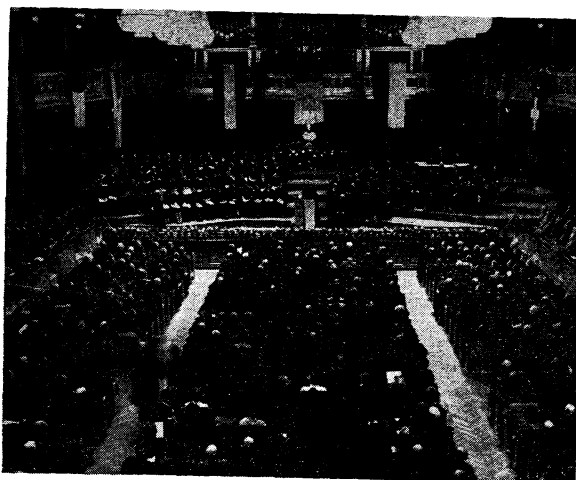


## THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CATHOLIC CHURCH MUSIC, VIENNA, 1954

by *Very Rev. Msgr. Charles N. Meter*

ONE COULD HARDLY IMAGINE A MORE appropriate setting for a gathering of musicians than the city that nurtured such great composers as Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven. Consequently, when the announcement was made by CARDINAL INNITZER that Vienna was to be the scene of the Second National Congress of Catholic Church Music, everyone agreed that a perfect place had been selected. The first Congress very appropriately had been held in Rome during the Holy Year of 1950. The purpose of this Congress was to commemorate on a large scale the 50th anniversary of the Motu Proprio on Church Music of Pope St. Pius X. At the kind behest of his EMINENCE SAMUEL CARDINAL STRITCH, Archbishop of Chicago, it was my good fortune to attend this memorable Congress and in a certain sense to represent the Church musicians of the United States. Arriving in Vienna on a cool but sunny afternoon, Monday, October 4, I was pleasantly surprised to discover how much of the old city has already been restored. St. Stephen's Cathedral is quite as magnificent as ever with a new brilliantly colored roof, emblazoned with the Hapsburg coat-of-arms; and the Opera House on the famous Ring Strasse is now practically completed.

The Congress opened late that afternoon with a session in the Great Hall of the Vienna Musical Society, with the entire hierarchy of Austria present, as well as the top Austrian government officials. A huge chorus of men and women was assembled on the stage, together with members of the brass section of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Flags of some twenty nations decorated the balcony all around the hall, representing the coun-



tries from which the delegates had come. After the singing of Palestrina's "Veni Creator Spiritus," during which the audience sang the alternate verses in Gregorian Chant, Cardinal Innitzer gave the formal speech of welcome and read the official letter from POPE PIUS XII inaugurating the Congress. MSGR. IGINIO ANGLES, President of the Congress, who is likewise president of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, responded, stressing the great importance of this meeting of Church musicians. He was followed by members of the Austrian government who gave speeches of welcome; and then the delegates from the various nations represented addressed the audience in turn, each in his own language, paying homage to St. Pius X. It was my privilege to be the spokesman for the United States. The program then ended with an inspiring new "Te Deum" by ANTON HEILLER, sung by the chorus to the accompaniment of organ and brass instruments — a thrilling climax to the festive opening. On this occasion it was a great pleasure to meet old classmates and friends, such as MSGR. FIORENZO ROMITA, the noted authority on Church music legislation, now a member of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

For the next six days a well planned program kept the delegates busy from morning to night attending Solemn Masses, lectures, and sacred concerts. But chiefly we were given the opportunity

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Monsignor Meter is Director of the Cardinal's Cathedral Choristers of Chicago, Professor of Music at Quigley Preparatory Seminary, Secretary of the Chicago Archdiocesan Music Commission, and National President of the World Federation of Boys Choirs. His musical degrees include a Master of Gregorian Chant from the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome and an honorary Doctor of Music degree from De Paul University.

of meeting many of the Church musicians of Europe and discussing pertinent matters with them. FR. RICHARD WOJCIK of Chicago, who is now studying Church music in Rome, had flown to Vienna to be present for the Congress; and we began a week of activities together.

Each morning we attended a different type of Solemn High Mass. On Tuesday morning the Apostolic Nuncio to Austria, ARCHBISHOP DELLEPIANE, celebrated Mass in the Burgkapelle. This was an entire Gregorian Mass — Number XII — sung by the Congregation and the Seminary Schola under the direction of MSGR. KOSCH, who had charge of all the Congress proceedings. On Wednesday morning ARCHBISHOP ROHRACHER of Salzburg was celebrant; and this Mass demonstrated classical polyphony. However, the composition that was performed, the Trinity Mass of Johann Fux, a composer of the latter part of the 17th century, approached more the style of Haydn and Mozart with its very elaborate vocalizations. Surprisingly too, the Vienna Boys' Choir, who sang the Mass, was accompanied by a full orchestra! The Gregorian Proper for the most part was limited to either a psalm tone or *recto tono*. Thursday morning we all boarded buses for the famous Klosterneuburg monastery of the Augustine Fathers. Here we were to attend a *Missa lecta* which would demonstrate the Volksgesang Mass, wherein the people sing their parts in German. This idea originated with FR. PIUS PARSCH, the famous liturgist of Klosterneuburg, who died only a short time ago. (Incidentally, the October issue of CAECILIA Magazine contained an article by Fr. Howell, S.J., giving a complete description of this strange type of Mass.) Frankly, we were all quite shocked at what we heard and saw! The celebrant, BISHOP ZAUNER, Auxiliary Bishop of the Linz diocese, did not read a Low Mass but rather chanted *recto tono* all the parts that would ordinarily be sung by the priest at a High Mass. We all responded *recto tono* in Latin; but the Schola of men and boys sang the entire Proper in German, and we of the congregation were given copies of the Ordinary that we were to sing likewise in German! All this seemed directly opposed to the Motu Proprio of Pius X where he speaks of the liturgical text: "The language proper to the Roman Church is Latin. Hence it is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions — much more to sing in the vernacular the variable or



common parts of the Mass and Office." Obviously this was not a mere Low Mass since the celebrant chanted his parts and was obliged to wait until the choir and congregation had finished singing their parts. I am afraid I shall have to differ with Fr. Howell about the appropriateness of this new type of Mass. Rome is quite concerned these days about some of these innovations; and as a matter of fact MSGR. MONTINI on the part of the Holy Father sent a special letter to Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna in which he stressed the fact that the Latin language must be retained. It is true that the people should take a more active part in the Mass, but that does not mean they must sing the Mass in the vernacular. Nowadays our school children are being taught many of the Gregorian Ordinaries, and it is quite simple to explain to them the meaning of the text. On the other hand many of our English translations of the Propers, especially with regard to the psalms or the epistles of St. Paul, contain theological thoughts that are decidedly over the heads of the ordinary congregation. How then can the people take a more active part in the Mass? I think the answer is given by Pope Pius X himself in the Motu Proprio.

"Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times."

If the day comes when the Mass is sung only in the vernacular, as seems to be the aim of a small group of extreme liturgists, then that will mean

the end of our ancient sung-prayer of the church — Gregorian Chant. Let us never forget that the Gregorian melodies were all derived from the accents of the Latin word; hence their peculiar appropriateness. It was noteworthy that all the musicians at the Congress, with but only two exceptions, were much opposed to singing the Mass in the vernacular. Actually, only a small group of liturgists from France, Germany and the United States are trying to push the vernacular movement. The International Liturgical Congress at Lugano of last year proposed a votum to foster the singing of the Mass in the vernacular; but CARDINAL OTTAVIANI, who had been present and in a sense represented the Holy See, had already departed when the votum was drawn up. One of the conclusions of the Vienna Congress was that liturgists and Church musicians should cooperate in this important matter of the vernacular; and at future liturgical meetings the musical aspect should always be kept in mind. The sung Mass as we have it today has been the tradition for many centuries, with its definite Ordinary and Proper chants sung in the Latin language. Any attempt to change this seems to be the very thing the Holy Father spoke about in his most recent address to the Cardinals and Bishops in Rome on November 2 when he said to them, "And do you give no consent or permission to attempts of this kind, or to movements which are more daring than prudent." I know for a fact that the Apostolic Nuncio to Austria was quite perturbed at this demonstration of the singing of the Mass in the vernacular at Klosterneuburg and gave instructions that such a type of Mass was not to be performed again in Austria. So much for that.

On Friday morning we attended a Solemn Mass celebrated by the Auxiliary Archbishop of Vienna, DR. FRANZ JACHYM. The choir consisting of men and women demonstrated modern music with a new mass by the Viennese church musician, ERNST TITTEL, entitled "Missa Gregoriana." Themes from the Chant were used throughout with great effect. The Proper was likewise sung in a modern polyphonic setting; but, to me at least, it seemed too dissonant and hence distracting. Incidentally, one of the points stressed in the above-mentioned letter from Msgr. Montini to Cardinal Innitzer referred to modern music. Msgr. Montini wrote that when the Pope in his encyclical *Mediator Dei* approved of modern Church music, he did not mean ultra-modern cacophony, such as frequently results in extremely dissonant

music. Hearing this elaborate and extremely modern Proper, I could not help but think how much more effective the one-part Gregorian Chant would have been as a contrast to the figured Ordinary.

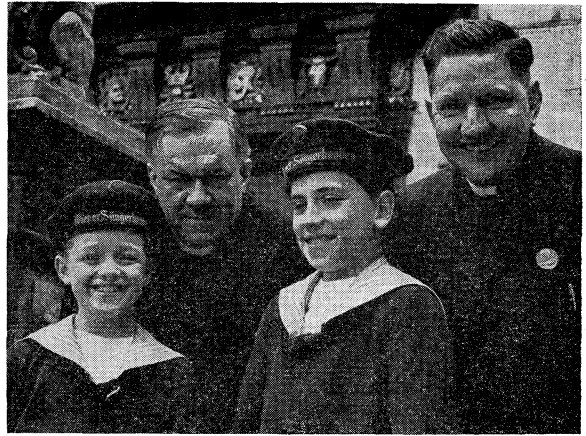
The following day, Saturday, late in the afternoon we all gathered in St. Stephen's Cathedral for a Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated by Cardinal Innitzer. For this occasion the Proper was expertly sung by a large group of laymen who had come from Geneva, Switzerland. They were directed by the famous DOM GAJARD, O.S.B. of Solesmes; and it was amazing to hear the utter perfection of the singing. These were not seminarians or priests, but laymen who sang the chant because they loved it. The sung Ordinary of the Mass did not fare quite as well. All those attending the Mass sang the "Missa de Angelis" and "Credo III," in which there was alternating between a solo Cantor, a boys' Schola, and the congregation. The Solesmes rhythm was not much in evidence, and I did not particularly like the contrast of a solo singer with the other groups. But aside from that, it was a thrilling experience to feel that all of us in this ancient, historical Cathedral were taking an active part in the mass in the very way mentioned by Pope Pius X in the *Motu Proprio*, by singing together the ancient Chant of the Church.

The next day, Sunday, no special Mass was scheduled for the Congressists, but we were free to attend any church we might choose and hear any particular choral group or composition of our own selection. And what a choice we had! I am sure no city in the world ever presented such an imposing list of masses, composers, and choirs as could be heard in Vienna that morning. There were 120 different churches with special masses sung either by their own choirs or guest choirs. The list of composers was fantastic — ranging from Palestrina, Vittoria, Des Pres, and Dufay; rather heavy on Haydn, Mozart, and Schubert; even Beethoven, Liszt, and of course Bruckner, Refice, as well as Rheinberger, Filke, and Griesbacher; right up to the moderns, David, Kronsteiner, Flor Peeters, and Jaeggi. I settled for the "Missa Choralis" of David, which I had heard in concert, a beautiful polyphonic work based entirely on the Gregorian *Missa de Angelis*. This was very artistically sung by the Linz Cathedral choir under the direction of REV. JOSEPH KRONSTEINER. Incidentally, Vienna justifies its singing

of the Masses of Mozart, Schubert, etc., on the grounds that a special verbal permission was granted by Pope Pius X!

So much for the various sung Masses arranged for the days of the Congress. Now for the different lectures which we attended every morning and afternoon. For the most part these were given in the Gobelinsaal, a rather large room in the Hofburg Palace, the walls of which were covered with some very fine Gobelin tapestries. The only unpleasant feature, however, was that we had to climb some four stories to reach this room. The first morning we attended very learned discussions of the early Chant of the Church, especially that of the Eastern Church. DR. WELLESZ of Oxford stressed the influence of Greek music on the Chant. DR. WERNER of New York dwelt on the origins of our psalmodic system, particularly as found in the Eastern Rite. In the afternoon we heard discussions on Gregorian Chant given by DR. LE GUENNANT, president of the Gregorian Institute of Paris, DOM CARDINE, O.S.B. of Solesmes, now Professor at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, and DOM HESBERTS, O.S.B., the noted paleographer of Solesmes. Dom Cardine emphasized the importance of observing the rhythmic signs as found in the ancient manuscripts in order to give a correct interpretation to the Chant. He made a striking comparison between a pianist who carefully observes all the various indications of interpretation the composer has placed in his score, and the singer of Gregorian Chant who should likewise observe all the signs indicated in the manuscripts. Above all, prayerful interpretation is the most important of all. The next morning Msgr. Angles, President of the Congress, gave a learned discussion on the origins of classical polyphony, and encouraged a restoration of the neglected music of Dufay and Dunstable. In the afternoon DR. SCHENK of Vienna spoke on instrumental Church music and traced the development of the use of instruments, other than the organ, from the days of Monteverdi and Gabrieli to Bruckner. It is well known, of course, that the use of orchestras in church is quite common throughout Austria and Germany. Frankly, I was amazed to find even kettledrums in the choir loft.

The Thursday we went out to Klosterneuburg Monastery to attend that highly controversial Betsingmesse, all lecture sessions were held in the Hall of the Monastery. The famous Jesuit liturgist, DR. JUNGSMANN, S.J., addressed us after the



Mass. Stressing the importance of lay participation in the Mass, he went so far as to say that the ideal is to let the people sing their parts of the mass in the vernacular so that they may better understand what they are singing. Then, of course, he referred to the votum of the Liturgical Congress in Lugano, which made an appeal to Rome for the vernacular even in a High Mass. As soon as Fr. Jungmann finished, Msgr. Angles of Rome stood up and, though regretting that he had to speak as he did, was obliged publicly to condemn this proposal of the learned liturgist. He produced the letter from Msgr. Montini stating that the Latin language must be retained, except in those places where Rome has by way of exception allowed the people to sing in the vernacular at a High Mass, such as the so-called Diaspora in Germany. Quite obviously the audience agreed with Msgr. Angles, except for a small group who had defended this type of the Betsingmesse celebrated that morning in the Monastery Church — a Low Mass chanted *recto tono* by the celebrant with the choir and people singing the Proper and Ordinary in German. It was evident from this session that the musicians' viewpoint is to preserve the Latin in the High Mass while that of a small group of more outspoken liturgists is to introduce the vernacular wherever possible. Too bad musicians and liturgists cannot get together.

After lunch we attended a rather technical lecture on the construction of the organ. But in the discussion that followed it was unanimously agreed by all organists to uphold the continued use of the real pipe organ and, as is the intention of Rome, to encourage the use of electronic organs only for smaller churches, where at best such electronic instruments are a mere substitute for the real thing.

On the following day, Friday, modern church music was discussed by DR. LEMACHER of Cologne, who seemed to give the impression that anything is allowed in the modern idiom for church use. Obviously, there are certain limitations imposed by the very religious significance of the words and ceremonies. Music in church should never be distracting or hinder devotion. Consequently, the next lecture given by a layman, DR. HILBER, Director of the Church Music School of Lucerne, Switzerland, emphasized the spiritual side of Church music, saying that the very function of the Church musician is such an exalted one that it even requires a special kind of vocation. I wondered how many of our organists and choir directors ever think of that.

The last lectures on Saturday morning dealt with the teaching of Church music in the schools and seminaries. PROFESSOR LENNARDS of Holland, a famous exponent of the Ward system in Europe, spoke of the importance of teaching children the Chant from their earliest years; and the REV. JOHANNES OVERATH of Cologne discussed the teaching of music in the higher schools, especially in the seminary, as a preparation for congregational singing in our churches. This is the best way we can hope some day to have the people take a more active part in the Mass; and this is definitely according to the wishes of Pope Pius X.

Thus ended the series of lectures given at the Congress. For the most part they were quite interesting, affording us a chance to hear some of the best musicologists of our time. But unfortunately, practically all of the lectures were given in German, only three or four in French; and no resumé was given in other languages, as had been done in Rome at the first Congress. This was a great barrier for many of the delegates—especially from France and Italy. Moreover, practically no time was left for discussions after the talks; and thus very little opportunity was had to discuss more practical problems.

However, the greatest feature of the Congress was the tremendous list of various sacred concerts arranged for the delegates. Choirs and organists came from all over Europe to demonstrate their abilities; and of course the Opera, Symphony, and Academy Chorus of Vienna itself performed some outstanding works for our benefit. Every evening a number of organ concerts were arranged in dif-

ferent churches given by some of the best European organists, such as FLOR PEETERS of Antwerp, JOSEPH AHRENS of Berlin, and GASTON LITAIZE of Paris. Naturally, choral concerts abounded. A group of young people from Essen, Germany, which sings music only of the Eastern Rite, gave an outstanding concert of selections from the Eastern Liturgy. One afternoon in St. Stephen's Cathedral we attended a very interesting concert given by some twenty different choirs of men and women from all over Austria. All were not of equal merit of course; but one could not help but be impressed by the very high standards of choral singing in this music-loving country. Perhaps the most impressive group was the Cathedral Choir from Linz, directed by one of the finest of present-day Church music composers, REV. JOSEPH KRONSTEINER. This group sang the *Kyrie* of the Bruckner "Mass in E Minor;" and rarely could one hear a more beautiful interpretation.

Another impressive choral concert was given that evening in the Hofburg Chapel by the Salzburg Cathedral Choir under the direction of the REV. JOSEPH MESSNER. The "Stabat Mater" by LECHTHALER was performed, accompanied by organ and orchestra. This was highly dramatic, theatrical music, but quite acceptable as concert music.

Another interesting concert was performed in the St. Augustine Church by some fifteen different boys' choirs, mostly from Austria. Again it was amazing to hear the superior work of these boys, all singing strictly *a cappella* and doing the most difficult types of music. Of course, the Vienna Boys' Choir did the finest singing, but several other groups were almost their equal. The boys from Innsbruck with their bright red Tyrolean jackets, leather pants, and green feathered hats quite stole the show. The occasion was graced by the presence of MSGR. FERNAND MAILLET, Director of the Little Singers of the Wooden Cross of Paris and International President of the World Federation of Boys' Choirs.

A program of religious music by contemporary composers, performed by the Vienna Chamber Choir under the direction of DR. HANS GILLESBERGER, left me with mixed feelings. The "Missa Choralis" of David was truly magnificent; a "Litany to the Queen of Peace" by Kronsteiner quite mystic; a motet by Heiller, "Ach Wie Nichtig," very impressive; but the Mass of Stravinsky, even

after several hearings, I think is quite shocking for Church music.

A highly original concert of early instrumental-vocal polyphony was given by the Collegium Musicum, directed by PROFESSOR JOSEPH MARTIN. Using old instruments of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as accompaniment, the group of musicians presented rarely heard works of Machault, Dunstable, Ockeghem, Gabrieli, Monteverdi, and Frescobaldi. This was for us a rare opportunity to hear the seemingly strange music as it must have sounded centuries ago.

The world premiere performances of two Oratorios were presented by the Vienna Academy Choir with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and a group of outstanding soloists. The first, called "The Seven-Fold Stream," that is, the seven Sacraments, was composed by FRIEDRICH REIDINGER, who made use of the old choral melodies throughout the vast work. The Oratorio showed Wagnerian influence, but was tremendously effective. The other work, "The Great Mystery," used the institution of the Holy Eucharist as its central theme. This was more modern music in the style of Hindemith, composed by the REV. RAIMUND WEISSENSTEINER who likewise conducted. Again a truly moving work.

One evening four singers from the Vienna Opera, including Irmgaard Seefried and Julius Patzak, gave a song recital of modern sacred music by Wolf, Honegger, and Hindemith. In fact, the Vienna State Opera itself added lustre to the Congress by presenting Pfitzner's "Palestrina," as well as Honegger's "Joan of Arc at the Stake."

The highlight performance of the entire Congress was the Concert of the Nations, presented by organists and choirs from all over Europe — Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Holland, and France. Some of these groups were very good; some rather ordinary. An imposing all male choir of about one hundred voices under the direction of JOSEPH VRANKEN did some great work; but the strange "Litany" composed by the director sounded not only scandalous but seemed positively disrespectful. The best choirs were those from Marburg and St. Gall, and of course the Vienna Boys' Choir.

And thus came to an end the feast of religious music presented at the Congress. Perhaps one could have wished for more classical polyphony, a more careful interpretation of Gregorian Chant, a somewhat less preponderance of German music;

but all in all it was a grand opportunity to see and hear what is being done in church music throughout Europe, fifty years after the appearance of the Motu Proprio of St. Pius X. Certainly tremendous strides have been made; certainly there is still room for improvement. But with all this as a background, there is great hope for the future.

At the final session of the Congress held in the Heiligenkreuz Monastery, to which we all drove Sunday afternoon, passing through the Vienna woods on our way, it was decided to hold similar Congresses every three years. The scene of the next one will be either Paris or Cologne; and the summer time seems more suitable than the fall of the year. I only hope that more Americans will be able to attend future Congresses in order to benefit from contact with the great music and musicians of the old world and at the same time to show what is being done in Church music in our own country.



## CATHOLIC CHOIR TERMINOLOGY

By Rev. Cletus Madsen

LITURGY — By this term is meant the DIRECT worship of God which is public. By direct is meant that kind of worship which involves the total attention of the worshipper as he talks to God. By public is meant that worship of God which is done in the name of the whole Mystical Body. By Mystical Body is meant the true Church of Jesus Christ which is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church.

Liturgy specifically is divided into worship which is rendered in three ways; namely, by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by the Seven Sacraments and by the Divine Office.

Therefore for the musician "liturgical" refers to any music composed and/or performed to intensify this public prayer of the church.

The term liturgy has caused much confusion in the minds of Catholics and others — so much indeed that many now propose the dropping of the word at least temporarily from our vocabulary. The confusion is due largely to a loose use or a misuse of the term by individuals. For example, the word has been used as a name for eccentric ideas about the worship of God. It has also been erroneously used as a synonym for the word Rubrics, which refers to rules that must be followed in performing the liturgy of the church, etc. These are merely a few of the many ways in which this term is abused. Actually it is the public worship of the Mystical Body paid to God.

In its origin the word comes from the Greeks. Among them it referred to any public work undertaken for the common good by an individual or a group, without thought of remuneration.

Its meaning and use have been developed down through the centuries, until, in our own day, we have a very concise definition of the liturgy, given us by our present Holy Father, Pope Pius XII. It appears in his

(Continued on Page 72)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*"No time to push alien compromises"*

Dear Editor:

Since you sent me a marked extra copy with Fr. Howell's clear and most interesting article on the German-Austrian "Prayer plus Hymn" mass I assume you did so remembering my warning against any attempt to introduce this in America or even to advocate its introduction. I also assume that you want me to state again why I think it is not a true solution of our problem, especially not in America. I even maintain that it was not a solution in Austria and German, if for no reason other than the fact that it was most vulnerable to the "sniping" of the noble guild of rubricists (e.g. reading of the gospel by a layman — not only objectionable to a rubricist, but even to a liturgist).

"Facciamo una combinazione" is one of the favorite slogans of worldly wise and realistic Romans in and out of authority. "Let us compromise" we would say. If we want a compromise, Fr. Howell's find is a good one, or rather the best one so far turned out, which is saying very little.

But after Lugano there are two reasons for utmost caution and angel-like patience. These reasons are most important and in their light only can Fr. Howell's quotation be correctly understood. Since I followed the discussion of both the small group on "mass reform" as well as the plenary meetings, I can say that Fr. Howell's interpretation of the resolution never came up for discussion nor was it in the minds of the discussants: their mind was not ever near it, since they were making proposals for the change of the missal, not the compromise between an unchanged missal and a congregation "making the best of it." The hopelessness of Fr. Howell — he himself does not realize this as he still assumes that Rome will give permissions instead of making reforms — was not the spirit of Lugano at all. The quotation "we have done all we can think of to bring the people closer to the mass, now it is time to bring the mass closer to the people" was in everybody's mind. Fr. Jungman's paper would have been the useless talk in a vacuum of an isolated scholar, had we had a new compromise in mind.

The second reason is also very grave: if we push a compromise now, we may get exactly that and all the chances of a thorough reform will evaporate as we attack in the rear of the proponents of a bolder and better measure. Just look at what happens in Parsch's Mass on p. 228 in CAECILIA "The Music of the Ordinary": priest and congregation are doing parallel things and occasionally meet, provided the priests wait idly for the people to finish their "liturgy" — which is again more of the same, parallel with occasional contacts. If the priest reads an introit vaguely or almost faithfully identical with something the people sing, then we have made little progress, even though Fr. Howell is a good enough authority for me, to assure me that the music and the words are better than those 18th century moralizing hymns I had to listen to all my young years. The combination Latin-German High Mass was exactly what drove me into the arms of the liturgical movement.

But above all, don't let us forget two things: that the German case is a special one, the product of the Lutheran impact and the accommodation policy of the early Jesuit missionaries of the counter-Reformation and the subsequent anti-liturgical tendencies of the period of enlightenment, both alien to the Church in America. And secondly that their plan does too much by keeping the people on their toes all the time, forgetting that there is still room for a schola-choir and time to listen. If the people sing all the responses and the ordinary plus a hymn or two (e.g. offertory and during communion, or perhaps before and after mass) they really have done enough.

If we carry participation to the point of making it a breathless singing feat, we leave (a) no time for the more artful, refined music of which our church is the greatest patron and (b) we lower our musical standards to a revival sect.

But one thing is sure: Fr. Howell made a significant contribution to this discussion, if we only realize that this is no time to push alien compromises in America, while we are trying to encourage the men who wage a battle for true essential and remedial reform. If Parsch's Mass became the accepted form — (it is not accepted in any

German and Austrian diocese in its present form in spite of its 20 years existence —) where would Gregorian Chant, Palestrina, Vittoria and Lassus go? Would travelling choirs and Protestant churches be their place of exile? Even in parish churches a schola needs to be more than just an "intoner" for the people! *Sit venia verbo!*

Sincerely yours

H. A. Reinhold  
Sunnyside, Washington

•  
"Might as well do it right"

Dear Editor:

Having been one of your subscribers for some time I have read with great interest the articles about Liturgical Music which you have published. And I have been much impressed by the accounts of splendid concerts and outstanding programs given in the larger cities.

I am not a professional musician but my deep seated affection for Gregorian Chant is backed up by a fair musical education.

All of which leads up to the one idea I would like to present to you — Gregorian Chant is not nearly as formidable a foe as it is generally considered by the choirs of small or middle-sized parishes. Please do not misunderstand me — I do not underestimate the tremendous skill necessary for the proper rendition of much of the Chant. I simply feel that entirely too many choirs have been frightened away from the part of the Chant which they can sing well. In our own diocese there is a very fine men's choir which sings part music beautifully but which does not even sing the Propers "recto tono" — they simply ignore them.

Your magazine could do a tremendous amount of good if it would point out once in a while that there is much in the music of the church which is not beyond the reach of ordinary choirs.

Here in this predominantly non-Catholic part of the country we have had many prejudices to overcome among our own people but in our own simple way we are carrying out the prescriptions of the Motu Proprio much more faithfully than many larger churches which I have had occasion to visit.

For several years we have had women in our choir but our ten men have now reached a point where they can carry on and we are taking the last step in making our little group really liturgical. And it is not an easy step to take as our women have been most faithful and helpful. I could write a book about our ten men — how they have learned the Requiem (with Libera) — two other Chant Masses — the Palm Sunday ceremonies — yes, even the Good Friday Tenebrae. And they love it! And their singing at the Field Mass (see "Names-People-Doings") was completely inspired. Except for the Ecce Sacerdos it was all done *a cappella* and unless I am badly mistaken both St. Cecilia and St. Pius were smiling happily when they heard their West Virginia friends singing their best in honor of the Blessed Virgin for this was a Marian Year celebration.

Certainly what we have done here can be done anywhere. Not a single one of our men has any musical education. None of them knew a word of Latin when we started — but they did have the right idea — if they were going to do it at all they might as well do it right. And that they have done.

The sole purpose of this letter is to point out what can be done by a small group in a small parish and suggest that with the proper encouragement any choir can do a creditable job. There simply is no excuse for anything else.

D. V. McGonagle  
Wheeling, W. Virginia

No. 1995

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