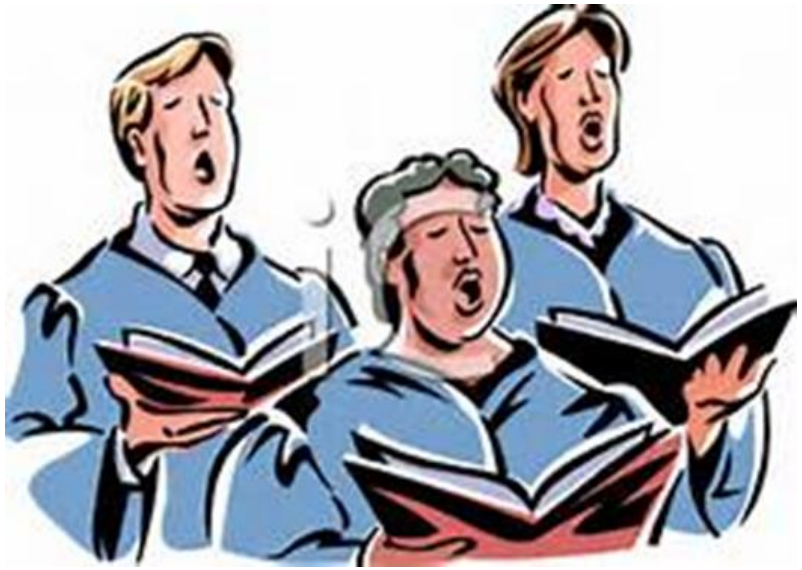
“A Treasure of Inestimable Value”

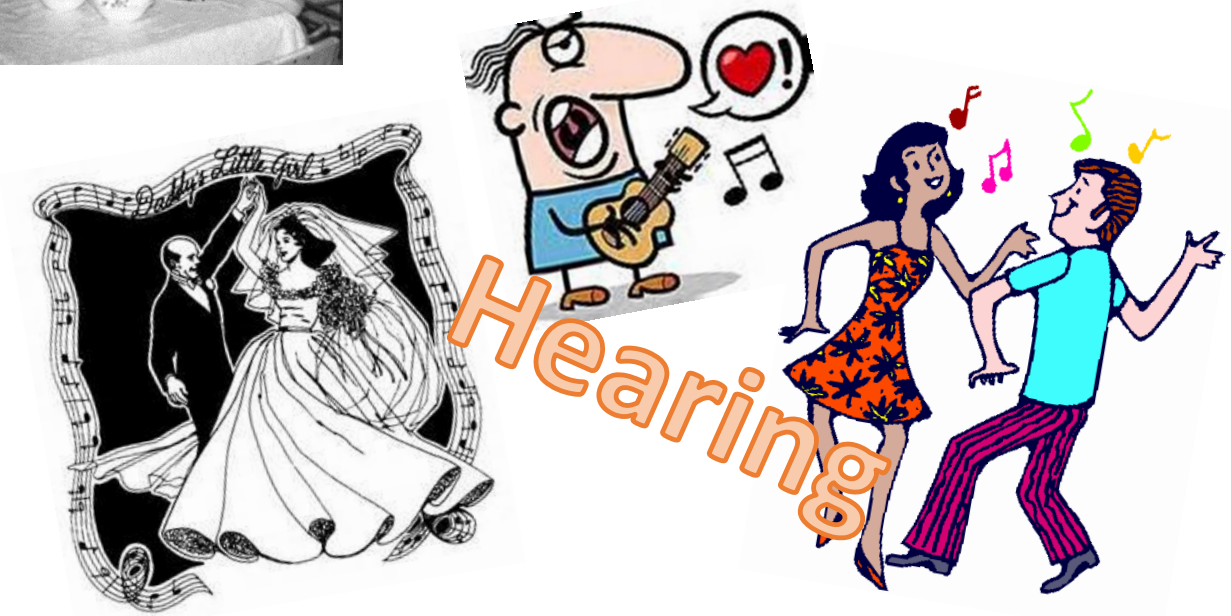
Sacred Music of the Catholic Church

Few things are as controversial….

… as the topic of music in church!



Our senses create emotion and a sense of being…



Holy Mother Church uses those same senses…

… to invoke mystery of God

Sight

Smell

Hearing

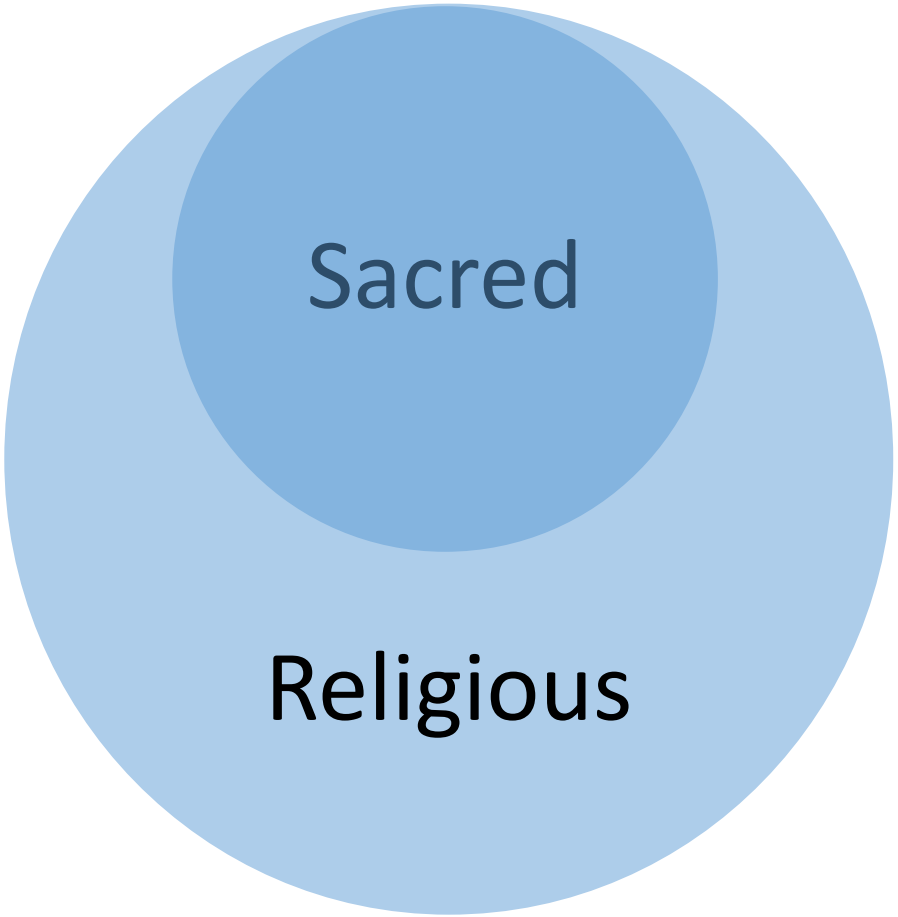
"How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs, and the voices that echoed through your Church! What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears, distilling the truth in my heart. A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face — tears that did me good"

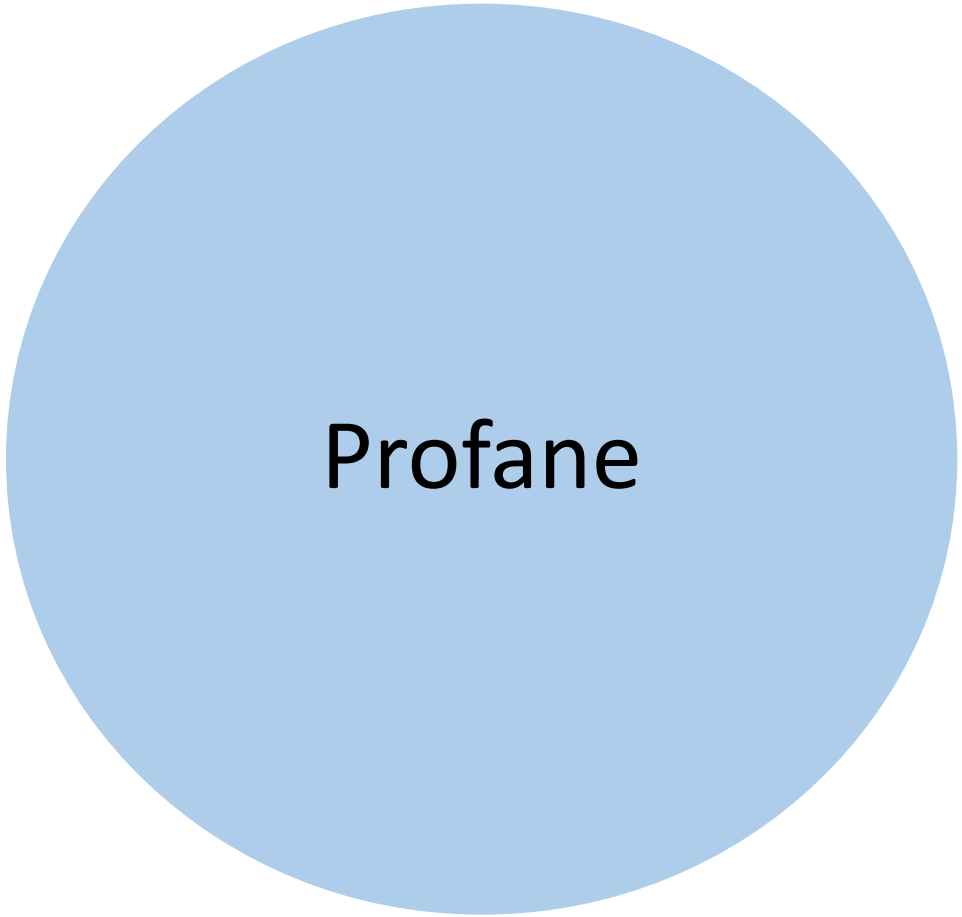
St. Augustine, *Confessions,* *c.AD 401*

Holy Mother Church's teaching on Sacred Music

• 1903	*Tra le Sollecitudini*	St. Pope Pius X
• 1928	*Divini Cultus*	Pope Pius XI
• 1955	*Musicase Sacrae*	Pope Pius XII
• 1958	*De Musica Sacra*	Sacred Congregation of Rites
• 1963	*Sacrosancta concilium*	Vatican II Council: Constitution
• 1967	*Musicam Sacram*	Vatican II Council: Instruction
• 1974	*Voluntati Obsequens*	Sacred Congregation of Worship
• 1985	*Liturgy & Music*	Cardinal Ratzinger
• 1999	*Letter to Artists*	St. Pope John Paul II
• 2000	*Spirit of the Liturgy*	Cardinal Ratzinger
• 2003	*Chirograph*	St. Pope John Paul II

The Church's definitions of Music…





The Church's definition…

Sacred (Liturgical)	• Used for the sacred liturgy • Holy, Sound, and Universal
Religious (Devotional)	• Aids & supports the faith but is not part of the liturgy • Devotional, praise & worship
Profane (Secular)	• All other secular music

Sacred Music defined…

Holy	• Set aside only for glorifying God & sanctifying the faithful • Is not the ordinary, not the every-day, not “pop”
Soundness of Form	• Synthesize diverse ritual elements into a unity • Draw together succession of actions into coherent whole
Universal	• Supra-national, equally accessible to diverse cultures • Latin is the quintessential unifier of the Latin Church

Honoring Religious (non-Sacred) Music

Pope Pius XII writes:

- We must also honor that music not part of the sacred liturgy
- Exercises great and salutary force and power on the souls of the faithful
- Used in churches during non-liturgical services & ceremonies
- Used outside churches at solemnities & celebrations

Enculturation of Peoples

- Tunes of these hymns often sung in the language of the people
- Memorized with almost no effort or labor, and frequently repeated and understood
- Children learn these hymns at a tender age, helping to know & memorize the truths of the Faith as a sort of catechism

History of Sacred Music…

Ancient Jewish Worship

Gregorian Chant

Baroque & Romantic era

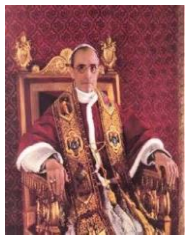
Post Vatican II

1000 BC | 0 | AD 500 | 1000 | 1500 | 1750 | 1960 | 2016

The Early Church

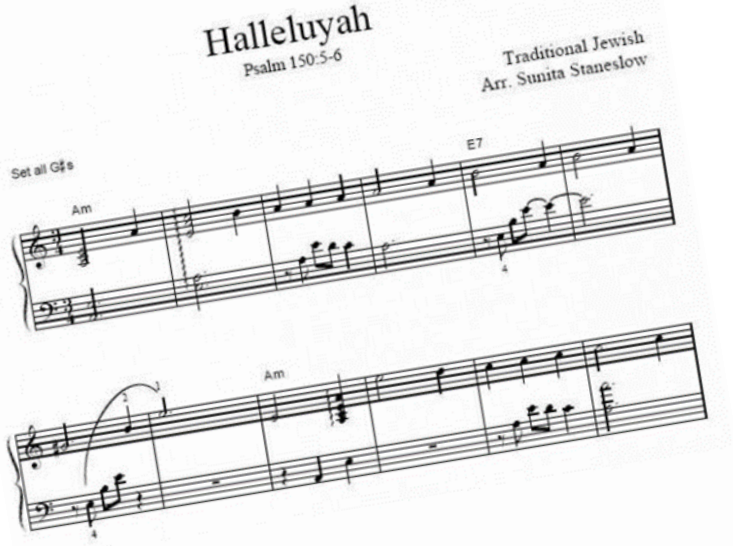
Renaissance Polyphony

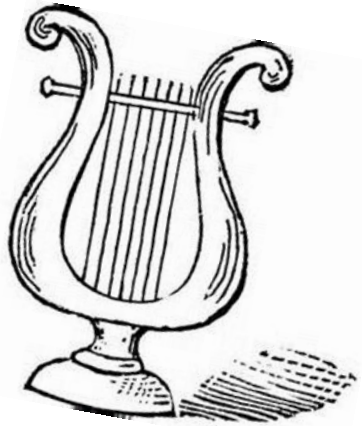
Early 20th Century

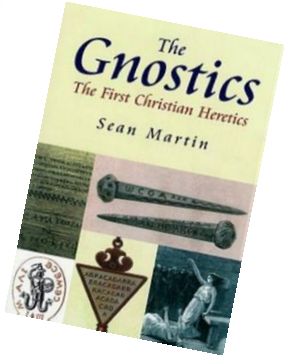


Ancient Jewish Worship…

The Early Church…







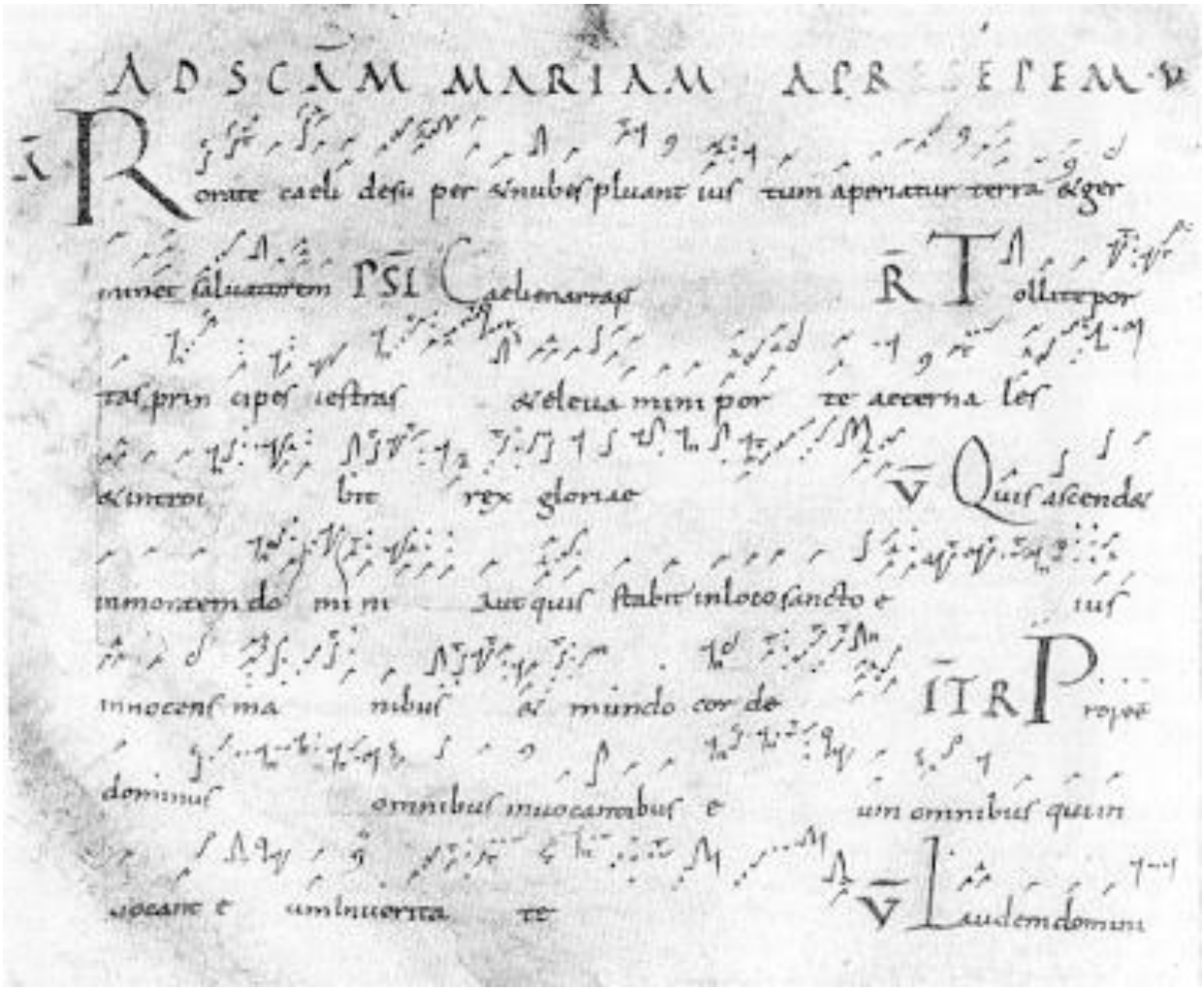
Development of Gregorian Chant…

David the Psalmist
(9th Century B.C.)

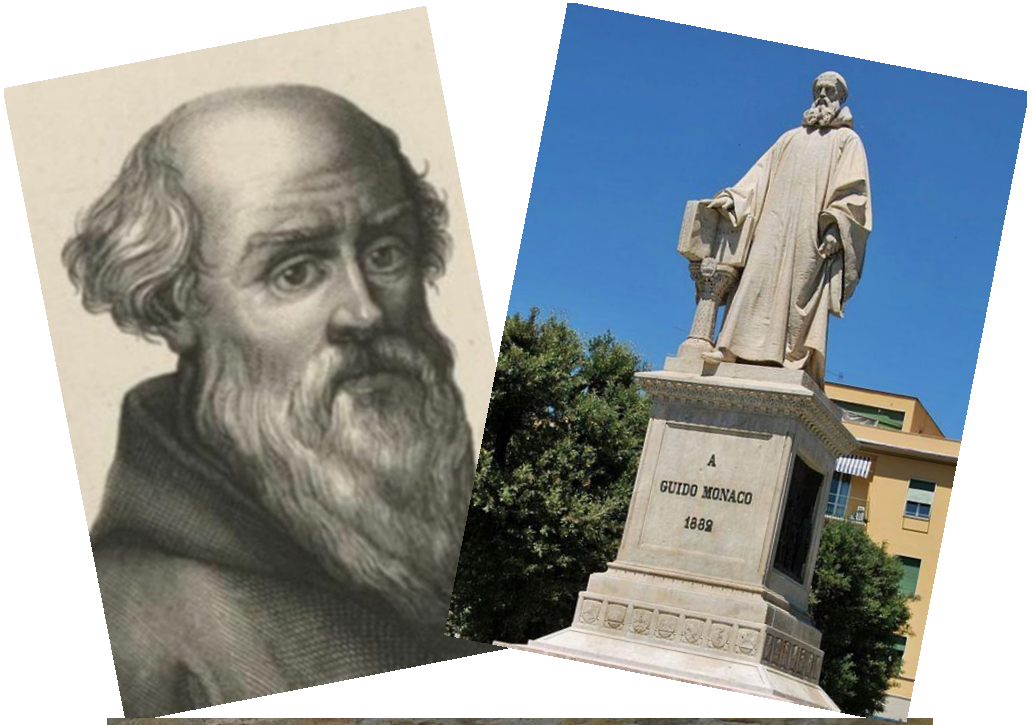
St. Pope Gregory the Great
(6th Century)

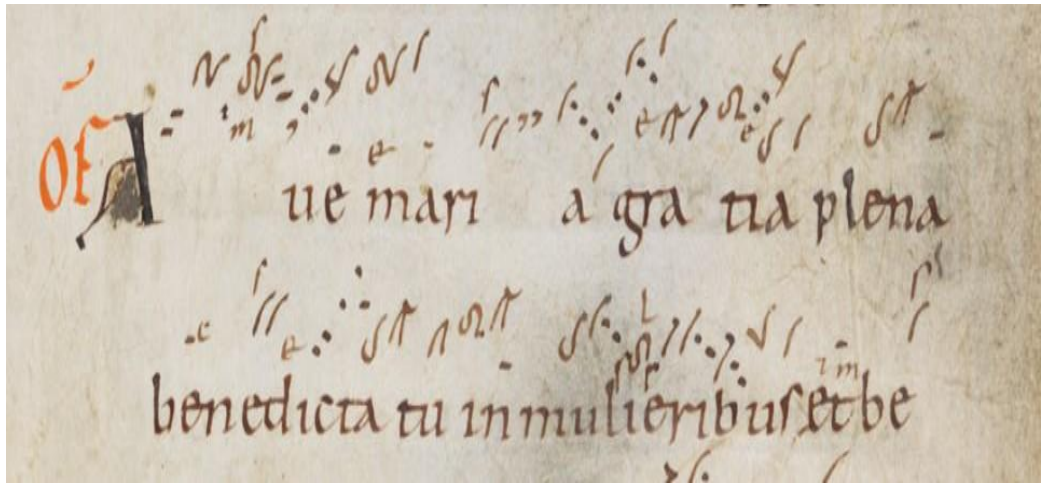
Charlemagne
(9th Century)

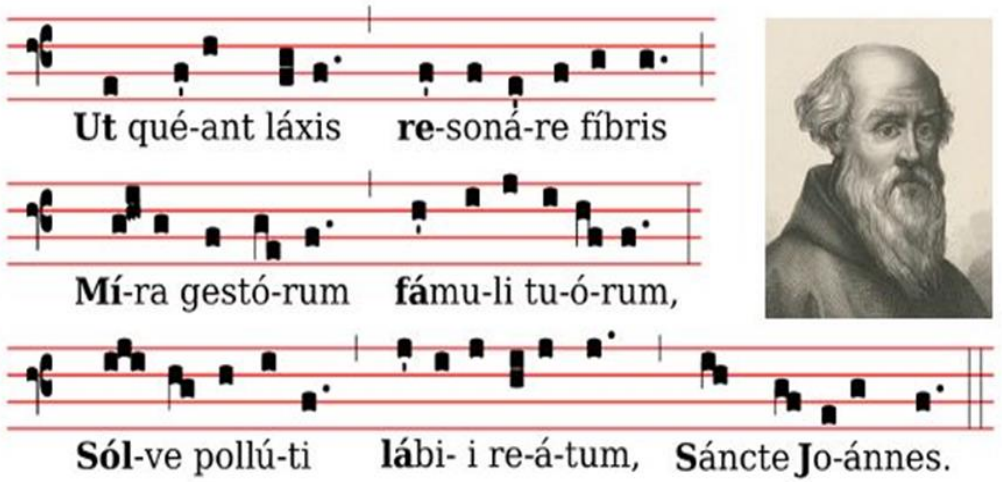
How was Gregorian Chant “passed on”?



Guido Monaco d'Arezzo (A.D. 995-1050)







Resultant “new” Gregorian Square Notation

The Church's View on Gregorian Chant

The Church inherited it from the Fathers of the Church and it is the supreme model of Sacred music serving as an element of unity in the Roman liturgy.

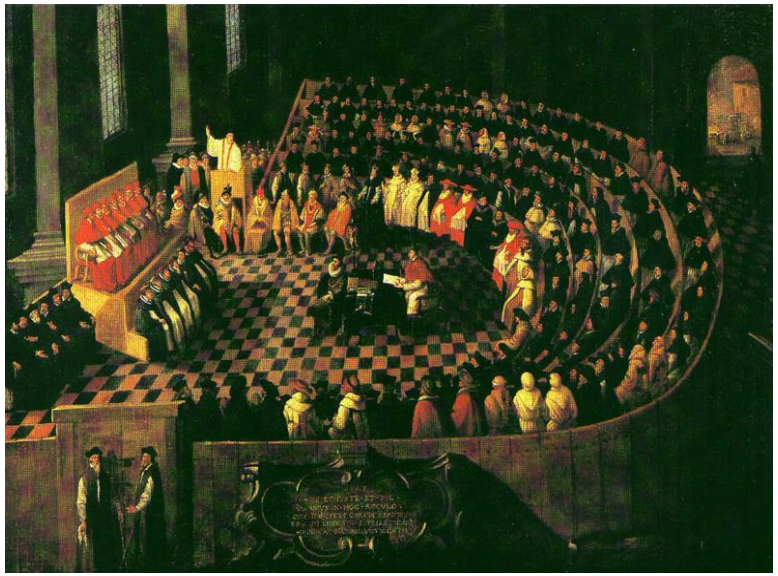
Within Gregorian chant the qualities of Sacred music are found in the highest degree and making it the Chant proper to the Roman Church

St. Pope Pius X
Tra le solleccitudini
(1903)

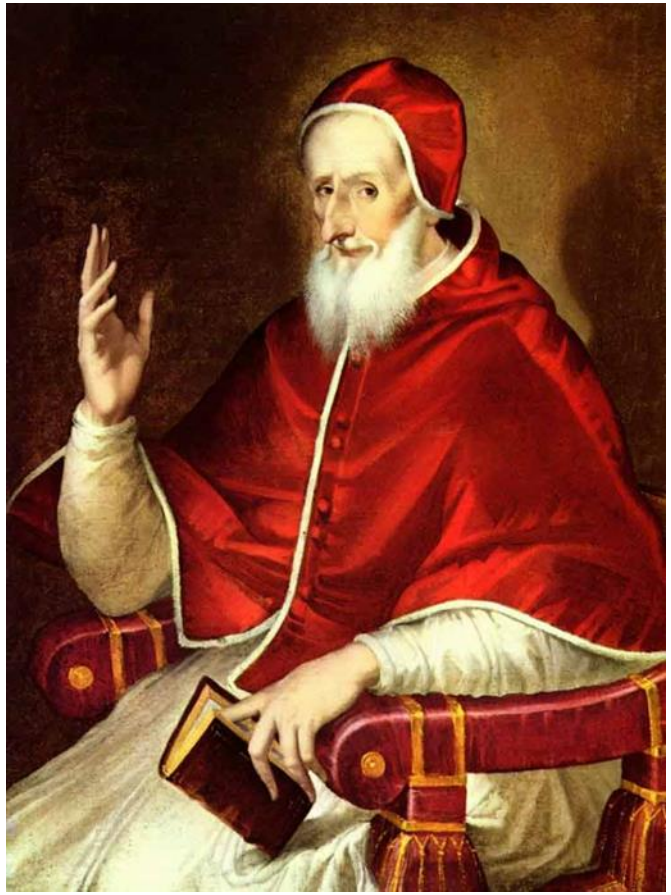
The more closely a composition for church approaches the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes

These sacred music qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by Classic Polyphony which reached its greatest perfection in the 16th century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina

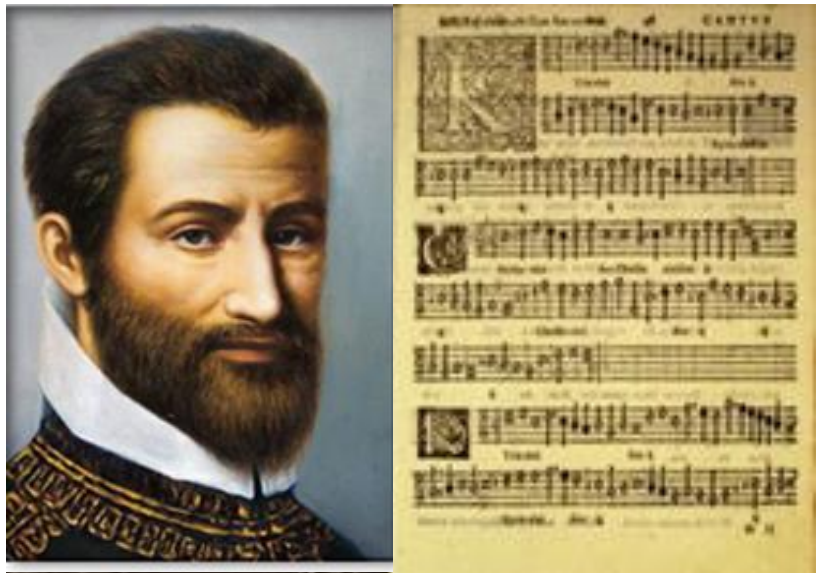
Development of Sacred Polyphony



The Council of Trent



Pope Pius V



Pierluigi da Palestrina

The Golden Era of Sacred Polyphony

AD 1400 | 1450 | 1500 | 1550 | 1600

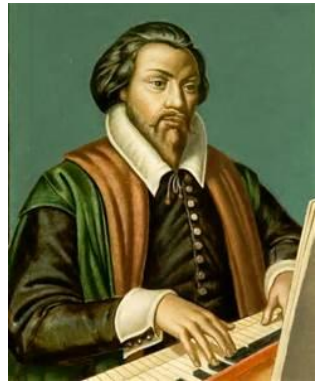
G. Dufay

Josquin desPrez

C. Morales

Palestrina

Orlando Lasso


William Byrd

Thomas Victoria

Karel Hassler

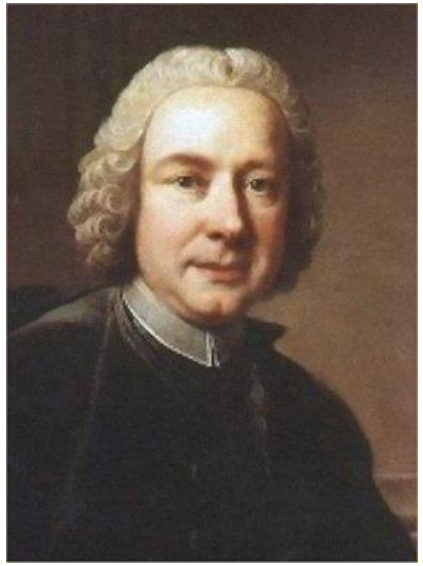
Jean Mouton

A. Gabrielli

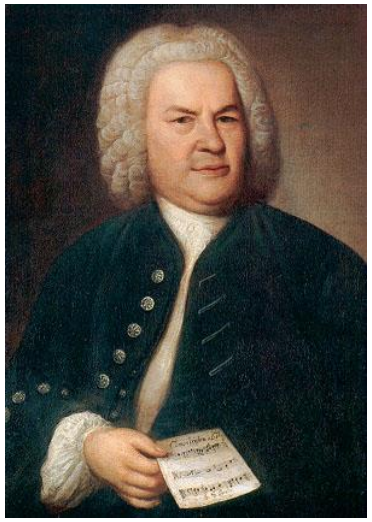
G. Gabrielli

Luca Marenzio

Sacred Music of the Baroque & Romantic



Antonio Caldara

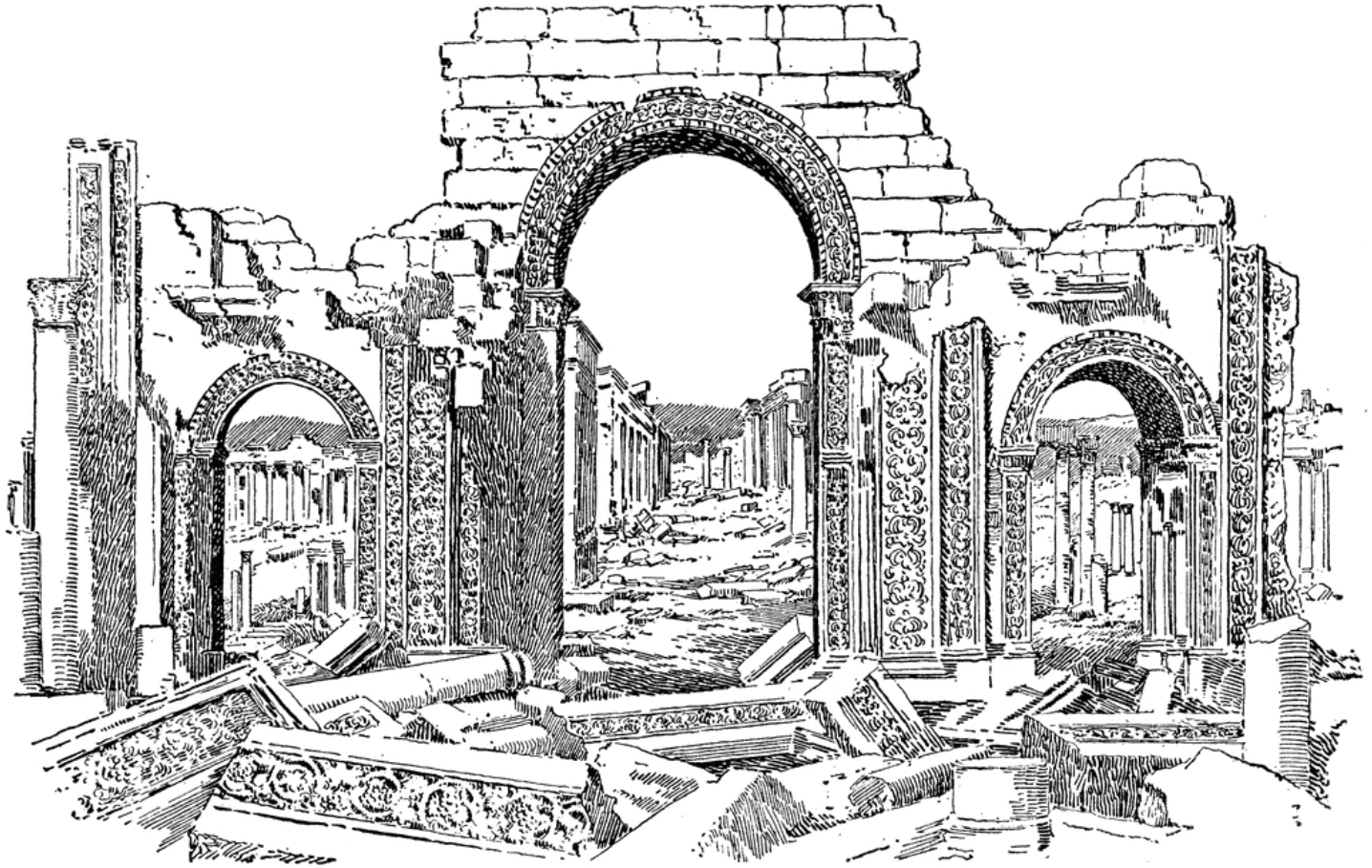


J.S. Bach

W.A. Mozart

Michael Hadyn

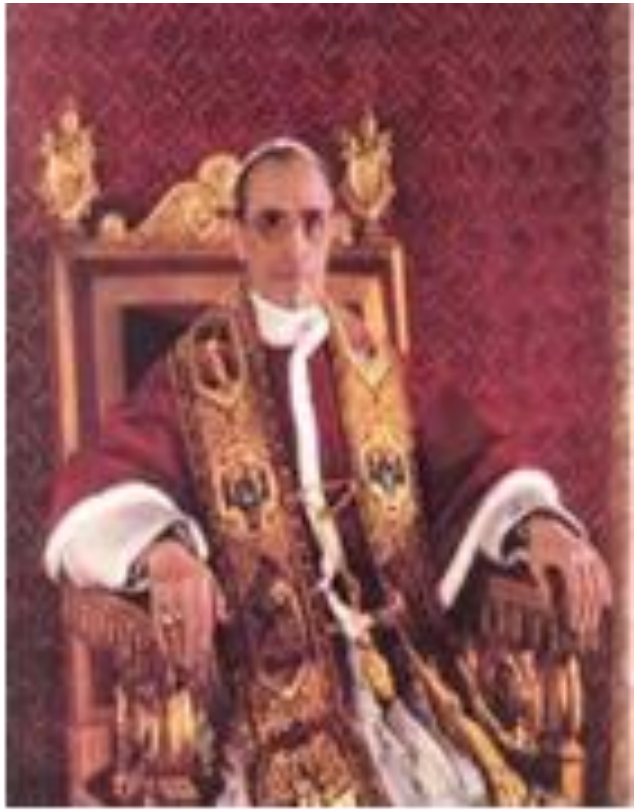
State of Sacred Music going into 20th Century



20th Century: Attempted Restoration…

St. Pope Pius X
Tra le sollecitudini (1903)

Pope Pius XI
Divini Cultus (1928)



Pope Pius XII
Mediator Dei (1947)
Musicae Sacrae (1955)

20th Century: Attempted Restoration…

St. Pope Pius X
Tra le sollecitudini (1903)

"To maintain and promote the decorum of the House of God"

Purpose was to renew sacred music during liturgical services:

- That any Mass must be composed in an integrated fashion
- That all percussive instruments should be forbidden
- That the congregation itself should ideally be trained to sing the various modes of Gregorian chant along with the choir

Kicked off a renewal in chant understanding and the re-codification of Gregorian chant

20th Century: Attempted Restoration…

Deplored that sacred music laws of prior pontiffs in some places have not been fully observed due to disobedience

Pope Pius XI
Divini Cultus (1928)

Praised again the value and greatness of Gregorian chant

Some give countenance to a type of music that should be altogether banned from our churches

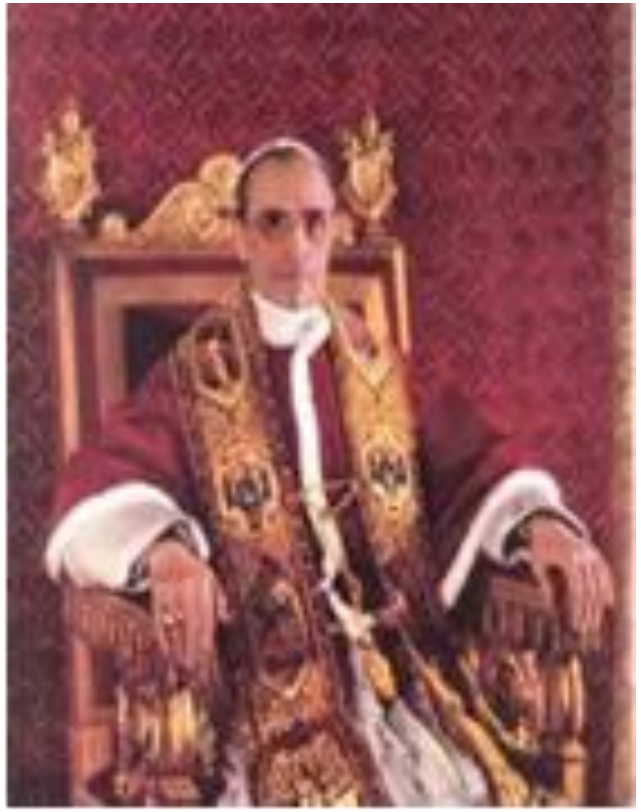
On 900th Anniversary of Guido Monaco d'Arezzo and his contribution to chant's preservation "to the great benefit & glory of the Church"

20th Century: Attempted Restoration…

"The laws and standards of religious art apply in a stricter & holier way for sacred music than all other forms of art…

… since the latter prepare a worthy setting, but sacred music has an important place in the actual performance of the sacred rites.

In order that singers and the Christian people may rightly understand the meaning of the liturgical words joined to the musical melodies…"



Pope Pius XII
Mediator Dei (1947)
Musicae Sacrae (1955)

State of Sacred Music before Vatican II

- Lack of focus and training on *scholae* and choirs lead to a proliferation of Low Masses (i.e. not solemnly sung)

- Low Masses introduced “vernacular hymnology” at Entrance, Offertory, Communion, & Recessional

Sacred Music & the “Myths” of Vatican II

Sacrosanctum Concilium (1963)

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

"Particular law remaining in force, the use the Latin Language is to be preserved in the Latin rites." (§36)

"In Masses which are celebrated with people…steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them." (§54)

"The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical settings." (§116)

Sacrosanctum Concilium
(1963)

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

"But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations…" (§117)

"In the Latin Church, the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and higher things." (§120)

"But other instruments also may be admitted for use…only on the condition that the instruments are suitable for sacred use…" (§121)

Musicam Sacrum
(1967)

Instruction on Music in the Liturgy

"Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when it is celebrated in song with the ministers...fulfilling their ministry and the people participating in it" (§5)

"The faithful fulfill their liturgical role by making that full, conscious and active participation which…should be above all internal… on the other hand external also. The faithful should also be taught to unite themselves interiorly to what the ministers or choir sing, so that by listening to them, they may raise the minds to God." (§15)

"Where the vernacular has been introduced …it may be opportune to preserve one or more Mass celebrated in Latin – especially the sung Masses" (§48)

Musicam Sacrum
(1967)

Instruction on Music in the Liturgy

"In sung liturgical services celebrated in Latin… Gregorian chant…should be given pride of place…" (§50)

"In order to preserve the heritage of sacred music…the study and practice of Gregorian chant is to be promoted, because with its special characteristics, it is a basis of great importance for the development of sacred music." (§52)

"Musical instruments can be very useful in scared celebrations… 'the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem'…" (§62)

"In permitting and using musical instruments… those…which are…suitable for secular music only, are to be altogether prohibited from every liturgical celebration…" (§63)

The “actual” Vatican II Teachings on Music

- ✓ Latin should continue to be used as the universal language
- ✓ Gregorian chant & sacred Polyphony should continue to be used
- ✓ New compositions are welcomed so long as they confirm to the definition of the sacred music and to the Gregorian mode
- ✓ Organ can be used, but other instruments are to be limited
- ✓ The people have an active, participative role in knowing, understanding, and singing that which is proper to them, most specifically the dialogue Reponses & Ordinary in Latin!

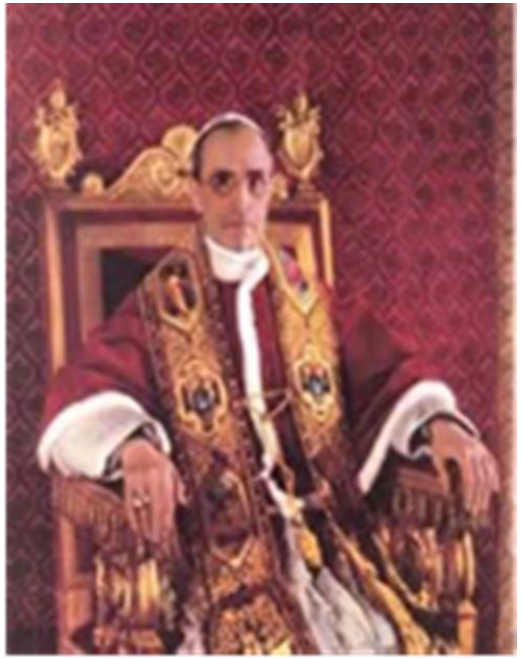
Sacred Music & the Sacrifice of the Mass

The Mass is a Sung Prayer… and the text is most critical

"When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives“
(Matthew 26.30)

Sacred Music & the Sacrifice of the Mass

The Mass is a Sung Prayer… and the text is most critical



Pope Pius XII
Musicae Sacrae (1955)

"Sacred music's special power and excellence lift up to God the minds of the faithful who are present"

Song represents prayer text; therefore, it is the prayer coming from the heart of man, through his voice, to God's ears.

Importance of Human Voice in Sacred Music

"Voices, rather than instruments, ought to be heard in the church…for no instrument, however perfect, however excellent, can surpass the human voice in expressing human thought, especially when it is used by the mind to offer up prayer and praise to Almighty God."

Pius XI, *Divini Cultus*, 1928

"if music – instrumental and vocal – does not possess at the same time the sense of prayer, dignity and beauty, it precludes the entry into the sphere of the sacred and the religious."

Paul VI, *Insegnamenti VI*, 1968

Degrees of Participation in the Mass…

1st Degree	• the faithful should always sing
2nd Degree	• the faithful should sing, unless a complex, multi-voice or polyphonic arrangement is used
3rd Degree	• the faithful would sing if it is easily arranged, but this is likely reserved to the *schola cantorum*

Structural Elements of the Mass…

Order of Mass
Missale Romanum

- The Priest's prayers
- The Dialogues

Ordinary of Mass
Kyriale Romanum

- The "unchanging" parts of the Mass
- *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei*

Proper of Mass
Graduale Romanum

- Prayers of the Mass "proper" to the Day
- Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory, Communion

Singing Participation in the Mass…

Order of Mass
1º - Always sing

- The Priest's prayers
- The Dialogues

Ordinary of Mass
2º - Usually sing

- The "unchanging" parts of the Mass
- *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei*

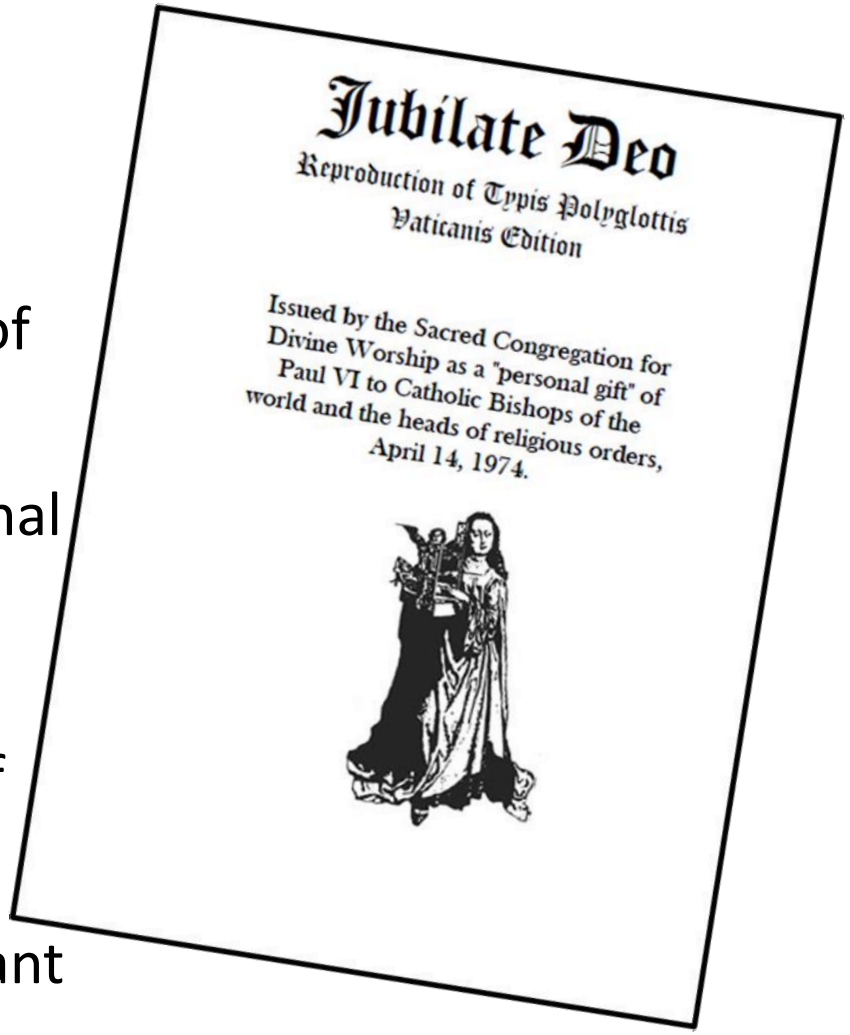
Proper of Mass
3º - Rarely sing

- Prayers of the Mass "proper" to the Day
- Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory, Communion

Voluntati Obsequens

Pope Paul VI, 1974

Letter to the Bishops on the Minimum Repertoire of Plainchant with a free gift to the world…



- make it easier for Christians to achieve unity and spiritual harmony with their brothers and with the living traditions of the past
- those who are trying to improve the quality of congregational singing cannot refuse to Gregorian chant the place which is due to it
- on the best ways of teaching the faithful the Latin chants of "*Jubilate Deo*" and of having them sing them
- promoting the preservation and execution of Gregorian chant

In Closing: What Sacred Music is NOT…

- Sacred Music is not a personal preference…

… it is assigned prayer text given to the Church !

In Closing: What Sacred Music is NOT…

- Sacred Music is not a Performance…

… it is integrated liturgical prayer wrapped in musical melodies

“Whenever applause breaks out in the liturgy because of some human achievement, it is a sure sign that the essence of the liturgy has totally disappeared and been replaced by a kind of religious entertainment.”

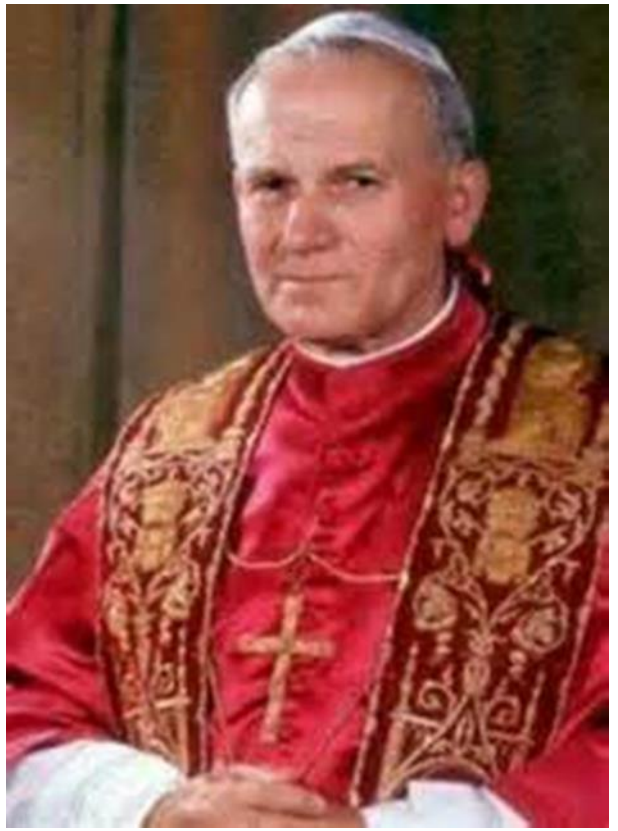
Benedict XVI, *Spirit of the Liturgy*

100th Anniversary of Pius X's *Tra le sollecitudini*

"the contamination of profane theatrical music that in many countries had polluted the repertoire…of the Liturgy"

"not all expressions …of music are able to express adequately the mystery…of the Church's faith"

"the sacred context of the celebration must never become a laboratory for experimentation"



St Pope John Paul II
Chirograph (2003)

“The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater than that of any other art.

The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as scared melody united to words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn Liturgy”

St. Pope John Paul II
Chirograph (2003)

Merci beaucoup
Thank You
お疲れ様
Danke
Gracias
Grazie
Dank u
谢谢你
Thanks
Obrigado