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Czasopismo Uniwersytetu Papieskiego Jana Pawła II w Krakowie poświęcone muzyce kościelnej



# Pro Musica Sacra

## ARTYKUŁY

Gilberto Sessantini

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100 anni di esperienza nella Scuola Diocesana di Bergamo

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#### Adres redakcji

Instytut Muzyki Kościelnej • 31-002 Kraków, ul. Kanonicza 25  
[muzyka@upjp2.edu.pl](mailto:muzyka@upjp2.edu.pl)

#### Wydawca

Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie • 31-002 Kraków, ul. Kanonicza 25  
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## Spis treści

### ARTYKUŁY

Gilberto Sessantini

Educare alla musica sacra:  
100 anni di esperienza nella Scuola Diocesana di Bergamo . . . . . 7

Prof. Dr. Christoph Hönerlage

Church music degree programmes at the University of Catholic  
Church Music and Music Education (HfKM) Regensburg (Germany).  
The history of an unusual university . . . . . 21

ks. Karol Litawa

The theological dimension of selected Polish Easter songs . . . . . 31

Wiesław Delimat

Education of church musicians in Cracow in the period  
from the end of the Second Vatican Council to the present day . . . . . 47

Jacob Benda

Magnificat: an exploration of sacred music in the United States . . . . . 63

### RECENZJE

Carlos Duque

Recent publications on Spanish sacred music . . . . . 75

Bernard Sawicki OSB

Mądrość praktyczna . . . . . 83



# ARTYKUŁY





**Gilberto Sessantini**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-5984-1197>

Scuola Diocesana di Bergamo

[g.sessantini@tiscali.it](mailto:g.sessantini@tiscali.it); [direzione.asc@didatticaosa.it](mailto:direzione.asc@didatticaosa.it)

## **Educare alla musica sacra: 100 anni di esperienza nella Scuola Diocesana di Bergamo**

Non è sempre facile educare alla musica, tantomeno educare alla musica sacra. Specie in un contesto come quello attuale dove, almeno nella gran parte dei paesi europei, assistiamo ad una profonda secolarizzazione che corrode il rito e i suoi linguaggi.

Per educare alla musica occorre tempo, e la nostra società è basata sul tutto e subito: tempo non ne ha. Per educare alla musica sacra occorre educare alla bellezza e alla contemplazione, senza le quali la liturgia è vuota di Dio e piena solo di umano; e la nostra società ha posto l'uomo al centro, un uomo che snatura la sua bellezza originaria.

La musica sacra, quando è veramente tale, è teologia uditiva, è evocazione epifanica, è—per dirla con l'Oriente cristiano—presenza sacramentale; è, cioè, parte integrante del mistero liturgico, che unisce in un tutt'uno i canti, i suoni, i riti, le forme architettoniche di una chiesa, gli oggetti e gli arredi liturgici, le immagini dipinte sui muri e le immagini del culto celebrato e cantato, facendone un unico corpo, dove il Dio della Bellezza si rivela e la sua azione a favore dell'uomo si dispiega.

La musica sacra è scuola di santità, perché nella liturgia è raccontato il progetto di Dio e mentre esso viene raccontato, tale progetto viene pure un poco realizzato, anche solo suscitando, nell'osservatore perspicace, una nostalgia di quella comunione perfetta che lega la creatura al Creatore, l'immagine al Prototipo, il somigliante all'Originale, l'uomo a Dio.

Educare alla bellezza della liturgia, quindi, perché attraverso di essa si possa raggiungere Colui che è la Bellezza o, meglio, perché Colui che è Bellezza possa raggiungerci, come spiegava molto bene Benedetto XVI:

Il rapporto tra mistero creduto e celebrato si manifesta in modo peculiare nel valore teologico e liturgico della bellezza. La liturgia, infatti, come del resto la rivelazione cristiana, ha un intrinseco legame con la bellezza: è veritatis splendor. Nella liturgia rifulge il Mistero pasquale mediante il quale Cristo stesso ci attrae a sé e ci chiama alla comunione. [...] La bellezza della liturgia è parte di questo mistero; essa è espressione altissima della gloria di Dio e costituisce, in un certo senso, un affacciarsi del Cielo sulla terra. [...] La bellezza, pertanto, non è un fattore decorativo dell’Azione liturgica; ne è piuttosto elemento costitutivo, in quanto è attributo di Dio stesso e della sua rivelazione. Tutto ciò deve renderci consapevoli di quale attenzione si debba avere perché l’Azione liturgica risplenda secondo la sua natura propria<sup>1</sup>.

Qui di seguito racconto l’esperienza dell’educazione alla musica sacra della scuola diocesana di cui sono direttore: l’Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo.

## 1. Un breve percorso storico

L’Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo proprio in questi giorni compie cento anni di vita, cento anni in cui pur rimanendo fedele a sé stessa è sempre stata in grado di adeguarsi alle necessità delle contingenze storiche, secondo un motto che mi è caro: “semper idem, semper aliud”.

Infatti, il 23 novembre 1923 apriva i battenti quella che allora si chiamava **Scuola Primaria di Musica Sacra S. Cecilia di Bergamo**. Fu per volontà di mons. Luigi Maria Marelli, vescovo di Bergamo dal 1914 al 1936, e per iniziativa di due pionieri del cecilianesimo orobico: don Angelo Crivelli<sup>2</sup> e Vittorio Carrara<sup>3</sup>. È, quindi,

<sup>1</sup> Benedetto XVI, Esortazione apostolica postsinodale *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 22.02.2007, n. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Mons. Angelo Crivelli era nato il 3 Agosto 1886 nella parrocchia di San Alessandro in Colonna a Bergamo. Entrato in Seminario, compì gli studi teologici a Roma dove venne ordinato sacerdote il 18 Dicembre 1910. Destinato dapprima alla Parrocchia di Borgo Canale e poi a quella del Carmine, nel 1920 venne nominato Mansionario della Cattedrale. Laureato in Teologia, compì gli studi musicali nel Conservatorio di Bergamo nella classe di Alessandro Marinelli (La sua vita sacerdotale fu sempre legata alla musica sacra e alla scuola da lui fondata. Nel 1937 divenne Segretario diocesano della Commissione vescovile di Musica sacra e nel 1948 per le benemerenzze acquisite venne nominato Canonico onorario della Cattedrale. Diresse la scuola fino al 1961 quando si ritirò a Villa d’Adda presso l’Istituto San Giuseppe, dove morì il 26 Luglio 1966.

<sup>3</sup> Vittorio Carrara nacque a Bergamo il 30 Agosto 1885. Studiò musica tra gli altri con Pietro Dentella. Nel 1912 iniziò l’attività editoriale dapprima con un ufficio di copisteria e dal 1915 con una casa editrice che diede vita a numerose riviste musicali e che si distinse nel panorama

nell'alveo del movimento ceciliano innescato dal Motu proprio di S. Pio X sulla musica sacra che si pone l'inizio della nostra scuola, la prima in Italia. Infatti, lo scopo che si prefisse fin dagli inizi fu quello di

facilitare e generalizzare la diffusione del canto sacro, specialmente popolare, mediante la formazione culturale di maestri corali e organisti complementari, per una più diretta partecipazione del popolo alla Sacra Liturgia. La Scuola si attiene alla fedel interpretazione del Motu Proprio di Pio X, e segue le direttive della Scuola Superiore Pontificia di Musica Sacra in Roma, mirando specialmente alla pratica utilità delle Parrocchie rurali<sup>4</sup>.

Questa attenzione alla diffusione capillare e alla formazione di base di personale preparato è esplicitata anche dall'aggettivo con cui venne designata la scuola: "primaria", una specie di scuola elementare. Tuttavia, questo non significò, fin da subito, una preparazione abborracciata, "ad usum delphini". Le materie, infatti, erano numerose, divise in tre anni di corso, con singoli esami alla fine di ogni corso ed un diploma finale di abilitazione:

- Canto Gregoriano Teorico-Pratico
- Liturgia, Cerimoniale e Testi Sacri
- Metodica, Cultura e Formazione in base al Motu Proprio
- Storia della Musica Sacra
- Teoria, Solfeggio e Dettatura musicale
- Tecnica vocalistica con esercitazioni corali
- Armonio e pratica d'organo
- Elementi di Armonia e Contrappunto<sup>5</sup>.

A riprova della serietà degli intenti e dei risultati vi è un primo elenco di insegnanti di tutto rispetto: il padre Giovanni Battista Le Guevello<sup>6</sup> per la teoria del

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editoriale italiano ed europea per la produzione di musica sacra. Nel 1919 costituì la sezione bergamasca dell'Associazione S. Cecilia, associazione di cui fu membro del Consiglio centrale. Con lo pseudonimo Vito da Bondo pubblicò diverse sue composizioni e compilò alcune antologie, divenute dei veri e propri classici, come il *Liber Missae*, il *Coralino* e l'*Antologia Cantica Sion*. Morì il 16 Novembre 1966.

<sup>4</sup> *Statuto della Scuola Primaria di Musica Sacra*, nn. 2, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Statuto della Scuola Primaria di Musica Sacra*, n. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Padre Giovanni Battista Le Guevello (1891–1965), sacerdote monfortano di origine francese (il cognome originario era infatti Le Gueveleu), fu illustre gregorianista e musicista. A Bergamo, presso la casa dei monfortani di Redona, operò dal 1919 al 1929 e dal 1930 al 1933, trasferendosi poi a Loreto. La sua opera più significativa fu *In dulci iubilo* un commentario completo in tre volumi delle melodie del Proprio di tutto l'anno liturgico che La Civiltà Cattolica definì

Canto gregoriano; il maestro Pietro Dentella<sup>7</sup> per la Teoria musicale, le Esercitazioni corali e la tecnica vocale; i maestri Daniele Arnoldi, Vittore Baccanelli, Lorenzo Monti e Silvio Scuri per il corso di Armonio e Organo: tutti nomi significativi del panorama musicale bergamasco. La direzione fin dagli esordi fu affidata proprio a don Angelo Crivelli.

Il primo anno i corsi ebbero 49 iscritti: decisamente un successo.

Nel 1948, 25° anniversario di fondazione, mons. Angelo Crivelli, nel frattempo nominato Segretario diocesano della Commissione vescovile di Musica sacra e poi canonico della Cattedrale, così scriveva:

La Scuola è di ispirazione Ceciliana e attuata: 1° per fornire le Chiese della Diocesi, tutte dotate di organo e per lo più d'autore, di buoni organisti, perché tutte le Chiese e tutte le funzioni risuonino dell'aureo strumento, che la Chiesa ha fatto suo. 2° Per preparare elementi capaci di dirigere Scuole Cantorum e coadiuvare il Clero nel ristabilire il Canto gregoriano e ridarlo al popolo, in conformità alla volontà del SS. Pontefici espresso nel Motu Proprio, nella Costituzione Apostolica *Divini Cultus* e ribadita nell'ultima Enciclica di Pio XII. La Scuola nel decorso di 25 anni si è affermata, ed ha avuto una frequenza di alunni sempre numerosa, ciò che testimonia la sua utilità e la sua importanza. Si presenta ora capace si sviluppo e denota la possibilità di un allargamento di scopi e di intenti<sup>8</sup>.

Lo sviluppo auspicato dal suo direttore era il completamento del percorso di studi, in modo che la Scuola non fosse solo "primaria", ma fosse dotata di un programma "totale" ovvero di un programma che comprendesse anche il perfezionamento per i più meritevoli, al fine di creare un "vero Istituto di formazione artistico-liturgica, un vero e proprio centro di movimento liturgico, di formazione, con frequenti conferenze, con saloni di letture liturgiche, di riviste e libri, di ampio

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vera opera di "esegesi spirituale e ermeneutica musicale". Mons. Crivelli così rievocava anni dopo l'operato del padre Le Guevello: "Ben lo sa la Scuola primaria nostra quanta efficacia e quanta profondità avessero le lezioni del Padre su canto gregoriano tenuti negli anni della sua permanenza fra noi. Qui ha suscitato un calore ed un entusiasmo che difficilmente si potrà dimenticare".

<sup>7</sup> Pietro Dentella (1879–1964), autore di molta musica vocale e organistica, si diplomò a Bergamo con Guglielmo Mattioli, fondò, insieme con Carrara, il periodico *Schola Cantorum* che dirigerà per molti anni fino a quando si trasferì a Milano dapprima come vice-maestro e poi, dal 1949 al 1957, come Maestro di Cappella del Duomo di Milano.

<sup>8</sup> Scritto del 23 ottobre 1948, Archivio Diocesano, Cartella Scuola S. Cecilia.

e libero accesso”<sup>9</sup>. Per questo chiese alla Diocesi di consolidare la scuola attraverso un riconoscimento ufficiale. Tale riconoscimento fu reso possibile solo nel 1961, quando divenne la Scuola divenne **Istituto diocesano di Musica Sacra S. Cecilia**. In quello stesso anno, però, mons. Crivelli dovette lasciare la direzione per motivi di salute. Direttore divenne don Egidio Corbetta<sup>10</sup>, che resse la scuola fino al 1974, quando passò il testimone a don Santo Donadoni<sup>11</sup>, insegnante di organo e vicedirettore della scuola. L’impulso dato dai due giovani sacerdoti fu notevole con una crescita costante del numero e della qualità degli allievi, tanto che nel 1979 la sede fu portata in via S. Alessandro 49, nei più ampi locali annessi al Collegio Vescovile S. Alessandro. Una iniziativa significativa di quegli anni furono i corsi di Canto corale, vera e propria istituzione didattica per quanti facevano parte dei cori parrocchiali. Sotto la direzione di don Corbetta in dieci lezioni tenute il sabato pomeriggio da gennaio a marzo, si diffuse in tutta la Diocesi uno stile ed un repertorio.

Nel 1983 la scuola cambiò denominazione e ragione sociale, divenendo **Scuola musicale S. Cecilia** e dipendendo giuridicamente dall’Associazione Scuola musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo, appositamente costituita. Finalità della Scuola era ancora quello di “avviare i giovani allo studio della musica, con particolare attenzione alla musica sacra, proponendosi scopi artistico-educativi nella luce dell’esperienza cristiana”<sup>12</sup>. Tuttavia, non possiamo fare a meno di notare un cambiamento significativo, dal momento che l’educazione alla musica sacra passa in secondo piano rispetto alla destinazione originaria mantenuta fino ad allora come unico scopo. Alla base di questo cambiamento ci furono non solo motivazioni di opportunità economica, ma probabilmente anche i primi sintomi di una crisi che stava per colpire tutto il settore della musica sacra e che nella diocesi di Bergamo si manifestò più tardi rispetto ad altre parti d’Italia e d’Europa.

Ciononostante, la Diocesi investì parecchio nella sua Scuola. Nel 1990 la si dotò di un nuovo organo a canne, costruito dalla ditta Mascioni op.1103, interamente meccanico, a due tastiere, due pedalieri (una diritta e una concavo-radiale) interscambiabili, con 17 registri, uno strumento certamente più rispondente agli attuali criteri didattici. A questi miglioramenti strutturali corrispose però un lento declino per l’interesse alla preparazione di musicisti di chiesa: il numero degli

<sup>9</sup> Scritto del 23 ottobre 1948, Archivio Diocesano, Cartella Scuola S. Cecilia.

<sup>10</sup> Mons. Egidio Corbetta (1924–2009), studiò al PIMS di Roma e dal 1955 fu direttore del Coro dell’Immacolata. Punto di riferimento della coralità bergamasca fu anche fecondo compositore.

<sup>11</sup> Don Santo Donadoni (1929–1996). Diplomato in pianoforte e in Organo e Composizione organistica, dal 1962 al 1982 fu direttore dell’Ufficio di Musica Sacra della Curia.

<sup>12</sup> Dallo Statuto e Regolamento della Scuola Di Musica S. Cecilia di Bergamo 1983.

iscritti alla classe d'organo e di direzione di coro si affievolì, fino a quasi scomparire, mentre in Diocesi anche le storiche *scholae cantorum* facevano fatica a sopravvivere.

Nel 2001 la direzione venne affidata a Gilberto Sessantini, che già dal 1993 era responsabile dell'Ufficio di Musica Sacra della Diocesi nonché Maestro di Cappella e organista titolare della Cattedrale. L'unificazione delle tre cariche, lungi dal costituire una sorta di monopolio, di fatto permise una organizzazione unitaria di tutto l'impianto liturgico-musicale della Diocesi. Non nascondo l'orgoglio di aver ricevuto una scuola con soli 32 allievi e di averla portata a 300 nel giro di quattro-cinque anni, attraverso un lavoro effettuato su più fronti, coinvolgente più persone, in primo luogo una rinnovata équipe di insegnanti di tutti rispetto guidata da un coordinatore didattico.

Nel 2005 la scuola cambiò di nuovo nome e ragione sociale, divenendo **Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo**, annessa alle scuole facenti capo all'Opera S. Alessandro, la Fondazione chiamata a gestire oltre che il Collegio vescovile S. Alessandro anche tutte le attività educative diocesane. Al cambiamento di nome corrispose di fatto un allargamento dell'offerta formativa, comprendente accanto ai corsi istituzionali, tutto un comparto di propedeutica musicale per i più piccoli e una serie di corsi di specializzazione per i già diplomati. Una scuola a tutto tondo, un'Accademia, appunto, nel vero senso della parola. Accanto all'originaria finalità didattica legata alla formazione di organisti, direttori di coro e cantori per l'animazione musicale della liturgia, vengono proposti corsi per numerosi strumenti, di varie tipologie e livelli, organizzati sia in lezioni singole e collettive, utili a tutti coloro che intendono approfondire le proprie competenze strumentali e musicali, grazie alla possibilità di percorsi formativi personalizzati. Sempre mantenendo fede al principio fondamentale secondo il quale l'educazione alla musica ha come prima finalità quella dell'educazione dell'individuo, l'offerta didattica si rivolge sia a chi voglia accostarsi alla musica in modo amatoriale (pur con un'adeguata serietà di impostazione) sia a chi intenda intraprendere un percorso professionalizzante. Proprio per questo, l'Accademia ha siglato una convenzione con il Conservatorio Gaetano Donizetti di Bergamo per il riconoscimento dei propri percorsi educativi al fine di facilitare il passaggio agli studi musicali superiori.

Attualmente le classi di insegnamento comprendono Organo, Pianoforte, Violino, Viola, Violoncello, Chitarra, Flauto traverso, Tromba, Clarinetto, Canto, Linguaggio musicale, Armonia analisi e composizione; gli insegnamenti specialistici di Canto gregoriano, Direzione di coro, Musicologia liturgica e Vocalità; i corsi di Alto Perfezionamento organizzati in Master annuali oppure in Masterclass di alcuni giorni con artisti di fama internazionale in diverse discipline (nell'anno accademico 2023–24: Direzione di coro con Filippo M. Bressan, Violino e musica da camera con Pavel Vernikov, Svetlana Makarova, Igor Volochine; Violino

barocco con Elisa Citterio, Stefano Montanari, Enrico Onofri, Alessandro Tampieri, Helena Zemanova; Tromba con Immanuel Richter).

All'ampliamento dell'offerta formativa è corrisposto anche un ampliamento degli strumenti in dotazione. Nel 2008 si aggiunse un clavicembalo a due tastiere, e nel 2012 un nuovo organo a canne, costruito da Giovanni Pradella in stile rinascimentale su modello Antegnati, ad un manuale e 12 registri, con ottava scavezza, tasti diatonici e temperamento mesotonico. Tale strumento si è reso necessario per affrontare con proprietà tutto il repertorio organistico e vocale di quello che fu il periodo d'oro della musica sacra il 5–600' ed in particolare la letteratura organistica italiana di quel periodo, per comprendere e suonare adeguatamente la quale è necessaria l'interpretazione su strumenti del genere.

Distribuiti su una superficie di circa 900 m<sup>2</sup>, i locali dell'Accademia si differenziano in aule specifiche per i corsi della propedeutica e per gli ensemble musicali ed in aule polifunzionali per i corsi individuali di strumento e le lezioni collettive, oltre a due sale da concerto: l'Auditorium S. Alessandro (con 600 posti) e il Salone Bernareggi (con 100 posti). La struttura dispone attualmente di 20 aule insonorizzate, 9 pianoforti verticali, 4 pianoforti a mezza coda, 1 pianoforte gran coda, 1 clavicembalo, 2 organi a canne e tutto lo strumentario Orff-Schülwerke per la didattica musicale per i bimbi.

Nei locali dell'Accademia trovano posto anche la sede della Cappella Musicale e della Schola gregoriana del Duomo, in modo che l'Accademia sia un centro non solo di acquisizioni teoriche, ma anche di esercitazioni pratiche nel campo della musica sacra al servizio della liturgia, oltre che di esemplarità concreta per gli allievi che frequentano l'Accademia.

Gli ultimi due anni sono stati caratterizzati da un ulteriore ampliamento dell'attività didattica svolta a favore e all'interno dei singoli percorsi delle altre sei scuole che ineriscono alla Fondazione Opera S. Alessandro, scuole che coprono l'intero arco che va dal Nido (0–3 anni), alla Scuola Materna (3–5), alla Scuola Primaria (6–10), e quella Secondaria di I (11–13) e di II grado (14–18) a sua volta divisa in Licei dai diversi indirizzi.

Nell'anno accademico 2022–2023 l'Accademia contava 664 iscritti, di cui circa duecento come allievi veri e propri dell'Accademia, gli altri appartenenti alle altre scuole.

Questo è il quadro attuale della nostra scuola diocesana.

Elementi qualificanti mi paiono essere, da una parte, l'educazione musicale dei più piccoli e, dall'altra, i corsi specialistici. Entrambi, in modo diverso, contribuiscono all'educazione alla musica sacra.

## 2. Educare alla musica

Per i più piccoli vi sono due proposte: la Propedeutica musicale e il Coro di voci bianche. Esse sostituiscono il tradizionale corso di Teoria e Solfeggio.

I due percorsi di propedeutica musicale (0–6 anni) e il coro di voci bianche (7–12 anni), costituiscono un unico percorso verticale in cui sperimentare le proprie potenzialità in ambito musicale attraverso l'uso della voce, del corpo e del movimento. Inoltre, le lezioni, in quanto collettive, sono per i bambini ed i ragazzi importanti momenti di aggregazione, socializzazione, solidarietà, collaborazione e formazione a “tutto tondo”.

### 2.1. La Propedeutica musicale

Attraverso 28 lezioni di 50 minuti l'una, il corso offre uno spazio in cui sperimentare le proprie potenzialità in ambito musicale attraverso l'uso della voce, del corpo e del movimento. Il ricorso ad attività ludiche di sonorizzazione e drammatizzazione aiuta a creare un ponte tra l'emotività che risiede nel far musica e gli aspetti più tecnici e formali. Il gruppo dei più piccoli prevede la partecipazione attiva di un adulto accompagnatore.

L'attività dell'educazione musicale della fascia 0–6 anni (o come spesso viene definita “propedeutica musicale”) consiste certo nel guidare il bambino verso l'apprendimento della musica e del suo particolare linguaggio.

Edwin E. Gordon afferma, nei suoi scritti sulla *Music Learning Theory*, che:

Tutti nasciamo con un certo livello di attitudine musicale, definita come “potenzialità di apprendere la musica”. L'attitudine musicale, innata in ogni individuo, è massima al momento della nascita e si sviluppa, a contatto con un ambiente in grado di far vivere a bambino esperienze significative, fino a 9 anni, età in cui tende a stabilizzarsi. [...] La capacità potenziale di comprendere la musica non è un'attitudine speciale concessa a pochi eletti, tutti gli esseri umani la possiedono. Chi è definito stonato è in realtà non ancora accurato nella produzione vocale dei suoni e questo fino ad una certa età del bambino è assolutamente naturale. L'obiettivo è quello di favorire la crescita di generazioni capaci di ascoltare e di capire la musica, di comunicare musicalmente, di improvvisare, di fare musica nelle loro famiglie e con i loro amici<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Cfr. *La Music Learning Theory. Sintesi degli elementi e dei principi fondamentali della teoria dell'apprendimento musicale del bambino secondo Edwin E. Gordon per genitori ed educatori*,



Gli ultimi anni di ricerca sulle teorie di apprendimento hanno dimostrato che la musica possiede una sintassi<sup>14</sup> simile a quella di un linguaggio, e di conseguenza, i canali di acquisizione sono gli stessi di una lingua madre: l'ascolto dei suoni fonetici, il contesto in cui si cresce e l'abilità presente in tutti noi di imitare ciò che si sente, grazie alla presenza dei neuroni a specchio. Il bambino apprende il linguaggio musicale nello stesso modo in cui apprende la lingua materna. Una madre 'non insegna', ma semplicemente 'parla'. Allo stesso modo, l'educatore musicale entra in dialogo con il bambino esponendolo alla musica, senza forzarlo alla risposta, ma incoraggiandolo e sviluppando poco per volta anche l'interesse per la musica stessa. Ecco perché, soprattutto nella fascia 0-3 anni, la presenza del genitore o di un adulto di riferimento che condivida la stessa lingua "madre" è importante. Gli incontri diventano un momento di condivisione e di relazione, dove l'apprendimento musicale viene favorito e rafforzato grazie e soprattutto al legame emozionale tra bambino e adulto di riferimento, che si viene a creare in questa occasione, fatto di sorrisi, sguardi e silenzi.

Il vocabolario degli incontri è fatto di altezze sonore (canti melodici) e di sequenze ritmiche (canti ritmici), che poco per volta saranno acquisite e imitate sempre più accuratamente. Tale apprendimento sarà favorito dall'uso di uno strumento musicale che tutti noi abbiamo a disposizione (e senza costi aggiuntivi), ovvero la voce, e dall'utilizzo di un movimento libero, o più strutturato se si lavora con una forma musicale di un brano o di una danza. Il tutto all'interno di quel contenitore che si chiama gioco, ovvero un'attività ludica, graficante e soprattutto non fine a sé stessa (perché non dobbiamo dimenticare che il contenuto è la musica e non viceversa).

Ciascun bambino potrà così sviluppare il suo potenziale innato in modo naturale e attraverso tempi e modalità personali, e sentendosi libero di muoversi nello spazio. Ciò non significa libertà assoluta (le regole servono per giocare bene insieme, nel rispetto di tutti), ma possibilità di potersi esprimere liberamente all'interno di un ambiente accogliente e stimolante, accompagnato da un adulto che funge da 'facilitatore' e lo guida attraverso l'esempio diretto. Così facendo, intorno ai 6 anni, il bambino potrà raggiungere un buon livello di imitazione e di discriminazione auditivo/orale, che lo condurrà verso l'associazione verbale di ciò che ha udito e verso l'associazione simbolica: è proprio in questa fase che l'educatore musicale introduce la notazione musicale e l'uso dello strumentario Orff-Schülwerke. Concludendo, questa attività si pone nella prospettiva di fornire all'allievo una

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a cura di R. Nardozi, <http://bambini-musik.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LibrettoMusicLearningTheoryITA.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Gordon mette l'accento sul fatto che la musica non è un linguaggio in quanto non ha parole né grammatica, tuttavia ha una sintassi, una "disposizione ordinata di suoni, e un contesto".

solida base per consentirgli di comprendere la musica ad un livello profondo e di sapersi esprimere musicalmente, e di poterlo riprodurre successivamente con qualsiasi strumento musicale vorrà scegliere.

## 2.2. Il Coro di voci bianche

Il corso, rivolto ai bambini (maschi e femmine) dai 7 a 12 anni, si pone l'obiettivo generale di raggiungere un pensiero musicale consapevole, anche sviluppando la sfera affettiva ed emotiva, attraverso la formazione al senso ritmico e melodico, l'avvio alla lettura musicale, l'educazione all'ascolto, il canto monodico e polifonico.

Abbiamo fatto nostro il pensiero di Zoltàn Kodály:

Il modo più efficace per avvicinare il maggior numero possibile di persone alla musica di qualità è il canto corale: l'unica attività musicale praticabile da tutti poiché ognuno possiede lo strumento necessario. Cantare in coro consente di vivere in modo attivo, dinamico e benefico l'esperienza musicale.

Il corso, articolato in 28 incontri annuali (Ottobre—Maggio) di 60 minuti ciascuno, sviluppa molteplici competenze tra le quali: la respirazione (con esercizi di riscaldamento e rilassamento muscolare propedeutici all'apprendimento della corretta postura del cantore, esercizi di respirazione e comprensione della sua importanza); l'impostazione della voce (comprendere, percepire e sperimentare le modalità di emissione della voce, le modalità di attacco, di evoluzione del suono); oltre che dell'utilizzo creativo del linguaggio verbale; conoscere ed utilizzare, attraverso la pronuncia parlata e cantata, alcune tra le più importanti caratteristiche del suono e alcuni aspetti musicali propriamente esecutivi. Il repertorio comprende brani di natura popolare e tradizionale fino alla letteratura "colta", ivi compresa quella sacra, con canti in lingue diverse e forme musicali provenienti da varie culture colte e popolari del mondo.

## 3. Educare alla musica sacra

Gli insegnamenti specialistici di Canto gregoriano, Direzione di coro, Musicologia liturgica e Vocalità, oltre ovviamente a quello curriculare di Organo, contribuiscono più direttamente alla formazione alla musica sacra, che rientra come scopo ancora principale della Accademia Musica S. Cecilia di Bergamo.

Non entrerà nei singoli programmi di questi corsi che immagino possano ovviamente essere conosciuti anche da voi. Mi soffermerò solamente sul punto di forza che rende accattivante la proposta e certamente la rende più incisiva.

Il punto di forza risiede nel fatto di fare convergere più persone e più istituzioni verso una medesima finalità. Questa convergenza permette non solo di unire le forze ma anche di risultare più efficace nella sua esemplarità. Anche in questo caso non posso esimermi dal fare riferimento a me stesso e alla mia attività.

Oltre ad essere il Direttore dell'Accademia, sono il Maestro di Cappella e l'Organista titolare del Duomo nonché il Priore della Basilica di S. Maria Maggiore e l'insegnante di Gregoriano e Liturgia in Conservatorio. Il nostro insegnante di Direzione di Coro è il Maestro di Cappella della Basilica di S. Maria Maggiore e l'insegnante di Esercitazioni corali del Conservatorio. I nostri insegnanti di organo sono contitolari con me in Duomo. Questa rete di collaborazione di fatto rende le due chiese più importanti della Diocesi anche un duplice centro di produzione, di educazione, di promozione di musica sacra. Ciò che di fatto si insegna in Accademia è ciò che viene attuato in queste due chiese, e, data la loro esemplarità, a ricaduta si attua nelle parrocchie pur nella diversità e dei limiti di ciascuna.

Questo è a tal punto vero che nell'anno accademico 2024–2025 il Conservatorio di Bergamo, con l'autorizzazione del competente Ministero statale, attuerà un Master annuale di II livello in Musica Sacra che vedrà unificare l'azione del Conservatorio, dell'Accademia S. Cecilia, della Basilica di S. Maria Maggiore e della Cattedrale al fine di preparare la figura professionale del Maestro di Cappella.

Tale Master si propone quale obiettivo fondamentale quello di garantire l'acquisizione delle competenze teoriche e pratiche necessarie per affrontare in termini specialistici il repertorio della musica sacra, con percorso di studio di alto perfezionamento orientato nello specifico settore della interpretazione e produzione della musica sacra all'interno del suo luogo naturale e cioè le celebrazioni liturgiche.

Finalità del corso è quella di formare professionisti di livello internazionale che abbiano acquisito l'insieme delle conoscenze e abilità che caratterizzano il profilo culturale e professionale di un interprete pienamente consapevole della prassi esecutiva e del repertorio sacro di ogni epoca, nonché delle attuali esigenze liturgiche nelle quali il repertorio deve essere inserito.

Un'ulteriore finalità è quella dell'acquisizione delle competenze relative alla progettazione e realizzazione dei programmi musicali riferibili ad ogni celebrazione festiva dell'anno liturgico.

Al termine del Corso di Master gli studenti saranno in grado di padroneggiare il repertorio sia vocale che strumentale della Musica sacra sia per quanto riguarda gli aspetti esecutivi che quelli organizzativi e didattici.

Gli studenti avranno anche conseguito le competenze per poter divenire Maestri di Cappella (profilo professionale Master of music) o Direttori musicali (Director of music) in chiese ed enti ecclesiastici.

In questo Master il punto di forza è costituito dai laboratori pratici, cosa che lo rende unico in Italia. Accanto alle materie curriculari specialistiche, infatti, gli allievi si confronteranno direttamente, da una parte, con il repertorio vocale corale (scelta, composizione, preparazione, allestimento, direzione) nelle liturgie domenicali della Basilica, e, dall'altra parte, con il repertorio organistico e la pratica organistica di accompagnamento assembleare nonché di improvvisazione nelle liturgie domenicali della Cattedrale.

Non so se quello dell'Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo sia un modello esportabile, dal momento che a Bergamo tutto ciò è reso possibile dalla convergenza di più fattori e di più persone con un'unica regia. Certo che, di fatto, lo ritengo un modello vincente, il quale, spero, possa aiutare la conoscenza e la diffusione di una musica per la liturgia che possa rispondere ai requisiti che la Chiesa nei suoi Documenti, richiede e di una musica sacra che possa aprire al mistero di bellezza che è il Dio di Gesù Cristo.

## Sintesi

### Educare alla musica sacra: 100 anni di esperienza nella Scuola Diocesana di Bergamo

La scuola diocesana di musica sacra, oggi Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo, compie cent'anni. Alla luce di questa esperienza secolare, la relazione, dopo un breve excursus storico, individua alcuni elementi portanti della formazione alla musica sacra che essa offre oggi alle parrocchie della Diocesi di Bergamo. Il primo e imprescindibile elemento è la formazione alla musica in generale, soprattutto delle nuove generazioni. L'accademia svolge questo compito attraverso i corsi di propedeutica musicale, rivolti ai più piccoli (0-6 anni), e il coro di voci bianche, rivolto agli allievi più grandicelli (7-12 anni). Queste due attività didattiche di fatto costituiscono il corso di alfabetizzazione musicale e di ear-training. Il secondo elemento riguarda la formazione alla musica sacra. Essa viene svolta da insegnamenti specialistici di Canto gregoriano, Direzione di coro, Musicologia liturgica e vocalità, Organo. Il punto di forza risiede nel convergere di più persone e istituzioni verso questa medesima finalità, dal momento che sono coinvolti a vario titolo, la Cattedrale con i suoi organi e la sua Schola gregoriana, la Basilica di S. Maria Maggiore con la sua rinomata e storica Cappella musicale, il Conservatorio di Bergamo. Questa rete di collaborazione di fatto rende le due chiese più importanti della Diocesi anche un duplice centro di produzione, di educazione, di promozione di musica sacra. Ciò che di fatto si insegna in Accademia è ciò che viene attuato in queste due chiese, e, data la loro esemplarità, a ricaduta si attua nelle parrocchie pur nella diversità dei mezzi a disposizione.

**Parole chiave:** Accademia musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo, educare alla musica sacra, propedeutica musicale, voci bianche

## Abstract

### Educating sacred music: 100 years of experience in the Diocesan School of Bergamo

The diocesan school of sacred music, today the Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia of Bergamo, turns one hundred years old. In the light of this centuries-old experience, the report, after a brief historical excursus, identifies some key elements of the training in sacred music that it offers today to the parishes of the Diocese of Bergamo.

The first and essential element is training in music in general, especially for the new generations. The academy carries out this task through musical preparatory courses, aimed at the youngest (0–6 years), and the children's choir, aimed at older students (7–12 years). These two educational activities constitute the musical literacy and ear-training course.

The second element concerns training in sacred music. It is carried out by specialized teaching of Gregorian chant, choir conducting, liturgical musicology and vocality, organ. The strong point lies in the convergence of several people and institutions towards this same goal, since they are involved in various capacities, the Cathedral with its organs and its *Schola gregoriana*, the Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore with its renowned and historic *Cappella musicale*, the Bergamo Conservatory. This collaboration network effectively makes the two most important churches of the Diocese also a dual center for the production, education, and promotion of sacred music. What is actually taught in the Academy is what is implemented in these two churches, and given their exemplary nature, it is subsequently implemented in the parishes despite the diversity of the means available.

**Keywords:** Diocesan school of sacred music of Bergamo, training in sacred music, children's choir

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**Don Gilberto Sessantini** (1963) – sacerdote della Diocesi di Bergamo, ha conseguito il diploma in Organo e Composizione organistica al Conservatorio “Donizetti” di Bergamo, il Magistero in Canto Gregoriano e Musica Sacra presso il Pontificio Istituto Ambrosiano di Musica Sacra in Milano e la Licenza in Scienze Ecclesiastiche Orientali con specializzazione liturgica presso il Pontificio Istituto Orientale di Roma. Dal 1993 è Maestro di Cappella e Organista titolare della Cattedrale di Bergamo, dove svolge intensa attività liturgica e concertistica. Dal 2001 è direttore della scuola diocesana di musica, l’Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia di Bergamo. Dal 2013 è Priore della Basilica di S. Maria Maggiore in Bergamo, dove ha contribuito alla ristrutturazione della storica Cappella Musicale con un innovativo progetto liturgico-musicale. Oltre che Direttore dell’Accademia Musicale S. Cecilia è insegnante di Canto gregoriano- Monodie medievali, Liturgia, Modalità, Storia della notazione presso il Conservatorio G. Donizetti di Bergamo. È co-direttore delle riviste “Celebriamo”, “Polyphonia”, “L’Organo nella Liturgia” e “Organistica” edite da Carrara presso il quale ha anche pubblicato numerosa musica corale e organistica e una serie di CD dedicati all’improvvisazione organistica su temi gregoriani. Attento anche ad esplorare le intime connessioni tra l’arte e la fede, ha pubblicato diversi volumi, saggi e articoli.

**Prof. Dr. Christoph Hönerlage**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2672-6972>

Hochschule für katholische Kirchenmusik und Musikpädagogik (HfKM) Regensburg/  
University for Catholic Church Music and Music Education Regensburg (Germany)

**Church music degree programmes  
at the University of Catholic Church Music  
and Music Education (HfKM)  
Regensburg (Germany).  
The history of an unusual university**

The Kirchenmusikschule Regensburg (Regensburg School of Church Music) was founded on 22 November 1874 by Franz Xaver Haberl on the advice of Franz Liszt. Today it is the oldest existing Catholic institution for church music of its kind in the world. From the very beginning, it has had international significance beyond the German-speaking world.

On 11 February 1962, by decree of the Congregation for Studies, the Regensburg Church Music School was permanently affiliated to the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra in Rome.

The Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Culture transformed the Church Music School into the Academy for Catholic Church Music and Music Education with retroactive effect from 1 January 1973. Cooperation agreements from 1989 and 1999 with the University of Music and Theatre in Munich made it possible to take diploma examinations.

On 22 November 2001, the Hochschule für katholische Kirchenmusik und Musikpädagogik (HfKM) –Regensburg University of Catholic Church Music and Music Education – was established under the auspices of the Regensburg Church Music School Foundation.

The implementation of the European study reform (Bachelor's/Master's) on 22 November 2008 strengthened the university's profile in church music and music education.

In September 2018, all 30 Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes were successfully accredited by the two agencies ACQUIN e.V. (Bayreuth) and AKAST e.V. (Eichstätt-Ingolstadt)<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. Portrait

The *University of Catholic Church Music and Music Education* (HfKM) is one of the world's leading educational institutions for church music. Its 190 students currently come from 12 countries around the world.

The HfKM has always focussed on both the artistic and pedagogical orientation of its training, in which church music students are also prepared for their liturgical and pastoral co-responsibility in the changing structures of deaneries and parishes. Given the outstanding importance of the liturgy for the life of the church, the need to train church musicians and music teachers who are prepared for their profession not only artistically and pedagogically, but also in their entire lives, is obvious. The close connection between study and life at the HfKM in Regensburg offers the best conditions for this, in addition to the training opportunities at the large state universities.

When the HfKM was founded, the standards that also apply to other universities of music were followed. In terms of competitiveness, the aim was to achieve equivalence (not similarity). In addition to the relevant state legal regulations, the main criteria are first and foremost the requirements specified in the implementation regulations for the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* and the requirements of the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and the Arts, which must be observed for state recognition. The structure of the HfKM and its relationship to the ecclesiastical sponsor are laid down in the basic regulations and in the study and examination regulations, which also follow the guidelines of the Apostolic Constitution. The Magnus Cancellarius of the HfKM is Diocesan Bishop Prof Dr Rudolf Voderholzer<sup>2</sup>.

Internationally renowned graduates since the founding of the Regensburg Church Music School in 1874<sup>3</sup>:

- Karl Gustav Fellerer (1902–1984), German musicologist, professor in Freiburg/Switzerland
- Max Filke (1855–1911), Silesian composer, cathedral conductor in Breslau

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<sup>1</sup> According to: <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/hochschule/geschichte/> (14.10.2023).

<sup>2</sup> *HfKM-Portrait*, <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/hochschule/portrait/>; *Stiftung Kirchenmusikschule*, <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/hochschule/organe/> (14.10.2023).

<sup>3</sup> I owe this research to my colleague, Dr Dieter Haberl.



- Józef Kromolicki (1882–1961), German-Polish composer, conductor at St Michael's in Berlin
- Ignaz Mitterer (1850–1924), Austrian composer, cathedral conductor in Brixen
- Juozas Naujalis (1869–1934), Lithuanian composer, organist at Kaunas Cathedral
- Lorenzo Perosi (1872–1956), Italian composer, conductor of the Cappella Sistina
- Theodor Bernhard Rehmann (1895–1963), German composer, cathedral conductor in Aachen
- Josef Renner jun. (1868–1934), German composer, cathedral organist in Regensburg
- Józef Surzyński (1851–1919), Polish composer, conductor of the Poznan Cathedral Choir
- Ernst von Werra (1854–1913), Swiss organist, hymnologist, director of the Beuron church music school.

## 2. The study programmes Church Music (BA and MA), Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant (MA) and New Sacred Music (MA)<sup>4</sup>

The HfKM Regensburg offers the following study programmes in the field of church music: Church Music (BA), Church Music (MA), Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant (MA) and New Sacred Music (MA).

A characteristic feature of church music studies at the HfKM is that they cover all areas of church music, in particular Gregorian chant/liturgical chant, choir and schola conducting, liturgical organ playing/improvisation, organ literature playing. Individual specialisations are possible.

This has been the basic concept of the Regensburg Church Music School since its foundation. Church musicians are thus trained in a comprehensive sense, receiving excellent training in all relevant areas in order to be comprehensively prepared for the diverse tasks of a church musician in liturgy and pastoral work. At present, it is becoming increasingly clear that the profession of church musician encompasses and characterises all three “pillars” of church life: liturgia, diakonia and martyria, and that it therefore often has a key position in church life.

As a rule, a full-time church musician in Germany is also a cultural organiser at local (political) level (e.g. by performing concerts).

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<sup>4</sup> Information on the BA and MA programmes in Church Music, Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant and New Sacred Music has been taken from the HfKM homepage: <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/>

It should be mentioned that there are full-time positions for church musicians (BA and MA) in German dioceses and thus the profession of “church musician”. These full-time church musicians can be employed at the parish level as well as at the level of the deaneries (deanery musicians) or larger regions (regional or district cantors) of the diocese. Depending on the scope of duties and responsibilities, a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree is required for such full-time positions. In addition to full-time positions (100% weekly working hours), there are also part-time positions.

## The BA programme in Church Music

### Artistic training

#### Aims of the programme

The degree programme in Catholic Church Music at the HfKM Regensburg qualifies students to perform church music tasks in liturgy, concerts and performances, in church educational and general cultural work, for tasks related to music pedagogy, in particular for the training and further education of part-time church musicians, for advising church committees on specialist issues and for representation in public.

### Degree

Successful completion of all module examinations in accordance with § 4 Para. 2 in the Catholic Church Music degree programme leads to a professionally qualifying degree. On the basis of these examinations, the university awards the academic degree Bachelor of Music (B.Mus.) in accordance with state law. By authority of the Holy See (cfr. Decree of the Congregation for Catholic Education, 22 November 2016, Prot.Nr. 829/2000/D), the academic degree Baccalaureatus in Musica Sacra is awarded in accordance with ecclesiastical law.

### Duration

The standard period of study for the Catholic Church Music degree programme is 8 semesters.

## The MA programme in Church Music

### Artistic training

#### Aims of the programme

The MA programme in Catholic Church Music at the HfKM Regensburg qualifies students for the exemplary performance of church music tasks in liturgy, concerts and performances, in church educational and general cultural work, for the training and further education of part-time and full-time church musicians, for advising church committees on specialist issues and for representation in public. It prepares students for work in prominent positions in a diocese and for teaching at church music training centres.

### Graduation

Successful completion of all module examinations in accordance with § 4 Para. 2 in the Catholic Church Music degree programme leads to a professionally qualifying degree. On the basis of these examinations, the university awards the academic degree Master of Music (M.Mus.) in accordance with state law. By authority of the Holy See (cfr. Decree of the Congregation for Catholic Education, 22 November 2016, Prot.Nr. 829/2000/D), the academic degree *Licentiatus in Musica Sacra* is awarded in accordance with ecclesiastical law. Graduates of the degree programme can choose to use either the state or ecclesiastical academic degree.

### Duration

The standard period of study for the MA programme in Catholic Church Music is 4 semesters.

## The MA programme Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant (Master of Music)

### Artistic training

#### Aims of the programme

The degree programme at the HfKM Regensburg qualifies students on the Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant course for outstanding church music tasks in liturgy, concerts and performances, in supra-regional (dioceses, regions, deaneries) church educational and general cultural work, for the training and further

education of part-time and full-time church musicians, for advising church committees on specialist issues and for representation in public. It prepares students for positions with a focus on Gregorian chant/liturgical chant and for teaching this subject at universities and other musical and pastoral theological training centres.

### Degree

Successful completion of all module examinations in accordance with § 4 Para. 2 in the Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant degree programme leads to a professionally qualifying degree. On the basis of these examinations, the university awards the academic degree Master of Music (M.Mus.).

### Duration

The standard period of study for the MA Gregorian Chant programme is 4 semesters.

### The MA programme in New Sacred Music (NGM)

#### Artistic training

#### Aims of the programme

The degree programme at the HfKM Regensburg qualifies students on the MA course in New Sacred Music for outstanding church music tasks in liturgy, concerts and performances, in supra-regional (dioceses, regions, deaneries) church educational and general cultural work, for the training and further education of part-time and full-time church musicians, for advising church committees on specialist issues and for representation in public. It prepares students for work in prominent positions in a diocese and for teaching at church music training centres in the field of new sacred music.

### Graduation

Successful completion of all module examinations in accordance with § 4 Para. 2 in the New Sacred Music degree programme leads to a professionally qualifying degree. On the basis of these examinations, the university awards the academic degree Master of Music (M.Mus.).

### Duration

The standard period of study for the MA programme in New Sacred Music is 4 semesters.

### Library

In addition to the well-equipped university library, there are other excellent libraries in the city of Regensburg that can be used by HfKM students. In addition to the University Library and the *Staatliche Bibliothek* (State Library), the *Bischöfliche Zentralbibliothek* (Episcopal Central Library) deserves special mention, whose holdings also include the famous *Proske Library*, which offers a wealth of research material for academic work.

### Weekly church service as an essential part of the church music programme

An essential part of church music studies at the HfKM Regensburg is the weekly church service, which is celebrated in the study church of St Andrew. This regularity and the anchoring of the service in the curriculum characterises the HfKM – as far as can be seen—above all other church music training institutions in the German-speaking world.

Various forms of worship are celebrated. In addition to the Holy Mass, this includes in particular Vespers, but also the Liturgy of the Word, vigils and popular forms, such as the May Devotion (Mai-Andacht), as well as freer forms of worship.

Under the direction of the professor of Gregorian chant/liturgical chant, students take on the musical conception of these services and also the liturgical services, in particular the musical services: cantor, organist, direction of the schola and choir, singing in the choir and schola.

In this way, the entire period of study is accompanied and characterised by liturgical practice. Students are able to gain a wide range of experiences that shape them and prepare them for their future tasks as church musicians. Feedback from former students who are now working full-time as church musicians confirms that they find this worship practice from their time as students very valuable for themselves and for their work.

### 3. Perspectives

This encourages the HfKM to maintain liturgical practice as an essential part of the course and to continue to optimise it, especially in view of the changing circumstances in the church and society.

It has already been emphasised above that the profession of church musician encompasses and shapes all three “pillars” of church life: *liturgia*, *diakonia* and *martyria*, and that it therefore often has a key position in church life—and beyond that: in social life.

This is a great opportunity for church music and church musicians. To seize this opportunity, the HfKM cultivates the entire spectrum of church music—from Gregorian chant to new sacred music—both in its curriculum and in its liturgical practice. It strives for the highest artistic quality as a prerequisite for church music to unfold its power in *liturgia*, *diakonia* and *martyria* for the glorification of God and in service to people and to send out new impulses for life in the church and the world.

The close connection between the two specialised groups at the HfKM also contributes to this to a considerable extent: Church music and music education fertilise and inspire each other. Students and teachers from both departments meet and contribute their skills both in church services and outside the liturgy (e.g. in concerts).

#### Abstract

Church music degree programmes at the University of Catholic Church Music and Music Education (HfKM) Regensburg (Germany). The history of an unusual university

The Regensburg University of Catholic Church Music and Music Education (HfKM), founded in 1874 as the Regensburg School of Church Music by Franz Xaver Haberl, is the world’s oldest Catholic institution for church music. With international significance from its inception, the institution was officially affiliated with the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra in Rome in 1962. In 1973, it was transformed into an academy and, in 2001, the HfKM was formally established. The university offers Bachelor’s and Master’s programs in Church Music, Gregorian Chant, and New Sacred Music, emphasizing both artistic and pedagogical training. The curriculum prepares students not only for liturgical and pastoral responsibilities but also for broader cultural roles. Students gain expertise in areas such as Gregorian chant, choir conducting, and organ performance. HfKM maintains close ties with the church, combining artistic training with liturgical practice. This comprehensive

education equips students for significant roles in both church and society, ensuring church music's contribution to religious and cultural life.

**Keywords:** University of Catholic Church Music and Music Education (HfKM) Regensburg, BA programme Church Music, MA programme Church Music, MA programme Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant (Master of Music), MA programme New Sacred Music (NGM)

## References

*HfKM-Portrait*, <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/hochschule/portrait/>  
*Stiftung Kirchenmusikschule*, <https://www.hfkm-regensburg.de/hochschule/organe/>  
 (14.10.2023) Dr phil.

**Christoph Hönerlage**, Dipl.-Theol., Dipl.-Musiklehrer, Kirchenmusiker (A-Examen) is Professor of Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant at the Hochschule für katholische Kirchenmusik und Musikpädagogik (HfKM) Regensburg (University for Catholic Church Music and Music Education). There he directs the Schola and represents the department in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes in Church Music. Since 2019, he has also been responsible for the newly established Master's degree programme in Gregorian Chant/Liturgical Chant (Master of Music).

Christoph Hönerlage is an elected member of both the board of the German-speaking section of the International Association for the Study of Gregorian Chant (AISCGre) and its international board (Consiglio Direttivo) and is a member of the AISCGre's "Melodie-Restitution" working group.

He is the founder and director of the Frauenschola Exsulta Sion and the Schola Gregoriana Ratisbonensis, which is dedicated to the Franconian-Carolingian core repertoire of Gregorian chant as well as the rich treasure of monophonic liturgical chants of the former Regensburg Benedictine Abbey of St Emmeram.

Christoph Hönerlage is internationally active as a speaker and lecturer at choral courses, participates in CD productions and publishes in the field of Gregorian chant/liturgical chant.





ks. Karol Litawa

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6365-8972>

The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

<https://ror.org/0583g9182>

## The theological dimension of selected Polish Easter songs<sup>1</sup>

Easter songs rooted in the tradition of the Roman Church, and particularly present in Poland, date back to the Middle Ages. With their content and the theology they contain, they reveal the greatest mysteries of the Christian faith, relating to the mystery of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. The New Testament truth was made present in the Church's liturgy, especially in the sacraments and other rites, which date back to the beginnings of Christianity. The joy of the mystery of Christ's resurrection and the redemption of man is experienced by the Church especially throughout the Easter season—from Resurrection Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. This time correlates directly with the season of Lent and the Holy Paschal Triduum which immediately precedes it. The theological dimension of the liturgy of the Easter season oscillates around the mystery of the victory of life over death, forgiveness over sin, love over evil and hatred, fidelity over betrayal, humility over human pride. This dimension also characterises the richness of Easter hymns and songs, which this article will attempt to interpret.

### 1. From the history of Easter chants

Father Prof. Cassian Folsom OSB emphasises: 'As far as the sensory soul is concerned, the objects of cognition in the liturgy are concrete sacramental signs, gestures, symbols. The sacraments, obviously, are rooted in the five senses. Music, art and architecture are also objects of the soul's sense power (even if reason later

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<sup>1</sup> The article was written as part of the project: '*Traditional church melodies from the perspective of organ accompaniment*' carried out within the framework of the programme "Social Responsibility of Science" financed by the Ministry of Education and Science, No. SONP/SP/564101/2022, implementation—Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow in the years 2022–2024.

can and should understand their meaning).”<sup>2</sup> This unique importance of music, alongside art and architecture, as an object of sensory power makes it an essential and indispensable part of the celebrated liturgy. In turn, Fr Odo Casel, an eminent liturgist and researcher of the documents of the early centuries of the Church, explaining the essence of the understanding of the Paschal feasts among the ancient Christians, stated:

The Paschal feast of the ancients is a whole, it is a celebration of the redemption accomplished by the death and exaltation of the Lord, it is a celebration of the economy of salvation which God willed to be accomplished by the work of men. It is, therefore, a ‘festival’ of the highest order, and as such it is a cultic expression of the essence of the Christian religion.<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly, songs that have their own genesis and history of origin have contributed to enriching the theological dimension of the Paschal feasts. Pope Benedict XVI expressed this truth in the words: ‘The early development of theology, its ever-deepening knowledge of the deity of Christ, was probably accomplished to a significant extent precisely in the songs of the Church, in the intertwining of theology, poetry and music’<sup>4</sup>.

The formation of liturgical hymns can be traced back to the earliest forms sung in the Latin Church, such as tropes and sequences, which appeared in Gaul at the end of the eighth century<sup>5</sup>. Their simple and syllabic form, with references to folk music, made them very popular and allowed the faithful to gradually join in liturgical singing<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, the liturgy itself gave birth to ‘devotional chants’ in national languages, which developed on the basis of Latin Gregorian chants, especially the aforementioned tropes and sequences, but also hymns and antiphons<sup>7</sup>.

The earliest records of religious chants or devotional songs in Poland are related to processions accompanying church celebrations, so the oldest songs are those related to the celebration of the mystery of Christ’s resurrection—Easter songs, and strictly Resurrection songs. The rich tradition of the Church in Poland brings out of its treasury Easter songs, initially alluding to the choral tradition both in terms of melody and literary value. The first testimonies date from the mid-14th

<sup>2</sup> C. Folsom, *Człowiek współczesny a liturgia*, ed. by K. Porosło, Krakow 2018, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> O. Casel, *La Fête de Pâques dans l’Église des Pères*, Paris 1963, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Nowa pieśń dla Pana*, transl. J. Zychowicz, Krakow 1999, p. 166.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. T. Sinka, *Polska pieśń w liturgii*, ‘Nasza Przyszłość’ 60 (1983), p. 245.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. T. Sinka, *Polska pieśń w liturgii*, p. 245.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. T. Sinka, *Polska pieśń w liturgii*, p. 246.

century. They are based on a centuries-old work dated 1360–1370, the Plock Pontifical *Stella chori Plocensis* called *Ordinale plocense*, as well as the *Plock Gradual*, which was unfortunately lost during the Second World War<sup>8</sup>. Thanks to the references to this work made by Fr Jozef Michalak in 1939, it is possible to reconstruct a brief description of the Resurrection procession from 14th-century Plock:

‘After singing the laudes during Lauds in solemn procession, all proceed to the tomb, singing ‘Cum rex gloriae...’ The two priests unveil the cross, intone the continuation of the song they began with the words ‘Advenisti...’ After this song the whole people sang: ‘Wstał smartwich crol nas Synboży’. The procession moved off and the song was sung alternately: the people a stanza in Polish, the clergy in Latin a prose stanza ‘Victimae paschali’ (clerus literaliter, populus vulgariter). The boys then sang the Latin hymn ‘Salve festa dies...’ while the people sang ‘Prestwe swete weschrzene’ after each strophe<sup>9</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that during the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord one sang *Przez Twe święte w niebo wstąpienie* [Through Thy Holy Ascension into Heaven], while on the Solemnity of Pentecost one sang *Przez Twe święte Ducha zesłanie* [Through Thy Holy Spirit’s sending forth]<sup>10</sup>. Thus, it can be assumed that the people also joined in with the singing of devotional songs during other processions, such as Palm Sunday or Corpus Christi<sup>11</sup>.

It should also be noted that the oldest medieval Easter processional songs, subjected to literary modification, are still performed today during the liturgy, e.g. *Chrystus zmartwychwstan jest* [Christ is Risen] and *Przez Twoje święte zmartwychpowstanie* [Through Thy Holy Resurrection], while the song *Wstał z martwych krol nasz, Syn Boży* [Risen from the Dead, Our King, the Son of God] became, over time, the so-called Easter part of the *Bogurodzica*<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. T. Sinka, *Polska pieśń w liturgii*, p. 246.

<sup>9</sup> J. Michalak, *Zarys liturgiki*, Plock 1939, pp. 217–218. During the procession the song was performed alternately: the clergy in Latin *Victimae paschali*, the faithful in Polish the same song. On the other hand, when the clergy sang *Venantius Fortunatus’* Latin hymn *Salve festa dies* (Witaj, dniu święty [Hail, holy day]), the people repeated after each stanza: *Przez Twe święte zmartwychwstanie* [Through Thy holy resurrection]. Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, Poznań 2006, p. 1295.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. T. Sinka, *Polska pieśń w liturgii*, p. 249.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

From the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries come the following songs: *Wszęgo świata wszystkim lud* [The whole world's people] and *Jezus Chrystus Bóg-człowiek* [Jesus Christ God-man] and *Wesoły nam dzień nastął* [A joyful day has come upon us]<sup>13</sup>.

The following centuries, especially the 16th to 18th centuries, brought a significant flowering of Easter songs. In the 16th century, the following songs were written: *Chrystus Pan zmartwychwstał* [Christ the Lord is Risen] and *Dnia tego świętego wielkanocnego* [This Holy Easter Day]<sup>14</sup>.

In the seventeenth century, the following songs were written: *Wesoły nam dzień dziś nastął* [Today is the joyful day], *Dziś Chrystus Król wiecznej chwały* [Today Christ, the King of eternal glory] and a translation of *Collaudemus—Wystawiajmy Chrysta Pana* [Let us praise Christ the Lord]<sup>15</sup>.

The next century—the eighteenth—added abundantly to the repertoire of Easter songs: *Alleluja, chwalcie Pana* [Alleluia, praise the Lord]; *Alleluja, Jezus żyje* [Alleluia, Jesus is alive]; *Chrystus zmartwychwstał* [Christ is risen]; *Dni wesołe nam nastaly* [Joyous days are upon us]; *Dziś nam nastął dzień ozdobny* [Today an ornamental day has come to us]; *Jezus przeszedł smutne drogi* [Jesus has gone through sad ways]; *Książę życia tryumfuje nad śmiercią* [The Prince of life triumphs over death]; *Nie zna śmierci Pan żywota* [The Lord of life knows no death], all written by the eminent poet Franciszek Karpiński (+1825)<sup>16</sup> and with music by Teofil Klonowski (+1876), composer of the song *Wesel się, Królowo miła* [Rejoice, my dear Queen]<sup>17</sup>.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the majority of composed Easter songs, which can be found in songbooks, beginning with the first edition of Fr Jan Siedlecki's *Śpiewnik kościelny* [The church songbook] of 1878<sup>18</sup>. Songs from the late 19th century highlight the special religious, cultural and patriotic consciousness of Poles then living under the regime of the partitioners.

Moreover, the 19th-century collections of Oskar Kolberg (+1890), which are an extremely valuable source of information on the Polish folk culture of the time and document the living tradition of Polish religious songs, deserve special

<sup>13</sup> Cf. J. Surzyński, *Polskie pieśni Kościoła katolickiego od najdawniejszych czasów do końca XVI stulecia*, Poznań 1891, pp. 95, 101.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

<sup>16</sup> See F. Karpiński, *Pieśni nabożne*, Supraśl 1792.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

<sup>18</sup> J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, Kraków 1876. Current edition recognised as a national liturgical songbook: edition 41, Kraków 2021.

mention<sup>19</sup>. He lists six Easter songs known in the Polish lands in the second half of the 19th century: *Chrystus zmartwychwstan jest* [Christ is risen]; *Dziś Chrystus, Król wiecznej chwaly* [Today Christ, the King of eternal glory]; *Nie zna śmierci Pan żywota* [The Lord of life knows no death]; *Wesoły nam dziś dzień nastał* [Today is the joyful day]; *Wstał Pan Chrystus* [The Lord Christ has risen]; *Wystawiajmy Chrysta Pana* [Praise Christ the Lord]<sup>20</sup>.

Cultural, regional and, above all, patriotic influences, especially at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, were extremely important for the formation of the Polish Easter song. During the Partitions of Poland, Poles perceived Easter, especially the Resurrection procession, as a harbinger of the ‘resurrection’ of their enslaved homeland, and in this context the song *Wesoły nam dzień dziś nastał* [Today is the joyful day] became, in a way, the ‘Easter Polish church hymn’<sup>21</sup>.

## 2. Theology of selected Easter songs

Analysing the content of Easter hymns, we should emphasise their significant value for the heritage of Polish culture. They were and are an invaluable treasure vividly present in the liturgy of the Church, especially when they resound during the Easter season. Their richness is also concluded in their literary and musical form, reflecting the cultural and historical epoch as well as the stages of development of the Polish language.

The theological dimension of the chants of the Easter period focuses essentially on the Gospel event of the night of Christ’s resurrection and the joy of Easter morning. During this period, the Church solemnly celebrates the joy of the work of redemption for fifty days between Resurrection Sunday and Pentecost Sunday<sup>22</sup>. Easter songs help the faithful to personally experience Christ’s victory over death, while opening up the prospect of resurrection and eternal life<sup>23</sup>.

The selected examples of Easter songs presented below are arranged alphabetically by title, consistent with their arrangement proposed in the project *Traditional Church melodies from the perspective of organ accompaniment*<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Oskar Kolberg lists 336 religious songs, out of 12,500 songs. See *Tradycja pieśni wielkanocnych*, <https://www.muzeum-radom.pl/muzeum-o-kolberga/tradycja-piesni-wielkanocnych/2947> (15.06.2024).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Tradycja pieśni wielkanocnych*.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Tradycja pieśni wielkanocnych*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, Kraków 2021, p. 261.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, p. 261.

<sup>24</sup> *Tradycyjne pieśni kościelne z perspektywy akompaniamentu organowego*, <https://akompaniament.upjp2.edu.pl/wielkanoc> (15.03.2024).

The song *Alleluja! Jezus żyje, On co za nas życie dał* [Alleluia! Jesus lives, He who gave his life for us]<sup>25</sup> by an unknown author composed of three strophes, joined by a refrain after each, refers to Christ's Gospel announcement of his resurrection: 'as he said, he is risen'. The victor of death brings sinners out of the abyss, as expressed in the Old Polish phrase: *'Wraca z otchłani z jeńcami, / śmiercią skruszył śmierci grot'* ['He returns from the abyss with captives, / by death he has crushed death's grotto'] and, as the Lord of heaven possessing 'the key to heaven's gate', 'hell is strewn underfoot', confirming his power over Satan. The final strophe, together with the refrain, is a joyful turn to the Mother of God, called 'Queen of Heaven', to whom the fact of the Resurrection is announced: 'Your Son lives, the Lord lives'. After the suffering and wounds comes the joy to be shared with the risen Son: 'Joy you must share with Him, / sunshine each of His wounds'.

This old Polish song contains lexical archaisms, such as: *'Nućmy Jemu pienia chwały'* ['Let's hum a song of praise to Him'], making it all the more valuable as a linguistic monument.

A joyful Easter song with a similar title: *Alleluja! Jezus żyje, już Go dłużej grób nie kryje* [Alleluia! Jesus is alive, the tomb hides Him no more]<sup>26</sup>, expresses great joy at the fact of the empty tomb in which Jesus rested for three days: 'the tomb hides Him no more, / in which He rested three days'. Each of the five strophes begins with the Hebrew word Alleluia, expressing joy and praise given to God, and literally from the Hebrew means 'praise, glorify Yahweh'<sup>27</sup>. Simple in literary phrases

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<sup>25</sup> '1. Alleluia! Jesus lives, / He who gave His life for us. / No longer does the night hide Him from the grave, / as He said, He is risen. / Ref. Let us hum songs of praise to Him: / Hail, Risen Jesus! / Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! / 2. He returns from the abyss with captives, / By death He has crushed death's grotto. / Hell is strewn underfoot, / He holds the key to heaven's gate. / Ref. / 3. Rejoice, Queen of heaven, / thy Son liveth, thy Lord liveth. / The joy you share with Him, / the sunshine each of His wounds. / Ref. R.: Hymn songs of praise to Him: / Hail, risen Jesus! / Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!' (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 175, p. 264).

<sup>26</sup> '1. Alleluia! Jesus lives, / no longer hides Him, the grave in which He rested three days, / in which He rested three days. / 2. Alleluia! He has overcome / Jesus the witchcraft that imprisoned us / in this shameful bondage, / in this shameful bondage. / 3. Alleluia! Triumphs / truth, and falsehood recedes / from a land liberated, / from a land liberated. / 4. Hallelujah! Malice rebuked, / and innocence exalted / has regained its rights, / has regained its rights. / 5. Alleluia! The Risen One / is the pledge of eternal glory, / which He has bloody won, / which He has bloody won' (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 174 a, pp. 262–263).

<sup>27</sup> 'Alleluia'—essentially this Old Testament expression has not been translated in various editions of the Bible. In the Greek Bible it was used in psalms 106 (105), 111 (110), 113 (112), 136 (135), 146–150, as an invocation to which the gathered people responded during the synagogue liturgy. The *Hallel* (psalms 113 [112]—118 [117]) was prayed during the feasts. The Church adopted the acclamation 'alleluia' and began to use it for the glory of Christ gaining

and rhyming, the text of the song (AA-BB) shows the people's faith in God's victory over Evil: *Przewyciężył / Jezus czarta, co nas więził / w tej haniebniej niewoli* ['He has overcome / Jesus the devil who imprisoned us / in this shameful bondage']. This victory refers to both the eschatological dimension and the earthly struggle of man and the triumph of truth over falsehood. Christ's resurrection also showed the victory over evil and injustice expressed in human passion, suffering and death: *'Alleluja! Złość zgromiona / a niewinność wyniesiona / odzyskała swoje prawa'* ['Alleluia! Malice rebuked, / and innocence exalted / has regained its rights'].

Another example of a 16th-century Easter song, *Chrystus Pan zmartwychwstał* [Christ the Lord is Risen]<sup>28</sup>, expresses the truth of Christ's victory over death. The author juxtaposes the two dimensions of death: human and Christ's. The former, 'harsh death', is overcome by His death on the cross, described as precious—'dear death'. Each of the three strophes ends with the solemn invocation 'Alleluia!'. After the victory over death referred to in the first strophe, in the second strophe the author addresses the Risen One, beginning with the invocation: *O Chryste, nasz Panie!* ['O Christ, our Lord!'], for inward conversion through the cause of the Resurrection (*'Przez Twe zmartwychwstanie / daj nam z grzechów powstać* ['Through Thy Resurrection / let us rise from our sins']) and for all graces, especially, one might suppose—the grace of the Resurrection (*'Łaski Twojej dostać. Alleluja'* ['Get Thy grace. Alleluia!']). The final strophe is, as it were, the apogee of the entire text of the song and expresses an eschatological nostalgia for eternal life and the encounter with God after life on earth is over: *'A gdy żywot minie / daj w wiecznej krainie / widzieć Ojca swego, / Boga Wszchemocnego. Alleluja!* ['And when life is past, / let us see Thy Father / in the eternal realm / God Almighty. Alleluia!']

One of the most well-known, widespread and at the same time oldest Easter songs is the aforementioned song *Chrystus zmartwychwstan jest* [Christ is Risen]<sup>29</sup>.

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victory. Therefore, 'alleluia' became the characteristic chant of the Easter season and is also performed at many other moments of the celebrated liturgy in the Latin Church. Cf. P. Caban, *Jakie odpowiedzi na wezwania liturgiczne dawali chrześcijanie w starożytności?*, 'Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny' 59 (2006) no. 2, p. 122.

<sup>28</sup> '1. Christ the Lord is risen, / the victory has been won, / for he has shattered death harshly / by his death by the way. Alleluia! / 2. O Christ, our Lord! / By Thy resurrection / grant us from sins to rise, / thy grace to receive. Alleluia! / 3. And when life is past, / grant in the eternal realm / to see Thy Father, / God Almighty. Alleluia!' (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 178, p. 267).

<sup>29</sup> '1. Christ is risen, / to us by example is given, / That we are to rise again, / With the Lord God to reign. Alleluia! / 2. He lay three days in the tomb, / he gave his side to be pierced, / his side, his hands, his feet both, / for salvation to you. Alleluia! / 3. Three Mary's went, / expensive ointments they carried, / they wanted to anoint Christ, / to Him honor and glory

It is considered to be the oldest Polish song of the Easter season and is written in Old Polish ‘Krystus zmartwych wstał je’, a translation of which was probably made by Świątosław of Wilków in 1365<sup>30</sup>. The song originated as a trope to the solemn Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*<sup>31</sup> (*Niech w święto radosne* [Let there be joyful feast]), and its notation—both text and melody—can be found for the first time in the Plock Gradual, although archaic linguistic forms point to an even earlier dating<sup>32</sup>:

Krystus z martwych wstał je,  
Ludu przykład dał je,  
Eż nam z martwych wstaci,  
Z bogiem krolewaci,  
Kyrie [eleison]<sup>33</sup>.

The single stanza form of the song, which appears in many accounts, has enjoyed widespread familiarity since the medieval period, and its melodic shape and equal number of syllables made it easy to remember and perform<sup>34</sup>. Originally, the piece consisted of four verses written in six lines with even rhymes (AABB), completed by the invocation *Kyrie eleison*<sup>35</sup>, but from the mid-15th century further strophes began to be added, including theophanic invocations to the Mother of God, or Polish saints (e.g. St. Stanislaus), expressing requests for spiritual protection and prosperity, and strophes strictly related to the mystery of the Resurrection, especially the motif of the three Marias arriving at the empty tomb of Christ (cf. Mk 16:1–16:6) and the Christophany, i.e. the appearance of Jesus after death<sup>36</sup>. The theology of the song focuses attention on the Gospel message of the kerygma of faith in the

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to give. Alleluia! / When they were on the road, / they said to each other: / There is a stone not small, / and who will roll it away for us? Hallelujah! / Tell us, Mary, / Where did you see the Lord? / I saw Him after the Passion, / holding the banner / in His hand. Alleluia! / 6. As they stood over the tomb, / the white angel said to them, / Fear not, Mary, / the Lord is risen and lives! Alleluia! (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 179, pp. 268–269).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Tradycja pieśni wielkanocnych*.

<sup>31</sup> The sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*, attributed to the presbyter and poet and chaplain to the German emperors (Conrad II and Henry III) Wipon of Burgundy (c. 995–1084), is performed on the Solemnity of the Resurrection and in its octave. Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, pp. 1031–1033.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, pp. 1031–1033.

<sup>33</sup> T. Michałowska, *Literatura polskiego średniowiecza*, Warsaw 2011, p. 464.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. M. Korolko, *Średniowieczna pieśń religijna polska*, Wrocław 1980, p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. T. Michałowska, *Literatura polskiego średniowiecza*, p. 463.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. T. Michałowska, *Średniowiecze*, Warsaw 1995, p. 276.



resurrection of Christ and the mystery of the empty tomb. It is filled with hope in the resurrection of man and reign with God in heaven: *‘Iż mamy zmartwychpować, / Z Panem Bogiem królować. Alleluja!’* [‘That we are to rise again, / With the Lord God to reign. Alleluia!’]

The Easter song *Dziś Chrystus, Król wiecznej chwały* [Today Christ, King of eternal glory]<sup>37</sup> once again shows the reigning Christ and His victory over death and Satan, announced in the gospels. He triumphs grandly and receives worship ‘on Zion’ as the true Messiah, King and Saviour of the world. His victory is eternal and immortal. Each of the four stanzas ends with a melodious double *Alleluia*, while the final stanza, like the ending of the psalms, is a doxology in praise of the Holy Trinity: ‘Glory to the King, God the Father and God the Son [...] to the Holy Spirit’.

The song *Nie zna śmierci Pan żywota* [The Lord of life knows no death]<sup>38</sup> was composed by Franciszek Karpiński, with music by Teofil Klonowski. The theology of the song refers to the mystery of Christ’s resurrection as repaying Adam’s debt: *‘Twój, Adamie, dług sptacony, / okup ludzki dokończony’* [‘Thy, Adam, debt paid, / human ransom completed’]. The text refers to the First Letter of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, in which the Apostle of the Nations states:

In the meantime, however, Christ has risen first among those who have died. For since through man [came] death, through man also [will be accomplished] the resurrection. And as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive, but each according to their own order. Christ first, then those who belong to Christ, at His coming (1 Cor 15:20–23).

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<sup>37</sup> ‘1. Today Christ, King of eternal glory, / Leads a triumph resplendent. / Adorned in a lovely crown, / receives worship on Zion. Alleluia, alleluia! / Death, where is thy power now? / Where is thy armour, Satan? / He hath beset the stronger armed / The mighty and taken his spoil. Alleluia, alleluia! / 3. My Jesus, for ever and ever, / Thou art the adornment of this world, / By grace bring us to thy / immortal victory. Alleluia, alleluia! / 4. Glory to the everlasting King, / God the Father and the Son, / glory to the Holy Spirit, / our one God. Alleluia, alleluia!’ (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 180, pp. 269–270).

<sup>38</sup> ‘1. The Lord of life does not know death, / though he has passed through its gates; / he has torn the grave’s bonds / by a holy hand. Alleluia! / [2] ‘Thy debt, Adam, is paid, / man’s ransom completed; / thou shalt enter heaven with thy happy / children. Alleluia! / 3. In vain, ye guards, ye guard the tomb! / You will no longer find Him here; / He has risen, penetrated the rocky walls / God of nature. Alleluia! / 4. Now He upon the human tribe / and upon the pleasant land, / that dearly garnished today / at the Lord’s expense. Alleluia!’ (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 184, p. 274).

Christ paid Adam's debt and at the same time opened the gates of heaven for believers. The song conveys the truth of man's eternal destiny. However, in order to rise with Christ, one must first die with Him, leaving the human body (cf. 2 Cor. 5:8) in the expectation that the soul will be reunited with Him on the day of the resurrection of the dead<sup>39</sup>. 'Dying with Christ' is fulfilled at the death of the human body, which dies in Christ's grace, at the same time that the implantation in Him in His redemptive act is completed<sup>40</sup>. In the third strophe, the author alludes to the Gospel scene of the setting of the guard at Christ's tomb (cf. Mt 27:65–66; 28:4), which remained vigilant in vain as the risen Lord penetrated the 'rocky walls'. We are referring here to the glorified body of Jesus. On the one hand, the resurrected body in which Jesus appears bears the marks of the Passion; on the other hand, this authentic body possesses the new properties of a glorified body, that is, it is no longer situated in time and space, but 'can make itself present in its own way, wherever and whenever it wishes, since His humanity can no longer be bound to the earth and belongs exclusively to the divine dominion of the Father'<sup>41</sup>. The joy of the mystery of the Resurrection should touch every human being and the whole earth, which is expressed in the song by the 'Alleluia' repeated at every strophe, as well as by the final words that speak of the 'today's preciously adorned' earth on which the Resurrected One looks.

Another Old Polish Easter song, *Przez Twoje święte Zmartwychpowstanie* [By Thy Holy Resurrection]<sup>42</sup>, reveals the truth of believers' hope of eternal life. Alongside 14th-century Polish Easter songs, the incipits of which are recorded in the aforementioned lost Plock Gradual: *Chrystus z martwych wstał je, Preswte swete weschrznenie, Wstał smartwich crol nas Syn Boży*, the song *Przez Twoje święte z martwy wstanie* most reflects the theological content of the mystery of Christ's rising from the dead: 'By Thy holy rising from the dead, O Son of God, forgive us our sin Thou hast made this world alone Thou hast made our life right Thou hast

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*, Poznań 1994, no. 1005, p. 246 [hereinafter: KKK].

<sup>40</sup> Cf. KKK, no. 1010.

<sup>41</sup> KKK, no. 645.

<sup>42</sup> '1. By Thy holy Resurrection, / Divine Son, forgive us our sinning; / we believe that Thou hast risen from the dead, / Thou hast made our life right, / eternal death hath saved us, / Thy holy power hath appeared. / 2. By thy holy Ascension, / God's Son, forgive us our sin; / we believe that thou hast ascended into heaven, / hast made our life good, / hast saved us from eternal death, / hast made thy holy power manifest. / [1] [1] [2] [3] By Thy holy Spirit sent, / God's Son, forgive us our sin; / we believe that Thou didst send the Spirit, / Thou didst fix our life, / Thou didst save us from eternal death, / Thy holy power hath appeared' (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 190, p. 283).

made our death eternal Thou hast saved us Thy power hast appeared”<sup>43</sup>. The song is divided into three thematically coherent stanzas. The first depicts the mystery of Christ’s resurrection, the second the ascension, the third the sending of the Holy Spirit, respectively beginning with the words: *‘Przez Twoje święte Zmartwychpowstanie, / Boży Synu, odpuść nam nasze zgrzeszenie; Przez Twoje święte Wniebowstąpienie, / Boży Synu, odpuść nam nasze zgrzeszenie; Przez Twoje święte Ducha zesłanie, / Boży Synu, odpuść nam nasze zgrzeszenie’* [‘By Thy holy Resurrection, / God’s Son, forgive us our sinning; By Thy holy Ascension, / God’s Son, forgive us our sinning; By Thy holy Pentecost, / God’s Son, forgive us our sinning’]. All of these 14th-century songs, as ethnographic and cultural studies show, were sung during the Resurrection procession and were intended to portray the Resurrection as a salvific event and to create an emotional connection between Christ and the liturgical participants<sup>44</sup>.

The first part of the *Regina caeli* antiphon is the Polish version of the song *Weseli się, Królowa miła* [Rejoice, my dear Queen]<sup>45</sup>, written in the first half of the 19th century by Fr Józef Wrzeciono, with music by Teofil Klonowski<sup>46</sup>. The antiphon *Regina caeli*, as one of the four Marian antiphons, is contained in the manuscript of the Antiphonary of St Peter’s Church in Rome (1171), but was popularised by the Franciscan general, Fr Haimon of Faversham (+ 1244), who incorporated it into the Franciscan liturgy of the Hours at the Paschal season<sup>47</sup>. Under the pontificate of Clement VI (+ 1352), it was adopted and spread, becoming the privileged antiphon of the Easter season<sup>48</sup>. Its legendary origin is linked to Pope Gregory the Great (+ 604)<sup>49</sup>. The theology of the hymn text refers to the Mother

<sup>43</sup> G. Ryś, *Pobożność ludowa na ziemiach polskich w średniowieczu. Próba typologii*, Szczecin 1995, p. 164.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. M. Kowalczyk, *Geneza i obchód Wielkanocy w Polsce. Zarys problematyki*, ‘Studia Elbląskie’ 21 (2020), p. 281.

<sup>45</sup> ‘1. Rejoice, O Queen dear, / for He whom thou hast borne, / is risen Lord over lords; / pray to Him for us! / Alleluia, alleluia! / 2. Rejoice and be merry in heaven, / ask Him for us in our time of need, / that we may get there too / and for ever sing: / Alleluia, alleluia!’ (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 191, p. 284).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, pp. 1282–1283; J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 191, p. 284).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, p. 1282.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, p. 1282.

<sup>49</sup> A legend described in the *Legenda aurea* (1265) mentions a plague that struck Rome in 596 during the Easter season. Pope Gregory the Great then ordered a penitential and supplication procession. The procession set off at dawn from the church of Ara Coeli to the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, where the grace-famous image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Salus populi Romani*, was located. The Pope carried the icon of Our Lady in the procession in person. As they passed

of God who, after the prophetic words about the sufferings (Lk 2:35) associated with the passion and death of her Son, experiences joy (Jn 19:26–27). The People of God turn to their Mother, Mary, as it were, consoling her, encouraging her to rejoice. At the same time, they turn to her—the Queen of heaven and earth—for intercession with Christ, asking for the necessary graces and blessing (‘ask Him for us in our time of need’), and ultimately for eternal life in heaven, in imitation of the Divine Parent (‘so that we may also get there and sing: Alleluia, alleluia!’).

One of the oldest Polish Easter songs is *Wstał Pan Chrystus* [The Lord Christ has risen]<sup>50</sup>. The song was most likely written in the late 14th or early 15th century, as its title is mentioned in *Przeworsczyk’s Canon*<sup>51</sup> of 1435. It is a Latin translation of the trope *Surrexit Christus hodie* and consists of two verse strophes written in irregular eight-verse with even rhymes<sup>52</sup>. A joyful and vigorous melodic acclamation begins the song: *Wstał Pan Chrystus z martwych ninie, / alleluja, alleluja!* [‘The Lord Christ has risen from the dead, / alleluia, alleluia!’] and will become the beginning of the sung joy in praise of the risen Lord. It is crowned by the praise of the Holy Trinity constituting a confession of faith in God present in Three Persons: *Świętą Trójcę wyznawajmy, / alleluja, alleluja! / Bogu cześć i chwałę dajmy, / alleluja, alleluja!* [‘Let us confess the Holy Trinity, / alleluia, alleluia! / Let us give honour and glory to God, / alleluia, alleluia!’]. The Divine Persons are inseparable; the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father on behalf of the Son (‘from the Father’—Jn 15:26) reveals that He is with the Father and the Son the same one God and receives with the Father and the Son praise and glory<sup>53</sup>. This confession confirms the statement present in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: ‘With the Father and the Son He jointly receives adoration and glory’, since the Father is the same as the Son,

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Hadrian’s mausoleum, the participants heard angelic voices singing ‘Regina coeli laetare, alleluia, quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia, resurrexit sicut dixit alleluia’. As the voices fell silent, the Pope added ‘ora pro nobis Deum. Alleluia.’ At that moment, an angel appeared, holding the sword of pestilence, which he tucked into its scabbard, and from then on the pandemic ceased. To commemorate this miraculous event, the name of the mausoleum-castle was changed to the Castle of the Holy Angel, and the words of the angelic hymn were placed on the roof of the church of Ara Coeli. Cf. B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, p. 1283.

<sup>50</sup> ‘1. The Lord Christ rose from the dead nin, / alleluia, alleluia! / He has exulted his people miles away, / alleluia, alleluia! / 2. He did not repent of his life, / alleluia, alleluia! / For a miserable man, / alleluia, alleluia! / 3. On this Easter day, / alleluia, alleluia! / Praise every Son of God, / alleluia, alleluia! / 4. Let us confess the Holy Trinity, / alleluia, alleluia! / Let us give honour and glory to God, / alleluia, alleluia!’ (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 194, pp. 289–290).

<sup>51</sup> A lost medieval hymnal from 1435 by Jan of Przeworsk contained religious songs in Polish. Cf. T. Michałowska, *Średniowiecze*, pp. 347–348.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. T. Michałowska, *Średniowiecze*, pp. 347–348.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *KKK*, no. 263.

the Son the same as the Father, the Holy Spirit the same as the Father and the Son, that is, one God as to nature, and they constitute a co-eternal Trinity<sup>54</sup>.

The Easter song *Zwycięzca śmierci* [Victor of Death]<sup>55</sup> was probably written in 1837, and its authorship of both text and music is attributed to Father Michał Marcin Mioduszeński (+ 1868). It was included in his songbook<sup>56</sup>. It expresses the truth of Christ's victory over death, hell and Satan. The figure of Jonah, who in typological exegesis<sup>57</sup> becomes a type of Jesus, is evoked in the song. The prophet Jonah and his story is thus a figurehead for the work of Christ already announced in the Old Testament (Jon 2:1). The Evangelist Matthew records Christ's words referring directly to the Old Testament prophet: 'The perverse and faithless tribe demands a sign, but no sign will be given to them except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the bowels of a great fish, so the Son of Man will

<sup>54</sup> *KKK*, no. 245; no. 253.

<sup>55</sup> 'The conqueror of death, hell and Satan, / comes out of the tomb on the third day of the morning. / The unbelieving nation is triumphant, frightened, / at the miracle of Jonah. Alleluia! / 2. The earth shakes, the guard of the tomb stirs, / an angel descends, the women are comforted, / 'See, thus he says, this tomb is left empty, / the Lord is risen.' Alleluia! / 3. Abandon from us sorrows and cares in waves, / when the Lord Saviour triumphs in glory; / to his Father he has already made satisfaction, / to us he brings joy. Alleluia! / 4. He rejoices with His disciples who have been faithful, / He confirms them in the faith so that they do not doubt; / He communes with them, gives many teachings / about His Church. Alleluia! / 5. He no longer ceases with an unbelieving people, / alone shows himself to the faithful; / immortality presents the mark / among the disciples of the cluster. Alleluia! / 6. Sorrows, wounds, scorns inflicted / and shameful deaths are already rewarded; / for humiliations He has been exalted / above all thrones. Alleluia!' (J. Siedlecki, *Śpiewnik kościelny*, no. 198, pp. 295–296).

<sup>56</sup> See M. M. Mioduszeński, *Śpiewnik Kościelny, czyli pieśni nabożne z melodyjami*, Kraków 1838, p. 458.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. P. Podeszwa, *Prorok Jonasz zapowiedzią Chrystusa w świetle Komentarza do Księgi Jonasza św. Hieronima*, 'Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia' 2 (2009), p. 158. The prophet Jonah and his story is thus a figure showing the work of Christ already announced in the Old Testament (Jon 2:1). The Evangelist Matthew records Christ's words referring directly to the Old Testament prophet: 'The perverse and faithless tribe demands a sign, but no sign will be given to them except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the bowels of a great fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the womb of the earth' (Mt 12:39). The monumental image of the Lord's resurrection, highlighted in the third verse: 'the unbelieving people will be troubled, frightened' emphasises the attribute of God—His power—and reveals the truth of the fear of a people immersed in sin, while by the term "unbelieving people" are meant those Jews who did not believe in the Deity of Christ and His resurrection. In the second strophe, the author refers to the experience of the empty tomb by the women and the dialogue with the angel announcing the Lord's resurrection (Mt 28:1–8). The death of Christ liberates the disciples from the bondage of sin and eternal damnation, while the death of the believer's body becomes an important event, a gateway, as it were, which opens eternal life.

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## Conclusion

The theology of Easter hymns, especially those analysed and deeply rooted in the Polish Church's liturgical and folk tradition, focuses mainly on the mystery of man's redemption through the mystery of Jesus Christ's resurrection. Fundamental truths related to the believer's existence in the perspective of eternal life appear in them. These include the theological virtues, especially faith and hope, the truth about human sin rooted in the biblical sin of Adam. There are many indirect or direct references to quotations taken from Scripture, especially those describing the event of Christ's resurrection. The soteriological significance of the truths concluded in the Easter songs directs the faithful to open their hearts and minds to the truth of the Triune God, the ultimate things, especially death, resurrection and eternal life.

In the Instruction on Music in the Sacred Liturgy *Musica Sacram* we read:

Through singing, too, a more solemn character should be given to those rites which the liturgy in the course of the Church year specially emphasises. Particularly solemn should be the celebration of the rites of Holy Week, which, through the celebration of the paschal mystery, lead the faithful as if into the very centre of the liturgical year and the liturgy itself<sup>59</sup>.

Easter songs expressing the joy of experiencing Christ's victory over death and the hope of the universal resurrection are therefore a form of prayer and should lead

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. S. Ropiak, *Treść teologiczna wielkanocnych pieśni zastępujących hymny w Liturgii Godzin*, „Studia Warmińskie” 44/45 (2007/2008), s. 141.

<sup>59</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy *Musica Sacram*, 5.03.1967, no. 44.

the faithful to a profound experience of the liturgy and consequently to an encounter with the risen Lord.

## Abstract

### The theological dimension of selected Polish Easter songs

The theology of Polish Easter hymns focuses on the mystery of Christ's resurrection and is directed towards the eschatological dimension of human existence. Through the victory of the Son of God over sin, death and Satan, man has an open gate to eternal life. Easter songs are rooted in the biblical account of the Lord's resurrection and are a form of prayer expressed both during and outside the liturgy, and should therefore bring the faithful closer to God. The oldest hymns, dating back to the 14th century, were composed throughout the centuries of the existence of the Polish nation and state, and often referred to the historical and social situation of Poles, especially during the partitions. However, their content and melody have always expressed the essence of man's faith in the resurrection of Christ and the hope of eternal life.

**Keywords:** Pascha, Easter, Easter chants, Paschal liturgy, theology of hymns

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**Karol Litawa** – doctor of liturgy (Pontificio Istituto Liturgico Sant'Anselmo, Rome), presbyter of the Archdiocese of Łódź, assistant professor of liturgy at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, lecturer at the Higher Seminary, Theological Institute in Łódź and chairman of the Commission for Liturgy in the Archdiocese of Łódź.  
E-mail: karol.litawa@upjp2.edu.pl



Wiesław Delimat

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6328-3923>

The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

<https://ror.org/0583g9182>

## Education of church musicians in Cracow in the period from the end of the Second Vatican Council to the present day

The Second Vatican Council, which ended in 1965, set church musicians all over the world—including Poland—many new and important tasks. One of these was to adapt the Mass chants to the prosody of the Polish language and to create melodies for the *ordinarium missae* based on Polish translations of Latin texts. These melodies were to be able to be performed by the general faithful gathered at the liturgy. The role of the church organist changed dramatically. From a musician accompanying hymns and sometimes priestly chants, having great freedom in the choice of repertoire and accompanying with his organ playing the silently recited prayers of the priest, he became an active participant in the liturgy. Paradoxically, however, his tasks were clearly limited. Musical display had to give way to simple accompaniment, the style and character of which was bound by numerous regulations and even rigour over time. The organist's main task became helping the faithful to sing the texts, which sounded very different in the national language than in Latin. Solo organ playing, although possible, could not dominate. Preluding and improvisation were relegated to the background, which, for those musically trained and accustomed to great freedom, was not always a cause for satisfaction. Some even contested the conciliar rules, hoping that their application would only be temporary.

Melodies for the texts of the fixed parts of the Mass cycle in Polish translation, as well as other liturgical chants, arose at this time 'like mushrooms after the rain'. Some of them were of obvious musical value, while others turned out to be compositionally weak and sometimes even inept. According to the principle that taste is a matter of individuality, anyone could be a musical composer: an organist, a priest, a nun, a wedding player, a choirboy, etc. The merits of a composition were not assessed by the composer. However, no one was in charge of the substantive assessment of compositions, and the few musical commissions operating under

the auspices of the episcopal curia did not begin to emerge until several years later. One of the earliest active ones was the Commission for Church Music/Commission for Sacred Music in Cracow, established by Karol Wojtyła, Archbishop Metropolitan of Kraków. The decree for its establishment was promulgated in 1973.

A few months later, in 1974, Cardinal Wojtyła also established the Liturgical Institute, and within it the Church Music Section at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology (after 1981 the Pontifical Academy of Theology). In terms of musical activities, the Institute's main task was to train lay people and nuns preparing to take up the ministry of organist in the churches of the Archdiocese of Cracow. Although similar attempts had been made before, e.g. within the framework of the Organist Training College for Religious Sisters and the Organist Training College for Men, led by the organist of St Mary's Basilica, Stefan Profic<sup>1</sup>, it was only the creation of the Institute that gave hope for a permanent action. Suffice it to say that when Cardinal Wojtyła entrusted the direction of the Institute to Father Dr Waław Świerzawski<sup>2</sup>, he surrounded himself with superbly educated Cracovian musicians, including: Marian Machura, Alojzy Poziorski, Danuta Degórska-Czubek, Mieczysław Tuleja, Władysław Radwan, Gerard Mryka, and somewhat later also: Jerzy Rieger, Barbara Kaszycka, Maria Machura, Bogusława Targosz, Jacek Targosz, Jacek Berwaldt, Bogusław Scheller, Jan Kokoszka, Krystyna Suzin, Anna Dzioba, Marek Wolak or Janusz Karteczka. A definitely leading role in this group was played by Associate Professor Marian Machura<sup>3</sup>, organist at the Tyniec Abbey, who for many years was head of the Archdiocesan Organist's

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan Profic (1892–1992), organist, composer and conductor. From 1927 to 1997 he served as organist of St Mary's Basilica in Cracow. There he also led the *Hasło* choir. In 1963 he was awarded the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* medal by Pope John XXII. He was an outstanding authority not only in the field of musical performance, but also in the education of organists.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Waław Świerzawski (1927–2017), priest, professor of theological sciences, researcher at the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow, rector of the Academy from 1988 to 1992. Rector of St. Mark's Church in Cracow for many years, as well as of the adjacent House of Retired Priests (later PAT professors). Sandomierz diocesan bishop from 1992 to 2002. For more see S. Koperek, *Kapłan Archidiecezji Lwowskiej. Trzy spojrzenia na życie i dzieło Księdza Biskupa Waław Świerzawskiego* [Priest of the Lviv Archdiocese. Three Views on the Life and Work of Priest Bishop Waław Świerzawski], Sandomierz 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Marian Machura (1933–2016), organist, composer, conductor and pedagogue. Since 1953 organist at the Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec. Academic and didactic employee of the Academy of Music and the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow. For many years director of the Archdiocesan Organist's College and the Church Music Section of the PAT. Creator of many liturgical chants. Honoured with papal awards—Medal *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* and Order of St Sylvester. For more see D. Sprada, *Marian Machura (1933–2016). Biografia* [Marian Machura (1933–2016). Biography], Tyniec 2023.

Study, operating within the Institute, as well as the Church Music Section. The operation of the latter was similar to that of university education. Its students were mainly graduates of the Archdiocesan Organist's Study who wished to continue their studies at a higher level.

The structure of the Archdiocesan Organist's College was to study for four years. However, many graduates chose to complete their education in a 2-year college, the so-called 'secondary'. The Music Section also trained in a four-year system. Group lessons of each grade were held once a week and lasted from morning to afternoon. Individual lessons were held on all days of the week. In the early days of the College, the teachers had no formal employment. In later years, they worked under civil law contracts. The tuition of College and Section students was self-financing. The House of Retired Priests at 10 St Mark's Street, thanks to the kindness of its rector, Fr. Prof. Świerżawski, lent several rooms free of charge, where collective and individual classes were held. The students paid tuition fees, the sum of which was distributed among the teachers conducting the classes. Although the rates of pay were rather low, voices of discontent were not heard. The unambiguously enthusiastic atmosphere of these educational activities did not allow either the students or the teachers to contest any sphere of the College's operation.

In the course of time, the building on St Mark's Street became too cramped to accommodate all the students. It was possible to move some of the classes to the catechism rooms at the churches of St Anne and St Catherine, the Bernardine Fathers and the Capuchin Fathers, as well as to the treasury, a room behind the sacristy of St Mark's Church.

In total, more than 100 students studied in the above-mentioned rooms, which had at their disposal a single pipe organ made by Truszczyński, based on a multiplex system, donated to the College by the Academy of Music in Cracow, as well as several old, heavily used pianos and harmoniums. In the second half of the 1980s, the Academy of Music donated another organ to the College, this time from the Waclaw Biernacki company, which had previously been installed in the 'Florianka' auditorium. It found its new home in the chapel of the Catholic school at Pędzichów Street. Unfortunately, the cooperation between the school authorities and the Institute's management was not very harmonious. As a result, it became virtually impossible to hold classes and practice with the instrument over time. By the decision of the director of the College, Associate Professor Marian Machura, the instrument was sold to one of the Silesian parishes.

The enormous interest in studying at the College necessitated a constant expansion of the teaching staff. In the 1980s, the teaching staff included, among others: Włodzimierz Siedlik, Teresa Arend, Marek Wolak, Paweł Szywalski, Wiesław Delimat, Monika Rusecka, Ewa Turska, Marta Machura-Czarakcziewa and Paweł Bitka.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the College's teaching activities were moved for a few months to a tenement house at 20 Kanonicza Street, and later to what seemed at the time a spacious building at 4 Szujskiego Street, which became the seat of the Organist's College and the Church Music Section for several years, until 2006.

In 1991, the Director of the Liturgical Institute, Father Professor Waclaw Świerżawski—at that time also the Rector of the Pontifical Academy of Theology—entrusted the responsibility of directing the Organist's College to Wiesław Delimat, M.A., a graduate of the Academy of Music and organist at St. Mark's Church in Cracow. Associate Professor Marian Machura remained in charge of the Church Music Section.

The following subjects were taught at the Archdiocesan Organist College of the elementary and secondary levels: organ and piano (classes conducted individually), liturgical practice, ear training, harmony and voice emission. In addition, the students of the College sang in the *Psalmodia* choir, led by Danuta Degórska-Czubek, M.A., and later Wiesław Delimat, M.A. In the Church Music Section, similar subjects were taught, only at a correspondingly higher level. An important role was also played, however, by practical classes in Gregorian chant, taught by the Benedictine friar docent Tomasz Dąbek, and elements of conducting, taught by Danuta Degórska-Czubek and Włodzimierz Siedlik. The choir, named *Psalmodia Minor*, was made up of all the Institute's students. Its conductor was a student and later a lecturer at the Institute, MA Włodzimierz Siedlik. This ensemble was the origin of the *Psalmodia* Choir of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, which is still active today.

An agreement concluded in 1993 between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland, known as the Concordat, provided the basis for partial funding of selected Church universities, including the Pontifical Academy of Theology. This fact became one of the reasons for the institutional separation of the Archdiocesan Organist College and the Church Music Section. The main reason was that the students of the College were not required to have a general secondary education culminating in a high school diploma. For the students, this requirement was a matter of course. As a result, the Archdiocesan Organist College was taken over by the Archdiocese of Cracow, while the students of the Church Music Section became students of the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow.

State funding of the Pontifical Theological Academy gave grounds for optimism about the future of the Church Music Section. However, the financial condition of the College of Organists was becoming increasingly difficult. The political and systemic changes of the 1990s, associated with high inflation, caused the cost of living to rise significantly. Students commuting to classes from the

remotest corners of southern Poland not only had to bear transport costs, but also had to pay tuition fees. Although tuition fees were increasing, teachers' salaries were not able to "catch up" with the level of inflation. In this situation, in 1996, the management of the College and the authorities of the Archdiocese of Cracow, supported by the authority of Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, the Metropolitan of Cracow at that time, began efforts to consolidate the Organist's College in the structures of state education. The intensive preparations, which lasted almost two years, bore fruit in 1998 when the Archdiocesan Organist College was transformed into the Archdiocesan Organist School, entered into the register of artistic schools. In addition to Fr. Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, the following persons played an exceptionally important role in the transformation process: Lidia Skrzyaniarz, M.A.—the then inspector of the Centre for Artistic Education in the Małopolska region, Fr. Marek Głownia, M.A.—the treasurer of the Archdiocese of Cracow, Fr. Robert Tyrała, M.A. and the writer of these words, Wiesław Delimat, M.A., the manager of the College.

The non-public Archdiocesan Organist School was put to a difficult test at the very beginning of its existence. Acting on the basis of the Statute approved by the Archbishop of Cracow, it had to demonstrate the reliability of its didactic process. The recruitment process and educational requirements were adapted to those of state schools. Teaching was based on ministerial programmes developed for organ classes of music schools of the second degree. As a result, teaching at the school was extended to include the following subjects: principles of music, musical literature, organ improvisation and organ accompaniment. In addition, subjects that seemed essential for the training of a church organist were introduced into the timetable: liturgy, voice emission and Gregorian chant. In accordance with state regulations, most of the general musical subjects, as well as individual organ classes, were taught at least twice a week. The school operated on a six-class system.

The school's commitment to the Ministry of Culture also included the gradual, full-time employment of teachers. Initially, only a few people were employed on a contract basis, but over time this principle was extended to all teaching staff. As the school was still only supported by tuition fees and a subsidy from the metropolitan curia, this requirement was extremely difficult to meet. After a year of operation, the Ministry of Culture gave a positive assessment of the unit's operation, as a result of which, in 1999, the Archdiocesan Organist School in Cracow was granted the status of a public school. This involved, among other things, receiving a ministerial subvention of half the costs necessary for educational activities. The Ministry's decision was a breakthrough for the school and provided a perspective for development.

At the same time, the authorities of the Pontifical Academy of Theology began efforts to reform the organisation of the Church Music Section. Functioning within the Faculty of Theology, it was not possible to formulate the educational requirements in a way that was consistent with the curriculum minima of the faculty and yet necessary for a sound musical education. Students also did not have the opportunity to obtain a master's degree. By decision of the university authorities, in 2001 the Church Music Section was incorporated into the Faculty of History. This allowed selected music subjects to be included in the Faculty *Ratio Studiorum*. At the same time, the extension of the hourly grid to include the necessary general subjects (e.g. foreign languages, philosophy, sociology, etc.), as well as the opening of the seminar of scientific work, became the basis for the recognition of the education of the students of the Church Music Section as sufficient for the award of a master's degree.

The turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries was a time when the education of church musicians also began to be dealt with by state art universities. The Academy of Music in Cracow took advantage of this opportunity. In 1997, Prof. Jerzy Kurcz created in the Faculty of Music Education a specialisation: church music and the Department of Church Music, whose pedagogues were: Prof. Leszek Werner, Dr. Krzysztof Latała (head in 1997–2000), Fr. Tadeusz Przybylski SDB, Dr. Marek Wolak, Fr. Dr. Robert Tyrała (head in 2005–2010). The teaching staff was expanded in the following years: Fr. Prof. Kazimierz Szymonik (head in 1999–2004), Dr. Henryk Jan Botor and Dr. Krzysztof Michałek. In 2010, the Department of Church Music was replaced by the Department of Religious Music. Its leadership was entrusted to Fr. Dr. Robert Tyrała, (2010–2019). In the 2019/20 academic year, the then Rector Prof. Dr. Stanisław Krawczyński became the acting head of the department, and from 2020, Dr. Krzysztof Michałek became the acting head of the department. In 2017–2018 and 2019–2020, the Chair of Religious Music was held by Dr Maria Januszkiewicz, and from 2020 also by Dr Daniel Prajzner<sup>4</sup>.

Until 2008, therefore, it was possible to obtain academic training in church music in Kraków at two universities: the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow and the Academy of Music. The activities of both academies were treated competitively in their own way. The Academy of Music had better facilities, including instrumentation, while the Pontifical Academy of Theology's strengths were experience, tradition and unequivocal support from church authorities. The activities of the Archdiocesan Commission for Church Music, headed at the time

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<sup>4</sup> *Katedra Muzyki Kościelnej* [Department of Church Music], <https://www.amuz.krakow.pl/wydzialy/wydzial-i-tworczosci-interpretacji-i-edukacji-muzycznej/katedra-muzyki-religijnej/> (26.04.2024).

by Fr. Robert Tyrała, which succeeded in drawing up a number of documents, including the Regulations for Organists of the Archdiocese of Cracow, should not be forgotten either<sup>5</sup>. The documents that were developed explicitly made organist work in the church dependent on the level of musical education acquired.

A significant caesura in the teaching of music at the academic level within the Kraków church became the year 2008, when the Inter-University Institute of Church Music (abbreviated as IICM) was established. The formula for the Institute had been maturing for several years among church musicians, who felt that the competing activities of the two universities did not serve the unity of this relatively small community. The *spiritus movens* of the concept of joint teaching was Fr. Dr. Robert Tyrała, who was employed as a lecturer at both of these universities. The uniquely unanimous position of the two rectors, Fr. Prof. Jan Maciej Dyduch of the Pontifical Academy of Theology and Prof. Stanisław Krawczyński of the Academy of Music, resulted in the establishment of an inter-university commission in 2006, whose aim was to develop documents that would allow the Ministry of Science and Higher Education to establish a new, unique course of study—church music. The commission was made up of: Fr. Dr Robert Tyrała (chairman), Fr. Prof. Andrzej Zając, assistant professor Adam Korzeniowski, assistant professor Jan Jazownik, assistant professor Wiesław Delimat. The committee created a study programme, training standards for the church music major, requirements for the entrance exam and study regulations. The documents were submitted to the ministry in autumn 2007. On 1 February 2008, the course was entered on the list of first- and second-cycle studies. The authorisation to run it was granted to both universities at the same time. On 19 November 2008, in the Archbishops' House in Krakow, an agreement between the rectors and the study regulations were officially signed. The Senates of both universities established the Inter-University Institute of Church Music in Cracow, with Fr. Dr Robert Tyrała as its first director.

The institute was extremely active for the next 13 years. Classes were held within the walls of both universities, the teaching staff consisted of academic teachers employed at the Pontifical Academy of Theology and the Academy of Music. The syllabus included general and specialised subjects, the completion of which was necessary to obtain full competence as a church musician. Particular emphasis was placed on organ playing, conducting and liturgical accompaniment and improvisation. At the end of each cycle of study, students were required to prepare and defend a written thesis in addition to a graduation concert on the organ and

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<sup>5</sup> *Regulamin Organistów Archidiecezji Krakowskiej* [Regulations for Organists of the Archdiocese of Cracow], chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://diecezja.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Regulamin-Organistow-AK.pdf (26.04.2024).

musical animation of the solemn liturgy. Diplomas of graduation, supplemented by an appropriate addendum, were issued by the university to which the student was formally assigned during the educational process. Several dozen church musicians graduated from this Institute, which was unique in the whole country. Subsequent directors of the Institute were Fr. Dr Robert Tyrała, Dr Witold Zalewski and Dr Susi Ferfaglia. However, the activities of the IICM were not only didactic. The Institute was also active in the scientific and concert spheres. One of the most important elements of the Church Music Days, organised annually in November, were conferences during which eminent scholars from Poland, Europe and the USA presented their papers. Most of the papers were published in the journal 'Pro Musica Sacra', whose editors are the Institute's staff, under the direction of Fr. Prof. Robert Tyrała. Dozens of organ, chamber and choir concerts were performed during this time by students and staff of the Institute, as well as invited guests. Among them were such notables as Ludger Lohmann, Peter Planyavsky, Lorenzo Ghielmi, Christoph Bossert and Jan Łukaszewski. Two events, of which the Institute was the initiator and main executor, were considered particularly momentous:

1. The conferment of the Doctorate *Honoris Causa* of the two universities UPJPII and the Academy of Music in Krakow to Pope Benedict XVI, which took place in Castel Gandolfo on 4 July 2015,

2. The Gala Concert to mark the 40th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's appointment to the See of Peter in Rome's Santa Maria Maggiore Basilica, combined with a Mass in St Peter's Basilica and an audience with Pope Francis in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall. The concert, which took place on 9 October 2018 and Mass at St Peter's Basilica the day after, featured the IICM choir and its staff, accompanied by the Subcarpathian Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dawid Kusz and Wiesław Delimat.

Sadly, as a result of the higher education reform, it has become impossible to run studies in an inter-university formula since 2021. This fact was one of the reasons for the end of the Institute. Starting from the academic year 2020/2021, the music education of the two universities was again separated. Currently, both universities offer Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes in church music, with a general academic profile at the Academy of Music and a practical profile at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow. Interest in studying at both universities is high, even though the entrance exam is of a competitive nature. At the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, there are currently 15 students studying on the faculty of church music, the teaching staff consists of seven academic teachers working on the basis of an employment contract and several specialists supporting their activities. Students undergo practical training in liturgical performance, conducting choir ensembles, organ-building, etc. Practical classes



take place under the guidance of eminent specialists and in the most important professional and amateur choral ensembles of Cracow. The profiling of the studies is of great importance; starting from the 2nd year of the Bachelor's degree, students choose the specialisation that interests them. This culminates in a diploma exam in the respective specialisation. Currently, the possible specialities to choose from are: organ playing, conducting, liturgical monody, organ improvisation and liturgical composition.

Since 2016, the University has also been running a postgraduate course in liturgical monody, initiated and directed by Dr Susi Ferfoggia, Professor of UPJPII. These studies are addressed to all those who are passionate about the heritage of Western monodic chant (from ancient Roman chant, through Gregorian chant, to medieval liturgical chant in the broadest sense). The aim of the studies is not only to practice performance in the spirit of Gregorian semiology, but also to acquire skills in researching and describing medieval liturgical-musical manuscripts. The highly qualified international teaching staff attracts students from all over Poland. Classes are conducted in a two-year cycle, with the fourth edition currently underway. To date, nearly 60 graduates have completed these studies.

The decisions of Cardinal Franciszek Macharski were crucial for the functioning of the Archdiocesan Organist School and the Church Music Section, which later gave rise to the Inter-University Institute of Church Music. Thanks to them, in 2005 these institutions moved to a new, spacious building at 35A Prosta Street. The premises, located on the premises of the Krakow parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, were adapted for educational and musical activities. The cost of the original adaptation was borne by the Archdiocese of Cracow, with the Archdiocesan Organist School later putting the finishing touches to it. Until 2013, the building remained the property of the parish, after which it was handed over to the Archdiocese of Cracow, which in turn handed it over for use and administration to the Archdiocesan Organist School.

With the change of the school's premises, by decree of Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, the Archdiocesan School of Music of the First Degree was established in March 2006, which educates children and young people aged 6 to 16. In the same year, the Archdiocesan Organist School changed its name, which is now the Archdiocesan School of Music of the Second Degree. Since then, instruments other than the organ can also be studied at the school, i.e. piano, harpsichord, string instruments and wind instruments. As of the 2022/2023 school year, the school has also opened a new specialisation: vocalism, with a four-year course of study. The building at 35A Prosta Street has become, so to speak, the centre of musical education of the Archdiocese of Cracow, where children, adolescents and adults at all educational stages study.

Together, the Archdiocesan School of Music of the First Degree and the Archdiocesan School of Music of the Second Degree currently employ 45 teachers who teach nearly 160 students. The director of both schools, from their inception to the present day, is Professor Wiesław Delimat.

From the very beginning of the Archdiocesan Music School's existence, its management and teaching staff have attached great importance to the enrichment of its instrumentation. Not only was the first mechanical organ purchased in 1998, it had been made many years earlier by Prof. Jan Jargoń and Henryk Wojnarowski. This organ first found its place in the building on Szujskiego Street, and was later moved to the premises on Prosta Street. They served pupils and students for more than 20 years. In 2020, they were sold to one of the parishes of the Tarnów diocese. They made way for another, much more valuable German instrument, built in the Baroque style.

At present, the School boasts extensive instrumental facilities, both pipe organs and electronic organs. One of these is a 36-voice organ made by Schuke of Berlin, located in the auditorium. The three-channel instrument, as opus 313, was built in 1975 for the Academy of Music in Cologne, from where it was translocated to our school in 2012. The school also owns the following organs:

- an organ made by the Stockmann brothers (1974, 6/II+P), to which a 16-foot base was added, tuned in mesotonic temperament of a quarter-comma,
- an organ by Becker (1983, 9/II+P), intoned by the Dutch organmaster Sicco Steendam,
- a 16-voice organ made by the Organ Building, Renovation and Repair Company of Damian Kaczmarczyk of Zabrze (II/P, built for the School in 2007, with corrections and intonation correction made by Georg Schloetmann, owner of the E. Hammer Orgelbau, an alumnus of Stockmann),
- a translocated 7-voice organ made by Walcker (II/P, built in 1968),
- two positives: one by the renowned South German company Rensch (1984, four registers), repurchased from *Capella Cracoviensis*, and a 4-voice positive built in 2007 by the above-mentioned D. Kaczmarczyk company.

At the moment, work is in progress to complete another 8-voice mechanical organ using technology that enables the same registers to be used in two sound sections.

The Archdiocesan School of Music also owns more than a dozen grand pianos and pianos, most of which are new or thoroughly restored instruments. Among these, the most valuable is a Steinway concert grand piano. In addition, the School owns a copy of a Baroque harpsichord, several modern electronic organs and digital pianos, as well as string instruments (violins, cellos, guitars) and wind instruments (flutes, saxophones, trumpets). A special place in the school's instrumentarium

is occupied by a grand piano made by the Bechstein company, which is the personal gift of the School's patron Fr. Cardinal Franciszek Macharski.

It is worth mentioning that the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow has also taken steps to enrich the organ instrumentarium. Thanks to the efforts of the former director of the Institute of Church Music, Fr. Dr Robert Tyrała and his colleagues, and a grant from the Ministry of Culture, the Academy purchased a second-hand and partially decomposed 57-voice instrument, originally built by the renowned German company Klais. Thanks to preserved documentation, the pipes, traction parts and new case were reconstructed. The main contractor for the work was the Cracow organ builder Lech Skoczylas. The organ was installed in the Kraków church of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr in Dąbie. Their ceremonial blessing took place on 26 October 2011. For several years it served the students and teachers of the IICM. Lessons, examinations and auditions were held at them. They were also used for concert activities.

For nearly 25 years, the Archdiocesan School of Music, in cooperation with the Archdiocesan Commission for Church Music, has been developing and publishing liturgical aids for organists. The result of the work of the editorial team consisting of: Wiesław Delimat, Mieczysław Tuleja, Fr. Robert Tyrała, Witold Zalewski (on the fourth volume of the Wawel Songbook also Krzysztof Michałek) and other Krakow musicians invited to cooperate, the following items have been published<sup>6</sup>:

- four volumes of the *Śpiewnik Wawelski* [Wawel Castle Songbook]: volume 1—hymns for Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, volume 2—hymns for the Lord's festivals, Marian hymns, volume 3—hymns to the Blessed Sacrament, mass hymns, casual hymns and psalms, volume 4—own and common hymns to the saints,
- *Ciebie, Boga, wystawiamy*—the collection contains priestly chants, responses to Mass in Polish, elaborated melodies of responsorial psalms, prayers of the faithful and selected Mass cycles,
- *Bóg bogaty w miłosierdzie*—chants in honour of the Divine Mercy and St Faustina,
- *Pogrzeb chrześcijański* [Christian Funerals]—aids for organists (songs for the last farewell, funeral songs and suggestions for songs to be sung at a funeral),
- *Pieśni do św. Jana Pawła II* [Songs to St John Paul II]—a collection including songs and prayers developed for the common singing of the faithful with organ accompaniment,

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<sup>6</sup> *Wydania nutowe – Archidiecezjalna Szkoła Muzyczna I stopnia.*, <https://asm1.edu.pl/kategoria-produktu/wydania-nutowe/> (26.04.2024).

- *Śpiewy na I Komunię Świętą* [Chants for the First Holy Communion with organ accompaniment]. It consists of 35 chants intended for the celebration of First Holy Communion. The sheet music is accompanied by a CD featuring all the chants presented in the collection performed by the boys' schola accompanied by the organ.
- *Przygrywki do pieśni kościelnych na cały rok liturgiczny* [Preludes to Church Chants for the Whole Liturgical Year]—a publication by Paweł Grabczyński, a graduate of the Inter-University Institute of Church Music in Cracow; the cycle of 151 preludes complements *Śpiewnik pieśni kościelnych* [Songbook of Church Songs] of Witold Zalewski, organist of the Royal Cathedral of Wawel.

Some of the above-mentioned books have been reissued several times up to now, and the number of printed copies has already exceeded several thousand. The publications, which have received very favourable reviews, are mainly used by organists, who play in churches both in Poland and abroad.

The Archdiocesan Music School's publisher, Church Music in Cracow (abbreviated as MKK), has also published 11 CDs<sup>7</sup>. Among these, the series entitled Anthology of the Organs of the Cracow Archdiocese certainly deserves special attention. It is a series of 5 CDs launched in 2009, presenting instruments in the following churches: St John the Baptist in Rzeszotary, St Peter and St Paul in Bolechowice, the Basilica of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice, St Stanislaus the Bishop and Martyr in Cracow-Dąbie, and St Barbara in Libiąż. The performers are organists associated with the environment of the Church of Cracow: Józef Serafin, Cyprian Jagiełło, Henryk Jan Botor, Witold Zalewski and Krzysztof Michałek. In addition to the aforementioned cycle, the following have been published by the MKK Publishing House: *Psallite Sapienter*—featuring Polish choral and organ music, *O crux, ave!*—containing choral music thematically linked to the mystery of the cross, *Zjednoczona Polska* [United Poland]—a cycle of chants by Feliks Nowowiejski Op. 37, including the famous *Rota, Missae*—containing premiere recordings of Baroque masses by German composers, *Missa est*—a simulation of pre-Conciliar liturgy at St Mark's Church in Cracow, and the latest item: *Jubilee Mass*—containing choral and organ works by Polish composers of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The performers included vocal soloists, as well as organists Witold Zalewski, Filip Presseisen, Jakub Woszczalski and the choirs of the Archdiocesan Music School and the *Kantorei Sankt Barbara* under the direction of Wiesław Delimat.

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<sup>7</sup> *Wydawnictwo – Archidiecezjalna Szkoła Muzyczna I stopnia*, <https://asm1.edu.pl/wydawnictwo/> (26.04.2024).

The Fr. Cardinal Franciszek Macharski Archdiocesan School of Music and the Institute of Church Music, in addition to their daily educational activities, organise a number of international, national and regional events. The most important of these are:

- Church Music Days
- Cracow Competition for Young Organists
- *The 20 Views of...* knowledge competition.
- *Colourful notes* piano competition
- Concerts within the walls of UPJPII.

However, the most important effect of the work of both institutions and their progenitors: the Archdiocesan College of Organists and the Church Music Section is the education of a multitude, thousands of church musicians, organists, conductors and animators of parish musical life, spread all over Poland and the world. Education by example, commitment and sound education, supported by systematic quality improvement, has accompanied these activities for several decades. I believe it will continue as long as the Church exists, so I would assume it will always last.

## Abstract

### Education of church musicians in Cracow in the period from the end of the Second Vatican Council to the present day

The training of church musicians in Cracow in the period after the Second Vatican Council became one of the important tasks of the institutional Church associated with the post-conciliar renewal of the liturgy. In the 1970s, the training of church organists here took on a systematic and organised character. The activities of the Archdiocesan Organist's College, as well as the Church Music Section at the Liturgical Institute, were constantly evolving. Over time, their tasks were taken over by the Archdiocesan Organist School (now the Archdiocesan Music School) and the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow (now the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow). Since 1997, the Academy of Music in Cracow has also been educating church musicians. At present, Cracow and the Archdiocese of Cracow offer many opportunities of professional music education, which are eagerly used by organists, choir conductors, as well as people passionate about Gregorian chant, liturgical composition and the broadly understood animation of the musical life of churches.

The immediate impulse for writing this article was the 25th anniversary of the Cardinal Franciszek Macharski Archdiocesan School of Music, celebrated in 2023, which is an

important link in the series of educational institutions thanks to which the level of education of church musicians is constantly rising.

**Keywords:** education, Institute, Church, commission, Cracow, Krakow, students, college, University

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**Wiesław Delimat** – artistic director of the Pro Musica Mundi choir; graduate of the Academy of Music in Kraków in the class of organ (Prof. Jan Jargoń) and conducting (Prof. Jerzy Katlewicz). At the same academy, he conducted his first degree qualification (2001) and habilitation (2008) conductorships, both in the field of conducting. In 2014, he was awarded the title of professor of musical arts. As an organist, chamber musician and conductor, he has given concerts in most European countries, as well as in the USA, China, Israel and Japan. He has conducted at the famous Berlin Philharmonic and Leipzig's Gewandhaus, among others. He has performed with many renowned orchestral and choral ensembles, which include: Polish Radio Choir in Cracow, Cracow Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, NOSPR in Katowice, Capella Cracoviensis or EuropaChorAkademie in Mainz. Between 1994 and 1999 he was the conductor of the Cracow Academic Choir of the Jagiellonian University. In 2000, he established the chamber choir Kantorei Sankt Barbara and the orchestra L'Estade Armonico. With

these ensembles, he has performed dozens of vocal and instrumental works of various eras and styles at home and abroad, and has made numerous radio and CD recordings. He has also won numerous competition prizes and awards. He is an employee of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow, where he holds the position of Head of the Chair of Church Music. In addition, he is director of the Archdiocesan School of Music of the first and second degree in Krakow. He serves as deputy chairman of the Archdiocesan Commission for Church Music in Cracow and vice-president of the Polish Federation of Pueri Cantores. For his pedagogical, artistic and organisational activity he has been awarded with many distinctions. The most valuable of them is the Order of St. Sylvester, conferred by Pope Benedict XVI.





**Jacob Benda**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0668-3064>

University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota USA

<https://ror.org/05vfxvp80>

## **Magnificat: an exploration of sacred music in the United States<sup>1</sup>**

Esteemed colleagues, it is an honor and privilege to speak to you today about three things I am most passionate about: music, liturgy, and faith. In my capacity as a Music Professor and Director of Music, Liturgy and Sacred Arts at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota (USA), I am fortunate enough to have the opportunity to exercise these passions daily through teaching, performing, and assisting in the liturgical life at the University of St. Thomas. I want to extend my deep gratitude to the organizers of this conference for their marvelous work, and for the kind invitation to offer a few words regarding the dynamics of sacred music in the United States as it relates to education and worship.

In the United States there are approximately 50 colleges and universities that offer degree programs in sacred music; these institutions identify with faith traditions ranging from Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Evangelical, and Non-Denominational, to Jewish and African Consortium. The most popular and prestigious institutions that offer sacred music degree programs identify as non-denominational, and these include schools such as the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, Yale University in New Haven Connecticut, and Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. There are only a handful of competitive Roman Catholic universities such as the Institute of Sacred Music at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, and the University of Saint Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota where I currently work and teach. It is worth noting that the number of students enrolling in sacred music programs is decreasing, while the number of career opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> Article presented at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Poland, 20.11.23.

in this field are increasing. I believe this decrease of enrollment stems from a lack of awareness of the vast opportunities available within the American “church music industry.” The challenge moving forward is to convince classically trained musicians, especially pianists and organists, that they can be formed into marketable full-time, or part-time, church musicians across any denomination with proper instruction that stems from the Roman Catholic Mass.

As a practicing Roman Catholic and professor at a Catholic University, my natural expertise and interests align with the study and practice of Roman Rite worship music, therefore that will be the primary focus of this article. However, throughout my career I have had the privilege to serve as a professional musician within a wide array of faith traditions ranging from Presbyterian and Lutheran, to Episcopal and Methodist; these experiences were invaluable to me because they not only broadened my perspective of sacred music and fostered musical growth but affirmed my love and appreciation for the Roman Catholic liturgy. Since 2015 I have served as a music director, organist, and liturgist at several Roman Catholic parishes in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/Saint Paul, Minnesota), and during this time I witnessed differences in liturgical expression between parishes located only a few miles away from one another, and at times within the same parish itself. The landscape of sacred music in the United States is broad and wide and cannot be neatly defined into a collective approach or style. Furthermore, the boundaries of Roman Catholic sacred music in America have been expanding further and further since the establishment of the liturgical reforms outlined by the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), and it was through this new sense of “freedom” that alternative styles of liturgical music emerged during the past 60 years. Interestingly, the state of Minnesota was at the center of this liturgical music revolution as composers associated with the University of St. Thomas, St. John’s University, and St. Catherine’s University composed a large portion of ‘new’ liturgical music. I am a native of Saint Cloud, Minnesota, and there are three things that you should know about the state of Minnesota: (1) it is located in the Midwestern region of the United States (on the Canadian border) (2) it is referred to as “the land of 10,000 lakes” even though there are actually 11,842 lakes throughout the state, (3) it is home to a group of composers (as previously mentioned) who revolutionized Roman Catholic worship music in the United States in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. These composers include Fr. Jan Michael Joncas (“On Eagles Wings”), Marty Haugen (“Eye Has Not Seen”), David Haas (“Blessed Are They”), Daniel Kantor (“Night of Silence”), and others. This folk-style form of sacred music became widely popular in America beginning in the 1970’s as it embraced two key points of emphasis declared within *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: (1) “the full, active,

and conscious participation in the Mass”<sup>2</sup> and (2) allowing the celebration of the Mass in the vernacular language of the faithful. These composers sought to increase the participation of the faithful within the context of the Mass by abandoning the Latin language, utilizing the English language through poetry and scripture, and implementing musical idioms/instrumentations that were fashionable at the time in popular American music such as simplified chord structures, lyrical melodies, use of acoustic and electric guitars, drums, piano, rain stick, synthesizers, eclectic percussion, etc. Relatedly, many churches saw the abandonment of pipe organs and classically trained choirs altogether because organs and choirs were too reminiscent of the ‘old way’ linked with pre-Vatican II Gregorian Chant and ‘traditional’ church design. In addition to the musical reform following Vatican II, traditional architectural designs based on the ‘Latin Cross’ saw a complete overhaul as the celebration of the Mass *ad orientem* (toward the west/high altar) was replaced with *ad populum* (facing the people). This shift in the orientation of the Mass placed emphasis on the role of the congregation in worship, and therefore the high altar was replaced with a more common table that was re-located to the center of the church on an elevated platform with seating arranged on three sides much like a theater or auditorium. Beautifully crafted décor was replaced with minimalistic and abstract sacred artwork, and the exterior of Catholic churches became both simpler and brutalist in design to reflect the architectural styles of surrounding civic buildings such as banks, shopping malls and business offices. During the past ten years, however, there has been a noticeable reaction to the described post-Vatican II movement as the music of Joncas, Haugen, Haas, Kantor, and others is gradually disappearing from regular use (although one is hard-pressed to attend a funeral without hearing Joncas’ “On Eagles Wings”), guitars are being replaced with the re-installation of pipe organs/electronic organs, choirs and cantors are replacing ‘folk bands,’ churches built during the post-Vatican II era are being redesigned so as to reflect the aesthetic of pre-Vatican II church design even though Mass is still largely celebrated *ad populum*, and the musical training of seminarians is leaning toward the practice of chant and polyphony.

As the proverbial pendulum continues to swing from one style of liturgical music to another in the United States, it is not uncommon to encounter a fusion of these approaches. For example, I served as the music director at a variety of Catholic Churches since 2015 and encountered nearly every possible style of Roman Rite Catholic worship music in America. The first position I held in Minnesota was at a large Catholic Church with modern architecture, a hardly

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<sup>2</sup> Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4.12.1963, no. 14.

operating electronic organ, and theater style seating that surrounded the centered altar on three sides. The parish had a membership of over 4,500 families and a very difficult music ministry to manage because most musicians were not classically trained. There were over ten different vocal ensembles ranging from a small adult ‘traditional’ choir to a quasi-Christian ‘rock band’ called “SINGcerely His” that *performed* with drums (trap set), electric bass, electric guitar, and other pop instruments. Additionally, there was a large handbell choir, youth band, children’s choir, and instrumental ensembles that comprised classically trained violinists and flutists. At times it was utter chaos because there were so many different musical styles being practiced within a single parish, and this chaos resulted in a lack of liturgical unity. After I left this parish, I was hired as the music director and liturgist at other churches in Minneapolis/St. Paul, and I noticed that the musical style/instrumentation at each respective parish gradually shifted from ‘contemporary’ to ‘traditional.’ The last position I held before being hired at the University of St. Thomas was as Director of Music and Liturgy at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Minneapolis. It was a privilege to serve at this parish because the acoustic was ideal due to the traditional architecture of the church, the musicians were classically trained, and they had a stellar choir that was trained in Gregorian Chant as well as more modern musical styles. I found this to be the ideal parish to work within because I was able to unify the liturgies with one style of music—a blended style that incorporated chant and hymnody, organ and piano, and additional instruments such as violin, cello and trumpet. Therefore, based on my experience in working with pastors and parishioners in several Roman Catholic churches, I have come to discover that the preferred style of Roman Catholic sacred music within the Mass is a blended style that fuses the old with the new—meeting in the middle, so to speak. My goal has always been to elevate the Mass and encourage the participation of the faithful with beautiful music, and this has been achieved by selecting the best of the best from a variety of musical genres. The greatest compliment I received from a priest came when I worked at a parish that preferred a contemporary approach to sacred music, and after being hired I slowly incorporated more traditional music and instrumentation within the liturgies; the priest said to me a few months after I began, “you have made our prayer more *beautiful, joyful, and real.*” I will never forget his words because I believe they sum up the ultimate end of liturgical music—to support and elevate the celebration of the Mass, which itself is a transcendental reality full of joy, beauty, and power.

Whether a seasoned sacred music professional, or a new student being introduced to the art of Roman Rite sacred music for the first time, it is of the utmost importance to ask two questions on regular basis: “What is liturgy? What is the role of music within the liturgy?” Stepping back to answer these questions will provide

clarity for educators, students, and church musicians alike as it relates to the reason and purpose for corporate worship, and the role that music plays within the context of the sacred liturgy. We begin our pursuit of answering these questions by referencing three figures who demonstrated: (1) a proper disposition for the liturgy [Mary, the Mother of God], (2) an understanding of the liturgy [Pope Benedict XVI], (3) a recognition of the transcendental power of the liturgy [St. John Paul II]. Let us first look to Mary who modeled a proper disposition for worship in her *Magnificat*; a song of praise, humility, faith, hope and love:

And Mary said: 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord  
and my spirit exults in God my saviour;  
because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.  
Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name,  
and his mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear him.  
He has shown the power of his arm, he has routed the proud of heart.  
He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.  
The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.  
He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his mercy  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors-  
of his mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever' (Luke 1:46–55).<sup>3</sup>

Echoing Mary's Magnificat within his book, *The Theology of the Liturgy: The Sacramental Foundation for Christian Existence*, Pope Benedict XVI masterfully encapsulates the essence of the liturgy:

What is liturgy? What happens during the liturgy? What kind of reality do we encounter here? In the 1920's the suggestion was made that we should understand the liturgy in terms of "play" (or "game"). The point of the analogy was that a game has its own rules, sets up its own world, which is in force from the start of play but then, of course, is suspended at the close of play. A further point of similarity was that play, though it has a meaning, does not have a purpose and that for this very reason there is something healing, even liberating, about it. Play takes us out of the world of daily goals and their pressures and into a sphere of free purpose and achievement, releasing us for a time from all the burdens of our daily world of work. Play is a kind of other world, an oasis of freedom, where for a moment we can let

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<sup>3</sup> *The New Jerusalem Bible*, Doubleday 1999.

life flow freely. We need such moments of retreat from the pressure of this way of thinking, but it is insufficient. It all depends on what we are playing. Everything we have said can be applied to any game, and the trouble is that serious commitment to the rules needed for playing the game soon develops its own burdens and leads to new kinds of purposefulness. Whether we look at modern sport or at chess championships or, indeed, at any game, we find that play, when it does not degenerate into mere fooling about, quickly turns from being another world, a counter-world or non-world, to being a bit of the normal world with its own laws.

We should mention another aspect of this theory of play, something that brings us closer to the essence of the liturgy. Children's play seems in many ways a kind of anticipation of life, a rehearsal for later life, without its burdens and gravity. On this analogy, the liturgy would be a reminder that we are all children, or should be children, in relation to that true life toward which we yearn to go. Liturgy would be a kind of anticipation, a rehearsal, a prelude for the life to come, for eternal life, which St. Augustine describes, but contrast with life in this world, as a fabric woven, no longer of exigency and need, but of the freedom of generosity and gift. Seen thus, liturgy would be the rediscovery within us of true childhood, of openness to a greatness still to come, which is unfulfilled in adult life. Here, then, would be the concrete form of hope, which lives in advance the life to come, the only true life, which initiates us into authentic life—the life of freedom, of intimate union with God, of pure openness to our fellow man. Thus it would imprint on the seemingly real life of daily existence the mark of future freedom, break open the walls that confine us, and let the light of heaven shine down upon earth.<sup>4</sup>

While highlighting key elements of Mary's *Magnificat*, Pope Benedict XVI hints at a transcendent reality that is likened to a "kind of anticipation... for eternal life," and it is then St. John Paul II (our mutual friend as a Polish Pontifical and St. Thomas Aquinas Scholar) who brings an awareness to the transcendental power of beauty within his Letter to Artists in 1999:

Beauty is a key to the mystery and a call to transcendence. It is an invitation to savor life and to dream of the future. That is why the beauty of created things can never fully satisfy. It stirs that hidden nostalgia for God which a lover of beauty like Saint Augustine could express in incomparable terms:

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<sup>4</sup> *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press, 2014, pp. 5–6.

“Late have I loved you, beauty sold and so new: late have I loved you!” Artists of the world, may your many different paths all lead to that infinite Ocean of beauty where wonder becomes awe, exhilaration, unspeakable joy.<sup>5</sup>

In his address to the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church in 2002, he stated further: “The Church has always maintained that, in some way through all the expressions of art, the infinite beauty of God is reflected, and the human mind is almost naturally drawn towards Him.”<sup>6</sup> Lastly, in his words to the International Youth Orchestra: “As with prayer, every artistic expression—especially music—lifts the soul beyond mere earthly existence; it allows us to face life and God who created it with humble devotion, open to the splendor of its truth.” It is here that St. John Paul II is reiterating the point that music, and all art, should reach beyond itself toward our Creator.<sup>7</sup>

The first fruit of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) came with the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) by Pope Paul VI on 4 December 1963. Within this document we come to understand the sacred liturgy through the lens of the universal church:

The liturgy (the Mass) 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... The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with “the paschal sacraments,” to be “one in holiness”; it prays that “they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith”; the renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 4.04.1999, no. 16, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1999/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_23041999\\_artists.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_23041999_artists.html).

<sup>6</sup> *Address of John Paul II to the Participants in the Plenary Assembly of The Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church*, 19.10.2002, no. 1, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2002/october/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_20021019\\_pcchc.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2002/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20021019_pcchc.html).

<sup>7</sup> John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 4.04.1999, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1999/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_23041999\\_artists.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_23041999_artists.html).

<sup>8</sup> Second Vatican Council, Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 10.

As Catholics, we profess and believe in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist; during every Mass we are called to be present with Christ on Calvary where His Paschal sacrifice is continually offered for the salvation of souls. In the Mass He offers us Himself—we offer Him our very selves—and we are united into one as we receive the Body and Blood of Christ during the communion rite. This is a wondrous and glorious mystery!

The Mass is rich with meaning beyond our comprehension, and every liturgical action has a purpose that bestows grace. It is crucial for church musicians to seek understanding regarding these actions so that fitting music can be selected to accompany the liturgy. This is where I believe a general disconnect has existed within Catholic liturgical music in America during the past 60 years—pastors and music directors have been more concerned about what will draw people to Mass rather than focusing on what will draw people closer to God.

Sacred music educators should aim to form classically trained musicians into well-rounded liturgical musicians who can lead a congregation in song on the pipe organ, direct a liturgical choir, and function as a liturgist, because these three skillsets are often interwoven into a single full-time position. Additionally, students need to learn ‘people skills’ to interact effectively with priests, pastors, choir members, and congregation members; many musicians do not possess these skills because we are naturally introverted creatures who spend much of our time alone in a practice room. Lastly, it is vital to train all musicians within the context of the Roman Catholic Mass no matter the student’s faith background. The reason for this approach stems from the reality that most Western Christian liturgies are in some way derived from the Roman Catholic Mass, and the skills needed to understand and perform the wide variety of musical styles practiced in the American Catholic Church can be useful within any Christian liturgy.

In conclusion, we are still trying to figure things out in America as it relates to the practice and education of sacred music. However, we are learning that the liturgy is the first ‘teacher’ of catechism, and that sacred music must be an instrument that draws the faithful to Christ.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps asking one final question will illuminate our paths moving forward so that God can be glorified, the faithful sanctified, and a transcendental reality realized in our worship: *are we magnifying the Lord?*

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<sup>9</sup> *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the “Scholae Cantorum” of the Italian Association of Saint Cecilia*, 28.09.2019, [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/september/documents/papa-francesco\\_20190928\\_scholae-cantorum.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/september/documents/papa-francesco_20190928_scholae-cantorum.html).



## Abstract

### Magnificat: an exploration of sacred music in the United States

The landscape of sacred music in the United States is broad and wide and cannot be neatly defined into a collective approach or style. The boundaries of Roman Catholic sacred music in America have been expanding further and further since the establishment of the liturgical reforms outlined by the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), and it was through this new sense of "freedom" that alternative styles of liturgical music emerged during the past 60 years. Interestingly, the state of Minnesota was at the center of this liturgical music revolution as composers associated with the University of St. Thomas, St. John's University, and St. Catherine's University composed a large portion of 'new' liturgical music. This article explores the musical trends of the past 60 years in the United States, and offers suggestions regarding the practice and education of sacred music in America and beyond.

**Keywords:** Sacred Music; Roman Catholic Church; United States; Higher Education

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**Jacob Benda**, DMA – appointed in 2022 as the Director of Sacred Music, University Organist, and Organ Professor at the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA, Dr. Benda is a published author, editor, organ consultant, and has been featured as a solo recitalist and lecturer at universities, festivals, and cathedrals

throughout the United States. Enthusiastic about new music, he has performed premieres by Pamela Decker, James Sclater, Gary Bachlund, James Callahan, and has championed the music of 20th century American composer Clarence Mader. His landmark commercial recording, *Music at Midnight, A Tonal Palette, Organ Music by Clarence Mader*, (Centaur Label, CRC 3361), was applauded by the American Record Guide as: “an important picture of American organ art in the 20th century... talented young American organist Jacob Benda performs with confident rhythmic stability and polished technical assurance.” He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Louisiana State University in 2015 under the mentorship of Professor Herndon Spillman, protégé of Maurice Duruflé. In 2018 he was appointed as the understudy for the world-premiere performance of *The Seven Last Words and Triumph of Christ* by Pamela Decker, and since then he has performed the piece throughout the United States to wide acclaim.

# RECENZJE



**Carlos Duque**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3221-5896>

Nebrija University

<https://ror.org/03tzyrt94>

## Recent publications on Spanish sacred music

*Ramón Garay (1761–1823). Obra musical sacra en latín*, ed. Paulino Capdepón, 2. Vols, Fundación María Cristina Masaveu Peterson, Madrid 2023, pp. 2648

Paulino Capdepón, *Música y músicos en la Colegiata de Santa María la Mayor de Talavera de la Reina (1800–1851)*, Alpuerto, Madrid 2022, pp. 660

### The Chapel master Ramón Garay (1761–1823)

Spanish music of the second half of the 18th century experienced a golden age primarily thanks to the activity of the musical chapels of the cathedrals. These chapels were at the center of the musical life of Spanish cities at that time, and the main repertoire cultivated was ecclesiastical. The chapel masters were the main responsible figures in these musical institutions, and this position was obtained through a rigorous competitive examination. One of the most important musical chapels was that of the cathedral of Jaén, the city where Ramón Garay arrived in 1787 after being appointed chapel master. Ramón Garay (1761–1823) was a prominent Spanish composer and chapel master, whose musical catalog spans a wide range of musical genres, both sacred and secular, vocal and instrumental. Furthermore, his work is exceptional as he also delved into the genre of symphony, being one of the pioneers of this genre in late 18th-century Spain, with ten symphonies composed between 1790 and 1817. Musically trained as a choirboy in Avilés and Oviedo, after further studies in Madrid, he successfully competed for one of the most prestigious positions in 18th-century Spain, the post of chapel master at the cathedral of Jaén. The competition process was controversial with several masters

vying for it, showcasing the musical level held by the Asturian composer. For over thirty years Garay composed one of the most interesting works of that time.

This publication in two volumes is focused on a study and edition of a selection of his sacred music works in Latin, made possible through the sponsorship of the María Cristina Masaveu Peterson Foundation. Back in 2016, we enjoyed a significant portion of his sacred vocal music in Spanish, also presented in two generous volumes that garnered applause from experts in the field. The author of this work is Professor Paulino Capdepón Verdú, doctor in Musicology at the University of Hamburg (1991) with a dissertation on *villancicos* by Padre Antonio Soler, and currently professor of Musicology at the University of Castilla-La Mancha and director of the Research and Musical Documentation Center. Capdepón has been awarded several recognitions, the latest of which was the Research and Innovation Award in Arts and Humanities from the Government of Castilla-La Mancha in 2023. Paulino Capdepón offers an edition of over 2,600 pages with beautiful and clear typography that allows us to discover the unpublished Latin music of Ramón Garay. The presentation of the scores adheres to the requirements of scientific musical editing as they are complemented with indications about sources, formal structure, vocal and instrumental staff, critical apparatus, and inclusion of the original Latin texts and their translation into Spanish. The published works of Garay consist of eight masses, twenty-five responsories, one psalm, two *Magnificats*, one *Stabat Mater*, and two *Té Deum*.

As the author highlights, “Garay constantly displays a high number of technical compositional procedures, used with full mastery in service of a complex and elaborate musical discourse. His compositional technique shows a remarkable inspiration and mastery of vocal writing, both for soloists and choral music (entries and responses in fugato, choral parts that interweave or dialogue, passages in tutti, etc.), resulting in expansive, elaborate, and well-developed melodies. Garay consistently demonstrates great care in capturing expressiveness and achieving perfect correspondence between text and music” (p. 119).

Ultimately, it is a colossal research whose value shines among Spanish musicology for its unique contribution and meticulous editing work. The publication is divided into two main parts: Study (included in volume 1, up to p. 175) and musical Edition (included from p. 178 of volume 1 to volume 2 inclusive). It is not easy to carry out such a careful and comprehensive edition, and we hope that the María Cristina Masaveu Peterson Foundation and Capdepón will continue to gift us with many memorable pages to publicize new musicological discoveries in this unique amalgamation of profound academic research and meticulous musical editing process.

## The Collegiate Church in Talavera de la Reina (Toledo, Spain)

Capdepón's second publication focuses on the music of the Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor in Talavera de la Reina during the first half of the 19th century. The music of Spanish collegiate churches has not received the necessary attention so far, despite the fact that they were religious centers that had their own musical chapels. Therefore, works like the one published by the author in 2022 are welcomed as the only way for Spanish musical heritage to be better known and appreciated. The extensive history and crucial role played by the chapel of the Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor in the history of music in Talavera de la Reina is a good demonstration of this.

The Collegiate Church of Talavera had been the subject of study from a historical or artistic perspective by prominent authors such as Ildefonso Fernández y Sánchez, Juan Nicolau Castro, Maricarmen González Muñoz, Leandro Higuera, and especially Fernando Jiménez de Gregorio. However, the study of historical music from Talavera had remained unpublished. This research work therefore represents the first contribution that has attempted to recover a musical heritage of undeniable value, which finds its main exponent in the musical chapel of the aforementioned Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor and in the musical works composed by the different Masters-Organists.

Just a simple review of the index is enough to realize the meticulousness that the author imposes on the general structure of the book, articulated in three main parts: the first titled *Study*, consisting of nine chapters, begins with a general, clarifying, and comprehensive introduction on the motives and research process developed, detailing the great diversity of sources consulted with enviable precision. The initial chapter focuses on the object of study within the context of international Romanticism through an approach to the spaces and knowledge of the main genres of Spanish music of this time.

Within a process of progressive approach, the author presents a snapshot of the social and economic context of Talavera with interesting tables of social categories based on the population register in which he skillfully frames the musical activity of the Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor, as well as numerous unpublished references about its structure, worship, officials, festivities, and extraliturgical performances. Regarding the analysis of the chapel music, its components and functions, the contribution provides a significant list of musicians who directed the Collegiate Church's music, their organist masters, singers, instrumentalists—and the very important function of plainchant and *sochantres*—documenting not only their biographies but also their professional stages and paths, elements of great interest and musicological utility as they allow for

data cross-referencing and the establishment of relationships with other important centers of that time.

The author has also addressed another of the fundamental aspects that characterize the volume, such as the musical work itself during the tenures of José Cortasa, Francisco Bernal, or José Leblic; more specifically, it includes the heritage recovery of four *villancicos* by Francisco Bernal, whose first hearing will define the musical quality and importance that this Collegiate Church could have had in the Castilian context; thus, the author opens up new avenues for research and connection with other Hispanic musical centers.

The second and third parts of the volume are truly exclusive. The second part includes four documentary appendices, the first composed of articles by Hilarión Eslava and Francisco Asenjo Barbieri on the reformist movement that swept through Spain—an echo of European Cecilianism—which the author includes not only for the relevance of its content but also for the relationship and importance this thought had for analyzing the decline of sacred music in the face of the predominance of theatrical music, particularly since the reign of Carlos IV. Following these are historical articles related to Talavera, written by Antonio Ponz, Sebastián de Miñano, and Pascual Madoz, materials that complement the musical documentation in Appendix IV, a component highly valued by Professor Capdepón, who understands the importance of documentation in any historicist musicological work: in total, over three hundred unpublished documents extracted from archives and chapter books form an appendix with unique and significant musicological value. The third and final part consists of the heritage recovery of four works from the musical collection of the Collegiate Church. The precision and detail of the editions provided will allow performers a highly desirable revival of these unpublished pieces, demonstrating that the Collegiate Church of Santa María in Talavera was a vibrant institution whose original heartbeat, thanks to the work and expertise of the author of this volume, can now be rediscovered.

The author states that “this research has demonstrated the importance that the musical chapels belonging to collegiate churches played in Spain in general and in Talavera de la Reina in particular, a field to which Spanish musical research has not paid the necessary attention. The case of the musical chapel of Santa María la Mayor is representative of how an institution of this kind can articulate the musical life of a city like Talavera de la Reina: it can be asserted with absolute certainty that the main musical activity revolved around the chapel of the aforementioned Collegiate Church between the early 17th century and 1851, leaving a profound void that would only begin to be filled with the founding of the Talavera Music Band in 1879” (p. 369).



To conclude this review, we must thank Professor Capdepón for this new and magnificent contribution, which represents a new, necessary, and definitive step forward for the study and understanding of another of the lost links in 19th-century Spanish music.

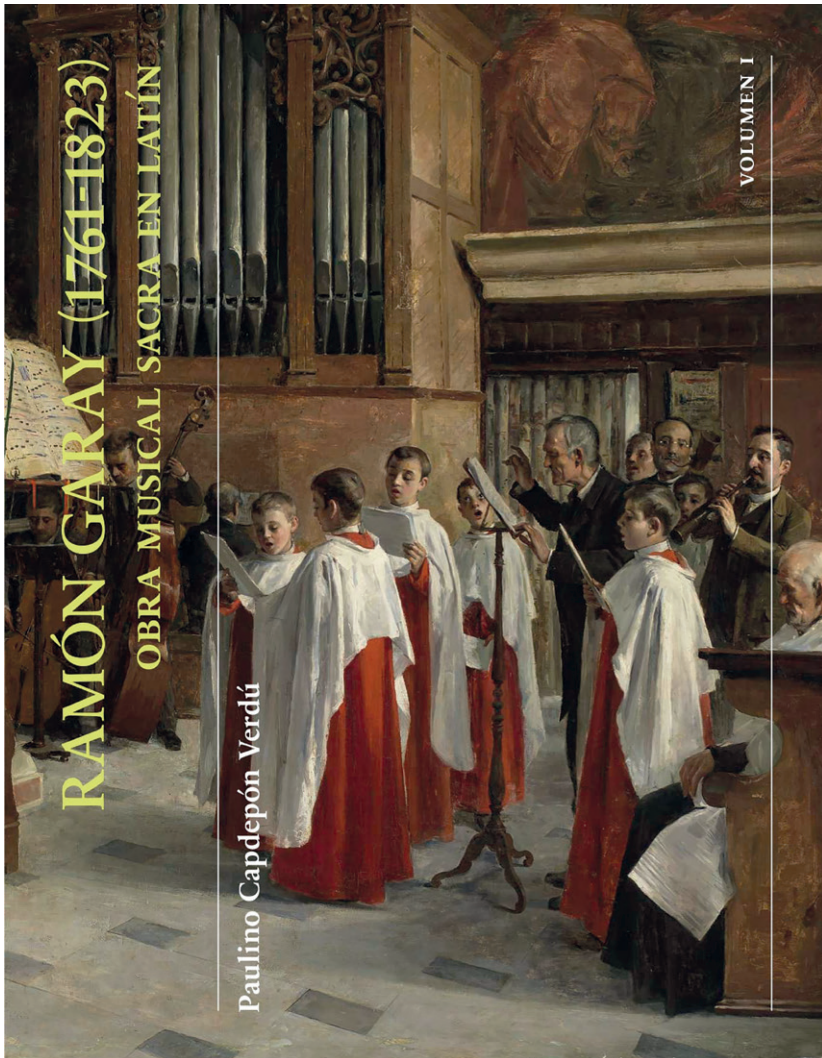


Fig. 1.

PAULINO CAPEDEÓN VERDÚ | EL COMPOSITOR ASTURIANO RAMÓN GARAY (1761-1823): OBRA MUSICAL EN LATÍN | EDICIÓN MUSICAL

Despacio 35

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
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Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

Paulino Capdepón Verdi

5

5

Tp1  
¡Ar-ma, ar - ma, gue-rra, gue-rra, a - van - za, to - ca,

Tp2  
¡Ar-ma, ar - ma, gue-rra, gue-rra, a - van - za, to - ca,

A  
¡Ar-ma, ar - ma, gue-rra, gue-rra, a - van - za, to - ca,

T  
¡Ar-ma, ar - ma, gue-rra, gue-rra, a - van - za, to - ca,

VI 1  
*f*

VI 2  
*f*

Ac  
*f*

528

Fig. 4.

**Bernard Sawicki OSB**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2500-6348>

Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo, Rzym

<https://ror.org/02pn9ep17>

## Mądrość praktyczna

Theo Flury, *Verso l'improvvisazione organistica. Basi di composizione, elementi propedeutici all'improvvisazione, esercizi ed esempi. Introduzione alla cultura organistica e alla liturgia*, a cura di A. Sala, revisione di A. Piovano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2024

Nie jest łatwo pisać o muzyce. Jeszcze trudniej napisać podręcznik muzyczny! Czyż bowiem muzyka nie jest kwestią subtelnej syntonii rozmaitych ludzkich sprawności i zmysłów? A co powiedzieć o napisaniu podręcznika do... improwizacji muzycznej, najbardziej ulotnej i osobistej z muzycznych działań? Jeśli dodamy do tego fakt, że chodzi o improwizację organową, stajemy przed sytuacją jedyną w swoim rodzaju, jeśli nie przed... utopią. W takim przypadku zaraz patrzymy, kto odważył się podjąć takie przedsięwzięcie. Gdy go znamy, dzieło zyskuje albo traci na sile.

Wiadomo, jak ważne są dzisiaj nazwiska i osobowości. Ojciec Theo Flury, autor omawianej książki, z pewnością do osobowości świata organowego należy, choć środowisko to nie jest zbyt liczne i rządzi się swoimi prawami. Autor od trzydziestu lat jest organistą tytularnym benedyktyńskiego opactwa w Einsiedeln, którego jest profesem od 1978 roku. Od 2003 roku jest profesorem zwyczajnym organów i improwizacji organowej w Papieskim Instytucie Muzyki Sakralnej w Rzymie. Bez wątplenia właśnie ta ostatnia okoliczność niejako „upoważniła go” do napisania omawianej publikacji. Wbrew jej ogólnemu tytułowi nie chodzi tu jednak o improwizację organową jako taką, czyli możliwą do usłyszenia w rozmaitych kontekstach na koncertach wybitnych wirtuozów (czy, co ostatnio się zdarza, jako podkład do niemych filmów stylu retro), lecz o liturgiczną improwizację organową. To jest właściwa przestrzeń działania szwajcarskiego benedyktyna, z jej całą delikatną specyfiką, wymagającej dzisiaj szczególnej troski i ochrony. Dostrzeżenie tego jest bardzo ważne, zwłaszcza w sytuacji obecnej kondycji liturgii i muzyki kościelnej, kiedy liczy się zarówno wiarygodne świadectwo osobiste, jak i zwyczajna

rzetelność warsztatowa. Te właśnie cechy stoją u podstaw książki o Flury, którą bez wahania można nazwać dziełem jego życia, sumą doświadczenia jego muzycznej praktyki i wyobraźni. Zarazem, jak to zresztą stwierdza sam autor, jest to rodzaj testamentu: „doszedłszy niemal do schyłku mojego życia zawodowego, odczułem potrzebę przekazania – za pomocą niniejszego dzieła – mojego skromnego dorobku artystycznego i dydaktycznego następnemu pokoleniu: zrealizowałem już to, co odczuwałem jako mój obowiązek” (s. 469). Wyznanie autora świadczy o poczuciu własnej wartości, ale i o pokorze: sam zresztą otwarcie uznaje fakt złożoności poruszanej materii, pozostając świadomy własnych ograniczeń (s. 1).

Skoro tak, naturalne jest, że książka ma charakter zarówno osobisty (układ i dobór materiału), jak i praktyczny (jest to dzieło organisty-praktyka, nie pisarza czy teoretyka). Owszem, autor próbuje sformułować i wyrazić pewne zasady, ale zawsze są one podporządkowane jego praktycznemu doświadczeniu, co jest zarazem cechą i... wadą wydanej publikacji. Jak bowiem objąć różnorodność świata organowej improwizacji, wraz z jego historią, bogactwem stylów i form oraz coraz szerszymi horyzontami współczesnymi? Kluczem może być osobiste doświadczenie, osobowość dokonująca arbitralnych wyborów porządku i ważności. Nie będzie to jednak nigdy miało wartości obiektywnej. Zawsze wzbudzi jakieś pytania czy wątpliwości. I tak jest w przypadku tej książki: tematy, ich kolejność, wzajemne powiązania to oczywiście osobisty wybór autora – jeden z wielu możliwych. Dzięki temu jednak ukazują się jego artystyczne korzenie i preferencje. Mamy tu więc interesujące i zachęcające ukazanie improwizacji jako gry, jako procesu otwartego, opartego na precyzyjnych zasadach, jednak dającego też wiele radości i wolności. Te ostatnie czyż nie są bramą do kreatywności?

Wspomniany wymiar praktyczny analizowanej książki to bogactwo zawarte w niej materiału muzycznego: tak na pięcioliniach (w rozmaitych ich konfiguracjach), jak i w dołączonym do publikacji pendriveie, zawierającym „realizacje ćwiczeń i improwizacje”, gdzie możemy też usłyszeć grę autora (wykonuje dziesięć z sześćdziesięciu nagranych realizacji).

Jaki jest klucz do tej książki? Jakie przynosi ona przesłanie? Zdaje się, że trudno byłoby je znaleźć tak od razu – zwłaszcza, że mamy do czynienia z 1138 stronami dwóch, jak to widnieje w opisie technicznym książki, „nierozdzielnych tomów”. A jednak, wraz z lekturą można dostrzec, że chodzi tu bardziej o świadectwo, nie bójmy się powiedzieć, „mądrości praktycznej”, niż o zarysowanie całościowej wizji sztuki liturgicznej improwizacji organowej (s. 181). Takie ujęcie jest możliwe dzięki oryginalnej i uczciwej eksploracji przez autora momentów „dialektycznych” materii muzycznej, tj. punktów styku między teorią a praktyką (s. 3), między regułami a kreatywnością. Mamy tu więc realizm (s. 215), ale i pewną uczciwość etyczną, wyrażającą się choćby we wskazaniach dotyczących autentyczności gry

organowej i wiążącej się z nią odpowiedzialności (s. 333). Ten zmysł realistyczny towarzyszy też sugestiom dotyczącym organowego towarzyszenia chorałowi, gdzie autor, co rozumiałe, przedstawia metodę akompaniamentu, w której powstanie był zaangażowany (s. 431–432). Może to sprawiać wrażenie autoreklamy, ale skoro książka ma być przekazaniem osobistego doświadczenia, taka postawa wydaje się zrozumiała, choć z pewnością byłoby dobrze pokazać też inne style, tak akompaniowania chorałowi (od s. 1004), jak i tonom psalmowym (od s. 1033). Ufajmy, że to jeden z efektów wspomnianych ograniczeń, wynikających z pracy nad tak szeroko zakrojoną książką. O innych – i związanych z nimi konsekwencjach – wspomnimy za chwilę.

Fakt poruszenia tematu akompaniamentu gregoriańskiego wskazuje, że książka nie jest poświęcona wyłącznie improwizacji: jest ona w praktyce kompendium kościelnej sztuki organowej, zawierającym także podstawowe informacje dotyczące harmonii, kontrapunktu i form muzycznych. W tym miejscu słuszne zdaje się pytanie o adresata książki. Można mieć bowiem wrażenie, że jest ona skierowana naraz do wszystkich – zbyt wiele rzeczy chce być wyjaśnionych od podstaw: elementarne pojęcia harmonii, modulacje, formy, podstawy liturgiki (Rozdz. I, s. 84, s. 101). Ta niejednoznaczność ostatecznie zostaje usprawiedliwiona wrażliwością dydaktyczną autora, jak też jego świadomością złożoności i delikatności materii, o której pisze. Nie brak tu jednak oryginalnych rozwiązań dydaktycznych, świadczących o jego dużym doświadczeniu pedagogicznym, np. ujęcia relacji tonalność–modalność (s. 4) czy wprowadzenia, obok pojęcia modulacji, pojęcia „tonulacji” (s. 23). Innym dydaktycznie ciekawym aspektem książki są jakby rzucone przypadkiem, od niechcienia, interesujące tematy „poboczne”, jak np. pojęcie *partimento* (s. 72), idea „planów dźwiękowych” (s. 86), ekskurs na temat „Psałterza geneńskiego” (*Salterio di Ginevra*) (s. 425) czy wreszcie *Directorium organi maioris* będące przykładem stylu harmonizacji stosowanej w Einsiedeln na początku XX wieku (s. 994).

Wyżej wspomniany zmysł praktyczny i „mądrościowy” autora w naturalny sposób przejawia się w postaci pewnych spostrzeżeń czy uwag, jak ta, że lepiej być zbyt precyzyjnym, niż zbyt powierzchownym (s. 441) lub sugestia natury praktycznej dotycząca organizacji tzw. „Podniesień muzycznych” (*Elevazione musicale*), czyli słowno-muzycznych spotkań duchowych, w których muzyka organowa wprowadza w określony temat biblijny czy obchód liturgiczny. W takich sytuacjach o. Flury nie waha się wspomnieć o konkretnej troście o wykonawców i słuchaczy, poprzez zaoferowanie im... piwa i kiełbasek (s. 450–451).

Ten zmysł praktyczny widać szczególnie wyraźnie, gdy autor omawia problem repertuaru organowego mszy posoborowej (s. 458–459), czy trafnie stawia pytanie o aktualność muzyki organowej w dzisiejszych czasach, proponując pewne

rozwiązania. Proponuje też ogólne, choć niekoniecznie jednoznaczne, bo polaryzujące (z uwagi na odniesienie do dwóch tylko autorów, s. 457) diagnozy sytuacji muzyki po Vaticanum II, ostatecznie uznających jednak fakt jej dekadencji (s. 264–265, 307). Jednocześnie może zaskoczyć oryginalne i śmiałe podejście do użycia innych instrumentów w liturgii, w przedstawieniu którego autor powołuje się na mało znany, pochodzący z lat osiemdziesiątych, niewydany list Mons. Laureta Bucciego adresowany do Armanda Renziego (s. 459–460). Jest to tym bardziej wymowne, że z refleksji autora na te tematy przebija pewna nostalgia za minionymi czasami, zwłaszcza, co zrozumiałe, gdy chodzi o organistowską praktykę koncertową, trudniejszą do wpisania w obecną liturgię, niż ta poprzedzająca Vaticanum II. Nie sposób wreszcie przejść obojętnie nad wzruszającym, osobistym świadectwem autora, benedyktyna i kapłana, o wielkości Mszy Świętej (s. 455).

Obok, jak to zostało wyżej wspomniane, „mądrościowego aspektu doświadczeniowego”, wartości książce nadają proponowane przez autora oryginalne inspirowane metafory dotyczące sztuki i formacji organowej: przed naszymi oczami pojawiają się obrazy jeziora (s. 139), stworzenia świata (s. 137–138), różnorodności języków, a nawet systemu planetarnego (s. 332–333).

Oczywiście przy tak dużym przedsięwzięciu edytorskim, w którym specjalistycznemu tekstowi towarzyszą tabele i zapisy muzyczne, nie sposób było ustrzec się błędów. Nie dziwi więc – a raczej dobrze świadczy o uczciwości wydawcy – obfita errata dołączona do drugiego tomu książki. Mimo niej w tekście pozostają niektóre niejasności – np. dotyczące numeracji: I 4/6 zamiast V 4/6 (s. 5); odesłanie do nieistniejących numerów przykładów 4.4.2.1. – 4.4.2.2. (s. 62), brak precyzji typograficznej (s. 65). Zasadniczo brakuje ujednoczenia czcionki przykładów muzycznych: raz jest za mała (s. 683), raz za wielka (s. 921). Nie zawsze też podane są nazwiska kompozytorów przytaczanych przykładów (na s. 687 mamy kompozycje autora, na ss. 560, 691, 716, 739 nie wiadomo czyje). Na s. 311 są wspomniane organy Cavaillé-Coll, jakby było wiadomo, o co chodzi, gdy tymczasem dokładne przedstawienie tego typu organów ma miejsce dopiero na s. 321. Na s. 371 pojawia się definicja formy koncertu, jednakże bez wspomnienia etymologicznie związanej z nią idei „współwalczenia” (*con-certare* od *certamen* – walka, spór, zawody). Nieścisła liturgicznie jest informacja o rozmieszczeniu psalmów w oficjum (s. 443): wypadało wspomnieć o istnieniu i zastosowaniu *Thesaurus Liturgiae Horarum Monasticae*, zatem przedstawiony w 2.4. układ psalmów nie zawsze obowiązuje.

Nie może też dziwić fakt, że wiele konstatacji autora dotyczących rozmaitych, bardziej szczegółowych tematów siłą rzeczy inspirowane do pewnych refleksji wychodzących poza ramy książki, mogących jednak rodzić u czytelnika pewien niedosyt. To chyba naturalna konsekwencja wspomnianej świadomości złożoności



przedstawianego materiału i własnych ograniczeń. I tak definicja melodii została przytoczona tylko z *Encyklopedii Treccani* (s. 83), zbyt koncentrującej się na aspekcie harmonii (s. 90). Problem zawężonej definicji można było rozwiązać choćby poprzez umieszczenie w przypisie kilku uzupełniających odnośników bibliograficznych. Z odkryć paleografii mogą wynikać interesujące implikacje harmoniczne (pozycja i rola bemola i możliwe tego konsekwencje harmoniczne w II i IV modusie). Przedstawiona na s. 400 relacja między muzyką a śpiewem wspólnotowym jest w rzeczywistości dużo bardziej złożona, niż ta „idealistyczna”, proponowana przez autora. Być może należałoby bardziej zwrócić uwagę na wymiar teologiczny, uwzględniając aspekt wiary, choć niewątpliwie trzeba zgodzić się z troską autora, by „nie nudzić” słuchaczy – uczestników liturgii (s. 435). A znaczenie antropologiczne muzyki znacznie wykracza poza skądinąd trafne słowa Benedykta XVI, należąc w pewnym sensie do jej natury (s. 455–456): wystarczy wspomnieć prace E. Ansermeta, S. Langer, L. B. Meyera czy J. Slobody). Podobnie niewielki akapit poświęcony analogii strukturalnej sztuki i liturgii (1.3., s. 456) sprawia wrażenie niewystarczającego. Może warto było wspomnieć o sakramentalności sztuki czy muzyki, odsyłając do innych autorów, np. takich jak Catherine Picstock, Pierangelo Sequeri, Mark Patrick Hederman czy Jordi-Agustí Piqué i Collado.

Istnieje jednak element, który nadaje dziełu o. Flury szczególnej wartości: przywoływanie postaci i nauki własnych mistrzów, w szczególności kard. Domenica Bertolucciego (s. 262, 462). Zostało to zasygnalizowane już w dedykacji całej pracy – poświęconej „tym kochanym osobom, które swoją wiedzą, hojnością i afektem pomogły mi wejść w fascynujący świat muzyki i tam działać”. Nieliczne, ale wymowne fragmenty poświęcone tym mistrzom to swoiste perełki. Dzięki nim zostaje wzbogacona najmocniejsza strona pracy, czyli wspomniany już wielokrotnie „aspekt mądrościowy”. Oto dwa przykłady. Dwaj nieżyjący już profesorowie Papieskiego Instytutu Muzyki Sakralnej tak kiedyś rozmawiali o nauce harmonii:

Nauczanie harmonii szkolnej i tworzenie w klatce form oznacza przywiązanie studenta do kul inwalidzkich, od których się nigdy nie uwolni... a nieuczenie harmonii szkolnej i nierealizowanie form przekazanych przez historię oznacza łamanie przez studenta nóg: nigdy nie nauczy się dobrze chodzić! (s. 337)

Nie zadawałaj wiernych, ale ich wychowuj, a wychowując buduj (D. Bertolucci, s. 462).

Przytaczamy te dwa cytaty z nadzieją, że staną się zachętą do dokładnego studiowania i wcielania w życie omawianego dzieła. Wszak w drugiej części dedykacji autor poświęca swą książkę tym, „którzy od młodości chcieliby studiować, pogłębiać

z pilnością i pasją wzniosłą sztukę, a jutro, na swój sposób, przekazać ją przyszłym pokoleniom”. Ta świadomość więzi pokoleniowej to jeszcze jeden wyraz troski autora o muzykę sakralną – a zarazem zaproszenie wszystkich czytelników do działania.

**Bernard Łukasz Sawicki OSB**, MA (teoria muzyki, fortepian – Akademia Muzyczna im. F. Chopina w Warszawie), STL (Papieska Akademia Teologiczna w Krakowie), STD (Pontificio Ateneo Sant’Anselmo w Rzymie); professore associato na Wydziale Teologii Pontificio Ateneo Sant’Anselmo w Rzymie, professore invitato w Pontificio Istituto di Spiritualità Teresianum; autor m.in. *W chorale jest wszystko, Muzyka Chopina i Reguła św. Benedykta, Ekspresja jako spotkanie chrystologii i antropologii*.



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