

PSALM

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The Need for Good Choirs and Good Music

by His Grace Bishop DEMETRI (Khoury),
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“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing... Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.” (Psalm 100:1)

If we had to write a mission statement for choirs and chanters, and indeed the entire people of God gathered in prayer, it seems to me that this section from Psalm 100 fits the bill. It speaks in terms of invitation, of participation, of rejoicing and praising, and doing so with the right attitude.

St. Theophan the Recluse, the great 19th-century Russian monastic and bishop, said of church music:

“The purpose of church hymns is precisely to make the spark of grace that is hidden within us burn brighter and with greater warmth. This spark is given by the sacraments. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are introduced to fan the spark and transform it into a flame...”

St. Theophan makes it quite clear that church music is meant to increase the grace of God in each one of us. That grace has been put there through the sacraments, and it is through music that the “spark of grace” is made to burn more brightly. This grace is not meant to be static, hidden away and unused, nor is it meant to be left unexperienced. It is through church music that it becomes more active and burns with “greater warmth”— not secular music, which, by its very definition and its themes, seeks to stir up worldly feelings and emotions rather than the spark of grace! Some worldly music is appropriate for us and some isn’t, just as some “church music” is appropriate for us as Orthodox Christians and some is not. St. Theophan goes on to say that:

“It is necessary not only to understand the hymn, but to be in symphony with it, to accept the contents of the song in heart and to sing it as if it came from our own heart...”

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To Thee Is Due A Song— Reflections on Orthodox Hymnody

by Father John Breck

The hymns of the Church are verbal images or icons by which we affirm, proclaim and celebrate our faith. Using the unique yet universal language of music, they enable us to express personally and communally the saving truth of the Gospel message, to bear witness to that truth to others, and to offer praise and thanksgiving to the One who renders that truth forever accessible to us. Orthodox hymnody, then, has an essential soteriological or saving function. Like proclamation of the Gospel itself, it *actualizes* and *communicates* its content within the Christian community through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

If we look at church singing in this way, however, it becomes clear that we have to accept certain canons or norms, laid down by Holy Tradition, regarding both the words and the music of our hymns. Authentic hymns are “theology in music,” just as an authentic icon is “theology in color.” This means that inappropriate music, even if well sung, distorts the message of the hymn. Like “bad” iconography, it feeds us with deception rather than nourishing us with the truth. But the converse is true as well. The most authentic *znamenny* is incapable of communicating grace and truth if the message it transmits is not centered upon the saving work of God fulfilled in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. Musical form is an essential vehicle that conveys the substance of our faith. While it needs to be continually adapted to changing cultural situations by an ongoing process of creation and translation, the music of the Church, like the words it bears, must express divine reality in human *Hymnody, continued on page 4*

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by Father Robert Arida

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In the time of the Apostles only those who were in such a state used to sing; others entered into a similar mood and all the congregation sang and glorified God from the heart only. No wonder if, in consequence of this, the whole congregation was filled with the Spirit! What treasure is hidden in church hymns if they are performed properly!”

This teaching of St. Theophan’s in the 19th century is an echo of the teaching of the Church Fathers. St. Athanasios, for example said, “Those who sing properly psalmodize not only with their tongue, but also with their mind, and benefit greatly not only themselves but also those who desire to listen to them...” And St. John Chrysostom tells us that, “Those who psalmodize are filled with the Holy Spirit, just as those who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit...”

If we in our churches are to produce genuinely spiritual music, we need choirs and chanters who are qualified on a technical basis and on a spiritual basis. Choir members and chanters must have true devotion to their work and they must always exhibit true humility. And they must always sing with what the Holy Fathers called “inner attention.” What this means is that not only do we have to know and understand the music theory and technique, the melody and dynamics, but we also need to know and understand the words and the meaning behind the words. And just as we strive to express a hymn as best as possible on a musical level, so we must strive to also express its meaning. And we must do so without showing off, with none of the worldly characteristics of secular music. This was made clear in the 75th Canon of the Council of Trullo which states:

“We decree that those whose office is to psalmodize in the churches do not use disorderly and loud vocalizations, nor force nature to shouting, nor adopt any of those modes that are inappropriate or unsuitable for the church; but that they offer to God, Who is the observer of secrets, with great attention and compunction.”

Thus it behooves us to pay strict attention to every aspect of our music ministry in the Church. This ministry demands of us absolute and total commitment. If we are to sing, then we must practice. If we are to practice, then we must do so regularly and on time. If we are to minister well, we must be attentive first, to the inner demands and requirements of the piece we are singing,

and then, secondarily, to the content of the music. In other words, for those whose ministry is church music, the first requirement is a commitment to the Orthodox faith, to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the church, each hymn, verse, phrase and word of the divine services must be executed as it should be, clearly, in the right tempo, with natural accents proper to the language of the hymn. And outside the church each choir member or chanter must live a life that is consistent with what is sung in the church, a life that is exem-

plary, full of faith in God and love for Him as shown by love for one another. Remember that in Baptism we put on Christ, for life! One who puts on the faith only during the services cannot be considered a true Christian.

What elements go into making a good choir? First, we must be well acquainted with the Orthodox faith. By this I do not mean to imply that you should rush out and get a degree in Orthodox theology. But you should be living a good Orthodox Christian life, one with a level of asceticism proper to your station as lay persons.

Asceticism comes from the Greek *asketiskos* meaning a whole system of personal discipline for the purpose of combating vice and developing personal virtues. In the Orthodox tradition, such a system includes a personal prayer life, daily spiritual reading—including the Scriptures, frequent Confession with a spiritual father of your choice, frequent Communion, fasting, almsgiving, and as much as possible, regular participation in the liturgical life of your parish. When we immerse ourselves in the life of the Church in all its aspects, then and only then do we begin to understand what the Church is teaching us through its prayers and hymns. Without first understanding what the Church is teaching us, we cannot teach others.

Having looked to the state of our spiritual health we can then effectively and appropriately address the technical aspects of the church music we are dealing with. There is no act, no work, no service in the Church that does not require preparation. Every time a priest celebrates the Divine Liturgy he does four things: He enters the church and says the *Kairon* or Preparation Prayers; he vests saying the Vesting Prayers; he washes his hands saying verses from Psalm 26; he prepares the bread and wine in a special service called the *Proskomide* or Preparation of the Bread and Wine. After these he begins to celebrate the Divine Liturgy.

Singing in church is no exception. It requires a great deal of preparation. In fact, one may say that to be most effective, all those involved in music ministry must be constantly working to maintain that ministry. In other words, your ministry and the preparation for and mainte-

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nance of that ministry never stop. Otherwise your ministry is fruitless and unworthy. No one should hide behind the argument that, "I have been singing in the choir for decades—I don't need to prepare! I already know it all!" Every act of ministry in the Church, if it is to be effective and fulfill God's plan, needs preparation. Specifically this preparation includes:

A good spiritual life as outlined above.

The technical aspects. You must train your voice under a qualified director and then keep your voice in good form. This can be done at home or at work by singing the music you have learned at rehearsals. Doing this not only keeps your voice in good form but it also gives praise to God continually and helps you to maintain your spiritual health.

Necessity of preparation: Choirs. You must have regular weekly rehearsals. If your parish choir is not doing so, you must begin to do this immediately. Every single choir member should be in attendance. In some parishes, if a choir member misses a rehearsal, they are not allowed to sing the following Sunday. But this rule is good only if it is consistently enforced. Choir directors should not be discouraged by lack of attendance. Even if only two or three people show up on a given day, the director should rehearse those two or three. Any choir member who cannot or will not accept these requirements should step down and put aside this ministry. We cannot forget that it is indeed a ministry. It is not a hobby or a pastime. We are ministering to the Body of Christ and to do so effectively requires work and constant practice.

Necessity of preparation: Chanters and Readers. Chanters need to prepare services in advance. Check with your priest to determine if any special services will be done in the next few weeks. Verify the time, the feast day, if there is one, the texts needed and where they can be found. Read over the texts several times well in advance of the actual service. They will become familiar to you and there will be less chance of stumbling over a phrase or mispronouncing a word.

There is also the important consideration of the role that chanters play in their ministry—of teaching by their chanting. They must not fall into the bad habit of singing the texts for themselves only, as if their function were a personal privilege or a private act. The texts of the Church's services are amazingly rich in their theological, spiritual, and didactic or teaching content. Approaching their task with proper preparation beforehand, the chanters become teaching assistants of the Church and the clergy. They must keep in mind that they are not reading or chanting only for themselves, but also for the parishioners. Keeping in mind that they are teaching the parishioners, they will comprehend the need to be adequately familiar not only with the wording

of the texts but also with the proper execution, stressing some words and phrases more than others. As the faithful hear the words, there will be an immediate understanding. This proper understanding will then lead to the words and what they teach, being absorbed into the hearts and minds of the parishioners where they will do the most good.

Punctuality. Being on time is as essential as being at rehearsals. To breeze into the church five minutes before a service begins, shows a total disregard and lack of respect for the service and for others. This must not be tolerated at all. Remember what Canon 75 of the Council of Trullo said about singing with "attention and compunction." We cannot arrive at the church and immediately begin to sing.

We need to adjust from being in the world, to being in the Kingdom. We need time to decompress from the rush-rush attitude of this world to the timelessness of the world to come. Those who arrive late are usually always late. This

tendency needs to be charitably pointed out to them with the request that they repent of this sin and begin to arrive early. Just as the deacons, the priests and yes, the bishops, have to slowly withdraw from the cares and concerns of this world to serve the Liturgy, so do you who sing have to slowly withdraw from the same world. You need a time of quiet preparation just as the clergy do, for the God who is praised and served from the altar is the same God who is praised and served from the choir loft or the chanters stand or the pew.

Attendance at the services. In the vast majority of our parishes few of the faithful, including choir members and chanters, are in church other than on Sunday morning. While there may be unavoidable reasons for this, we must do everything in our power to remedy the situation. None of us can be "Sunday Christians." As much as possible every member of the choir and every chanter should be present for services held during the week. Our sense of values must be such that church attendance is the first and highest priority. Anyone who says that this is not realistic given today's society and values, needs to hear that, yes, it is realistic, because other people are doing it. Those who say it is too difficult because there is not enough time, should be made aware of the fact that others manage to find the time and the means. For all our talk on the need to focus on family values our problem these days is not one of time, but one of values. We talk about values, but do nothing about them. We have to translate our talk into action. We speak of having values, but often times do not indeed have them, or if we have them, do not place a proper emphasis on those values.

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Church music versus secular music. There is a disturbing increase not only in the desire for but also the performance of music in our churches which is wholly inappropriate. Your ministry is one which requires not only the cooperation of the clergy but also cooperation with the clergy. When your priest explains that a piece of music is inappropriate, you need to be understanding and agree with him both privately and publicly. As others see you and your priest in agreement and cooperating with each other, they also will begin to do the same. In this way a climate of harmonious understanding and cooperation spreads throughout the entire parish.

Thus, it is very important for a good choir to follow the priest's instructions regarding the order of the service, the texts to be used, who will do the various parts of service, the tempo and rhythm of the service. Neither the priest and deacon, nor the chanter and choir should drag out any part of a service. None of us is performing; we are praying and leading others in prayer!

Conclusion. Centuries ago the Church had a custom of including the singers among the orders of clergy. A listing of church offices in order of rank has come down to us from the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 343-381): presbyters (priests), deacons, sub-deacons, readers, singers, exorcists, door-keepers, and ascetics.

Today, choir members are rarely, if ever at all, tonsured, nor are they considered clergy in any formal sense. But the function they exercise remains just as important, elevated, and vital, as in the early Church. To be included as a member of the choir or numbered as a chanter should still be considered the high calling which it truly is. Choir members, directors and chanters cannot and must not separate their musical role from their personal piety and spirituality. Neither can they assume a level of authority not given to them by the Church. Each person has a ministry to fulfill within the Body of Christ. And each of us, when fulfilling that ministry, must always keep in mind the admonition of St. Paul to the Hebrews 13:17-18:

“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give an account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably.” ✚

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language. And it can do so only insofar as it reflects the living and life-giving content of Holy Tradition.

From the witness of the New Testament, and even from secular writings contemporary with it, we can be sure that the hymns of the early Church served the very purposes we have noted: they proclaimed the faith of the gathered people; they served as catechetical devices for defining, deepening and transmitting that faith; and they enabled the believing community to offer praise and adoration to the God of their salvation. Aside from the allusions made by St. Paul and other Christian writers to the singing of “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” offered to God with thanksgiving (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians. 5:19; Revelation. 5:9; etc.), we find in a famous letter of the Roman Pliny the Younger a somewhat mocking reference to the fact that Christians were accustomed “to assemble before the dawn on a set day and to sing hymns to Christ as to a god” (Ep. X.96.7). To discern the purpose of those and other musical compositions within the life of the early Church, we may look at several typical examples of hymns and hymnic fragments found scattered throughout the Gospels and Apostolic letters.

Pliny's allusion to “hymns to Christ as to a god” may very well refer to the magnificent “Christ-hymn” of Philippians 2:5-11.

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death on the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Form-critical studies of the New Testament have shown that this passage preserves what is probably the oldest Christological statement in hymnic form. Very likely composed by St. Paul himself, it circulated independently in Christian tradition within a decade after Christ's death and resurrection. Its purpose is to proclaim the self-emptying love and obedience of the Son of God who, through incarnation and crucifixion, achieved victory over death and was exalted into heaven, to receive universal acclamation as *Kyrios* or “Lord.” The pattern of descent/ascent, of humiliation and exaltation, marks fulfillment of the prophetic image of the Suffering Servant in the person of Jesus (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). Although nothing is said in the hymn of Christ's

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redemptive work on our behalf—the emphasis is upon His proclamation as God—nevertheless that work is clearly indicated by the theme of incarnation. In later patristic terms, “He became what we are (‘form of a servant,’ ‘likeness of men’) in order that we might become what He is,” namely, participants in His exaltation and bearers of His divine life. Thereby the hymn proclaims, in rhythmic form and with extraordinary poetic beauty, the “mystery laid up before the ages” (Ephesians 3); the mystery of our salvation brought about through the self-sacrificing devotion of the Son of God. If the early Church thus expressed its deepest faith in hymnic form, it did so to unite its confession of faith with its liturgical celebration of that faith. The very act of lifting its common voice in confession and adoration enables the gathered community to actualize, that is, to proclaim and to relive, the joyous message of its new life in Jesus the Lord.

Many other examples could be drawn from the New Testament in order to make the point: that to be lived with depth and power, faith must be sung; it must be celebrated by the lifting of voices in a unified expression of thanksgiving, adoration and praise. The first two chapters of St. Luke’s Gospel contain several “confessional hymns” (the expression is redundant!), from the *Magnificat* (Canticle of the Most Holy Theotokos—“My soul magnifies the Lord...”) to the *Nunc dimittis* (Canticle of St. Simeon—“O Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant...”), hymns that remain at the heart of the Church’s services of Matins and Vespers. Other passages represent either modified hymns of the early Church’s liturgy (the prologue of St. John’s Gospel and the *axios* confessions of Revelation 4-5) or fragments of hymns, modified to serve doctrinal purposes within apostolic writings (Hebrews 1:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 1-2). In each case, hymnody serves doctrinal purposes; faith comes to its fullest and most beautiful expression in song.

The same is true with the hymns of the later Church. Tradition preserves not only the content, but also the form, the living vehicle, by which faith is expressed and communicated. Thus St. Gregory of Nazianzus is lauded as a true theologian because of his magnificent hymns to the Holy Trinity; the works of St. Romanos and St. Simeon the New Theologian remain priceless pearls within the theological and spiritual tradition of Orthodoxy.

To illustrate the vital connection between the Church’s confession of faith and its liturgical celebration, between its *lex orandi* (rule of prayer) and its *lex credendi* (rule of belief), it is enough to refer to two creedal formulas, each of which is a full and perfect expression of Christian belief. Both of these are sung at every Divine Liturgy, yet one is among the most familiar of confessional hymns, while the other tends to be obscured by its place within the Liturgy and consequently neglected as an authentic symbol of faith.

The first of these is the Nicene Creed, the symbol of faith *par excellence*, which since the fourth century has been the touchstone of authentic Orthodoxy. The second is the hymn known as the *Monogenes*, the “Only-begotten Son,” that forms part of the second antiphon. Attributed to the 6th-century Emperor/Theologian Justinian, the *Monogenes* affirms in confessional terms the same divine mystery of descent/ascent, of abasement and glorification, expressed in the hymn of Philippians 2. Beginning with the twofold proclamation of Jesus as “Only-begotten Son” and “Immortal Word of God,” it stresses both relationship within the inner life of the Holy Trinity and “economic” outreach into the created world, “for the life of the world and its salvation.” Then follows the motif of descent through incarnation, the total assumption of human nature and human destiny, in the womb of the Virgin Mary. One of the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son and creative Word, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, “became man and was crucified.” The hymn repeats the central affirmation of Philippians 2: “Even death/death upon a Cross.” Yet it includes a most significant addition. For the *Monogenes* affirms that the Son became man, assumed the fullness of human existence, without change (*atreptos*). St. Paul declares that the Son was in the form of God and equal to God (the Father). In the historical context of Christological controversies that followed upon the Chalcedonian definition, the author of the *Monogenes* felt obliged to make still more clear the fact that incarnation in no way deprives the Son of His divine nature, authority or will. He becomes man while remaining forever One of the Holy Trinity. He becomes what we *are*, that He might make us what He Himself *is*, that is, God. Therefore the confessional hymn concludes with a cry of faith and longing: “O Christ our God...save us!” Adoration, supplication, proclamation, and confession of faith—all are expressed here, and each element is inseparable from every other. With its exceptional theological precision and beauty of expression, the *Monogenes* is a fundamental and indispensable expression of Orthodox faith.

The Nicene Creed is an all-embracing symbol, whose three articles speak of the inner life of the Godhead, the redemptive activity of the Son, and the sacramental life of the Church as the community of salvation. It is the confessional formula that most perfectly expresses the total faith of Christian people. The Monogenes, however, is a symbol of nearly equal value. It speaks not only of the person and work of the Son, but it affirms as well the crucial role of Mary as Theotokos or “Mother of God.” Its central message, however, like that of Philippians 2 and the Nicene Creed, focuses upon the sacrificial death of Christ upon the cross, the ineffable outpouring of love in the form of water and blood. By His death Christ our God has destroyed the power and consequences of death. This is the Paschal proclamation that grounds and confirms all Christian faith. In the words of St. Cyril of Alexandria, “the Logos has suffered—

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Rediscovering Christmas Lent

Orthodox Hymns and Advent

by Archpriest Robert M. Arida, Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Boston, Massachusetts

The development of Christian hymnography is based on the synthesis of word, music and image. Emerging from this synthesis is a liturgical tradition that awaits rediscovery in our parishes in North America.

Psalmody, testimonies of faith, statements of belief as well as expressions of prayer denoting adoration, supplication, repentance and thanksgiving converge to make up the living spring of liturgical worship. And it is in this liturgical context that the hymnody of the Church is experienced as living theology. Thus, the words of our hymns express a canon of belief intended to draw the faithful into an ongoing dialogue with the Holy Trinity.

The texts of Christian hymns were meant to be heard and understood. Their musical settings were recognized as mediums for transmitting the saving power and message of the Gospel. Meter and melody created a context that facilitated both the memorization and contemplation of texts. For this reason good hymnography, whether Eastern or Western, never subordinated the word to a particular setting. Word and music were a composite whole which conveyed the Gospel to the faithful. Yet, tragically, over a long period of time, the contrary has occurred. Consequently there has been the eclipsing of the word by the complexities of certain musical arrangements.

By subordinating the word to music, the meaning and purpose of liturgical worship is left up to the power of one's imagination. Such flights of fancy have contributed greatly to the breakdown of liturgical dialogue and the understanding of liturgical worship as a concelebration of all the faithful.

Pietistic sentimentality as well as an intellectual penchant for aesthetics have emerged from this critical breakdown. From pietism came the eventual divorce of spirituality from the living theology of the Church while the desire for beauty without theological grounding became a subtle veil for what is passionate and disturbing to the very peace of the human person seeking union and communion with God. In either case music steadily lost its connection with the words of worship.

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If there is to be a renaissance of Orthodox missionary and evangelical work in America there must be a rebirth of liturgical life. To assume that the ongoing ministry of Christ can impact the American psyche and culture without an organic revival of Orthodox liturgical life is at best naive. Without worship—without the very nurturing context of the Christian life—all attempts to share and reveal the Good News will eventually be overwhelmed by the aggressive secularism of our culture.

One area of liturgical life that needs to be rediscovered is the Advent and Nativity cycle. Since the

9th-century, November 15 has marked the beginning of the "Christmas Lent." Compared to the liturgical cycle leading to and including Great Lent and Holy Week, Advent is a season with little liturgical structure until the two Sundays before the Nativity and the celebration of the pre-festal services beginning December 20. Until then, Advent—as a liturgical cycle—remains almost hidden. This "hiddenness" is enhanced by the fact that in many Orthodox parishes in North America liturgical celebrations are limited to Sunday morning. Compounding this is the reduction of the Christmas cycle to basically one celebration, i.e., either a Vespertal Liturgy on December 24 or the Divine Liturgy on the morning of the 25th.

While there is no even distribution of pre-Christmas music over the 40 days of Advent, there exist hymns that help orient the faithful to this season of preparation. The feasts of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21), St. Andrew, the First Called (November 30), St. John of Damascus (December 4), St. Nicholas (December 6) and St. Herman of Alaska (December 13) provide a liturgical prelude to Christmas. Their complimentary themes of prayer, repentance, ascetical struggle, fidelity, apostleship and priesthood form a composite image of one who sets out to embrace the Christ child. These fundamental themes, which permeate the festal hymns, remind us that before we can enter the joyous (and cosmic) celebration of the incarnation of God's only begotten Son, each of us is to undergo an internal renewal. For unless there is desire for self-purification—unless there is the ongoing struggle to be freed

from the seductive vanity and tasteless banality of the world—we risk misplacing the humble gift given to us from above—“a little Child, God before the ages.” (Christmas Kontakion)

In addition to the hymns describing the attitude needed to approach the incarnate Savior, the feasts falling within Advent also contain direct references to the feast of Christmas. Beginning with the Entrance of the Theotokos we hear in the Matins kanon the *katabasia* taken directly from the *hermoi* of Christmas. These hymns, in their pre-festal context, invite us to give glory and thanksgiving to the incarnate Lord who “now dwells among us.” Thus, beginning November 21 we sing and hear: “Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ comes from heaven, go to meet Him! Christ is on earth, be exalted! Sing to the Lord, all the earth, and praise Him with gladness, O people, for He has been glorified!” These hymns taken from the feast of Christmas and brought into Advent are repeated during the Resurrection (Sunday) Matins following November 21 and are also included in the kanons for the feasts of Saint Andrew, Saint John, Saint Nicholas and Saint Herman.

The two Sundays prior to the Nativity draw our attention to salvation history. Their Vespers and Matins hymns focus on the incarnation and the redeeming ministry of Christ as the center of history. From these hymns we are reminded that it is God and fallen man who prepare the world for the birth of the Messiah, and it is God and men, working together, who establish the Church as the new Eden to which all creation is called to return. Creatively incorporating Old Testament typology, the hymns proclaim the birth of the Son of God as the pivotal event of history. Past, present and future are linked to the incarnation which stands as the purpose and fulfillment of creation.

The pre-festal services, beginning on December 20, are the culmination of the Advent season. Within these services the fundamental biblical themes of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection are tightly drawn together.

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ed in the flesh.” And we, in response, raise our voices in a hymn of praise that confesses, proclaims, and—by the Spirit-inspired power of the liturgical Word—actualizes that truth within the community of faith. Within our churches, as within our seminaries, it should be recovered and taught as such, somehow rescued from the liturgical limbo into which it has fallen. For no other creedal statement so well or so fully expresses the mystery of our salvation through the incarnation, crucifixion and glorification of the Son of God.

In the hymns of the Church, music serves theology.

The *hermos* of Ode 6 from the Compline Kanon of December 24 clearly expresses how the birth of Christ points to His voluntary death and resurrection. It is a hymn whose themes resonate during Holy Week and Pascha. “Jonah was caught but not held fast in the belly of the whale. He was a sign of You who appeared in the flesh. Coming forth from the beast as from a bridal chamber, and now You are born in the flesh. You shall undergo death and burial in the flesh and shall arise on the third day.”

From this and other pre-festal hymns the incarnation is presented as an event that points to the public ministry and redeeming passion of Jesus. These hymns also prepare the faithful to engage in spiritual warfare. For with the birth of the Savior comes the battle between His inaugurated kingdom and the kingdom of the world. Thus, Herod

plays a prominent role in some of the hymns, personifying those who seek the Christ child in order to destroy Him.

These words and music of the pre-festal hymns compose an image disclosing the cosmic nature of the incarnation. They create a comprehensive image of the divine and human Christ Child inviting all of creation to the manger in the cave from where He reigns. As the day of the Lord’s Nativity draws closer, these hymns form a lively reflection of the festal icon. Everyone and everything is drawn to the Savior. All of creation responds: heaven offers a star, the earth provides a cave, humanity offers the Virgin Mother, the ox and ass recognize their Master and give Him warmth, the mountains exult, the valleys rejoice, the humble shepherds with their flocks approach the Child and with the Angels give glory, the Magi from the East offer gifts to incarnate Wisdom, while the evil one seeks to tempt Joseph to reject the incomprehensible event. In his struggle we recognize our ascetical struggle from which is disclosed the Good News—“God became man so man might become God.” †

Through its beauty and its sobriety, music gives eloquent expression to dogma and transforms it into joyous adoration and a powerful proclamation of divine truth. Silence may be, as the Fathers declared, the language of the world to come. But as those same Fathers now surely know, at the heart of the silence there is a song. It is the song of the living creatures and the twenty-four elders of the Apocalypse. Through the hymnody of Orthodox Tradition, however, it is also our song. May we receive it with gratitude, offer it with joy, and preserve it for coming generations as the fullest and most perfect expression of our theology and of our faith. †

*If there is to be a
renaissance of
Orthodox missionary
and evangelical
work in America
there must be a
rebirth of
liturgical life.*

Glory to God in the Highest

(verses before the Six Psalms)

Walter G. Obleschuk
based on Valaam Chant

Joyously ♩ = 96

Soprano
Alto

Tenor
Bass

Glo - ry to God in the high - est,

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is for Soprano and Alto, and the bottom staff is for Tenor and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Joyously' with a quarter note equal to 96. The lyrics are 'Glo - ry to God in the high - est,'. The music features a melodic line with some notes circled and a bass line with a dotted line indicating a continuation.

Sing three times

and on earth peace _____ good - will _____ to men.

Detailed description: This system contains the second two staves of music. The lyrics are 'and on earth peace _____ good - will _____ to men.' The music continues with a similar melodic and bass line structure. Some notes are circled, and there are dotted lines indicating continuation.

O Lord _____ o - pen my lips and my mouth

Detailed description: This system contains the third two staves of music. The lyrics are 'O Lord _____ o - pen my lips and my mouth'. The music continues with a similar melodic and bass line structure. Some notes are circled, and there are dotted lines indicating continuation.

1 shall show forth _____ Your Thy praise. 2 shall show forth _____ Your Thy praise.

Detailed description: This system contains the final two staves of music. The lyrics are '1 shall show forth _____ Your Thy praise. 2 shall show forth _____ Your Thy praise.' The music concludes with a final cadence. Some notes are circled.

Note: In Russian practice these verses are only sung on the great feasts of the Nativity of Our Lord, Theophany and Annunciation, and the Parish Patronal Feast, otherwise these verses are intoned by the reader.

Rejoice, Virgin Theotokos

Voskresenski Monastery, Moscow
English setting: Walter G. Obleschuk

$\text{♩} = 48$

Voice 1

Re - joice, Vir-gin The - o - to - kos, Ma - ry

Voice 2

full of grace, the Lord is with you.
thee

Blest are you thou a - mong wo - men, and blest is the

Fruit of your thy womb, for you thou have borne the

Sav - ior of our souls.

Note: This hymn may be sung by treble, male or mixed voices (voice 2 sung one octave below.)

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RESOURCES

Resource Editor, Walter Obleschuk

So Many Books... So Little Time

In an ideal world, we would be able to buy all the books that interest us and would have enough time to read them, at least twice. Since most of us cannot afford this luxury, here are a few suggestions to help you choose books from the ever-increasing number of titles available in English on the topic of Orthodox church singing and liturgy:

The Year of Grace of the Lord

*A Monk of the Eastern Church,
Deborah Cowen, translator, SVS Press, 1980.*

In the author's own words, the liturgical year is "an abridgement of the history of salvation," intended to bring us into union with Christ. Using the scriptural readings and the hymnography of the services of the Orthodox liturgical year as guideposts, the author describes the path, should we choose to follow it, which can lead us closer to Christ day by day. As church musicians whose responsibility it is to sing and chant the services, we must understand what we are chanting and singing, or else what we do is meaningless, or even worse harmful, to our worshiping communities. This book serves as an excellent guide to keep us on the right path.

Poets and Hymnographers of the Church Saints for All Ages—Book 9

*Constance Tarasar, Department of Religious Education,
Orthodox Church in America, 1982.*

This volume is at the same time comprehensive and highly readable by all age groups. This book contains short biographies and excerpts from the works of the well-known hymnographers Saints Romanos the Melodist, Andrew of Crete, and John of Damascus, as well as the lesser known Saints Nicetas of Remesiana, Ephrem the Syrian, Auxentius of Bithynia, and Theodore of Studios. The book concludes with a short, but exceptionally complete, glossary of terms pertaining to Orthodox hymnography and worship.

The Orthodox Liturgy

Hugh Wybrew, SVS Press, 1990.

Over the years, non-Orthodox have made memorable contributions to the study of the development of the Eastern Liturgy. Written by the Dean of the Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, this book can be numbered among those efforts. In his Preface to the American Edition, the author writes: "It [this book] is not at all intended for the expert in either the history of Christian worship or the Orthodox Christian tradition. It is meant for those who have had some experience of the Liturgy, and are curious about its shape and content." Bishop KALLISTOS (Ware) of Diokleia writes in the foreword: "In a simple and readable manner, ...[Wybrew] traces

step-by-step the historical development of the eucharistic Liturgy in the Christian East, conveying vividly a sense of what it felt like to worship during each period from apostolic times up to our own day. This is a study based on wide and careful reading, but the results are presented in a manner readily intelligible to the non-specialist. Hugh Wybrew not only describes the words and ritual actions used in the service, but also considers the outer architectural setting with its iconography, as well as the inner symbolism and theology." What better endorsement does this book need! ✚

Christmas Recordings

Kiev Christmas Liturgy

*Moscow Liturgic Choir, Father Amvrosy, conductor,
Erato 2292-45961-2*

The CD *Kiev Christmas Liturgy* is not a recording of a Divine Liturgy celebrated on Christmas Day in Kiev, but consists mostly of excerpts from the Vigil (Compline and Matins) for the feast of the Nativity of Christ. The settings are predominantly the musical tradition of the Kiev Caves Lavra, a nice alternative to the better known Kievan or Common Chant settings of the hymns of Christmas. This recording is musically varied, combining trios, octets, and full ensemble with a canon-arch, deacon and priest, often responsorially or antiphonally. The performance itself is excellent—the intonation is true, the ensemble singing is well controlled even in *forte* and *fortissimo* passages, although some of the solo singing is a bit excessive. Sung in Slavonic, this pleasant-sounding recording would be a welcome addition to anyone's collection of Orthodox church singing. (Incidentally, the photograph on the cover of the booklet is not of the Kiev Caves Lavra, but of the Monastery of the Intercession in Suzdal.)

Sacred Choral Music From White Russia

*Confido Domino, Galina Tsmyg, conductor,
Erasmus WVH 163*

This CD contains a very interesting assortment of Byelorussian church singing. It begins with twelve Christmas carols, sung with instrumental accompaniment, including *Nova radist stala* ("A new joy") and *Nebo i zemlya* (Heaven and earth). These are followed by a *Kyrie* very much in the style of Haydn. The next set of hymns comes from the musical tradition of the Byelorussian Catholic Church. These para-liturgical hymns, also popular with the Ukrainians and Carpathorussians, are sung outside the context of the services. The last set of hymns comes from the tradition of the Russian Church. This varied assortment of styles is handled adroitly by this chamber choir, and the singing is effortless. With rare exception, the intonation is excellent and the ensemble singing is tight. This self-described group of amateurs from Minsk have produced a recording of which they can be very proud. ✚

CONFERENCES

✠ Announcements ✠

Liturgical Singing Seminar 1998 Liturgical Composition Workshop

*Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church,
Ben Lomond, California
February 6 - 8, 1998*

“And when we began to learn from one another, then the singing began to spread...” (Anonymous treatise, 17th-century Russia) This quote has provided the focus and impetus for the annual West Coast Liturgical Singing Seminar since it began in 1994. This winter the Seminar is offering a Liturgical Composition Workshop the weekend of February 6, 7, & 8 in Ben Lomond, California. Mark Bailey from St. Vladimir’s Seminary will be presenting “An Orthodox Approach to Liturgical Composition,” including work on textual analysis, poetic form, liturgical function and form. A variety of other speakers will cover the topics of music composition and arranging technique, setting traditional chant, music adaptation for textual change, copyright issues, computer score production, score preparation for ease of singing, and score analysis for conductors. As always, many traditions of chant will be represented, the worship cycle will be rich and full, and the beautiful redwoods and mountains will provide a rejuvenating and refreshing atmosphere. Bring your umbrella! The registration fee includes tuition, materials and meals and is sixty dollars (\$60) before December 31 and seventy dollars (\$70) after January 1. Limited “in home” housing is available on a first-come-first-served basis. Additional accommodations will be available at a motel one block from the church. For more information call Anne Schoepp (408) 336-3019. ✠

Symposium on English Translations of Byzantine Liturgical Texts

*St. Basil’s College, Stamford, Connecticut
June 17 - 20, 1998*

The purpose of this symposium is to bring together Eastern Christian Scholars, who have demonstrated competence in the area of liturgical translation, to discuss three basic areas of concern: 1) theological and philological accuracy, 2) translation style, and 3) singability. Also, representatives of North American Churches committed to the use of English will be invited to present reports on work done by their respective translation committees.

The intent of this conference is purely scholarly—to provide a collection of publishable papers and transcript of discussions as a resource for Orthodox Christian Churches engaged in the translation process. At present there exist scores of English translations of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, yet very little has been done to

bring together the scholars responsible for this work. This conference has no “hidden ecumenical agenda,” nor will it pretend to function as an “umbrella translation committee.” Rather it is the conviction of the organizers that regardless of how individual church and diocesan translation committees decide to proceed with their work, they deserve the opinion of recognized experts in the field, an opinion accessible via scholarly articles on the subject.

Among the speakers will be: Bishop KALLISTOS (Ware), Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash), Paul Meyendorff and Mark Bailey. The Symposium will be held June 17 - June 20, 1998 at St. Basil’s College, Stamford, Connecticut. The Symposium is sponsored by Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, Faculty of Theology, St. Paul University, Ottawa, Canada and the Diocese of Stamford.

For more information contact the Rev. Prof. Peter Galadza, St. Paul University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, Ontario CANADA K1S 1C4 or call (613) 236-1393. ✠

✠ Reviews ✠

The Life of Worship through Music

Usually when I attend Saturday Vespers at St. Pan-teleimon Church in Summit, Illinois, very few people are present. The quiet atmosphere and the singing remind me of the monasteries of the East. However, on Saturday, September 20, more than 60 people flocked to this small Church just after lunch. Choir directors, singers, and others from all over the Chicago deanery came to listen to Mark Bailey speak on “The Life of Worship through Music.”

Mark discussed the characteristics common to Orthodox musicians in North America, then spoke about liturgical singing in theory and practice. Using the same text, he gave examples of music either enhancing our prayer or making it virtually incomprehensible.

Mark uses the talents and ears of a professional musician and a conductor—both of which he is—in the spirit of worship. What a wonderful combination! While sitting in our places in the church, he divided us into groups and made from us, instant “professional” singers.

What struck me most during his talk was his sense of spirituality. He explained to us the main reason and the fundamental qualities of Orthodox Christian singing. It is not to become a performance. Rather, the goal of singing in the Church is worshipping God in the Spirit, so that we are led to the central role and purpose of our Liturgy, that is, the Eucharist. He acknowledged that there are numerous musical styles within Orthodox worship, but reminded us that there is but one Liturgy for the Lord.

Mark talked about the development of music over the centuries and the influence upon it exerted by the different cultures—Byzantine, Slavic, Kievan, etc. He pre-

dicts that as time goes by, Orthodox Christians will eventually develop their own style of liturgical singing in the United States.

He explained to us that all singing in the Church should flow smoothly in harmony and without interruption. I was surprised to learn that the Cherubic Hymn during the Great Entrance was not intended to be interrupted by petitions as it is in our current practice. Mark explained that this was foreign to the original tradition and that, since these petitions have their place during other parts of the Liturgy, there is no need for this unnatural interruption. Imagine how beautiful and natural it would be to sing the Cherubic Hymn as “Let us who mystically represent the Cherubim...now lay aside all earthly cares” and then continue singing “that we may receive the King of all, who comes invisibly unborn. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!” Can we go back to the original tradition? Please!

Finally, the time had come for the great finale, when all of what we had learned was applied during the Great Vespers. It was heaven on earth. Thank you, Mark, for inspiring and directing us to worship God. Thank you, Matushka Paula Manzuk, for arranging for him to come and for inviting all of us. It was a wonderful experience, which we pray can be repeated. ✚

Reviewed by Ezzat Doss

12th Annual Antiochian Sacred Music Institute 1997

About 150 people attended the Institute at Antiochian Village in Ligonier, Pennsylvania this August—the most ever in the Institute’s twelve-year history. The focus was on Byzantine chant; the guest speaker was Fr. David Barr. The Institute began with Daily Vespers on Thursday and culminated with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Sunday morning.

Workshops were given on Byzantine chant, conducting, voice, Byzantine music for choirs, and how to use the Byzantine Music Project published by the Archdiocese. Fr. Barr gave an interesting talk about Orthodox hymnography and its role in worship. The presiding bishop, Bishop DEMETRI, spoke about the need for good choirs and good liturgical music. He emphasized the need for preparation, rehearsals, and punctuality, in no uncertain terms! [*Ed. note: See lead article.*]

Both Thursday and Friday evenings ended with a “sing-in” including hymns in four-part harmony led by Mr. James Meena and Byzantine hymns led by Fr. Barr.

If you want to learn to chant, this is a great place to get started. However, three days is not long enough to get any in-depth training. If you are newly Orthodox, newly involved in an Orthodox choir, or a new choir director, this is a great conference for you. For those who love the music of the Church, it is worth attending the Institute just to hear the singing in chapel. ✚

Reviewed by Laura Busse,

St. Stephen the Protomartyr Antiochian

Orthodox Church, South Plainfield, New Jersey

St. Vladimir’s Institute of Music and Pastoral Practice 1997

Each summer St. Vladimir’s Seminary in Crestwood, New York, hosts the Institute of Music and Pastoral Practice. My colleague Randy Jackson and I had the opportunity to attend it this last June. What a blessing it was for us! While the substance of the Institute was enough to make it worth our while, the fellowship was equally valuable. It is always a help and encouragement to meet others who are partners in ministry, including fellow directors, editors, composers, professors, etc. The music track offered practical as well as more theoretical/informational presentations and activities that helped us increase our abilities in leading and our knowledge of liturgical music. Each day we got to watch these principles put into practice in daily worship. The pastoral track explored the role of the initiatory rites and practices of the Church, past and present, especially examining the theological aspects of Holy Baptism. These sessions strengthened us in the faith of the Fathers and encouraged us to make manifest the grace of our baptism in our individual and communal lives.

From a personal standpoint, I gained the most from working with those who have written and edited much of our OCA liturgical music. The music presenters included Mark Bailey, Helen Erickson, Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, and David Drillock. Mr. Bailey assisted us in cleaning up our own directing habits and setting priorities in choosing, writing and arranging music for the services. Mrs. Erickson explored, with Professor Drillock, the process of rehearsal and helped in beginning directing techniques, as well as assisting us in understanding the Russian *octoechos* system of melodies and formulae. Professor Drillock also led us through a brief history of Russian church music and its use in North America. Dr. Suchy-Pilalis taught about Byzantine chant, its structure and practice. Later in the week we sang an entire Byzantine Vespers. It was a worthy challenge! Summing up the week was a trip into New York to view the “Glory of Byzantium” exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was stunning, to say the least!

It would be an understatement to say that the St. Vladimir’s faculty and staff are very competent and hospitable. They are more than that; they are examples of faith at work in life. It is this atmosphere and the many folks who participate which make this workshop a pleasure to attend. I am grateful to my parish for sending me. I learned much which I have already found useful. I know I can say the same for my friend Randy. We are hoping to attend next year. We hope you will meet us there. ✚

Reviewed by Tracey D. Edson

Choir Director, St. Nicholas Church, Portland, Oregon

REVIEWS

Let Us Sing to the Lord I & II

Orthodox Christian Chorale of Metropolitan Detroit
\$9.98 available from *Musica Russica*
(800) 326-3132 or fax (203) 421-3132

Let Us Sing to the Lord is a jubilant recording of Orthodox hymns in the English language. Joyful music combined with energetic and musical singing make Listening to it a pleasure. Effective use of men's and women's choirs contrasts nicely with the full choir. Drawing on many traditions, the music varies from the traditional Byzantine "Psalm 33" to Bortniansky's Paschal concerto "This is the Day." and ventures into newer pieces by American composers. Some of the newer highlights include the V. Rev. James Meena's beautiful "Before Thy Cross," "God is our King" by Vladimir Morosan, and the most joyous "Alleluia" by V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev.

Let Us Sing to the Lord II has a more solemn character, containing several Lenten and Vespertal hymns, with arrangements that offer more somber tonalities, haunting open harmonies, and polyphonic passages. Again representing many Orthodox musical traditions, this repertoire is more complex and demanding. Although the intonation sometimes falters through the difficult sections, the overall sound is good and the tape remains a worthwhile documentation of new arrangements in English and new hymns by American composers. Particularly beautiful are Mark Bailey's "Blessed is the Man," and V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev's "Let My Prayer Arise." Reflecting the enormous amount of work behind any recording in English, this tape is dedicated to the "men and women in America who compose, transcribe, publish, and translate Orthodox hymnography in the English language." Now all we need is the sheet music! ✚

Reviewed by Anne Schoepp
Associate Editor, PSALM Notes
Choir Director, Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church,
Ben Lomond, California

Psalm Verses of the Orthodox Liturgy

Compiled by Michael G. Farrow, Ph. D.
Oakwood Publications, \$19.95
(800) 747-9245 or e-mail: Oakwoodpub@juno.com

I was delighted to see this book published. Until now, those of us who use psalm verses in the Liturgy—with the antiphons, entrance hymns, prokeimena, alleluias and communion hymns—had to search through various sources, hoping to find the appropriate psalm verses for specific days and feasts.

Psalm Verses for the Orthodox Liturgy has greatly simplified this task. An extremely user-friendly source book, it supplies the appointed psalm verses for any Liturgy. The table of contents lists material for weekday Liturgies, ordinary Sundays, Great Feasts of the Church Year, the Triodion—including Presanctified Liturgies, Saturday and Sunday Liturgies, and Holy Week Liturgies—and the Pentecostarion, including Bright Week and Mid-Pentecost. Other services include the consecration of a church, commemorations for saints, apostles, prophets, hierarchs and martyrs, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

The format was designed with the chanter or choir director in mind. You will not see references to other pages in the book—psalm verses are printed in full for each service with source citation included. Also noted are differences in Greek and Slavic usage. The translation used is from **Psalter According to the Seventy**, published by Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, Massachusetts.

The introduction contains a thorough history of the use of psalmody in the Orthodox Liturgy and how it evolved through the centuries. This is fascinating and valuable information for anyone involved in the music of the Church. Also helpful is the chart which gives general rules for using the psalm verses on feasts, afterfeasts and leave-taking of the feasts.

Our sincere thanks to Dr. Michael G. Farrow for this three-year labor of love, to His grace, Bishop BASIL (Essey), for his support and review of the material, and to Archpriest Edward Hughes for his research into original sources. This book, **Psalm Verses for the Orthodox Liturgy**, belongs on every chanter's and choir director's stand. ✚

Reviewed by Khouria Joyce Black
Choir Director, St. Philip Orthodox Church
Souderton, Pennsylvania

PSALM Notes

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The articles and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors. While the editors assume responsibility for the selection of the articles included, the authors assume responsibility for facts and interpretations that appear in their articles.

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are available from
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1 HOLY NOTE PRESS 1

Dear Musical Benefactor:

We are writing on behalf of Holy Note Press to let you know about an exciting project that will enhance the worship in our churches. We would like to share what we are trying to do, and then tell you how you can help make this project a reality.

Holy Note Press represents a collaborative effort on the part of Orthodox musicians of various dioceses, working in a spirit of pan-Orthodox cooperation. Initially established in 1980, it published 52 titles in the series "Hymns for the Orthodox Liturgy," but then entered a period of inactivity for a number of years. God willing, we hope to resume our music publishing activity, unto His glory and unto the service and adornment of His Holy Church.

The primary goals of Holy Note Press are:

- To provide high-quality editions of Orthodox liturgical music in English, serving the needs of choirs and parishes
- To foster liturgically appropriate and aesthetically pleasing styles of singing, drawing upon the wellspring of canonical chant melodies from various ethnic traditions
- To stimulate the creativity of liturgical composers working within the aesthetic traditions and liturgical norms of the Holy Orthodox Church
- To aid in the evangelization of both Orthodox and non-Orthodox people through the medium of liturgical music

We believe that the most effective way to realize the above goals will be through providing a subscription service. By having a regular base of subscribers we will be able to release about 20-25 new titles a year. These will be excellent editions of traditional chant melodies, arrangements of chant melodies and newly composed liturgical music within the Orthodox tradition.

Here is how you can help us. We are looking for benefactors willing to support the musical liturgical art in the Orthodox Church. It costs about \$30 per typeset page to prepare a piece of music for publication. The editors are donating their services for the typesetting and other prepublication costs for the first issue. However, to print and mail the initial issue—which will include 10 new titles—we need seed capital. We plan to send the first issue to every Orthodox church in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Great Britain. This way choir directors and priests will be able to see first-hand the quality of the music that will be offered and exactly what they will be receiving for the cost of their subscription. We expect that we will need approximately \$5000 (in printing and mailing costs) to release the first issue and about half that amount for the second issue. Our expectation is to become self-sustaining, through our subscription base, within the first year.

Strictly speaking, Holy Note Press is a "commercial" venture. However, our purpose is not financial gain but the achievement of the goals stated above. It is our intention to use all profits to produce additional titles. The composers, arrangers and editors will be offered appropriate royalties for their work, and their work will be protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America.

We hope you can help within the means available to you. Perhaps you know of individuals or choirs in your area who would be willing to offer a gift. (Many choirs have funds established for special projects.) If you or another potential benefactor would like any additional information about Holy Note Press or about how you can help, please feel free to contact Alice Hughes or Vladimir Morosan. (*See contact information below.*)

We hope you will give our request your prayerful consideration.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Alice Hughes
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 22, 1997 St. Athanasius Orthodox Church, Sacramento, California; and
 January 17, 1998 St. Matthew Orthodox Church, Torrence, California; and
 February 6 - 8, 1998 St. Paul Orthodox Church, Lynwood, Washington.

St. Romanos Chanters Workshops in Byzantine Chant, at all of the above dates and places. Sponsored by Western Region Fellowship of St. John the Divine. For more information call: Fr. David Barr, (520) 622-2265.

February 6 - 8, 1998

The **5th Annual Liturgical Singing Seminar**, Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, Ben Lomond, California. "Liturgical Composition Workshop," Mark Bailey, featured speaker. For more information call: Anne Schoepp, (408) 336-3019.

June 17 - 20, 1998

Symposium on English Translations of Byzantine Liturgical Texts, St. Basil's College, Stamford, Connecticut. Speakers include: Bishop KALLISTOS (Ware), Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash), Paul Meyendorff and Mark Bailey. Information contact the Rev. Prof. Peter Galadza, St. Paul University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, Ontario CANADA K1S 1C4 or call (613) 236-1393.

June 21 - 26, 1998

St. Vladimir's Summer Liturgical Institute of Music and Pastoral Care, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood N.Y. "Words and Worship in the Christian Tradition," guest speaker Bishop KALLISTOS (Ware). For information call: (914) 631-8313.

August 20 - 23, 1998

Sacred Music Institute at Antiochian Village. For information call Antiochian Village: (412) 238-3677.

October 8 - 11, 1998

12th Annual Russian Orthodox Church Musicians' Conference, "Russian Orthodox Liturgical Chant in Late 20th-Century North America—A Legacy of Tradition in Service to Mission", Washington D.C. For more information call: Nicolas Schidlovsky, (609) 279-1756 or e-mail: nschid@phoenix.princeton.edu

SUBMISSION DEADLINE for next issue of PSALM Notes: February 15, 1998.

Please send items—national and local—for the Calendar of Events, Reviews of conferences, recordings, books, Letters to the Editor, Ask the Choirmaster, Choirs in the Community, or Community events involving Orthodox music. Please send your submissions to: PSALM Notes, P.O. Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA or e-mail: alice.hughes@bigfoot.com

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Please send us names and addresses of anyone you think would be interested in receiving PSALM Notes!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors,

Thank you for sending me a copy of **PSALM Notes!** Great work you are putting forth. Looking forward to my next issue.

Phyllis Arsenault—St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, Lowell, Massachusetts

Dear Editors,

Thanks so much for sending me a copy of **PSALM Notes!** Please keep them coming! I have a tape of Fr. Glagolev's lecture on the ministry of singing, and I loved his article in your paper. I hope to see him when he comes to Canton, Ohio in October.

I have a few comments that I'd like to make: You included sheet music for "Receive the Body," the Easter Koinonikon, arranged by Anne Schoepp. As pointed out by Professor Oliver Strunk in his book, **Essays on Music in the Byzantine World**, only those Koinonika that are *scriptural* end with the Alleluia. There are only two Koinonika that are not scriptural and therefore we don't sing Alleluia—"Receive the Body of Christ" and "Of Thy Mystical Supper" (which is sung as a Koinonikon on Holy Thursday). Also, the Greek Triodion and Pentecostarion omit the Alleluia for these two hymns. I'm not blaming the arranger, since many times I've had to hunt, dig, and research over and over again just to find out these kinds of things. There's just not that much source material in English on Orthodox music history, especially not in your typical local public library.

Someone asked what suggestions you had about what could be sung while the clergy take Holy Communion, in the *Ask the Choirmaster* column. I'd like to offer two commonly used alternatives that weren't mentioned.

It has become the practice in many churches in Greece, and increasingly so among Greek parishes in America, to chant Psalm 135(136) in addition to/or instead of the usual "Praise ye the Lord...". Each half-verse of the Psalm is followed by a single Alleluia. This psalm is sung in the sticheraric (moderately fast) style in Tone 5. I can provide you with the Byzantine melody for

this hymn, if you wish.

The other option is, if a memorial service is being offered that Sunday, it is traditional to sing the three sets of Troparia from the Funeral service ("Ah, the blameless in the way, Alleluia...") instead of/or in addition to the normal Koinonikon.

I have been a choir director for 21 years, and at age 42 am still a long way from retiring, plus I've been a chanter for about 9 or 10 years (a continuous learning process!). I'm also a composer of Orthodox church music. We use about fifty percent Greek and fifty percent English in our church (St. George, Massillon, Ohio) and I have the advantage of being able to chant in either language. Frankly though, I don't think God cares in what language we choose to worship Him!

Thanks again for putting me on your mailing list, and who knows, perhaps someday I'll be sending you an article or two!

Sincerely, Emmanuel H. Creekus—Akron, Ohio

[Resource Editor's Note: Thank you for your letter of support and with your comments and suggestions for the Koinonika. While it may be the practice in some traditions not to sing Alleluia after the non-scriptural Koinonika, i.e. Holy Thursday and Pascha, Russian service books specifically state that the Alleluia is to be sung. Therefore, Anne Schoepp's setting of "Receive the Body" can be sung by those following either tradition, simply omitting the Alleluia if that is your custom.

As regards the singing of the Troparia from the funeral service as the Koinonikon, Sunday is specifically reserved for the commemoration of the Resurrection. Therefore, it is not appropriate to sing the Troparia from the funeral service on Sunday while the clergy commune, despite the fact that memorial services—contrary to the Canons—are sung on Sundays to accommodate people's busy schedules.

True, God understands us in whatever language we chant. However, people are not omnilingual, so we must sing in the language(s) that they understand.—W.O.]

PSALM Notes

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