

1909 Article in "Church Music"

The Kyrie indicates that the Benedictus should immediately be sung after the Sanctus; and the preface to the Vatican Graduale intimates the same thing. (Cf. CHURCH MUSIC, Sept., p. 277). On the other hand, the *Caeremoniale Epp.* prescribes the singing of the Sanctus down to the Benedictus "exclusively," and the singing of the Benedictus "after the elevation of the chalice." The *Revue du Chant Gregorien* remarks:

Now these two books are typical and authentic. . . . In view of these authorities, both respectable, what is to be done? And we are asked: Does not one take away the authority of the other? And since a choice must be made, should we not prefer the *Caeremoniale*? For if Rome "intended to impose a reform", it should have spoken more clearly; besides, the *Graduale* affords only an argument of silence, wholly negative, whilst the text of the *Caeremoniale* is formal and positive.

It is fair to answer: *Negative ad utrumque*; and doing this, we shall have the advantage of respecting equally, as is proper, two authentic declarations of the Church which seem to us perfectly reconcilable both from a practical and theoretical point of view.

And first of all: if Rome "intended to impose" the singing of the Benedictus before the elevation, it would have spoken more clearly. Perhaps so—probably so; and so we may conclude that the Holy See does not intend to "impose" it. It is content to make it lawful or permissible, believing either that an absolute reform is impracticable, or that the way may thus be prepared for a decree. It leaves the substance of the prescription of the Ceremonial untouched, and simply removes its obligatory and universal character.

The idea of the *Revue* is that a plainchant Sanctus and Benedictus may be sung without interruption, because of their slight length; but that musically developed compositions (polyphony, e. g.) require to be divided (as the Ceremonial legislates), in order not to entrench on the elevation. The Ceremonial contemplates the liturgy in general, the Graduale contemplates plainchant in particular; the two things therefore do not clash.
