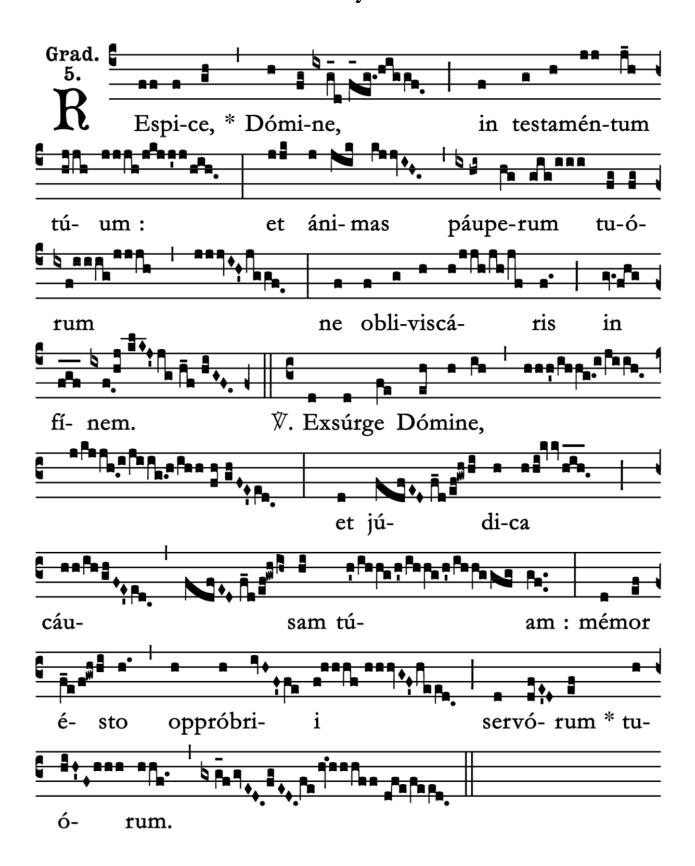
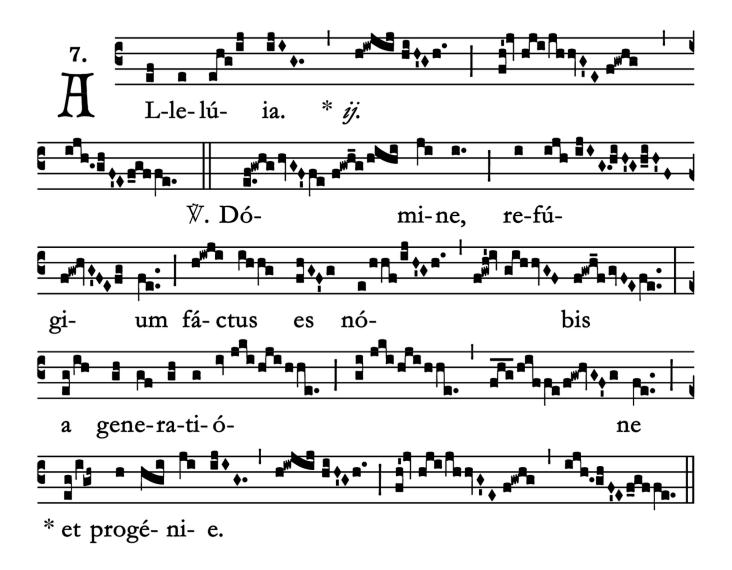


Have regard unto thy covenant, O Lord, and forsake not to the end the souls of thy poor: arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause, and forget not the voices of them that seek thee. Why, O God, hast thou cast us off unto the end: why is thy wrath kindled against the sheep of thy pasture?



Have regard, O Lord, to thy covenant, and forsake not to the end the souls of thy poor. Arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause: remember the reproach of thy servants.

—Psalm 73:20, 19, 22

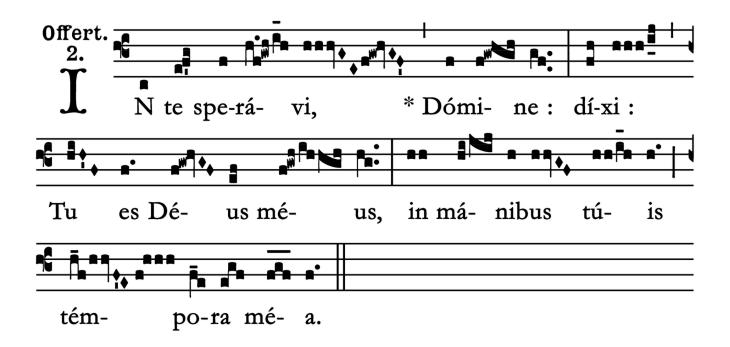


Lord, thou hast been our refuge: from generation to generation.

—Psalm 89:1

This Alleluia comes like a song of thanksgiving for the granting of the petitions mentioned in the Gradual. Would that we might hear the prayers of all the nations of the Christian centuries thanking God that He has provided a place of refuge in His Church, a shelter against the darts and arrows of the evil one, an asylum of rest after the sorrows and hardships of life, a haven where the soul, hungering for truth and grace, may find sustenance! If we could hear all these songs of thanksgiving, from those which were sung in the catacombs to those we now hear in all the churches of Christendom, how our hearts would be aflame with gratitude for all that God means to us in His Church.

—Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B.

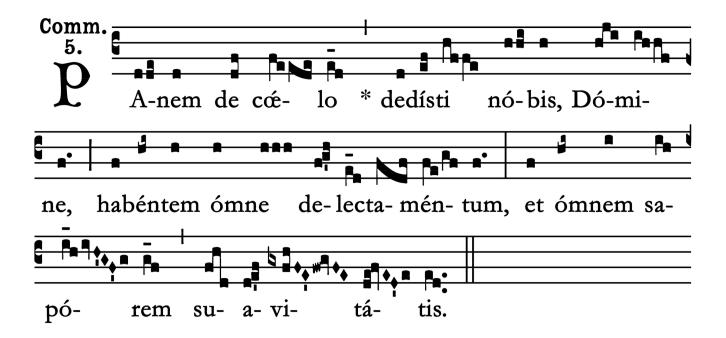


In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, I said: Thou art my God, my times are in thy hands.
—Psalm 30:15-16

Included in the gifts which we bring to the altar is the oblation of ourselves to God; we confide entirely in Him, and place in His hands both life and death, both time and eternity. There we shall be safe. At a nuptial Mass the spouses similarly place their entire lives in God's hands, for this Offertory is also sung in the Mass Pro Sponso et Sponsa. And even if we are conscious of the leprosy of sin with which we are afflicted, we know for certain that to our suppliant cry, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," He will reply with His almighty word: "Arise, go thy way: for thy faith hath made thee whole."

Special beauty attaches to the verses which formerly were sung in connection with this Offertory: (1) "Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me in Thy mercy. Let me not be confounded, O Lord, for I have called upon Thee." (2) "O how great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord? Which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee! Which Thou hast wrought for them that hope in Thee, in the sight of the sons of men." And each verse closed with the joyfully confiding refrain: *In manibus tuis tempora mea*.

In content and melody this Offertory strongly resembles that of the First Sunday of Advent.
—Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B.



Thou didst feed us with the food of angels, O Lord, having in it all that is delicious and the sweetness of every taste.

1. Attend, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. 2. I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter propositions from the beginning. 3. How great things have we heard and known, and our fathers have told us; they have not been hidden from their children. 4. In another generation they declared the praises of the Lord, and his powers, and his wonders which he hath done. 5. He had commanded the clouds from above, and had opened the doors of heaven. 6. And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them the bread of heaven. 7. Man ate the bread of angels; he sent them provisions in abundance. 8. And he rained upon them flesh as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea. 9. And they fell in the midst of their camp, round about their pavilions. 10. So they did eat, and were filled exceedingly, and he gave them their desire.

—Wisdom 16:20; V. Psalm 77:1-4, 23-25, 27-29

The bread of heaven hast Thou given us, O Lord! Only Thou wast able to give it. Thy wisdom alone could conceive such a gift; Thy love alone could bestow it upon us. In very truth, "Thy sustenance showeth forth Thy sweetness to Thy children," as the subsequent verse of the Book of Wisdom puts it.

We have again been made partakers of this precious food from heaven. That is the Lord's answer to our supplication and lamentation in the Introit. He does not forget or forsake us. He comes into our hearts, bringing His peace, which contains all sweetness in itself. Would that we might thank Him as we ought! This heavenly food is to prepare us for heaven, for a heavenly life even on this earth. Its sweetness will detach us from all earthly joy.

—Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B.