

ADOREMUS BULLETIN

[Home](#) | [Join/Donate](#)

Donate



Adoremus, Society for the Renewal of the Sacred Liturgy

facebook

Name:
Adoremus, Society
for the Renewal of
the Sacred Liturgy

FOLLOW ME ON twitter

Online Edition - Vol. VII, No. 2: April 2001

Buried Treasure

Can the Church recover her musical heritage?

[Part I](#), [Part II](#), [Part III](#), [Part IV](#), [Part V](#)

Download: [PDF version of all 5 parts](#)

by Susan Benofy

Editor's Note:

Part I of *Buried Treasure* traced the history of the reform of the liturgy and its music in the first half of the twentieth century. Pope Saint Pius X issued [Tra Le Sollecitudini in 1903, a Motu Proprio](#) that was the first in a series of papal and curial documents urging the active participation (*participatio actuosa*) of the people in the Mass, especially through the singing of Gregorian Chant. The spread of the desired reforms was slow, and the movement for reform was not without abuses. Later popes continued to encourage participatio actuosa and a greater use of chant and the rest of the treasury of sacred music at Mass. The Congregation of Rites summarized the series of documents and codified the musical reforms in a [1958 Instruction on Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy, De Musica Sacra](#). Pope Pius XII appointed a commission to study liturgical reform, and their work led to the reform of the Holy Week liturgy in the 1950s and to a simplification of the rubrics in 1960. It was in the midst of this ongoing liturgical reform that the recently elected Pope John XXIII issued his call for an Ecumenical Council in 1962.

Part II

Sacred Music in the Twentieth Century Liturgical Reform

Norms and precepts on music

Implementation and experts

International music organizations -- Differing views, different roles

Universa Laus and Father Gélineau

Post-conciliar revision

Developing the "Simple Gradual"

"Simple Gradual" approved

Simple Gradual led to "Diversity and adaptation"

The Instruction, *Musicam Sacram*

Preserving the treasury

Effects of *Musicam Sacram*

The first session of the Second Vatican Council began on October 11, 1962. The first official document issued by the Council was the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. The final vote on the Constitution was taken on the sixtieth anniversary of Pope Pius X's *Tra le Sollecitudini* [TLS], November 22, 1963.

It is not surprising to see many of the concerns of the pre-conciliar liturgical documents reflected in the Constitution.

All popes from Pius X on stressed the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy; and the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy did not break from this tradition. It even used the same Latin term, *participatio actiosa*, as other documents had. Echoing the language of Popes Pius XI and XII, it says the people are not to be at Mass as "strangers or silent spectators" (§48). *Sacrosanctum Concilium* specifies that this participation should be expressed in "acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes. And at the proper time a reverent silence should be observed" (§30). Although it permitted the use of vernacular languages, it also insisted that Latin was to be maintained in the Roman Rite: "Nevertheless, care must be taken to ensure that 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" (§54).

An entire chapter of the Constitution was devoted to Sacred Music. The first paragraph of Chapter VI stresses in general terms the importance of sacred music in the liturgy, calling it a "treasure of inestimable value". Before proceeding to specific provisions it says:

Accordingly, the Sacred Council, keeping to the norms and precepts of ecclesiastical tradition and discipline and having regard to the purpose of sacred music, which is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful, decrees as follows... (§112)

Norms and precepts on music

The "norms and precepts" mentioned here are primarily those developed over the previous sixty years and contained in TLS and the 1958 Instruction.

The Constitution specified that the "treasury of sacred music is to be preserved and cultivated with great care" (§114), that Gregorian chant is "specially suited to the Roman liturgy [and] should be given pride of place" (§116), that polyphony should not be excluded, that the current

work on a typical edition 1 of Gregorian chant should be completed (§117), and that the "pipe organ is to be held in high esteem" (§120), though other instruments may be used.

None of these provisions differs from those developed in the series of liturgical documents from TLS to the 1958 Instruction. Yet the experience of most Catholics in the immediate post-conciliar period was of a radical and sudden change in the music at Mass. Organs, choirs and Latin hymns were replaced almost overnight with "folk groups" singing their own compositions .

Implementation and experts

Other provisions in this chapter of the Constitution differed from those in previous documents. It urges that the musical traditions of the people (particularly those in mission lands) be incorporated into the liturgy. Authorization for introducing vernacular languages into parts of the liturgy also affected the music. The Constitution on the Liturgy did not give detailed directives about how its provisions were to be put into practice. Those who were placed in charge of the implementation of the reform interpreted the document and specified how it was to be followed.

The magnitude and rapidity of the changes that occurred in the aftermath of the Council were difficult for most Catholics to understand. Even the bishops' conferences seemed bewildered about how to exercise their newly granted authority over the liturgy -- specifically, overseeing translation of the texts and implementation of all the new rites. Most American bishops had not taken a great interest in the liturgical movement before the Council. Thus, during and after the Council, they relied greatly on the opinions of various liturgical experts.

Bishop Robert Tracy of Baton Rouge, in an account of his experiences at the Vatican Council recalls that most "non-specialist" bishops at the Council attended lectures given by experts daily. Even Archbishop Paul Hallinan of Atlanta, he writes, "was less than an expert liturgist when he was elected the only member of the US hierarchy to sit on the Council commission on the Liturgy." 2

Those who took such an avid interest in the experts' lectures may have been more influenced by the opinions they heard than by what the Council actually said. For their part, the experts believed that the bishops were in need of their instruction. One expert writing to another said: "Hallinan is very good indeed; I only wish it were not a case of getting him a Berlitz-type education in the liturgy while we operate". 3

Many of these experts were appointed to the *Consilium* (Council) for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy, a body created to determine the details of implementation of liturgical reform. Also, some experts staffed the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (BCL) and diocesan offices of worship, which were created or expanded at this time.

In some cases the opinions of the experts were tainted with the same kind of errors that Pope Pius XII had condemned in *Mediator Dei*. Notably, the experts were eager to restore what they believed were the liturgical practices of the first Christian centuries (e.g., use of the vernacular) while rejecting later developments, (e.g. polyphony and Gregorian chant). But the liturgical experts' opinions had predated the Council, as we have seen. Some experts conveniently saw the Council documents as requiring the implementation of their own favored theories concerning the liturgy.

International music organizations--Differing views, different roles

Not all experts, of course, had identical views; but some seemed to have more influence on post-conciliar liturgical reform than others.

Two international organizations were founded during and after the Council, representing markedly different views on how the musical provisions of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy should be implemented.

The first, the *Consociatio Inter-nationalis Musicae Sacrae* (CIMS), was established by Pope Paul VI on November 22, 1963, the Feast of Saint Cecilia, patroness of music -- the very day that the Council approved the Constitution on the Liturgy. CIMS developed out of a series of conferences on sacred music held in Europe starting in the Holy Year 1950, sponsored by the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music. The chirograph, *Nobile subsidium Liturgiae*, establishing the *Consociatio*, said that the new organization was to be an "international institute which would be able to make known [to the Holy See] the needs of sacred music, and which would be able to assist in putting the decisions of the supreme ecclesiastical authority relating to sacred music into practice." 4

Pope Paul VI himself appointed officers for the CIMS on March 7, 1964. In addition, the Holy Father appointed as consultants to the *Consilium* the president of the CIMS, Monsignor Johannes Overath, and its honorary president, Monsignor Higinio Anglès, who was president of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome. Monsignor Fiorenzo Romita, president of the International Federation *Pueri Cantores*, was also appointed a consultant. The Federation was an organization of boys' choirs and an institutional member of CIMS. According to Monsignor Overath, however, these men were "not in fact numbered among the working committees entrusted with the various musical problems before the *Consilium*." They were not informed in advance of important developments related to music, such as the plans for the *Graduale Simplex*, nor were they invited to be part of the group that met to determine the final version of the Instruction on Sacred Music in 1967. 5

Another group of church musicians 6 met in 1964 at Boys' Town, Nebraska, to form a new organization, the Church Music Association of America (CMAA). 7 The CMAA, the American affiliate of CIMS, pledged to uphold the highest artistic standards, preserve the treasury of sacred music, and encourage composers to write artistic music for the more active participation of the people.

In August 1966, CIMS organized the first international meeting of church musicians after the close of the Council -- the Fifth International Church Music Congress was held in Chicago and Milwaukee, and hosted by CMAA.

The program for this meeting, approved by the Holy See, dealt with sacred music in light of the Constitution on the Liturgy and focused particularly on *actuosa participatio populi*, the active participation of the people.

Shortly before this Congress began, another international organization for the study of liturgical music was formed. Known as *Universa Laus* (Universal Praise), this predominantly European group was officially inaugurated at Lugano, Switzerland in April 1966.

Like CIMS, *Universa Laus* was an outgrowth of work begun in years before the Council. When the Council was announced, a group of liturgists and musicologists formed a group to offer assistance to those who were preparing the *schema* (draft) on the liturgy to be presented to the Council Fathers.

Universa Laus and Father Gélineau

The most familiar name among the founders of *Universa Laus* is that of Father Joseph Gélineau, SJ. Father Gélineau composed the so-called "Gélineau Psalms", musical settings of the Psalms, which were published in 1953 to be used with the French text of the Psalms from the Jerusalem Bible. The English text of the Grail Psalter was later set to the same tunes. These musical settings of the Psalms became quite popular shortly before the Council and continued to be used after the new Rite of Mass was promulgated.

Besides the Psalm settings, Father Gélineau produced works on the use of music in the liturgy, the most influential of which was published in English in 1964 as *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship*.⁸ The book, written prior to the Council, had first appeared in 1962 in French, and was based on ideas in a series of articles Father Gélineau had published in a French journal of liturgical music between 1958 and 1961.⁹

In a note added to the English translation Father Gélineau says that the conclusions expressed in the book:

have by no means been weakened; on the contrary, they acquire added strength in the light of the Council's teaching. ... The author has not felt any need to modify his text in any way, but has thought it worthwhile to add, in the footnotes, references to articles of the Constitution [on Sacred Liturgy] which vindicate or strengthen the views he has expressed or are helpful in rendering them more specific. **10**

While Father Gélineau says that the Council did not influence his ideas on liturgical music, his ideas on liturgical music (along with those of *Universa Laus*) had a very strong influence on how the Council's reform of liturgical music was implemented.

Father Gélineau was a member of the three-man *Praesidium* (presidential committee) that governed *Universa Laus*. The other two members were Father Luigi Agustoni, a Swiss parish priest and a Gregorianist associated with the Institute of Sacred Music in Milan; and Doctor Erhard Quack, diocesan director of sacred music and music director of the cathedral of Speyer, Germany.

After a series of meetings beginning in 1962, *Universa Laus* published a study on the role of music in the liturgy, *Le Chant liturgique après Vatican II* (Liturgical Chant after Vatican II). The book appeared in 1965 in five languages. One commentator tells us:

From this era dates the faithful friendship for *Universa Laus* of Monsignor Annibale Bugnini, who was unstinting in his encouragement and support of the group's work. **11**

Monsignor (later Archbishop) Bugnini was Secretary of the *Consilium* for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy from 1964 to 1969, and Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship from 1969 to 1975. **12** He was extremely influential in the post-conciliar reform of the liturgy. Bugnini's history of this reform, *The Reform of the Liturgy: 1948-1975*, is instructive both for its details of the membership and workings of the individual committees of the *Consilium* and for its insight into his own views on the liturgical reform. **13** The book confirms that he favored the opinions of *Universa Laus*, and reveals his negative attitude toward musicians holding more traditional views.

The roles of the *Consilium* consultants associated with the two international music associations, CIMS and *Universa Laus*, differed significantly, both in terms of the study groups to which they were assigned, and in terms of Bugnini's opinions of their ideas and methods. Fathers Gélinau and Agustoni, of the *Universa Laus* Praesidium and advisors to the *Consilium* were far more influential in the development of norms for liturgy than were the two members associated with CIMS, Monsignors Anglès and Overath.

Their influence was not confined to music. Both Agustoni and Gélinau were members of the important Group 10, responsible for revising the Order of Mass. In 1965 two Masses were said for a select group to demonstrate what the reformed rite would be like. Agustoni was music director of the first Mass (in Italian) and Gélinau for the second (in French).

Gélinau was also a member of committees writing new Eucharistic Prayers, including those for Masses with children, and was a speaker at an international congress on translation, sponsored by the *Consilium*. Those who supported traditional sacred music, however, were involved in none of these projects.

Post-conciliar revision

The revision of the rites and the use of some vernacular following the Council made it necessary both to update the norms for sacred music and to make some revisions in the repertoire of chant. The *Consilium* undertook both of projects.

The first resulted in the instruction *Musicam Sacram*. The second involved the revision of the chant books and the publication of a collection of simpler chants that the Council had requested. (SC §117) The *Consilium* had instituted "study groups" to implement the liturgical reform, and two groups were assigned these projects.

Group 14 was in charge of the study of singing in the Mass, and is the group originally charged with writing the first *schema* [plan] for the post-Conciliar instruction on sacred music that eventually became *Musicam Sacram*. None of the leaders of either the CIMS or *Universal Laus* was appointed to Group 14 (Helmut Hucke, who gave a paper at the *Universa Laus* meeting in Lugano, was a member of this group).

Group 25 was charged with revising the Gregorian Chant books and assembling the collection of simpler melodies. Father Agustoni of *Universa Laus* was secretary of this group.

A third committee, Group 33, was also designated to deal with questions of music and liturgy. Monsignor Overath was appointed to this committee. According to Bugnini, this group "had a supervisory role". **14** But despite the detailed discussion of the controversies surrounding some of the musical projects of the *Consilium*, there are no details of the work of Group 33. In fact, since it is never mentioned again, is difficult to see what its "supervisory role" might have been.

Developing the "Simple Gradual"

Group 25's project of producing an edition of simpler chant melodies, the *Graduale Simplex* [Simple Gradual], was extremely controversial.

The chant for the Mass of the Roman Rite is contained primarily in two books, the *Kyriale* and the *Graduale Romanum*.

The *Kyriale* is a collection of music for the sung parts of the Mass (the Ordinary), the text of

which is unchangeable. It consists of the *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. The *Kyriale* contains 18 musical settings of these parts of the Mass. Several also include the *Gloria*, and several settings of the Creed are included, as well as the *Requiem*. (The *Gloria* and *Credo* are not used in every Mass.)

When the earlier popes' documents spoke of the participation of the people in the singing of the Mass, they recommended singing the Ordinary. The Council's recommendation of a collection of simpler melodies resulted in the *Kyriale Simplex*, an abridged *Kyriale* containing only five or six Mass settings and two or three *Credos*. A few simple settings from non-Roman Latin rites, such as the Ambrosian and Mozarabic Rites, were also included .

The other set of sung portions of the Mass is known as the Proper. The text of these parts changes, each Sunday or feast having a set of texts proper to it with corresponding melodies. Included in the Proper are the *Introit, Gradual, Alleluia* (replaced by the Tract during Lent), Offertory and Communion.

The chant settings of the various Propers for Mass are collected in the *Graduale Romanum* [Roman Gradual]. For centuries these parts of the Mass were sung by the *schola* or choir and were generally more elaborate musically than the settings for the Ordinary. Many consider the Propers to be the most beautiful in the entire chant repertoire. (Recordings of Gregorian chant generally include several selections from the *Graduale*.) The contents of the *Graduale* are more extensive and generally more elaborate than the *Kyriale*, so any selection process would be more difficult. However, there is no reason to believe the Council's desire for a collection of the simpler melodies from the *Graduale* could not have been accomplished. This would have produced an abridged *Graduale*, containing the simplest settings, thus making it easier for smaller churches and inexperienced choirs to use the authentic chant repertoire at least part of the time.

Group 25 chose a very different procedure for compiling the *Graduale Simplex*.

Instead of setting the texts of the Proper of the Mass for the various Sundays and feasts, as in the Missal and the *Graduale Romanum*, the Simple Gradual gives a few sets of chants for each liturgical season to be used repeatedly throughout a season. In this arrangement there is no longer a set of proper texts for each Sunday. Thus the texts used would not necessarily correspond to those in either the Missal or the *Graduale Romanum*, both of which have different texts for each Sunday and feast.

Even when the texts are preserved, however, the melodies traditionally associated with these texts at Mass have disappeared. Instead, melodies from manuscripts and other parts of the chant repertoire (such as the Divine Office) were used, because the committee judged that to ensure the participation of the people "there is an absolute need for simpler melodies" for which "the more complex melodies in the *Graduale Romanum* could not be the source". **15**

This seems to imply that no simpler melodies can be found in the *Graduale Romanum* itself. However, the same introduction earlier recommended that smaller churches using the Simple Gradual should also use selections from the *Graduale Romanum* "especially the easier ones or those more familiar through long usage among certain peoples".**16** Yet it was a collection of precisely these simpler and more familiar melodies that the Council apparently asked for. Further, the structure of the individual sections was changed.

The *Graduale Simplex*, then, is not simply a short collection of the simplest melodies taken from the *Graduale Romanum* thus serving as an introduction to its repertoire for choirs. It is an

entirely different book intended for congregational participation.

On what principles was this book produced? One principle seems to be a somewhat exaggerated view of the need for vocal participation by the people -- the idea that people cannot participate in the Mass unless they audibly intervene in some way. This is reinforced by a view of the history of liturgy which concludes that from the earliest times singing at Mass was done by the people and a soloist, and that this singing consisted mostly of complete Psalms with antiphons. Neither of these opinions corresponds to those of CIMS. But they are views promoted by *Universa Laus* and advocated in the works of Joseph Gélineau.

The form of the musical settings in the *Graduale Simplex* corresponds to the form of singing for the liturgy advocated by Father Gélineau in *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship*. Therein he states:

In spite of all the vicissitudes it has undergone in the course of the centuries, the *responsorial form* remains in Christian worship as the *most traditional and the best way* of including the entire assembly in the singing of psalms. **17** [Emphasis added.]

Gélineau also objects to the length of the Mass antiphons. He believes these were developed from a form that was originally responsorial psalmody in which the people participated. He contends that over the course of time the Psalm verses were suppressed and the responses lengthened; their music became more elaborate, and was consequently sung by a choir, not by the people. The resulting antiphons, he believes, became the Gregorian Propers. In Gélineau's view, this development is decidedly negative. He states that it "has not always exerted a favorable influence on the evolution of the rites" **18** and often "took place at the price of radical transformation". **19**

Gélineau's theories about the history of the liturgy are not accepted by all historians **20**, and were emphatically rejected by leaders of CIMS. Monsignor Anglès, in an article in the CIMS journal, contends: "from a historical viewpoint it is impossible to maintain that the *Proprium Missae* belonged to the people". **21** He indicates that the people never sang the *Introit*, Offertory or Tract, and contributed only a simple refrain for the Communion. If the liturgical reform nevertheless thinks it desirable that the congregation join in singing the proper, says Anglès,

it would be absurd to insist on its singing the various parts in the single form of chant with responsions, i.e., always providing a short refrain to the voice of the soloist. There exist other, and less monotonous ways in which the congregation may partake in church singing. **22**

Similarly, Monsignor Overath stresses that the Proper was not sung by the congregation, and that simple responses were necessary in the early centuries only because the people had no books and could not read. He adds:

Active listening also belongs to *actuosa participatio*. Very often we say: "All praying is, after all, listening to the will of God"! Let us make room for such listening within the Church service. I believe I am allowed to say that more listening is what our devotion needs. **23**

It is by now clear that the *Simple Gradual* expressed the reform desired by those who shared the ideas of *Universa Laus*, and opposed the ideas of the more traditional CIMS.

"Simple Gradual" approved

The *Graduale Simplex* was the part of Group 25's work that had the hardest time gaining approval. It was approved by the *Consilium* in April 1965 and was submitted at that time to the Congregation of Rites, who wished to see the page proofs before approving it. (Oddly, Bugnini praises the work of the members of this group in part because their presentations were "often modest and hardly intelligible even to the members of the *Consilium*". **24** One wonders if the members who voted on this book knew what they were approving.)

There was some question about which office of the *Curia* would publish the book, and whether it would even be an official liturgical book. It was proposed that the book be issued by some agency that was less official than the Congregation for Rites so that "it will always be possible to correct it, revise it, or even, should it prove less useful, abandon it." **25** Ultimately the Congregation of Rites would issue the *Graduale Simplex*. The decree (dated September 1, 1967) said that it could be used "unless some future legislation determines otherwise." **26**

During the two years that elapsed between the *Consilium's* approval of the Simple Gradual and its publication, Bugnini says, "serious reservations" were voiced about its nature. The *Consilium* responded to three main objections and to the "difficulties and fears that were felt".

1. "The musical forms of the Gregorian chants used in the Roman Mass would be destroyed".

The *Consilium* insisted that this was not true, since the new book was not intended to replace any of the existing official chant books, but would be used in addition to these.

2. "New forms [e.g. responsorial] would be introduced that are not adapted to the faithful and not in conformity with the art of the Church and with the liturgical renewal".

The *Consilium* argued that none of the melodies was new, all of them being taken from the existing chant books; and that "[t]he manner of singing in which one or more cantors alternate with the congregation, which sings a refrain verse, is the oldest and most traditional in the Church". **27**

3. "The text of the Roman Mass would be changed" (the introit, gradual, tract, alleluia, offertory and communion verses would be changed, and in some cases changed completely).

The *Consilium* answered: "This is a logical consequence of the entire approach to the problem", the "fundamental criterion" of providing a simple set of songs to be used through out an entire liturgical season. If authentic Gregorian melodies were to be used, the texts must be altered. The Simple Gradual texts maintained the "concepts that inspire a season", rather than being "bound to a text". **28**

The *Graduale Simplex* was finally published by the Congregation of Rites in September 1967 with a note approved by the pope requiring that the term "psalmist" be replaced by "cantor".

Simple Gradual led to "Diversity and adaptation"

The Simple Gradual "opened the door to greater diversity and adaptation", according to Monsignor Frederick McManus, a *peritus* (expert) at the Council, a member of the *Consilium* and first Director of the Secretariat of the US Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy. He saw the change in the Propers of the Mass as an intended, even desirable, consequence of its development.

Speaking to a meeting in Kansas City in December 1966, before the Simple Gradual was published, he stated:

The significance of the Simple Gradual, a direct fruit of Chapter VI [of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*], does not lie in the Latin texts and accompanying melodies. It lies rather in the principle: *the first alternative to the proper chants of the Roman Gradual is officially provided, and the door thus opened to greater diversity and adaptation.* **29** [Emphasis added]

(Msgr. McManus was also a founder of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy [ICEL], which composed the English texts of the antiphons used in the Simple Gradual).

That the aim of the Simple Gradual was not to supply chants for every Sunday and feast, but "to provide a set that can be useful for a liturgical season, with permission to use it several times during the same period." **30** This is a departure from the traditional practice in the Roman Gradual of having a Proper particular to each Sunday and feast.

During the process of approval, several questions were raised by an official identified by Bugnini only as "the reviser from the Secretariat of State". For example, the Constitution on the Liturgy §117 had asked for a book of simpler chants for use in small churches. The *Consilium* proposed to call the publication "Simple Gradual for the Use of Small Churches and Small Groups". The reviser for the Secretariat of State removed the phrase "and Small Groups" on the grounds that it was not in §117 and that its removal would "help to prevent abuses leading to the practical elimination of the Roman Gradual". **31** Bugnini insists that the Simple Gradual would be useful in more general situations:

The way things were going was so obvious that the Simple Gradual was used at Masses of the Council in Saint Peter's Basilica, which is certainly not a "small church," nor were the assembled Fathers a "small group". **32**

This comment implies that the Simple Gradual was used at the Council because of the Council fathers' enthusiasm for it, but in fact the decision to use it was made by a committee appointed by Bugnini that prepared a booklet to be used for Council liturgies. One of the committee members was Father Luigi Agustoni of *Universa Laus*, secretary of the *Consilium* study group that was working on the Simple Gradual. **33**

This illustrates a familiar (and highly effective) technique used by those who pushed for radical implementation of the reform. A practice, often one which had been explicitly rejected for general use, would be requested for "pastoral" reasons for a particular situation. Once permission was granted, liturgists would employ the innovation in other situations. Then its "widespread use" becomes an argument for general approval.

So the scenario for radical and sudden change in the music at Mass was set.

First, the antiphons from the Simple Gradual were translated into vernacular languages.

Next, new musical settings for the vernacular versions of the antiphons were required, it was argued, because of the different stress patterns and the reduced number of syllables in English as compared with the Latin version.

The ICEL translation of the antiphons was ready in 1968 and an English edition of a musical setting of the Simple Gradual was published in England in 1969. **34** In addition to musical

settings of the antiphons, Psalm texts are given (from the 1963 Grail Psalter), marked for the use of three different sets of Psalm tones. **35**

The musical settings of the antiphons differ from those in the Latin edition, and no claim is made that these are authentic Gregorian melodies. The explanatory material in the English edition of the Simple Gradual stresses that the *texts* are officially promulgated by the Congregation of Rites, and emphasizes these do not change every Sunday, but by seasons. As to the music, the notes observed:

On the other hand, you may be unimpressed by the music you find here. "Where has our heritage of sacred music gone to?" you may ask. This book does not pretend to satisfy a highly skilled and resourceful choir.... The *Simple Gradual*, like its Latin original, is "for the use of smaller churches", in accordance with the wish expressed in the Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Liturgy* (art. 117). **36**

Simply put, the "heritage of sacred music" is not to be found in the Simple Gradual. Article 117 of the liturgy Constitution had asked for an edition of the simpler Gregorian chants. The English Simple Gradual makes no pretense to be such a collection.

Thus, in the *Graduale Simplex*, the texts of the Proper of the Mass were changed, and their variety reduced, on the grounds that this was the only way to enable the people to sing "authentic chant melodies".

Yet the English Simple Gradual, with its newly composed music, did not fulfill this purpose.

What it *did* do was to establish a principle that other texts could be substituted for the official Proper. The Simple Gradual itself was rarely used, but the principle of substituting new texts, which Monsignor Frederick McManus saw as its primary significance, was used to replace the Proper with other songs.

The final result, then, of a process ostensibly intended to preserve authentic music at the sacrifice of authentic texts, led to most Masses using neither authentic music nor traditional texts for the chants of the Proper of the Mass. The principle of "seasonal options" intended for smaller churches, became an ideal norm for all churches.

The principle has been extended even further in ICEL's proposed revision of the Sacramentary. For example, the proposal to rearrange the entrance rite so that that one option should be used throughout a liturgical season -- the sprinkling rite (without *Kyrie* or *Gloria*) would be used during Easter time, while the *Gloria* (without a *Kyrie*) would be used at Christmas.

The Holy See has not as yet approved these changes.

The Instruction, *Musicam Sacram*

The *Constitution on the Liturgy* had dealt with music only in general terms (in Chapter VI), and the early post-conciliar documents on the liturgical reform [e.g., *Inter Oecumenici*] were even more vague. Some people interpreted the absence of directions to use polyphonic music or Gregorian chant as meaning that this music was no longer to be used in the liturgy. So the *Consilium* proposed a special instruction on music.

The resulting document, *Musicam Sacram*, is the only post-conciliar Vatican document devoted entirely to the subject of sacred music. The process of writing it was long and

contentious, according to Bugnini's account, and twelve *schemata* [draft proposals] were issued between February 1965 and February 1967. The final document was published in March 1967 just six months before the Simple Gradual.

The drafting of *Musicam Sacram* was entrusted to the *Consilium* Study Group 14. Consultors who examined on the first draft found it weak and wanted "the instruction to codify the entire current discipline on sacred music as it related to the liturgical constitution." **37**

A second, much longer, draft followed in April. This seventy-four-paragraph version was written by Canon A.G. Martimort, a sacramental theologian. A larger group of consultors reviewed this draft and found it generally acceptable. A third draft was written, incorporating their comments.

Up to this point no musicians had been members of the drafting committee or included among the consultors. (In Bugnini's usage, a "musician" is not simply one trained in music, but one who has *traditional ideas* about sacred music and is concerned about preserving the treasury of sacred music.)

This unsatisfactory situation impelled Monsignor Anglès (with the agreement of the academic senate of the Pontifical Academy of Music) to write a memorandum to the Holy Father on May 25, 1965, and another on June 7. The latter asked "the Holy See to intervene and prevent the practical introduction of many abuses". **38**

Bugnini calls the Anglès memo an attack "against the entire liturgical reform". **39** But he says that the Secretariat of State saw the memo as raising a "serious and urgent question", and recommended that the *Consilium* study it and inform the Secretariat "with all due haste of [its] thinking and activity in this area." **40**

(Bugnini's account never mentions the name of Cardinal A.G. Cicognani, Secretary of State, who addressed these matters.)

After this exchange, Bugnini judged that "the time had come to bring the musicians into the committee that was to put the finishing touches on the text that the liturgists had drawn up." **41** A new committee was formed that, according to Bugnini, "was made up of forty-three experts, half of them liturgists and half of them musicians." **42**

But the "finishing touches" extended to several more drafts of the instruction.

From Bugnini's account it appears that a new committee of experts was formed for each successive *schema*. Musicians frequently represented less than half of the committee. For example, the committee for the fifth *schema* had a twelve member committee among whom were two "musicians of the Roman school" and two "Gregorianists", one of whom was Agustoni of *Universa Laus*. Other members were described as canon lawyers, theologians, pastoral experts and rubricists.

In his account of the development of further drafts of the instruction on music (he refers to this as its "way of the cross" **43**), Bugnini usually presents the musicians as obstructionist. He charges that their suggestions for revision "reflected bygone ideas of sacred music", took concert performances as their ideal, and ignored "new problems raised for sacred song by pastoral liturgics". **44**

Bugnini presents the liturgists, on the other hand, as invariably "pastoral" in their views. He

contrasts the views of the two sides on the meaning of active participation:

Here precisely is where the views of the two sides diverged: in the view of the liturgists the people must truly *sing* in order to participate actively as desired by the liturgical Constitution; in the view of musicians, however, even listening to good devout, and edifying music ... promotes 'active' participation.

These and other observations betrayed a mentality that could not come to grips with new pastoral needs. **45**

Bugnini claims that some of the musicians' recommendations were incorporated,

but the *Consilium* did not intend to yield on certain basic points, since they embodied the basic principles on which the liturgical reform was founded. **46**

Given this attitude, it is not surprising to find that Musicam Sacram incorporates some attempts at compromise of dramatically divergent views.

In the end, "traditional" statements included were sometimes worded so as to permit a "progressive" interpretation. The musicians, for example, asked repeatedly for inclusion of some reference to the retention of Latin in the Roman Rite (SC §36a) and to the preservation of the treasury of sacred music (SC §114).

The final text did mention the retention of Latin, but it also promoted the vernacular; and it said that in order to follow these norms "one will therefore employ that form of participation which best matches the capability of each congregation". (MS §47)

(No one seemed to notice that congregations whose "capability" in Latin was superior to their capability in their native language would be extremely rare.)

Preserving the treasury

Musicam Sacram deals with the preservation of the treasury of sacred music in the following way:

In sung liturgical services celebrated in Latin:

a) Gregorian chant, as proper to the Roman liturgy, should be given pride of place, other things being equal. Its melodies, contained in the "typical" editions, should be used, to the extent that this is possible....

c) 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. (MS §50)

The opening phrase confining these provisions to liturgies "celebrated in Latin", Bugnini interprets to mean that:

When, therefore, the Constitution allowed the introduction of the vernaculars, it necessarily anticipated that the preservation of this "treasure of sacred music" would be dependent *solely on celebrations in Latin*....

In this part of the text, the instruction intends to make it clear that just as there are *two forms of celebration, one in Latin, the other in the vernacular*, in accordance with the norms established by competent authority, so the use of the *musical repertory that is connected with the Latin text is for celebrations in Latin*, although it is possible to use some parts of it even in celebrations in the vernacular. **47**
[Emphasis added.]

There is nothing in the Constitution on the Liturgy, however, to indicate that the Council Fathers envisioned anything like "two forms of celebration". They did not envision an entirely vernacular liturgy.

Paragraph 36 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says that Latin is to be preserved, but that since the vernacular may be beneficial "a wider use may be made of it, especially in readings, directives and in some prayers and chants".

But it is not at all obvious, either, that *Musicam Sacram* §50 fully reflects Bugnini's view.

He states that the Council "makes it clear that the principles set down for use of the vernacular refer to all celebrations, whether with or without singing", thus, he says, "It follows from this that it would be contrary to the Constitution to decree or even to hint that sung celebrations, especially of the Mass, should be in Latin".

He asks rhetorically, "How can clerics be trained for the vernacular liturgy that will occupy most of their ministry if the experience only celebrations in Latin? Singing is something that requires long practice, beginning in youth". **48**

Thus we can see how the "two forms of celebration" implicit in *Musicam Sacram* §50 became a springboard to further "reforms" in liturgical music.

This had been foreshadowed in a paragraph of the fifth *schema* which allowed for the replacement of the chants of the Mass with other songs approved by the episcopal conference. Indults (permission) allowing this practice had been in effect for a long time, particularly in German-speaking countries, that had an existing repertoire of such approved songs. Since these indults were already in effect and limited to certain countries, some of the experts saw no need to include mention of them in a document for the universal Church. According to Bugnini, this paragraph merely confirmed the existing indults and it was retained.

The majority, however, saw the pastoral advantage of having other songs besides the psalms for the Proper of the Mass. The paragraph ... would subsequently play a very important role, because the episcopal conferences would appeal to it as a basis for asking the same indult for their regions. **49**

The paragraph did not merely confirm existing indults, but highlighted the possibility of such indults, thus encouraging other conferences to ask for them -- especially if their expert advisors (e.g., Frederick McManus to the US bishops) were enthusiastic about additional options. Introducing other songs to replace the Gregorian chants of the Mass, of course, would work against the preservation of the treasury of sacred music.

The debate continued through ten drafts of the document. When the tenth *schema* was submitted, Pope Paul VI

felt an obligation to get a better insight into the divergent points of view. He

therefore asked the musicians to draw up a single text that would include their variants and to provide justification for their differences with the liturgists. **50**

The Holy Father then read both texts, comparing them and noting his own comments and questions in the margin. He finally sent his annotated text to the *Consilium* in November 1966, with instructions to revise it according to his marginal notes. The *Consilium* then produced *Schema 11*.

Bugnini states that despite criticism of this draft, "the Pope stood by the balanced and carefully worded text of the *Consilium*". **51** Finally the twelfth schema was accepted and issued on March 5, 1967, as the Instruction *Musicam Sacram*.

Effects of *Musicam Sacram*

The final version encouraged the formation of choirs and the preservation of the heritage of sacred music, specifying that settings of the Ordinary of the Mass written for several voices could be sung by the choir, provided that the congregation was not excluded entirely from the singing. **52**

It maintained the distinction of solemn, sung and read Masses. For the sung Mass it specified degrees of participation "so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing, according the capabilities of each congregation". **53**

It suggested that some compositions of sacred music in Latin could be used in vernacular Masses: "there is nothing to prevent different parts in one and the same celebration from being sung in different languages." **54**

Teaching of music at all levels was emphasized, in order to "preserve the heritage of sacred music and genuinely promote the new forms of sacred singing.... 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." **55**

Despite this emphasis, however, few Catholics have experienced a Mass celebrated according to these instructions. Few Catholics who came of age since the Council learned even the simplest Gregorian chants or experienced a polyphonic sung Mass.

According to Monsignor Richard Schuler, "[*Musicam Sacram*](#) was never truly put into effect. It was obscured by a document prepared by the Music Advisory Board of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, entitled 'The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations,' which has done untold harm." **56**

Ironically, an instruction whose aim was to dispel confusion and to help preserve the Church's treasury of sacred music was ignored or interpreted in such a way as to permit this treasure to be buried ever more deeply.

[Part I](#), [Part III](#), [Part IV](#), [Part V](#)

Notes - Part II

1 A typical edition (*editio typica*) is the normative or authorized edition approved by the Holy

See.

2 Most Rev. Robert Tracy, *American Bishop at the Vatican Council* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). p. 57. Archbishop Hallinan was elected Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy and was instrumental in the founding of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy shortly after the Council.

3 Letter from Frederick McManus to Godfrey Diekmann Nov 1, 1962. Quoted in Kathleen Hughes, RSCJ *The Monk's Tale* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991) p. 206. McManus and Diekmann were in the small group that founded ICEL and permanent members of its Advisory Committee ever since.

4 English translation quoted in *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform after Vatican II: Proceedings of the Fifth International Church Music Congress*, Johannes Overath, editor (Rome: CIMS, 1969) p. 32. [later referenced as Congress Proceedings].

5 Congress Proceedings, p. 7.

6 These musicians were mostly members of the Society of Saint Gregory of America or of the American Society of Saint Cecilia.

7 CMAA publishes the quarterly journal *Sacred Music*.

8 Reverend Joseph Gelineau, SJ. *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship: Principles, Laws, Applications* translated by Rev. Clifford Howell, SJ. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1964).

9 "Les rôles dans l'assemblée qui chante" (6 articles) *Église qui chante* 1958-1959 and "Fonction et signification des principaux chants de la liturgie" (9 articles), *Église qui chante* 1959-1961.

10 Gelineau. *Voices and Instruments*, p. 10.

11 See Claude Duchesneau and Michel Veuthey, *Music and Liturgy: The Universa Laus Document and Commentary* translated by Paul Inwood, (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1992), pp. 1-2.

12 Prior to the Council he had been Secretary of the commission for liturgical restoration appointed by Pope Pius XII, Secretary of the preparatory commission for the liturgy before the Council, and a peritus for the Conciliar commission on the liturgy during the Council. From 1976 to 1982 he was Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in Iran.

13 Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975*, translated by Matthew J. O'Connell, (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990). See especially "Part IX: Sacred Music and the Liturgy" pp. 885-917.

14 Bugnini, p. 890.

15 The Simple Gradual Introduction. §§5-6 *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982) (DOL) ## 4261-4262.

16 The Simple Gradual Introduction. §2, DOL #4258.

17 Gélinau, *Voices and Instruments*, p. 101. (emphasis added)

18 Gélinau, *Voices and Instruments*, p. 68.

19 Gélinau, *Voices and Instruments*, p. 87.

20 See, for example, Peter Wagner, *Introduction to the Gregorian Melodies Part I*, 2nd edition, translated by Agnes Orme and E.G. P. Wyatt (London: Plainsong & Medieval Music Society, 1901).

21 Monsignor Higinio Anglés, "Commentary by Msgr. Higinio Anglés", *Musicae Sacrae Ministerium* Vol VI (1967) pp. 35-44. Quoted passage on p. 35.

22 Anglés, p. 36.

23 Monsignor Johannes Overath, "Church Music in the Light of the Constitution on the Liturgy", *Sacred Music* Spring 1965, pp. 3-11. Quoted passage on pp. 3-4.

24 Bugnini, p. 892.

25 Letter of Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro, President of the Consilium, to the Vatican Secretariat of State, June 23, 1966. Quoted in Bugnini, p. 892.

26 Quoted in Bugnini, p. 896. Thus it did not have the status of an official liturgical book when it was issued; however, a new edition, published in 1974, was designated the "second typical edition".

27 Bugnini, p. 894.

28 Bugnini, p. 894. See also p. 121, where Bugnini says that publication of the *Graduale Simplex* "was certainly another step toward a new form of celebration" since the text "offered a selection of texts for each chant in the Proper, created Commons for the seasons, and revived the responsorial psalm innovations very useful for participation."

29 Frederick R. McManus, "Sacred Music in the Teaching of the Church" in *Crisis in Church Music? Proceedings of a Meeting on church music conducted by the Liturgical Conference, Inc., and the Church Music Association of America* (Washington, DC: The Liturgical Conference, 1967) p. 20.

30 Bugnini, p. 895.

31 Quoted in Bugnini, p. 896.

32 Bugnini, p. 895, footnote 22.

33 See Bugnini, pp. 810-811.

34 *The Simple Gradual for Sundays and Holy Days*: revised edition. Edited by John Ainslie (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970).

35 The tones given are by Lawrence Bevenot, OSB, Gregory Murry, OSB and Joseph Gélinau.

- 36 *The Simple Gradual*, Editor's Foreword, p. iv.
- 37 Bugnini, p. 899.
- 38 Bugnini, p. 900.
- 39 Bugnini, p. 900.
- 40 See Bugnini, p. 900, footnote 2.
- 41 Bugnini, p. 900.
- 42 Bugnini, p. 901. All 43 members are listed on this page. See note 4.
- 43 Bugnini, p. 900.
- 44 Bugnini, p. 902.
- 45 Bugnini, p. 904.
- 46 Bugnini, p. 905.
- 47 Bugnini, p. 907.
- 48 Bugnini, p. 906, 907 .
- 49 Bugnini, p. 903.
- 50 Bugnini, p. 909.
- 51 Bugnini, p. 910.
- 52 [Musicam Sacram](#) §34.
- 53 *Musicam Sacram* §28.
- 54 *Musicam Sacram* §51.
- 55 *Musicam Sacram* §52.
- 56 Msgr. Richard Schuler, "A Chronicle of the Reform" in *Cum Angeles Canare* p. 383.

Credit Card Donations

To donate by credit card:

1. Call our office to donate directly: (314) 863-8385, have your name, address and credit card number ready. If you would like automatic donations to Adoremus let us know what date(s) you would like to be billed on.

2. You may also donate by using Network for Good: <http://www.networkforgood.org> (follow instructions on site)

3. You may donate using PayPal below



US Membership Donation



Foreign Membership Donation



****Adoremus operates solely on your generous donations.****

Adoremus is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Site Copyright © 1999 - Present by Adoremus
All rights reserved.

PERMISSION GUIDELINES

All material on this web site is copyrighted and may not be copied or reproduced without prior written permission from Adoremus, except as specified below:

Personal use

Permission is granted to download and/or print out articles for personal use only.

Quotations

Brief quotations (ca 500 words) may be made from the material on this site, in accordance with the "fair use" provisions of copyright law without prior permission. For these quotations proper attribution must be made of author and Adoremus + URL (i.e., Adoremus or Adoremus Bulletin – www.adoremus.org.)

Attribution

Generally, all signed articles or graphics must also have the permission of the author. If a text does **not** have an author byline, Adoremus should be listed as the author. For example: Adoremus (St Louis: Adoremus, 2005 + URL)

Link to Adoremus web site.

Other web sites are welcome to establish links to www.adoremus.org or to individual pages within our site.

[Home](#) | [Join/Donate](#) | [Adoremus Bulletin](#) | [Archive](#) | [Index](#) | [Church Documents](#) | [Architecture](#) | [Posture](#) | [Music](#) | [Translation](#) | [What's NEW?](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Search Site](#) | [Site Map](#)