

Church Teaching on Sacred Music

Tra le sollicitudini, motu proprio, Pope Pius X, November 22, 1903

Divini cultus, constitution, Pius XI, December 20, 1928

Mediator Dei, encyclical, Pope Pius XII, November 20, 1947

Musicae sacrae disciplina, encyclical, Pope Pius XII, December 25, 1955.

De musica sacra et sacra liturgia, instruction, Sacred Congregation of Rites, September 3, 1958.

Sacrosanctum concilium, constitution, Second Vatican Council, December 4, 1963.

Musicae sacrae, instruction, Second Vatican Council, March 5, 1967.

Liturgicae Instaurationes, instruction, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, September 5, 1970.

Letter to Artists, John Paul II, April 4, 1999.

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Chirograph for the Centenary of the *Motu Proprio* “*Tra le sollicitudini*” on Sacred Music, John Paul II, November 22, 2003.

Letter of the Holy Father Benedict XVI on the Occasion of the Study Day organized by the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, letter, Benedict XVI, December 1, 2005.

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Tra le sollicitudini, motu proprio, Pope Pius X, November 22, 1903

- We deem it necessary to provide before anything else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of **acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable font, which is the active participation** in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.
 - o First use of active participation
- The purpose of the liturgy: the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful (1)
- Sacred music (2)
 - o Contributes to decorum and splendor
 - o Principle office is to cloth the liturgical text
 - o Add efficacy to the text in moving people to devotion
 - o Possess qualities of sanctity (holiness) and goodness of form (which produces universality)
 - Holiness
 - In itself
 - In the manner it is presented

- Goodness of form - Be true art
- Universal
 - Sacred music from a single place would be recognized as sacred anywhere else
- Different kinds of sacred music (3)
 - Gregorian Chant
 - Has the qualities of holiness and goodness of form to the highest degree
 - The chant proper to the Roman Church
 - The Church prescribes chant “exclusively for some parts of the liturgy”
 - the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes
 - Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant in public worship
 - Classic Polyphony (4)
 - 15th Cent Roman, esp. Palestrina
 - Esp for use in the more solemn functions of the Church
 - the more important basilicas, in cathedrals, and in the churches and chapels of seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions in which the necessary means are usually not lacking
 - Modern music (5)
 - is **also admitted to the Church**, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.
 - since modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken
 - contain nothing profane
 - be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theaters
 - be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces
- Liturgical texts (7-9)
 - Language is Latin
 - No singing in the Vernacular
 - Cannot change, reorder or omit texts
 - liturgical text must be sung as it is in the books, without alteration or inversion of the words, without undue repetition, without breaking syllables, and always in a manner intelligible to the faithful who listen
- External form (10-11)
 - The different parts of the mass and the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which ecclesiastical tradition has assigned to them, and which is admirably brought out by Gregorian Chant. The method of composing an introit, a gradual, an antiphon, a psalm, a hymn, a Gloria in excelsis, etc., must therefore be distinct from one another.
- Singers (12-14)
 - Only men and boys allowed
- Instruments (15-21)

- Music proper to the Church is purely vocal
- Organ accompaniment is permitted
- Other instruments may be allowed by the Ordinary
- Instruments sustain the vocal singing
- Length of Chant (22-23)
 - Do not keep the priest waiting on the music
 - Makes the rite appear secondary to the music
 - Music is a humble handmaid of the liturgy
- Means to implement
 - Diocesan commissions for sacred music
 - Cultivate Gregorian chant in seminaries
 - Restore scholae cantorum in at least principle churches
 - Support and promote higher schools of sacred music

Divini cultus, constitution, Pius XI, December 20, 1928

- anything that is used to adorn the Liturgy should be controlled by the Church, so that the arts may take their proper place as most noble ministers in sacred worship
- Referring back to *Tra le sollicitudini*:
 - these most wise laws in some places have not been fully observed
 - some places “a type of music which should be altogether banned from our churches”
- Seminarians to be taught Gregorian chant and sacred music
 - Gives a kind of program for doing so
- Singing the Divine Office
- Sacred polyphony ... is rightly held second only to Gregorian Chant.
 - Palestrina is mentioned
- Use the organ
 - Do not introduce profane forms of music
- Gregorian Chant for all the faithful
 - In order that the faithful may more **actively participate** in divine worship, let them be made once more to sing the Gregorian Chant, so far as it belongs to them to take part in it.
 - sing alternately with the clergy or the choir, as it is prescribed
 - clergy should instruct the people in liturgy and music
 - teaching liturgical chant in schools, pious confraternities and similar associations
- need for schools of higher education to train teachers of sacred music

Mediator Dei, encyclical, Pope Pius XII, November 20, 1947

- Active participation
 - all should approach and be drawn to His cross, especially by means of the sacraments and the eucharistic sacrifice, to obtain the salutary fruits produced by Him upon it. Through this **active and individual participation**, the members of

the Mystical Body not only become daily more like to their divine Head, but the life flowing from the Head is imparted to the members (78)

- all the faithful should be aware that **to participate** in the eucharistic sacrifice is **their chief duty and supreme dignity**, and that not in an inert and negligent fashion, giving way to distractions and day-dreaming, but with such **earnestness and concentration** that they may be united as closely as possible with the High Priest, according to the Apostle, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." [80] And together with Him and through Him let them make their oblation, and **in union with Him let them offer up themselves**. (80)
- Many of the faithful are unable to use the Roman missal even though it is written in the vernacular; nor are all capable of understanding correctly the liturgical rites and formulas. So varied and diverse are men's talents and characters that it is impossible for all to be moved and attracted to the same extent by community prayers, hymns and liturgical services. Moreover, the needs and inclinations of all are not the same, nor are they always constant in the same individual. Who, then, would say, on account of such a prejudice, that all these Christians cannot participate in the Mass nor share its fruits? On the contrary, they can adopt some other method which proves easier for certain people; for instance, they can lovingly meditate on the mysteries of Jesus Christ or perform other exercises of piety or recite prayers which, though they differ from the sacred rites, are still essentially in harmony with them. (108)
- Refers back to *Tra le sollicitudini* and *Divini cultus*
 - Gregorian chant to be fostered in seminaries (191)
 - Gregorian chant be restored to popular use in the parts proper to the people (192)
- Quotes St. Augustine, *Serm.* 336, n. 1.
 - A congregation that is devoutly present at the sacrifice, in which our Savior together with His children redeemed with His sacred blood sings the nuptial hymn of His immense love, cannot keep silent, for "song befits the lover" and, as the ancient saying has it, "he who sings well prays twice."
- Modern music (193)
 - It **cannot be said that modern music and singing should be entirely excluded from Catholic worship**
 - not profane nor unbecoming to the sacredness of the place and function, and do not spring from a desire of achieving extraordinary and unusual effects, then our churches must admit them since they can contribute in no small way to the splendor
- Promote congregational singing (194)
- Not to reject polyphonic music or singing in parts (62)

Musicae sacrae disciplina, encyclical, Pope Pius XII, December 25, 1955.

- History of sacred music (6-15, 18-20)
- Musical art must remain within its proper limits and prevent anything profane and foreign to divine worship from entering into sacred music along with genuine progress (17)
- the Church is so vigilant and careful about sacred music (21)
 - because it takes part in divine worship

- sacred music obeys laws and rules which are no different from those prescribed for all religious art and, indeed, for art in general (22)
- even art and works of art must be judged in the light of their conformity and concord with man's last end
 - o imitate God's infinite perfection for the praise and glory of the Creator
- purpose of art: express in human works the infinite divine beauty of which it is, as it were, the reflection
- religious art is even more closely bound to God and the promotion of His praise and glory, because its only purpose is to give the faithful the greatest aid in turning their minds piously to God through the works it directs to their senses of sight and hearing
 - o an artist must first profess belief in the truths of the faith before he can do religious art
- standards for religious art apply in a stricter and holier way to sacred music because sacred music enters more intimately into divine worship than many other liberal arts, such as architecture, painting and sculpture (30)
- purpose of sacred music consist 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 (31)
 - o increases the honor given to God
 - o helps to increase the fruits which the faithful derive from the holy liturgy
 - o "I feel that our souls are moved to the ardor of piety by the sacred words more piously and powerfully when these words are sung than when they are not sung, and that all the affections of our soul in their variety have modes of their own in song and chant by which they are stirred up by an indescribable and secret sympathy." St. Augustine (33)
- **Religious music (different from sacred music) (36-37)**
 - o used in churches **during non-liturgical services** and ceremonies, or when it is used outside churches at various solemnities and celebrations
 - o **includes vernacular hymns**
- Sacred music must have the three qualities given by Pius X (41)
 - o Holiness
 - must not allow within itself anything that savors of the profane nor allow any such thing to slip into the melodies in which it is expressed (42)
 - o Goodness of form
 - An example of true art (45)
 - o Universality
 - so that the faithful, wherever they may be, will hear music that is familiar to them and a part of their own home (45)
- Gregorian chant
 - o gloriously outstanding for [its] holiness (42)
 - o interprets [the sacred text's] force and efficacy and brings delight to the minds of the hearers (43)
 - o preserve this precious treasure (44)
 - o should be most widely used and great care should be taken that it should be performed properly, worthily and reverently (44)
- **Singing in vernacular at Mass – quite restricted (47)**

- Eastern rite liturgical chants (52)
- Polyphony (53)
 - If this polyphonic music is endowed with the proper qualities, it can be of great help in increasing the magnificence of divine worship and of moving the faithful to religious dispositions.
 - in the basilicas, cathedrals and churches of religious communities these magnificent works of the old masters and the polyphonic compositions of more recent musicians can be performed (55)
 - Some forms of polyphony are not appropriate
 - keep out of churches polyphonic music which, because of its heavy and bombastic style, might obscure the sacred words of the liturgy by a kind of exaggeration, interfere with the conduct of the liturgical service or, finally, lower the skill and competence of the singers to the disadvantage of sacred worship
- Instruments
 - organ rightly holds the principal position, since it is especially fitted for the sacred chants and sacred rites (58)
 - adds a wonderful splendor and a special magnificence
 - moves the souls of the faithful by the grandeur and sweetness of its tones
 - gives minds an almost heavenly joy and it lifts them up powerfully to God and to higher things
 - Can use other instruments (59)
 - play nothing profane nothing clamorous or strident and nothing at variance with the sacred services or the dignity of the place
 - violin and other musical instruments that use the bow are outstanding
 - express the joyous and sad sentiments of the soul with an indescribable power
 - if they are not profane or unbecoming to the sacredness of the place and function and do not spring from a desire to achieve extraordinary and unusual effects, then our churches must admit them, since they can contribute in no small way to the splendor of the sacred ceremonies, can lift the mind to higher things, and can foster true devotion of the soul (60)
 - Quote from Mediator Dei 193
 - when the means and talent available are unequal to the task, it is better to forego such attempts than to do something which would be unworthy of divine worship (60)
- **Popular Religious Hymns (62)**
 - derive their origin from the liturgical chant itself
 - **most in vernacular**
 - differ according to races and mentalities
 - To be helpful they must:
 - be in full conformity with the doctrine of the Catholic faith
 - express and explain that doctrine accurately
 - use plain language and simple melody and must be free from violent and vain excess of words
 - manifest a religious dignity and seriousness

- When **can they be used for the Mass?** (64)
 - **Cannot** be used for Solemn High Mass (unless permission from Holy See)
 - **Can be used** for Masses that are not Solemn High (Sung and Low)
 - 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
- **Also to be used in non-liturgical settings** (65)
- foster and promote diligently popular religious singing of this kind (66)
 - memorize them (66)
 - especially in the instruction of youth (67)
 - disappearance of worldly songs which because of the quality of their melodies or the frequently voluptuous and lascivious words that go with them are a danger to Christians, especially the young, and their replacement by songs that give chaste and pure pleasure, that foster and increase faith and piety.
- Some allowance for women and girl singers (74)
- Seminarians to be instructed in sacred music and Gregorian chant (75)

De musica sacra et sacra liturgia, instruction, Sacred Congregation of Rites, September 3, 1958.

- Purpose of this document: put together from the above documents a special instruction containing all the main points on sacred liturgy, sacred music, and the pastoral advantages of both
- General Concepts
 - Two kinds of Mass (3)
 - Sung Mass
 - Solemn Mass
 - The more noble form of the Eucharistic celebration (24)
 - High Mass
 - It is desirable that on Sundays, and feast days the parish or principal Mass be a sung Mass (26)
 - Read Mass (aka Low Mass)
 - **Kinds of “Sacred Music”** (4)
 - Gregorian chant
 - Sacred music proper to the Roman Church
 - not only permitted, but encouraged at all liturgical ceremonies above all other styles of music (16)
 - because of its character as liturgical music, must be exclusively Latin
 - sacred polyphony
 - reached its height in the art of Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina (1524-1594) in the latter half of the sixteenth century
 - sacred polyphony may be used in all liturgical ceremonies (17)
 - modern sacred music
 - many voice-parts, at times with instrumental accompaniment

- for liturgical use it must be animated by a spirit of devotion, and piety
 - may also be used in all liturgical ceremonies if it conforms to the dignity, solemnity, and sacredness of the service, and if there is a choir capable of rendering it artistically (18)
 - sacred organ music
 - must comply with laws for sacred music
 - hymns
 - recommended for fostering the piety of the faithful, and enhancing their private devotions
 - can, at times, be admitted to liturgical ceremonies
 - may be freely used in private devotions
 - texts "must conform to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, plainly stating, and explaining it. The vocabulary should be simple, and free of dramatic, and meaningless verbiage. Their tunes, however brief, and easy, should evince a religious dignity and propriety" (52) (quoting *Musicae sacrae disciplina*)
 - religious music
 - serves to arouse devotion, and religious sentiments
 - composed in a free style, it is **not to be used during liturgical ceremonies** (54)
 - proper places for the performance of such music are concert halls, theaters, or auditoriums, but not the church (55)
 - if giving a concert in a church, the Blessed Sacrament should be removed if possible (55)
- General Norms
- Sacred music is to be taken generally in this instruction as embracing both vocal and instrumental music. But at times it will be limited to instrumental music only, as will be clear from the context. (11)
 - Latin is the liturgical language
 - Special permission is needed for the use of vernacular in sung ceremonies
 - For Sung Masses only Latin is used (14)
 - popular vernacular hymns may be sung at the solemn Eucharistic Sacrifice (sung Masses), after the liturgical texts have been sung in Latin (14)
 - At Low Masses vernacular hymns may be used
 - The Sacred Text
 - strictly forbidden to change in any way the sung text, to alter or omit words, or to introduce inappropriate repetitions. This applies also to compositions of sacred polyphony, and modern sacred music: each word should be clearly, and distinctly audible (21)
- Principle Liturgical functions with sacred music
- General principles for Mass
 - Interior participation is most important
 - paying devout attention, and in lifting up the heart to God in prayer. In this way the faithful "are intimately joined with their High Priest...and together with Him, and through Him offer (the

Sacrifice), making themselves one with Him" (quote from Mediator Dei)

- Exterior participation added to interior makes participation more complete
 - exterior participation is manifested by external acts, such as bodily position (kneeling, standing, sitting), ceremonial signs, and especially responses, prayers, and singing
- Active participation is perfect when "sacramental" participation is included (receiving Communion)
- primary end of general participation is the more perfect worship of God, and the edification of the faithful (23)
- Three degrees of external sung participation for Sung Mass (25)
 - Sing the liturgical responses
 - Sing the Ordinary
 - Recommended chants to know
 - the Kyrie, eleison; Sanctus-Benedictus; Agnus Dei of Mass XVI from the Roman Gradual; the Gloria in excelsis Deo, and Ite, missa est-Deo gratias of Mass XV; and either Credo I or Credo III
 - Sing the Proper
 - if those present are well trained in Gregorian chant (ex: seminaries)
 - The proper antiphons (introit, offertory, communion) can be repeated with psalm verses between (27)
- Participation in Low Mass
 - pay devout attention to the more important parts of the Mass (interior participation), or by following the approved customs in various localities (exterior participation) (29)
 - following with a small missal is praiseworthy
 - by saying prayers together or by singing hymns
 - the most perfect form, is for the congregation to make the liturgical responses to the prayers of the priest
 - Four degrees of participation:
 - Liturgical responses
 - Say the server prayers
 - Say aloud the Ordinary
 - Recite with the priest the Proper
 - Can recite with the priest the *Pater Noster* (in Latin)
- Vespers
 - Where the ancient, and venerable custom of singing Vespers according to the rubrics together with the people on Sundays, and feast days is still practiced, it should be continued; where this is not done, it should be re-introduced, as far as possible, at least several times a year. (45)
- Musical Instruments (60)
 - As a general rule it is better to do something well, however modest, than to attempt something more elaborate without the proper means.

- some instruments which, by common estimation, are so associated with secular music that they are not at all adaptable for sacred use
- The principle musical instrument is the pipe organ
 - Electronic organ can be temporarily tolerated
- Times during which Instruments are not to be used (81-85)
- Ringing bells should be carried on (86)
- Good Example Required
 - Those who have a part in the sacred music -- composers, organists, choir directors, singers, and instrumentalists -- should above all be outstanding Christians, and give example to the rest of the faithful, conformable to their role as direct or indirect participants in the sacred liturgy. (97)
 - Composers: thorough knowledge of the historical, dogmatic or doctrinal, practical, and rubrical aspects of the liturgy; they should know Latin; and finally they should be well trained in the art, and the history of both sacred, and secular music
 - Organists/choir directors: comprehensive knowledge of the liturgy, and a sufficient understanding of Latin; and finally they should be well trained in their art, and able to carry out their role worthily, and competently.
 - Singers: taught the meaning of the liturgical functions, and of the texts they sing insofar as they are capable of comprehending; taught to pronounce the Latin words correctly, and distinctly
 - Instrumentalists: how to adapt to playing sacred music
- Cultivate sacred music
 - instruction in both sacred music, and sacred liturgy cannot be separated from each other (104)
 - children learn hymns in home and church
 - school children are to be given additional training in sacred music, and hymn (106)
 - taught to sing the simpler Gregorian melodies

Sacrosanctum concilium, constitution, Second Vatican Council, December 4, 1963.

- Full and active participation (*actuosa participatio populi*) (14)
 - In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else (14)
 - both internally and externally (19)
 - 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 bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence. (30)
 - by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves; through Christ the Mediator [38], they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all. (48)
- the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites (36)
- Vernacular languages are opened to greater use

- mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants, according to the regulations on this matter to be laid down separately in subsequent chapters.
- for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, to decide whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language is to be used; their decrees are to be approved, that is, confirmed, by the Apostolic See
- The vernacular language may be used in administering the sacraments and sacramentals, according to the norm of Art. 36. (63)
- Divine Office
 - To whatever extent may seem desirable, the hymns are to be restored to their original form, and whatever smacks of mythology or ill accords with Christian piety is to be removed or changed. Also, as occasion may arise, let other selections from the treasury of hymns be incorporated. (93)
- Sacred Music
 - 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 sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. (112)
 - sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. **But the Church approves of all forms of true art having the needed qualities, and admits them into divine worship.**
 - Purpose of sacred music: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful
 - The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care.
 - Choirs diligently promoted
 - the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is rightly theirs, as laid down in Art. 28 and 30.
 - 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 bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence. (30)
 - 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)
 - But other kinds of sacred music, especially **polyphony**, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action, as laid down in Art. 30.
 - Religious singing by the people is to be intelligently fostered so that in devotions and sacred exercises, as also during liturgical services, the voices of the faithful may ring out according to the norms and requirements of the rubrics. (118)
 - Instruments
 - pipe organ is to be held in high esteem (120)

- other instruments also may be admitted for use in divine worship
 - only on condition that the instruments are suitable, or can be made suitable, for sacred use, accord with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful.
- Composers, filled with the Christian spirit, should feel that their vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures. (121)
 - produce compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, not confining themselves to works which can be sung only by large choirs, but providing also for the needs of small choirs and for the active participation of the entire assembly of the faithful.
 - texts intended to be sung must always be in conformity with Catholic doctrine; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from holy scripture and from liturgical sources.

Mysterium Fidei, encyclical, Paul VI, September 3, 1965.

- Quotes *Adoro te devote* by Thomas Aquinas

Musicam sacram, instruction, Second Vatican Council, March 5, 1967.

- For the correct implementation of *Sacrosanctum concilium* (3)
 - This does not, however, gather together all the legislation on sacred music; it only establishes the principal norms which seem to be more necessary for our own day.
- true purpose of sacred music, "which is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful. (4)
- **Definition of sacred music:** that which, being created for the celebration of divine worship, is endowed with a certain holy sincerity of form.
 - (so has holiness and goodness of form)
 - **Sacred music includes:** Gregorian chant, sacred polyphony in its various forms both ancient and modern, sacred music for the organ and other approved instruments, and sacred popular music, be it liturgical or simply religious.
- Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when it is celebrated in song, with the ministers of each degree fulfilling their ministry and the people participating in it. (5)
- Encourage active participation (5)
- Degrees of solemnity
 - Between the solemn, fuller form of liturgical celebration, in which everything that demands singing is in fact sung, and the simplest form, in which singing is not used, there can be **various degrees** according to the greater or lesser place allotted to singing. However, in selecting the parts which are to be sung, one should start with those that are by their nature of greater importance, and especially those which are to be sung by the priest or by the ministers, with the people replying, or those which are to be sung by the priest and people together. The other parts may be gradually added according as they are proper to the people alone or to the choir alone. (7)

- **No kind of sacred music is prohibited from liturgical actions by the Church as long as it corresponds to the spirit of the liturgical celebration itself and the nature of its individual parts,[7] and does not hinder the active participation of the people. (9)**
- full, conscious and active participation (15)
 - Should be above all internal, in the sense that by it the faithful join their mind to what they pronounce or hear, and cooperate with heavenly grace,[14]
 - Must be, on the other hand, external also, that is, such as to show the internal participation by gestures and bodily attitudes, by the acclamations, responses and singing.[15]
 - The faithful should also be taught to unite themselves interiorly to what the ministers or choir sing, so that by listening to them they may raise their minds to God.
- the usage of entrusting to the choir alone the entire singing of the whole Proper and of the whole Ordinary, to the complete exclusion of the people's participation in the singing, is to be deprecated. (16)
 - The formation of the whole people in singing, should be seriously and patiently undertaken together with liturgical instruction (18)
- importance of silence
 - are associated more intimately in the mystery that is being celebrated, thanks to that interior disposition which derives from the word of God that they have heard, from the songs and prayers that have been uttered, and from spiritual union with the priest in the parts that he says or sings himself. (17)
- Choir
 - Have greater importance and weight by reason of the norms of the Council concerning the liturgical renewal. Its duty is, in effect, to ensure the proper performance of the parts which belong to it, according to the different kinds of music sung, and to encourage the active participation of the faithful in the singing (19)
 - Placement of the choir (23)
 - That its nature should be clearly apparent—namely, that it is a part of the whole congregation, and that it fulfills a special role;
 - That it is easier for it to fulfill its liturgical function;[20]
 - That each of its members may be able to participate easily in the Mass, that is to say by sacramental participation.
 - Whenever the choir also includes women, it should be placed outside the sanctuary (presbyterium).
 - suitable liturgical and spiritual formation must also be given to the members of the choir (24)
- Degrees of Mass
 - distinction between solemn, sung and read Mass, sanctioned by the Instruction of 1958 (n. 3), is retained (28)
 - celebration of the Eucharist with the people, especially on Sundays and feast days, a form of sung Mass (Missa in cantu) is to be preferred as much as possible, even several times on the same day. (27)

- different degrees of participation are put forward here for reasons of pastoral usefulness, so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing
 - First degree (can be used by itself)
 - In the entrance rites: the greeting of the priest together with the reply of the people; the prayer.
 - In the Liturgy of the Word: the acclamations at the Gospel.
 - In the Eucharistic Liturgy: the prayer over the offerings; the preface with its dialogue and the Sanctus; the final doxology of the Canon, the Lord's prayer with its introduction and embolism; the Pax Domini; the prayer after the Communion; the formulas of dismissal.
 - Second degree (wholly or partially) (not to be used without the First)
 - the Kyrie, Gloria and Agnus Dei;
 - the Creed;
 - the prayer of the faithful.
 - Third (wholly or partially) (not to be used without the First)
 - the songs at the Entrance and Communion processions;
 - the songs after the Lesson or Epistle;
 - the Alleluia before the Gospel;
 - the song at the Offertory;
 - the readings of Sacred Scripture, unless it seems more suitable to proclaim them without singing.
- The Proper (32-33)
 - The custom legitimately in use in certain places and widely confirmed by indults, of substituting other songs for the songs given in the Graduale for the Entrance, Offertory and Communion, can be retained according to the judgment of the competent territorial authority, as long as songs of this sort are in keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast or with the liturgical season. It is for the same territorial authority to approve the texts of these songs.
 - It is desirable that the assembly of the faithful should participate in the songs of the Proper as much as possible, especially through simple responses and other suitable settings.
 - The song after the lessons, be it in the form of gradual or responsorial psalm, has a special importance among the songs of the Proper. By its very nature, it forms part of the Liturgy, of the Word. It should be performed with all seated and listening to it—and, what is more, participating in it as far as possible.
- The Ordinary (34)
 - if they are sung by musical settings written for several voices may be performed by the choir according to the customary norms, either a capella, or with instrumental accompaniment, as long as the people are not completely excluded from taking part in the singing.
 - parts of the Ordinary of the Mass can be divided between the choir and the people or even between two sections of the people themselves: one can alternate by verses, or one can follow other suitable divisions which divide the text into larger sections

- Creed should be sung by all
 - Sanctus should be sung by all
 - Agnus Dei can be repeated as often as necessary
- There is no reason why some of the Proper or Ordinary should not be sung in said Masses. Moreover, some other song can also, **on occasions**, be sung at the beginning, at the Offertory, at the Communion and at the end of Mass. It is not sufficient, however, that these songs be merely "Eucharistic"—they must be in keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast, or with the liturgical season.
- Divine Office (37-41)
 - sung celebration of the Divine Office is the form which best accords with the nature of this prayer
 - When the Divine Office is to be celebrated in sung form, a principle of "progressive" solemnity can be used
 - One will invite the faithful, ensuring that they receive the requisite instruction, to celebrate in common on Sundays and feast days certain parts of the Divine Office, especially Vesper,, or, according to the customs of the particular area and assembly, other Hours.
- the introduction into the celebration of anything which is merely secular, or which is hardly compatible with divine worship, under the guise of solemnity should be carefully avoided: this applies particularly to the celebration of marriages. (43)
- In all popular devotions the psalms will be especially useful, and also works of sacred music drawn from both the old and the more recent heritage of sacred music, popular religious songs, and the playing of the organ, or of other instruments characteristic of a particular people. (46)
- Language
 - Pastors of souls should take care that besides the vernacular "the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them. (47)
 - In sung liturgical services celebrated in Latin: (50)
 - Gregorian chant, as proper to the Roman liturgy, should be given pride of place, other things being equal.[34] Its melodies, contained in the "typical" editions, should be used, to the extent that this is possible.
 - "It is also desirable that an edition be prepared containing simpler melodies, for use in smaller churches."[36]
 - Other musical settings, written for one or more voices, be they taken from the traditional heritage or from new works, should be held in honor, encouraged and used as the occasion demands.[36]
 - Venacular Masses can use Latin sacred music (51)
 - Pastors of souls, having taken into consideration pastoral usefulness and the character of their own language, should see whether parts of the heritage of sacred music, written in previous centuries for Latin texts, could also be conveniently used, not only in liturgical celebrations in Latin but also in those performed in the vernacular. There is nothing to prevent different parts in one and the same celebration being sung in different languages.

- **to preserve the heritage of sacred music and genuinely promote the new forms of sacred singing**, "great importance is to be attached to the teaching and practice of music in seminaries, in the novitiates and houses of study of religious of both sexes, and also in other Catholic institutes and schools," especially in those higher institutes intended specially for this.[37] **Above all, the study and practice of Gregorian chant is to be promoted, because, with its special characteristics, it is a basis of great importance for the development of sacred music.** (52)
 - New works of sacred music should conform faithfully to the principles and norms set out above. In this way they will have "the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, being within the capacities not merely of large choirs but of smaller choirs, facilitating the participation of all the faithful."[38]
 - As regards the heritage that has been handed down those parts which correspond to the needs of the renewed liturgy should first be brought to light. Competent experts in this field must then carefully consider whether other parts can be adapted to the same needs. As for those pieces which do not correspond to the nature of the liturgy or cannot be harmonized with the pastoral celebration of the liturgy—they may be profitably transferred to popular devotions, especially to celebrations of the word of God.[39]
- Preparing Melodies for Vernacular Texts (54-61)
 - fidelity to the Latin text is suitably harmonized with applicability of the vernacular text to musical settings
 - Musicians should consider:
 - The nature and laws of each language must be respected
 - the features and special characteristics of each people
 - the laws of sacred music
 - It will be for the competent territorial authority to decide whether certain vernacular texts set to music which have been handed down from former times, can in fact be used, even though they may not conform in all details with the legitimately approved versions of the liturgical texts.
 - Priest parts
 - consider whether the traditional melodies of the Latin liturgy, which are used for this purpose, can inspire the melody to be used for the same texts in the vernacular.
 - New melodies to be used by the priests and ministers must be approved by the competent territorial authority.
 - **Musicians** will enter on this new work with the **desire to continue that tradition** which has furnished the Church, in her divine worship, with a truly abundant heritage. Let them **examine the works of the past**, their types and characteristics, but let them also pay careful attention to the new laws and requirements of the liturgy, so that "new forms may in some way **grow organically from forms that already exist**,"[41] and the new work will form a new part in the musical heritage of the Church, not unworthy of its past. (59)
 - The new melodies for the vernacular texts certainly need to undergo a period of experimentation in order that they may attain a sufficient maturity and perfection.

However, anything done in churches, even if only for experimental purposes, which is unbecoming to the holiness of the place, the dignity of the liturgy and the devotion of the faithful, must be avoided. (60)

- Sacred Instrumental Music (62-67)
 - pipe organ is to be held in high esteem
 - use of other instruments may also be admitted in divine worship, given the decision and consent of the competent territorial authority, provided that the instruments are suitable for sacred use, or can be adapted to it, that they are in keeping with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful. (62)
 - culture and traditions of individual peoples must be taken into account. However, those instruments which are, by common opinion and use, suitable for secular music only, are to be altogether prohibited from every liturgical celebration and from popular devotions
 - their sound should not so overwhelm the voices that it is difficult to make out the text (64)
 - when some part is proclaimed aloud by the priest or a minister by virtue of his role, they should be silent. (64)
 - the organ, or other instrument legitimately admitted... can also be played solo at the beginning before the priest reaches the altar, at the Offertory, at the Communion, and at the end of Mass. (65)
 - The playing of these same instruments as solos is not permitted in Advent, Lent, during the Sacred Triduum and in the Offices and Masses of the Dead. (66)
 - organists and other musicians should not only possess the skill to play properly the instrument entrusted to them: they should also enter into and be thoroughly aware of the spirit of the liturgy (67)
- The diocesan Commissions for sacred music are of most valuable assistance in promoting sacred music together with pastoral liturgical action in the diocese. (68)

Liturgicae Instaurationes, instruction, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, September 5, 1970.

- The many options regarding texts and the flexibility of the rubrics are a great advantage to a living, pointed, and spiritually beneficial celebration, that is, one adapted to local conditions and to the character and culture of the faithful. **There is, then, no need for purely personal improvisations, which can only trivialize the liturgy.**
- The liturgical reform bears absolutely no relation to what is called "desacralization" and in no way intends to lend support to the phenomenon of "secularizing the world". Accordingly the rites must retain their dignity, spirit of reverence, and sacred character.
- The liturgical texts themselves, composed by the Church, are to be treated with the highest respect. No one, then, may take it on himself to make changes, substitutions, deletions, or additions.
 - Under no consideration, not even the pretext of singing the Mass, may the official translations of its formularies be altered.

- Sources for the entrance and communion antiphons are: the *Graduale romanum*, The Simple Gradual, the Roman Missal, and the compilations approved by the conferences of bishops. In choosing chants for Mass, the conferences should take into account not only suitability to the times and differing circumstances of the liturgical services, but also the needs of the faithful using them.
- Congregational singing is to be fostered by every means possible, even by use of new types of music suited to the culture of the people and to the contemporary spirit. The conferences of bishops should authorize a list of songs that are to be used in Masses with special groups, for example, with youth or children, and that in text, melody, rhythm, and instrumentation are suited to the dignity and holiness of the place and of divine worship.
- **The Church does not bar any style of sacred music from the liturgy [13]. Still, not every style or the sound of every song or instrument deserves equal status as an aid to prayer** and an expression of the mystery of Christ. All musical elements have as their one purpose the celebration of divine worship. They must:
 - o possess sacredness and soundness of form[14],
 - o fit in with the spirit of the liturgical service and the nature of its particular parts;
 - o they must not be a hindrance to an intense participation of the assembly [15]
 - o direct the mind's attention and the heart's sentiments toward the rites.
- musical instruments
 - o limited in number
 - o suited to the region and to community culture
 - o should prompt devotion
 - o not be too loud.

Letter to Artists, John Paul II, April 4, 1999.

- Gregorian chant, with its inspired modulations, was to become down the centuries the music of the Church's faith in the liturgical celebration of the sacred mysteries. The “beautiful” was thus wedded to the “true”

Liturgiam authenticam, instruction, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, March 28, 2001.

- 28. Consideration should also be given to including in the vernacular editions at least some texts in the Latin language, especially those from the priceless treasury of Gregorian chant, which the Church recognizes as proper to the Roman Liturgy, and which, all other things being equal, is to be given pride of place in liturgical celebrations. [28] Such chant, indeed, has a great power to lift the human spirit to heavenly realities.
- 60. A great part of the liturgical texts are composed with the intention of their being sung by the priest celebrant, the deacon, the cantor, the people, or the choir. For this reason, the texts should be translated in a manner that is suitable for being set to music. Still, in preparing the musical accompaniment, full account must be taken of the authority of the text itself. Whether it be a question of the texts of Sacred Scripture or of those taken from the Liturgy and already duly confirmed, paraphrases are not to be substituted with the intention of making them more easily set to music, nor may hymns considered generically equivalent be employed in their place.[39]

- 61. Texts that are intended to be sung are particularly important because they convey to the faithful a sense of the solemnity of the celebration, and manifest unity in faith and charity by means of a union of voices.[40] The hymns and canticles contained in the modern *editiones typicae* constitute a minimal part of the historic treasury of the Latin Church, and it is especially advantageous that they be preserved in the printed vernacular editions, even if placed there in addition to hymns composed originally in the vernacular language. The texts for singing that are composed originally in the vernacular language would best be drawn from Sacred Scripture or from the liturgical patrimony.
- 108. Sung texts and liturgical hymns have a particular importance and efficacy. Especially on Sunday, the “Day of the Lord”, the singing of the faithful gathered for the celebration of Holy Mass, no less than the prayers, the readings and the homily, express in an authentic way the message of the Liturgy while fostering a sense of common faith and communion in charity.[78] If they are used widely by the faithful, they should remain relatively fixed so that confusion among the people may be avoided. Within five years from the publication of this Instruction, the Conferences of Bishops, necessarily in collaboration with the national and diocesan Commissions and with other experts, shall provide for the publication of a directory or repertory of texts intended for liturgical singing. This document shall be transmitted for the necessary *recognitio* to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Ecclesia de Eucharistia, Encyclical, John Paul II, April 17, 2003.

- Quotes *Adoro te devote* by Thomas Aquinas (15)
- Quotes *Lauda Sion* by Thomas Aquinas (62)

Chirograph for the Centenary of the *Motu Proprio* “*Tra le sollecitudini*” on Sacred Music, John Paul II, November 22, 2003.

- Purpose of sacred music: the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful (1)
- The text of the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in which it is declared that the Church "approves of all forms of true art which have the requisite qualities, and admits them into divine worship", finds satisfactory criteria for application in nn. 50-53 of the above-mentioned Instruction *Musicam Sacram*. (2)
- need to "purify worship from ugliness of style, from distasteful forms of expression, from uninspired musical texts which are not worthy of the great act that is being celebrated (3)
- Two characteristics of sacred music + one
 - o Holiness (4)
 - increases in holiness to the degree that it is intimately linked with liturgical action
 - Possess prayer, dignity, and beauty
 - Today, moreover, the meaning of the category "sacred music" has been broadened to include repertoires that cannot be part of the celebration without violating the spirit and norms of the Liturgy itself.
 - as I emphasized in the Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, should be given to the fact that not all the expressions of figurative art or of music are able "to express adequately the mystery grasped in the fullness of the Church's

faith". Consequently, not all forms of music can be considered suitable for liturgical celebrations.

- Sound form (5)
 - Must be true art – The art of musical sounds
 - liturgical music must meet the specific prerequisites of the Liturgy:
 - full adherence to the text it presents,
 - synchronization with the time and moment in the Liturgy for which it is intended, appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite.
 - The various moments in the Liturgy require a musical expression of their own.
 - now proclaiming God's marvels,
 - now expressing praise,
 - supplication
 - sorrow for the experience of human suffering which, however, faith opens to the prospect of Christian hope.
 - There are “legitimate demands of adaptation and inculturation”
 - any innovation in this sensitive matter must respect specific criteria such as the search for musical expressions which respond to the necessary involvement of the entire assembly
 - avoid any concessions to frivolity or superficiality
 - elitist forms of "inculturation" which introduce into the Liturgy ancient or contemporary compositions of possible artistic value, but that indulge in a language that is incomprehensible to the majority, should be avoided.
 - [Does this mean Latin?]
- Universal (6)
 - the sacred context of the celebration must never become a laboratory for experimentation or permit forms of composition and performance to be introduced without careful review
- Gregorian Chant (7)
 - To be given pride of place in liturgical services in Latin
 - The supreme model of sacred music
 - It is today still an element of unity in the liturgy
- Other forms of sacred music
 - Polyphony
 - necessary to pay special attention to the new musical expressions to ascertain whether they too can express the inexhaustible riches of the Mystery proposed in the Liturgy and thereby encourage the active participation of the faithful in celebrations.
- Choirs (8)
 - Choirs must be assiduously developed
 - the reform of the Liturgy have given the choir's function greater prominence and importance.
 - To help the faithful in singing
 - The musical aspect of liturgical celebrations cannot, therefore, be left to improvisation or to the arbitration of individuals but must be well conducted and

rehearsed in accordance with the norms and competencies resulting from a satisfactory liturgical formation.

- Musical teaching (9)
 - o Sound formation of pastors and lay faithful
 - o Teaching and practice in seminaries
 - o Other Catholic institutions and schools
- Church admits into celebrations even the most modern music, as long as it respects both the liturgical spirit and the true values of this art form. In compositions written for divine worship, therefore, the particular Churches in the various nations are permitted to make the most of "those special forms which may be said to constitute the special character of [their] native music". (10)
- popular religious song (11)
 - o about which *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says: "Religious singing by the faithful is to be intelligently fostered so that in devotions and sacred exercises as well as in liturgical services, the voices of the faithful may be heard...". This singing is particularly suited to the participation of the faithful, not only for devotional practices "in conformity with the norms and requirements of the rubrics", but also with the Liturgy itself. Popular singing, in fact, constitutes "a bond of unity and a joyful expression of the community at prayer, fosters the proclamation of the one faith and imparts to large liturgical assemblies an incomparable and recollected solemnity".
- Compositions of liturgical music (12)
 - o I make my own the "general rule" that St Pius X formulated in these words: "The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour the Gregorian melodic form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple". It is not, of course, a question of imitating Gregorian chant but rather of ensuring that new compositions are imbued with the same spirit that inspired and little by little came to shape it. Only an artist who is profoundly steeped in the *sensus Ecclesiae* can attempt to perceive and express in melody the truth of the Mystery that is celebrated in the Liturgy.
 - o Renewed and deeper thought about the principles that must be the basis of the formation and dissemination of a high-quality repertoire is therefore required.
- Musical instruments (14)
 - o The pipe organ is given high esteem
 - o Nonetheless, it should be noted that 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.

Letter of the Holy Father Benedict XVI on the Occasion of the Study Day organized by the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, letter, Benedict XVI, December 1, 2005.

- Addressed to Cardinal Francis Arinze, Prefect of CDWDS.
- The intention of this Meeting is to comply with the wishes of the Venerable Pope John Paul II, who asked this Dicastery, in the Chirograph he published on the occasion of the centenary of the "*Motu Proprio*" *Tra le Sollecitudini*, to increase its attention to the sector of sacred music in the liturgy.
- In making my beloved Predecessor's request my own, I would like to encourage lovers of sacred music to continue along these lines.

Speaking in the Sistine Chapel following a tribute concert to Dominico Bartolucci, Benedict XVI, June 24, 2006.

- An authentic renewal of sacred music can only happen in the wake of the great tradition of the past, of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony. For this reason, in the field of music as well as in the areas of other art forms, the Ecclesial Community has always encouraged and supported people in search of new forms of expression without denying the past, the history of the human spirit which is also a history of its dialogue with God.

Sacramentum Caritatis, post-synodal apostolic exhortation, Benedict XVI, February 22, 2007.

- 42. In the *ars celebrandi*, liturgical song has a pre-eminent place. (126) Saint Augustine rightly says in a famous sermon that "the new man sings a new song. Singing is an expression of joy and, if we consider the matter, an expression of love" (127). The People of God assembled for the liturgy sings the praises of God. In the course of her two-thousand-year history, the Church has created, and still creates, music and songs which represent a rich patrimony of faith and love. This heritage must not be lost. Certainly as far as the liturgy is concerned, we cannot say that one song is as good as another. Generic improvisation or the introduction of musical genres which fail to respect the meaning of the liturgy should be avoided. As an element of the liturgy, song should be well integrated into the overall celebration (128). Consequently everything – texts, music, execution – ought to correspond to the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, the structure of the rite and the liturgical seasons (129). Finally, while respecting various styles and different and highly praiseworthy traditions, I desire, in accordance with the request advanced by the Synod Fathers, that Gregorian chant be suitably esteemed and employed (130) as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy (131).
- 62. None of the above observations should cast doubt upon the importance of such large-scale liturgies. I am thinking here particularly of celebrations at international gatherings, which nowadays are held with greater frequency. The most should be made of these occasions. In order to express more clearly the unity and universality of the Church, I wish to endorse the proposal made by the Synod of Bishops, in harmony with the directives of the Second Vatican Council, (182) that, with the exception of the readings, the homily and the prayer of the faithful, it is fitting that such liturgies be celebrated in Latin. Similarly, the better-known prayers (183) of the Church's tradition should be recited in Latin and, if possible, selections of Gregorian chant should be sung. Speaking more generally, I ask that future priests, from their time in the seminary, receive the preparation needed to understand and to celebrate Mass in Latin, and also to use Latin texts and execute Gregorian chant; nor should we forget that the faithful can be taught to

recite the more common prayers in Latin, and also to sing parts of the liturgy to Gregorian chant. (184)

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC., 2011.

- 38. In texts that are to be pronounced in a loud and clear voice, whether by the Priest or the Deacon, or by a reader, or by everyone, the voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself, that is, depending upon whether it is a reading, a prayer, an explanatory comment, an acclamation, or a sung text; it should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. Consideration should also be given to the characteristics of different languages and of the culture of different peoples.
- Therefore, in the rubrics and in the norms that follow, words such as “say” and “proclaim” are to be understood either of singing or of reciting, with due regard for the principles stated here above.
- 39. 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,”[\[48\]](#) and there is also an ancient proverb: “Whoever sings well prays twice over.”
- 40. 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.
- However, in the choosing of the parts actually to be sung, preference is to be given to those that are of greater importance and especially to those which are to be sung by the Priest or the Deacon or a reader, with the people replying, or by the Priest and people together.[\[49\]](#)
- 41. The main place should be given, all things being equal, to Gregorian chant, as being proper to the Roman Liturgy. Other kinds of sacred music, in particular polyphony, are in no way excluded, provided that they correspond to the spirit of the liturgical action and that they foster the participation of all the faithful.[\[50\]](#)
- Since the faithful from different countries come together ever more frequently, it is desirable that they know how to sing together at least some parts of the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin, especially the Profession of Faith and the Lord’s Prayer, according to the simpler settings.[\[51\]](#)
- 45. Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times.[\[54\]](#) Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration. For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard; then after Communion, they praise God in their hearts and pray to him.

- Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner.
- 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.
- 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. In the Dioceses of the United States of America, there are four options for the Entrance Chant: (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.
- If there is no singing at the Entrance, the antiphon given in the Missal is recited either by the faithful, or by some of them, or by a reader; otherwise, it is recited by the Priest himself, who may even adapt it as an introductory explanation (cf. no. 31).
- 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.
- Each acclamation is usually pronounced twice, though it is not to be excluded that it be repeated several times, by reason of the character of the various languages, as well as of the artistry of the music or of other circumstances. When the Kyrie is sung as a part of the Penitential Act, a “trope” precedes each acclamation.
- 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. If not sung, it is to be recited either by everybody together or by two choirs responding one to the other.
- It is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and Feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.
- 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.
- The Responsorial Psalm should correspond to each reading and should usually be taken from the Lectionary.
- 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. However, in order that the people may be able to sing the Psalm response more easily, texts of some responses and Psalms have been chosen for the different times of the year or for the different categories of Saints. These may be used instead of the text corresponding to the reading whenever the Psalm is sung. If the Psalm cannot be sung, then it should be recited in a way that is particularly suited to fostering meditation on the Word of God.

- 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.
- 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 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.
 - o a) The Alleluia is sung in every time of year other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary or the Graduale.
 - o 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.
- 63. When there is only one reading before the Gospel:
 - o a) during a time of year when the Alleluia is prescribed, either an Alleluia Psalm or the Responsorial Psalm followed by the Alleluia with its verse may be used;
 - o b) during a time of year when the Alleluia is not foreseen, either the Psalm and the Verse before the Gospel or the Psalm alone may be used;
 - o c) the Alleluia or the Verse before the Gospel, if not sung, may be omitted.
- 64. The Sequence which, except on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost Day, is optional, is sung before the Alleluia.
- 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.
- 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.
- If it is not sung, it is to be recited by everybody together or by two choirs responding one to the other.
- 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). Singing may always accompany the rite at the Offertory, even when there is no procession with the gifts.

- 79. 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.
- 83. The supplication Agnus Dei (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.
- 86. While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun, its purpose being to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the “communitarian” character of the procession to receive the Eucharist. The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful.[\[73\]](#) However, if there is to be a hymn after Communion, the Communion Chant should be ended in a timely manner.
- Care should be taken that singers, too, can receive Communion with ease.
- 87. In the Dioceses of the United States of America, there are four options for singing at Communion: (1) the antiphon from the Missal or the antiphon with its Psalm from the Graduale Romanum, as set to music there or in another musical setting; (2) the antiphon with Psalm from the Graduale Simplex of 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) some other suitable liturgical chant (cf. no. 86) approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop. This is sung either by the choir alone or by the choir or a cantor with the people.
- However, if there is no singing, the antiphon given in the Missal may be recited either by the faithful, or by some of them, or by a reader; otherwise, it is recited by the Priest himself after he has received Communion and before he distributes Communion to the faithful.
- 88. When the distribution of Communion is over, if appropriate, the Priest and faithful pray quietly for some time. If desired, a Psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the whole congregation.
- 366. It is not permitted to substitute other chants for those found in the Order of Mass, for example, at the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God).
- 367. In choosing the chants between the readings, as well as the chants at the Entrance, at the Offertory, and at Communion, the norms laid down in their proper places are to be observed (cf. nos. 40-41, 47-48, 61-64, 74, 86-88).
- 390. It is for the Conferences of Bishops to formulate the adaptations indicated in this General Instruction and in the Order of Mass and, once their decisions have been accorded the recognition of the Apostolic See, to introduce them into the Missal itself. They are such as these:
- • the texts of the chants at the Entrance, at the Presentation of the Gifts, and at Communion (cf. nos. 48, 74, 87);
- 393. Bearing in mind the important place that singing has in a celebration as a necessary or integral part of the Liturgy,[\[151\]](#) all musical settings for the texts of the Ordinary of Mass, for the people’s responses and acclamations, and for the special rites that occur in

the course of the liturgical year must be submitted to the Secretariat of Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for review and approval prior to publication.

- While the organ is to be accorded pride of place, other wind, stringed, or percussion instruments may be admitted into divine worship in the Dioceses of the United States of America, according to longstanding local usage, in so far as these are truly suitable for sacred use, or can be made suitable.
- 398. The norm established by the Second Vatican Council, namely that in the liturgical renewal innovations should not be made unless required by true and certain usefulness to the Church, nor without exercising caution to ensure that new forms grow in some sense organically from forms already existing,[\[160\]](#) must also be applied to implementation of the inculturation of the Roman Rite as such.[\[161\]](#) Inculturation, moreover, requires a necessary length of time, lest the authentic liturgical tradition suffer hasty and incautious contamination.
- Finally, the pursuit of inculturation does not have as its purpose in any way the creation of new families of rites, but aims rather at meeting the needs of a particular culture, though in such a way that adaptations introduced either into the Missal or coordinated with other liturgical books are not at variance with the proper character of the Roman Rite.[\[162\]](#)
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The Roman Missal, Third Edition, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation, 2010.