

Monday Morning Presentation



Faith Becoming Music

NPM Colloquium 2010



2.1 THREE Fold foundation of music: Exodus (Bible), Liturgy, Cosmic Liturgy



In the Biblical account, the people's reaction to the foundational event of salvation is described in this sentence "[T]hey believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses" (Ex 14:31). But then follows a second reaction, which soars up from the first with elemental force," then Moses and the pole of Israel sang this song to the Lord" (15:1)

Year by year, at the Easter vigil Christians join in the singing of this song. They sing it in a new way as their song, because they know that they have been "taken out of the water" by God's power, set free by God for authentic life.

2.1 THREE Fold foundation of music: Exodus (Bible), Liturgy, Cosmic Liturgy (con't)



The Apocalypse of St. John draws the bow back even farther...[T]he Seer is given the vision of the conquerors, “standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God and the song of the Lamb.” (Rev 15:3) [ML 136]

2.2 The PSALMS LACK MUSIC, but do shape MUSICAL FORM of ISRAEL'S Singing style



In addition to the various witnesses that are found throughout Scripture to the singing of the individual and of the community, as well as to the music of the Temple, the book of Psalms is the proper source for us to rely on here. **Because it lacks musical notation, we are unable to reconstruct the “sacred music” of Israel,** but it does give us an idea of the richness of both the instruments and the different kinds of singing used in Israel.

[LM 139]

2.3a The PSALMS as HUMAN EXPERIENCE, then becoming sung FAITH



In the prayed poetry the psalms display the whole range of human experiences, which become the prayer and song in the presence of God. Lamentation, complaint, indeed accusation, fear, hope, gratitude, joy – **the whole of human life** is reflected here, as it is unfolded **in dialogue with God**. It is striking that even complaints made in desperate affliction almost always end with **words of trust**, with an anticipation, as it were, of God's saving act.

2.3b THE PSALMS linked to ONE SONG: THE NEW SONG, EXODUS and TRUST



In a certain sense, one might describe all these “new songs” as variations on the song of Moses. Singing before God rises up, on the one hand out of an affliction from which no earthly power can save human beings --- our only refuge is God. But at the same time it **emerges out of a trust** that, even in utter darkness, knows that the crossing of the Red Seas is a promise that will have the last word in life and in history. [LM 139]

2.4 THE PSALMS' dynamic: *From Personal to Communal PRAYER*



It is important to say that the Psalms frequently **come from very personal experiences** of suffering and answered prayer, and yet they always **flow into the common prayer** of Israel. [LM 139]

2.5 The PSALMS Use: ALL GOD'S APPROACHES TO HUMAN BEINGS (all of Revelation)



[The Psalms] are nourished out of the **common store of God's saving deeds in the past.** [LM 139]

2.6 The Toda-PSALMS – model for Eucharistic PRAYER (As PRAYER OF COVENANT RENEWAL)



Particularly in the Toda-psalms, one finds a type of prayer that grew out of the faith of Israel; this prayer, deep down inside, was on the path into the newness of the New Covenant. The following characteristics belong to the schema of these psalms: [1] asking for help in dire need [2] experiencing banishment into the abyss of death [3] vowing to proclaim God's great deed if one is saved [4] keeping this vow by singing of God's favor before the assembly so as to give thanks and bring humans the message of God's gracious power. [BDCM 127]

2.7 The Psalter as TEMPLE CULT (Law) and PRAYER IN Song (Prophecy)



We must pay attention to the place of [the Book of Psalms] in the biblical canon in order to appreciate its significance properly. With the Old Testament the Psalter is a **bridge between the Law and the Prophets**. It has grown out of the requirements of the **temple cult**, of the Law, but by appropriating the law in prayer and song, it has uncovered its **prophetic essence** more and more. [BDCM 127]

2.8 The Book of Psalms as THE FIRST LITURGICAL BOOK



The bible contains its own hymnal: the Psalter, which was not only born from the practice of singing and playing musical instruments during worship – but also contains by itself – in the practice, the live performance – **essential elements of a theory of music in faith and for faith.**

[BDCM 122]

2.9a ZAMIR determining influence on... entire history to come



On the path from the Hebrew word *zamir* to the Greek phrasing *psallate*, a cultural and intellectual development had occurred that had a **determining influence on the entire history to come** and which still has something very concrete to say to us as well. Just the choice of the Hebrew word presupposes a cultural decision-making process that is based on a religious orientation and marks the peculiarity of Israel in the history of the religions of the Near East as well as humanity in general. [BDCM 125]

2.9b ZAMIR-refers originally to instruments



The word zamir is based on a term found in all old Hamito-Semitic languages. The word means singing with or without instrumental accompaniment; the emphasis is on articulated singing, a singing with reference to a text, which is instrumentally supported as a rule **but always ordered to a specific statement in regard to content.**

[BDCM 125]

2.9c Zamir-different than pagan music



Thus zamir stands clearly apart from orgiastic cult music, which serves to intoxicate the sense and which through the frenzy of sensual feelings, carries people away in ecstatic “liberation” from mind and will.

In contrast zamir refers to logos-like music, if we can put it that way, which incorporates a word or word like event it has received and resounds to it in praise or petition, in thanksgiving or lament. [BDCM 125]

2.10a PSALLEIN- In Greek, it did not mean “to Sing”



The Septuagint chose the word Psallein in its translation which for the Greeks meant “to touch, pluck, run with the fingers, particularly when playing strings” in general to play a stringed instrument **but never to sing.**

2.10b PSALLEIN- In Greek BIBLE, means to sing as Israel sings to her God (a unique musical form)



The Greek Bible gave the Greek word a completely new meaning, and with that it also introduced a cultural change. Although the word Psalmos had denoted a stringed instrument in Greek, it now meant the songs of Israel which arise from faith. The verb likewise acquired the meaning “to sing” but now in a sense that is quite clearly defined by the history of a civilization and religions: **to sing as Israel sings to her God.**

2.10b PSALLEIN- In Greek BIBLE, means to sing as Israel sings to her God (a unique musical form) con't.



In this sense the expression “to sing psalms” is a neologism for the Bible with which it also introduced a new phenomenon into the Greek world.

[Psallein] denotes a **singing that found its clearly defined musical form in the prayer tradition of Israel.** [BDCM 126]

2.10c Psallein means “special kind” of instrumental playing Refers to both Jewish and Christian worship.



The Greek Bible translated the Hebrew zamir by the word Psallein, which in Greek meant “to pluck” (especially in the sense of a stringed instrument) but now became **the word for the special kind of instrumental playing** used in Jewish worship and later described the singing of Christians. [insert about Maskil].

[ML 143]

2.10b Alt Psallein creates its own culture,
a standard for all later forms of enculturation.



Thus, in the musical sphere biblical faith created its own form of culture, an expression appropriate to its inward essence, one that provides **standard** for all later forms of inculturation. [ML 143]

2.11 Psallein is imperative-

The first result is response of Revelation



This imperative runs through all of Scripture; it is the concrete version of the call to worship and glorify God which is revealed in the bible as **the most profound vocation of human beings.**

- This means that musical expression is part of the proper human **response** to God's self-revelation, to his becoming open to a relationship with us.
- Mere speech, mere silence, mere action are not enough. That integral way of humanly expressing joy or sorrow, consent or complaint which occurs in singing is necessary for **responding** to God, who touches us precisely in the totality of our being.

2.11 Psallein is imperative-

The first result is response of Revelation (con't)



- The word psallite entails more than our word “to sing”. Psallite does not necessarily require instrumental accompaniment, but because of its origin it does refer to instruments in which were creation is made to sound. *Admittedly the biblical adaptation of this word has made singing—that is, making music vocally—primary.* [BDCM 126]

2.12 Psallein is imperative- The second result is creates and refers to unique musical form



The musical imperative of the Bible therefore is not entirely unspecified but refers to a **form** that biblical faith gradually created for itself as an appropriate mode of its expression.
[BDCM 127]

2.13 Music and culture “exchange and flourish” in “New Song”



This ability to **exchange and flourish** also finds its expression in the ever-recurring imperative: Sing to the Lord a New Song.” Experiences of salvation are found not only in the past, but occur over and over again: hence they also require the ever-new proclamation of God’s contemporaneity, whose eternity is falsely understood if one interprets it as being locked in decisions made “from time immemorial.” [BDCM 127]

2.14 The Alliance of Love and Song-in the Song of Songs



The **Alliance of Love and song** came into the Old Testament in a rather curious way, namely, through the acceptance of **the Song of Songs**. This was a collection of thoroughly human love songs, but almost certainly its acceptance involved a far deeper interpretation. These very beautiful love poems of Israel could be seen as the inspired words of Sacred Scripture because of the conviction that, in this serenading of human love, the mystery of the love of God and Israel shines through. [ML 141]

2.15 Martin Hengel's theory regarding Psalm singing [quoted by Ratzinger]



“Since the number of syllables per line of verse was not fixed, it is not a matter of singing a thoroughly composed melody, but of a... sprechgesang which probably **only permitted melody-like movements of tone** at the beginning and end of the stichs.” [BDCM 126]

2.15a The unique form: cantilation? [music subservient to text]



It presumably involved a kind of speech-song that allowed changes of note in the melody only at the beginning and end. [ML 143]

2.16 Psalter as Church's prayer book – Why we sing?



Quite **spontaneously**, the Psalter becomes the prayer book for the infant Church, which with equal spontaneity, has become a Church that sings her prayers. This applies first of all to the Psalter, which Christians now pray together with Christ. [ML 139]

2.17 The MUSIC of the psalms are inspired – Or is it the musical form? Or merely “singing” faith?



The Holy Spirit, who inspired David to sing and to pray, moves him to speak of Christ, indeed causes him to become the very mouth of Christ, thus enabling us in the Psalms to speak through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father. Now this exegesis of the psalms, at once Christological and Pneumatological, not only concerns the text **but also includes the element of music.**

2.17 The MUSIC of the psalms are inspired – Or is it the musical form? Or merely “singing” faith? (con’t)



- It is the **Holy Spirit who teaches us to sing**—first David and then, through him, Israel and the Church.
- **Yes, singing**, the surpassing of ordinary speech, **is a pneumatic event**. Church music comes into being as a charism, a gift of the Spirit. It is a true Glossolalia, the new tongue that comes from the Holy Spirit. [ML 140]

2.18 Psallein creates “the standard” for any new song.



What is the lasting significance of biblical directives for the music of the Church?

- First, that Christ is regarded as the true author of the psalms.
- Second, “along with the texts [of the psalms], the Church embraced the mode of singing, that basic cultural decision which had occurred during the development of the psalmody. She saw in it **the standard** that served as orientation for any new singing of the new song.” [BDCM 131]

2.19 In Scripture, Psalmos (song) is “a gift” – that is, From God, not “to God”



This is quite apparent in the organization of I Cor 14:26 “When you come together, each one has a song (psalmon), a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.”

At the beginning of the service there is song which Paul describes with the word “psalm” and thus defines **its musical and theological form**.

For the assessment of art in the apostolic Church it is important that **the song appeared as a gift of the Spirit** just like the lesson, tongue, prophecy and interpretation. [BDCM 131]

2.19a New Music added to the Psalms in the Early Church, Stage two of “faith becoming music,” but as gifts of spirit.



Through the Roman author Pliny, who informed the emperor about the religious services of the Christians, we know that, at the beginning of the second century, AD, singing to the glory of Christ in his divinity was at the very heart of Christian liturgy. One can well imagine that, with these new Christian texts, came a more varied use of the singing than hitherto and the composition of new melodies. It would seem that **one of the ways in which Christian faith was developed was precisely in the writing of canticles**, which arose at this time in the Church as “gifts of the Spirit.” [LM 144]

2.19 b Same idea – Stage Two – of faith becoming music, but now in the development of Logos Theology



From Pliny we learn that the sung glorification of Christ in his divinity belonged to the core of the Christian religious service at the beginning of the second century, and we consider the prologue of John and the hymn in Philippians as archetypes of such song. The **early development** of Christology, its ever deeper recognition of **Christ's divinity**, probably **occurred essentially and particularly** in the **hymns** of the Church, in the blend of theology, poetry and **music**.

[BDCM 131]

2.20 Christian singing related to Synagogue: Christian singing related to Temple?



The Christian Communities had grown out of the synagogue and, along with the Christologically interpreted Psalter, had also taken over the synagogue's way of singing.

[Some scholars, eg. Ed Foley, question whether there was singing in the synagogue.]

2.20a Step three in faith becoming music – OT foundation, then Christological Hymns [including John's Prologue]



Very soon, new Christian hymns and canticles came into being: first, with a wholly Old Testament foundation, the **Benedictus and Magnificat**, but then **Christologically focused texts**, preeminently the prologue of St. John's Gospel (Jn 1:1-18), the hymn of Christ in the epistle to the Philippians (2:6-11) and the song of Christ in the first epistle to Timothy (3:16) [LM 143]

2.20a Step three in faith becoming music – OT foundation, then Christological Hymns [including John's Prologue] (con't)




He was manifested in the flesh
Vindicated in the spirit
Seen by the angels
Preached among the Gentiles
Believed in throughout the world
Taken up in Glory. (Tim 3:16)

2.21 Logos mysticism and Greek Hymnody –

A historical lesson: music's power to change faith fundamentally.

The Role of Church authorities: preserve authentic faith.



As the Christian Church was uprooted from her Semitic soil and moved into the Greek world, a spontaneous and far-reaching fusion took place with Greek Logos mysticism, with its poetry and **music**, that eventually **threatened to dissolve Christianity** into a generalized mysticism.

2.21 Logos mysticism and Greek Hymnody –

A historical lesson: music's power to change faith fundamentally.

The Role of Church authorities: preserve authentic faith. (con't)

It was **precisely hymns and their music** [notice meaning of “music”] that provided the point of entry for Gnosticism, that deadly temptation which began to subvert Christianity from within.

And so it is understandable that, in their struggle for the identity of the faith and its rooting in the historical figure of Jesus Christ, **the Church authorities** resorted to a radical decision. [at Laodicea]

2.22 Modern day moderation – because of extensive good music.



“We certainly do not need to inflict upon ourselves the strict discipline the Church practiced in the second and third centuries when, in the face of the Gnostic temptation, she reduced church music to the Psalms. We do not need this if only because, in the meantime, an **infinitely larger trove of music** that is really appropriate to faith has become available.” [BDCM 136]

2.23 The first Centuries struggle – with the “a cultural form of music”



The First centuries of Christianity confront us with a dramatic **struggle** for the right determination of the relationship **between** this **openness toward the new** on the one hand and the **irrevocable** and **fundamental** cultural **form** on the other, which belongs to the essence of faith itself.
[BDCM 128]

2.23a Faith becoming music—music becoming faith: Song doesn't do away with cultural decisions of the faith, nor does culture overwhelm Biblical faith and biblical song, But simultaneously define each other more clearly

In this process of renewal, the song has not done away with the basic cultural decisions of faith, nor with that which faith has culturally given as a directive, but has opened them on the one hand even further while simultaneously defining them more clearly. [BDCM 128]

2.24 The Luminous power of music and Doxa (glory)

“...no one hums the homily”



[The Baroque] succeeded in dedicating the whole **luminous power of music**...to the glory of God. Whether it is Bach or Mozart that we hear in Church, we have a sense...of what the glory of God means. The mystery of infinite beauty is there and enables us to experience the presence of God more fully and vividly than in many sermons. [ML 146]

2.25 Pius X—creates the standard: Gregorian Chant, polyphony



Pius X tried to remove the operatic element from the liturgy and declared that **Gregorian chant** and the **great polyphony** of the age of the Catholic Reformation (of which Palestrina was the outstanding representative) to be the standard for liturgical music. A clear distinction was made between liturgical music and religious music in general.

2.25a Pius X—musical/liturgical reform



The motu proprio of Pius X intends ...

- The de-emphasizing of orchestral accompaniment, which above all in Italy had developed opera-like qualities, was meant
- to put Church music once again at the service of the text, and of adoration.
- Church music was no longer to be a performance on the occasion of a liturgical service, but **rather the liturgy itself**, ie. a joining in with the choir of angels and saints. [IPOA 8]



Monday Afternoon Presentation



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3.1 Liturgy and Music live in tension



“Liturgy and Music have been closely related to one another from their earliest beginnings...liturgy and music are closely connected, their relation to one another has also been **stained**, especially at turning points of history and culture...**In the disputes of the Council and immediately thereafter, the proper form of music in the liturgy has become controversial.**” [LCM 377]

3.2 “Inner Dignity” is linked to history, that is, the Biblical “standard.”



“It seemed to be merely a question of the difference between pastoral practitioners and Church musicians. Church musicians did not want to be subject to mere pastoral expediency [previously defined as esoteric versus utility; then as functional versus artistic] but church musicians attempted to emphasize the *interior dignity* [inner Würdigkeit] of music as a pastoral norm in its own right. The controversy seemed to move essentially on the level of application only.” (*emphasis mine*) [LCM 377]

3.3 Questions about music lead to questions about Liturgy



“The controversy about Church music is becoming symptomatic for the deeper question about **what the liturgy is.**”
[LCM 377]

3.4 Participatory music and false experiences of Church music: [1] Cohesion of the group and [2] identity of “group”



[1] “music which shows itself as the power that effects the **cohesion** of the group.

[2] The familiar songs as it were, are the **identifying** words of a community.”

[LCM 377]

3.5 Virgil's short hand summary:



Ratzinger challenges “full, conscious, active participation” as it exists in popular use from several points of views:

1. Participation refers to participation in the sacred mysteries (the Pascal Mystery), not simply by participation in song.
2. Activity in the liturgy, according to Guardini, is not “doing” but “receiving” and “being,” we don’t “activate” redemption, we participate in it.

3.5 Virgil's short hand summary (con't):



3. Activating the assembly in worship, that is, making them “do” something exterior, is misdirected.

4. Participation in worship can be achieved by listening as well as by singing.

5. Nor does active participating mean active participation in social movements, e.g. in *Missa Nicaragua*. Music of this type shows the passion for action in the culture.

3.6 A Central Statement



“Faith becoming music
is part of the process of
the Word becoming Flesh.” [LCM 385]

German Text:

Das Musikwerden des Glaubens ist ein Teil des Vorgangs
der Fleischwerdung des Wortes. [LCM German edition, p.
166]

Alternate Translation: **“The Musification of Faith is
part of the process of the Incarnation of the Word.”**

3.6 A Central Statement continued



- *Four parts:*
- [1] The Musification of Faith
- [2] The Incarnation of the **Logos**
- [3] Part of the process
- [4] *werdung* – “becoming”

3.6a One image, but not the only one:



3.7 Faith becoming music in musical images



“wood and metal become tone, the unconscious and the unreleased become ordered and meaningful sound. A corporealization takes place which is a spiritualization, and a spiritualization which is a corporealization. The Christian corporealization is always a spiritualization at the same time, and the Christian spiritualization is a corporealization into the body of the incarnate Logos.” [LCM 386]

3.8 Faith becoming music; music transforms faith just as word becomes flesh and flesh is transformed by word.

Relates to Liturgy as “inner Exodus” related to “inner Dignity” which relates to “Psallein/Zamir” biblical “standard.”


Provided that this interpenetration of both movements occurs in music, it serves to the highest degree and in an indispensable way that **inner exodus** which liturgy always seeks to be and to become. But this means that **the appropriateness of liturgical music is measured by** its inner correspondence to this basic anthropological and theological form.”
[2 LCM 154]

3.9 “Inner standard” is Logos, the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery



“The music that corresponds to the liturgy of the incarnate Christ raised on the cross lives from another, greater and broader **synthesis** of **spirit**, **intuition** and **sensuous sound**.” [2 LCM 156]

3.10 Not all music comes from this standard, inner dignity, reflecting Ratzinger's starting point of Revelation (God's approach to humans.)



“This greatness exists only here because it alone was able to grow out of this anthropological ground that joined the spiritual and the profane into an ultimate human unity. This unity is dissolved in the measure that this anthropology disappears.” [LCM 388]

3.11 Music which is rejected using this “Inner standard”

- There is music of *provocation*, which rouses people for various collective goals.
- There is *sensual music*, which drives people into the erotic or is in some way essentially intent on sensual feelings of pleasure.
- There is *ordinary light music*, which does not seek to make a statement, but only wants to break open the burden of silence.
- There is *rationalistic music*, in which the tones simply serve rational constructions but no real penetration of the mind and senses ensues.

[2 LCM 156]

3.12 Ratzinger's personal experience and testimony about music

“The greatness of this music is, for me, the most immediate and the most evident verification of the **Christian image of the human beings** and of the **Christian faith** in redemption that history offers us. Whoever is really touched by it knows somehow deep inside that the faith is true, even if this person still has a long way to go to re-enact this insight with mind and will.” [2 LCM 156-157]

3.13 Ratzinger's (the Church's) 3 criteria for Liturgical music.

- First, one must live through and through from the inner structure of this image of the human being. One must be receptive, humble, and in necessary awe. In short, one must pray for the gift of music.
- Second, Liturgical music must in its inner character meet the requirements of great liturgical texts—the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei. *This does not mean that it can only be text music, but it does find a guide for its own message in **the inner orientation** of these texts.*

3.13 Ratzinger's (the Church's) 3 criteria for Liturgical music (continued).

• Third, Liturgical music has as a road sign Gregorian Chant and to Palestrina. ***This does not mean that all church music has to be imitation of this music. Correctly understood we are simply saying that models were given here that provide orientation.***

○ ***What can arise through the creative application of such an orientation cannot, however be decided in advance.***