Sacred or Secular Music: The Great Debate
In this issue . . .

We explore the relationship between the sacred and the secular in music, in art, and in religion in general. The pressing question of this relationship has been and remains central in religious practice. Its simplest phrasing on a practical level — “can we sing this popular song at our wedding?” — reflects a more profound question on the theological level — “How is the eternal God present in our world?” We can ask “what does Sunday worship have to do with my humdrum, everyday life?” or “Is church independent of or dependent on culture?” Because of the overlapping of the theoretical and the practical, each of our authors relates his or her theoretical explorations to practical consequences.

No author fully answers these questions. Pelton explores the religious context of the question; Parker, the musical style; Gardner, the pastoral practice; Thompson, the consequences for planning. In a wonderfully insightful article, Buscemi explores the creative process of the artist from the point of view of the sacred and secular and clears the air of any overly theoretical emphasis in this issue. Keifer (whose new book To Hear and Proclaim has just been published by NPM), provides a commentary on Eucharistic Prayer III and shows how it celebrates the real presence of God in our world. “Sacred and secular” behavior shows up in church people, sometimes in odd ways. In the clericalism of ordained priests (Ward) and in the emerging ministries among the laity (Leckey), the boundaries of proper and improper behavior are constantly being tested.

All sacred signs were at one time secular. The cross, the bread and wine, the table-altar, the shepherd’s crook, the madonna and child, all first have meaning in the secular world. Music, too, was first played in everyday culture. By what principles do you exclude signs and sounds from religious life, and by what baptismal act do you take the world’s secular signs and sounds and re-create them into the sacred? If asked correctly, this is a profound and disturbing question.

This issue offers more of an attempt to ask the right question than to answer it. Each pastoral musician answers the question a thousand times in his or her everyday practice. We hope that this issue provides you with deeper insight into the consequences of an inadequate answer for the prayer life of the parish community, and that it challenges you to ask the question more frequently.

In St. Louis, as we “Remember into the Future” at our national convention, pastoral musicians will discover just how central the question of sacred and secular has been in the last twenty years. See you in St. Louis!

V.C.F.
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St. Louis Convention

Those of you who have registered will notice that your confirmation notice packet contains several forms. We would like to bring your attention to two of them. The first is a confirmation notice, which you are to bring with you to the registration booth at the convention. The second concerns convention choir (there is still space if you wish to sign up) and special interest sessions (giving you a chance to choose the ones you wish to attend). Please return this second notice to us even if you choose not to sing in the choir. Your response will help us in our planning.

Clergy Institute

The Institute for Advanced Studies in Pastoral Practice is receiving a tremendous response. Clergy from all over the country are signing up. If the parish clergy from your area have not done so, please contact them and point out how important this program will be for the development of parish clergy.

Economically priced at $5.00, these tapes will provide all the NPM members with a high quality cassette recording. They will be especially valuable to those not able to attend all the sessions. The taping system will also allow the speakers to indicate whether they wish their presentation to be recorded or not. Private cassette recordings are not allowed at the convention so that we can make the cassettes available after the convention.

“Get Your Parish Singing”

The ministry of cantor, reappearing following the directives of Vatican II, needs a strong training and formation program. Thus, in the summer of 1983, NPM will establish the first NPM School for Cantors, to be held at four locations across the United States: Long Island, NY, Notre Dame, Ind., Ft. Worth, Texas, and San Francisco, Cal.

This five-day intensive program is designed to provide training in animation, how to get a congregation to sing, how to keep them singing, and how to start and sustain a cantor training program in your parish (six hours); voice training for the untrained voice (six hours); vocal training for the trained singer (six hours); basic and advanced repertoire (four hours); foundation in liturgy (four hours); and basics in a scriptural understanding of the Psalms (four hours). In addition there will be opportunities for some of the candidates to sing at the daily eucharistic and Evensong liturgies.

The faculty will vary from place to place, but each faculty member has been selected because of his or her competence. For example, the faculty will include, among others, Mr. James Hansen, Coordinator for Ministries in the Diocese of Saginaw and former head cantor at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.; Rev. John Gallen, S.J., director of the Loyola Center for Pastoral Liturgy; Rev. John Kelson, S.S., Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Catholic University of America; Laetitia Blain, Director of Liturgical Music at Boston College; Robert Batastini, General Editor of G.I.A. Publications in Chicago; and Eugene LaVerdiere, S.S.S., Associate Professor of New Testament Studies at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Many people claim “My parish won’t sing.” But NPM believes that, with the right leadership, every parish will sing. Here is a training program specifically designed to “Get Your Parish Singing.” Sorry, we will not be able to accept everyone. Space is limited so get your request in early.

The program will be held in New York, July 11-15, 1983; Notre Dame, August 1-5; Ft. Worth, July 25-29; and San Francisco, July 18-22. Tuition cost is $125; room and board varies in each location.

Write to the National Office, NPM, 225 Sheridan St., NW, Washington, DC 20011 for a complete brochure.

New Program by NPM

The Mystery of Faith: The Ministers of Music is a sequel to the recent BCL-PDLC study, The Mystery of Faith. The Mystery of Faith examined the eucharistic liturgy from the standpoint of the structure of the Mass, and offered documentation, history, reflections, and
study questions about our current liturgical practice. Many parishes and liturgy committees used this study to further their own understanding of the liturgy.

The Mystery of Faith: The Ministers of Music, its sequel, examines the Assembly, the Presider, the Deacon, the Cantor, the Choir, the Instrumentalists, the Organist, the Dancer, and the Composer from the same four perspectives—history, liturgical documentation, reflections, and questions. It is a wonderfully clear educational tool that will help every parish liturgy team and every musician better understand their role in history and in the assembly today.

Many people have complained that there has been insufficient education in the new liturgy. Here are two solid, straightforward tools for parish education. If you liked The Mystery of Faith, you'll love its sequel, The Mystery of Faith: The Ministers of Music ($4.95).

Another New Book from NPM

NPM proudly announces the publication of Lyric Psalms: Half a Psalter, by Francis Patrick Sullivan.

The psalms are lyrical poetry in search of melody. Lyric Psalms has found a poet who re-creates their power and beauty through the images, rhythms, and metaphors of today's poetry.

Francis Patrick Sullivan has accomplished more than a translation here. Basing his work on contemporary biblical scholarship and the practice of poetics, he offers us a new act of creation—psalms matching in our own time and language the creativity and richness of the original Hebrew.

Discover in these new sounds the message of consolation and confrontation. Read aloud the words of the community's prayer and hear them for the first time.

Francis Patrick Sullivan, a Jesuit priest, has published two volumes of poetry and teaches courses on aesthetics and theology at Boston College. He offers these versions of the psalms to the loved tradition of poetry in prayer.

Lyric Psalms awaits a musician to compose the melodies which will complete this psalter as sung prayer.

Lyric Psalms awaits you—the community and individuals who will read these 76 psalms aloud and risk the prayer of truth and beauty.

Ralph Keifer's New Book

The Introduction to the Lectionary was revised in 1982, but because the American bishops did not wish to require parishes to purchase a new lectionary, the revised introduction was published as a separate booklet.

Ralph Keifer believes the new introduction is "a landmark in official commentary on liturgical practice. It is Roman, Catholic, collegial, and official. Like all of those things, it is not perfect. But here is a document with which the churches of God can breathe and grow."

To Hear and Proclaim, published by NPM, contains the entire revised introduction and a complete commentary by Ralph Keifer. Those who enjoyed To Give Thanks and Praise, Dr. Keifer’s commentary on the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, will find To Hear and Proclaim equally valuable for pastoral musicians, for planning liturgies, and for liturgical studies in general (available in April; $4.95).

A Request to Our Members

Would you please pass this copy of Pastoral Music to a friend, an acquaintance, a musician, or member of the clergy. All too frequently we receive complaints from people who never seem to see a copy of Pastoral Music. Why not keep it in your choir room or make someone in your music group responsible for its circulation? Thanks. If you give yours away, we'll send you a replacement copy free. Just give us the name and address of the person you passed yours on to.

Report from NAAL

Over 140 liturgists from many denominations gathered at Douglaston, NY last January 3-6 for the eighth annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy (NAAL).

While the major work of the meetings is handled in small group discussions and meeting sessions, a major presentation by NAAL president Dr. Mark Searle is of special interest to pastoral musicians.

In his address to the general assembly, Dr. Searle spoke about "New Tasks, New Methods of Pastoral Liturgical Studies," and called on liturgists to go beyond historical and theological approaches to a new area of pastoral studies.

Liturgists have achieved success beyond the wildest dreams of the early pioneers in the liturgical movement, said Searle, but while the tools of the liturgists—historical awareness and theological depth—were enough to persuade church authority to reform the liturgy,
"they were insufficient to ensure any controlled connection between the reform of the liturgical books and the renewal of Christian life."

The experience of implementing the reform has raised new questions beyond the competence of historians and theologians alone, he said. These questions include: the understanding of the term "active participation," the content of religious imagination, the nature of sign and symbol, the role of American culture, the difference between what is said and what is done, and the effect such factors as social status, age, and sex have on different styles of liturgical celebration. "If confronting such questions lies beyond the limits of our competence as historians or theologians," he said, "then it is for us to extend our competence."

Liturgists have a responsibility to recognize the limitations of our traditional resources and to see the need to address new problems in new ways. Alongside liturgical history and liturgical theology there is room and need for a third branch of scholarship, that of pastoral liturgical studies."

Pastoral liturgical studies, he continued, would involve in three tasks:

- The empirical task—describing what is going on in worship;
- The hermeneutical task—studying how the symbolic words and gestures of the liturgy operate when they engage the believing community. These are questions which refer not so much to what the liturgy means, as to how it means. For example, "how does the contemporary believer enter into the rite and become engaged by it?";
- The critical task—taking the findings of the empirical and hermeneutical tasks and comparing them with the historical tradition and the theological claims made for the liturgy.

The NAAL needs to put some of its expertise at the service of the churches in these new areas of study, said Dr. Searle. "And by serving the churches, I mean serving not only the interests of the official leadership, but attending to the experiences, frustrations, and hopes of the Christian people as a whole, committed as we are to the proposition that the sacred liturgy is the worship of the whole church and that its benefits are intended even for the least of God's people."

In a small group session, Rev. Edward Foley, Capuchin, presented a very scientific paper that should become a foundational document for church musicians. Speaking "Toward a Working Definition of Music in Ritual: A Pre-theological Investigation," Foley stressed that one must first determine the role of music before one can determine the role of music in the liturgy. In his presentation he explored the power of music, music as a form of communication, music as a form of language, and music as symbol—all as part of a search for a working definition of music that would allow for an exploration of the relationship between music as symbolic activity (his conclusion about the fundamental nature of music) and ritual. You will be hearing about this paper again. It will be referred to very often in the years to come.

It was clear that the meeting planners had worked to improve the quality of liturgical celebrations at the meetings, and particularly interesting was the integrating of dance and music, with Carla De Sola as a dancer, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church at the Citicorp Center in Manhattan.
How to Involve the Clergy

From its very beginning, the National Association of Pastoral Musicians has emphasized above all the goal of encouraging church musicians and clergy to work together to improve musical liturgy. Thus, regular membership in this Association is a dual membership of both the pastor and the musician in a parish.

Many chapters are reporting ever-increasing attendance and involvement of clergy in their meetings. While most of the meetings are designed primarily to serve the educational needs of musicians, the NPM Chapter Manual includes two meetings per year to which the clergy are invited in a special way to participate with their musicians. The purpose of these meetings is to go beyond simply "having the clergyman to dinner," and to help him with the musical aspects of his ministry and with the ministerial responsibilities of supporting parish musicians.

The first clergy meeting has a simple format. The Music Showcase suggests inviting a well-respected clergyman who sings well to demonstrate clerical chants, beginning with the Our Father to warm up, and continuing with the preface, the oration, and the eucharistic prayer. Clergy in the group are encouraged to sing with musicians, and the leader uses the same techniques that musicians use to teach a congregation to sing.

Questions in the Exchange for Learning focus on the role of music in the liturgy and on developing mutual understanding and respect for the complementary ministries of clergy and musician. "What are the most supportive things musicians can do for their clergyman? When is the best time to talk to a clergyman—right before Mass? right after Mass? over drinks or dinner? When is the best time to talk to a musician? How can musicians and clergyman share their visions and come to a consensus on what their parish ought to be like musically? What are some of the problems that you experience? Too much choir, too much folk music, not enough congregational singing, too loud organ, the priest saying the Mass too fast, etc.?

It is essential at this meeting that everyone have a good time. Clergymen must not be made to feel threatened but important, wanted, and respected.

Dues Paid to Local Chapters

In the December-January 1983 issue we announced a new policy of allocating a portion of national member dues back into the chapters. This was explained in further detail in a letter that went out to all the permanent chapters in September. Since then six of the 16 permanent chapters have responded with the required list of NPM national members, and have received checks. Those chapters are Hartford, St. Louis, Orlando, Green Bay, Dubuque, and Providence. The National Office is delighted to support the work of the local chapters, monetarily as well as spiritually.

New Permanent Chapter

The Gaylord, Mich. Chapter has received its permanent charter and will soon become the seventh chapter to receive a check for national dues allocation. The officers include Sr. Elizabeth Meagher, Director; Laurie Trahan, Coordinator for Planning; Rosanne Anderson, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Sr. Catherine Williams, Animator for Koinonia; and Sr. Nancy Ribble, Secretary-Treasurer.

For More Information

The pamphlet entitled "How to Form an NPM Chapter" contains instructions for conducting an organizational meeting and an application form for a copy of the NPM Chapter Manual. If you are interested in forming a chapter in your diocese, send $1.00 (check or money order only) for this pamphlet to the NPM National Office, 225 Sheridan St. NW, Washington, DC 20011.

Elizabeth Dahlslien
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### GENERAL

- Celestial Vibrato
makes it look good on paper.  
good in church.

Baldwin's use of microprocessor technology makes the model 645 three-manual organ look good on paper, and allows it to feature specifications usually found only on more expensive organs. Because the Baldwin 645 represents the state-of-the-art in electronic classical organ design, it can offer outstanding tonal flexibility and complete reliability. In addition, the 645 design affords remarkable playing ease. And its new ensemble sound is bound to be inspiring.

The Baldwin 645 three-manual offers an impressive list of specifications. As you can see, these are specifications normally not found on organs in this price range. But due to the advancements in microprocessor technology and the Baldwin capability in applying them to classical organ design, they are now available on the 645.

For instance, in addition to the standard Sforzando, the 645 gives you a programmable tutti that provides the freedom to select each and every voice. An exclusive Pedal to Division setter button lets you combine pedal stops with Swell, Great and Positif division pistons. The 645 offers six reversible toe studs, including the traditional Great to Pedal. And Baldwin's exclusive Division Cancells assist the organist in quick registration changes.

Not only does the 645 possess an impressive technical design, its sound is also engineered for an outstanding ensemble. The unique tone generation system consists of four independent tone generators designed to create the rich, full sound necessary to support congregational singing. With its controlled speech characteristics, the 645's individual voice articulation is accurate, stop by stop and note to note on each manual. And each voice has the proper scaling, so volume and tone color are consistent throughout the keyboard.

Exclusive to the 645 are its 24 couplers that increase its tonal flexibility. The multiple channel amplification system allows the organ to be acoustically tailored to your church building. Your Baldwin Master Organ Guild dealer provides custom installation, so you get the most in musical performance from the Baldwin 645.

The 645 is also designed for ease of operation. The exclusive SilentTouch™ controls allow the organist to change registration silently and instantly. And with the Baldwin transposer, you can change all registrations into any key at the push of a button.

**Hear It For Yourself.** So if you think the Baldwin 645's sound technology looks good on paper, don't wait to hear it in church. Send for the Model 645 record albums with classical organist Bene Hammel, and Billy Graham Crusades musicians Bill Fasig and John Innes. Albums are $5 each, or $9 for both.

To learn more about the Model 645, send for a free booklet. Write for booklet and albums to Baldwin Piano & Organ Company, P.O. Box 2525—Dept. PM-483 Cincinnati, Ohio 45201.

*Baldwin*
When the subject of the sacred and secular arises there is often a confusing blur. Sometimes this is due to our inability to define the terms, and at other times it is a recognition that we as music and liturgy planners use these two words for our own purposes or to suit our own tastes. Members of congregations also use these words to describe their feelings and reactions. How many of us in the process of planning the music for a wedding celebration will say to a bride or her mother: "Oh, we can't use that processional or march, it's from a secular opera." Or, "We certainly couldn't have dance during one of our liturgies. It's so pagan! It's certainly not fitting for the sanctuary of our church." Or, "When we build our new church, we have to be sure that we have all those sacred things like statues, stained glass, and pews. We want it to look holy, not like our living rooms!"

These are not the only words we use though. We also find the terms demythologize and retheologize. History tells us of an ancient pagan celebration in the winter that brought people together to revel in the sun of the winter solstice. After the birth of Christ, the early Christians took that story and removed the former connotations. They demythologized it. They turned this from a celebration of the "sun" to a celebration of the "Son" and by doing so, retheologized it.

We also see the terms sacralization and desacralization. What happens when we take an object from the secular world and bring it into the church? When we do, we find that we can no longer take it out of the church or can do so only with great difficulty.

An example of this sacralization could be seen in the early use of the organ. Historians of the instrument tell us that this noisy instrument signaling war did not come into use in the church building easily. But after it did gain acceptance it was, in a sense, canonized for use and is still encouraged in current church documents. Only after the advent of electronic organs did these instruments leave the church for use again in the secular world. In spite of the fact that non-religious organ music has been written and studied in music schools, the popular impression of the organ has always been that of a "church instrument." Similar problems have faced the introduction of other musical instruments into worship.

Our growth in the various ministries has served to desacralize the image of the priest for many people. "Father used to read all of the scriptures and he was the only one to distribute the Eucharist. But now other people do these things. Before, he was the only sacred person." This symptomatic statement has chipped away the sacred image of the priest for many of our parishioners. But just what is it that makes a certain piece of music, or certain actions and gestures, or certain objects and decorations sacred or secular? It is a simple observation that all the signs and symbols we use and experience in worship are first of all secular. How can they help but be anything else?

It seems that what we are dealing with here is not that the sign, symbol, action, object or musical composition itself is sacred or secular. Rather it is the connotation the world has given to it, or our understanding and attitude toward that sign or symbol, that makes it sacred or secular in our own minds.

With these concepts as background, I would like to suggest a few guidelines to be kept in mind while planning the use of signs and symbols.

First, if signs and symbols are to be vehicles of communication and instruments of faith, they must be simple and comprehensible. As Music in Catholic Worship tells us, "if the signs need explanation to communicate faith, they will often be watched instead of celebrated."

Musical Instruments from Pompeii, National Museum, Naples, Italy.
At the same time, because these signs and symbols are directed to human beings, they must be humanly attractive and honest. For example, we have a simple sign and ritual at the end of the preparation of the gifts—the washing of hands. Questions remain as to the origin and meaning of this ritual and whether it is a truly valuable sign in our liturgy today, but even beyond that, what kind of honesty and human attractiveness is there in seeing a tiny cloth pour a few drops of water over a couple of fingers dried by a small piece of linen, instead of having a large and visible basin, pitcher and towel? Another example comes from the guidelines in Environment and Art in Catholic Worship. This document from the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy asks that furniture and other objects in our churches “not be made in such a way that they are far removed from the print of human hand and human craft.” Here we must relate to our domestic experience. Why do we settle for mass-produced “art work,” vessels, and other objects in our churches when we save and search for high quality and handmade furnishings, original works of art, fine crystal, linens and decorations in our homes? Without being wasteful and extravagant we must strive for quality—for honesty and humanness in our churches, and in our musical performance.

Third, if a symbol is to be effective, it must be repeated. Over the church year we use water at the Easter Vigil, the water blessing in the penitential rite, holy water fonts, funerals, and several other times. Educators tell us that this type of reinforcement is necessary to make the sign or symbol a part of us.

Fourth, however, although symbols and signs need to be repeated, we must avoid the traps of overkill and multiplication. We could, for example, make our congregation so tired of hearing about, singing about, and seeing water during Lent that its effectiveness could be dulled at the Easter Vigil. The old axiom applies here: all it takes to kill a movement is a zealot. Also, we must remember that repeating symbols is not the same as multiplying symbols. Again, Environment and Art in Catholic Worship gives an example. Unless we are displaying a collection of crosses, does it help the clear simplicity of the church to have more than one cross in the sanctuary? If one is good, are two or three better? If we use water well in the opening prayers of the funeral liturgy when it is tied textually and visibly to the white robe of baptism, does it really add to the sign value of the water to use it again during the final commendation? Repetition of symbols and signs strengthens them in our experience; multiplying symbols and signs only weakens them.

Fifth, symbols work well when they come from tradition and when they become tradition. As we try to introduce new or different symbols into our worship we must ask ourselves honestly: will this stand the test of time? I’ve been told of an East Coast parish that has used an Easter egg hunt as part of an Easter morning children’s liturgy. After finding the hidden eggs, the children gather around the celebrant who, in his homily, uses the egg as an explanation of the Easter experience and new life. This has become a tradition and a significant part of Easter in that parish even after many years, even after personnel changes. Too often we try to be clever and do something new every week. In our music planning, for example, if the music and the signs and symbols that were carefully developed this year for Holy Week worked well, must we really feel compelled to come up with a whole new program for next year? Of course this does not mean freezing programs and never allowing new life to enter them. We must always look to the future and ask if what we are proposing is worthy and capable of becoming a tradition.

Finally, we must recognize that some signs and symbols are not capable of working universally. Using the Easter egg example again, even though the parents present at that celebration can appreciate the symbol through the eyes of their children, that same symbol would not work at an exclusively adult celebration. The general rule of all planning also holds true for sign and symbol: the occasion, the congregation and the celebrant must be taken into consideration.

Thus, in planning, we need to remember that all we make sacred is first secular, since liturgy uses human expression. When that expression is clear and comprehensible, honest, of high quality, and used in the proper context, then it will stand the test of time and will not run the risk of becoming trite or offensive.

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For Musicians & Clergy: Liturgy

Eucharistic Prayer III: The World Squirms with the Life of God

BY RALPH KEIFER

In a previous article in Pastoral Music (see "Liturical Prayer is Inherently Monotonous," February-March, 1982, p. 67). I tried to suggest that prayer has everything to do with the way we experience the world. It has to. We were taught, on what we take to be good authority, to pray "thy kingdom come," which is to work from the assumption that God is to be found in human history, not somewhere else. And I attempted to suggest the import of that in the light of the history that has overtaken us in our own generation.

I took a lot of time to say that we ask a lot of wrong questions about making the liturgy more interesting. Liturgy isn't designed to be interesting anyway, at least not interesting in the way a television show or a rock concert or CB radio is interesting, nor even interesting in the way a white tie and gloves formal concert is interesting for people of certain refined tastes. I finished all that by saying that we can live with a liturgy that is somewhat monotonous and somewhat graceless, mainly because most of us, after all, are dullest than we are interesting and clumsier than we are graceful, and liturgy appropriately responds to who we are.

Having suggested that we should not worry so much about style and variety, I indicated what I see as the real issue: how do we pray in a world where the human race is so terribly powerful and creative, yet so horribly destructive, and where yesterday's certainties have become today's ambiguities? If God is to be found at all in the contemporary world, it will be in the midst of ambiguity. And if God's grace is to be found, it will be a grace for transformation to live in that world, not the grace of a tidily ordered life.

Now what does all this have to do with the eucharistic prayer? I submit that it has everything to do with it. I will even go further and suggest that we in fact have at least one eucharistic prayer that comes close to fulfilling some of the major requirements for an adequate eucharistic prayer for our time—Eucharistic Prayer III of the Roman Sacramentary.

The seething confusion of a pluralistic and often fragmented world . . .

For in my own study of the history of the eucharistic prayer, I find that eucharistic prayers do not simply give thanks and praise for the great events of salvation history, nor do they simply petition for their fulfillment in eucharistic action and in the consumption of all things in the life of the world to come. Rather, what makes a eucharistic prayer sacramental and sacrificial is not that it has words about real presence or sacrifice (these are lacking in one way or another in many traditional prayers), but rather, that it connects the great events of salvation history with the history of the praying assembly. Thus the prayers of the Didache pray about bread scattered on the hillsides and about the vine of David because the community is a community of scattered Jewish Christians who suffered not only loss of holy land and temple, but also, in becoming Christians, their connection with the rest of the Israel of God. Likewise, the prayer of the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus lays great stress on Christ's being born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin, and portrays the paschal mystery as a defeat of Satan, because the church of the martyrs saw itself as a church of the holy ones locked in the throes of a battle unto the death with demonic powers. The undoubted staying power of the Roman Canon lay in its prizing of order and meditation—not only in an evocation of an order established by Christ and a mediation by Christ as the holy One who stands at the heavenly altar, but also in its panoply of saintly founders—apostles and popes and presbyters and deacons—with a few holy women thrown in to complete the picture of the perfectly ordered household of the faithful. Thus the prayer swells to its beginning with the heavenly hierarchies of angels and draws to its majestic close with the hymning of the unique mediation of Christ the Lord; Per ipsum et cum ipso et in ipso . . . . It was thus the perfect prayer for a church which conceived itself as the arbiter of culture, as mother and teacher of kings, as patroness of art and learning, in a world in which it was seen as fitting and right that "every creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

As I have so strongly suggested (I trust) we can no longer pray authentically in that way, for we inhabit another world, a world in which we have undergone a "loss of the sense of the sacred," and where, if God is to be found anywhere, it is not in the majestic order of a Christendom governed by pontiffs and anointed kings, but within the seething confusion of a pluralistic and indeed often fragmented world. Doubtless, it is for this reason that the first lines after the sanctus in Eucharistic Prayer III are so utterly memorable: Father, you are holy indeed, and all creation rightly gives you praise. All life, all holiness comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the working of the Holy Spirit. From age to age you gather a people to yourself, so that from east to west a perfect offering may be made to the glory of your name.
This speaks for the God within the world, not a God outside the world like the little girl outside her dollhouse, but a God deeply within the world. The world squirms with the life of God, and the point is made all the stronger by the inclusion of the whole Trinity in that presence to the world. And in a world which experiences many gaps—ecumenical, political, generational, geographical—these become the matter of prayer in the affirmation of those distances and divisions—from age to age—from east to west. The prayer says, in other words, that there does not have to be perfect order for God to be present. The unity of God’s work in the world is greater than our division and stronger than our fragmentation.

The prayer goes on to affirm this very human situation as the very stuff of eucharistic offering. It goes on to pray, “And so, Father, we bring you these gifts. We ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit, that they may become the body and blood of your Son . . .” In other words, eucharistic consecration is not some kind of sacred disinfection of the gifts which dissociates them from their profane origin. Rather, it is precisely because they represent the stuff of our lives—including not just our domestic lives but our workaday and political lives as well—that they are fit matter for eucharistic consecration. The Spirit is not invoked “from above,” but from within. The same Spirit who gives life to the world and makes it holy, and who gathers the church despite its division and narrowness, is the Spirit who is now called upon to sanctify the gifts.

We should note, too, that the work of the Spirit in the world and in the church is portrayed as working to bring a perfect offering to the glory of the Father. And that perfect offering is not simply the bread and the wine, but God’s people themselves. The bread and the wine are fit to become the body and blood of Christ because it is the church, which is the body of Christ, who presents them. This identification between the lives of those assembled and the offering of Christ is underscored in the anamnesis prayer after the consecration: “We offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice. Look with favor on your church’s offering, and see the Victim whose death has reconciled us to yourself.” In other words, “We offer you ourselves in thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice. Look with favor on what we do here, and see in us Christ your crucified Son, the victim whose death has reconciled us to yourself.”

This identification with the self-offering of the assembly and the offering of Christ is underscored by a significant omission in the text. Normally (as in Prayers I, II, and IV) traditional eucharistic prayers include an expression of offering the bread and the cup. This startling omission (startling because it appears in all traditional prayers since the second century of the Christian era) can only mean that the prayer is fully intended to be read as making an identification between the self-offering of the assembly and the offering of Christ.

It is doubtless for these reasons that Eucharistic Prayer III is used so much. It speaks not only to a contemporary sense of divine presence, to a sense of God present within the world, but also to a sense that we are called to transformation in a world which never will be perfectly ordered, much less conveniently ordered for Christians.

And it is for about the same reasons that people generally fall asleep during the second half of the prayer. Two features of the second half, one structural and the other verbal, tend to undermine the very positive contemporary strengths of this prayer.

First, the structural problem. To put it quite bluntly, what we call the anamnesis acclamation is in the wrong place. It also suggests the wrong things to people, or at least does not suggest the right things. First of all, it is passing strange that an acclamation should precede presidential praying. Normally, acclamations (sanctus, great amen, for example) follow the presider’s praying. This is no mere quibble. I assume that with the present wording of our anamnesis acclamations (Christ has died . . . When we eat this bread . . . Lord, by your cross and resurrection) the common supposition is that they are expressions of adoration, appropriate enough since they follow immediately upon the consecration, and understandable enough since two of the forms are addressed directly to Christ. This is nice enough, and with more than half a generation’s use it might be inappropriate to remove something that piety has probably begun to cherish.
But the wrong thing about all this is that it fails to achieve what the sacramentary tells us an anamnesis acclamation ought to be — an expression of the assembly's share in the eucharistic offering, the assembly's way of saying that Christ is offered to the Father because this assembly is offering itself to the Father. If people's attention begins to wander at this point, it may be because our actual practice tells them they have no further part.

There is a simple solution, so simple I wonder why it has not been tried, and that would be the introduction of a real anamnesis acclamation at the appropriate place — after the priest's praying the anamnesis and as a perceptible echo of his own expression of the church's offering. The obvious anamnesis acclamation to Prayer III would be for the people to repeat the line, "We offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice." See what kind of awe and attention the prayer gets once the people are actually enfranchised to appreciate that the prayer is indeed theirs and that what it is about is offering themselves in union with Christ.

A second fault of the prayer may seem minor, but I do think it is one of the major reasons why people tune out for the second half. In its praise, the prayer adequately rings on contemporary experience — if God is to be found at all, it is across the boundaries of time and space, and in the midst of a moral life fraught with ambiguity. In some ways, this is beautifully carried into the second half of the prayer by so vigorously identifying the life of the assembly with the offering of Christ the reconciling Victim, culminating in the lines, "May he make us an everlasting gift to you, and enable us to share in the inheritance of your saints." The suggestion is not that we have to become plaster and stained glass saints, but that the work of the Spirit of God in our own tangled lives will, we trust, lead us at last to the kingdom of the saints.

Unfortunately, this honest and robust affirmation of the contemporary experience is badly fudged in the intercession of the prayer. Listen to its first specific petition (always a key to what is valued most): Strengthen in faith and love your pilgrim Church on earth; your servant Pope John Paul II, our Bishop N., and all the bishops, with the clergy..." People complain about the repetitiveness of the intercessions, that they duplicate the prayer of the faithful. I suggest that the problem is not their repetitiveness, but their utter failure to resonate our own real experience of what it is to be the people of God in the last quarter of the twentieth century. In this intercession, the people of God are effectively defined, first of all, as the Roman Catholic Church (which by the standards of the dogmatic constitution on the church of Vatican II is a formulation of dubious orthodoxy), and second, they are defined as being, in the first place, the hierarchy (again a formulation of dubious orthodoxy). But besides being of dubious orthodoxy, it has nothing to do with the experience of most normal Christians these days. The Augustinian preoccupation with good order rides again, and to the exclusion of that which is most precious and most special to our own time. Former generations of Christians accounted the religious experience of others as either false or obsolete, often as both. It has been the gift of our time to affirm the work of the Spirit of God in other people, other religions, other churches. And I would suggest that a prayer which (at the very least) fails to name Orthodox, Protestants, and Jews fails to touch the heart of where real people pray as well as betrays the teaching of the most recent ecumenical council.

I would suggest, then, that the intercession of Prayer III ought to read like this: "Strengthen in faith and love your pilgrim people on earth, your beloved Israel, your church scattered throughout the world, our separated Christian brothers and sisters, those of us in communion with John Paul II, bishop of Rome, and with our Bishop N. all believers and all who serve them: the entire people your son has gained for you."

To sum up, Eucharistic Prayer III speaks well for a contemporary perception of faith — at least in its first half. Its last half tends to put people to sleep, perhaps not so much because of its length but because of its failure to speak well for that perception. With minor adjustments it could become a genuine contemporary prayer.
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In the Catholic tradition the dichotomy between sacred and profane is not a basic element of our world view. Sacred language, sacred space, sacred dress, and sacred vessels were unknown phenomena in the early church. The language used, whether Aramaic, Greek, or Latin, was simply the vernacular of the people, and no sacredness was attached to it. Vestments were the dress of the times and only became stylized when that was no longer the case. The word chalice means a cup, but we add a "sacred" connotation by continuing to call the cup a chalice. Minucius Felix wrote: "We have no temple, no altar..." Christian temples were homes, and our altars were common tables. But as the church became well established after Constantine, practices changed. We evolved from a house to a church, from table to altar, from bread to host, from communion to adoration of the species, from priests to hierarchs. Things and persons assumed a sacred aura as priests and religious "left the world," and the non-ordained became second class citizens of the church, in which they were expected to "pray, pay, and obey." Sanctuaries were sacred spaces, separated from the "profane" by the communion railing. And Latin was the language of the holy. "For to possess the language is to possess the reality, and conversely, to lose control of the words is to forfeit one's claim to reality" (Cult and Controversy by Nathan Mitchell, p. 73).

All of this led, in many cases, to a cultural and intellectual schizophrenia, culminating in the Syllabus of Errors of Pius IX and the anti-Modernist witch hunt of Pius X. The world became an evil place which we were encouraged to flee. But Catholic Tradition and the Scriptures contradicted this attitude. If the world was created by God, it had to be good, even if it was sometimes dangerous. It was, in fact, Christianity that had secularized the world by proclaiming the paradox that everyone and everything is sacred and, therefore, nothing is sacred. But sacredness is not localized. It was precisely a St. Boniface who cut down the sacred tree, showing that God is everywhere and not in a particular locale. Christianity abolished sacred trees and cows— which is why we Christians have never been particularly popular, because people like and even adore their sacred trees and cows.

However, we Catholics also tended to vest sacrality in things and persons. And language (Latin) was one of those things. The western church has undergone only two linguistic revolutions: one at the end of the fourth century and the other during Vatican II. The first change was from Greek to Latin and was about a century behind popular usage.

Thus for almost 1600 years the language of the liturgy was accessible only to the clergy—and often it was unintelligible even to them. Until Leo XIII (1878-1903) one who dared even to translate the texts of the Mass was excommunicated (a fate which perhaps should befall those who have translated some of our present texts?). A letter from Paris de Grassis to Pope Leo X (1516) reveals the attitude of many:

First of all I shall answer those who believe that religious ceremonies should be made accessible to all...

Your Holiness is well aware that the authority and prestige of the Holy See depend on the attitude of princes and the powerful. They, in fact, believe that Popes are not mortal men but something like gods on earth; they submit to them, obey them, venerate, and even worship them; their admiration is ungrudging when they observe the ceremonies of canonization, imperial coronation, royal anointing, creation of cardinals, consecration of bishops, and any other ceremony which seems to have a whiff of the divine about it. But if the secrets of the cult were revealed and ceremonies were made accessible, the immediate result would be a loss of prestige.

Few are naive enough to deny that the loss or change of a language such as Latin involves many subtle and hidden issues; for language brings with it an entire culture and ambiance of meaning. The stately English of Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer represented a whole culture, which no doubt is why the changes in that work have met with so much opposition.

Holiness does not mean separation from the world and our people.

Although adults may not believe that teenage music and language reflect any cultural values, nonetheless, just listen to an adolescent conversation and you will quickly discover the generation gap in full bloom, because they control the language from which we are mostly excluded by our ignorance. In addition,
Time magazine this year (1983) chose the computer as the "man of the year." In its lead article it explained that terms from computerese are making enormous inroads into everyday language, e.g., interface, input, output, etc. Such jargon may not be used by most of us, but that just leads to a further generation gap as ordinary people feel they lack an understanding of their own vernacular. As Time puts it: "Like the high priests of any new religion, these keepers of the computer faith like to rename familiar things. . . . They like even more to give new things names that are sacred passwords of an esoteric cult" (Time,

We need to recognize our sacred cows and replace them with the ever-living God.

January 3, 1983, p. 39). Or to put it another way, our age has invested "sacredness" into advanced technology and its semi-divine machines—the sacred trees of our time.

Some feel that we must return to the trappings, the panoply, and even the archaic language of former times in order to recover an experience of the sacred. No one denies the sense of malaise in the ecclesiastical air, a sense of stultification as the world appears to either ignore us or regard us with ill-concealed contempt. Nevertheless, regression is not the answer; for that would signify a return to the former clericalism which was patronizing then and which would certainly not be acceptable today. Even the most nostalgic of persons have asked why some young priests are wearing birettas. It is a question I am hard-put to answer, although I believe it represents a desire to regress to the secure days of "Father knows best."

The word cleric (clericalism, clerk) derives from the Greek kleros, and originally meant those who believed in God, as opposed to those who did not. Only in later Christian terminology did it evolve to denote those in holy orders as opposed to those not ordained. It turned out to be a tragic distinction which, in turn, made us believe that only priests and religious were called to holiness. Vatican II had to remind us that sanctity is a vocation we all receive by virtue of our common baptism, a point not yet firmly grounded in our collective consciousness. If only the priest is called to holiness, then he alone may touch the host; he alone may receive Christ's blood from the chalice; maybe only he alone should receive the Eucharist at all. It was this clerical worldview that historically effected the abolition of communion in the hand, the withdrawal of the cup from the non-ordained, and their general abstinence from the Eucharist altogether, prompting the Fourth Lateran Council (1215 A.D.) to promulgate the law for the reception of the Eucharist yearly, i.e., the "Easter Duty." In addition, if the execution of the rites is a matter of concern only to clerics, then by all means allow those rites to remain in the clerical and sacred language of Latin. The laity had lost ownership in so many other ways that the matter of language was irrelevant. After so many centuries of this situation, we should not be surprised at two opposite (but related) occurrences: 1) some of the laity want to regain a sense of ownership with a vengeance—hence the recurrent theme of conflict often found in parish councils between laity and priests; 2) The reluctance of the laity to get involved; many Catholics believe parish councils et alia are passing facts that are a waste of time and energy since priests and bishops have the final word anyway. Both these points of view have a fundamentum in re (a foundation in reality).

If a return to the clericalism as described above is not the answer to our attempt to recover a sense of the sacred, then what is? Since we live in a time of transition, few would be foolish enough to answer that question rashly. However, a few thoughts may point us in the direction we should go.

My first point concerns a matter over which most of us have no control, namely, the texts of our rites. We need original texts, not the translations of Latinisms. The old saying tells us that "all translators are traitors." It's not their fault; it goes with the job by its very nature. However, more and more we are being told that all language is metaphor, and certainly the language we use in liturgy, in attempting to speak to God and of God, is at its best when it is poetic and metaphoric. How else can we adequately speak of the Numinous? Too many of our texts today are pedantic, lifeless, and dull—aspects that hardly tend to put us in touch with the "sacred other."

Second, as priest/presiders we have to pay careful attention to the rites themselves. Do we fully use the periods of silence? Do we proclaim when the organist plays all the verses of a hymn? Do we proclaim the texts prayerfully and thoughtfully? Do we prepare our homilies? Do we respect and pay attention to the liturgical cycles and seasons, or do we preside on Easter in the same way as we would on the Sundays of Ordinary Time? Do we involve others in liturgical planning and execution, or do the rites remain a demonstration of clerical omnipotence?

Finally, we need to remember that Latin, a cassock, and a biretta do not effect holiness. It cannot be denied that such things did help to give us an identity. The old had much to offer, and it sustained us for centuries. However, these same things tended to separate us clergy from the non-ordained, as though we were members of the highest caste. Separation from the world and from people is not equated with holiness in the lives of the "secular" clergy. Rather, such separatism most often means loneliness, alienation, isolation, a morbid nostalgia for perceived past glories, and the manipulation of the people we are called to serve. Noli me tangere, as we used to say, "Don't touch me." Don't get too close, because then I become vulnerable, and you may begin to notice my warts. As priests, we probably can't be "one of the boys" (sorry for the sexist language); but we must be one of the people.

Christianity was never meant to be a mystery religion.

Christianity was never meant to be a mystery religion in which only the chosen few were fortunate enough to be fully initiated into the sacred rites through arcane gestures, dress and language. Rather, in Christianity, liturgy/cult is in fact the work of the people, gathered together to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ until he returns in glory. In short, we clergy need to recognize our own sacred trees and sacred cows and to replace them with the ever-living God, who is the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow.
God Likes Gardens

BY ROBERT D. PELTON

We know the danger that threatens us, the taking of the image we have formed as the image of God which was given to us. It is the primal, and actually the only, sin: idolatry. We also know that it is written that we shall make no image, but not that no image may be given to us. And we know further that the entire life of faith consists solely of reverent recognition of this given image. As the Russian icon painter does not make a beautiful painting as a crown of human beauty, but, rather, discovers in awe the features of his Lord in the material which takes form under his hands (Gerardus van der Leeuw, Sacred and Profane Beauty: the Holy in Art, trans. David E. Green, Abingdon Press, New York, 1963, p. 323).

The wholly sacred has appeared in our own small world. When it did, it turned out not to be an "it" at all—not a state, condition, or event, but a person, light from light, true God of true God. He took our nature, lived, died, and rose in our time. He had and has a human mother, a human name, a human face. Those of us who have looked on that face, who have been made new by the sight of the image of eternal beauty, are, like others, often idolators as well as worshipers in spirit and truth, yet we have a most narrow path to walk between pantheism and atheism. Others also know that God is both impossibly near and unimaginably far, but in the defying light that we have received and discovered in the flesh of God's Son we have touched a humility that is infinite glory.

Thus the sacred world founded by the "hierophany" that is the Lord Jesus Christ (to use Mircea Eliade's language; see The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion, trans. Willard R. Trask, Harper & Row, New York, 1961, pp. 20-22 ff.), is odd, quirky as well as mysterious. This sacred world we Christians call the church. We acknowledge its oddness, first of all, by our endless wrangling over what it is. Yet even the phrases we use with a measure of agreement—first-fruits of the Kingdom, already and not yet, in but not of the world, Christ's Body, the people of God—do not quite describe how this "sacrament of Christ's presence" (perhaps the best contemporary phrase) is at once spotless and stained, exile and home, heartbreak and feast—truly Jacob's locus terribilis. But then, how outside of poetry do you say, "Love has pitched his mansion in the place of excrement"? How could our Christian world not be odd when its Lord was conceived by a virgin, was born in a stable, consecrated village humdrum, and became sin (cf. II Cor. 5:21) as well as human? How do you draw clear boundaries between sacred and profane when every creature is good yet bound with human bondage, saved yet groaning with us? How can you know how to make beauty in liturgy and daily life if their Master keeps coming to you without beauty or comeliness, with the face of one of the earth's forgotten ones?

The answer, I think, is this: by remembering God's impossible word—"Let there be light!" "Be holy as I am holy!" "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect!" "Love one another as I have loved you!" and, most simply, "Jesus"—and by allowing that word to overcome all your falsity and to empower you to become both icon and iconographer.

I am watching the sunlight fall through the trees onto the snow. I am wondering why I don't simply write, "Repent! Believe and live the Gospel" and be done with it. I don't because exhortation is not enough. I reflect on my awareness that the light I see, along with every other created thing, including awareness itself, can become a sacrament, a vessel of the transfiguring, sanctifying Spirit. Two memories cross my mind. The first: in the seminary, no matter how rarefied a visitor's lecture might be, someone would surely ask at its end, "But what can we as seminarians do about it?" As I ask a similar question of myself and you, I know that to make things holy—Christ's—one must make a voyage with him that is discovery as well as revelation.

We cannot understand ourselves outside of Christ.

The second memory is that of a college argument over determinism and free will. My friend said, "Do you think that a man running from a murderer decides which way to run when he comes to a fork in the road?" "Well, yes," I said, "that is just what I think." My friend tacked, and I covered bases, but I believe we came near the heart of the human mystery: the center of every person is a word spoken in silence and nurtured in both silence and speech until it comes to know itself as a unique name—a name in conversation with every other name. This knowledge, however dimmed by world, flesh, and devil, discloses to each human that she or he is a space where being is freely given and freely received, a meeting-place for all of creation and for God's own boundless, triune communion: if it is chosen.
In the awareness of a separateness that cannot be overcome and a distance that must be overcome in order to live truly lies the root of the distinction between sacred and profane. The word “overcome” is crucial. It suggests the answer to the unspoken question, “Who cares?” God cares because he made us to share his joy. Everyone cares because everyone knows what it means to be separate, but painfully so. Moreover, the wise in one way and the foolish in another know that we “be” unfinished, if not in fact wrong. This incompleteness faces us with the brokenness, often disguised as simple discontinuity (sleep, novelty, parting), that shows itself everywhere we really look. Everyone cares.

The sacred turned out not to be an “it,” but a person.

Not everyone, of course, agrees that the Lord Jesus is God’s response to inner distance and outer brokenness. Even Christians do not agree on the way the Lord is fashioning all creation through and in the church into the Father’s Kingdom; hence our wrangling. But what happened to Catholics? Some no longer believe that Jesus is the center of a new world that will never pass away, the way between silence and human speech; the life that reveals sin at the heart of brokenness, then heals it in the cross and transforms it in the resurrection. However, most Catholics, including those of us who are at peace with the post-conciliar church, have experienced the loss of something less than faith and something more than confidence in the clergy. Our sacred world, with its certitude about what was and wasn’t yet (but could become) sacred, seemed to vanish in a flurry of strange music, everyday language, excommunicated images, relativized morality and departing priests and sisters. Because the lines of sacred space and time had so randomly shifted or disappeared, many lost their orientation. What was the way to the center, which is Jesus? What did it mean, then, to be religious—or was “religious” even the true thing to be? Worst of all, perhaps, was the deep suspicion that what was—no matter how mystically—the Body of the Lord was being juggled like a trickster’s toy.

This is familiar ground, but suppose we have been so busy describing and analyzing its rockiness, explaining socio-historically, scripturally, theologically, and demonologically how we got there and how we can make the best of it, that we have failed to see its holiness? Suppose we are learning the deep wisdom of all being that what you see is never what you get? Suppose the Lord wanted to teach us to see sacredness more clearly with his sovereign, all-compassionate eyes—the vision of the beatitudes and the cross that tells us that the way down is the way up? After all, Yuri Andropov.

Porel Desarmo (Prayer for Disarmament) by Anastasio Tellez Sanchez, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City
if not J.K. Galbraith, knows that the church has imploded, not collapsed. Nor did it fall; it was pushed. And the man who pushed it was the pope.

Yes, many others were involved, enormous historical and spiritual forces were at work, and something would have happened anyway. But what happened didn’t happen anyway. It happened more or less like this: an old Italian priest, Giuseppe Roncalli, Pope John XXIII, was walking in his garden, praying, reflecting. “Ecco,” he thought. “The church isusty. We need fresh air. And so many Christians are so far from us. What shall I do?” In the next instant, God told him.

A myth? Only in the best sense: if Pope John XXIII told the story this way, it was because this is what really took place—as we’ll see it in glory. It’s not so strange when you remember that God likes gardens. He made Christmas and Easter and Pentecost. His eternal Word in our flesh is the Lord of Cana—and of utterly amazing grace. Wouldn’t he know how to choose a pope who knew a hierophany when it happened to him, one who was as simple as a dove and wise as a serpent, one so at home with Jesus’s name, with his own, with woman-and-man’s, with the church’s, that the word he heard in the garden would become holy, able to transform breakdown into breakthrough no matter how it might be used by others?

How do you make beauty in liturgy and daily life when God keeps coming to you without beauty?

Overcoming: humans want to close distances, heal the broken, meet other faces, speak other names. It is a law of being. The Holy One, when he enters our space to make it sacred, when he grasps our time to make it no longer duration but the history of his love, speaks like this: “Be holy as I am holy.” “Go, proclaim the Gospel to every creature.” We Christians owe a huge debt of thanks to the non-Christians who have helped us remember this. Buddhists do not deny the distinction between sacred and secular. They overcome it by opening themselves to the silent center that is everywhere and nowhere. Marxists loathe the distinction and call it alienation; they will not rest until man so possesses himself that even history ends. Freud, more tragic in his thought, knew that the illusion he hated had some sort of real existence in the human psyche, but held out the hope that it could be isolated and largely nullified. Chastened, we Catholics have come to see that the church we knew wasn’t even big enough for those closest to us, the Orthodox, and have accepted our Messiah’s task: to make his Father’s house a house of prayer for all peoples.

How? By remembering the impossible word so that it may speak its true name in us and through us; by remembering that this word is the one Word, Jesus, and by letting him re-member us. Liturgists and liturgical artists share this work of overcoming with other Christian worshipers, but they have a special work as well. The Eucharist—with the whole of our common life of prayer—is the Lord’s great gift of remembrance. By making present to us and sharing with us his own worship of and, even more, perfect communion with the Father, Christ reshapes us in his own image. He feeds us with holiness, sending us out to a life of courageous, humble love by letting us taste his. The rite of priestly ordination speaks to all those responsible for the liturgy: “imitate the mystery you celebrate.”

To make the liturgy the icon, not of “beauty” but of the Beautiful One, we must become iconographers. The Christian East understands that the iconographer discovers the image of the Lord that he paints only if he first allows that image to be revealed in his own flesh and spirit—in a lifetime’s death in love” (T.S. Eliot, “The Dry Salvages,” Four Quartets). Ecstasy may happen, but to make Christ present in his transfiguring power one gives oneself to faith, the faith that, in Eliot’s words,

Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.
The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation.
Here the impossible union
Of spheres of existence is actual,
Here the past and future
Are conquered, and reconciled.

And if poetry seems too airy to use to form the features of the iconographer of Jesus, his people, and his Eucharist, we can always recall the supremely human face of Pope John XXIII—or of Mother Teresa, say, or of Dorothy Day.

In the end, of course, we must look at Jesus, or perhaps with Jesus. Van der Leeuw writes, echoing the words of an old friend of mine, "We cannot understand ourselves outside of Christ" (p. 314). The holiness that overcomes every form of alienation cannot be learned anywhere but in the boundlessly loving, crucified, radiant, all-forgiving, all-holy face of Jesus. Whether in the parish church, at home, in the slums, at a desk, or in the secret of a heart, a Christian cannot give a single ray of light that he has not received from that face. On the facade of Chartres Cathedral are carved panels that show how the first Adam was created as well as re-created by the crucified and risen Second Adam. In one, Jesus, the wounds still large in his hands, embraces a kneeling Adam, whose smile is one of uncomprehending bliss. In another, the still naked Adam stands just behind the Lord’s right shoulder. Adam’s face would look proud if it were not so innocent. His eyes, so bright with dignity that they could be flesh not stone, are wholly attentive. He is all eyes, all ears. His and Jesus are looking together, and what the Lord wants to show his brother and his friend is not less than everything.
Precious Lord, take my hand . . . . " The singer's voice plunges through the depths of human sorrow, confronting despair, resisting, knowing only that the Lord is there. "Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home." The majesty of Gospel: this is sacred music at its finest.

Washington Cathedral, January 1981. A colorful procession approaches the altar, and a sprawling crowd sings with unaccustomed fervor. The huge organ is incongruously perfect for accompaniment as the song pours forth in thanksgiving for the return of our hostages: "God bless America, my home sweet home."

In dim daylight a small group gathers around a table with incense in a corner of an empty church. Their unaccompanied voices are fresh and bright as they sing their daily prayer.

In so many different settings, in so many different styles, people experience God and respond to him with their voices, reaching out hungrily for his touch by singing. What is it, in music, that makes it sacred and fit for prayer, and what is secular and to be excluded?

This question has been well-addressed by Rembert Weakland in his article in Crisis in Church Music? (The Liturgical Conference, 1967). He lays the historical and philosophical foundations for the issue and concludes that there is no "super-natural" music (he did not say "sacred") which will of itself bring about contact with the Deity. Bernard Huijbers has written a whole book about "Vernacular Liturgy and Musical Style" entitled The Performing Audience (N.A.L.R., 1972). This article will not attempt to improve on these two excellent works, but simply will add the reflections of a parish musician of today.

First, there is the matter of texts. It is usually fairly obvious whether or not a text is religious. The scrutiny of the theologian must be undergone in eliminating spurious doctrine. But what is it, on the positive side, that makes a lyric successful in worship?

We used to hear that texts should be scriptural or liturgical in origin. Does this mean that we should sing the exuberant curses of Psalm 83, or that we are restricted to imitating the hymns of the past? Of course not. On the other hand, the beautiful canticles of the Bible and the hymns of the Office will always be our model and measure. It was a concrete, intensely felt experience of God that inspired poets like David, Miriam, Mary, Venantius Fortunatus, and Aquinas, not just a dogma or a passing emotion. And so our songs must help people express real feelings and see that the events of their lives are sacred history too.

A good text will embody the thrill of the experience of God, or the pain of his absence. Sing through "Come, Come, Ye Saints," for example (Book of Worship for U.S. Forces, #41). You can almost hear the wagon wheels roll. Here is the history of a brave people set to song—concrete, emotional, stirring. It follows the biblical pattern: because God has done so and so, and is doing so and so, we praise him and rejoice.

How do our Catholic texts of the past twenty years compare? After the vernacular came in, a repertoire of hymns had to be assembled and pressed into service. Did they tell the story of the people in the pews? Did they touch their hearts? Certainly something was lost when rousing songs like "To Jesus' Heart All Burning" were snatched away, and theological treatises set to bland verse were substituted. "We enter," "We gather," "Our Priest does this and that." Nobody's going to set out for Utah singing that kind of stuff!

The folk movement of the Sixties began with weak texts; we tended to string together almost any words to go with the folk melodies we wanted to use, such as "Michael, Row the Boat Ashore." Original texts that followed were not much stronger.

If texts are to be scriptural, should we sing the exuberant curses of Psalm 83?

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other denominations we sometimes find that we could not really borrow their people's story.

By now, much of the repertoire introduced between 1955-1975 is tattered, faded. Hymn texts and other religious lyrics haven't been treated with much respect. Verses are chopped off under the glare of celebrants eager to get on with their talking. Hymnal editors feel free to alter texts, so that no two hymnals seem to have the same version. "Thees" are changed to "Yours," un-fashionable language is neutered and neutralized, often without regard for the norms of good poetry.

Does all this suggest that we do not take worship lyrics seriously enough as poetry? Are they just something to go under the notes? On the technical side, an article by John Foley in Worship (Vol. 56, No. 2), although actually about prose composition, takes a close look at the exacting requirements in crafting words for the liturgy. As for content, "Emotion recollected in tranquillity" was Wordsworth's definition of poetry. "Religious experience (and not just emotion) embodied in poetry" could be a definition of a lyric for worship.

Next, we move to music for worship. Here, judging secular and sacred on the basis of musical style is risky. An untrained listener could easily be convinced that most of Carmina Burana was sacred, and that any number of Bach's arias were passionate love numbers from baroque opera. As we look over music history, we will see that sacred and secular styles are about the same in any given period (see Weakland, op. cit., p. 12).

The notion of sacred music as being hushed, reverent, slow-moving, with lots of 4-3 suspensions and always fading out with a placid "Ahh-mehhnn" goes back to a false idea of how chant and renaissance polyphony sounded. As Weakland points out, musicians in the Romantic period, thinking they were rediscovering the true, pure sacred music from an imagined Golden Age, performed the music according to their expectations. Now we know that polyphony, when presented at the correct tempo, actually sounds quite jaunty. I think that it is still safe to say that we are as uncertain as ever about what chant sounded like, but it is doubtful that medieval performance always reached the perfection of Solesmes, with its chaste ebb and flow. We do know that the medieval ear relished sharp tone colors, a nasal singing voice, and lively rhythms.

Should we make a distinction between "pop" and "classical" in determining what is sacred and secular?

Although artists like Beverly Sills and Dolly Parton, Placido Domingo and John Denver are regularly seen rubbing elbows and even singing together, there still are some critics who insist that classical and pop styles are opposed, and sneer about "cheap, commercial music."

We borrow the songs of others, but we can't borrow their stories.
American pop music, the music of Gershwin and Bernstein, the music which strongly influenced Copland and Stravinsky, is a splendid tradition. The difference between pop and classical is one of performance practice and intent, not quality (for example, I’d rather hear John sing “Annie’s Song” than Placido, wouldn’t you?). The two styles have different aims: the popular entertainer seeks to entertain with songs about love and music for dancing, while the classical artist goes beyond mere statement of melody to development of ideas; longer attention and more knowledge are demanded of the listener. Certainly there is much poor pop music on the airwaves, but on the whole the standards of American popular music are very high. Could this be why our younger congregations are dubious about the indifferent music making they hear in church?

“We enter,” “We gather.” Nobody’s going to set out for Utah singing that kind of stuff!

The point of this discussion is that popular music has as much right to influence the religious music of today as its similarly secular cousin, classical music. Enough, then, of critical broadsides at religious music that has “mass appeal,” shows “broadway influence,” etc. There is no “pure source” in the past or in the present from which our sacred music is to be drawn, nor is there any reason to call any of our contemporary “springs” contaminated.

Now, after saying that music style alone does not make music either secular or sacred, it is time to recognize another distinction: pure worship music is not music for performance at all. In a concert hall, a proscenium separates the players from the listeners. In the worshipping assembly, there is no audience. We should naturally expect the music sung in such circumstances to be different from most popular or classical forms.

We could call this kind of music “participational” music, music that is sung or played by a group of people for their own purposes. Other examples of this type of music are renaissance madrigals, 16th century chorales and psalms, 17th century consort music, catches and glee, children’s jump rope songs and athletic fight songs. Our worship variety tends closer to the latter examples, since it is meant to be sung by a very ordinary group of people who can’t be expected to read music or rehearse on their own.

Although no set of intervals, no compositional technique, no mode is of itself “holy,” practical considerations will dictate certain stylistic qualities for worship music. This is why Lutheran chorales, Geneva psalms, English carols, American folk hymns, and much contemporary music are so similar despite the years and miles that separate them. Let’s look at some of these common characteristics.

Participational sacred music is basically vocal monody—one-part singing. Accompaniment by instruments and choral harmonies and descants are welcome, of course, but not essential. These provide the “setting” as a ring provides the setting for a jewel, but the people’s *melos* is supreme. The truly great melodies, like *Adeste Fideles*, are marvelous in big settings such as that of Willcocks, but just as effective sung plain, as when carolling. This is a desirable characteristic, because we can’t always count on accompaniment when we worship.

A good worship song is easily learned. Do you
Do you remember ever having to be taught “Silent Night”? The liturgical melody must have a warmth and an appeal that will practically teach itself.

The piece should be rhythmically decisive (not necessarily square or simple—see “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” again). It should pretty much “conduct itself” since participants don’t want to have to watch a conductor all the time.

The monodic nature of these melodies tends to dictate a rather simple harmonic vocabulary, but the skilled composer will make up for this by the use of counterpoint in the setting. Jacques Berthier has written a veritable textbook on this sort of thing with his Taizé music.

If this article seems to take the viewpoint that we are only beginning a new age in sacred music, perhaps this is so. Responding to major changes in our liturgy, and proud of our cultural heritage as Americans, we are on the brink of a new style of sacred music which will go beyond anything that has gone before, whether traditional Catholic or Protestant music or today’s folk mass. Look at what happened in Lutheran music in the two centuries after the Reformation: we don’t want to stop developing only twenty years after Vatican II, do we?

In a worshiping assembly there is no audience.
Creating the Sacred: Participation in Art

BY JOHN BUSCEMI

The debate over what is sacred and what is secular ranks up there in the philosophical "top 40" with such other cosmic questions as "what comes first the chicken or the egg," and "does a tree falling in a forest make a sound if no one is there to hear it." Generally, people do not lose much sleep over these questions. The distinction between the sacred and the secular was not even much of an issue until the 1800's. The task of defining the realm of the sacred and secular is usually played out in the classroom or at the cocktail parties of the theological/liturgical literati.

But, with all that said, we can also add that, especially for artists, some understanding of at least the outline of the sacred/secular struggle is important. If an artist—whether in music, the visual arts, dance, proclamation, or drama—strives to speak within a pastoral context, then wrestling with an understanding of the sacred and secular is a must.

It is the pastoral context that must be stressed because, on the theoretical/academic level, the debate can rage on and on—endlessly repeating itself. On the pastoral level, however, the fruits of an understanding, or the lack of them, have more noticeable and immediate effects. A lack of clarity and balance regarding the sacred shows itself in many attitudes we bring to worship. To overmystify the sacred robs our symbols of their naturalness and their rootedness in creation. This prompts excessive signs of reverence to objects rather than to people. It puts the assembly in a passive position marked by a reverential silence, and makes kneeling the proper posture for the eucharistic prayer. To underestimate the power of the sacred can place the Eucharist on the level of a parish potluck dinner and causes the intellectualizing of symbols. In many parishes the concept of the sacred is simply muddy and produces liturgical expressions that are incongruous—a hodgepodge of things old and new. This incongruity is seen in communities where participation is heightened by a sense of hospitality and spontaneity, but also where the servers, both male and female, are dressed in cassock and surplice with hands rigidly folded, bowing whenever approaching the table and ringing bells during the institution narrative.

In this article we open the box in which the terms sacred and secular are kept. We do so with the firm hope that this box does not belong to Pandora. The purpose for opening the box at all is to shed light on the debate from a pastoral perspective. We look into the box with the eyes of a visual artist who is concerned with the relationship of the arts to a pastoral sense of worship. What we hope to draw from the box is a workable notion of the sacred which comes through the visual arts but which is useful to all the arts necessary for good liturgical expression.

We start by stressing that "sacred" and "secular" are labels. For a viewer they are helpful only when we want to step back from observation and begin to organize what we see. We can use these labels with more or less the same significance as saying the golden arches of McDonald's are effective commercial art or that the Picasso sculpture in Chicago is monumental art or public art. For the artist the labeling dynamic is similar. No one deserving the title of artist ever starts out specifically to create something because of the label. This is especially true when the label is sacred. The artist begins the creative process with an insight or experience that calls for expression. If a particular work comes to be viewed as sacred, then the artist is the first to be amazed and to stand in awe of what the creative process has wrought through his or her own hands.
Labels come later. Because they are after-the-fact, their value is their ability to help organize the categories of the viewer. In this organizational sense the sacred/secular labels rank with all the other labels used in the arts: post-modern, abstract, neo-gothic, impressionistic, romantic, kitsch, etc.

Insight into the meaning of the sacred comes to us not by the label but through examining the creative process and looking for models where the sacred is communicated. For the purposes of our consideration we can pose three questions: What is the task of the artist? What can be considered sacred? What is the connection between sacred art and liturgical art?

The most enduring works of art — those that speak anew in each age — are those that mirror the struggle of the artist to express a relationship. These works are a testimony to the artist who has moved away from isolation. The relationship is the experience of the whole person of the artist with another reality — be that a fresh insight, a new perspective, an object, another person, an event or God by whatever name he is known. The National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. is exhibiting the photographs of Alfred Stieglitz. These works tell the story of the relationship of this man with a city, with clouds, with immigrants, and with a special woman, Georgia O'Keeffe. There is no way to see one of the photographs of Georgia O'Keeffe without seeing Alfred Stieglitz. These images are icons to the depth of their relationship. The first task of the artist, then, is to establish relationship with some other facet of creation. Only in relationship does an artist possess vision.

Don’t unload your needs on the liturgy.

The vision achieved in relationship is the first step, but it is not enough. It is only the first step. So the next task of the artist is to take whatever natural ability he or she possesses and, through hard work, hone it into a disciplined craft capable of expressing the vision. The common anguish of the artist is to get the hand to give form to what the imagination has produced. This difficulty is aptly expressed by the driven choreographer in the film All That Jazz as he studies a rose and cries aloud, "Why can’t I do that? This is what I want to make!"

Skill in a medium is critical. The notes on a page, the ability to interpret them, the sound from a musical instrument or the human voice, the body in motion, words set down or spoken, the cutting into stone, the application of color, or the arrangement of space must reflect a disciplined craft or the vision of the artist can never transform the viewer. It is sad that often those with much to express do not have sufficient mastery of their medium and thus their vision appears muddy or unclear. It is even sadder when those who have the skills will not take the risk or be vulnerable enough to experience a relationship and, despite all their craft, have nothing to express. Art for the church is plagued by both of these sadnesses.

Let the preacher do the preaching; let art be art.

To summarize, we can say that the creation of a work that can be considered art demands: 1) the whole person of the artist; 2) the willingness to risk relationship; 3) the medium or materials which can express the relationship; 4) a disciplined skill so that what is experienced can be expressed.

I believe we can turn to the gospels to find a model which combines these four elements. Although there is no definitive exegesis on the subject, I feel reasonably confident in asserting that Jesus never experienced the thrill of cutting felt to form the letters s.h.a.i.l.o.m. and then gluing them to burlap. There is no strong evidence to suggest that he could strum the chords of "Cum-By-Ya" or even that he could saw straight or hammer nails without bending them. However, we can say much about Jesus in connection with the four elements mentioned above.

The energy and joy of the Incarnation is the fact that Jesus is fully human. The love and the Word of God has become flesh. The Word of God is a person "like us in all things but sin." The history of theological reflection in this mystery is a tortuous path of always trying to balance the uniqueness of Jesus as the God-Man. He is not God loosely costumed in humanity. He is fully human, but more. Jesus as artist is rooted in the richness and completeness of his humanity.

Jesus came to express a relationship initiated by the Father. It is a relationship of two parts. One part is the Clay Bowl, by Marie Martinez and Julien. 1925
Jesus immersed in the glory and plan of the Father. The other part is the Jesus immersed in, and in love with, all of creation. The relationship was expressed in the dynamic of those things which lie at the core of reality—birth, life, death, love, healing, sharing, sacrifice, suffering, faithfulness, journey, home, destiny.

The medium or the materials for the expression of the relationship are found in creation itself—earth, air, fire, water, food, the times for planting, growth, and harvest. The medium is also the humanness of Jesus himself and of other people. The joy of an artist is to see the possibilities contained in familiar material. It is the joy of stretching material to allow it to say more than we ever thought it could. Jesus the artist used the secrets and the potential locked within the media of all creation—including ourselves.

The teachings of Jesus—especially the parables—show the deft touch of a disciplined craftsman, a skilled artist. The genius of the parables, their artistry, is taking that which is ordinary and holding it up as a revelation into the nature of God. Salt, a vine, leaven, light, bread, wine, a pearl, people confused or broken, all became images of love of an unseen God who now can be seen in creation.

With Jesus, then, we can find a model for the artist. We can also find much more. Jesus is not only the artist; he is the art work of God. By his faithfulness to the Father and by fully exploring the medium of his humanity Jesus has become the definitive image of God bonded in relationship to creation. He is symbol because Jesus not only points to the reality of God, he contains it. He expresses the relationship to God in a way that is open-ended, inviting, challenging, and transforming. Our encounter with the symbol which is Jesus—our being drawn into this symbol—constitutes the sacred for the Christian. It is to this that we now turn our attention.

From the Christian perspective we have in Jesus not only a model of the artist and the artist's task, we also have the focus for discovering the nature of the sacred within an artist's work. Again, we are taught by the gospels. The sacred is whatever speaks to us of the power of God—whatever shows us the face of God as mediated through creation. The sacred is the stuff of this world being broken open to reveal its source and its destiny. Seeing the source and purpose of creation has the power to transform. The sacred, then, has to do with glimpsing our life in relationship to God who is its source and end. From this perspective the sacred is that which has the power to make us more fully human, which is really making us more fully of God. It is our participation in the transforming power of the Incarna-
tion. Mark Searle of the University of Notre Dame puts it another way: "... no activity, no place is sacred if it lowers life. Nothing is profane if it elevates the quality of life."

To look back again to the parables of Jesus we can learn two things about the notion of the sacred: it is found in nature and it is found in art. This first realization—the sacred is found in nature—is well known by many people. However, from time to time it has been lost in the church. Therefore, even if it is a completely obvious notion, it must be stated again and again as a reminder. The sacred found in creation is lost in the church when the atmosphere for prayer is characterized as shutting out everything, fleeing from the world. It is lost when the events of the world and, of course, the body are seen as distractions to the "purity" of prayer and must be overcome. The spaces for our worship are often void of any reminders of creation. Our symbols, which are rooted in creation, especially the symbols of the assembly and bread, are often robbed of their naturalness and must conform to the images of "churchiness" rather than speak the sacred by the power of their ordinarness. There is a very real challenge to us involved in worship by those who say: "I can find the sacred much more easily in a walk through the woods at sunrise than by sitting in church." While we can sometimes discount this remark as an attempt to keep one's religious experience only at the private, individual level, it should also force us to evaluate our liturgy to see if it reflects any of the power and naturalness of creation as shown in the parables of Jesus.

Jesus is not only the artist; he is the art work of God.

The second point we can learn from the parables is that the work of artists down through the centuries and today can be vehicles for communicating the sacred. This communication is based upon the power of the artist's insight and upon the glimpse it offers of God speaking through the forms of creation. The artistic form of the expression does not matter. It can be realistic or abstract. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the use or non-use of religious imagery. It certainly is not found in those handy reference books of "Christian Symbols," which are not symbols at all but only signs and doodads.

All who search for the sacred in art are able to put together a list of those images which especially speak to them. For the moment my list includes the door paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe, the pottery of Maria Martinez, Rodin's sculpture of the Burghers of Calais, Picasso's Guernica and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright in the house called Falling Water. While this list is personal, it is also eclectic—but then so is the sacred. While these images are sacred for me, there is not among them a chi-rho, a cross or an alpha and omega even though these rather arbitrary signs form a core part of our modern ecclesiastical design repertoire. Nor do these works contains a literal representation of Christ. Most of the time the experience of the sacred is too vast to be contained in such literalness.

To conclude this section on the sacred we can say that the sacred is not tied directly to religious images. We learn from the parables of Jesus that the sacred is found in the vast vocabulary of creation. We look to creation itself for the sacred. We also look to the work of any artist who has the insight and skill to break open forms to reveal to us the transcendent—the God of wonder who seeks relationship with the created. While many people can describe the sacred they have found in these two sources, we have only to look at our "sacred" spaces and "sacred" liturgy to know the poverty of a church which has many times cut itself off from these sources. With a whole lexicon at hand we have chosen only a few, monosyllabic words with which to express the sacred. To use another metaphor, in the musical Mame, Auntie Mame asks, "If life is a banquet, why are so many people starving?" It is time for the church in its
spaces and in its worship to learn the dynamic of the parables of Jesus.

This brings us to our final question: “What is the relationship between sacred art and liturgical art?” In a nutshell, we can say that not all sacred art is liturgical art, but all liturgical art has the possibility of being sacred art. This prompts two thoughts. The first adds a new dimension to the understanding of the sacred. The second underlines a theme threaded through this article—the parables. Nathan Mitchell in the chapter he contributed to the book Parish: A Place for Worship draws out both these points when he says:

“If the liturgy, then, is to be—or to become—a primary source of the sense of the sacred among our people, we are going to have to face, and to resist, the strong cultural inclination to identify the sacred with the self, the holy with the intimate, the divine with the private and personal. Liturgy is, after all, a calling forth, a summons to mission, a challenge to move beyond where we are now to a future that is God. At its deepest root, Christian liturgy is parable.”

Let us look at both these points more closely.

For the most part our discussion of the sacred has situated itself within the realm of personal experience—that of the artist and that of the seeker of the sacred. We know the experience of the sacred can be found in creation and in works of art. To this knowledge, however, we must apply a critical test. If we are to be faithful to our own Christian heritage, which sinks its roots deep into the Jewish soil of a covenant people, somehow any experience of the sacred must lead us to experience connectedness. The encounter with the sacred can never allow us to remain isolated individuals. It must affirm in us a belonging, an attachment to, and a responsibility for all of creation, especially other people. Our tradition tells us that the revelation of God is never directed solely to the individual. It is always to the whole people. The individual is within that context. The most important test of the sacred, therefore, is its ability to move the individual person from a preoccupation with self into a realization of connectedness—of community.

The liturgy is our primary gathering of people. It is the action where the sacred must be experienced as a shared encounter. To simply label ourselves community does not make it so. It must be experienced. The arts have a vital role to play in the forming of this experience. However, the vast majority of the images in our churches fail to do this. While many are barely able to give faint expression to the sacred, most reinforce
private devotion rather than promote inclusive expressions of a shared reality. In this sense we can say most art in churches is devotional rather than liturgical.

The second point of this section returns to the power of the parables. We have discussed the power of the parables of Jesus as taking the ordinariness of creation and making revelatory symbols of the splendor of God. Nathan Mitchell pushes us further when he says, “Christian liturgy is parable.” From this vantage point we can come to see liturgical art as that which makes visible and reinforces the sacredness found in this parable by highlighting the symbols of the parables.

What are these symbols? The bishops’ document Environment and Art in Catholic Worship gives us a strong starting point. “Among the symbols with which the liturgy deals, none is more important that the assembly of believers” (No. 28). Any art form used in liturgy must, as its primary criterion, embrace, nurture, and support the assembly. From that basic symbol all the others flow.

Dr. Mary Collins of the Catholic University points to the Triduum to find our other symbols. In these three days we experience our basic symbols in their most intense context. The symbols presented in the Triduum are assembly, cross, oil, water, word, light, bread and wine, laying on of hands, and foot washing. However, we must go further than just a list, because our symbols

Only in relationship does an artist possess vision.

are more than things. They contain actions. Therefore, we can say that our symbols include the assembly, but the assembly gathered for praise and thanksgiving, the cross that is signed, oil for anointing, water flowing and giving life, light that is passed to all, bread broken and wine shared, the laying on of hands as actual touching, foot washing expressed as intercessory prayer and works of service. In the liturgy the sacred is mediated through these active symbols.

Liturgical art helps to make clear the sacred in these symbols by helping them speak as profoundly as possible. The altar platform is not free gallery space for artists to present their latest flights of fancy, but this happens far too often to be discounted. The environment of the Easter Vigil is often a jungle created by a florist gone wild. The ministers of the liturgy are occasionally seen popping in and out of the foliage. Somewhere in this jungle is hidden a token nod to water and fire. Because the symbols are obscured the assembly is forced to find the sacred in a papier-mâché butterfly with a ten foot wingspan. While the platform is a stage-set spectacular no thought is given to the space of the assembly, which remains sterile and barren. The effect of this all too common arrangement is a denial of the symbol of the assembly, which is more damaging than any communication could ever be.

There are also many instances where a weak secondary sign is used because the primary symbols have been obscured. Examples of this are banners with pictures of candles or zig-zag lines to represent water. Both are substitutes for the real things. The time it took to make these banners would have been better spent in making sure the assembly could actually experience water and fire.

I hope we have made enough progress in the field of liturgical art to only mention in passing the greatest sin of all—word banners. These once popular, hybrid confections try to preach in a pretty way. Let the preacher do the preaching; let art be art. The liturgy has more than enough words. It has ample intellectualizing without forcing the arts into this role.

The hope in presenting these brief examples is to underscore the fact that the liturgical art must do nothing to minimize the symbols of the liturgy. The only focus of the liturgical artist is to be a servant of these symbols. Anything else is a disservice. If an artist is doing stage sets, that person would be a greater service to the church by going to Broadway or volunteering at the local theatre guild. The same is true for “pastoral” musicians and song leaders. If you long to see your name up in lights and for the chance to strut your stuff, get involved in the theatre. Don’t unload these needs on the liturgy.

Liturgical artists must care for the symbols of worship. Their only task is to make sure these symbols are able to speak with all the power they possess. This task is challenging enough to be worthy of the time and creative insight of any artist. Godfrey Diekmann of Collegeville gives the method for our caring. He says, "That which is the best liturgical symbol is also the most natural. The effort of the whole renewal movement has been to restore the authenticity and integrity of our symbols." It is here that liturgical art becomes sacred art.

The Burghers of Calais, by Auguste Rodin
Join in the Spirit of St. Louis
Annual National Convention
National Association of Pastoral Musicians
April 19-22, 1983
(Third Week After Easter)
St. Louis, Missouri
God is a Perfect Secularist

BY FRANCIS PATRICK SULLIVAN

If you see things through the eyes of God, mystics say, then you see them for themselves; you love them for themselves. You are a perfect secularist.

If you see things through human eyes, mystics say, then you see them for yourself; you love them for yourself. You are a perfect narcissist.

If you struggle against narcissism in order to see things through the eyes of God and to love them for themselves, mystics say, then you are a perfect religionist.

We choose beauty, but not too much or too little.

Iconophiles love color, sound, smell, motion, and taste in beautiful works because they are drawn into them as a lover into a beloved, where he or she will meet God. God is also drawn into the same beautiful works for the same reasons. Something is lovable in and for itself. That is a foretaste of heavenly glory. Iconoclasts detest sensuous constructs in religion because these constructs draw love to themselves—both human love, which should belong purely to God, and divine love, which should remain unconstrained by any creaturely medium. Whatever interferes is an idol, and therefore a blasphemy.

Most people waver between being iconophiles and iconoclasts and choose—as the fragment of an Irish sermon says—to steer the straight and narrow path between right and wrong. They choose beauty, but not too much or too little—just enough so that the icono-

Mystics say very few succeed in being perfect secularists like God. Very few fail and remain perfect narcissists. Most are in the struggle of the perfect religionists—to see things and love them in and for themselves, as God does.¹

An artwork is something someone makes in and for itself. It the artist makes the work for another motive (to feed a narcissism or to fight against one), then the artwork loses its chance to be in and for itself and to affect people in a non-narcissistic way. It becomes like propaganda and it teaches those who undergo it how to use beauty to prove their own points. It gives bad example. Other human doings—thought, service, control, response—can also be self-serving; but when they are not, they free people to know what altruism is, and how like it is to God. These human activities generate their visions differently, however, and they appeal to us differently than does art.²

Does an artwork really lean an artist or an art lover away from narcissism toward altruism, toward God and God’s ways? From early on in our Greek and Hebrew traditions, and in Indian traditions as well, religionists have vehemently answered yes and no. Throughout the history of religions there have been iconoclasts and iconophiles, within the same belief, in fierce argument over beauty and where it leads.

Rev. Sullivan, SJ, teaches courses in aesthetics and theology at Boston College and the Gregorian University, Rome. His latest book, Lyric Psalms, Half a Psalter, has just been published by NPM.
phile in them is soothed, but not enough that the iconoclast is enraged. This is the conflict of the true religious in both the past and the present, though it seems as if the major rule these days is not to enrage the iconoclast. Make it seem as if the beauty is a stranger helping with some chores and will soon be gone!3

Make it seem as if beauty is a stranger helping with some chores and will soon be gone.

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Take Psalm 39 as a work of art, a poem in the best sense.4 Are its images secularist, or narcissistic, or religious? The psalmist feels that his God is arbitrary about what the earth suffers. He himself is cynical about life. He yearns for moments that are untouched by an arbitrary God, or by cynical human behavior, as if happiness means life free from harm in this world as a guest of its creator. He means more, though. He means God should leave him be and yet be with him. The hold he keeps on God at the end is a fierce contradiction.

St. Joseph Church, St. Joseph, Minn.

Watch yourself, I said, watch your tongue, do not blame God, the wicked enjoy it when someone gets bitter. I did, I shut tight, I swallowed the pain, a mute with no other choice, but when I thought about it, my anger broke out. What becomes of me, I said, will this go on long, when do I vanish from sight? Look, you made my days only the width of my hands. Every life is fog. Every life is fakery, every life a ghost struggling with ghosts and for what! We pile up our wealth with no idea who gets it. Now I am supposed to pray: God, I hope in you! Free me from my pain so some fool won't laugh at me! I kept still, I did not beg you to change your ways and to stop lashing at me like some torturer! You punish our guilt! You eat our guilt like a moth! You make us a hole! I will pray you instead, O God, through tears on my face: I am a guest in your world, so were my parents. Forget who I am. Let me be glad I lived. Then let me die and do not know.5 Some people would say this psalm is purely narcissistic, a pitiful soliloquy made by someone with a false idea of God and a bitter disappointment in the only life he will have. Use of the psalm will damage a believer's soul.

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The psalm is not to be used. It works when it is not used.

Some people would say no, the psalmist begs for an honest meaning to life in a time when there were bad theologies explaining what suffering meant and who was its cause. This psalm is an example of integrity praying for integrity. The tears of things open the psalmist's eyes to an unspoken truth: that God is not a violation of anything, and the psalmist must not be, though the mystery of suffering remains.

Some others say that it is clear for a reader that the art of the psalm is in the way the psalmist sees and loves things in and for themselves, which is both the source of
his suffering, and the source of the quarrel with God. The poem is not to be used. It works when it is not used, when the images, the colloquy, the clear but pained love, the quarrel, the clanging during the letting go, and the longing are all free to be their own unique revelation of who it is the psalmist loves, what he suffers, from whom he thinks, and what he wants with whom he loves. In this last sense, the psalm is a religious work of art. It effects readers and hearers by showing them they have their own integrities out of which they must live and pray.

Even if the artist serves a text, ritual, space, or event, he or she must let the beauty speak on its own terms.

A religious work of art is one he or she creates, or re-creates, so as to know the integrities of things through their beauty. Beauty in most traditions means the power something has to manifest its own life as a gift, or its own struggle for life. Aesthetic beauty works by sensual revelation of its own life, like the nakedness of a lover to a lover, nakedness of sight or sound or smell or touch or taste; the revelation is the sensation—the sensation as it gives someone the life it has to give. Beauty is the most vulnerable of all gifts: it reveals the most of anything, it shows the tears of things most wholly, the joy of things, the failure of things, the future of things.

Believers sense the respect God must have for everything in the respect the artist has for her one thing.

Sooner or later religious artists who create or re-create beauty come face to face with the great demand the senses make without demanding anything. Are the senses allowed to be themselves? Are they manipulated? Are they free? Is their union with beauty addicting, idolatrous? Is it a life that is provoked, or a death? When an artist can create beauty that owns itself, the beauty can give freedom to the senses that meet it. Even if the artist serves a text, a ritual, a space, or an event, he or she must let the beauty speak on its own terms. Some icons are precious to non-believers for this reason, as are some compositions, some churches, some sculptures, some mosaics. They are precious to believers for the same reasons. Believers sense the respect God must have for everything in the respect the artist has in

Even so, there is a terrible conflict: the iconophile and the iconoclast still admit the same beauty in the work of art: one loves it, the other hates it; their reasons are instinctual as well as rational. The destruction matches the creation. An artist who is a religious artist at the present time faces the two attitudes all around, even within him or herself. Everything he or she creates will show up within the field of conflict. The work will show itself to iconophiles and iconoclasts. Something more may even happen. The iconophiles may not recognize the beauty they want to see and the iconoclasts may not recognize the beauty they detest. This is especially true if the artist is original and believes that God is a perfect secularist, not a perfect narcissist. The artist must be prepared to be ignored, but to keep creating.

The work of art is crucial for religion. It is the one place where creation is made visible to human senses, and where human senses learn to hope they can be redeemed from all that has gone wrong. Through works of art human senses learn to judge what the propaganda is that serves the narcissist, and what the seduction is that serves the iconoclast. Human senses also learn the true freedom beauty gives from either service. They learn to believe that such beauty will last because God believes the same way. The artist of the work must learn this first. This is what he or she is invited to do, by the work of art itself, by the work of religion itself. Religion wants to love creation the way God loves it. An art can show both loves what they must be. It may be torn apart for showing this, it may be idolized, or it may be ignored. Yet while it is in being, it has its gift to give.

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Ten Commandments for Pastoral Musicians

BY CHARLES R. GARDNER

Parish music directors come in a great variety of shapes, sizes, and styles. When we compare one with another, we usually think in terms of their musical competence: do they know how to choose good music, and can they perform it well? But even the best church musicians can be further divided into two different groups.

For example, let us consider “the case of John and Mary.” Both are very talented musicians who direct music programs in two parishes on opposite sides of the same city. John is very devoted to the great works of the sacred choral and organ literature. He finds his chief motivation in the preparation and performance of these works and tries to use them during the liturgy as often as possible. Mary follows a more eclectic course in planning the music. She tries to achieve a balance between the best of the old and the best of the new. (John would say that her tastes are too “secular.”)

John has little time to devote to the improvement of the congregational singing or for working with the “less interesting” musical parts of the liturgy. He believes that most of the members of the congregation want to be left alone and would rather listen to the organ and the choir. Eventually, the appreciation for good sacred music may “trickle down” to them, and then perhaps they will be motivated to sing. The congregational singing in Mary’s church would be rated “fair, but steadily improving.” She tries to provide the assembly with strong leadership, both visibly and audibly, and places a priority on the singing of the acclamations and responses. It has been a struggle, but her choir members are finally beginning to realize the importance of their role as members of the assembly and leaders of its song. Now at their rehearsals, they always make sure they know the hymns and responses before practicing their anthems.

John’s pastor respects him for the fine musician he is, and for the most part he lets John “do his own thing.” They have brief meetings before Christmas and Easter, but usually their communication is limited to checking last minute signals on the intercom between the sacristy and the choir loft. Mary is a member of her parish liturgy committee. She is also considered part of the parish staff and meets regularly with her pastor to assess the progress of the music program.

Both John and Mary are church musicians, but only one of them is truly a pastoral musician. Of course, good pastoral musicians must, first of all, be good musicians. Some of the music they perform can and should include the sacred music of our Christian tradition. But this is only a part of the total picture.

Mr. Gardner is Music Director of the Office of Worship in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and Director of the NPM Indianapolis Chapter.
In our renewed understanding of music as an integral part of worship, the distinction between sacred and secular music is in many ways no longer valid. As Aiden Kavanagh has written in the pages of this journal: "Liturgical music is neither 'sacred' nor 'secular'; it is liturgical; that is, liturgical music is any music that serves the assembled faith community and its values in ritual engagement." If the distinction continues to have any validity, it does not pose the question: Is this music sacred or is it secular? The important question is rather: How is this music used by the discerning pastoral musician? Thus it has to do more with persons than with things.

"Secular" musicians have their own sets of values that include the striving for excellence in performance and the appreciation of good music. "Sacred" (pastoral) musicians must add to these values a sensitivity to the demands of good liturgy. "Secular" musicians may be motivated in the performance of their art by a variety of reasons. "Sacred" (pastoral) musicians must be motivated primarily by the desire to serve the praying assembly through the art of music.

Good pastoral musicians first of all claim their musical art by perfecting their musical knowledge and skills. The following "ten commandments" for pastoral musicians suggest some ways they can then proceed to claim their special art.

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**The Ten Commandments**

I

Pastoral musicians must learn to love the sound of a singing congregation above any other musical sound. Some may consider this an exaggeration, but I believe it is absolutely crucial. In a very real sense, the primary musical instrument of the pastoral musician is not the organ or the piano or the guitar but the singing assembly itself. Many times we become so involved in developing a good choral or instrumental sound that we forget that the musical prayer of the assembly is our primary concern. To be sure, it is not usually a polished sound: rather it is rough-edged and slightly out-of-tune. But if it is also a strong and authentic sound, it provides a measure for successful liturgical music more accurately than any other voice or instrument.

II

Pastoral musicians must be concerned about the spiritual health of the communities they serve. This is the other side of the coin. If the assembly's singing is weak, the problem may be a liturgical or musical one. But it may also be primarily an ecclesial problem. If the bonds that join the members of a community are very weak; if its members do not have some sense of belonging to and being responsible for each other, then its singing will also be half-hearted. In this case, the musician should not be expected to shoulder the total burden of improving the participation when the problem is much deeper. On the other hand, the musician should be willing to give help and support to those who are ultimately responsible for seeing that the community bonds can begin to grow stronger.

III

Pastoral musicians must learn to appreciate a variety of musical instruments and styles. Notice that the word is "appreciate," not simply "tolerate." Obviously, musicians have varying personal tastes, and these cannot help but be reflected in the general style of the music programs for which they are responsible. But those who completely avoid particular styles or instruments—"traditional" or "contemporary"—are forgetting the nature of their ministry. Many times, personal tastes must be set aside. Pastoral musicians have the duty both to encourage their congregations to be open to many styles of good liturgical music and to be perceptive in discovering the particular styles that best serve the prayer of their parishes.
IV

Pastoral musicians must be able to work with a variety of liturgical song forms. There are at least six song forms used in the liturgy including acclamations, brief responses, litanies, responsorial songs, hymns, and choir anthems. While an anthem may be musically more interesting than an acclamation, it is not nearly as crucial to the liturgical prayer. Musicians must give more attention to these shorter musical forms, working with them imaginatively and learning to weave them into the fabric of the liturgical action. A good music program includes a balance among the different forms, not relying too heavily on one or the other. It includes not only solid hymns and choral music, but also responses and acclamations that are strong and spontaneous.

V

Pastoral musicians must be able to communicate effectively with their congregations. A musician who says: "I will sing and play for the congregation, but please do not ask me to stand up in front to teach or lead them," cannot be pastorally effective in the long run. In other musical fields, a person can say: "Here is my music; take it or leave it." But in the liturgy, strong communication is essential. It is hoped that the music itself is clearly communicated, as in the case of an organist who knows how to really lead a hymn with a firm and articulate style of playing. But usually more is needed. An inviting personal presence, good eye contact and facial expression, strong gestures, and a clear, positive approach when giving explanations and introductions: all of these elements are important factors in helping the pastoral musician to be a good communicator.

VI

Pastoral musicians must be able to work as members of a team. There is no room for the "rugged individualist" or the temperamental artist who gets terribly upset when presented with suggestions or constructive criticism. The exact shape of the "team" responsible for the liturgy varies from parish to parish. In many cases, the music director is an "ex officio" member of the parish liturgy committee. At the very least, there must be good communication and cooperation between the pastor and the musician. This is not to say that a music program should be directed by a committee. Trained musicians must be responsible for the specific musical planning and performance. But they must also be open to the other members of the team for general planning and direction as well as feedback and evaluation.

VII

Pastoral musicians must have a good knowledge of Scripture. Careful study of the Scripture readings for a particular liturgy is an important step in the process of musical planning. On a deeper level, the Bible has been and continues to be the chief source for the texts of our liturgical songs. The musician who takes time to study the Word of God is able to better appreciate and perform these songs and to communicate this appreciation to others.

VIII

Pastoral musicians must be people of faith. Of course, this may have nothing to do with the quality of the musical performance itself. A non-believing organist may play considerably better than a believing one. But pastoral musicians who attempt to keep the rest of these "commandments" cannot be effective ministers unless they are fellow travelers somewhere on the road of faith. Eventually, it will be obvious to those they serve not so much by what they do as by how they do it.

IX

Pastoral musicians must be people of prayer. This flows from the previous point, but it adds another dimension. As Music in Catholic Worship states: "Christians' faith in Christ and in each other must be expressed in the signs and symbols of celebration or it will die (no. 4)." As musicians, do we pray in our homes? Do we begin our rehearsals with prayer? Do we pray with the other ministers before the liturgy? And most important, can we see through all the technical details of our performance so as to experience the liturgy as our own prayer?

X

Pastoral musicians must be proud of their vocation. On several occasions, I have met musicians who seem to consider their church performance as "secondary"—not as demanding or fulfilling as teaching or concert performance. This may be true for those who cannot see beyond the music itself. But those who strive for excellence in performing their music and their ministry have a vocation of which they can be proud. They are called not only to use the musical talents with which they have been blessed, but also to be musical instruments of the sacred.
Gregorian Chant: Keeping Alive Our Treasures

BY THEODORE MARIER

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7. Lle-tú-ia, alle-lú-ia.
8. Lle-ló-ia, alle-lú-ia.

It should be clear to all that the years of liturgical evolution since Vatican II have brought cataclysmic changes to the music of the American Catholic Church. Once contained within rigid legal structures, the musical content of accepted liturgical practice has burst forth over the last twenty years into a myriad of new musical textures and forms. During these decades, resources of musical invention, once considered too worldly on the one hand or too Protestant on the other, have yielded to a new spectrum of acceptable combinations of instruments, song forms, and music-group dynamics. During this period of evolution (some might prefer to call it revolution), a few significant goals were achieved as pre-ludes to progressive action. For example, one by one the imagined barriers to liturgical growth were removed systematically and officially: the Solemn High Latin Mass, the Tridentine Rite, the Dies Irae of the burial rite, the motu proprio of Pius X, the St. Gregory White List and many others. In their place have come new musical styles that have radically changed our liturgical horizons. Diversity has replaced unity as a basis for musico-liturgical expression.

This change in favor of diversity has produced an attitude of freedom of musical conscience with regard to "appropriate" music for the liturgy. This freedom to explore without feeling legally restricted has, in turn, led to adopting many new compositions taken from the repertory of non-Catholic religious groups. Moreover, liturgists have felt free to adopt a style of music imitative of the southern and western folk ballads of the USA. As time goes on they shall probably feel free, also, to probe more deeply into the meaning of music as a separate and vitalizing element of liturgy, in order to extend even further the horizons of liturgical communication.

But there is freedom, too, to keep alive the treasures of the sacred music of the past. Although rarely mentioned in contemporary commentaries, the great store of classical musical treasures—especially Gregorian Chant—is still an important resource of liturgical music. Not only did the church at Vatican II acknowledge chant as "proper to the Roman Liturgy," giving it "pride of place" in liturgical services, but modern composers continue to find in it a well-spring for their own music.

Speaking in Paris last year, composer and organist Jean Langlais said that Gregorian Chant, "because of its purity and its perfection, remains the artistic expression of the Catholic Church. I like to think of it as the eternal youth of art that serves to revitalize by its modality the inspiration of all Catholic composers."

And speaking last year in Berlin, composer Max Baumann said that, "In a very real sense, my music was born and lives out of Gregorian chant. Frankly I cannot conceive of truly ecclesiastical compositions which are not influenced by Gregorian Chant."

In an age of freedom and plurality in musical styles, and at a time when the concepts of sacred and secular need to be reexamined and possibly reformulated, it is important to sit down and reflect on

Mr. Marier is the Director of the Boston Archdiocesan Choir School, and The Center for Ward Method Studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.
gregorian chant
in liturgy and education
an international symposium
June 19-22, 1983

at
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with sessions at
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To experience with Christian people from all parts of the world
the universal character and spiritual binding force of the
"music proper to the Roman Rite"
To demonstrate the musical roots of an art-form that is a prime
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our musical heritage and on the ways that heritage continues to inspire us today. And it is to that end that an international Symposium on "Gregorian Chant in Liturgy and Education" will be held June 19-22, 1983 at the Catholic University of America (for information on the Symposium write to the Center for Ward Method Studies, the School of Music, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC 20064). Its purpose, say the organizers, is to enhance present-day worship with the same inspired melodies that have enriched the prayer-life of the Western church for centuries; to experience with Christian people from all parts of the world the universal character and binding force of the "music proper to the Roman Rite"; to demonstrate the musical roots of an art form that is the prime base of sacred music; to offer means for employing the resources of Gregorian Chant as an enriching element in contemporary music education.

In many ways the history of Gregorian Chant has followed the pattern of church history in general: it has evolved over centuries; it has changed and grown; it has influenced and inspired other styles and often served beside them; it has endured corruption and misunderstanding and survived to be rediscovered and renewed. And for many centuries it has held the high ground in discussions of what is sacred in music and what is not (for an overview of Chant in church history, see chapter 9 of The Mystery of Faith: The Ministers of Music, by Lawrence Johnson, NPM Publications, 1983). A pope as recent as our own John Paul II has said that "to the extent that the new sacred music is to serve the liturgical celebrations of the various churches, it can and must draw from earlier forms — especially from Gregorian Chant — a higher inspiration, a uniquely sacred quality, a genuine sense of what is religious."

Exactly what constitutes "a uniquely sacred quality," and a "genuine sense of what is religious" in our pluralistic, technological world may now need to be discussed anew. But such discussions can only be helped by a careful, honest appraisal of Chant, the role it has had in the music and worship of our church, and the ways it continues to inspire us. The survival of this body of religious music, which has served the worship needs of people across boundaries of time and geography, attests to its strength and relevance today.

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Roundelay

BY FRED MOLECK

The Christmas season of 1982 unearthed another treasure trove of semi-liturgical experiences, some of which were designed and printed in the monthly throwaway guides to worship and fun. There must exist now at least three million different ways to bless a Christmas Crib and to place the statue of the Infant Jesus in the manger. All of these ways might be seen as a type of liturgical drama.

Some of these events were done simply with a "Hail Mary" and a quick verse of "Silent Night" while the janitor turned off the lights in the church. Sometimes the janitor remembered to turn them back on for the entrance rite of the Mass. Some of the events, however, were executed with procession and dance, but with neither direction nor choreography. Such an event occurred in the Midnight Mass procession in a church east of the Rocky Mountains and west of the sea of Galilee and, most definitely, west of the Hudson River.

This past Christmas, this church boasted a Midnight Mass procession of a resplendence of forty angels under the age of ten, a flock of shepherds, all bearded, an under-aged Mary and Joseph, and—at the tail end of it all—E.T., the extra-terrestrial creature who has taught all of us the value of non-verbal communication. E.T. stood about five feet tall and was clutching a baby doll. E.T. was costumed in brown, wrinkled vinyl with a head of paper-mache. The head was so formidable that it could have easily substituted for the Iron Maiden of the Inquisition. Unfortunately, the eyes of the mask were not large enough for the body inside to see outside and navigate a graceful entrance. E.T. came down the aisle lagging about ten or fifteen feet behind the rest of the entourage and ricocheting from pew to pew. From the choir loft, the procession looked like a large pin-ball machine with E.T. as the ball. Demonstrating early signs of Christian charity, Joseph rescued the baby doll from E.T.'s hands and gave it to Mary who placed the doll in the manger. E.T. bumbled his way to the clump of shepherds and snatched his left hand in the beard of the smallest keeper of the flock. Once again, the rite of the American church is plunged into a new area of development under the guise of relevance, of being hip, and being, inevitably and hopelessly, banal.

No doubt, similar experiences occurred in many other parishes at Christmas time. That is not to say, however, that other occurrences were staged without some authenticity and theatrical validity. The most obvious one is the Hispanic Posadas, the entrance mini-drama of Joseph and Mary on their way to Bethlehem. The dialogue, the rich singing, the approach of the couple to the crib scene all merge into a flood of warm feelings and a full heart. One cannot help but be moved into a feeling of personal hospitality drawn strongly from the feelings of Hispanic warmth and hospitality. Perhaps that is the reason for the success of the Posadas ceremony.

It is based on an authentic expression of a cultural fact and it draws its inspiration from the liturgical celebration of the incarnational mystery. These are the two elements present in the origin and development of liturgical drama, a drama as much a part of the church's tradition as processions, stained glass, music and gesture.

The seeds of this development were present in the medieval enactment of the meeting of the three Marys with the angel at the empty tomb of Jesus on Easter morning. The angel asks the Marys "Whom do you seek" (Quem quirkis?) and they respond, "Jesus of Nazareth." The dialogue was sung in medieval chant. The setting was the choir space and altar space of the medieval church, and the time was during the morning office of Easter Sunday.

Drama is as much a part of the church's tradition as stained glass and music.

Dr. Moleck is a professor of music at Seton Hill College in Greensburg, Pa.

Drama was born, and it was born in the church. The evolution and development of this drama grew rapidly and strongly. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the drama flourished. One only needs to inspect the numerous plays extant from this time period and one discovers a form that was sophisticated and vigorous in its execution. The paradigm of this form is, of course, the Play of Daniel. The story of Daniel, the lions, the evil counselors and everything else the story asks for create a fanciful demonstration of a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. It is all first class stuff to commemorate, remember and re-present the incarnational mystery at Christmas time. In fact, that is exactly when the Play of Daniel was performed.

These liturgical dramas were performed as part of the morning liturgy. Like the Posadas, it was unnecessary to banalize the performance of a liturgical drama by the insertion of a creature of fad or to stimulate a feeling of "cuteness." The liturgy was strong and the culture's consciousness was strong. It is no wonder that the expressions of both were strong as one is still moved by the story of Daniel; and the procession of the Holy Family still moves into our midst and into our hearts.
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Introducing a Person of Note

She remarks with pride that Story City, Iowa was a town rich in musical tradition where, at an early age, she came to appreciate the import of music at the service of worship. Whatever the other boasts of this Iowan berg, Story City must be justly proud of their musical ambassador, Betty Ann Ramseth, and we are equally pleased that we can introduce her to you.

A familiar name to those who frequent these reviews, Mrs. Ramseth (b. 1920) received her formal musical training at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, where she was privileged to sing under the legendary F. Melius Christiansen. After receiving her B.A. in Public School Music in 1941, she taught her training in the school systems of Iowa, and later California where she now resides. Continued studies—especially in the Orff and Kodaly methods—at Stanford, the University of California-Davis, and in Salzburg further prepared her for diverse assignments as a clinician, college instructor, and popular festival director. Married to a Lutheran Pastor, she also boasts a musical and non-musical involvement with the church which now spans over 40 years.

Like many before her, Betty Ann Ramseth's work as a composer gradually evolved out of practical need. And it was while arranging materials for church and school choirs that she forged a philosophy which shapes her writing and teaching to this day. One of the most compelling facets of that perspective recognizes that children are not only to be encouraged in musical participation, but also in musical leadership in worship. Her 100+ published compositions and arrangements have certainly rendered such leadership more attainable, and thus we are pleased to feature two of her most recent publications in review.

Edward Foley, Capuchin

Miracle of Grace


A light, lilting melody, Miracle of Grace moves in 6/8 rhythm giving joy to the text, "What a miracle of grace to receive this earth and space . . ." Any choir will enjoy singing this piece, but it is especially suitable for children. Buy it — you'll like it!

A Psalm of Blessing


This setting of Psalm 130 by John Horman is joyful and energetic. Written in canon form, the melodies of Part I and Part II move along simply. After a brief unison section, Part III enters with the melody sung in augmentation while the voices of the canon continue to the end. This sounds confusing but in reality the composer has found an excellent method of teaching children to sing three parts. Both the words and melody are simple enough for a junior choir to understand and perform.

Psalms to Ring and Sing


Any choral director who is searching for an interesting presentation of the psalms should acquaint himself with Psalms to Ring and Sing. The psalm verses are set to simple vocal lines, which children ages eight through twelve will perform well. Unison antiphons include the choir and congregation plus an optional descant. The flute-like tones of children's voices suit the descant melodies and enhance the antiphons. Psalm verses may also be sung responsorially between cantor and choir. The simplicity of the bell parts permits even a beginning bell choir to join in the fun of playing and singing. Included in this short collection are Psalms 121, 107, 34, and 100. Here is a great opportunity to involve the children in the knowledge and performance of the
Responsorial Psalm during the Liturgy of the Word.

I Will At All Times Praise The Lord

George F. Handel, Arranged by Hal H. Hobson. Verses paraphrased for Psalm 34: unison voices and keyboard.

Simple in melody, which is from the Oratorio "St. Paul" by George F. Handel, this piece is suitable for older youth choirs who have a better understanding and vocabulary than young children. Although the text is not difficult, little children will have a hard time grasping meaning from words unfamiliar to them. Learning and singing the music of G.F. Handel presents an excellent opportunity for students to gain insight into the life and works of this great composer.

Anne Kathleen Duffy

Eucharistic Prayer for Children II

Richard Proulx. For priest, congregation, organ and instruments (flute, xylophone, handbells, glockenspiel, and timpani). G.I.A. Publications, 1982. G-2516 (full score), $7.00; G-2516-P (presider's copy); G-2516-INST (instrumental parts); 569-F (singer's card for choir/congregation).

By using repetition skillfully, Richard Proulx has crafted a useful setting of the Eucharistic Prayer for Children II. The value of simple lines with colorful instrumentation are the strong points of this opus. What can be a miscalculation is the tempo marking for the presider, which, if adhered to could result in a plodding type of performance. This work needs a good singer as a presider, not just a celebrant who is willing to try.

Whether or not the use of same melodic pattern 9 times will result in tedium and ennui is moot at this point. Perhaps the best recommendation that can be given is try it. You might like it.

James Burns

Tudor Church Music, A Collection of Fourteen Anthems and Motets


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ever be more universal than "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

But how does one use Latin motets or Masses in vernacular liturgy? Does their appearance jolt liturgical sensibilities and turn the Eucharist into a concert performance? Are they old cloth sewn into new fabric which, at best, is distractingly out of place, and at worst an unnecessary patch on material not needing mending?

As in so many matters touching on faith and ethics in our time, pastoral, liturgical, cultural and environmental judgments help formulate proper answers to these questions. Appropriate examples of melding Latin and vernacular liturgical music, too, will continue to show the best way that the procedure can be executed. Without specifying where that practice may be best found in this country, one can confidently say that at least every diocese has a parish which uses Latin music in the vernacular liturgy in a convincingly right way.

In considering the Latin pieces under review it should be noted at the outset that all of them have been in print before, some as early as the sixteenth century.

What is new in the current format is either the collection itself or the appearance of the motets in modern notation with accompanying editorial suggestions. The Ten Motets of Lassus for example, have been chosen by Clive Wearing from the five hundred and fifty motets in the composer's complete list. Anthony Petti, on the other hand, has reduced the Flemish and German schools to nine excellent examples of a cappella literature for five voices. Novello's collection in its editorial process is not as successful as the others, because it combines photo reprints from Victorian editions with recent scholarly folios. The result is uneven print face and ink density, inconsistent editing, and a slapdash effort unworthy of a major publishing house. But the music, which includes representative works of Byrd, Morley, Tye, Weelkes and other contemporaries demonstrates major achievements of these Elizabethans.

Morley's "Eheu, Sustulerunt Dominum" (They have taken away my Lord) edited by David Wulstan, who directs the Clerkes of Oxenford, would be a worthy addition to any choir's repertoire. So would the same composer's verse anthem for alto, chorus and organ, which uses an English text: "Out of the Deep."

From the Lassus collection, special attention should be paid to "Resonet in Laudibus." The tune is familiar, but the conception Lassus has of it allows us to discover nuances in rhythmic color and harmonic texture which remain fresh after nearly five centuries.

"Stetit Jesus" (Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples) will have to serve as the selection of the month from Petti's collection. The Flemish composer Jacob Regnart tells the story of discipleship with poignancy, simplicity, dramatic flair culminating in a flourish of alleluias, and an irresistible linear clarity. With this piece, do as the Mormons of Radio KKL do: have the text read in English first and let the choir tell the story in its own full, inimitable language.

J. KEVIN WATERS, SJ

Instrumental

Suite On American Hymn Tunes

Two trumpets and two trombones proclaim the melody in the opening first movement of this suite, entitled "Salvation" (Kentucky Harmony). Alternating organ and brass quartet interludes lead to a full and powerful tutti section concluding the movement.

The second movement entitled "Foundation" employs a short motive developed through the compositional technique of stretto. Alternating organ and brass quartet interludes lead to a timbre change characterized by trombones alone proclaiming the melody with an organ counter melody and pedal point. A variation of the stretto technique leads to another textural and timbre change with the trumpets sustaining the pedal point with trombones proclaiming the melody over the organ counter melody in double octaves.

A contrapuntal style technique of the melody is proclaimed by the brass quintet in the opening of the third movement entitled "Protection." Once again
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the alternating organ and brass quartet interludes lead to a full tutti climax. The fourth movement entitled "Exhortation and Exhilaration" uses the alternating technique of the previous movements providing unity and continuity in the suite. All these short movements are easy to perform and will enhance any liturgical celebration.

Ceremonial Entrada
The dotted rhythm figure and close dissonant harmonies create the majestic and vibrant sound of this composition. The polyphonic style provides the necessary thrust and spirit, while short textural changes of one, two, or three instruments provide the necessary variety. Tempo changes, ritardandos, and dynamic markings bring this composition to a glorious climax. This is an excellent composition for the entrance or recessional of any liturgical celebration.

Ave Maria
Many arrangements have been published of this famous composition. This particular arrangement employs the rich sounding middle and low range of the flute with the usual ostinato keyboard accompaniment. The composition is easy to perform and suitable for any liturgical celebration in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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with life and gaiety. The opening cell-like motives return occasionally so that the listener can comprehend the unity, variety and form of the composition. The climax of the composition consists of fast legato and staccato scale-like passages. This is a difficult composition to perform, due to the great demand of control and technical dexterity placed upon the performer. However, a skilled performer would enjoy performing this composition at any liturgical celebration.

ROBERT E. ONOFREY, CPPS

Congregational

Eucharistic Liturgy of the Holy Family

You will need a good priest/cantor to negotiate the vocal lines of the Penitential Rite as the organ quietly adds modal dissonances. The congregational parts are not difficult, but tempi must be carefully chosen to avoid an opening dirge-like quality. A large part of the Glory to God is spoken by the congregation with the opening and closing frames being multiple repetitions of "Glory to God in the highest." Congregations may need rehearsal to speak these lines with clarity and rhythm while the organ supplies filler-harmonies. The acclamations are "keyed" in G minor, so that tonally there is continuity. The extensive use of 7ths, 9ths, and parallel 5ths could be tiresome to the ears.

Brubaker’s work is facely put together, almost too much so. Its main supports are those of the musical theater, harmonically speaking. The vocal lines are severe and almost stark. Realistically designed for a congregation that is already a “community” that values singing.

JAMES BURNS

Books/Audio Visuals

Experiencing Music with the Piano

This piano method for teaching the mentally handicapped individually or in groups is a valuable contribution, designed to prepare handicapped students to integrate with society through active participation in music-making. It introduces teaching techniques that should also prove eminently useful in teaching other students, especially very young pianists. Flora Bilini described the method as a “comprehensive, conceptual, multi-key approach to keyboard musicianship in which neither a pseudo-language nor a pseudo-notation is necessary.

Silini gives clear directions for teaching musical skills, stressing that the element of rhythm is of foremost importance. "Echo Rhythms" are used as rote
exercises — rhythmic patterns clapped by the teacher and echoed immediately by the student, who may use rhythm instruments. An effective suggested lesson activity is "teacher exchange," whereby a student becomes the "teacher" and quizzes other students or leads the group in Echo Rhythms. Spoken words are added to selected rhythmic patterns to create "Rhythm Rounds" that students clap and chant. The words of Rhythm Rounds help students to understand and remember concepts, for example: "D is in the middle of two black keys." Table Top Exercises tapped by the teacher with both hands together and immediately repeated by the student help the student develop coordination when playing a different rhythm in each hand. Early in their study students are encouraged to improvise by repeating with variations rhythms clapped by the teacher. Students use these rhythms in playing simple improvised melodies. After students have gained tactile security in playing pentascales, note reading is introduced, based on recognition of skips, steps, and repeats. Students learn the names of lines and spaces through chanted Rhythm Rounds.

Silini considers developing good musicianship a high priority, and includes instruction in dynamics, phrasing, and playing legato and staccato. Repertoire in the text consists primarily in melodies within the scope of a pentascale and evolving around tonic and dominant harmonies. Most of the selections are familiar songs; it would have been helpful if words were consistently provided.

The text includes twenty-two clearly outlined and practical lesson models. Three helpful fifteen-minute videotapes of group lessons given to handicapped youths are available as an optional supplement to the text. Some terminology in the text seems to be used inexact; for example, on page 90 the author refers to having students perform rounds at first in unison and later "antiphonally." She also states that the method is founded on the principle that an "instinct for music must be developed in order for the student to understand musical concepts that lead to acquisition of keyboard skills. Yet overall this is a fine method book that includes sound pedagogical pointers for the teacher. In viewing the videotapes, I was impressed by the efficiency of the method and the attainments of the students, who obviously enjoyed the lessons and were delighted with their own accomplishments.

MARY ANN HAMLEY, CSJ

The Parish Cantor: Helping Catholics Pray in Song

The role of the cantor in Roman Catholic worship has evolved slowly since Vatican II. This booklet opens up for the layman an understanding of the role and its value for the future. According to the author, a definition of the ministry of cantor is "to bring the song of the assembled community to life, and to assist the people so that their song may be prayer, from the heart as well as the head" (p. 7). He does this by leading the assembly's song, solo singing and teaching new music.

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55
Review Rondeau

It is not the side of religious music that most of us ever experience, or even know exists—but dollar for dollar it is one of the largest segments of the contemporary religious music market. Furthermore, considering the enormous amount of air time devoted to it over Christian radio, plus the accumulated playing time on private turntables across the country, it is possible to understand the substantial impact of Christian easy-listening music in America today. If you're interested in pursuing the matter further, you might give one of the following a spin on the old victrola:

B.J. Thomas of "Raindrops" fame is alive and well in the Christian market, as attested to by his latest release Miracle (Myrrh, #MSB-6705, from Word Inc., Waco, Texas 76703). This is an above average collection of 10 easy-rockin' tunes—tasteful with the message, and classy in the production. Vintage B.J.T. shines through on "Hey Jesus," performance prevails in the relatively secular "Sail on, Atlanta," and faith shows its sense of humor in "Would They Love Him Down in Shreveport." This is why they call it easy-listening.

Another top 40 survivor, Dion (remember the Belmonts?) DiMucci, lives amongst the born again, as witnessed in his Dion: Only Jesus (DaySpring, #DST-4027, from Word Inc.). Musically and textually less satisfying than Miracle, Dion could be a primer for the uninitiated in the transformation of modern musical styles for religious ends. Heavy on country-rock, Dion takes a crack at the blues in "Thank You, Lord," soft-rock in "Sailing Ahead," and the most successful cut, "It's Gonna Rain" . . . a baptized version of "Long, Tall Sally."

. . . And There Was Light by Cam Floria and Jeff Kennedy (Christian Artists Records, #NL 0801-5, from Sparrow, Canoga Park, CA 91304), marketed as a "youth musical," contains 15 cuts loosely connected by the common theme of "light." The sound combines splashy orchestra with a believer's version of the Johnny Mann Singers, and styles ranging from dixieland ("What would it be like") to pop sing-along ("Shine on the Day"). Occasionally overarranged—but always well-executed—sections of Light could be educationally valuable for those working with middle school age.

An all together different venture is Wendy Hofheimer and Mary Rice's Out of the Fullness (Birdwing, #BWR 2-36, from Sparrow). This folk-rock collection eschews the orchestra and back-up chorus, and relies on two clear voices, providing their own instrumental work on guitars, violins, flutes and refreshing break.

Edward Foley, Capuchin

A very useful chapter walks a cantor through the Sunday Mass, showing the many options for his or her involvement. The author, in recommending that the cantor "warm-up" the congregation, wisely encourages a minimum of spoken words by the cantor.

The requirements for the cantor are, first of all, lively faith, followed by an understanding of worship and the musical skills necessary for the role. The cantor should be interested in people and their involvement in worship more than simply being an outstanding vocalist.

A very simple presentation of cantor's skills would make clear to all beginners in this ministry what is required. Particularly helpful are the words about body language and cantorial conduct-

Other chapters discuss musical forms and repertory which involve the cantor, some eminently practical suggestions for helping people sing as prayer, and brief ideas about starting a cantor training program in the parish.

The book is most useful for both beginners and intermediate cantors.

Patrick W. Collins, Ph.D.

What Every Choir Member Should Know


If you want a brief description of what is involved in singing in a church choir, this short treatment could be for you. As choirs begin to be retrieved now in parish worship life, more people could be attracted to share in the exciting adventure of a choral ensemble. Braun explains that choir membership is good for faith, for your spirits, for the release of tensions, for your voice and mind and for a sense of personal satisfaction. He also explains the commitment and discipline required of such a musical team effort.

Braun clearly understands the post-Vatican II role of the choir, namely, to be a leader in the assembly's prayer and participation. It is not a concert group. It rather helps the expression of the faith and the prayer of choir and assembly together. As such, the choir must see itself and be seen by others as an integral part of the worshiping assembly.

The longest chapter is devoted to an explanation of basic musical facts needed by the choral neophyte for intelligent participation in the rehearsal of the ensemble. Conducting patterns, score reading, musical symbols, and fundamentals of voice production are mentioned briefly.

In short, this is a fine basic introduction to the church choir. May it gather fine voices for praise . . . and fun!

Patrick W. Collins, Ph.D.

Living Bread, Saving Cup:
Readings on the Eucharist

In Living Bread, Saving Cup, Kevin Seasoltz has assembled a significant collection of articles on the Eucharist which appeared in Worship during the period 1965-1981. Although only two of the sixteen articles (James Dallen's "The Congregation's Share in the Eucharistic Prayer" and "A Congregational Order of Worship" by Kenneth Smits) have direct and immediate bearing on the work of pastoral musicians, it is nevertheless a book which should find a place in every parish library and in the libraries of all those involved in planning and ordering the celebration of the Eucharist.

Growing out of bibliographies he prepared for students at the School of Theology in St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, Seasoltz' principles of selectivity for this anthology are avowedly pedagogic rather than representative. The articles selected by Seasoltz are grouped in three general subject clusters set off from each other and sandwiched between articles on the communal aspect of eucharistic liturgy. The subject clusters include historical studies of the origin, character and shape of the eucharistic prayer,
theological studies of aspects of the Eucharist (meal, sacrifice, real presence, and eschatology), and a category that can only be called special topics (presidency, celebrations without priests, forgiveness of sins, concelebration, and the Eucharist in religious communities). The anthology begins with Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's "Eucharist and Community in First Corinthians" and ends with Smits' article which views the eucharistic liturgy from the perspective of the general role of the congregation as the principal one. Dallen's article on congregational participation in the revised eucharistic prayer separates the historical and theological clusters while Hervé-Marie Legrand's "The Presidency of the Eucharist According to the Ancient Tradition" both initiates the cluster of special topics while highlighting the role of the whole assembly as celebrant of the Eucharist.

The cluster of historical studies of the eucharistic prayer is a particularly excellent example of selectivity and organization. Articles by Aidan Kavanagh, Robert J. Ledogar, and Thomas J. Talley demonstrate a progressive appropriation, critique, and refinement of Jean-Paul Audet's comparison of the eucharistic prayer with the Jewish meal prayer. Birkat ha-Mazon, while at the same time providing the necessary background for an appreciative reading of a further article by Kavanagh critiquing the Roman reformed eucharistic prayers.

The cluster on eucharistic theology includes Edward Schillebeeckx' careful statement on "Transubstantiation, Transfinalization, Transignification," and a deft Ricoeurian interpretation of the use of sacrificial language in the Eucharist by David Powers. Philippe Rouillard explores the theological significance of the meal aspect of the Eucharist against a broad background that includes meal accounts in the Old and New Testaments and the cultural meaning of hunger and thirst, nourishment, meal, and feast. Donald Gray's article analyzes Christ's eucharistic presence as a presence that also includes a real absence, emphasizing the eschatological nature of eucharistic celebration.

The special topics cluster of essays ranges from Jean Laclercq's presentation of evidence of eucharistic celebrations without priests at Monte Cassino and elsewhere during the Middle Ages to Robert Taft's survey of Eastern practices of concelabration for the purpose of clarifying contemporary thought and practice in the Roman Rite. The Lord's Supper as a celebration of reconciliation is explored by John Quinn, while Seasoltz' article explores practical aspects of eucharistic celebration in American Benedictine communities.

Seasoltz' anthology, Living Bread, Saving Cup, is a collection of articles of the Eucharist that is both broad enough to be helpful to any serious student of the liturgy and focused enough to be enjoyable reading as a book.

Rev. Jonathan P. Gosser
Sunday Morning: A Time For Worship


This volume contains the papers from the Tenth Annual Conference of the Notre Dame Center for Pastoral Liturgy, University of Notre Dame, June 15-18, 1981. The quality of these papers reflects
the high standards of the Center and the excellent programs it has sponsored. These papers clearly demonstrate that pastoral theology and liturgy does not have to mean watered down scholarship, shallow reflection or soft criticism of contemporary practice.

Mark Searle's three page introduction sets the tone for what follows. There is a clear challenge set out—Sunday is a sacrament of Christian existence and, like the parables of Jesus, it calls us to question everything in our lives which does not reflect Christ's dominion of our hearts. The articles that follow deal with Sunday from every critical aspect. The common focus of all is the assembly itself. Sunday is because of the assembly of believers.

Eugene LaVerdiere presents the New Testament evidence for the origins of the Sunday celebration. Robert Hovda gives some keen insights into the tradition and in his inimitable style raises uncomfortable questions about present practice. Robert Taft, in shedding some light on the subject from the Eastern Churches, presents five reflections that would serve well as criteria for all liturgical praxis.

John Gurrieri puts us in touch with the American Catholic experience of Sundays past while William C. McCreary presents the data of contemporary sociological analysis. Richard P. McBrien uses contemporary principles of ecclesiology to make applications for local practice today and tomorrow. Mark Searle brings his paper, "The Shape of the Future: A Liturgist's Vision," the sort of synthesis and creative reflection that we have come to expect from all his work. Benedicita Boland's article moves slightly off the focus of assembly as the key to Sunday and broadens the perspective with some helpful insights grounded in the common call of Christians to a contemplative vision of time. These hardy offerings conclude with Godfrey Diekmann's "Sunday Morning: Retrospect and Prospect," a delightfully concrete journey through memory and into imaginings for the future. The last three pages are Diekmann's response to the Mathis Award conferred upon him at the 1981 June conference at Notre Dame. It would be difficult for me to think of one single work which would be more useful for a pastoral team and/or parish liturgy committee open to a critical study of their current Sunday celebration. The recurrent emphasis on the assembly as the gathering of those who have experienced the Risen Lord, a community which has been to death and back, makes this little collection a powerful source of self-examination and a call to ongoing communal conversion.

Andrew D. Ciferni, O. Praem

About Reviewers

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Roger Grenier and Paul Lambert are University of Rhode Island graduates. Roger is presently a Choral Director and Masters Degree Candidate in Music, and Paul is Music Director and Leader of Song, fulfilling their ministries at Saint Louis Catholic Church in Miami, Florida.

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Going to church! The phrase, familiar as it is, is likely to evoke in us a variety of memories, feelings and theologies, but I suspect that for most of us there is a dominant consciousness that “going to church” calls forth. For me, it is trust.

From childhood, through adolescence, from marriage to new parenting and now into midlife (all periods of freedom and crisis), church has conveyed to me a rock-like stability. Underneath all kinds of veneers I have been able to see a precious reservoir of wisdom and tradition, of counsel and correction. How has it happened, this trust?

First, there is the liturgy, the steady reliable ritual that goes on, day after day, whether I am feeling “in season or out of season.” Somehow there lives in me the belief that “going to church” can restore my lagging confidence in myself as a person and as a Christian. I don’t have to perform or achieve. The liturgy is simply there, abiding, like God, and as such it supports me in my recurring weakness and forsakenness. It also energizes me for work, for ministry, and for continuing commitment to liberation.

Dolores Lecky is the Executive Director of the NCCB Committee on the Laity.
This is not to say that my experience of going to church has been free of disappointments. Unfortunately, there are liturgies that are conducted like an afterthought. There are homilies that abuse the listeners. There are priests I would never approach for wisdom or discernment. There are indeed shadows on the rock.

The liturgy is simply there, abiding, like God, and it supports me in my weakness.

But somehow the light is stronger than the shadows, and somehow, new and vivid rays appear from time to time. One such ray, growing in brightness, is the heightened sensitivity to the laity’s unique place in the church.

It is a sensitivity to the complexity, challenges, and needs of the laity who spend 99% of their time outside church settings. Ministry, as a whole, is beginning to fathom that the church has a responsibility to free people to be an active, caring presence in the “outer church” arenas of their lives: neighborhoods and families and PTA’s, work and leisure and politics and civic associations. Lay ministers, with the experience of living in two worlds, that is, the world of secular responsibility as well as ecclesial responsibility, have played a significant part in developing this sensitivity. And priests who serve on pastoral teams have spoken to me about their new understanding and appreciation of lay life—breakthroughs precipitated by their co-workers in pastoral care.

One breakthrough is around the major commitment of lay people to their work. Work, leisure, and civic responsibilities are what some Protestant churches call “Monday ministries.” In Called and Gifted the bishops of the United States recognize this important facet of lay life:

just as by divine institution bishops, priests, and deacons have been given through ordination authority to exercise leadership as servants of God’s people, so through baptism and confirmation lay men and women have been given rights and responsibilities to participate in the mission of the Church. In those areas of life in which they are uniquely present and within which they have special competency because of their particular talents, education and experience, they are an extension of the Church’s redeeming presence in the world.

What about the worldly ministers?

The issue I see is how to make these words come alive for the laity.

I have been personally helped in understanding the issue through the work of Mark Gibbs, an Anglican layman, and the work of the Grubb Institute. Both have their roots in England.
In a new book, *Christians with Secular Power* (Fortress Press), Mr. Gibbs contends that the church must be concerned with leaders in the secular order who are Christians. Their responsibilities in large and small spheres are often awesome, he says, and he poses a derivative question. Can we now, in this time, assert that intelligent, critical, secularly-minded laity can find any clear understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ in our modern skeptical, technologically-dominated society? He believes we can.

He notes that the lay men and women he's writing about have a great capacity for learning. "They have known," he writes, "how to develop their emotions, their imagination, their sexuality without following the sloppy anti-intellectualism of our time. They have learned how to develop a deep love for their family and for friends (developed it, not pretend instant intimacy), how to meet openly and courteously with all kinds of people they come up against, and how to burn . . . burn for justice for millions of their fellow human beings whom they will never know personally at all."

The laity's unique place in the church . . .

_________________________________________

But two things more are needed, he adds: 1) A constant attempt to assess the new knowledge, the new experience, the new challenge, against what has been called the mind of Christ—the vision we have, imperfect yet genuine, of what God wants for us and for this world; and 2) A readiness to be thoroughly obedient to what we learn. And, he maintains, the laity are looking to their religious leadership for this help.

The Grubb Institute has a good deal to say about how the religious leadership may best help. The Institute's researchers theorize that the parish, particularly in its central act of worship, offers to contemporary men and women a place of positive dependency and rest. Sabbath, if you will. Leaning heavily on cultural anthropology (particularly the work of Victor Turner, who is a Catholic), they describe a rhythm of oscillation as basic to human life. In a religious context, oscillation happens in this way. I—active lay person, involved in family and friendship patterns, a worker, a member of village or city neighborhood—"go to church." Worship draws me there, offering to me the deepest symbols of the Christian faith. Because these symbols are of ultimate reality, they are powerful and have the potential to undo my prevalent societal image of God. In other words, the Mass has the potential to touch my personal unconscious where my personal image of God is fixed.

But it also reaches into the collective community unconscious, that is, all of us at worship, the People of God.

In the Grubb Theory, the way the symbols are handled by the priest (and other ministers) is all important. Music, the arrangement of space, the reading of the Scriptures, the homily, gestures, clarity, intention—all are of immense importance.

I was thinking about Gibbs and Grubb during a recent visit to a large suburban parish. The pastor preached a lively sermon, and no one fell asleep in my immediate vicinity (this has happened). I listened carefully for the presider's concern for the laity—and I was happily surprised. The homily was about community but rather than generalized comments, we were encouraged to experiment with small faith-sharing and Scripture groups in order to bring the totality of our lives in alignment with the truth of Christ. Good suggestion, I thought. The homilist went on to speak of people in the parish who needed community support: the catechists, the youth minister, those who visit the aged, the evangelization workers—yes, I agreed. But . . . something was missing. I looked around me. What about the great proportion of the "worldly ministers" (to use a phrase from Gibbs)? What about the military, the government workers, the university professors, the executives, the public school teachers, the medical personnel, the politicians, students, mothers, fathers, single adults, secretaries, taxi-drivers . . . Don't they need support for their mission in the world? And what kind of support? It seems to me that if we are to have a healthy church in the world, religious leadership will have to provide spiritual formation and development, and good adult theological education for the laity—all the laity—not only those engaged in direct ecclesial ministry. This will mean reallocation of resources, and will require willingness, creativity, and trust.

Religious leadership will also have to place the highest priority on the quality of worship. The presiders, the pastoral musicians, the readers, the ministers of hospitality, the eucharistic ministers—all are involved in clearing a path for the transcendent. I submit there is no greater ministry. The moments of transcendent awareness, fleeting though they may be, empower us to

Clearing a path for the transcendent—there is no greater ministry.

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be attentively present in the world, present to our work, to our personal relationships, to the stranger in need, to the oppressed, to our God.

I sense the commitment in our post-Vatican II church to the principles of true and beautiful worship. I hope there will be a similar commitment to strengthening the laity's skills to be an effective Christian presence—everywhere.
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