

INSTRUCTION

MUSIC AT THE CELEBRATION OF MASS IN THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND

1. Introduction

The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.

Holy Scripture, indeed, has bestowed praise upon sacred song, and the same may be said of the fathers of the Church and of the Roman pontiffs who in recent times, led by St. Pius X, have explained more precisely the ministerial function supplied by sacred music in the service of the Lord.

Therefore sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. But the Church approves of all forms of true art having the needed qualities, and admits them into divine worship.¹

As an art placed at the service of communal prayer, liturgical music is part of the liturgical action, one that is “a particularly apt way to express a joyful heart, accentuating the solemnity of the celebration and fostering the sense of a common faith and a shared love.” The inestimable treasure of liturgical music is considered integral to worship because it is so closely bound to the liturgical texts.²

This Instruction flows from the above, from the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM), and other such teachings regarding music given to us by the Church and also embodies the following two principles:

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows.³

No other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.⁴

¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), paragraph 112

² Introduction to the Order of Mass: A Pastoral Resource of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (2003), paragraph 40

³ SC, paragraph 14

⁴ SC, paragraph 22§3

2. Entrance Chant

*When the people are gathered, and as the Priest enters with the Deacon and ministers, the Entrance Chant begins. Its purpose is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical time or festivity, and accompany the procession of the Priest and ministers.*⁵

Upon the Priest Celebrant's arrival at the chair, finish the current verse in a strophic hymn, or end with the final refrain in a refrain/verse song. Avoid any instrumental extension at the conclusion of the song text.

3. Penitential Act

*The Priest calls upon the whole community to take part in the Penitential Act, which, after a brief pause for silence, it does by means of a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the Priest's absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance.*⁶

*After the Penitential Act, the Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy), is always begun, unless it has already been part of the Penitential Act.*⁷

The faithful are invited by the Priest to participate in the Penitential Act.

The Priest Celebrant leads form A or B of the Penitential Act, with the *Kyrie eleison* being sung or recited following the absolution.

The Priest, or a Deacon or another minister,⁸ may lead form C, in accord with the rubric which states that the *Kyrie eleison* is not repeated after the absolution.

4. Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

*From time to time on Sundays, especially in Easter Time, instead of the customary Penitential Act, the blessing and sprinkling of water may take place as a reminder of Baptism.*⁹

The Roman Missal indicates that an antiphon or other appropriate song is sung during the sprinkling.

At the conclusion, the *Gloria in excelsis* is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent.¹⁰

⁵ General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy, paragraph 47.

⁶ GIRM 51

⁷ GIRM 52

⁸ Order of Mass, paragraph 6

⁹ GIRM 51

¹⁰ GIRM 53

5. Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and Feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.

It is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by everybody together or by two choirs responding one to the other.¹¹

A through-composed (no refrain) setting of the *Gloria* is preferred since this respects the integrity of the text.

6. Responsorial Psalm

The Responsorial Psalm should correspond to each reading and should usually be taken from the Lectionary.

It is preferable for the Responsorial Psalm to be sung, at least as far as the people's response is concerned. Hence the psalmist, or the cantor of the Psalm, sings the Psalm verses at the ambo or another suitable place.

In the Dioceses of the United States of America, instead of the Psalm assigned in the Lectionary, there may be sung either the Responsorial Gradual from the Graduale Romanum, or the Responsorial Psalm or the Alleluia Psalm from the Graduale Simplex, as described in these books, or an antiphon and Psalm from another collection of Psalms and antiphons, including Psalms arranged in metrical form, providing that they have been approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop. Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the Responsorial Psalm.¹²

It is preferred that the Psalm is sung at the ambo given that the Psalm is Scripture.

¹¹ GIRM 53

¹² GIRM 61

7. The Acclamation before the Gospel

When the Deacon [or Priest who is to proclaim the Gospel] stands, the music for the Gospel Acclamation begins and all present stand.¹³

The Alleluia or another chant laid down by the rubrics is sung, as the liturgical time requires. An acclamation of this kind constitutes a rite or act in itself, by which the gathering of the faithful welcomes and greets the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel and profess their faith by means of the chant. It is sung by everybody, standing, and is led by the choir or a cantor, being repeated as the case requires. The verse, on the other hand, is sung either by the choir or by a cantor.

a) *The Alleluia is sung in every time of year other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary or the Graduale.*

b) *During Lent, instead of the Alleluia, the Verse before the Gospel as given in the Lectionary is sung. It is also possible to sing another Psalm or Tract, as found in the Graduale.*¹⁴

The Gospel Acclamation is sung from a cantor stand or other suitable place, not from the ambo.

During Lent one of the eight prescribed acclamations listed in the Lectionary for Mass, section 223, is to be selected.

8. Offertory Chant

*The procession bringing the gifts is accompanied by the Offertory Chant (cf. no. 37b), which continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. The norms on the manner of singing are the same as for the Entrance Chant (cf. no. 48). Singing may always accompany the rite at the Offertory, even when there is no procession with the gifts.*¹⁵

The Offertory Chant is to conclude no later than when the lavabo (the celebrant's washing of hands) has been completed.

¹³ Instruction: Deacon Assisting at Mass in the Diocese of Cleveland, paragraph 17.

¹⁴ GIRM 62, 131

¹⁵ GIRM 74

9. Eucharistic Acclamations

There are three acclamations that are part of the Eucharistic Prayer: *Holy, Holy, Holy; Mystery of Faith; Amen.*

Only the texts approved for use in the Eucharistic Prayer, as found in the *Roman Missal* are to be used.

As of 27 November 2011, “*Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again*” will no longer be permitted as an acclamation for the Mystery of Faith.

Other songs [e.g. “*Keep in Mind*”(L. Deiss), “*Jesus, Remember Me*” (J. Berthier), “*We Remember*” (M. Haugen)] were never approved for use as the Mystery of Faith acclamation, thus they are not to be used.

10. Lamb of God

*This invocation accompanies the fraction of the bread and, for this reason, may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has been completed. The final time it concludes with the words grant us peace.*¹⁶

This chant is to begin when the Celebrant fractures the host and is to last only until the fraction is finished.

The trope *Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)* is to be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has reached its conclusion, the last time ending with the words *dona nobis pacem (grant us peace)*.

¹⁶ GIRM 83

11. Communion Chant

While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun, its purpose being to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the “communitarian” character of the procession to receive the Eucharist. The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful.¹⁷

The Communion Chant begins while the priest is receiving the Sacrament.

The singing should last at least as long as the faithful are receiving Holy Communion.

In order to highlight the “communitarian” nature of receiving communion, there is to be only one song sung during the procession.¹⁸ Additional cantor, choral or instrumental verses might be added from other sources, but one reoccurring refrain should unify the distribution of Communion.

Provision needs to be taken to ensure singers and musicians can receive Communion with ease.¹⁹ Each parish/institution where Mass is celebrated is to develop a plan to ensure that this happens during the time of the distribution of Communion.

Communion is not to be distributed to singers and musicians after Mass.

12. Song of Praise After Communion

When the distribution of Communion is over, if appropriate, the Priest and faithful pray quietly for some time. If desired, a Psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the whole congregation.²⁰

The optional song of praise after Communion is not to be a choir piece or a piece sung by a soloist. All present must be involved in the singing of this song.

The text (and music) must be included in the worship aid or referenced on the hymn board.

13. Copyright Permissions

A reminder that copyright permission must be obtained and properly acknowledged in the worship aid for all printed music and texts.

¹⁷ GIRM 86

¹⁸ cf. GIRM 87

¹⁹ cf. GIRM 86

²⁰ GIRM 88

Instruction: Music at the Celebration of Mass in the Diocese of Cleveland

In order to fully implement the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, I, in accord with Canon 34, hereby promulgate the Instruction *Music at the Celebration of Mass in the Diocese of Cleveland* on 11 July 2011, with an implementation date of 14 September 2011.

Sister Therese Guerin Sullivan, SP

Most Reverend Richard Lennon

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