

# PSALM

Pan-Orthodox Society for the Advancement of Liturgical Music

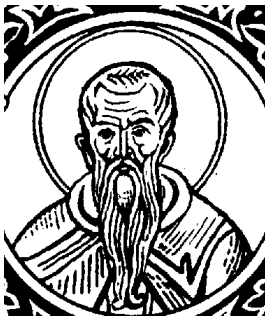
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## ODE AND KANON LINKING WORSHIP AND SCRIPTURE

by Elizabeth Theokritoff



St. Andrew of Crete

Most of our hymnography was originally attached to verses of Scripture, usually psalms. In some cases, the psalm verses have since dropped out altogether.<sup>1</sup> In others the psalm is still clearly in evidence, notable examples being “Lord, I have cried” at Vespers and the Lauds Psalms at Matins. Almost invariably, however, there is no discernible thematic connection between the scriptural text and the hymns inserted into it.

Exceptional in two respects is the *kanon*. Firstly, it is based not on psalms but on scriptural odes; and secondly, the connection with the scriptural passage is evident, at least in the *eirmos*. This connection may often be rather perfunctory, indicated by nothing more than a characteristic tag. But it gives an indication at least of how our own song of praise joins with that of the author of the ode, and frequently also prompts the melodist to recall other ways in which that scriptural figure foreshadows our own present celebration. *Eirmos* means a concatenation or connection; we should think of the *eirmos* of the *kanon* not just as forming a link between Scripture and the post-scriptural hymns, but as *linking us* into the train of all those who have sung in praise of God down the ages.



St. John of Damascus

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Nicetas of Remesiana, a fourth-century bishop in Dalmatia and one of the first hymnographers, points out that the tradition of praise in song starts with Moses and Deborah, later to be continued by David.

The nine scriptural odes on which the kanon is based are the following:

- 1 Exodus 15:1–19 *The song of Moses after the Red Sea crossing*
- 2 Deuteronomy 32:1–43 *The song of Moses before his death* (normally omitted)
- 3 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms, Septuagint) 2:1–10 *The song of Hannah, in thanksgiving for her son Samuel*
- 4 Habakkuk 3:1–19 *The prayer of Habakkuk*
- 5 Isaiah 26:9–19 *A prayer “from out of the night”*
- 6 Jonah 2:3–10 *The prayer of Jonah*
- 7 Song of the Three Children 2–21, 28–33 *Prayer of Azariah: Thanksgiving and confession of sin*
- 8 Song of the Three Children 34–65 *Hymn of praise from all creation*
- 9 Luke 1:46–55 *The Magnificat*  
 Luke 1:68–79 *The song of Zacharias*

### The Scriptural Odes

The root meaning of the term “ode,” or “canticle” as they are usually called in the West, simply indicates something that is sung. But the term is used already in early Christian times to designate particular scriptural passages outside the Psalms that could be identified as “songs” and might be incorporated as such in prayer and worship. It is not certain whether the phrase “spiritual odes” in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 refers to such pieces,<sup>2</sup> but the reference in Revelation (15:3) to the “ode of Moses” is unequivocal—even though the text given draws freely on both odes of Moses (our first and second odes). Scriptural odes formed an important part of the “hymnbook” of the first Christians, as they had for their Jewish forebears; there is evidence that the ode of Habakkuk and the greater odes of Moses (Deuteronomy 2) were performed in the Temple in a manner similar to the Psalms,<sup>3</sup> and the Song of Hannah is evidently ringing in the ears of the Mother of God as she utters her own “Magnificat.”

We probably think of the Psalms as the pre-eminent scriptural example of praise in song; but Nicetas of Remesiana, a fourth-century bishop in Dalmatia and one of the first hymnographers, points out that the tradition of praise in song starts with Moses and Deborah, later to be continued by David<sup>4</sup> (the song of Deborah in Judges 5:1–31, celebrating the gruesome murder of Sisera, was frequently reckoned among the odes in earlier times).

Although “odes” seem to have been a significant element in worship throughout the early Christian

world, there is a certain fluidity, not to mention local variations, in ideas of which texts qualify and how they are used. One of the earliest writers to enumerate the odes is Origen, in third-century Egypt; he mentions nine, but only the two odes of Moses and the song of Hannah correspond to our set. He defines an ode as something once sung by prophets or angels, and includes a version of the Doxology;<sup>5</sup> presumably this qualifies because it is an expansion of the song of the angels in Luke 2:14. The first formal list of odes we know of appears in the Codex Alexandrinus (a fifth-century Bible manuscript now in the British Museum) and consists of fourteen passages. In addition to the nine familiar to us, we find the prayers of Hezekiah and Manasseh, the Song of Symeon, and the Doxology; the Songs of the Mother of God and of Zacharias from Luke are counted separately.<sup>6</sup> The Church of Constantinople continued to recognize a set of fourteen odes until the ninth century, but these were probably not used *en bloc*.<sup>7</sup> Non-Byzantine traditions also show evidence of the persistence of a set of odes considerably larger than nine—for instance, a set of fifteen is still used at some feasts in the Ethiopian Church.<sup>8</sup>

### The Nine Odes at Matins

The set of nine odes that we know today arose in Palestine—as did the kanon, some time later. By the sixth century, the nine odes are found in both monastic and parish use in that region, at least in Sunday matins;<sup>9</sup> they appear at the conclusion of the morning office, immediately before the Lauds psalms.<sup>10</sup> The use of nine odes in morning worship is ancient and widespread, and certainly precedes any classification of these texts as *the nine odes*. Thus Nicetas of Remesiana, as we have seen, reckons the Song of Deborah among the odes; but elsewhere he speaks of “singing the marvels of the eternal God in the company of . . . Saints, prophets and even martyrs,”<sup>11</sup> and apparently has in mind a liturgical series of nine odes preceded by Psalm 117/118. This series is almost the same as our nine odes (with some differences in order), except that Ode Seven is the prayer of Jeremiah (probably Lamentations 5), and the Song of Zacharias does not appear.

At least by the time the set of odes achieved its present form, the number nine was clearly critical; why else would the two New Testament odes have been counted as one? Later, we find a symbolic explanation for the number, linking it with the nine orders of angels and the Holy Trinity.<sup>12</sup> But early liturgical use of the odes at Matins is closely linked

to that of the Psalter;<sup>13</sup> it is highly probable, therefore, that the number nine originally reflects the Palestinian division of the Psalter. This division involved either three *staseis* (as in sixth-century Sinai, where the singing of the odes three by three followed recitation of the entire Psalter) or *kathismata* comprising three *staseis*, usually composed of three Psalms each<sup>14</sup>—the arrangement we have inherited. Whether this division of the Psalter was itself based on symbolic considerations is, of course, another question.

With the establishment of “the nine odes,” other texts earlier recognized as odes were not forgotten. Odes such as the Song of Symeon, the Great Doxology, and the Prayer of Manasseh retain a prominent place in worship, as do verses from Isaiah 8—9 “with ‘God is with us’ as an ever-repeated refrain.”<sup>15</sup> These remain much-loved “spiritual songs,” but we no longer think of them as belonging to a discrete category of scriptural material.

### **From Scriptural Ode to Kanon**

From an early date, there seems to have been a set or subset of scriptural odes regularly used in morning worship;<sup>16</sup> and it has been suggested, quite plausibly, that this set of odes itself came to be referred to as a “kanon.”<sup>17</sup> These Matins odes early attracted ornamentation in the form of refrains or nonscriptural material. When two Palestinian monks visited Nilos of Sinai at the beginning of the seventh century and attended the Saturday night vigil, they were surprised not to hear any troparia on the Song of the Three Children.<sup>18</sup> It is likely that some odes attracted additional hymnography earlier than others; a seventh-century papyrus from Egypt gives four verses “On *Evlogeite*” (i.e. the Song of the Three Children) and three “On *Megalynei*” (i.e. the Song of the Mother of God).<sup>19</sup> The full-blown kanon, supplying troparia for the remainder of the odes, was a natural and fairly small next step, albeit one that was to have drastic consequences for the scriptural odes themselves.

The invention of the poetic kanon is traditionally ascribed to St. Andrew of Crete, a native of Damascus who was a monk in Jerusalem before becoming bishop of Gortyn, where he died in 740. There is no reason to doubt this attribution. Compared with the work of his contemporaries and compatriots John of Damascus and Kosmas of Maiouma, Andrew’s hymns seem in many ways more primitive. The eirmoi stay closer to the biblical ode; the structure is untidy, sometimes with

more than one eirmos per ode, and the number of troparia is highly variable. In the Great Kanon, there is a troparion for every scriptural verse;<sup>20</sup> it is not clear what dictates the number of troparia in other kanons of his.

### **The Odes of the Kanon**

The connection between the scriptural ode and the theme of the day is usually made only in the eirmos; and as with all liturgical use of the Old Testament, connections are easily missed if one does not have the Septuagint (LXX) text in mind. Sometimes there is a real connection with the substance of the ode; this is especially true of the odes concerning key images in the story of salvation, notably odes one, seven and eight, but also occurs when there is an obvious affinity between the subjects of the ode and of the celebration. Often, however, the link is made through reference to certain key ideas in the scriptural ode, used more or less out of context; this usually takes the form of a tag or refrain, either taken from the ode itself or echoing it. The most dedicated user of refrains is St. Kosmas, author of many of our festal kanons. Among earlier authors at least, a refrain used in the eirmos usually recurs throughout that ode; but not always, and almost no kanons have a refrain in every ode (Palm Sunday is an exception). This unpredictability suggests that these “refrains” were not actually taken up by the people or choir—though in all probability they evolved from refrains to the scriptural odes that were.

Not all odes of the kanon are equally likely to have a refrain. A refrain is almost invariable in odes seven and eight, and usual in one and four. The Ode Four refrain is rather a puzzle, to which we will return later; but those of odes one, seven, and eight are not. In Ode Eight, a repeated refrain is a characteristic of the scriptural ode itself; while for Ode One, the idea of Exodus 15:1 as a refrain appears to have been pioneered by no less an authority than Miriam the prophetess. Both the victory ode of Moses and the Song of the Three Children, including the closely related prayer of Azariah, have a strong and ancient tradition of being sung, in all probability with a refrain; the solemn singing of these two odes on Holy Saturday, substantially as we have it today, was already well-established in fifth-century Jerusalem.<sup>21</sup>

### **Ode 1: Exodus 15:1–19**<sup>22</sup>

Since the Red Sea crossing is a seminal event in the drama of salvation, it is not surprising that this

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incident itself is usually referred to in the first eirmos—or in many cases forms its sole content. Making a link with the theme of the kanon is rarely hard, since so many of the events we celebrate echo aspects of that story of God’s triumph. The kanon for the Exaltation of the Cross, for instance, reminds us that Moses parted the waters *by inscribing a cross upon them*. More unusually, it continues this train of thought into the next two troparia, recalling other types of the Cross embodied by Moses: when he stood with outstretched arms to secure victory over Amalek (Ex. 17:10–14), and when he set the serpent “crosswise” on a wooden pole (Num. 21:8–9). The Easter kanon brings out the full significance of the crossing for us: “From death to life Christ has brought us across,” ending with a phrase referring directly to the scriptural ode, “singing a triumphal song.” More usual refrains are variants on “for gloriously has He been glorified” (Ex. 15:1). The Holy Saturday kanon draws a tragic contrast between Old Testament and New Testament events: the Lord once buried beneath the sea the enemies of His people, but now their descendants bury Him. And then the present worshippers provide a further twist to the story, for we glorify Him “like the maidens”—Kassiani, the author of these eirmoi, pays a tribute to Miriam’s part which is rare in the kanons, even though the ode is often entitled “Of Moses and Miriam.”<sup>23</sup> Is it farfetched to suppose that this spirited lady saw herself, and the nuns who would presumably have been the first to sing her compositions, as spiritual heirs to Moses’ sister and her choir of women?

### **Ode 2: Deuteronomy 32:1–43**

Eirmoi of the second ode, to judge from the few still in use, typically *begin* with words from the scriptural ode; there is no characteristic refrain at the end. The openings are those we find in the two second eirmoi of the Great Kanon: the opening words, “Attend, O heaven . . .” (Deut. 32:1) are much less popular than the opening of the great hymn of God’s triumph, “See, see that I am . . .” (32:39). This suggests an emphasis on the latter part of the ode, the part that resurfaces in a victory hymn in Revelation (Rev. 19:2; cf. Deut. 32:43) and among proof-texts in Hebrews for the exaltation of the Son (Heb. 1:6; cf. Deut. 32:43, LXX); and that in turn militates against the traditional explanation that the second ode came to be omitted because of its somber and threatening tone.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, we have the Paschal kanon of Andrew of Crete, which

not only boasts a second ode, but makes highly appropriate use of motifs from the scriptural ode: “See, see that I am God, who in the flesh was dead among the dead . . .” “Come, see the place where He lay . . .”<sup>25</sup> It is more plausible to suppose that the great ode of Moses, with added hymnography, was simply felt to be too long.

### **Ode 3: I Samuel (I Kingdoms) 2:1–10**

The Song of Hannah is a prototype of the Magnificat; its characteristic themes of the weak girded with strength and the mighty brought low are reflected, for instance, in the first kanon for Transfiguration. But that kanon is the exception, for Hannah’s ode seems at first sight to be poorly served by the hymnographers. Often the only obvious link is a reference to “making firm” or “establishing,” echoing 2:1 (LXX): “Established is my heart in the Lord.” Another common tag is “None is holy save Thee, O Lord” (2:2).

On closer inspection, however, we realize that it is the wider context of the ode, the thanksgiving of a woman who was once barren, that determines the way it is understood. As Nicetas of Remesiana writes, “With Hannah, who is a symbol of the Church—once sterile and now fecund—we strengthen our hearts in the praise of God”;<sup>26</sup> and his words sum up precisely the meaning the ode continues to be given in our kanons. The Church is very frequently the subject of the third eirmos (e.g. Resurrection kanons, Tones 4 and 5), and this allegorical interpretation opens up multiple ways in which the ode can be connected to the theme of the day. Thus at the Exaltation of the Cross, Aaron’s rod that budded (Num. 17:8) is a type of the Cross, because it flowers in the Church *which once was barren*. In the first kanon for Theophany the same melodist, Kosmas, gives a baptismal significance to the conclusion of Hannah’s song by making plural the “anointed” whose “horn” the Lord exalts (2:10). Then in the first troparion following, he returns, via Isaiah 54:1 (“Rejoice, O barren . . .”) to the theme of the Church “once barren and sadly childless”; now she rejoices over her sons born of water and the Spirit in the words of Hannah (2:2) that form the refrain of the ode: “None is holy as our God, and none is righteous save Thee, O Lord.”

### **Ode 4: Habakkuk 3:1–19**

Habakkuk sings of the coming of the Lord: “The prophet heard of Your coming, O Lord, that You

were to be born of a Virgin, and he was afraid” (Great Kanon; cf. Hab. 3:1); or as Kosmas’ kanon for Transfiguration glosses, “I have heard of Your glorious dispensation.” On most feast days, therefore, the ode is in its natural habitat, so to speak, and its primary sense can readily be linked to the event celebrated. And since the preceding chapters of that brief prophetic book have the same theme, they are often quoted too—perhaps most memorably in the Paschal kanon, where Habakkuk, standing on his watch (cf. 2:1), is exhorted to show us the angel announcing the Resurrection.

Many fourth eirmoi expound the way in which various elements of Habakkuk’s prophecy point to particular aspects of the Lord’s incarnate coming. God has shown us “the mighty love of His strength” (Hab. 3:4, LXX) by “giving His only Son to death for us” (Resurrection, Tone Three). The Palm Sunday kanon, with its strong eschatological emphasis on the first coming of the Lord pointing forward to the second, reminds us that “Christ our God who comes manifestly will come and will not tarry” (cf. 2:3) and proceeds to an exegesis of the scriptural ode: “from the mountain overshadowed, forested, a Maiden who gives birth without knowing a man” (cf. 3:3).<sup>27</sup> Another aspect of the prophetic vision is elucidated on Mount Tabor, when “arrows of divinity go forth from His flesh” (second kanon; cf. 3:11). The reference later in the same ode to the sun being eclipsed by Christ’s light is probably inspired by the same verse, “the sun was exalted, and the moon stood still in her course” (LXX)—though one wonders if the hymnographer could have known a variant reading.

One curious feature of the fourth ode is its persistent refrain: “Glory to Thy power, O Lord.” This is a very common tag linking the fourth eirmos to the scriptural ode, despite the fact that *Habakkuk never said it*. A reasonable conjecture—though it is no more than that—would be that this was originally a nonscriptural refrain/response to the scriptural ode, which became so closely identified with Habakkuk’s prophecy that it was later adopted by the kanon as the characteristic “marker” for the fourth ode.<sup>28</sup>

### **Ode 5: Isaiah 26:9–19**

Unlike the other odes we have talked about, Isaiah’s prayer is first and foremost a canticle of the morning: “From the night my spirit rises early unto Thee, O Lord” (26:9, LXX). We can be fairly sure that it had a place in morning prayer before the other odes came to join it; Chrysostom, for instance, suggests

that it was the first hymn sung by the monks of Antioch when they awoke in the small hours,<sup>29</sup> and we may see traces of a similar practice in the use of this ode immediately after the Six Psalms on days when Alleluia takes the place of “The Lord is God.” As we might expect, then, “I rise early unto Thee” is one of the catch-phrases of this ode, as are references to light and peace (cf. 26:9, 12).

Verse 26:18, “We have conceived and been in labor and given birth; the spirit of Thy salvation have we made upon the earth” (LXX) is a passage usually passed over in silence. But it is not surprising to find it taken up at Pentecost, where the continuity of the Spirit’s work, seen earlier in the prophecy and prayer of the Old Testament, is a prominent theme: “The spirit of salvation, conceived through fear of Thee, O Lord, in the womb of the prophets, creates clean hearts in the Apostles and is renewed as a right spirit within the faithful” (first kanon).

One of the most dramatic uses of this scriptural ode is on Holy Saturday when Isaiah, watching by night, cries out: “The dead shall arise and those in the tombs shall be raised” (26:19). Rarely do we have a more vivid sense of sharing the prophet’s vigil. But this scriptural ode is only one of many passages of Isaiah that are crucial for elucidating the work of Christ, so the fifth ode of a kanon often provides an opening for references to other key prophecies—for example, the Angel of Great Counsel (Is. 9:6) at Christmas, or the vision of God enthroned (Is. 6:1–5) at the Meeting of the Lord.

### **Ode 6: Jonah 2:3–10**

It might seem surprising that the dramatic story of Jonah does not receive more attention in the kanons. The first kanon for Pentecost is quite unusual in taking up the story and using it allegorically: we are “seasick from the swell of everyday cares, cast into the sea by the sins which are our fellow-sailors.” This eirmos also does duty for the Resurrection kanon in Tone 7, and indeed most of the Resurrection kanons do have some reference to waters or the abyss in the sixth eirmos. Elsewhere, however, the link with the scriptural ode frequently consists of a single word: “corruption.” Laconic



Ode Six has little to do with close encounters with marine wildlife, but is intensely focused on one thing: the Lord's power over the forces of chaos and disintegration—in short, death.

though it may be, this link goes to the heart of the ode. This ode has little to do with close encounters with marine wildlife, but is intensely focused on one thing: the Lord's power over the forces of chaos and disintegration—in short, death. So the ode is not used in ways that might detract from this focus: when it is found integrated with the theme of the kanon, we can be sure that this manifestation of divine power is central to what we are celebrating. So, notably, Jonah's ode is prominent at Pascha and Christmas, where it is used in very similar ways; for Christ's birth from an inviolate Virgin is a sign of His own freedom from the power of decay.<sup>30</sup> It is striking that the analogy between the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection is continued in the Paschal kanon from the eirmos into the following troparion.

**Ode 7: Song of the Three Children  
2–21, 28–33**

**Ode 8: Song of the Three Children  
34–65**

The Song of the Three Children (our Ode Eight) was one of the best known and loved hymns among early Christians,<sup>31</sup> having a long-established place in festive morning prayer as well as at the paschal vigil.<sup>32</sup> The Song proper and the Prayer of Azariah which immediately precedes it (Ode Seven) have been used as separate odes since earliest times; we treat them together, however, because the salvation of the three children in the furnace shares with the Red Sea crossing the distinction of regularly retaining a place in the eirmoi as a story, so that the same scriptural subject matter may be used almost indis-

criminally in the seventh or the eighth eirmos. As St. Nikodimos says symptomatically in the introduction to his commentary on the festal kanons, “the seventh and eighth odes are the poem of the Three Children.”<sup>33</sup>

The Great Kanon—as usual, closer to the scriptural ode than most of its successors—does echo the rather different characters of the Prayer of Azariah and the Song. Its seventh eirmos takes up Azariah's confession of sin (Song 5–6), while the eighth reflects universal praise: “Let everything that has breath and all creation praise Him.” Kosmas sees in this theme of cosmic praise a link with the eschatological emphasis of his Palm Sunday kanon, on which we have remarked already, and takes it up in a magnificent eighth eirmos: “Let all the earth stand in reverence before His face and cry out: All ye works of the Lord, praise the Lord.” But these are exceptions: most seventh and eighth eirmoi are concerned in one way or another with the story of the children.

If the two odes are scarcely distinguished in content, they are distinguished with remarkable consistency by their refrains, respectively, “God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou” (cf. 2, 28) and “All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever” (cf. 34, etc.)—with minor variations in each case.

The image of the three children in the furnace has changed its meaning over the centuries. Originally, it was the supreme type of deliverance; thus Athanasius in one of his paschal letters reminds his flock of the importance of praising God when one has passed through affliction, following the example of Hezekiah (Is. 38:20—earlier used as an ode) and the three children.<sup>34</sup> This understanding is preserved in some of the kanons: “The three godly children in the furnace were preserved by the Offspring of the *Theotokos*; then He was prefigured, while now He is present in actuality” (eirmoi of the Mother of God; cf. Easter kanon).

But others reflect a later interpretation: it is not so much the presence in the furnace of the “angel of the Lord” (Dan. 3:25), the mysterious fourth figure whose “aspect is like a son of God” (Song 25), that points to Christ, but rather the fire itself, prefiguring the fire of divinity which, in the Incarnation, will leave mortal nature and material creation unburnt. Kosmas, for instance, uses the latter imagery in both Christmas and Theophany kanons, and it surfaces in several of the Sunday Resurrection kanons as well. One might nevertheless be forgiven for regard-



ing this as a somewhat forced piece of typology, since Nebuchadnezzar's furnace is quintessentially a fire of *ungodliness*.

We have remarked already on the ancient pedigree of the Song of the Three Children as an element in worship; but we may also say that among the authors of the scriptural odes, the three children are regarded as the singers *par excellence*. Indeed, according to Kosmas, it was *through hymnody* that they changed the fire into dew (Pentecost, Ode Seven). Nor are they simply singers, but singers equal in number to the Trinity (Exaltation of the Cross, Ode Eight); and the way in which they image the Trinity is rather more subtle than first appears. Kosmas makes his reference to the triple number of children against the background of a tradition that sees this ode as the supreme example of singing *in unison*;<sup>35</sup> the three sing “as if from one mouth” (Song 27).<sup>36</sup> This “three-stringed harp,” as Kosmas calls the children elsewhere (Dormition, Kanon One, Ode Seven), is a figure not only of God as Trinity, but of the Holy Trinity as harmonious unity.

### Ode 9: Luke 1:46–55, Luke 1:68–79

Since the ninth ode of the kanon has retained at least the first component of its scriptural ode (except on great feasts), few will be unaware that it is connected with the Magnificat and almost invariably with the Mother of God. Zacharias' ode has left scant trace in the kanons, though Andrew of Crete combines elements of both scriptural components in his kanon used at compline on Lazarus Saturday.

The catch-phrase characteristic of this ode is the word “magnify”; and as we are reminded in the “magnifications” preceding the ninth ode at major feasts, it is *the Lord* who is magnified in the first instance (this is occasionally reflected in the eirmos as well, e.g. at the Meeting of the Lord). We “magnify” the Mother of God because her words, “All generations shall *call me blessed*,” have been assimilated to the dominant theme of “magnifying.”

Singers will not need to be told that the ninth ode is far more complicated in its liturgical usage than any of the others. Even in parish use, the scriptural ode is sung on some occasions but not others; the scriptural ode has its own refrain, separate from the kanon; the odes of the kanon may be preceded and interspersed with additional nonscriptural material in place of the scriptural ode. All this stands as a reminder of the rich and varied history of the scriptural odes in liturgy, the poetic creativity they have inspired, and the wealth of theological



insight they continue to provide if we pay attention to them as the background to the odes of the kanon.<sup>37</sup> †

### Notes

1. E.g. the Trisagion: cf. Michael Breck, “The Trisagion: An Historical Perspective,” *PSALM Notes* 3.1 (Fall 1998), pp. 8–9.
2. Egon Wellesz declares that these “were obviously the melismatic melodies of the Alleluias and other exultant songs of praise” inherited from Jewish worship; *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, second edition 1961), p. 41.
3. H. Schneider, “Die biblischen Oden in Christlichen Altertum,” *Biblica* XXX.1 (1949), pp. 30–31.
4. Nicetas of Remesiana, *De utilitate hymnorum* 3–4, *PSALM Notes* 4.2, pp. 19–20. Excerpts from the translation in vol. 7 of the Fathers of the Church series (Catholic University of America Press) appear under the title “The Ministry of Hymns and Psalms” in *PSALM Notes* 4.2 (Spring 2000) and 5.1 (Fall 2000).
5. Commentary On Song of Songs, Prologue, 33; *Griechische Christliche Schriftstellere*, Origen 8, p. 83. Cited in Schneider, “Oden,” p. 51.
6. The Odes of the Codex Alexandrinus are listed in Wellesz, *Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, pp. 37–38.
7. Schneider, “Die biblischen Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert,” *Biblica* XXX.2 (1949), pp. 249–252.
8. Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, second edition 1993), p. 266 n. 13.
9. Our source is the account of a visit by John and Sophronius of Jerusalem to Nilos of Sinai in about the year 600, first published by J. B. Pitra, *Iuris Ecclesiastici Graecorum Historia et Monumenta* [1864–8] I.220, in a note to the *Apostolic Constitutions*; see also Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, pp. 198–199, for details of a critical edition.
10. See the outline of the service in Taft, *ibid.*
11. ‘Ministry’ 11, *PSALM Notes* 5.1, pp. 20–21.
12. Cf. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain, *Eortodromion A’* (Thessaloniki: Orthodoxos Kypseli, 1987), pp. 23–24.
13. E.g. the ancient Armenian rite divided the Psalter into eight sections, each followed by an ode; cf. Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 221; James Mearns, *The Canticles of the Christian Church Eastern and Western in Early and Medieval Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), p. 31. Constantinopolitan usage seems to have had “antiphons” of the Psalter followed by “antiphons” of odes; Schneider, “Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert,” p. 249.
14. Cf. Schneider, “Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert,” pp. 254–255.
15. Mearns, *Canticles*, p. 14, referring to an early Psalter which lists this passage as an ode.
16. E.g. the Bohairic Life of Pachomius (fourth century) refers to

Among the authors of the scriptural odes, the three children are regarded as the singers *par excellence*. Indeed, according to Kosmas, it was through hymnody that they changed the fire into dew.

- the first ode of Moses being sung at morning prayer in the cell (cited in Schneider, "Oden in Christlichen Altertum," p. 45). Ambrose of Milan (also fourth century) warmly recommends beginning the day with canticles, and alludes to Isaiah 26 (Commentary on Ps. 118/119:30, 32; cited in Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 142).
17. Schneider, "Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert," p. 263, following W. Christ and H. Paraniakas, *Anthologia Graeca Carminum Christianorum* (Leipzig, 1871), p. lxx.
  18. Pitra, *Iur. Eccl. Gr. Hist. et Mon.* 1.220. See also accounts of the visit in Taft, p. 275; Wellesz, pp. 173–174.
  19. Schneider, "Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert," p. 261.
  20. The divisions of the odes in earlier times did not correspond to the verses as we know them. I am not aware of direct evidence relating to the numbering that Andrew would have used, but Schneider ("Die biblischen Oden in Jerusalem und Konstantinopel," *Biblica* XXX.3, p. 448) cites a later count of verses in the odes corresponding exactly to the number of troparia in the Great Kanon. He remarks (pp. 442–443) that this count seems to be based on Constantinopolitan verse numberings; usage in Crete may well have been the same. Anyway, the coincidence is hardly likely to be fortuitous.
  21. Cf. Bertonnière, *The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil* (*Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 193) (Rome, 1972), Chart A-2. The first ode was already a prominent part of the paschal service by the fourth century, although we do not know how it was sung; cf. ps. Chrysostom, *On Pascha* 6, PG 59:746. On the dating of this homily see Floëri and Nautin (ed.), *Homélies pascales* (*Sources Chrétiennes* 27), pp. 46ff.
  22. Many examples of first odes of kanons and the way they connect to the scriptural ode are set out by Wellesz, pp. 222ff.
  23. Other kanons mentioning Miriam include both of those used at the Dormition.
  24. Cf. Nikodimos, *Eortodromion A'*, p. 26.
  25. Troparia 1, 3. This kanon survives only in Slavonic, and has recently been edited from manuscripts preserved in Moscow (publ. "Svyatitel' Kiprian" in the series "Byzantine Hymnography"). Unfortunately I do not have the bibliographical details of this publication at the time of writing, but can supply them to any interested readers in due course.
  26. "Ministry of Hymns," 11; *PSALM Notes* 5.1, p. 21.
  27. Kosmas uses the same passage with the same interpretation in his Christmas kanon. The sense in which this image is applied to the Virgin is explained by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain in his commentary on the kanons (*Eortodromion*), translated in *Alive in Christ* [Diocese of E. Pennsylvania, OCA] XV.3 (Winter 1999), p. 26.
  28. We know that such responses existed, at least in Constantinopolitan usage; these are listed by Schneider ("Die Oden seit dem VI. Jahrhundert," *Biblica* XXX.2 p. 250), but the response for Habakkuk here is "Hear me, O Lord."
  29. Hom. 14, On 1 Timothy, 4; PG 62:576.
  30. For exposition of these eirmoi see Nikodimos, *Eortodromion*; extracts translated in *Alive in Christ* XII.1 (Spring 1997), p. 13, Easter, 6 eirmos; XVI.1 (Spring 2000) p. 14, Easter 6.1; XV.3 (Winter 1999), p. 27, Christmas 6 eirmos.
  31. Cf. Taft, p. 144.
  32. Its place in morning prayer is mentioned by Athanasius, *On Virginity*, 20; cited in Taft, p. 88. Taft has reservations about the authorship of this work, but not about its fourth-century date.
  33. *Eortodromion* Vol. 1 (Thessaloniki: Orthodoxos Kypseli, 1987), p. 30. cf. Symeon of Thessaloniki, *Treatise on Prayer* 18; tr. H. L. N. Symmons (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1984), p. 32.
  34. Paschal Letter 10.3; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* ser. 2, vol. 4, p. 528.
  35. Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of St Macrina*, PG 46:993C.
  36. This verse is quoted by Nicetas, "Ministry of Hymns," 13 (*PSALM Notes* 5.1, p. 21), and by Andrew of Crete, *Compline kanon* on the eve of Lazarus Saturday, ode 7.
  37. Opportunities to listen to the Matins odes in their liturgical setting are of course severely limited—but they do not have to be. It may be noted that the Russian Cathedral of Assumption and All Saints in London has made a practice in recent years of celebrating a full Matins, complete with scriptural odes, on Tuesday and Thursday of the first week of Lent, and this has been received with some enthusiasm. Detailed rubrics for the singing of the scriptural odes on weekdays during Lent are given in *The Lenten Triodion*, tr. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), pp. 75–79.

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## PSALM Notes

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# Auditioning Your Choir

by Alice Hughes

**au-di-tion** (ô-dish-ēn) *n.* 1. The act or sense of hearing. 2. A presentation of something heard; a hearing. 3. A trial hearing, as of an actor, musician or other performer. —*v. tr.* To give (someone) an audition. —*intr.* To perform or be tested in an audition. (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, New College Edition, 1976.)

Say the word “audition” to a choir and it will probably cause immediate panic, dread, or at the very least butterflies in the stomachs of the singers. It is as if “audition” were a bad word. The purpose of this brief article is to dispel the horrors of this useful tool by explaining the need for regular auditions; to give some useful instructions about how to conduct a simple, constructive choir audition; and finally, to offer some suggestions about how to begin to analyze what you hear.

The heart of the audition is hearing. The director of a choir needs to hear the voices of the singers who are or will be singing together. Believe it or not, the audition process can be fun. The director sets the tone for the audition (a relaxed director in a friendly environment is more conducive to relaxed singers). Auditions can provide the director with a wonderful opportunity not only to properly classify each voice, but also to connect personally with each of the singers in the choir, and to evaluate and analyze the musical and vocal needs of each singer and thereby of the choir in general. But what is it that the director is supposed to hear, and then what should she do with that information?

First, make sure you inform the singers clearly why you are holding auditions. Communication about the goals and purposes of auditions will take away at least some of the trepidation singers feel. Are you doing this because you are going to limit the size of the choir? (This would probably make the singers pretty nervous.) Is it simply to evaluate the individual capabilities and skills of the singers? Or is it an annual event that occurs even if the choir personnel hasn't changed? Singers will almost always

feel nervous before an audition, but if you dispel some of the fears, their nervousness can be mitigated.

Realistically, if the idea of choir auditions is a new one for your community, you may experience some resistance. If you think you will encounter resistance, it may be a good idea to ease into it gently. An excellent way to begin is by having an informal “listening” or “vocal interview” for any new singers who will be joining the choir. You can easily explain this to the priest, singers, or anyone else who makes a fuss by saying that you need this in order to place each singer in the appropriate section of the choir. If you do this informally at first, it may even slip by unnoticed for a while. If you do meet resistance later, when you decide it is time to institute annual auditions with the full choir, you will be able to say that you've been auditioning new singers for some time. If you find that someone is under par (that is, if he or she can't even match pitch), you then have the opportunity to let the person down easily and privately, offering constructive suggestions about what he or she can do to improve.

## What You Can Learn from an Audition

### Voice Classification

Voice classification (what part should this person sing?) is probably one of the most important things the director is trying to confirm or determine in an audition, particularly for an amateur choir. This is often the best excuse a director can give for holding auditions. The director can say to the choir, “I need to hear each of you so I can determine which part you should sing.” Little do they know that you will be listening for more than just their vocal range.

While testing the singer for overall range—how high or low can he sing—the director will quickly be struck by the timbre or quality of the voice. Is it dark or bright? Light or heavy? Tight or relaxed? Nasal or pure? Smooth or rough? Although initially, if one isn't used to listening to voices, it may seem difficult to make this determination, over time these

**A**uditions can provide the director with a wonderful opportunity not only to properly classify each voice, but also to connect personally with each of the singers in the choir, and to evaluate and analyze the musical and vocal needs of each singer and thereby of the choir in general.

**A**t what point the voice makes a register change can often be the single most important factor in determining how to classify the voice.

qualities or timbres of tone tend to jump out at you. The timbre of a particular voice will have some bearing on voice classification, but will be more important for the placement of the voice within the section.

The third aspect of range that the director listens for is the change in registers, often called the “break.” (Actually, nothing is broken; the vocal folds are simply making an adjustment.) At what point the voice makes a register change can often be the single most important factor in determining how to classify the voice. Register changes tend to be more noticeable in untrained singers. Trained singers work to smooth out and blend the break so that the voice sounds even and smooth throughout the range.

In general, the lower the register change, the lower the voice. For example, for a female voice, if her register change occurs around a B-flat (on the staff), she should probably sing in the alto section. Conversely, if her register change is at an E (at the top of the staff), she should probably sing in the soprano section. There is much controversy among voice teachers about where these breaks occur and what they mean, but it is generally agreed that higher voices make the adjustment or change most commonly between D and F-sharp; lower voices make the change between A and C.

The fourth and final aspect of classifying the voice is to determine the optimal *tessitura* for that voice—in other words, in what part of the range the voice is most free, comfortable, and full. This can often be determined by having the singer sing a favorite song beginning on different pitches, perhaps the Troparion for the Cross or some other parish favorite.

So far in the audition, the director has explored the singer’s range, taken note of the timbre of the voice and the register changes, and determined the *tessitura* of the voice. Is the audition complete? Certainly the most important aspect is complete, but an individual audition is an opportunity to learn even more about your singers.

## **2 Pitch and Rhythmic Accuracy**

When listening to the singer, the director should also take note of how accurately the singer sings each pitch and replicates the rhythm. Some questions to ask: Is the singer on pitch, or does the pitch waver somewhat? Is she consistently sharp, which may indicate overall tightness that needs to be relaxed? Or does he sing flat, which may indicate a

lack of breath support? Does the accuracy fluctuate with certain types of exercises or in a certain range? Or is the singer simply not listening carefully? Does the singer speed up or slow down the exercise? Does she seem to feel the beat or pulse?

## **3 Listening Skills**

There are tools for quick checking of listening skills, which can become more complex with more skilled singers. Begin by having the singer identify which of two pitches played in succession is higher or lower. This can be a fun game, particularly with children, but also with adults. You can prepare your singers by trying this in the rehearsal. Have them all close their eyes, then play two or three notes in succession. Have the singers indicate whether the pitches moved up or down using thumbs-up or thumbs-down. (In an audition the singer can simply say “up” or “down.”)

Next, test the singer’s tonal memory by having him repeat a simple melody of three to seven notes after hearing it only once. It is best to start simply with diatonic stepwise melodies and progress to more difficult, even highly disjoint, melodies. Whether or not the singer can accurately repeat a simple or complex melody will be useful information. The next level is to play two or three notes, simultaneously, and have the singer sing the pitches from top to bottom or from the bottom up. Initially, a singer may only be able to sing the top or bottom note; hearing the middle can be more difficult.

## **4 Sight-Singing Skills**

The final skill that a director can test during an audition is sight-singing. Don’t be fooled if the singer flatly denies any ability to do this—she may surprise you and herself. Encourage all of your singers at least to try. Begin the sight-singing with a simple stepwise diatonic melody on quarter notes. If they succeed on that, have them try one that contains a skip or two with some eighth notes. Obviously, it can progress from there. Feel free to give some instruction in the moment if you think it will help them have greater success.

## **Scheduling Auditions**

First you must determine the length of time required for each audition. Auditions can last anywhere from five to thirty minutes, but somewhere in the middle is probably reasonable for a typical church choir audition. Fifteen minutes allows time to chat a little (which can help relieve nerves), check range and

# Audition Form

**Part Assigned**    Sop 1    Sop 2    Alto 1    Alto 2    Ten 1    Ten 2    Bari    Bass

Name \_\_\_\_\_

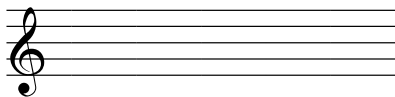
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

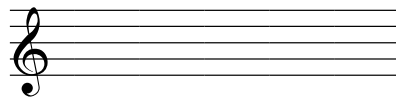
Age \_\_\_\_\_ Previous Singing/Choral Experience \_\_\_\_\_

Instruments \_\_\_\_\_

Other music lessons \_\_\_\_\_

Other activities \_\_\_\_\_

Range 

Tessitura 

**Vocal Quality/Timbre** (circle all that apply):    dark    bright    breathy    tight    warm    stri-  
dent    light    nasal    throaty    full    weak    confident    pure    husky    pushed    full    rough  
smooth    other \_\_\_\_\_

**Pitch accuracy**    poor    fair    good    excellent

**Rhythmic accuracy**    poor    fair    good    excellent

**Listening skills**    poor    fair    good    excellent

**Tonal memory**    poor    fair    good    excellent

**Sight-singing**    poor    fair    good    excellent

**Other comments:**

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tessitura, and then test listening and sight-singing skills. If possible, try to schedule auditions at a time when people are less likely to be stressed. Sometimes it is helpful to schedule auditions by gender. One option is to audition only a few voices a week over the course of a month; another is to do all of the auditions on a single Saturday morning. If you decide to do more than a handful of auditions in one day, make sure you schedule regular breaks for yourself; otherwise, your head may begin to swim.

## Conducting the Audition

We have discussed what we are listening for and why auditions are useful. Now let's examine how to conduct a simple and constructive audition. By "constructive," I mean an audition that is a positive (or at least not negative) experience and that allows both the singer and the director to know more when they leave than when they entered. The basic audition will have three parts: the chat, voice classification, and skill check. Each of these parts will have subparts, but by thinking of it in three basic sections the director can more easily stay on schedule. (As an aside, a director who stays on schedule wins many trust points with the choir.)

### The Chat

This is the director's opportunity to help put the singer at ease and learn a little more about him. You could have a card for each singer to fill out with the information you require, but by talking about mundane stuff like e-mail addresses and previous musical experience one-on-one, you allow the singer a chance to calm himself before you begin. If you do have the singers fill out an audition card ahead of time, you can use the information they provide as a jumping-off place. For example, "I notice that you studied voice in college. What repertoire did you sing?" or "I see you studied guitar; did you also study music theory with your teacher?" If you are lucky enough to make a singer laugh or even smile during the chat, you will likely be rewarded by hearing a truer picture of her current range and skills, because she will be more relaxed. Yes, this is about the psychology of nerves. This portion of the audition should last one to three minutes—no more than five minutes.

## 2 Determining Voice Classification

The chat is actually the first step to voice classification. By listening carefully to the pitch of the singer's conversational voice, you can begin to

approximate his range. Typically, a person who speaks below a B-flat will have a lower voice (bass or second alto); between a B-flat and a D will be a middle voice (second soprano/first alto or baritone); a D or higher indicates a higher voice (soprano or tenor). The speaking voice should only indicate voice classification; it should never be considered a definitive tool. (*The Choral Experience: Literature, Materials and Methods*, Ray Robinson and Allen Winold; Harper's College Press, 1976.)

This portion of the audition should take five to seven minutes. Begin by checking the range. Start with a five-note diatonic scale, up and down on an "ah" vowel. Begin on a pitch that is below the probable register change. For lower voices, you may want to begin on a B-flat or C. For higher voices, begin on a D. First, move the singer up by half-steps, through the point where the register change occurs. Take note of the register change. Now move the singer down by half-steps. Listen for the register change; also note the lower change into the chest voice. (Note: Some singers will sing more comfortably on an "ee" or an "oo." If that seems to be the case, offer that as an option.) You should also pay close attention to the singer's posture and breathing.

Next, to check the upper extreme of the range, have the singer sing an arpeggio on "ah" or "oh." Move the exercise more quickly and encourage the singer to use good support and to open the mouth as she moves higher. Once you have heard the top, bring the singer back down into a comfortable middle range. Then stop and write down the upper note. Now quickly determine the lower extreme. Use the five-note diatonic scale again, but start on the top and come down. Begin around A on the staff, sing on an "ah" or "oh," and go down by half-steps.

Finally, to check the tessitura, have the singer sing a familiar song in various keys. Use the knowledge you gained in listening to the range to determine which keys you want to hear in order to finish with the classification process. If you still have time left in this portion of the audition, you may also want to check the flexibility of the voice using a quick exercise in triplets that moves through a variety of vowels. This exercise may also be the beginning of section three—checking skill level.

## 3 Skills Assessment

If you have moved through the first two sections of the audition process efficiently, you should have about five to seven minutes left to assess the musicianship of the singer. In the second section you

**A**n audition should be a positive (or at least not negative) experience that allows both the singer and the director to know more when they leave than when they entered.

should have been able to determine the singer's basic pitch and rhythmic accuracy. Make sure to use a form to make note of what you have learned so far (see the sample form provided on page 12). These notes will prove valuable in making decisions in the near term, but also will be interesting to review for improvement in the years to come as you reaudition singers each year.

Depending upon what you learned in the first two sections, you should decide at what level to begin your assessment of listening skills. For example, if your singer has indicated several years of experience singing in choirs, plays solo violin, and has demonstrated excellent pitch and rhythmic accuracy, you can probably begin with more complex listening tests. However, if your singer seems to be a beginner, even if you hear great potential, begin with the simplest skills and progress quickly if he seems capable. The same notion applies to the sight-singing test. Unless you have some knowledge that the singer knows how to sight-sing, start him with the basic test. Good performance in the previous skills will not necessarily indicate sight-singing skills.

Once you have completed the audition, make sure to thank your singer for coming, and share with her any information you feel is appropriate and that time allows. After she exits the room, make any additional notes you feel are necessary, take a deep breath, and bring in the next singer.

### **After the Auditions**

Once you have listened to all of your singers, go home, pour yourself a relaxing beverage of your choice, and congratulate yourself on a job well done. Then take time to review the information you have collected and begin to devise a plan. Your plan may include a new arrangement for the singers within each section; new repertoire; or a list of skills that need to be improved and a plan of attack to improve those skills and build the choral sound. At your next rehearsal, share some of the goals and directions that are the direct result of the auditions. Be assured that when the choir sees—and more importantly, hears—the results of the audition process, they will be less nervous next year when they get to do it all again! ✚

### **Is your head swimming?**

### **Feel like you don't know where to begin?**

If you don't have a lot of vocal training, after reading this article you may be thinking, "Yes, this auditioning-the-choir thing sounds like the way to go, but I'm not a trained singer, I'm not qualified to take another person through this process." Don't panic. Use this as motivation to begin six months of private voice lessons, or take a voice class at your local college or junior college. It is never too late to get started. In the meantime, hire a professional to come in and help you audition your choir, sit in, watch and listen. This professional might also be the perfect person to invite to do a vocal workshop (or several!) with your choir.

For help finding a qualified teacher in your area, go to the National Association of Teachers of Singing website: <http://www.nats.org/>

# PSALM's 2003 Annual Meeting: Growing in Size and Scope

by Valerie Yova Sheets

This year's annual meeting, held June 20–21, was graciously hosted, once again, by St. Vladimir's Seminary. The meeting served multiple purposes this year. First of all, it provided an opportunity for PSALM board members and staff to report on the organization's progress and plans for the future. It also provided opportunities for PSALM members to meet each other face to face and to discuss issues of concern to all Orthodox musicians. Many of us had already become acquainted via the e-group and e-mail. What a joy it was to put faces (and souls!) together with e-mail addresses! And it was very encouraging to have over thirty participants this year, some who stayed over after the Liturgical Music Institute, and some who came from as far away as San Diego just for the meeting. We had a healthy mix of clergy, choir directors, singers, and composers, which lent itself to balanced and *lively* discussions!

The meeting began on Friday afternoon with the presentation of progress reports, given both orally and in the form of a sixteen-page booklet. Highlights of the reports (which can be found on the PSALM website) include the following:

- ✦ Paid memberships nearly tripled from 2002 to 2003; among these, we now have sixteen parish memberships.
- ✦ The online liturgical music resource is well on the way to being launched. Several grant applications have been submitted requesting funding to support the final stage of this project.
- ✦ The Board of Directors has embarked on a strategic planning process to develop and prioritize goals for the next three years.
- ✦ A regional events chairperson has been appointed, and we are enlisting the aid of regional events coordinators to organize workshops throughout the country.
- ✦ The website continues to improve and expand on a daily basis, thanks to a competent team of volunteers!

Following the reports, the attendees broke out into three discussion groups on the following topics:

- ✦ Clergy/musician relations
- ✦ Bringing professionalism to the role of the church musician
- ✦ The role of composers/arrangers in the growth of liturgical music

(A brief summary of these discussions will appear in future issues of *PSALM Notes*.)

Following the group discussions, Anne Schoepp, national events chairperson, presented some models and resources for planning regional liturgical music workshops. She then divided the participants by regions of the country, and each group brainstormed workshop ideas. Out of this session came several planning committees for regional events to be held in the coming year.

On Friday evening Professor Helen Erickson (St. Vladimir's Seminary) moderated a lively roundtable discussion on copyright issues, called "Whose Music Is It, Anyway?" Some important points made during this discussion were:

- ✦ Works composed or arranged by Orthodox musicians should be protected and respected by the Orthodox community at large.
- ✦ There is a historical precedent in the Church for this protection.
- ✦ Education will be necessary to change existing attitudes regarding respect and financial support for those who create liturgical music.

Saturday morning provided an opportunity for attendees to test their sight-reading "chops" in a music-reading session of PSALM Music Press publications. Fr. Sergei Glagolev, Anne Schoepp, Walter Obleschuk, and Vladimir Morosan shared the podium and led the group through several dozen pieces. (It was a joy to watch Fr. Sergei's face as he heard some of his own compositions sung for the first time by a full choir!) Many participants commented that all PSALM events should include some time to lift our voices in song, since making beautiful sacred music is at the heart of our ministry. It was



inspiring, challenging, uplifting, and just plain fun!

After the reading session, a brief demonstration was given by PSALM volunteer and technical consultant, Ted Feldman, on the progress of the online liturgical music resource. The resource will house sheet music that can be downloaded from the PSALM website and will contain a vast index of over 2300 categories of liturgical hymns. If the music is not available through the PSALM website, the index will give information about where it can be purchased. This project is in its final stage—the one that is the most technically complicated and labor-intensive. While we have applied for several grants to help fund the final stage of this project, we

are also asking PSALM members to make contributions toward this groundbreaking resource.

The final session on Saturday was a group discussion, led by Mark Bailey and affectionately known as “Group Therapy for Church Musicians.” The group discussed ways that choir directors and clergy can instill a sense of commitment in singers. Some of the ideas mentioned were:

- ✦ Plan rehearsals so that there are reachable goals.
- ✦ Set long-term goals, too.
- ✦ Build opportunities for success into your “Choir Plan.”
- ✦ Make sure that learning is happening at rehearsals (no one wants his time to be wasted).
- ✦ Include a social element in the rehearsal that provides opportunities for the singers to bond.
- ✦ Include humor in your approach.
- ✦ And a gem from Fr. Sergei Glagolev: “If you want your choir to pay attention to you, say something interesting!”

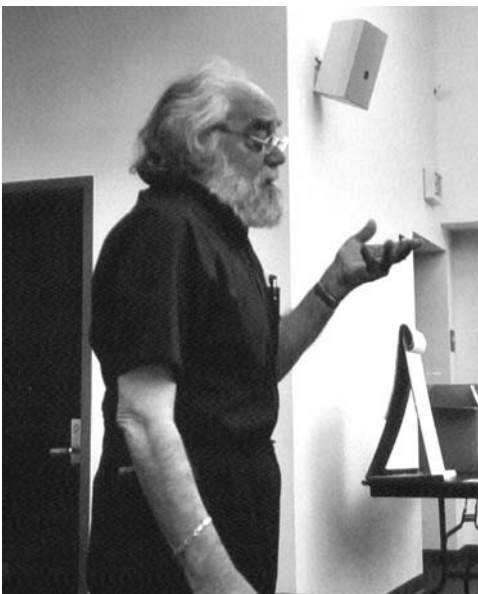
We at PSALM pray that God will bless our efforts to bring Orthodox musicians together more often to make music, learn from each other, encourage each other, and glorify God. And we hope that you will plan *now* to join us next June for our annual meeting. It’s a unique opportunity to network with Orthodox musicians from all jurisdictions throughout the U.S. and Canada! ✦



*Left: Vlad Morosan addresses the meeting*

*Below left: Fr. Sergei Glagolev speaks*

*Below right: Fr. Sergei Glagolev conducts*



# PSALM Membership and Gift Membership Form

“And when we began to learn from one another, then the Faith and the Divine Singing began to spread throughout the land.”

Through its membership program, PSALM seeks the ongoing support of all those who love the beauty of Orthodox liturgical music and share in the mission and goals of the organization. We welcome donations of any amount from individuals, parishes, choirs, and parish organizations and encourage gift subscriptions to individuals, parish libraries, local public libraries, and college/university libraries. PSALM offers seven different types of membership. Please see the reverse side of this form for a detailed listing of membership prices and corresponding benefits.

**Membership benefits include the following:**

- ✦ *PSALM Notes*: A newsletter that focuses on practical issues affecting liturgical musicians on the parish level, and also facilitates communication within the organization.
- ✦ *New PSALM Music Journal*: A scholarly music journal published annually, featuring articles on liturgical music of a more in-depth nature.
- ✦ Directory of Orthodox Liturgical Music Resources and Church Musicians
- ✦ A directory of PSALM members, plus a contact list of valuable resources for liturgical musicians that will be updated regularly; available in hard copy and also on the PSALM website.
- ✦ PSALM Music Press has printed two packets of sheet music and a bound volume of Selected Orthodox Sacred Choral Works composed by V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev, available to members at a 20% discount. A third packet of sheet music will be published in 2003, and a new on-line music database will be introduced.

Your membership in PSALM also supports free services, including the website and e-mail discussion group.

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**Friends of PSALM:** Donors of \$15 or more (tax-deductible) will be listed in the PSALM Directory and will receive a complimentary copy of the Directory.

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Additional copies of *PSALM Notes* Newsletter may be added to any membership for \$3/person per year.

### Music Database Update

Plans are currently underway to make sheet music available for downloading through the PSALM website. Music will be available in the following liturgical categories:

Daily Cycle (Horologion)	Lenten Triodion	Octoechos
Weekly Cycle	Pentecostarion	Special Needs
General Menaion	Festal Menaion	

If you have computerized music files that you would like to submit for consideration, please contact Vladimir Morosan at PMP@musicarussica.com for a set of submission guidelines. Or call 203-458-3225 for more information.

Download subscription packages will be available to PSALM members. Watch *PSALM Notes* and the website ([www.orthodoxpsalm.org](http://www.orthodoxpsalm.org)) for updated information.



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*Who indeed can still consider as an enemy  
him with whom he has uttered the same prayer  
to God? So that psalmody, bringing about choral  
singing, is a bond, as it were, toward unity; and  
joining the people into a harmonious union of  
one choir, produces also the greatest of blessings,  
charity.*

— St. Basil the Great